

Parables of ants, conies, locusts and spiders

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- [0 : 00] The End Independence upon the Lord I will direct your prayerful attention to the book of Proverbs, chapter 30, and I'll read from verses 24 to 28.
- The book of Proverbs, chapter 30, verses 24 to 28.
- Are but a feeble folk, yet they make their houses in the rocks. The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands.
- The spider taketh hold with her hands and is in king's palaces.
- Now you will scarcely need me to say that these things of nature are parallels.
- [2 : 17] I have been a sukey Harley, so express as if with a word you don't find in the dictionary, tossy-kity, concerning what to bring before you this evening.
- But waking at four this morning, as I normally do, though occasionally go to sleep afterwards, but I did not this morning, this seemed to rest upon one's mind to bring before you.
- And our opening hymn seemed to confirm it this afternoon, and also, as I may mention our friends' remarks this afternoon.
- And I would firstly like to say a few things concerning the scriptures, but especially concerning parables.
- Then a few things concerning this book of Proverbs, then concerning this chapter, and then lastly concerning these verses.
- [3 : 32] Yesterday evening, Mrs. Bloom at Southampton quoted two lines I'd never heard before.
- And much to my surprise, our dear friend quoted them this afternoon, concerning the snatches. The new is in the old concealed.
- The old is in the new revealed. And it rested on my mind during the night, and I felt I must quote it this evening.
- And you can imagine my surprise when our friend, Mr. Dawson, quoted them this afternoon. And I'd never heard them before in all my life, as far as I am aware.
- Now, I had also thought of mentioning that verse he spoke from, concerning the scribe that is instructed into the kingdom of God, bringing forth from his treasure things new and old.
- [4 : 41] But I leave that as he dealt so ably with the subject. But I want to come especially to parables. And parables are not confluent to the New Testament.
- We read, for example, of Nathan, coming to David after Nathan, having already many wives, had taken you rose only wife.
- And Nathan came to him with that parable of the rich man with his many flocks, taking the poor man's eulet. David was greatly incensed.

The man that had done this shall surely die. Thou art the man. Conviction of the Holy Spirit entered David's heart.

And then, as you know, the 51st Psalm was written, which so many of us have had to pray throughout our lives, and still have to pray.

[5 : 45] But now concerning parables, many parables commence with that expression, the kingdom of heaven, or the kingdom of God.

In Matthew 13, there are seven parables, of which six begin with that expression, the kingdom of heaven. For example, the parable of tares.

And the tares shall be gathered out into bundles and burnt with foam. The net cast into the sea, and the bag shall be cast away.

Many errors have arisen in thinking the kingdom of heaven refers to heaven itself. It does not. It does not. The kingdom of heaven refers to the gospel dispensation on earth.

There will be no casting out of heaven, for nothing will enter that defalleth or maketh alive. But sadly, many who have made a profession, many who have sat under the sound of the truth, will be found laughing at last.

[7 : 04] The kingdom of heaven is the gospel dispensation. A few weeks ago, when sadly we heard so much about the death of the late Pope, I felt led to speak from Matthew concerning those words the Lord said to Peter, upon this rock I will build my church.

It was not built upon Peter, as the Roman Catholics have it, but upon that which Peter had said, thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

But in connection with our thoughts this evening, the Lord went in and said unto Peter, I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

Peter does not stand at the gate of heaven, admitting some and turning away others. The keys of the kingdom of heaven.

Keys are those things that are needful to unlock and to reveal and to bring forth those things that are precious. We don't put a cabbage or potato in the scythe, do we?

[8 : 30] It is of negligible value. But those things that are precious are not to worry. What a treasure in the word of God. And Peter and the apostles were given the keys of the kingdom of heaven to bring forth in the preaching of the gospel the treasures in the scriptures.

In their case, of course, in a measure more than we ever have now, with the gift of tongues, the gift of healing. But all whom the Lord sends to preach the gospel will have these keys of the kingdom of heaven in their way.

I'm sure my ministerial friends like myself have found perhaps a scripture you've read hundreds of times.

You know it by heart. And then the Lord lays it upon your mind to preach from you. You think, I can't possibly speak from that for more than five minutes.

And the Lord opens it to you. And you see things in it you've never seen before. Because the Lord has given you the keys of the kingdom of heaven to bring forth and show to his people the treasures in the word of God.

[10 : 01] And I'm sure like myself, and indeed this applies to all the Lord's people, the more we know of the word of God, the more we feel our ignorance.

When I was a child in the infant school at Hokington, where three of my grandchildren are now, the younger ones, when I could add and subtract and multiply and divide, I thought I knew all there was to know about mathematics.

Never heard of calculus and other more complicated things. Thought I could leave school. I knew it all. But when having left school much younger than most of you and taking night school and evening classes till I was 30, then I learned more.

But I felt my ignorance more. Because I realized how little I knew of what there was to know. And so it is in the word of God.

It would be false modesty to say we did not know more now than we did in our early spiritual days. We do know more.

[11 : 26] But we feel our ignorance more. Because of so much we know, as one expressed it, like a child with a teaspoon by the side of an ocean.

The keys of the kingdom of heaven. And just in passing, before we move on, it may puzzle some of you dear young friends to consider the words of the Lord concerning John the Baptist.

The Lord said of John the Baptist, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. Did that mean John the Baptist was not a child of God?

Of course not. John the Baptist was not as favored as you and I. He was executed before the Lord suffered, died and rose again.

John the Baptist did not live under the time of the gospel dispensation. So he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than him.

[12 : 45] I'm sure John the Baptist, like the patriarchs of old, saw Christ by faith as the Lord said of Abraham, he saw my darling and was glad.

Do we not read in the 11th of Hebrews how they looked forward to these things and they died in faith not having received the promises, promises, that is the fulfillment of the promise concerning the coming of Christ, that having seen them afar off and were persuaded of them and held them?

You look at the small print of the scriptures. They embrace them. When my small grandchildren see me coming in the distance, they run to meet me knowing I shall sweep them up in my arms and embrace them.

You can hold something for which you have little affection, but you embrace those you love. They embrace them and confess that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

They that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. Now, we read the Lord taught by parables and without a parable spoke he not unto them and afterwards expounded to his disciples.

[14 : 30] After he had spoken that parable of the tares, the disciples came to him and said, tell us the meaning of this parable.

Thousands millions see the parables of nature, but how few and are you and I among them young and old desire to be spiritually instructed in those parables.

May that be our desire. I trust you are all young and old daily readers of the word of God, but I hope more than that you are searchers of the scriptures.

We read in Acts 17 that the Bereans, they were more honourable than they of Thessalonica. Now, there's two epistles to the Thessalonians and none to the Bereans, but the Bereans were more honourable.

in that they search the scriptures once a week, no, daily, daily, whether these things were said.

[15 : 48] And the Lord said, search the scriptures, for they testify of me. If we search, we're looking for something. We may read something casually without desiring to search.

Oh, may we each be daily searchers of the scriptures. Well, now, coming to the book of prophets.

prophets, when I first, I believe the Lord called me by his grace at the age of fourteen, no doubt the age of some of you, I first had a desire to read the scriptures and meditate upon them on my own.

And I said to my father, where do you suggest I read? And he said he had asked my grandfather. And my grandfather had said to him, read the book of Proverbs.

And so he gave me the same advice. And I'm thankful that he did. For in this book of Proverbs is so much instruction for the young.

[17 : 06] Both do positive things, what we should do, and negative things that we should beware of and keep away from. And especially concerning the fear of the Lord.

The fear of the Lord is not a slavish fear, but a loving, respectful fear. To illustrate that when I was at the village school, the same school, I have mentioned, there was a head mistress of the old fashioned sort.

Five minutes late and you were kind. Talking in class, you were kind. Every morning there'd be ten or a dozen lined up to be kind before break, mostly boys, sometimes girls.

We feared her. But there's no love, no love. In everyday words, when the opportunity occurred, we got our own back. love.

But with our parents, there was also a respect. We knew we would be punished if we disobeyed, but there was a desire through love to keep their commandments.

[18 : 23] That illustrates the fear of the Lord. The other, a slavish fear. A slavish fear. fear. And especially when we are young, how we need this guidance.

I was not so old when I was posted to Germany in the army, surrounded by drunkenness, and all manner of evil it would not be prudent to mention here.

And how one felt the need to be gagged. And also kept from this thing, from a pharisaical spirit.

Ah, how easy to say, stand thou by thyself, I am holier than you. Or like the Pharisee, I thank God on others other men are.

I fast twice a week, I go to weeknight services. Ah, what a good person I am. but it was the publican who went down to his house justified rather than the other.

[19 : 36] For he cried, God be merciful to me the sinner. Read the book of Proverbs and may the Lord bless you in so doing.

Now, the book of Proverbs is chiefly the Proverbs of Solomon. But here in this chapter, we have the words of Agir, the son of Jacob, and the last chapter, the words of King Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him, may well be the words of Bathsheba father, to her son Samuel, by a name that she may have known him, as we often, of course, in the family have particular names for loved ones, be that as it may.

These are the words of Agir, the son of Jacob. we do not know who this man is. He does not appear to be mentioned elsewhere in the scripture.

The name means an assemble, as if he assembled these prophets. Well, just briefly looking at a few of them, before we come more especially to those I read as eight texts.

And especially in connection with Luke 12, I mention verses 7 and 8. They've been my prayers now for many, many years.

[21 : 21] I commend them to you, young adult. Two things have I required of thee, which deny me them not before I die.

Remove far from me vanity and lies, give me neither poverty nor riches and feed me with food convenient for me.

How many with the national lottery and other gambling for sinful things want those riches? Oh, beware of it.

It is the prosperity of fools that slaves them. Give me neither poverty nor riches, lest I be full and deny thee and say, who is the Lord?

I'm independent of you, I have great substance, for lest I be poor and steal and take the name of the Lord in life.

[22 : 34] the et■■■■ And his fields brought forth plentifully.

And without going through it in detail, you see, he did his arithmetic. He knew the extent of his savings. He knew his annual consumption.

He divided his savings by his annual consumption. Perhaps someone here is doing the same thing. And he came to the conclusion.

So, thou hast much goods laid up for many years. No consideration whatever of helping the poor, or even helping someone of his family, if he had one.

Take thine easy drink and be merry. But, God said, thou fool. Now, this night, not in many years' time, this night, my soul shall be required of thee.

[23 : 50] Then who shall those things be which thou hast provided? So, just like that, is he that is not rich toward God.

I want to come to that more in a moment when we consider these things. Well, coming now to these four things that are little upon the earth, but are exceeding wise.

Remember, again, you see, they are parables. I'm not an etymologist who is expert in insects, though, of course, spiders are a rat-leds with eight legs and not true insects.

But there are a few things that we do know concerning these, though it is the spiritual side of the parable, of course, that we want to bring before you.

But the ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer.

[25 : 11] In the sixth chapter of the book of Proverbs, we read, Go to the ant thou sluggard.

Consider her wise and be wise. The ant is a parable of industry, of hard work.

The word of God never condones laziness, idleness. See, if there are men diligent in business, he shall stand before great men.

But it is not so much concerning diligence in natural things I desire to bring before you. Though we should be diligent, if we sweep the streets, our streets should be the best swept streets in the town.

If the world can point a finger of reproach that we are dishonest servants to our masters, we do not do it full day's work for a full day's pay and so on, they will soon point the finger.

[26 : 24] You say you fear the Lord, and that's how you go home. Oh, may we never give occasion for our Lord's name and his people to be a reproach.

But are we diligent in spiritual things? Remember what we read in the first epistle to Corinthians?

We cannot now enter into the cost of redemption.

I'm sure you've had it set before you many times, and rightly so. But when we consider that cost of the redemption of our souls, redemption means the payment of a debt by his sufferings on the cross, especially when they reached a crescendo with felt separation from his Father.

When he cried, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And the answer to the question is, because his people deserve to be forsaken, cast into the pit.

[27 : 58] And he had to bear that punishment in their room and place. Ye are bought with a price. Let us remember that.

Now, in that twelfth chapter that I read, we are told there, take no thought for your life, which is what ye shall eat, neither for the body which ye shall put on, and so on.

Consider the lilies. If God so clothe the grass, which is today in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little?

One thinks of that which we read concerning Martha in an adjacent chapter. The Lord had, in chapter 10, come to the house of Martha and Mary.

There is no mention of Lazarus in that connection. And Martha was cumbered about much serving. Mary sat at the feet of Jesus.

[29 : 12] Lord, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her, therefore, that she help me.

Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but Mary hath chosen that better part we shall not be taken from.

Now, in the epistle to the Philippians, we read, Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God which passeth understanding shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Be careful for nothing. Does it mean, then, we are to be careless? Read it this way, Be full of care for nothing.

Be full of care for nothing. A simple parable I often think of in that connection. We may have a liter, a jug, we take a liter of bottle bought from the shop, and we tip that liter of milk into the liter jug.

[30 : 41] It is full. And there's no room for anything else. If you wanted to add water, you can't do so. If we're full of care, there's no room for more important spiritual things.

I say we're surrounded by parables. So we are to be diligent in the things of this life, yes. But, but, give priority to the things of God.

And so, do we read, lay up for yourselves treasure in the heavens.

The ants gather their meat, they prepare their meat in the summer. Lay up treasure in heaven, where moth and rust do not corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal.

We read in the 25th or 24th of Matthew concerning the parable of the talents. I know the word talent there means a sum of money, but does it not apply also to our various abilities?

[32 : 05] Talents in the sense we use them. They are to be used in the Lord's service, primarily.

Have we health and strength? To be used in the Lord's service. Have we homes? To be used in the Lord's service and His people's service.

Have we time? Ah, sadly, many can put their hands in the pocket to help the cause, but they can't spare the time.

Can't spare the time to do this or that thing which is needful for the maintenance of the mountain. Our time is not our time. In the book of the Acts, we read this, the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one spirit, and no man called anything he possessed his own, but they had all things common.

And it is followed by the solemn account of Ananias and Sapphira, who said they had given all when they kept back part for themselves.

[33 : 30] Freely have ye received, freely give. Well, ants also, of course, are so protective of their eggs.

We often find in the summer we may raise a paving slab or something and find the ants underneath with their eggs, but when exposed to the light, how quickly they take them away, lest they should be damaged.

Let an ear we get in the nest of ants, how they will attack it and drive it away. Are we so diligent with our precious things, lest we let them slip, lest the enemy of our souls steals away our thoughts?

I'll dwell upon that, but I remind you of the temple where there were buyers and sellers, and the Lord said, ye, my father's house shall be called a house of prayer, and ye have made it a den of thieves.

What, wiveth the apostle, know ye, not that ye are the temple, if the spirit dwell within you. How many thieves are in our hearts?

[34 : 45] They steal away our meditation. Sadly, I may sometimes sit down to meditate and how often our thoughts get carried away or we fall asleep.

Oh, what unprofitable servants we feel today. Well, we must move on. The conies are but a feeble folk.

The conies were a rabid, like, defenseless creature. But they make their houses in the rocks. If these set forth the Lord's people, why haven't the conies become extinct hundreds of years ago when they've no strength and ability to defend themselves?

And yet, they're still in Palestine. There was some day of a river in the land of Israel. Now, God pointed them out. Because they have four essential things, consider them spiritually.

First of all, they have life. Or they would not realize their weakness. The dead conie might soon be eaten by the hyena or the lion.

[36 : 03] They have life. Having life, they know their weakness. And they know their danger. And they know where safety is to be found.

Your adversary, the devil, goeth about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may give out. The name of the Lord is a strong tower.

We read it, I think, in Proverbs. The righteous runneth into it and he's safe. Amen. The apostle writes, When I am weak, then am I strong.

When I am strong, that is, in my own strength, then am I weak. Delilah asked of Samson a searching question.

Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lies. Well, sadly, Samson fell.

[37 : 12] I say, the cone is our butterfeeble foe, yet they make their dwelling in the Lord. And when we are under conviction of sin, and our friend referred to that God, the second occasion when Moses spoke, or smothered it with a rod instead of speaking to him, we won't dwell upon it now, but does not that rock set forth Jesus Christ?

Within the clefts of thy dear sight, his safety dwells and peace dwells. and that beautiful hymn of rock of ages, rock of ages, cleft for me.

You see, if there was no cleft or brakes in this rock, the coneys couldn't run into it, could they? If it was a bare rock, they'd soon be captured and devoured.

Rock of ages, cleft for me. Ah, what faith is needed for me. Let me hide myself in thee.

Let the water and the blood from thy living side which flow be of sin the double cure. Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

[38 : 44] And power. the locusts have no king, yet they go forth all of them by bands.

Locusts in the scriptures seem in many ways to set forth God's judgment. I noticed recently there have been many plagues of locusts in Africa far more than usual.

Mercifully we are spared from them in this land. Now in the book of Revelation we read there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth and unto them was given power as the scorpions of the earth had power and it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth nor any green thing neither any tree but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

eyes. I remind you in the last chapter of Revelation we read of the Lord's people his name shall be in their foreheads.

Not on but in. We read of the names of the tribes of Israel on those onyx stones upon the shoulder and the names of the stones on the breastplate engraved not rediment chalk to be there one day and wiped off the next engraved as the engraving of a seed.

[40 : 48] His name shall be in their foreheads but this judgment upon those that have not the seed of God in their foreheads.

That which is on or in your forehead you can't see yourself. You may look at someone else and say I'm sure they're a child of God but how is the case my soul with thee?

This is to make us more diligent in seeking to make our calling and election show. I think locusts were the eighth plague that came upon the Egyptians.

Some years ago I spoke to you I think it was 1997 of the significance of ten in the scriptures.

There were ten plagues of Egypt and there we read how Moses and Aaron said to Pharaoh that if he did not let the people go the locusts will come into thy coast they will cover the face of the earth that thou shalt not be able to see the earth and they shall eat that which the hail had spared and saw God's judgment God's judgment God's judgment we also of course read of John the Baptist feeding upon locusts I understand they taste something like a shrimp but of course cannot speak from personal experience the locusts have no king yet they go forth all of them by bands and then fourthly and lastly the spider taketh hold with her hands and is in king's palaces

[42 : 51] I've always had a fascination for spiders so as my wife could soon say if I see a large one I send for her to get rid of it to put it out the window spiders I don't think there is another creature that varies so much in size an inhabitant there are spiders as small as a pin's head there are spiders you may see in the zoo eight inches across their legs but they all have one thing in common they are poisonous they bring death to their victims does that not set forth sin sin and some spiders are exceedingly beautiful those garden spiders that spin those cartwheel webs how beautifully they are marred but that doesn't stop them poisoning and eating their victims and then those tropical ones which are so fierce and loathsome horrific we would naturally detest them but how poisonous they are and then again spiders can be found right up to the snow line up in the mountains and surprisingly you can find them underwater there are those pond spiders that take down a bubble of air down a stalk and lie in white under the surface of the water is not seen to be found everywhere everywhere in all its forms and sin when it hath conceived as the apostle writes bringeth forth death bringeth forth death and notice takeeth hold yes the spider can walk upside down across the ceiling

I was watching one in the bathroom recently and he could climb up a glazed tile I marveled how it got and so is with sin found everywhere we cannot get rid of it as it were of ourselves and it taketh hold with her hands notice always the small print of the scriptures her hands it is the female of course that lays the eggs and some female spiders eat the male after they bite it be that as it might but you see how quickly they multiply sometimes watch the spiders nest like a little ball of cotton wool and look at it perhaps day after day and they break it and scores of them seem to come out minute at first but how quickly they grow so it is with sin there is this parable too

I think it is in the clifton hymnal I've often thought of it when I've seen what I know to be a large river at the estuary in the upper reaches where it is but a little rock just as the broadest rivers run from small and distant springs the greatest climbs that men have done have grown from little things a little theft a small deceit too often leads to more it is hard at first yes the first time you do that sin it is hard at first but tempts the feet as through an open door oh beware of so called little sins take it hold with her hands and is in king's palaces you expect to see the spiders in the barn or the garden shed but the king's palaces yes the word of god declares they are now if you and

I are born again by the holy spirit our souls are the palace of the great king Jesus Christ and yet spiders are found in our hearts spiders are found oh may we be diligent we get them in our chapel there's no doubt you do here easy to get rid of the web yes but you come back the next morning the spider spun another web you've got to get rid of the spider itself or the web will be back before your back turned almost oh may we ever be on our god against these sins that so creep in even into our heart the palace of the great king jesus christ while i leave these thoughts we are surrounded by parables may we pray for the lord to open and to expound them for our soul's profit and for his glory amen let us conclude by singing hymn 778 778 to the tune howton 808 so straight be the way with dangers beset and we on the way are no father yet our good guide and savior has helped us thus far and is by his favor we are what we are hymn 778 on visitors here our wish and an yang ha ha k h h ja

SONG CONTINUES CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS

[52 : 20] CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS
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Tim H Select God bless you.

parables to heart and to pray that thou will explain to us the meaning of the parables. Do forgive anything of this.

Be with us as we go our various ways and grant journeying mercies to our destinations in peace without hindrance if it is for thy glory and thy people's God.

And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of the Father, the communion of the Spirit be with us.

[55 : 25] Amen. We will sing the doxology to the usual tune.

Praise God from her and all blessings flow. Praise him, O creatures here below. Praise him above, ye heavenly hosts.

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Praise God from her and all blessings flow.

Praise God from her and all blessings flow. Praise God from her and all blessings flow.

Praise God from her and all blessings flow.

[56 : 37] Praise God from her and all blessings flow. Thank you. Thank you.