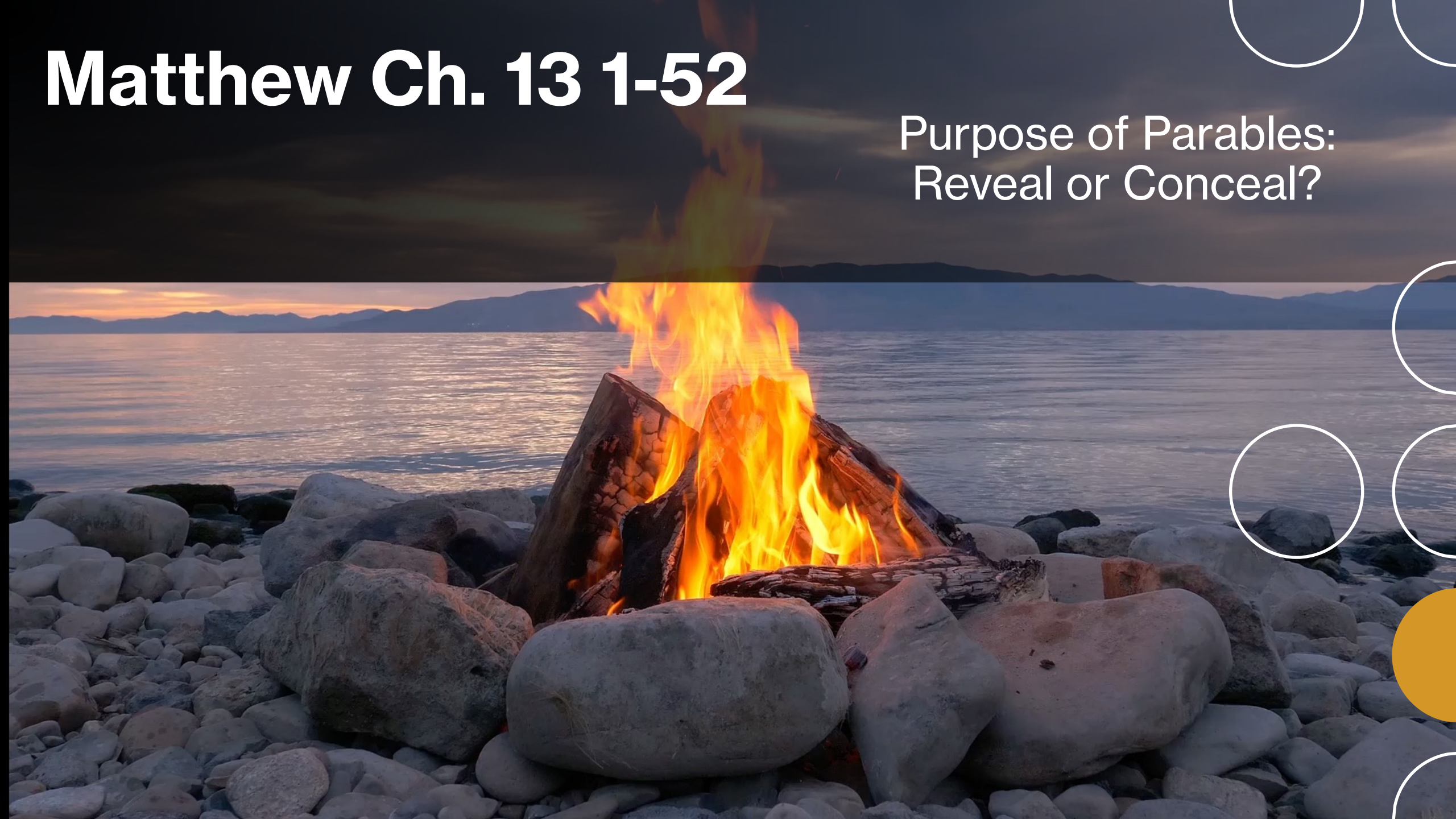


Matthew Ch. 13 1-52

Purpose of Parables:
Reveal or Conceal?



Inquiring minds want to know...

“Then the disciples came to Him and asked, ‘Why do You speak to the crowds in parables?’ ¹¹ And he answered them, ‘To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.’”



Lesson Summary

- What is a Parable?
 - Why did Jesus teach using parables?
 - We'll review similarities of parables in Ch. 13
 - OT references about parables
 - What meanings do parables hold for us today?
-

What's a Parable?

- Eschatological allegories
 - “of or relating to end times”
 - “doctrine of final things”
 - Story using metaphors to teach a specific lesson
- Parables are encoded teaching that can be decoded into edifying lessons for Christian life.

It is a story about earthly things that teaches a lesson about heavenly things!

Why Parables?

Q: How do we learn best and retain information?

A: Through engaging, relevant storytelling

Your participation isn't only essential,
your participation is the point!

Why Did Jesus Teach in Parables?

- Jesus is the incomparable storyteller
- Parables are MORE than stories/moral lessons

PARABLES ARE INSIGHTS INTO THE VERY
HEART OF JESUS

and

ACCESS TO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Why Did Jesus Teach in Parables?

- To separate His teaching from the Pharisees' tactics in method and substance
 - Pharisees: A Great Irony
 - The stewards of God's word rejected Christ
 - Knowledge of The Law failed to produce faith
 - Adherence to religious rituals exposed hatred of God
-

Who Were the Pharisees?

- The largest and most influential of three Jewish sects – the others: Sadducees and Essenes
 - Rebelled against Hellenization (assimilation to Greek culturalization and pagan customs)
 - Taught strict obedience to the Law; they prayed publicly and sinned privately
 - Their hearts were far from God
-

Why Did Jesus Teach in Parables?

- Practical reasons to:
 - Confound the Pharisees and other hard-hearted enemies
 - Liberate the Hebrews from the constriction of OT Law
 - Establish Himself as fulfillment of the Law
- To fulfill what was spoken by the prophet:
 - “I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter what has been hidden since the foundations of the world.”

Psalm 78:2

Isaiah 6:9-10

- Hearing, yet not understanding
- Seeing, but not perceiving
- Dull hearts, heavy ears, blind eyes

What's the significance of Matthew recording Jesus' citation from Isaiah?

Isaiah 6:9-10

Hearing, yet not understanding

Seeing, but not perceiving

Dull hearts, heavy ears, blind eyes

- What's Isaiah's context?
 - How is it similar or different from Jesus' use?
-

Isaiah 6:9-10

Hearing, yet not understanding

Seeing, but not perceiving

Dull hearts, heavy ears, blind eyes

- What did it mean to the apostles?
 - What's the lesson for us?
-

The Eight Kingdom Parables...

- Righteousness & Judgement Parables
 - Wheat/Weeds & Net
 - God's work starts small; becomes great
 - Mustard Seed & Leaven (yeast)
 - Understanding is a valuable, precious gift
 - Treasure & Pearl
-

The Kingdom of Heaven is Like...

The **Eight Kingdom parables** show that:

- Not everyone can understand the word now
- All people will be judged
- God's work starts small; becomes great
- Understanding is a precious gift

UNDERSTANDING prompts us to ACTION!

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Chiastic or Mirror Structure

A Parable of the Sower

B Disciples ask question and Jesus answers

C Parable of the Tares Among the Wheat

D Parable of the Mustard Seed

E Parable of the Leaven

F Jesus speaks to crowds in parables

F' Jesus speaks to His disciples alone

E' Parable of the Hidden Treasure

D' Parable of the Costly Pearl

C' Parable of the Dragnet

B' Jesus poses question and disciples answer

A' Parable of New and Old Treasures

What the Parables Tell Us...

The purpose of the parable is to...

- Make us think
 - Invite us to participate in the story
 - Ask us to wrestle with the meaning, leads to understanding
 - Discover the personal lesson for each of us
 - Move us from understanding to action
-

From Understanding to Action...

- Understanding the Word + Doing His will
= Bearing Fruit
 - Bearing Fruit = Reproducing Believers,
Building God's Kingdom
-

Reveal or Conceal?

Parables conceal meaning and truth from those who don't believe and reveal meaning and understanding to those who believe and trust in Christ.





Jesus is

Because Jesus reveals understanding
I will wrestle with Scripture to guide
my actions