

# Notes on Interpretation of Parables

Excerpt from BibleSanity.org's "Natural Interpretation/Special Notes"

<http://www.BibleSanity.com\interpret7.htm>

## Interpreting Parables

- The main components of a parable present a single specific, contextually applicable, truth. While the main elements of a parable may be clearly symbolic, incidental components of a parable are not to be assigned any symbolic or allegorical meanings. Parables do not have multiple meanings, nor does the meaning extend beyond the clear contextual frame.
  - Parables should always be compared to their parallel accounts in the other gospels, Matthew and Luke share most parables, and Mark also includes many of the same ones. Comparing these passages can shed light on what Christ is illustrating.
  - Also, some parables are directly interpreted by Christ, either in the same or following passage, or in a parallel gospel - No other meanings should ever be ascribed to the parables which Christ explains!
  - Maintaining the context of the original, historical audience is vital to properly interpreting parables!
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## Using Commentaries to Understand Parables

- **Parables demand commentaries!**
- Examples of conservative commentary sources (in general) include Matthew Henry, J. Vernon McGee, Ironside, or Weirsbe commentaries and Scofield, Ryrie, or Thompson study Bibles
- Commentaries (reliable, conservative commentaries) will give you a clear explanation of the parable right away – this is a good starting point.
- Commentaries will identify parallel passages and other contextually relevant passages
- Commentaries will identify theological relevance (especially end-times)
- **Commentaries are allowed to be WRONG – Form your own conclusions!**

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Study, Obey, Teach – Ezra 7:10 *For Ezra had set his heart to SEEK the law of Jehovah, and to DO it, and to TEACH in Israel statutes and ordinances. (ASV)*