Revealing the Secret of the Kingdom of Heaven in the Gospel of Matthew Chapter 13

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ABSTRACT

The God of biblical revelation is present everywhere in the Gospel according to Matthew, but often in a self-effacing way, receding behind Jesus, Emmanuel, God-with-us. God's presence is veiled by divine passives, hidden behind the reverent circumlocution “heavens.” The parable of the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God is widely stated in our Gospel of Matthew. Many scholars claim that the Gospel of Matthew reveals more about Jesus as a powerful King.

Keywords: Revealing, The Kingdom of heaven, Matthew 13.

I. INTRODUCTION

Mac Athur, said: Matthew uses the phrase kingdom of heaven thirty two times, and this the only gospel writer who use it at all. The other three uses — the kingdom of God. It is probable that Matthew use kingdom of heaven because it was more understandable to his primarily Jewish readers. There is no significant difference between “the kingdom of God” and the kingdom of heaven. The one phrase emphasizes the sovereign ruler of the kingdom and the other emphasizes the kingdom itself, but they are the same kingdom. Matthew 19:23-24 confirms the equality of the phrases by using them interchangeably [1].

In Matthew 19: 23-24, —Jesus said to His disciples: "I tell you, it is very difficult for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Again, I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle from the rich to the kingdom of God."

Jesus spoke in different terms and with the same meaning between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven. In verse 23 Jesus mentions how difficult it is for the rich to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, and in verse 24 Jesus repeats His words with different terms and the same meaning, that it is very difficult for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God. It means that Jesus stated that the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God are in principle the same, He does not distinguish between these two terms.

The writers of the Gospels who referred to the terms Kingdom of Heaven and Kingdom of God with different words, such as Matthew more often referred to the Kingdom of Heaven, while Mark and Luke refer to the Kingdom of God. Guthrie explains about —Government. The kingdom is commonly referred to as the Kingdom of God, but specifically in Matthew's Gospel, it is sometimes called the Kingdom of Heaven, although Matthew wears the form —The Kingdom of God as well. There must be a reason why Matthew used a different term, perhaps the term —Hun as a substitute expression for —Allah based on the special reverence of the Jews who refused to mention the name of God [2]., as explained above that Jesus used the terms Kingdom of Heaven and Kingdom of God with the same meaning, just as Matthew used many terms of the Kingdom of Heaven, but also he did not distinguish the Kingdom of Heaven from the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of Heaven is an expression that refers to God's eternal rule in Heaven, but His kingdom will also include everything that happens on earth. Jesus declared that God's rule would be fulfilled at some future time, Matthew 24:14, 30, the phrase “God's kingdom” in Mark, and Luke had this meaning [3].

Jesus sent His disciples to preach the Kingdom of Heaven, Matthew 10: 7, Go and preach: The kingdom of heaven is at hand. In preaching the Kingdom, Jesus taught His disciples and the crowds by using terms and parables about the Kingdom of Heaven. And the Kingdom of Heaven has been revealed to His disciples, but to the multitude of the Kingdom it is a secret that needs to be conveyed using parables. Matthew 13: 10-13, —Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more away even that he hath. listen, they do not hear and do not
understand ". To those who sincerely seek the Kingdom of Heaven, God will reveal the Kingdom to them, 13:11, Jesus answered: "You have been given the gift of knowing the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not. Jesus distinguishes between those who will receive the Kingdom of Heaven and those who does not accept, among the 4 groups of people, the only one who can accept is those whose hearts are like fertile soil, it will bear fruit many times over, 13:23, Those who are sown in good soil are those who hear the word and understand it, and because that beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. "One example of the hearts of those who turn to the proclamation of the Kingdom of Heaven is when John the Baptist preached about the Kingdom of Heaven, Matthew 3: 2, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!" And those who heard about the Kingdom of Heaven, confessed their sins, and were baptized, 3: 6. Then they confessed their sins by being baptized by John in the river Jordan.

Matthew uses the term Basileia or Kingdom 52 times, mostly with the addition of — Heaven, but this is dominant in Jesus' preaching according to Matthew, in His parables especially in Matthew chapter 13. His healing and expulsion of evil spirits, Matthew 12:28, But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. In Matthew's perspective, meeting the Kingdom means meeting Jesus Christ, and in Jesus the kingdom of God has been come to mankind [4]. Lois Berckhof asserts that—The office of Christ as spiritual King is the government of His kingdom over regnum gratiae (kingdom or government of grace), that is, over His people or His churches. This position as King is Spiritual because it is related to spiritual power. That position is as a statement set in the heart of every believer in the heart [5].

Jesus stated that these parables about the Kingdom of Heaven, apart from revealing the truth also to cover it up, because when His disciples asked why He used parables when talking to people, he said: "You are gifted to know the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them not, "he meant that Jesus wanted His teaching to be clear to those who were ready to receive it, and closed to those who challenged it [6].

In the Abundant Life Guide Bible, it is explained, The Parables of the Lord Jesus encourage the listener to find the truth, while at the same time hiding truth is from people too lazy or too stubborn to see the truth of the Kingdom of Heaven [7]. For those who sincerely seek the truth of the Kingdom of Heaven will find it, Matthew 6:33, — But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you".

Jesus Himself said that His coming to earth to reveal hidden things since the world was made through parables, as in the Gospel of Matthew 13: 34-35, Jesus conveyed all these things to the multitude in parables, and without a parable he did not convey them He said to them, so that the words of the prophet may be fulfilled: "I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." which has been hidden since the world was made. And that is why in Matthew chapter 13 the Lord Jesus gave 8 kinds of parables about the Kingdom of Heaven that has been hidden since the world was made.

Before the Lord Jesus came to earth almost no one understood about the Kingdom of Heaven, because there were no prophets who preached specifically about the Kingdom of Heaven, except John the Baptist. In the Gospel of Matthew 3: 1-2 it says that —At that time John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea and preach: "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near!". And the preaching of the news about the Kingdom of Heaven was continued by Jesus Christ in His first sermon, Matthew 4:17, From that time Jesus preached: "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near!"

The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is Matthew's special property, and according to Jewish custom, substituted God's name by one of the figures. "Kingdom of Heaven" means "Kingdom of God" [8]. As stated above, the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God do not have a significant difference, which has the same meaning. Matthew 19:23, it is difficult for rich people to enter the Kingdom of Heaven and verse 24 repeated that rich people find it difficult to enter the Kingdom of God, so according to Jesus The Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God are the same.

In Maitus 13: 34-35, Jesus said that He wanted to open His mouth to speak parables and speak things that were hidden from the foundation of the world. And in Matthew chapter 13 it states 8 parables about the Kingdom of Heaven, it means that the Kingdom of Heaven has existed and been hidden since the world was made, so it is only natural that Jesus came to earth to reveal secrets or reveal things that have been hidden since the creation of the world, namely secrets about - The kingdom of heaven.

Walvoord John F. said: Mysteries, a word used of secret of various religious cults, refers to truth that was not revealed in the Old Testament but is revealed in the New Testament. More than a dozen such truths are revealed in New Testament, all following the basic definition of Colossians 1:26, which defines a mystery as that “which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to this saints.” A mystery truth, accordingly, has two elements. First, it has to be hidden in the Old Testament and not revealed there. Second, it has to be revealed in the New Testament. It is not necessary a reference to a truth difficult to understand, but rather to truths that can be understood only on the basis of divine revelation [9].

The Old Testament reveals, in clear terms, the earthly reigns of Christ when He comes as King to reign on the throne of David (which truths are not mysteries). Matthew 13 introduces a different form of the kingdom, namely the present spiritual reign of the King during the period He is physically absent from the earth, prior to His second coming. The mysteries of the kingdom, accordingly, deal with the period between the first and the second advent of Christ and not the millenial kingdom which will follow the second coming [6].

The second four parables: concerning the core aspects of the Government, the price to be paid to obtain them such as hidden treasures and beautiful pearls; two possibilities that will be experienced by those who hear about the Kingdom of Heaven, such as a net anchored to the sea and a mixture of old and new elements, such as a host releasing his property. From the eight parables about the Kingdom of Heaven above, the author divides it into six main topics or six meanings of the parable: The seed sown is the Seed of the
Kingdom of Heaven: The weeds among the wheat are the People of the Kingdom of Heaven and the kingdoms of the world; Mustard seeds and yeast are the Influence of the Kingdom of Heaven; The hidden treasures and the beautiful Pearls are the Values of the Kingdom of Heaven; The net anchored in the sea is the Harvest in the Kingdom of Heaven and the Host who opens his property is the Attitude of the People towards the Kingdom of Heaven.

II. THE SEED SOWN IS THE WORD ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

In the parable of the sown seed, it describes the word of the Kingdom of Heaven, Matthew 13:19, “To everyone who hears the word of the Kingdom of Heaven but does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away that which is sown in his heart; that is the seed sown by the roadside”.

And the seed of the word about the Kingdom of Heaven is sown on 4 kinds of soil that describes 4 groups of human hearts, namely: roadside land; rocky soil; thorny bush soil and fertile soil. Each has different characteristics to respond to the word about the Kingdom of Heaven.

III. THESE FOUR PARABLES WILL INSPIRE

Spiritual — farmers!, that is, those who teach, preach to the word of the Kingdom of Heaven and to guide others to God. Farmers always sow good seeds, but not all of them germinate, even the plants that grow give a variety of results, sometimes not in line with expectations, sown in four places, but still thrive in one place, so the ratio of four compared, 4 : 1 between the seeds that are planted and the seeds that grow. Four types of soil give different responses to God's message. People respond differently because their readiness situations are different, some are hard-hearted, some shallow-minded, some are polluted by disturbing anxieties, and some are willing to accept. How do the words of the Kingdom of Heaven take root in your life and what kind of soil do you belong to? Jesus gives the meaning of this parable in verses 36-43. All the parables in this article teach us about God and His Kingdom. These parables explain how the Kingdom of God is really different from our thoughts. The Kingdom of Heaven is not a geographical location but a spiritual realm where God rules and where we experience His eternal life. We join in that Kingdom when we believe in Jesus Christ as Savior [10]. By paying attention to the comparison of people's hearts' responses to receiving the words about the Kingdom of Heaven, namely: 4: 1, it is not surprising that there are many people who do not respond to the news about the Kingdom of Heaven, this has actually fulfilled the prophecy of the prophet Isaiah, 53: 1, believe in the news we have heard, and to whom will the hand of the Lord's power be revealed?

Before speaking in chapter 53, Isaiah had received the vision, was sanctified, and anointed by God, in Isaiah chapter 6. So, he took a pretty risky step when challenged by God, was he willing and courageous to carry out His vision and will or not? This is the attitude of Isaiah: He was aware of the situation he was experiencing —Then He said: "Go, and say to this people: Listen carefully, but understand: do not! Look earnestly but consider: do not! Make the heart of this people hard, and make his ears heavy to hear and keep his eyes closed, so that they do not see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts, then turn around and be healed.” Yes: 6: 8-10.

He realized a man whose lips were unclean could not speak; He realized that God offers, who wants to do His work; He realized he would not be accepted by his countrymen. Isaiah realized how difficult it was to respond to his call, for God sent him when the eyes, hearts, and ears of the nation lost their function, but he answered "willingly: Here am I, send me.” Ready to carry out his duties for the mission of the Kingdom of God.

So long before Jesus' first coming into the world, Isaiah prophesied that Jews or Israelites would find it difficult to understand and see or receive the News of the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of Heaven, because their hearts were hardened, their ears heavy to hear and their eyes closed, that is why Jesus quoted the prophecies of the prophets who had prophesied to their ancestors and passed them back on to the new generation of Jews.

Matthew 13: 14-15, And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, but do not understand, you will see and see, but do not respond. For this people's heart is waxed gross, And their ears are dull of hearing, And their eyes they have closed; that they should not see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

The teachings of the King of the Kingdom of Heaven use parables, to reveal the things of the Kingdom (verse 34) to make the things of the Kingdom a secret for those who challenge and reject the Kingdom of God (Jews), so that they cannot understand or understand it, from when the King comes to sow or deliver the seed or the word of the Kingdom until He comes again to reap the harvest, everything about the Kingdom is a secret to the natural mind. Only the enlightened mind of an obedient heart can understand the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven [11].

The purpose of Jesus' first coming was to preach the Kingdom of Heaven or the Kingdom of God, in Matthew 4:17, From that time Jesus preached: "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near!" This is Jesus' sermon for the first time since He finished his temptation in the wilderness for 40 days of fasting, and after being tempted by Satan, He received "revelations" to proclaim the Kingdom of Heaven. Then He stated the purpose of His coming to the disciples, "But he said unto them, I must preach the good tidings of the kingdom of God to the other cities also: for therefore was I sent.” And Matthew 13:35, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth; parable: I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world. "Luke 4:43.

According to the above verse Jesus states and announces His coming to reveal the secret of the Kingdom of Heaven which has been hidden since the world was made. There are two meanings or opinions about the Kingdom of Heaven hidden since the world was made are as follows:

First, the Kingdom of Heaven already exists in Heaven where God reigns still hidden because there is no creation or
creations of everything, so everything is still hidden. According to Colossians 1:16, “For in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; everything was created by Him and for Him”. Everything was created in Him, and for Him, Jesus Christ.

Second, to declare His Kingdom, God created all things, so that His creation could know His real Kingdom on this earth. God's Plan God's plan in creation is: He wants to expand His spiritual Kingdom in Heaven, to expand physically on earth, so that Power

His kingdom can be seen, known, enjoyed, experienced by all of His creations.

The purpose of Creation is that God wants to establish His Kingdom which is spiritual, in the physical world, without Him having to come alone in a visible form into the world. God wants to create an invisible Kingdom that will be implemented by an invisible creation, which is the work of His creative genius. His plan will be carried out by creating, from His own Spirit beings, a family of His children who will be like Him, created exactly according to His image and likeness, to release, establish, establish His invisible Kingdom in a visible, visible and natural world [12].

Mankind was empowered and placed in the garden of Eden to carry out and represent His Kingdom on earth, but man failed to represent God by sinning, man was cast out of the garden of Eden, where God exercised His rule. Genesis 3:23-24 And the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. He drove out the man and to the east of the garden of Eden He placed some cherubim with flaming and flaming swords, to guard the way to the tree of life. The Garden of Eden is a picture of the Kingdom of Heaven or the center of God's government on earth and since man was expelled from the garden of Eden, man lost contact with God and lost power and lost the garden of Eden, and the garden of Eden the symbol of the kingdom of Heaven on earth became hidden.

Jesus Christ came to reveal hidden things since the world was made, Matthew 13:35, (8 parables about the Kingdom of Heaven). That is why Jesus' first preaching was about the Kingdom of Heaven, Matthew 4:17, and at the end of His ministry before ascending to Heaven, Jesus continued to speak about the Kingdom of God to His disciples, Acts 1:3, to them He showed Himself after His suffering was over, and with many signs He proved that He was alive. For forty days he appeared to them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God. Jesus will say the end of all things when the good news of the Kingdom is preached in all the world. Matthew 24:14, And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

The mission of the first coming of Jesus Christ to preach the Kingdom of Heaven or the Kingdom of God especially to the people of Israel, Matthew 10:5-7, Jesus sent the twelve disciples and He instructed them: "Do not go astray in the way of the Gentiles or enter into the but go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and go, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Heaven to the nation of Israel, but the nation did not respond and even crucified Jesus. The mission of the Kingdom of Heaven is to preach to the Gentiles, Matthew 21:43. Therefore I say to you, The kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits of it. The nation of Israel rejected Jesus’ message and the right of the Kingdom was transferred to another nation that could produce the Kingdom fruit.

It is actually prophesied by the prophet Isaiah that the eyes, hearts and ears of the people have lost their function to hear and receive the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven, Matthew 13:19, To everyone who hears the word of the Kingdom of Heaven, but does not understand it, seizing what is sown in the person's heart; that is the seed sown by the roadside. Thick hearts, heavy ears to hear and closed eyes are an opportunity for the evil one to seize the seed of the word about the Kingdom of Heaven so that it cannot grow.

The New Testament Bible Commentary explains [11] that the hearers of the parable of the seed of the word of God. The seed is the teaching of the Lord Jesus about the Kingdom of God; good soil is a suitable condition and that grows to bear fruit that is the disciples of Jesus, and bad soil is an unworthy condition, in vain does not bear fruit and describes those who do not and do not believe. According to this explanation, poor soil symbolizes the lack and shallowness of understanding the news of the Kingdom of Heaven, while fertile or good soil, symbolizes the message of Jesus or the news of the Kingdom of Heaven can be accepted and produce abundant fruit.

IV. THE PEOPLE OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN ARE STILL LIVING WITH THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD

The parable of the weeds among the wheat that both grow on the field, describes the human life that exists on this earth. Lalong is a picture of the children of the Kingdom in this world and wheat is a picture of the children of the Kingdom of Heaven, while the field is a picture of this world where the children of the human kingdom and the children of the Kingdom of God can live together. When a good seed is sown in the field, suddenly at night the enemy comes to sow the weeds, and finally the two grow together in the field. The landlord, the wheat field did not allow the slaves to uproot the weeds because they were still young and difficult to distinguish and were afraid of being uprooted. Arthur explains that: Tares is from Zizanion, a variety of darnel weed that closely resembles wheat and is almost impossible to distinguish from it until the wheat ripens and bears grain. Because of this resemblance, sowing tares, among the wheat was sometimes done in ancient times out of spite or revenge by an enemy who wanted to destroy or at least greatly reduce the value of someone’s crop. It was common enough crime for the Romans to have had a specific law against it [1].

Young tares and young wheat looked the same and were indistinguishable until they were grown and ready to be harvested. Weeds and wheat must coexist in this world. Allah allows an unbeliever to stay for a period of time, just as a farmer allows weeds to grow in his fields so that the surrounding wheat does not come up when the weeds are uprooted. However, at the time of harvesting, the weeds will be uprooted and thrown away. The time of God's harvest of all people is coming. We must prepare ourselves by making sure that our faith is sincere [10]. As children of God’s Kingdom, we must prepare ourselves with a full commitment...
to live for God and His Kingdom. We must believe that the Lord Jesus is the only way of salvation and Heaven is the purpose of our life being saved. Because no one becomes a citizen of that royal state regarding his humanity. Only the redeemed can have honor and privilege [13]. When the Lord Jesus will come to judge the people of this world, He will separate the weeds or the unbelievers who will be gathered up and burned, and the wheat or the believers will be gathered in the Kingdom of Heaven. The Apostle Paul said that as citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven, we are waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, Philippians 3:20, because our citizenship is in heaven, and from there we also wait for the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior. And while waiting for the Lord's coming, we should work to produce the fruit of the Kingdom, just as the wheat must bear fruit before it is harvested.

According to Abineno, Philippians 3:20, from the Greek word, "Hemon gar to politeuma en ouranois uparxei" which is translated: "because we are citizens of the kingdom of heaven" actually means: "because our law order is now in heaven" only we are now waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus to live in the real kingdom of heaven, and believers are yearning for it. The word politeuma is parallel to Ephesians 2:12,13,19, which are fellowship members and fellow citizens in God's family. Believers are participants of a divine "Order", that is what Paul meant by "Politeuma" or Politeia is becoming a member in a "Political-order" of citizenship. The status of church members in Philippi is "Politeuma" this is related to the status of their city at that time, maybe this is very easy for them to understand [14].The status of the People of the Kingdom of God is Citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven, whose citizenship is in Heaven there and is looking forward to it now on earth, said uparxei "huparchei" praesens, indicating that citizenship is already possessed in this life [15].

Before the harvest of wheat is still alive with lalang meaning as citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven, we must continue to obey the rules of our citizenship rules in Indonesia along with other neraga residents such as lalang. All citizenship status will end at the time of harvest, the weeds, or children of the kingdoms of the world will be gathered to be cast out and burned and the children of the Kingdom of God will be gathered in the barn of God, the Kingdom of Heaven. The nature of the weeds squeezing, controlling, and making the wheat difficult to grow, therefore the wheat must struggle to survive until the time of harvest arrives. Do not give up easily, live with true faith and continue to work for God, because if we live for God, then God will protect, nurture, and give us strength.

In the parable of the weeds among the wheat, chapters 24-30, that is, the wheat describes the beginning of the church or the people of the Kingdom who live with unbelievers or infidels are symbolized by the weeds. Weeds and wheat grow on the farm or the world. God did not remove the weeds until the time came, deliberately the weeds that portrayed the evil will continue to grow, therefore the true Kingdom must remain faithful and vigilant against all the subversive elements and persons that Satan places in all parts of God's work [10].

The Lord Jesus cast out devils as proof that the Kingdom of God had spiritually come among men, Matthew 12:28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. In preaching the Kingdom of Heaven, the Lord Jesus has given believers the power to overcome demons and others, Matthew 10:7-8. Go and tell it: The Kingdom of Heaven is near. Heal the sick; raise the dead; cleanse the lepers; cast out devils. You have received it freely, therefore give it freely.

V. CONCLUSION

There are many church leaders who do not preach the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God in particular. The teaching and preaching of church leaders and Christian institutions has always been general and even tended to teach about becoming successful and prosperous Christians or often called successful theologies, whereas the purpose of Jesus' return on earth except to atone for our sins is that He preaches and preaches the Kingdom Heaven. Is it possible that church leaders and Christian institutions still have not opened their eyes, hearts and minds about the Kingdom of Heaven as prophesied by the prophet Isaiah?

Matthew 13:13-15, This is why I speak to them in parables: — Thoughseeing,they donot see;though hearing, they do not hear or understand. In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: — You willbehearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. For this people heart has become calloused;they hardly hear with their ears,and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise, they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.‘

Jesus Christ has revealed the mystery of the kingdom of heaven two thousand years ago with parables, 13:35, that the word of the prophet might be fulfilled: "I will open my mouth to speak a parable, I will speak the secret from the foundation of the world. "Since Jesus has revealed the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Kingdom of Heaven is a new treasure, church leaders and Christian institutions should focus on preaching and teaching that Jesus Christ is the way of salvation and faith shaking in the Kingdom of Heaven is the goal of the lives of the saved.

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