



World Christian Fellowship

www.wcflondon.com
wcflondon@gmail.com

Response to Jesus the King- Overview Matthew 13:53-16:12

Matthew 13:53-58, *Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, that He departed from there. ⁵⁴ When He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, "Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works? ⁵⁵ Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? ⁵⁶ And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?" ⁵⁷ So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honour except in his own country and in his own house." ⁵⁸ Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.*

Matthew has designed to present Jesus as King.

Matthew, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, has told us who Jesus Christ is.

He has presented Him as the Son of God, God incarnate, the King, the Anointed One, the Messiah, the Christ, the Saviour of Israel, and the world.

Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the living Lord, the Son of God. Matthew has tapped every effective witness to the claims of Christ.

Chapter 1, begin with the testimony of the genealogy and ancestry that points to Christ as Messiah.

The testimony of the virgin birth, He was uniquely conceived by the Holy Spirit without a human father.

Chapter 2, Christ fulfils the Old Testament predictions in detail.

Chapter 3 is the testimony of the forerunner John the Baptist. A prophet of God, a man filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb, says, "This is the Messiah."

The testimony of God the Father, who at the baptism of Christ said, "This is My beloved Son."

Chapter 4, the testimony of power as Jesus Himself defeats the arch enemy of God, Satan.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7, the testimony of His words.

The truthfulness, the power, and the authority of what He said verifying His claim.

Chapters 8-9, the testimony of His works. Healing, casting out demons, raising the dead, forgiving sin, all testifying of His deity.

People basically have rejected Him. We have been looking particularly at the rejected King.

As the Lord looks out over the people in the ninth chapter, He sees them as a mass of people who will not hear His message, who are on their way to judgment.

Jesus cries for God to send forth labourers.

Those laborers turn out to be the disciples.

Chapter 10, the testimony of His disciples. The training of the twelve.

They were so convinced that He was the Christ that they were willing to pay the dearest price of loyalty to Him, death itself.

Matthew has laid out all this tremendous evidence.

All of these have been called into the courtroom to testify that Jesus is the Christ.

Chapters 11 and 12, Based upon all this testimony, what is the reaction of those who have heard and seen?

Chapter 13, Kingdom Parables were spoken.

Matthew has presented not only the King, but the King has presented His Kingdom. All the characteristics and principles of

His Kingdom in the Sermon on the Mount, the demonstration of the power of His kingdom in His miracles.

Chapter 13, Jesus says how the world is going to react to them, what it's going to be like out there as they labour and minister in the harvest.

Jesus is through with this element of their training, and it is time now to move out.

V 53, “He departed from there.”

This is the time when they move out into the harvest to warn men of the judgment.

They come back and debriefing in chapter 16.

From this passage at the end of 13, through the beginning of 16, we find Jesus out now in the harvest, proclaiming the message as the rejected King, still calling men to come to His kingdom.

The major mark of this period of time of the King's rejection until His return to be received in power and glory.

During this period mixed good and evil will remain here in this church age.

The main message mainly of the parables.

It is a time of good and evil.

It is a time of faith and unbelief.

It is a time of believing and not believing.

Jesus is saying to His own and to us, *“As you go out into the world, expect that some will believe, and some will not.”*

To illustrate this, Matthew gives us from Matthew 13:53 till Matthew 16:12, eight incidents in the life of our Lord which illustrate the kind of response that there will be to the King.

They are masterfully presented.

Open your heart and mind to see what the Holy Spirit was really doing in this section.

Having said in chapter 13,

- Expect rejection,
- Expect unbelief,
- Expect some will believe,
- Expect some will be the good
- Expect good and evil growing together.

1. Stony Ground.

**Matthew 13:53-58,
Nazareth**

First, they go to Nazareth.

What was their response?

V 57, *So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honour except in his own country and in his own house.”*

They were not at all interested in the message.

They were not all interested in the messenger.

They would have nothing to do with it.

They were offended.

When we compare this with the most important of the parables, which is the parable of the four soils, we could say they were stony ground or hard soil, no response.

2. Hard Ground.

Herod the tetrarch, lived in that area had dwelling place in Tiberius, so he was very close.

He had heard about the fame of Jesus, and his reaction was fear.

Matthew 14:2-5, *and said to his servants, “This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him.”*³ *For Herod had laid hold of John and bound him, and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his*

brother Philip's wife. ⁴ Because John had said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." ⁵ And although he wanted to put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.

Herod wouldn't get near Jesus; he was afraid, because of his guilt.

All through history, there will be people like that. There will be those who are offended at the whole thought like, the Jews to whom Christ is a stumbling block.

They are offended over the whole thing.

There are those who are afraid. They don't want to get near it, because of the overwhelming sense of guilt.

Herod was exactly like that.

He was more of that hard, stony ground.

3. Shallow Soil.

Multitude: Feeding of 5,000 people.

Matthew 14:13-14, *When Jesus heard it, He departed from there by boat to a deserted place by Himself. But when the multitudes heard it, they followed Him on foot from the cities. ¹⁴ And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude;*

and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick.

A great multitude and they were Jews.

They followed Him.

They followed Him and He fed them.

But there is no statement made about the fact that they believed, or that they were taking part in His kingdom.

We could say that they were curious!

They would be like the shallow soil, or the weedy soil, where there is life for a little while, and eventually it dies away.

4. Good Soil.

Jesus' walking on the water.

The disciples who were with Jesus were commanded to go over to other side of the Lake.

Matthew 14:22-33.

Matthew 14:33, *Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God."*

The disciples witnessed great miracle of their life.

What was the response of the disciples?

Worship!

A Good soil.

Great response.

- ☐ In **Nazareth**, we have the Stoney ground.
- ☐ In **Herod**, we have the hard ground.
- ☐ In the **multitude the curious Jews**, we have a mixture of shallow ground and that thorny, weedy soil.
- ☐ In the **disciples**, we have the good soil.

5. Hard ground.

Matthew 15:1-20.

Pharisees and scribes.

Matthew 15:1-2, *Then the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying, ²“Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.”*

Approach of Pharisees and Scribes to Jesus was condemnation.

They came to condemn Him.

They didn't want to hear anything.

They came to blast Him.

That is hard ground and no penetration.

6. Good Soil.

Matthew 15:21-28.

A Gentile woman of great faith.

Matthew 15:21-22, *Then Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon.²² And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed."*

'Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David!'

Matthew 15:28, *Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.*

'Woman, great is your faith!'

There is good soil.

A good ground.

Great faith.

“O Lord have mercy, Son of David.”
All the right terms, and great faith in her heart.
Good soil.

7. Shallow Soil.

Multitude: Feeding of 4,000.

Region: Galilee.

Matthew 15:29-39.

Matthew 15:31, So the multitude marvelled when they saw the mute speaking, the maimed made whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel.

Jesus healed them all.

They weren't too sure about Christ, but they believed that God was in this.

Again, we have the shallow soil and the weedy soil where there seems to be a response of amazement.

Or like the curious Jews in the earlier record that they are interested to a point.

But short of worship of Christ.

Short of great faith like the Canaanite woman.

8. Hard ground.

The Pharisees and the Sadducees.

They came to tempt, or to test.

Matthew 16:13-30.

What is their approach?

The attack.

Matthew 16:1, *Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven.*

They come to attack Jesus.

They are against Him.

What we find the majesty of the intricate mind of the Holy Spirit?

We have eight accounts.

Out of those eight, only two are good soil!

The same ratio exactly as the one good soil in the four.

So, the mind of the Spirit illustrates beautifully what that parable is saying.

Now as we go in the world, we can expect the same kind of things. Now and then there will be that good soil.

Very often, there will be that hard, resistant soil. Sometimes that curious, amazed sort of temporary response kind of soil.

After these eight incidents, we see the disciples gathered with Jesus in a debriefing **Matthew 16:13-20**.

Matthew 16:13-17, *When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"*

¹⁴*So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."*

¹⁵*He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"*

¹⁶*Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

¹⁷*Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven."*

These incidents demonstrate what Jesus taught in the parables about how men would respond in this age.

Matthew 13: 53, *Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, that He departed from there.*

“There” is Capernaum.

He had been ministering with Capernaum as a base for about a year.

Now Jesus left.

He departed after the giving of these parables.

Do you remember at the very beginning, early in chapter 13, that the parables were hidden from the people, and revealed only to the disciples, because the people were not willing to believe.

Matthew 11:23-24, *And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. ²⁴ But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.”*

had pronounced a curse on Capernaum.

When it says that very simple little statement at the end of **V 53**, *“He departed from there,”* Capernaum’s history ended.

God’s damning judgment began.
It was the beginning of the end.

Jesus never went back, except in passing.
Jesus never reestablished a base there.

Capernaum had its opportunity.
He had come into that city, demonstrated power that could only be interpreted as from God, and now it was over.

It marked a crisis in the town’s history from which it never recovered.

If you go today to Capernaum, no one lives there. It is utter ruin, and one of the most beautiful places on the earth, and no one is there. It has felt the hot breath of the curse of Jesus Christ for its unbelief.

When He left Capernaum and He went back to Nazareth.
V 54, *When He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, “Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works?”*

Home country Nazareth.

It was walking distance from Capernaum.

All of this is so close. We could walk it all in just a day. He went back to Nazareth where He had been raised, where He was since a child.

Jesus went into the synagogue and taught them. This is not the first time He has done that.

At the very beginning of His Galilean ministry, He went to His own hometown.

Very important in understanding this passage.

Luke chapter 4. This is a year earlier, or approximately a year.

Luke 4:14-15, *Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region.¹⁵ And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.*

He is just beginning His ministry in Galilee.

He went into Galilee in the power of the Spirit.

Luke 4:16, *So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read.*

This is very normal. Every little town had its synagogue, and on the Sabbath day, everything stopped, and everyone went.

They sat in a very prescribed manner in a very prescribed place. It was very routine, very familiar faces, very familiar activities, and events.

Jesus had been there as a citizen of Nazareth, and now He is beginning His public ministry.

Jesus goes to Nazareth, and He does as He always did.

If He was there on the Friday night, just as the sun was setting down, He would have heard a very familiar sound.

He would have heard two trumpet blasts. Those two trumpet blasts would have come from the trumpet in the hands of the minister of the synagogue, who climbed up onto the roof of his house, and just as the sun was beginning to set on Shabbat, Friday evening, he would blow two blasts, warning of the impending beginning of the Sabbath.

A little time would intervene, and he would blow a second time. This time one blast.

At that blast, all work halted.

Then there would be a little space of time, and he would blow another single blast, and then instantly put his trumpet down, lest he should defame and dishonour the Sabbath by carrying

the trumpet now that the third blast indicated it had begun. He would not defile the Sabbath.

Jesus would have heard the trumpet blasts, and with the people, and gone to a place to partake in the Sabbath activity. In the dawn of the Sabbath morning, He would have found His way into the synagogue, which had been so much a part of His life for the years in Nazareth.

Jesus had become famous. No more Hometown boy!

There is a curiosity about Him because of all that has been said. Those days that if you were a famous person in a synagogue then you were given the right to speak.

Jesus became the speaker. He went, as was His custom, but He did something He never done in that synagogue before.

“He stood up to read.”

They always stood up to read.

The standing posture was indicative of the authority of the Word of God.

They sat down to teach, lest the people think that man’s teaching had the same authority as God’s Word. They stood to read and they sat to teach.

They gave a very high place to the reading.

Luke 4:17-19, *And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: ¹⁸“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”*

It is a Messianic text that describes the ministry of the Messiah, and it also described to the very letter the ministry of Jesus Christ.

Jesus was saying, ‘The Messiah is here. He is in your midst. This is fulfilled. This is a monumental claim. This is a banner day above all days in the history of Israel. This is the day when the promise is fulfilled.

Luke 4:20-21, *Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him.²¹And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”*

He sat down to teach, and the eyes of all of them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him.

They marvelled at His words.

Luke 4:22-23, *So all bore witness to Him, and marvelled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is this not Joseph's son?"* ²³ *He said to them, "You will surely say this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.'* "

Do you know what that means?

If You are such a good physician, and You heal so many people, let us see You do it right on the spot. Heal Yourself.

Don't tell us stories about what You have done, do something right here. Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in your country. Charity begins at home, don't forget. Do it here.

There was no need for that. He had done miracle, upon miracle.

Luke 4:24-26, *Then He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country."* ²⁵ *But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land;* ²⁶ *but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow.*

Jesus was defending the right that He had to minister as the light to the nations.

In Matthew 4, He said He had come to be a light to the nations. He was reaching out to the nations, the people who were not God's people.

God is not going to do anything special for you.

Why?

Because of their resistant, hard-hearted unbelief. God does not cast His pearls before swine.

Luke 4:27-28, *And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.”²⁸ So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,*

To claim to be the Messiah, and say you have come like Elijah and Elisha, to others and not to your own hometown, and to ignore them, was the highly intolerable.

Luke 4:29-30, *and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff.³⁰ Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way.*

They tried to kill Jesus.

Hard soil!

Jesus left there and made His home in Capernaum.

A year intervenes, and now we are back in Matthew 13.

About a year later. Jesus' desire is to return now, a second chance.

Another opportunity for Nazareth.

Another time for that narrow, prejudiced, jealous, proud, conceited, cliquish town.

He went back fearlessly, boldly, courageously, graciously, lovingly, to those people who had tried to kill Him.

V 54, When He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, "Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works?"

He went right back into the teeth of the storm, synagogue, and He taught them.

Often wished that I could have heard how Jesus taught.

We have the words in the Bible, but there is so much in technique and to hear Him.

Teachers can be boring.

Have you ever wondered why His speech was so amazing?

Basically, it was characterized by five things we find in the New Testament.

a) He was authoritative.

Matthew 7:28-29, *And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching,²⁹ for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.*

Speak with authority.

Whenever Jesus spoke, He spoke with the conviction that carries authority.

b) He had knowledge.

John 7:15, *And the Jews marvelled, saying, "How does this Man know letters, having never studied?"*

Jesus had knowledge. There is nothing worse than a person talking who has absolutely no knowledge. But He had knowledge.

Jesus had an incredible, vast knowledge of all the truth of God.

c) He had grace in His speech.

Luke 4:22, *So all bore witness to Him, and marvelled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is this not Joseph's son?"*

Your speech is to be always gracious, seasoned with salt.

Colossians 4:6, *Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.*

His words were Gracious.

d) His speech was Powerful.

Luke 4:32, *And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority.*

Authority speaks of the speaking itself. It is coming with authority. Power speaks of its effect.

You know how sometimes you can sit and listen to a speaker, and the whole time he's speaking, you are arguing with him.

You couldn't do that with Christ.

You couldn't fight Him off.

The power was so great and consistent that you were knocked over with it. You couldn't fight it off.

He spoke with such devastating impact.
He penetrated the mind and the heart.

There were no loopholes in His logic.

e) His speech was unique.

John 7:46, *The officers answered, "No man ever spoke like this Man!"*

Absolutely essential element for one who is an effective speaker.

His speech was unique.
He didn't stand up and say what everybody else said.
He said what nobody else said.

He didn't say the obvious.
He said what wasn't obvious.

He cut through the traditions to the stuff they had never saw and never heard.

The power that He had when He taught in Nazareth was the same that He had when He taught anywhere.

It was the power of a tremendous conviction that came through His authoritative speaking. It was that great wealth of knowledge, that when He opened His mouth, the truth of God came flooding out. Truth has its own impact.

Then it was the graciousness of the way He said it. The irresistible power when it was said and the very uniqueness of the message itself.

Now if you want to study to be an effective teacher, those are the things you need to have.

What was their response?

To one who was authoritative, knowledgeable, gracious, powerful, and unique, they were astonished. Sure.

They were blown away by Him.

They were astounded.

They were amazed.

V 58, *Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.*

Didn't lead to anything.

You can be amazed at Jesus.

You can be astounded at Him.

You can be astonished.

Doesn't mean anything if the heart is filled with unbelief!

How can you be unbelieving when you have just heard this?

How can you be unbelieving when the mass of the things that He has done is so obvious?

Unbelief is something you determine.

You will not believe.

Unbelief is the hard ground, the stony ground. It's not like the man who said, "Lord, I believe help my unbelief. I am trying to believe help me the rest of the way."

But theirs was that hard unbelief. "Doesn't matter what the evidence is, we don't believe."

Conclusion:

The Power of Unbelief.

We all know the power of faith, or the power of belief.

Our Lord said that if a man had faith the size of a grain of mustard seed, he could remove mountains, he could do the impossible. We all know the power of believing, the power of faith in God.

Abraham believed God and became the father of a great nation.

Israel believed God and they walked across the Red Sea on dry land.

The people in Numbers 21 believed, and they looked at a brazen serpent, and were healed of their disease.

The children of Israel believed God and the walls of Jericho fell flat.

Naaman the leper believed and was healed of his leprosy.

David believed God and was enabled to slay Goliath.

Daniel believed God, and the lions could not harm him.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed Nego three Hebrew young men believed God and stood in the midst of a flaming furnace unhurt.

Martha believed God and her brother was raised from the dead.

A lame man believed God and was healed.

A nobleman believed God and his son was raised.

The leper believed and was made whole.

The centurion believed and his servant was made well.

A father believed and his child was healed.

Two blind men believed and were instantly able to see.

The Philippian jailer believed God and was saved, and his whole household.

A sick lady believed and touched the hem of Christ's robe and was made whole.

A palsied man believed and picked up his bed and walked away.

Jairus believed God and his daughter was raised from the dead.

Peter believed the Lord and walked on water.

Paul believed the Lord and was able to face his own death with joy.

People believe God and are passed from death unto life.

The power of believing. The power of faith.

But on the other hand, we need to understand the power of unbelief.

As believing saves the soul and enables the power of God to be released on behalf of the person in its fullness, so unbelief halts the full release of the power of God.

Unbelief dams up the flood of God's blessing.

The power of unbelief to stop God from doing what He could do.

History chronicles for us the power of unbelief to stop the blessing of God.

Eve failed to believe God, and the whole world was cursed.

The world itself failed to believe God's Word through Noah and was destroyed in the flood.

Israel refused to believe God and wandered forty years in the desert.

Again, refused to believe God, and ultimately was scattered throughout the earth to suffer for centuries.

Pharaoh refused to believe God's Word through Moses, and lost his slaves, his son, and his army.

Aaron refused to believe the Word of God about worship, led the people into idolatry, and as a result, lost 3,000 lives.

Moses refused to believe God, and it cost him the long-awaited Promised Land.

Achan refused to believe God, and was killed, along with his whole family.

Nebuchadnezzar rejected God's Word and became a raving maniac.

Sennacherib blasphemed God's Word, and an angel of the Lord slew 185,000 of his soldiers, and he himself was slain by his own sons.

The rich young ruler refused to believe in the words of Jesus Christ and was damned to hell.

The Pharisees refused to believe Jesus Christ, and died in their sins, and went to a place where they would never know anything but pain and suffering.

Many would-be disciples refused to believe Jesus when He talked about eating His flesh and drinking His blood, and they walked no more with Him, and stepped into eternity without God.

Felix wouldn't believe,

Festus wouldn't believe, and **Agrippa** wouldn't believe when Paul presented to them the gospel of the grace of God and they were lost forever.

Judas, who in living three years in the presence of the Living Truth never did believe and was damned to go to his own place.

We talk a lot about the power of faith. Faith has the power to bring blessing. Faith has the power to bring eternal life. Faith has the power to bring heaven.