

THE WENCHOSTER BIBLE

Matthew 13: 31-33, 44-52

31. Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:
32. Which indeed is the least, to say the least, of all seeds: but when it is grown, phwoar - it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

[Only the Great Wenchoster Bible has the following verses between 32 and 33]

* Another parable He saith unto to them that listened and were not sitting with confused countenances, Behold, the kingdom of heaven is like a garden where the grass is long and in need of cutting, and the neighbours complain, and when it is of length it produceth ears of seed:

* And lo! Pigeons fly down to eat: though when their blood is hot [1] they forget their food and instead sport themselves, making display and mounting, (let the reader understand,) and verily cooing, making droppings thereupon, then returneth they again unto their feeding.

33. Another parable spake He unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three unspecified measures of meal, till the whole was leavened, and did bake it so that it riseth and develop a tasty crust and maybe sesame seeds are sprinkled thereupon, and did share it with her neighbours serving it with fresh butter and fruit jam and thick cream so that they were satisfied and filled. Yet some doubted because the cream was first and the jam thereafter. And the kettle was hot, oh yes.

(In some traditions tea may be served at the back of the church at this point. [+] Afterwards, the Gospel continues.)

44. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field that hath much stubble, weeds, and odious deposits laid therein which are best avoided; the which when a man hath found, he entereth it carefully and covereth it with earth again and hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. And the former owner of the field is much disquieted when he discovereth that he hath lost such great a treasure, and doth go unto the inn and drink mightily all that night. And woe to that man when he waketh the next morning.
45. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:
46. Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it, setting it in a ring so that he might wear it upon his finger and be admired in the marketplace and when he sitteth in the gateway. And he shall dream of finding more and wearing them with a twinset.
47. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered flotsam and jetsam and old market carts and fish of every kind:
48. Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good fish into vessels, and casteth away the shellfish (for they are forbidden thee) and the weeds and the general waste of the town, and cast them away where those pigeons I talked about earlier shall return and feast.
49. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the naughty from among the just, and the left-handed from the right, and the hairy from the shaven, and they shall frown upon the limp,
50. And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth and a vague smell of scorching. I know, I have used those metaphors before, but this time I truly mean it.
51. Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto Him, Yea, Lord, some of them. But Thomas did ask, But Lord, I am left-handed, and often a bit limp. And Jesus replied, Call not unclean those things that I have declared clean, for thou art clean, though not every one of you. (He said Not every one of you, as in the breeze He knew which had not bathed that day. [2])
52. Then said He unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old,

of precious metals and base, and manuscripts that are illuminated and those that are plain script. And yes – some have doodles in the margins, but what is that to you? For to the righteous all things are righteous. Work that one out for yourselves.

Notes:

[1] Here the Greek is uncertain.

[2] Some scholars believe this is a direct inserted reference to Isaiah 3:24, arguing that the evangelist used the imagery to emphasise the salvific importance of spiritual purity in an eschatological framework. Others simply point to a lack of soap.

[+] Every effort should be made to ensure that the tea trolley does not interfere with the gospel procession.