

• THE Gospel Part 11 –The Abhorrence and Horror of False Prophets – Study Guide

This study guide examines why only a "few" find the narrow gate, focusing on the primary obstacle: the presence and influence of false prophets. It details the nature of these deceptive teachers, the spiritual effects of their doctrines, and the divine timing for their eventual exposure.

Definitions of Key Words

- **Strive** (*Agonizomai*): To labour fervently or "**agonize**" to enter; it describes the difficult effort required to follow Christ's commands rather than choosing an easy path.
- **False Prophet**: A master of **misimpression** who comes in "sheep's clothing"—appearing and sounding like a true believer—but inwardly leads the redeemed away from the hard way.
- **Darnell**: A specific weed (often found in Syria) that is **identical to wheat** until it reaches full maturity; it serves as a scriptural metaphor for false teachers sown among the redeemed.
- **Word of the Kingdom**: The specific **doctrinal teaching** of Jesus regarding His coming earthly reign; it is the "good seed" that Satan seeks to snatch away.
- **Lawlessness**: The act of using Jesus' name and performing mighty works while **ignoring His specific instructions** and commandments.
- **The Day**: Refers to the **day of resurrection** or judgment, which is the only time the true nature of works and teachers will be disclosed.

Expansion of Key Points

1. The Reason for the "Few"

While God desires all people to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth (2 Timothy 2:3–4), Jesus reveals that only a few will enter the Kingdom because many refuse to do what is required. The specific reason provided for this small number is the presence of **false prophets (Matthew 7:15)**, who divert the redeemed from the narrow gate and the hard way that leads to life.

2. The Nature of Deception: Sheep's Clothing

False prophets are not easily identified by outward appearances or obvious greed; they are **masters in the art of misimpression**. They come in "**sheep's clothing**" (**Matthew 7:15**), meaning they are part of the "club," use the name of Jesus, and are deeply embedded within the religious systems of the redeemed. They are so closely aligned with the truth that they cannot be distinguished from genuine believers by human analysis.

3. The Parable of the Darnell (Weeds)

The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, but an enemy came and sowed **weeds (darnell)** among the wheat (**Matthew 13:24–25**). The "field" is the field of the **redeemed**, and the "good seed" is the **word of the kingdom (Matthew 13:19, 24)**. Satan's strategy is to sow these false teachers directly into the church to grow alongside the true wheat until the harvest.

4. The Poisonous Effects of False Doctrine

When the redeemed "digest" the teachings of false prophets—which appear identical to the truth—the spiritual effects are **poisonous**. These effects include **apathy, giddiness, sleepiness, and "dimsightedness"** regarding the actual words of Jesus. Apathy is particularly noted as a byproduct of doctrines that suggest obedience is optional or that "Jesus did it all," leading the redeemed to ignore the work they are commanded to do.

5. Future Recognition: "On That Day"

Contrary to popular belief, the "fruit" of a false prophet is rarely recognizable in the present life. Jesus uses the future tense when He says, "you **will** recognize them by their fruits" (**Matthew 7:16**), specifically referring to the **day of resurrection**. On "**that day**" (**Matthew 7:22**), the "fire" will disclose and test the sort of work each one has done (**1 Corinthians 3:13**).

6. Works of Lawlessness vs. The Father's Will

Many will appeal to Jesus on the day of resurrection, citing their **prophecies, exorcisms, and mighty works** done in His name (**Matthew 7:22**). However, Jesus will declare, "I never knew you; depart from me, you **workers of lawlessness**" (**Matthew 7:23**). This is because they used His name while failing to **do the will of the Father** as defined in the hard commands of the Sermon on the Mount (**Matthew 7:21**).

7. The Foundation: Hearing and Doing

Entrance into the Kingdom is predicated on **hearing and doing** the words of

Christ. Those who hear but do not act are like a foolish man who built his house on the **sand**, which will suffer a "great fall" when the floods come (**Matthew 7:26–27**). Only those who **instigate change** and build their lives on the "rock" of obedience will survive the test (**Matthew 7:24–25**).

Biblical References

- **Matthew 7:13–14:** The narrow gate vs. the wide gate; few vs. many.
- **Matthew 7:15–20:** Warning against false prophets; sheep's clothing; recognizing fruits.
- **Matthew 7:21–23:** Not everyone saying "Lord, Lord" enters; workers of lawlessness.
- **Matthew 7:24–27:** The wise man (rock) and the foolish man (sand).
- **Matthew 13:19:** The seed defined as the "word of the kingdom."
- **Matthew 13:24–30:** The Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds (Darnell).
- **Matthew 18:1–4:** Changing to become like children (referenced).
- **2 Timothy 2:3–4:** God's desire for all to be saved and know the truth.
- **2 Timothy 2:10:** Paul enduring all for the sake of the elect.
- **2 Timothy 2:19:** The requirement to turn away from unrighteousness.
- **1 Corinthians 3:13–15:** Works revealed by fire; suffering loss.
- **Daniel 12:2:** Resurrection to life or shame/contempt.
- **Romans 10:9–10:** (Contextual reference to verses used as a formula).

Study Questions

- **Timing of Judgment:** According to the text, why is it impossible for believers to fully separate the "weeds" from the "wheat" in the present day?
- **The Good Seed:** What is the "Good Seed" Jesus sowed in His field, and why is this specific definition important?
- **The "Lord, Lord" Claim:** Why does Jesus reject those who have performed miracles and cast out demons in His name?
- **Darnell Symptoms:** List three spiritual "symptoms" that occur when a redeemed person digests the doctrines of false prophets.
- **The Separation:** Who is responsible for the final "weeding" of the

church, and when does it occur?

Answer Key

- Because they are **so closely aligned** to the truth that they are indistinguishable; they grow together "until the harvest," and only the angels can tell them apart.
- The "Good Seed" is the **word of the kingdom**—the doctrinal teaching of Christ's earthly reign. This is important because Satan's priority is to snatch this specific truth away from the redeemed.
- Because they are **workers of lawlessness**; they followed their own "wide way" or church traditions instead of the "narrow gate" of the Father's specific will.
- Apathy, giddiness, sleepiness, drowsiness, or "dimsightedness".
- The **angels** perform the separation at the **end of the age** (the harvest/resurrection).

Exhortations

- **Avoid the "Easy" Church:** If a church or teacher makes the Gospel "easy," Jesus warns you to **"avoid it like the plague"**. The way to life is hard and narrow; do not be seduced by "flashing lights" that hide the requirement for change.
- **Don't Be Distracted by Miracles:** Do not let signs, wonders, or "mighty works" be your determining factor for truth. Many who perform these will still be **shut out of the Kingdom** because they were lawless.
- **Check Your Fruit Inwardly:** Recognition of false prophets happens later, but your own foundation is tested now. Ensure you are **doing** the words of Christ, not just hearing them, so your "house" does not fall.
- **Fight Spiritual Apathy:** If you feel "apathetic" toward the commands of Jesus, you may have been digesting "darnell". Wake up and return to the **striving and agonizing** required for the narrow gate.
- **Trust the Gatekeeper:** Remember that Jesus is the only one with the "checklist". No matter how many zeros are in a church's attendance, only those who **walk the narrow path** will enter.