

# The Parable of the two Builders

*Matt. 7:24-27 Luke 6:46-49*



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**Scripture Reading: Matt. 5:1-12; 7:24-27; Luke 6:46-49**

⇒ **Introduction: From *Parables of the Messiah*, by John Carter, pp 49-50:**

- ◆ The beatitudes promise a good to come which will be the fruit of present effort. Jesus plainly declares he will decide men's future. Some call him Lord, Lord, but do not the will of God. In a future day many will call him Lord, Lord, and claim to have done many things in his name, only to hear him say, "Depart". Nowhere is the claim that the future is in his hands more clearly or more boldly made than in the Sermon on the Mount—that he will make decisions which will effect men forever.

It is a fitting sequence to that claim, and a fitting climax to the sermon as a whole to compare his hearers to two builders. With a marked rhythmic balanced parallelism he declares:

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***Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them,      And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not,***

*I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:      shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:*

*- And the rain descended,  
- and the floods came,  
- and the winds blew,  
- and beat upon that house;  
- and it fell not:*

*- And the rain descended,  
- and the floods came,  
- and the winds blew,  
- and beat upon that house;  
- and it fell:*

***for it was founded upon a rock.***

***and great was the fall of it.***

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(End Quotation)

- ◆ In the previous parable of the Trees and the Fruit, much emphasis was placed upon the need to manifest the One Faith in our daily lives as proof that our faith is indeed a *real faith*, and not merely a declaration or a belief system without substance. The parable of the Two Builders emphasizes that not just any "building" (or works) and not just any "faith" will do, but each must be founded upon the teaching of Yahweh alone, as imparted to us through the saving name of Jesus Christ, the stone of Israel (**Zech. 3:9; Matt. 21:42; Acts 4:10-14; I Peter 2:6-7; Rev. 4:3**).
  - ◆ How appropriate it is that Jesus contrasts the works of his brethren, the true servants of Yahweh, with the works of those who are false, by the symbol of stone verses sand. Many men profess to have faith, and much money is gathered and expended and many works are accomplished upon the profession of the many isms that the world has to offer, but these are not the faith nor the works that can sustain a man in things eternal—these are but sand and the wind will carry them away (**Isa. 41:13-16; Dan. 2:35**).
- ⇒ **The House built upon a rock:** In his youth, Jesus most likely learned carpentry from Joseph (Matt. 13:55). That his family was in the building industry by trade is emphasized by the fact that Jesus and his brethren in the immortalized state are referred to as four carpenters by Zechariah who are given a specific charge:

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*“Therefore thus saith the LORD; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it, saith the LORD of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem”*

- ◆ As a young carpenter in Nazareth, Jesus would have observed the manner of building; foundations dug deep to reach the bedrock, ten, twenty, sometimes thirty feet or more, to ensure the house would not settle or fracture under stress. He would have noted the spiritual meaning in these practical lessons of his upbringing as he pondered the faith of the patriarchs of Israel (**Hebrews 11:8-10**). It is not at all surprising to find, therefore, that Jesus, as the Son of the Highest, the Strength of Yahweh and savior of Israel, is himself described as a rock—a symbol of the impregnability of his doctrine, which, as he said, was not original to himself, but was the teaching of his Father in heaven (**John 7:14-17**). Thus Yahweh also is a rock, an immovable and solid support upon which any house which is to last must be founded (**2 Sam. 22:2, 32, 46; Psa. 28:1; Psa. 21:2; Psa. 61:2; Isa. 26:4**).
- ◆ The metaphor of the rock and the stone associated with Yahweh manifested in Christ runs throughout Scripture and casts the foundation upon which the importance of the parable is built. The first significant appearance of the symbol is found on the occasion of Moses and the encampment of Israel at Horeb in the wilderness. Horeb (choreb) means “desolate, parched,” and such was the spiritual condition of Israel at that time. Not soon after the miraculous deliverance from Egypt, the faithless multitude raised their voices against Moses, and by implication, Yahweh, believing that having come out of Egypt they would now perish from lack of water. Spiritually speaking, they did lack the water of life, as they continued to doubt the strength of Israel—Yahweh (**Exod. 17:1-7; Deut 8:14-16**).
- ◆ In yet another miraculous display of power, however, the multitude was not only provided for naturally, but was given a powerful lesson concerning the water of life, that it would burst forth by the smiting of the rock of Israel—Jesus the Christ (**John 4:10; Rev. 21:6**).
- ◆ Yahweh, manifest in His son, is this rock of salvation upon which if any man build, he will not be moved.

*“For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward” (1Cor. 3:9-14, also Eph. 2:19-22).*

- ◆ **Summary of the house built upon a rock:** “Men build upon sand when they trust in human speculations; they build upon rock when they follow Christ’s teaching. All men are building, whether they will or not, for life’s activities assume some shape; but all efforts can have the quality of permanence only if men build on the foundation Jesus laid in his teaching” (*Parables of the Messiah*, John Carter, p. 52; Ref. **Hag. 1:7-8; I Cor. 10:12; Eph. 6:13; 2 Peter 1:10**).

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- ⇒ **The House built upon the Sand—Introduction:** From *Parables of the Messiah*, by John Carter, p. 52:
- ◆ “Some results seem fair to look upon; humanistic philosophy may produce a refinement far removed from savagery; but the result has nothing of value to God. But Jesus does not even consider or assess such human schemes; his thought is limited to those who hear his words. The hearer who is also a doer builds a character that has abiding value, and it will survive not only the storms and stresses of the present life, but also the greatest crisis of all—the judgment of Christ himself. *‘The wicked are overthrown, and are not: but the house of the righteous shall stand’* (Prov. 12:7). *‘The house of the wicked shall be overthrown: but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish’* (14:11).”
- ⇒ Rock and sand appear as fitting metaphors for the righteous and the wicked in a region of the earth where they are both found in such abundance and in such contrast with one another. The mountains of Judea wherein is Zion’s hill are formed of rock, steep and difficult to approach. The fortress of the Jebusites that David took for a possession was considered impregnable, and perhaps it would have remained had not Yahweh chosen the place for Himself to build a house of prayer for all people. In a geologic survey of the region a Professor Hull remarks:
- “The rocks...around Jerusalem furnish not only a solid and durable white building stone, but marbles of red, pink, and yellow colours, capable of receiving a fine polish;... the beds of stone, locally called ‘Misseh,’ have yielded large blocks used in ancient structures of Jerusalem, such as those of the wailing place of the Jews, which have been extracted from the quarries near the Damascus gate” (The Temple of Ezekiel’s Prophecy, P. 155, by Henry Sulley).
- ⇒ In contrast with the impregnable character of the mountains, the place where Abraham chose to dwell (**Gen. 22:9, 19**), the Jordan valley was, in ancient times, covered in silt from the annual flooding of the Jordan (**Josh. 3:15**). It was fertile land, well watered and pleasing to the eye. Thus Lot chose to dwell among the cities of the plain (**Gen. 13:8-13**), a site fitting for the character of the people there. Sodom was at length destroyed with all the cities of the plain, after which Lot fled to the mountains (**Gen. 19:19-30**).
- ⇒ After separating from Lot, Abraham was promised that Yahweh would “*multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore*” (Gen. 22:17), and one might think from such a promise that sand must not be such a poor material after all. History and the Bible, however, shows that this is not the case. (**Deut. 7:7-11**). Sand represents a multitude, but the promise did not naturally convey to Abraham’s seed holiness to Yahweh (**Matt. 3:7-12**). Holiness is something which must be strived after and worked for, but is not achievable by works alone. It also requires Yahweh’s grace. But grace is not given to fools who would rather have sand to build one’s house, whose confidence is not in God, but in man, and particularly oneself. Thus is the man who builds his house upon the sand. His is the way of the fool from whom the wisdom of God is wholly departed (**Prov. 1:7; 3:35; 13:19; 14:9; Eccl. 5:1; 7:4**).

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- ⇒ Returning to the geography of the land of Israel, another matter to consider is the Jordan river, whose banks, as was mentioned, overflowed at the time of harvest, depositing the silt upon which the city of Jericho was founded. The Jordan descends into the dead sea (or the salt sea) which epitomizes the way of all flesh. We know the history there from Abraham until the crossing of the Jordan under Joshua. The men of Jericho, like the Jebusites in later years, thought that their position was impregnable against the invading Israelites, but theirs was the thinking of perishing flesh. How foolish, they must have thought, the silent band of pilgrims marching around the city each day and to what avail? All were content to trust in the works of their hands to save them. All but one—the house of Rahab. Despite the odds, she chose another course; to place her faith in the God of Israel, the God who, as she had said, destroyed the Egyptians and overthrew mighty armies, and while others doubted these reports, she had faith and works by which she was justified unto salvation (**Josh 2 and 6, Heb. 11:31; James 2:25-26**). The account of Rahab presents a great deal for us to consider as concerning appearances. The multitude trusted in what they perceived through the eye of flesh—strong fortified walls, bars and gates vs. the Israelites, who had no weapons of practical use against such a city as Jericho. Rahab could have sided with the sinful throng, but she evidently thought deeply upon the subject. Jericho, strong as it was, was no match for the Egyptians, and they were utterly destroyed (**Exod. 15:1-11**). And then came the fall of Amalek (**Exod. 17:8-16**), the overthrow of Sihon of the Amorites, mighty Og, king of Bashan (**Num. 21:21-35**) and the slaughter of the kings of Midian (**Num. 31:8**). Where were their mighty men? Where were their fortified cities? What became of them? - Perished all before the God of Israel! Rahab must have pondered all these mighty works in her heart and come to the conclusion uttered in the Song of Moses, *“The LORD is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation.”*
- ⇒ This song must become the anthem of all Saints! It must be inscribed upon our hearts if we are to build a house that will weather the storm of life that Yahweh will set before us as the trial of our faith. Our trust must be in Yahweh’s strength and Yahweh’s salvation (Yahshua) and not in man’s wisdom, and certainly not our own. All that is in this world is fleeting; moth eats it, rust ruins it, man takes what is good and defiles it and reduces it to particles of sand, unstable and erodible. But that which is of God is firm, stable and is certain to keep us from falling (**2 Thes. 2**).

