

Matthew 13:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

Analysis

But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also (ὅτε δὲ ἐβλάστησεν ὁ χόρτος καὶ καρπὸν ἐποίησεν, τότε ἐφάνη καὶ τὰ ζιζάνια)—phanerōthē means 'became visible, revealed.' Darnel looks identical to wheat during early growth; only when grain heads emerge does the difference become obvious. Wheat produces edible seed; darnel produces toxic seed. Similarly, false believers appear genuine until pressure, testing, or time reveals true character.

The fruit-bearing stage exposes reality. Profession without fruit evidences false faith (Matthew 7:16-20). This timing—appearing **then** (τότε), not earlier—explains why church discipline addresses manifest sin rather than suspected hypocrisy. We can't identify tares during 'blade' stage; we must wait for 'fruit' to reveal true nature. Patient discernment, not hasty judgment, characterizes wise leadership.

Historical Context

Bearded darnel's resemblance to wheat during vegetative growth was notorious—ancient agricultural writers (Pliny, Columella) documented this problem. Only when seed heads formed could farmers distinguish crops from weeds. This parable addresses Matthew's church community struggling with false teachers who initially seemed orthodox but eventually revealed heresy through their 'fruit' (behavior and doctrine).

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What 'fruit' distinguishes genuine believers from tares—what evidence reveals true spiritual life?
2. How does this parable inform church discipline—when should leaders address suspected false profession?
3. Where might you be impatient to 'root up tares' before their true nature becomes evident through fruit?

Interlinear Text

ὅτε	δὲ	ἐβλάστησεν	ὁ	χόρτος	καὶ	καρπὸν	ἐποίησεν
when	But	was sprung up	G3588	the blade	also	fruit	brought forth
G3753	G1161	G985		G5528	G2532	G2590	G4160
τότε	ἐφάνη	καὶ	τὰ	ζιζάνια			
then	appeared	also	G3588	the tares			
G5119	G5316	G2532		G2215			

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