

HIDDEN AND REVEALED

(Matt. 11:25-26)

Jesus presented Himself to the nation of Israel, which, as seen in their representative leaders, largely rejected Him. Consequently, Jesus then focused upon individuals, inviting them to come to Him individually and find rest in Him. Matthew 11:20-24 describes the condemnation of those rejecting Him, while verses 25-30 describe the blessing or REST on those accepting Him.

Matthew 11:25 (NKJV)

25 At that time Jesus answered and said, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.

“**At that time**” emphasizes the time of the Lord’s rejection. This is Christ’s response. The phrase “**I thank You**” (Gk. *exomologeō*) literally means to acknowledge or to confess, coupled with the sense of praise.

“When this verb [**thank**] is used with respect to God, the person praying “acknowledges” who God is, the propriety of his ways, and the excellence of his character.” – **D.A. Carson**

In this prayer, Jesus uses two descriptive titles for God the Father: namely, **Father**, and then also “**Lord of heaven and earth**”.

“Father” emphasizes God’s sovereign superintendence over all, and “Lord of heaven and earth” emphasizes Him as being sovereign Master over all (cf. Gen. 14:19, 22). Both underscore the idea of sovereign authority.

In context, there is a strong emphasis that nothing can thwart the sovereign will of God. Even this strong rejection by the nation at large did not mean that God was not in control. He was still sovereign. He always remains sovereign! This is the BEDROCK truth that everything comes back to.

As the One Who has absolute sovereign authority, Jesus acknowledges that the Father has “**hidden these things from the wise and the prudent and have revealed them to babes.**” This is God’s way, and Jesus praised the Father for it.

Remember, this is the context of rebuking the cities in which MOST of Christ’s mighty works were done. They didn’t get it. They didn’t see the

truth of Who Christ was. They didn't connect the power of His kingdom miracles with Jesus being the promised King.

John 12:37 (NKJV)

37 But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him,

The signs were clearly there for all to see, and they are clearly held accountable for seeing, but indeed they failed to see. The sign-miracles (that I call kingdom-miracles) all pointed to Jesus as being the promised Messiah Who brings in the kingdom, but “***the wise and prudent***” didn't see it.

Why didn't they see it? Well, we have an indicator in verses 23-24 where Jesus said to Capernaum that on judgment day it will be better for Sodom than for them because if Sodom had had the privilege of seeing Christ's mighty works, the implication is that they would have repented.

But what was Capernaum's KEY problem? Jesus describes Capernaum as being “***exalted to heaven,***” which is a description of PRIDE! In other words, they were full of PRIDE. Pride is the idea of “independent self-exaltation”.

The “***wise and prudent***” here are those who think themselves to be very wise and intelligent about spiritual matters. Thus, they are very proud of all their supposed wisdom! They are full of themselves. Sometimes people can be “***too smart for their own good***”.

People think they are so smart and sophisticated, but they are not smarter than God. In fact, in their puniness, they fail to see that God, in His wisdom, hides His truth from prideful self-wisdom that does not humbly rely on God. This is the KEY point. We can only know God's truth by humbly relying on Him – we never arrive there through our own mental brilliance.

The problem here is not merely their intellect. It was not that their IQ was too high. The problem was intellectual pride that depends on human wisdom instead of on the revelation of God. Proud people think they can figure out spiritual truth by means of their own human intelligence.

As a means of judicial judgment, God hides His truth from such people. In all their supposed brilliance, they claim to be the “***all-wise ones,***” but in truth they don't get it. God does not cater to prideful wisdom that thinks it is self-sufficiently wise and is therefore dependent upon the strength of their own intellect.

“Jesus’ point in Matthew 11 was not that God has withheld the truth from intelligent people, but rather that those who rely on their own cleverness cut themselves off from the truth.” – **John MacArthur**

Have you met people who come off like “**a know-it-all**” when in fact they have no clue what they are talking about? And as you go along in the conversation, they continue to “**put on airs**” and won’t back down. Such a person has a PRIDE problem. They don’t know what they are saying, but their PRIDE won’t acknowledge it.

Pride is the besetting sin of mankind, and God hates pride – which in essence is the idea of operating independently of God. Pride says I can do it myself – I don’t need God’s help. God hides His truth from such an attitude. The Bible is clear that God gives grace to the humble.

1 Peter 5:5 (NKJV)

... “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”

Want to be graced by God – be humble. He doesn’t cater to the pride of self-made people who think they can know truth apart from Him.

In truth, we can only know the things of God by His revelation. We totally need His help (cf. 1 Cor. 2:14). Paul deals with this extensively in 1 Cor. 1-3.

1 Corinthians 1:20–21 (NKJV)

20 Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? **Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?**

21 For since, **in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God,** it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

1 Corinthians 3:18–20 (NKJV)

18 Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise.

19 **For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.** For it is written, “He catches the wise in their own craftiness”;

20 and again, **“The LORD knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile.”**

You take the most intelligent person in the world who is not a believer, and all of his spiritual ideas are foolishness. He never has a great original spiritual thought. Those who think so are merely deceived. No one ever outsmarts God, and God works in such a way that we are totally dependent

upon Him to know spiritual truth, and the key is to humble ourselves and admit it (cf. 1 Cor. 2:14). That is where it all starts – right there.

God has hidden “**these things**” – that is, kingdom truth as previously revealed by Christ’s mighty works. In other words, in context, they have not seen the significance of Christ’s miracles that point to Him as the Messiah King. God hides the truth of Who Christ is from them because they were not reliant upon Him.

But while God has hidden these things from the “self-wise,” He has revealed them to babes (cf. Mt. 18:3). Babes here refers to those who are not self-wise. They recognize their helplessness and are totally dependent upon God. That is the picture. They are humbled and in a position of dependence upon God to know His truth. Babes here depicts those with a teachable, humble, dependent spirit.

Here was the problem with Israel. They refused to assume the position of dependent babes. They were not in the position of humble dependence, but rather in the position of prideful self-wisdom, and consequently spiritual things of the King and His kingdom were not revealed to them.

They had a PRIDE problem! The proud don’t come to Jesus. They are self-satisfied in their self-righteousness and their legalism. That was Israel.

Isaiah 57:15 (NKJV)

15 For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy place, With him who has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

Matthew 5:3 (NKJV)

3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“God gives rest – salvation- to humble people, people filled with contrition, brokenness, and a sense of dependency. There is no place for the proud.” – **John MacArthur**

In 1 Corinthians 1:26-29, Paul says that God has chosen not many wise, and He has done this so that “**no flesh should glory in His presence.**” No one can strut their wisdom stuff before God. All the glory belongs to God alone!

Matthew 11:26 (NKJV)

26 Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.

This is God's way of working, which He deems as good. And I, for one, am really glad that the smart alecks of the world are not given any room to boast before God. It is a good thing that God humbles the proud and gives grace to those who humble themselves before Him. God reveals His truth to those who humble themselves before Him. Those who refuse to humble themselves will never see the kingdom!

This withholding of insight from the wise was not a matter of injustice but rather a matter of judicial judgment. In their self-proclaimed wisdom, they rejected the light of God's truth found in Christ, and so God removed the light from them. That is judicial judgment.