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The Parables of Matthew 13

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There are nine parable texts in Matthew without parallels in Mark or Luke that are often considered dependent on a "Special Matthew" source. I follow Zimmerman (**Parables**, 165) in classifying Mt 13:51-52 as a "parable". Inclusive of that text, I here designate these parables as "M1" through "M9". Two of them, M1 and M4, have an appended explanation, but the explanation of M1, designated here as "M1e", is textually separate from the parable. The ten texts, with NA27 word counts, are:

M1	Mt 13:24–30	Weeds (137)		M5	Mt 13:51–52	Householder (32)
M1e	Mt 13:36–43	Weeds Explained (152)		M6	Mt 18:23–35	Unforgiving Servant (213)
M2	Mt 13:44–44	Hidden Treasure (31)		M7	Mt 20:1–16	Laborers in Vineyard (242)
M3	Mt 13:45–46	Pearl (25)		M8	Mt 21:28–32	Two Sons (106)
M4	Mt 13:47–50	Fishnet (71)		M9	Mt 25:1–13	Ten Virgins (171)

I will now explore how the first five of these ten texts could have been composed apart from a "Special Matthew" source. Throughout I presuppose that Mark is precedent to Matthew, but I make no assumptions about the existence or extent of a precedent Q document.

The Weeds, its Explanation, and Intervening Transition (Mt 13:24-43):
Narrative Structure parallels suggest that <u>the entire sequence of Mt 13:24-43 was composed to fit this specific context</u>. Segments M1 and M1e are separated by the seven verses of Mt 13:31-35, which contain two short parables, the Mustard Seed (13:31-32) and the Leaven (13:33), with an appendix about Jesus' use of parables (13:34-35). The whole text then has the sequence of a parable, transitional material, and an explanation of the parable. That combination is obviously parallel to the immediately preceding arrangement of Matthew's Sower parable, where we find first the parable itself (Mt 13:3-9), followed by transitional material (Mt 13:10-17), and ending with the explanation of the parable (Mt 13:18-23). Both of these sequences in turn emulate the parable/transition/explanation sequence of the precedent Sower texts of Mark 4:3-20. Adding to the similarity is the way the Weeds transition segment ends with an OT quotation about "parables" (Mt 13:34 < Ps 77:2 LXX), just as both Mark's and Matthew's Sower transition segment prominently feature an OT quotation at or near their closing (Mt 13:14-15 ∥ Mk 4:12, both < Isa 6:9-10). Here I compare the structures, word counts in parentheses:

Mk Parable of Sower (302)	Mt Parable of Sower (381)	Mt Parable of Weeds (396)
Parable: Mk 4:3-9 (105)	Parable: Mt 13:3-9 (98)	Parable: Mt 13:24-30 (137)
Transition: Mk 4:10-12 (52) • Why Parables? • OT Quote near End	Transition: Mt 13:10-17 (155) • Why Parables? • OT Quote at End	Transition: Mt 13:31-35 (107) • Two short Parables • Why Parables + OT Quote
Explanation: Mk 4:13-20 (145)	Explanation: Mt 13:18-23 (128)	Explanation: Mt 13:36-43 (152)

Narrative content analysis of the Weeds transition segment (Mt 13:31-35), also supports this proposal. Matthew is here constrained from inventing a redundant discussion of the purpose of parables which would duplicate Mt 13:10-17. Instead, he fashions this second transition out of three short elements: a) the Mustard Seed parable of 13:31-32, an adaption of Mk 4:30-32; b) the parable of the Leaven in 13:33, parallel to Luke 13:20-21; and c) a summary paragraph in 13:34-35 about the function of parables. This summary begins in 13:34 with a repetitiously emphatic adaptation of Mark 4:33-34a about speaking to the crowds <u>only</u> in parables, which in Mark also falls right after his own Mustard Seed parable. This

summary concludes in typical Matthean fashion with a quotation of OT scripture (Ps 77:2 LXX) in 13:35, prefaced by the same πληρόω as in his Sower transition (here, πληρωθῇ ∥ 13:14, ἀναπληροῦται). We may even detect an added sense of πληρωθῇ here as marking the quotation to be the necessary literary element that "fills up" this narrative structure as a "complete" parallel to 13:10-17.

Narrative Placement of Matthew's Weeds package (M1 and M1e) also suggests literary dependence on Mark's Parable of the Seed in Mk 4:26-29. Both occupy the same place in narrative order: after the Explanation of the Sower (Mt 13:18-23 ∥ Mk 4:13-20) and before the Parable of the Mustard Seed (Mt 13:31-32 ∥ Mk 4:30-32). Matthew has already used the intervening Markan material in Mk 4:21-24 in other scattered places (Mt 5:15, 10:26, 7:2, and 13:12), which explains its absence here. He does however repeat Mk 4:25 ("He who has…") here in 13:12 and elsewhere in 25:29.

Diction Analysis similarly supports seeing Matthew's Weeds as a conflation Mark's Seed parable along with the two Sower parables. Gundry (**Matthew**, 262) provides this inventory of verbal precedents from Mark's Seed and from Mark's/Matthew's Sower:

   From Mark's Seed: οὗτος, ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, ὅς, ἄνθρωπος, βάλῃ τὸν σπόρον ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, καθεύδῃ, βλαστᾷ, καρποφορεῖ, χόρτον, ὁ καρπός, ἀποστέλλει, and ὁ θερισμός.
   From the Sower parables: ἄλλην for "parable" rather than for "seed", καλὸν for "seed" rather than for "soil", σπέρμα cognate with σπείρω, καρπὸν ἐποίησεν from ἐδίδου καρπόν and καρποφορεῖ, ὁ σπείρων, and τοῦ πονηροῦ.

Gundry notices the "seed/sower" interplay, but he, like most others, overlooks the way Matthew closely emulates Mark's literary planting of "sow/sower" and "seed" in his two parable texts. Nowhere in Mark's Sower (Mk 4:3-9) or his Explanation (M 4:13-20) does he scatter any "seed" lexeme (σπέρμα, σπόρος, κόκκος). Rather, "seed" is always indirectly referenced by circumlocutions, pronouns, or as "the Word" (τὸν λόγον). Only in his separate Seed parable does Mark finally (twice) use an explicit "seed" lexeme (σπόρος, Mk 4:26,27). A nice artistic touch indeed, by Mark! Matthew imitates Mark's artistry, always referencing "seed" indirectly by cirumlocutions and pronouns throughout his Sower package, but using a explicit synonymous "seed" lexeme (σπέρμα), twice in his parable (Mt 13:24,27) and twice in his Explanation (Mt 13:37,38), each time phrased as "good seed" (καλὸν σπέρμα), a doubled replication of Mark. That Luke saw what Mark (and Matthew?) was up to is confirmed in his own Sower. There he does use "seed" explicitly in his parable (τὸν σπόρον, Lk 8:5) and in his explanation (ὁ σπόρος, Lk 8:11), most likely because he completely omits any emulation of Mark's Seed (or Matthew's Weeds)!

Davies and Allison (**Matthew**, 2:409) admit that Matthew's Weeds package replicates or echoes verbal precedents from the Seed and Sower parables. They, suggest, however, that Matthew's Weeds and Explanation are not "redactional" of Mark, but are instead a rewriting of fixed oral tradition (**Matthew**, 2:409-410). Some have also questioned the lack of realism in the "Enemy" who sowed the Weeds (ζιζάνια) among the the wheat, and so treat that as intrusive. However, Jewish LXX readers would be familiar with the "parables" of Ezekiel and others where trees talk, eagles plant seeds, and cedars sprouts into vines. Drury demonstrates how Matthew's dreamlike surrealism follows well onto these OT precedents (**Parables**, 10-20).

My sense of the prevailing desire to attribute the Weeds parable and its Explanation, all or in part, to an outside source, is its (unprecedented?) emphasis on the separation of the good wheat from the bad weeds (= the righteous from the wicked), who are allowed to "grow" together until the harvest (= Doomsday, the day of Final Judgment) when the weeds/wicked may finally be pulled out for burning while the wheat/righteous are gathered to shine as stars in coming Kingdom of God. This apocalyptic

separation of what was previously mixed may be nascent in Mark's Sower (the three bad soils versus the three seeds in the good ground), but just barely, and such development would reflect literary invention far beyond that of a mere "redactor". But is Matthew only an editor? Before addressing that question, I must explore other issues that will, I believe, lead to a satisfactory conclusion on Matthew's Weeds.

BIRD Analysis of pertinent text segments strongly suggests that Matthean text Segments M1 through M5 were composed at the same time and by the same author as his Sower Explanation (13:18-23). BIRD, or the **B**rooks **I**ndex of **R**hetorical **D**ifference, originated and developed by E Bruce and A Taeko Brooks (see their forthcoming article "A Test of Stylistic Difference" in Alpha, v2, 2014), provides a measure of relative "distance" of the style of one text from the style of another. The calculation of the BIRD "D" (difference) value between two texts is peformed in terms of the relative frequencies of the fourteen most common GNT function words (ὁ, καί, δέ, ἐν, εἰς, οὐ, ὅτι, μή, γάρ, ἐκ, ἐπί, πρός, διά, and ἵνα). BIRD represents an approach to the other end of the preceding diction issue. That analysis looks at <u>rare</u> discourse events, words or phrasing that conveys distinctive content. BIRD mathematically analyzes the most <u>common</u> discourse events, particles whose utility is functionary, conveying litte or no content.

Experience with BIRD analysis in three corpora, literary Chinese, Homeric Greek, and New Testament Greek, suggests that a "D" value equal to or less than 0.50 for a given pair of texts usually indicates the same author writing, especially one writing consecutively. A value equal to or greater than 1.00 suggests a different author, or possibly the same author writing under outside influence. A value between 0.50 and 1.00 is neutral, compatible with either the same or different authorship.

In this BIRD analysis, I use the 10 text segments as delimited and abbreviated here:

MkS	Mk 4:3-9	Parable of Sower (Mark)		**MtSe**	Mt 13:18-23	Sower Explained
MkSt	Mk 4:10-12	Sower Transition (Mark)		**M1**	Mt 13:24-30	Parable of Weeds
MkSe	Mk 4:13-20	Sower Explained (Mark)		**M1t**	Mt 13:31-35	Weeds Transition
MtS	Mt 13:3-9	Parable of Sower		**M1e**	Mt 13:36-43	Weeds Explained
MtSt	Mt 13:10-17	Sower Transition		**M2-5**	Mt 13:44-52	Postscript of 4 Parables

Here is the cross-table of the BIRD results, D values less than or equal to 0.50 are bolded:

Text	MkS	MkSt	MkSe	MtS	MtSt	MtSe	M1	M1t	M1e	M2-5
MkS		0.62	**0.35**	**0.44**	0.59	0.59	0.87	0.61	0.85	0.62
MkSt	0.62		0.64	0.53	0.76	0.57	0.64	0.56	0.64	0.64
MkSe	**0.35**	0.64		0.58	0.79	**0.39**	0.63	0.52	0.56	**0.41**
MtS	**0.44**	0.53	0.58		0.65	**0.32**	0.69	0.56	0.73	0.72
MtSt	0.59	0.76	0.79	0.65		0.78	1.02	0.83	0.97	0.96
MtSe	0.59	0.57	**0.39**	**0.32**	0.78		**0.48**	**0.49**	**0.42**	**0.45**
M1	0.87	0.64	0.63	0.69	1.02	**0.48**		**0.40**	**0.26**	**0.49**
M1t	0.61	0.56	0.52	0.56	0.83	**0.49**	**0.40**		**0.48**	**0.44**
M1e	0.85	0.64	0.56	0.73	0.97	**0.42**	**0.26**	**0.48**		**0.37**
M2-5	0.62	0.64	**0.41**	0.72	0.96	**0.45**	**0.49**	**0.44**	**0.37**	

D values for a given text pair are located at the intersection cells of those two texts. The upper right triangle of cells is a mirror image of the lower left triangle. Thus, the D value of Mark's Sower and his Explanation, MkS with MkSe, which I will denote as D(Mks,MkSe), may be found at the intersection of the third ("MkSe") column and the top ("MkS") row or, at the third row and the first column, both cells

displaying **0.35**. We see a similar result with Matthew's Sower and Explanation, where D(MtS,MtSe) = **0.32**. Interestingly, the Matthew Sower and Explanation segments show close stylistic affinity with their corresponding Markan segments, as D(MtS,MkS) = **0.44**, and D(MtSe,MkSe) = **0.39**. This is not surprising since Matthew so closely emulates Mark's parable and explanation.

I observe further from these D numbers that:
- The fulcrum in this chart for Matthew is MtSe, his Explanation of the Sower, as it displays close affinity with Matthew's preceding parable and all the following Matthew segments;
- Starting from MtSe through the next four consecutive segments, the D value for each text pair is less than **0.50**, indicating close stylistic affinity between all combinations of these five texts – see the outlined block of cells in the lower right quadrant. Such uniform results are quite unusual for BIRD calculations in any consecutive New Testament text, and would accordingly support a finding that MtSe through M2-5 was all composed and/or edited at the same time by the same author.
- Since (as argued in the Narrative Analysis above) the sequence M1-M1t-M1e is a literary emulation of MtS-MtSt-MtSe, which is in turn an emulation of Mark's MkS-Transition-MkSe, we may therefore expand that argument to include the entire text of Matthew 13:1-52 as a single unified composition.
- While widening the possibility that Matthew composed M1 through M5 (13:24-52) for this specific context, BIRD still cannot rule out reliance on an outside precedent source, either oral or written, for his Weeds package, since his Sower Explanation (MtSe) and his Mustard Seed (part of M1t) are both rewrites of Mark. More evidence, however, is still to be found in Matthew's Hidden Treasure (M2) and Leaven (Mt 13:33) parable texts.

Hidden Treasure (Matthew 13:44)
Gundry (**Matthew**, 276) suggests that Matthew took his description of the man "going and selling all that he had" from Mark's version of the "rich young ruler" in Mk 10:21. The Treasure has even deeper verbal and thematic matches to that story, which we may begin to assess with this comparative chart:

Mark 10:21 (rich young ruler)	**Matt 13:44** (hidden treasure)	**Matt 19:21** (rich young ruler)
ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἐμβλέψας αὐτῷ ἠγάπησεν αὐτὸν καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, ἕν σε ὑστερεῖ: ὕπαγε, ὅσα ἔχεις πώλησον καὶ δὸς [τοῖς] πτωχοῖς, καὶ ἕξεις θησαυρὸν ἐν οὐρανῷ, καὶ δεῦρο ἀκολούθει μοι.	ὁμοία ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν θησαυρῷ κεκρυμμένῳ ἐν τῷ ἀγρῷ, ὃν εὑρὼν ἄνθρωπος ἔκρυψεν, καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς χαρᾶς αὐτοῦ ὑπάγει καὶ πωλεῖ πάντα ὅσα ἔχει καὶ ἀγοράζει τὸν ἀγρὸν ἐκεῖνον.	ἔφη αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, εἰ θέλεις τέλειος εἶναι, ὕπαγε πώλησόν σου τὰ ὑπάρχοντα καὶ δὸς [τοῖς] πτωχοῖς, καὶ ἕξεις θησαυρὸν ἐν οὐρανοῖς, καὶ δεῦρο ἀκολούθει μοι.

Four key verbal elements shared by Mk 10:21 and Mt 13:44 are underlined: "go" (ὑπάγω), "sell whatever one has" (πωλέω ὅσα ἔχω), and "treasure" (θησαυρός), which is connected with "heaven" (οὐρανός). The "treasure" in Matthew is explicity compared to kingdom of "heaven", and that word pair of immediate neighbors in Mt 13:44 appears first in the sequence of shared elements, whereas it appears last in Mark, an artistic reflection of Matthew's thematic reversal of Mark's outcome.

Additionally, Matthew's treasure-finder went and sold all he had "because of his joy" (ἀπὸ τῆς χαρᾶς αὐτοῦ), completely opposite to the reaction of Mark's Rich Man who in Mk 10:22 was "saddened" (στυγνάσας) by Jesus' words, and went away "grieving" (λυπούμενος). This feature then comprises another strong parallel with, and reversal from, Mark. While "field" (ἀγρός, twice in Mt 13:44) is not in Mark's story, it has already appeared five times in the immediate context of Matthew 13 (13:24, 17, 27,

31, 36, 38), and thus is within easy reach in Matthew's mental lexicon. So far, this parable is turning out to be an artistic adaptation of Mark, down to the shared feature of the actor as an individual "man".

The one key element of The Treasure not in Mark is its description as "hidden" (κεκρυμμένῳ), which upon finding, the man "hid" (ἔκρυψεν) it again. But, "hidden" is clearly on Matthew's mind as he has just presented his similitude of the woman who "hid" the leaven in her dough (Mt 13:33), and immediately afterward he rewrote Ps 77:2 (Mt 13:35 < Ps 77:2 LXX), altering the OT phrasing to make his parables now teach things previously "hidden" (κεκρυμμένα) from humans, confirmation of the importance of "hidden" to Matthew. So, all the necessary ingredients were on the table ready for synthesis into this this parable by Matthew's own inventive artistry. The phrasing is lean and balanced, paratactic like Mark 10:21 except for a single hypotactic clause, ὃν εὑρὼν… ἔκρυψεν, and overall a well crafted piece, a mixture of "treasure both new and old" (Mt 13:52).

The Leaven (Mt 13:33 || Lk 13:20-21)
Matthew and Luke share identical phrasing in this parable: … ὁμοία ἐστὶν … ζύμη, ἣν λαβοῦσα γυνὴ ἐνέκρυψεν εἰς ἀλεύρου σάτα τρία ἕως οὗ ἐζυμώθη ὅλον. It is connected to Matthew's Hidden Treasure by the common verb "hide", both in third-person singular aorist form ἐνέκρυψεν/ἔκρυψεν. The doubled use of "leaven", first as noun (ζύμῃ) and then as verb (ἐζυμώθη) along with the expression "whole" (ὅλον) is quite close to the language of the proverbial (parabolic!) saying repeated by Paul in 1Cor 5:6 and Gal 5:9, "a little leaven (ζύμη) the whole (ὅλον) lump it-leavens (ζυμοῖ)". This part of the parable is thus likely based on the same well-known proverb.

The phase, "a woman" hiding her leaven in "three *sata* of ground wheat flour", is widely recognized as an echo of Genesis 18:6 where Abraham urges Sarah to knead and make loaves out of "three se'ah's of fine flour", phrased in the MT as שלש סאים קמח סלת, which Matthew nicely replicates in Greek as ἀλεύρου σάτα τρία. Danker confirms that the Koine σάτον is a loan-word from the Aramaic *sata* (סאתא), equivalent to the Hebrew *se'ah* (סאה), whose plural form is used here in Gn 18:6 (**BDAG**, 917:a). Intertextuality is strengthened by Matthew's preference for a more precise Semitic loanword rather than the LXX's ambiguous μέτρα. Knowledge of the LXX is nevertheless present in Matthew's "hiding" of the leaven, a likely echo of the LXX translation of "make loaves" as ποίησον ἐγκρυφίας, whose final member is a rare cognate of the same ἐγκρύπτω discussed above, signifying "hidden in (the embers)". Further on this word, see **LSJ**, 474, and **Athenaeus** 3.74, Kaibel 1:252 -- ἐπ᾽ ἀνθράκων γίνεσθαι, ὥσπερ καὶ ὁ παρ᾽ Ἀττικοῖς ἐγκρυφίας = "made on the coals, just as that which the Attics called *egkryphias*".

A more granular comparison of Matthew's text with the LXX and the MT may profit. Broken into consecutive parts, the three phrases of "three measures of flour" appear in written form as follows:

MT Gen 18:6	קמח סלת	סאים	שלש
Matt 13:33	ἀλεύρου	σάτα	τρία
LXX Gen 18:6	τρία	μέτρα	σεμιδάλεως

As to diction, either Matthew's ἄλευρον or the LXX's σεμίδαλις are sufficient glosses for "fine-milled flour" (קמח סלת), and I have already noted that Matthew's σάτον is more precise than the LXX's μέτρον. The more interesting comparison is in word order: the LXX reads as "three *metra* of-flour", whereas Matthew's sequence is "of-flour *sata* three". Both are adequate translations, both are without aural hiatus, the LXX scanning (as Koine) prosodically as a trochee, Matthew as an iamb. But, since Hebrew is written from right to left, the LXX order precisely renders the Hebrew text as it would have been read (aloud), whereas Matthew's order renders the Hebrew as it would have appeared in written form. Could this be a tiny bit of artistic rumination on a written Hebrew text familiar to Matthew "the scribe"?

In any case, just as with The Treasure, all the necessary ingredients, which are few and easily identified, are present on Matthew's table for the preparation of this short parable. All that was required is the quick work of a skilled baker to synthesize these ingredients into a hot and tasty "loaf in the embers". Once again there is no reason from within the parable itself why it may not be attributed to Matthew's own inventive artistry, another synthesis from his "treasure, both new and old".

Other Matthew links with Genesis 18
The distinctive "three *sata* of flour" leads us to look for other links in Matthew within this context of Genesis 18. Recall that the opening sentence in Mt 1:1 describes Jesus Christ as "the son of David, the son of <u>Abraham</u>". A "son of Abraham" is precisely what is promised to the aged Abraham and Sarah in the very next paragraph of Genesis 18:9-15, the son who is named Isaac when he is born in Genesis 21:

- But Isaac was Abraham's second son, so that Paul's discussion headed by "Abraham had two sons" in Gal 4:21-31 may be precedent or parallel to Matthew's Two Sons in Mt 21:28-32 (M8).
- The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, which intervenes in Genesis 19-20 between the announcement and fulfilment of Isaac's birth, may be echoed in Matthew's repeated pronouncement that the "Sodomites" will be better off in the judgment than certain Galileans (Mt 11:23-24 ‖ Lk 10:12, and previously in Mt 10:15).
- YHWH's internal debate in Gn 18:17-19, after predicting (baby) Isaac's birth, contains at least two prominent links with the very next paragraph after the "Sodomites" in Matthew 11:
  - "<u>shall I hide</u> (μὴ κρύπτω, LXX = אני המכסה, MT) from Abraham my <u>child</u> (τοῦ παιδός μου in LXX, omitted in MT) what I am doing?", Gn 18:17 ≈ "Father…you have <u>hidden</u> (ἔκρυψας) these things from the wise and understanding, and have uncovered (ἀπεκάλυψας) them to <u>babes</u>", Mt 11:25
  - "<u>for I have known him</u> (ידעתיו כי) so that he will command his <u>sons</u>… , MT, Gen 18:19 ≈ "no one <u>knows</u> (ἐπιγινώσκει) the <u>son</u> except the father, neither does anyone <u>know</u> (ἐπιγινώσκει) the father except the <u>son</u>, and the one to whom the <u>son</u> wills to uncover (ἀποκαλύψαι) him", Mt 11:27
- The "plant" in the immediately preceding Mustard Seed grows in Matthew to become a "tree" (δένδρον, Mt 13:32 ‖ Lk 13:8), in whose branches the birds may encamp. Although the primary intertextual link seems to be with Daniel 4:7-9, there is also a "tree" connection with Genesis as our "three *se'ahs*" reference in Gn 18:6 is enclosed in a paragraph which begins with God appearing to Abraham "near the oak (δρυΐ) of Mambre" (18:1), and then twice mentions "the tree" (τὸ δένδρον, 18:4 and 18:8) under whose shade Abraham entertained his guests.

Like Matthew, Luke replicates Mark's Mustard Seed which for him also "became a tree". Then, Luke also immediately follows with a virtually identical version of this Leaven parable, which, of course, is not in Mark. So Luke is here writing, for this brief distance, in tandem with Matthew. But, viewing The Leaven within Matthew, the Genesis 18 connections in and around the parable would indicate that it is most likely his own literary invention. The Genesis connections also make the "tree" innovation in the Mustard Seed more at home in Matthew than in Luke. For this parable couplet, I would judge Matthew to be Luke's antecedent text. A separate Q text is not needed here to explain the genesis of either version of The Leaven.

The Weeds now also benefits from Genesis 18 comparison. When we look at "what" it was that YHWH could not "hide" from Abraham, it turns out to be his contemplated destruction of sinful Sodom and her sister towns, where also Abraham's nephew Lot and family were then dwelling. Thus after YHWH's soliloquy in Gn 18:18-19, he reveals to Abraham what he is about to do and then waits for Abraham's

response, whereupon Abraham launches the best known argument with God in the entire Bible. He begins by arguing that YHWH may not destroy "the righteous along with the ungodly, so the righteous shall be as the ungodly" (Gn 18:23), then he pleads for YHWH to absolve the entire place if fifty righteous are found therein (Gn 18:24), and closes with this stirring repetition of his opening appeal:

μηδαμῶς σὺ ποιήσεις ὡς τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦτο,	Absolutely not shall you-do anything like this,
τοῦ ἀποκτεῖναι δίκαιον μετὰ ἀσεβοῦς,	to kill the righteous with the ungodly,
καὶ ἔσται ὁ δίκαιος ὡς ὁ ἀσεβής.	and the righteous end up as the ungodly!
μηδαμῶς· ὁ κρίνων πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν οὐ ποιήσεις κρίσιν; (Gn 18:25, LXX)	Absolutely not! O judge of all the earth shall not you-do judgment? (Gn 18:25, LXX)

Is this not precisely the burden of Matthew's Weeds? The righteous (wheat) and the wicked (weeds), living (growing) together in the same society (field), are to be separated only by doomsday judgment brought by the righteous judge (the Son of Man). To attempt wholesale expulsion of the wicked (pulling the weeds) before that final judgment will damage (uproot) the righteous as well, so they would perish along with the wicked, which would violate Abraham's basic contention that God must not judge the righteous and wicked as a collective whole. Consider these further parallels: Matthew's Son of Man sends his "angels" (ἄγγελοί, Mt 13:39,41) to separate the wicked from the righteous at the "harvest" (= the "end of the age", Mt 13:39,40), just as YHWH's two "angels" (ἄγγελοί) were sent into Sodom to separate out Lot and his family from their wicked neighbors before they were destroyed in judgment (Gn 19:2ff). Matthew's angels gather "all" the wicked for judgment (Mt 13:41), just as YHWH is judge of "all the earth" (Gn 18:25). Finally, Matthew's wicked are judged by being "burned-up" (κατακαῦσαι, Mt 13:30,40), just as the wicked of Sodom were devoured by a rain of "sulfur and fire from the Lord out of heaven" (θεῖον καὶ πῦρ παρὰ κυρίου ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, Gn 19:24 LXX).

We may also throw in Daniel 12:3 where the resurrected righteous will "shine (ἐκλάμψουσιν, also in Mt 13:43, a *hapax* in the GNT) like the luminaries/stars of the heaven", as well as John the Baptist tradition where the Coming One will "gather the wheat into his barn, but burn the chaff with unquenchable fire" (Mt 3:11 ‖ Lk 3:17), making these additional features available for Matthew's use. Gathering all of this together with the previously presented evidence from narrative structure, placement, content, and diction, we come to a positive conclusion for original Matthean composition of The Weeds. As with the Hidden Treasure, and as with The Leaven, so also with The Weeds: all the necessary ingredients for synthesizing this parable were present on Matthew's workbench. The artistic ability that could craft The Leaven and the Hidden Treasure could easily have also crafted The Weeds and its Explanation.

The Pearl, Fishnet, and Householder (M3-5) together with the Hidden Treasure (M2) have been shown in the BIRD discussion above to have a very close stylistic fit, in terms of the most common function words, with the Weeds Explanation (M1e).
- Thematically, the Pearl follows the same track as Hidden Treasure in that both feature a "man" (ἄνθρωπος, ἀνθρώπῳ) who upon "finding" (εὑρὼν, εὑρὼν) an item of superlative value, he "goes" (ὑπάγει, ἀπελθὼν) and proceeds to "sell all that he has" (πωλεῖ πάντα ὅσα ἔχει, πέπρακεν πάντα ὅσα εἶχεν) in order to "purchase" (ἀγοράζει , ἠγόρασεν) that item. The Pearl, then is another typical example of Matthean doubling.
- The Fishnet is obviously a thematic doubling of the Weeds with the same surealistic separation of the wicked from the midst of the righteous (Mt. 23:49 ≈ Mt. 13:41), but with the explanation appended directly to the parable. It even duplicates the Weeds' graphic ending word for word: "and they will throw them into the furnace of fire where there will be the weeping and gnashing of the teeth" (καὶ βαλοῦσιν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὴν κάμινον τοῦ πυρός ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ

βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων, Mt. 13:50 = Mt. 13:42). The metaphor of men as fish and the use of a fishnet to gather them for doomsday judgment may echo the similitude of Habakkuk 1:14-17 where Nebuchadnezer is likened to a fisherman "gathering" (συνήγαγεν) the fish with his "dragnets" (σαγήαις), additional verbal matches with Mt. 13:47.

- The Hidden Treasure, Pearl, and Fishnet comprise the third inclusio in Matthew 13, paralleling the previous inclusios of the Sower and the Weeds, per this outline from Davies-Allison (Matthew, 2:371):

13:1-9	Parable of the sower
13:10-17	Discussion of parables (+ scriptural allusion)
13:18-23	Interpretation of the sower
13:24-30	Parable of the weeds
13:32-33	Parables of the mustard seed and leaven
13:34-35	Discussion of parables (+ scriptural allusion)
13:36-43	Interpretation of the weeds
13:44	Parable of the treasure
13:45-46	Parable of the pearl
13:47-50	Parable of fishnet and its interpretation
13: 51-52	Discussion of parables (+ saying on treasure)

Summary:

I contend that the evidence presented here confirms my hypothesis that the entirety of Matthew 13:1-52 is a unified narrative, authored at the same time by one writer, who gathered his featured components from "old" (the Jewish scriptures) and "new" (proverbial and Markan!) treasuries, from which he inventively synthesized this stunning panorama of the Kingdom of Heaven. None of featured components examined here has required a separate "Special Matthew" source. Matthew as author thus emerges here in chapter 13 as a skillful and artistic kingdom scribe, a house-master bringing out new and old treasures together.

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