

Episode #807 Matthew 13 Part 1-The Sower and the Soil

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being “in Israel,” in contrast to believers today who are “in Christ.”

II. In Matthew 13, the Lord begins teaching the multitudes by the use of parables. Today we begin our study of the important parables of this chapter in considering the first parable, the Parable of the Sower.

III. The Parable of the Sower. Matthew 13:1-9.

- A. Verse 1. The same day as his mother and brothers came to Him. “The house” was His. This is just simple fact, not symbolic for Him turning His back on Israel and turning to the mass of the nations, represented by the sea. The multitudes He was speaking to were all Israelites, every one. The other interpretation is wishful thinking.
- B. Verse 2. A large crowd. Did the Lord use His power so all could hear? Speaking from the boat created an orderly way for the multitude to all face Him and hear.
- C. Verse 3. A parable is “parallel” with the truth, *bole* is “to cast down” alongside the truth so that the figure and the truth align. It is a riddle or puzzle for those who had no basis on which to understand, but a revelation of truth to those intended to hear. Notice that this parable does not start with “the kingdom of heaven is like.” At the right time of year you could have seen sowers anywhere in the land of Judea.
- D. Verse 4. The “wayside” is a hard-packed footpath. These would run through all the fields. Of course no seed could grow there. The sower did not intend to grow his wheat on the beaten footpath. It was just that, as he scattered it, some could not help but fall there. This packed ground made it convenient for these birds to snatch it up.
- E. Verse 5. “Stony places” are among the rocks with shallow soil. In that semi-rocky country this condition would certainly be easy to reproduce by looking at almost any field. All signs pointed to a false healthiness at first.
- F. Verse 6. No roots could grow through the rock!
- G. Verse 7. These “thorns” are weeds. “Choked” is the same as the pigs who drowned.
- H. Verse 8. Bullinger points out that this ground was good because it was prepared. This was the ground the farmer had prepared to receive the seed. The other ground it fell on was accidental. Not every plant brought the same amount, but all increased. In Mark it goes from least to greatest, but in Matthew the opposite.
- I. Verse 9. The second time the Lord says this. The first time was about John the Identifier in 11:15. The third and final time in Matthew is later in this chapter. This phrase occurs 3 times in Mark and 2 in Luke, then 8 times in Revelation. This was all the Lord said. It was a very ordinary thing. Any farmer had probably experienced this. Yet then He indicates there is more to hear than on the surface!

IV. The Use of Parables. Matthew 13:10-17.

- A. Verse 10. This may have been at a later time, the interpretation being moved to be placed right after the parable. Notice that they imply that this is a change in policy.
- B. Verse 11. “Mysteries” means “secrets,” the Greek *mustEria*. This word refers to a thing formerly kept secret but now revealed. In this case, it is about to be revealed by His interpretation. Every government has its secrets, and the insiders who are allowed to know them. In this case, that is the disciples. Even today, many want no part of a

- message that someday God is going to govern this earth. Why should these be given the secrets? Even the Son of Man sowing this message received varied treatment.
- C. Verse 12. Those who have knowledge can build on it to understand. "Abundance" is in Matthew 5:20 and 14:20, means to have leftover, more than needed. On the other hand, many are unable today to receive precious truths because they simply do not have enough knowledge of the Bible to even build upon to reveal that truth.
 - D. Verse 13. The Lord is referring here to words of Isaiah and shall go on to quote them in the next verse. Some ignore this and teach that the Lord taught in parables to make what He was saying easy to understand. That is not what He said about it!
 - E. Verse 14. Notice again this matter of fulfilling. Isaiah was not predicting these people, but his words were proven true again in their lives. Here it is *anapleroo*, to fulfill once again.

V. Conclusion: The Lord told the great crowd a parable of a farmer sowing seed in a field, and the four kinds of soil the seed landed on. The disciples were confused as to why the Lord started teaching in parables, and He revealed it was to hide the secrets of the kingdom from some and reveal them to others. Let us carefully consider the Lord's words and His interpretations so that we can grasp the secrets of His government, and not be like those who hear and fail to understand.