

## Episode #808 - Matthew 13 Part 2-The Interpretation of the Sower

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 began teaching the multitudes by the use of parables. His first parable was about a farmer who sowed seed on four kinds of soil. The disciples came and asked him why He had started using parables rather than just plain teaching. He explained to them that this was to reveal the truth to some but to hide it from others. He quoted Isaiah 6:9-10 in explaining this, and today we begin by considering this quotation.

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

- A. 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.
1. This is from Isaiah 6:9-10, one of the most quoted passages in the New Testament, in Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, and Romans. This is the first time. The most significant for us dispensationally is Acts 28:26-27.
  2. I do not agree with Bullinger that every time it is quoted it indicates a dispensational change. Yet I do agree that Christ quotes it here to justify His change from plain speech to parables. In this first quotation it is quoted quite in full, as it is in the last (chronologically) in Acts 28.
  3. “Not” here is much stronger than in verse 13, Greek *ou mE*, the two Greek words for “no” put together, which indicates the strongest possible “no,” “By no means.” They did not want to lay hold of the truth to the point where it would have a claim on their lives. They wanted to think about it and debate it but not dedicate themselves to it.
- B. Verse 15. Dull hearts are fat. Our expression is “thick.” Remember what He said about ears to hear back in verse 9! They were hard of hearing, not deaf. Notice that to close eyes is intentional. They must turn because they were heading entirely the wrong way away from God! “Heal” means make whole, not here from physical ailment, but from their stubborn hearts and unbelief.
- C. Verse 16. “Blessed” here is the Greek *makarioi*, meaning “how happy!” Those for whom the message was intended understood it, and those for whom it was not intended, they were left outside.
- D. Verse 17. “Assuredly” is “amen, I say to you.” Prophets are those who spoke the word of God. Righteous is the Greek *dikaios*. Those called this in the New Testament are Joseph Mary’s husband, John the Identifier, Zecharias and Elizabeth, Simeon, Joseph of Arimathea, Cornelius, Abel (in review), Lot (in review), the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

IV. The Interpretation of the Parable of the Sower. Matthew 13:18-23.

- A. Verse 18. Our Lord is going to interpret the parable of the sower. It is simple and straightforward, and once it is given to us, though we might explain some things, yet we should not interpret the interpretation. He says “you hear,” the “you” being emphatic, meaning the privileged disciples, not the people.
- B. Verse 19. “The word of the kingdom” is what the sower sowed. Many get the parable of the wheat and the tares confused with this parable and identify the sower as the

- Son of man. In Luke the good seed is identified as the word of God. I am proclaiming the word of the kingdom. I am a teacher of the Bible and the kingdom of God is a topic in the Bible. I will also proclaim every truth I find in the book. I am seeking in every way to sow the seed of the Word of God and the seed of the kingdom of God. When we speak this and people don't have enough of the Word to recognize it as coming from God's Word it disappears almost immediately and has no effect. The heart is where the word is sown, but sometimes it finds no purchase there whatsoever.
- C. Verse 20. The message of the kingdom is joyful at first, but then one must learn the price for receiving it!
  - D. Verse 21. He grows for a time off the root of the teaching itself, but he has no deep connection to it beyond his shallow liking for the idea. "Tribulation" is the Greek *thlipsis*, meaning "pressure." The offence comes as quickly as the joy. Some like the idea of the kingdom of God at first, and yet because it is something that needs to be studied and pondered over, it needs a lot of time and effort, or when they find that they lose friends or respect because of it, they soon give it all up.
  - E. Verse 22. "This world" is actually "this eon," meaning this flow of things in this world. Such people get caught up in various things of the world and the way it flows so bear little fruit for God's kingdom.
  - F. Verse 23. Good soil is prepared soil. How would you prepare your heart for the receiving of the Word of God? The nicest thing would be to give God a perfectly clean slate to write on, but that we cannot do. Many people have picked up an idea here and a phrase here and a doctrine there and so they come to God in the Word with their slate cluttered with a lot of preconceived ideas. For one thing they place the kingdom of God after the tribulation period, and they make the tribulation out to be the worst time imaginable, so of course they do not hope for or look forward to the kingdom of God with these imagined horrors coming first. Yet the kingdom of God is a much better hope than this. We must learn the basic facts of the Word in order for us to be ready to grow God's truth. We must learn that the work of God is believing in the One He sent, or that by the works of the law no flesh will be justified. The wages of sin is death and eternal life is only a gift from God. Most are simply unready for the truth of God when it comes to them.

V. Conclusion: Parables were used so that those whose hearts were not prepared for God's truth would hear and see and yet not understand and not perceive. The parable of the sower was about the different kinds of hearts that would hear the word of the kingdom of God. Some hearts, completely unready, would immediately shut out the word. Others would receive the message immediately with joy, but as soon as it cost them something they would dismiss it just as immediately. Some would hear the word and yet be so much more concerned with the things of the world that it would get choked out. Yet some would hear and receive the word and bring forth much fruit. The question is: what kind of soil are you?