

Questions for Gospel Harmony #49

Matthew 13.1-23; Mark 4.1-20; Luke 8.4-15

1. When and where did Jesus preach this sermon? In what unique way was this sermon presented? What does the word “parable” mean? (Matthew 13.1-3; Mark 4.1-2; Luke 8.4)
2. Explain the expression “the wayside.” What happened to this seed? What was the problem with the “stony ground”? What happened to this seed? What happened to the seed that fell on thorny ground? What happened to the seed that fell on good ground? (Matthew 13.3-8; Mark 4.3-8; Luke 8.5-8)
3. Explain the phrase “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” When else is this phrase used throughout the Bible. How did the disciples react to this teaching? What was Jesus’ answer to their question? What did Jesus say the disciples were “given to know”? To whom was this not given? Why does Jesus use the word mystery and how does this word relate the concept of parabolic teaching? Explain the phrase: “For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.” (Matthew 13.9-12; Mark 4.9-11; Luke 8.8-10)

4. Which prophecy does Jesus quote? What happens to the ears and eyes of these people, and why? How was the prophecy fulfilled in the people about whom Jesus was speaking? Why did He call His disciples “blessed”? (Matthew 13.14-17; Mark 4.12; Luke 8.6)

5. What did Jesus say would happen if one failed to understand “this parable”? What is the seed? Who is the sower? (Matthew 13.18; Mark 4.13-14; Luke 8.11)

First Soil: What does “the one who received seed on the wayside” represent? How might the devil “take away the word out of” a person’s heart? Why does he do this? (Matthew 13.19; Mark 4.15; Luke 8.12)

Second Soil: What does the “seed received on stony ground represent”? What is this person’s problem? Why does this person “stumble” and “fall away”? (Matthew 13.20-21; Mark 4.16-17; Luke 8.13)

Third Soil: What does “the seed received among the thorns” represent? What “chokes” this person, and what does that illustration mean? What is the result in this person’s life? (Matthew 13.22; Mark 4.18-19; Luke 8.14)

Forth Soil: What kind of heart is represented by “good ground”? How does this person react to the word of God? Why does Jesus describe various degrees of fruitfulness? (Matthew 13.23; Mark 4.20; Luke 8.15)

Matthew 13.1-23; Mark 4.1-20; Luke 8.4-15

On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea. **And again He began to teach by the sea.** And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore **facing the sea.** Then He spoke many things to them in parables, **and said to them in His teaching:** "Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow **his seed.** And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; **and it was trampled down,** and the birds came and devoured them. Some fell on stony places – **on rock,** where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth, **and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture;** when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up **with it** and choked them, **and it yielded no crop.** But others fell on good ground **that sprang up, increased and produced** and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." **When He had said these things He cried,** "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" And the disciples, **those around Him with the twelve,** came **and asked Him about the parable** and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" **"What does this parable mean?"** He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them – **to the rest** - it has not been given; **to those who are outside, all things come in parables.** For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive; for the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them and their sins be forgiven them.' But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.' **And He said to them, 'Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?'** Therefore, hear the parable of the sower; **the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. The sower sows the word.** When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one, **the devil,** comes and snatches away what was sown **and takes away the word out of his heart, lest they should believe and be saved.** This is he who received seed by the wayside. But he who received the seed on stony places, **the ones on the rock,** this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, **for the word's sake,** immediately he stumbles, **and in time of temptation falls away.** Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, **goes out and is choked with the deceitfulness of cares, riches, and pleasures of life,** and he becomes unfruitful **and**

brings no fruit to maturity. But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it and accepts it with a noble and good heart; keeps it, and indeed bears fruit with patience and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”