

## Yeshua Explains the Parable of the Four Soils To Be Like Yeshua Means – To Understand the Parables of the Kingdom

In my last post, we learned why Yeshua spoke in parables. In this post, we will explore His explanation of the parable of the four soils.

***"So listen to what the parable of the sower means. Whoever hears the message about the Kingdom, but doesn't understand it, is like the seed sown along the path - the Evil One comes and seizes what was sown in His heart. The seed sown on rocky ground is like a person who hears the message and accepts it with joy at once, but has no root in himself. So He stays on for a while; but as soon as some trouble or persecution arises on account of the message, He immediately falls away. Now the seed sown among thorns stands for someone who hears the message, but it is choked by the worries of the world and the deceitful glamor of wealth, so that it produces nothing. However, what was sown on rich soil is the one who hears the message and understands it; such a person will surely bear fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirty times what was sown."*** ~ Matthew 13:18-23

### What the Parable of the Four Soils (or the Sower) Means

The **sower** was Yeshua and, by extension, anyone after Him who would teach and preach **the Word** (represented by the seed). Yeshua was telling the parable and exemplifying it; as He spoke of the farmer sowing the seed, He was sowing the **Word** among the crowd of followers. Yeshua was revealing His mission while teaching the emissaries and talmidim about theirs. The parable revealed people's varying responses to the Gospel message. The attitude or condition of their hearts would govern their response. The **Word** makes no impression on some people. For those who hear and do not understand, the seed lands on a hard heart (like the hardened soil of the path). **Then Satan, like the birds of verse 4 snatches it away.** Perhaps the person feels no need in his or her heart, no desire for anything other than this life, no guilt of sin or need of forgiveness. Satan has no trouble with these people.

The seed **sown on rocky ground** had some soil to accept the seed, but not much. These people joyfully receive the Good News of the Gospel because of the promises offered. They grow a bit initially. These people understand some of the basics but do not allow God's truth to work its way into their souls and make a difference in their lives. They have **no root** and thus endure only **for a while**. **When trouble or persecution arises** (the scorching heat, 13:5-6), they decide not to believe the Gospel or its promises and so fall away. Satan can always use sorrow, trouble, and persecution to draw people away from God. Ironically, those who let the message take root in good soil find that sorrow, trouble, and persecution bring them closer to God.

Satan's most subversive tactic of all is when the seed falls among the **thorns**. These people hear and accept the word and allow it to take root in their hearts, giving hope of a harvest. But **thorns** grow up and choke out the growing seed. Thorns rob nutrition, water, light, and space from newly sprouting seeds. **Distractions and conflicts rob new believers of time to reflect on and digest God's Word to grow from it, as well as robbing them of guidance and support from interaction with other Believers.** Yeshua described the **thorns: worries of the world** and **deceitful glamor of wealth**. Worldly worries, the false sense of security brought on by prosperity, and the desire for material things plagued first-century Believers as they do us today. Daily routines overcrowd and materialistic pursuits distract Believers, choking out God's Word so that it **produces nothing**.

Sometimes Yeshua's message is phrased today like a television commercial, and **we buy into it** on those terms - a product that will make us happier. Then troubles come, and we wonder what went wrong. Yeshua promises to help us through life's troubles, not to remove us from them all. Stay with His message because it's true, not because it makes you feel good. When you start to feel discouraged, it's time to get together

with a believing friend for a good talk or maybe a good cry, and prayer. No matter what your reaction will be to the upcoming election, we have to remember that **GOD IS STILL ON THE THRONE AND HE IS IN CONTROL.**

However, other people are like the *rich soil* - they hear the Word and accept it. These are the true talmidim - those who have accepted Yeshua, believed His words, and allowed Him to make a difference in their lives. Notice that the seed *will surely bear fruit*. Those who preach the Word yield others who preach the Word to others who preach the Word and so on. The call to evangelize the world should naturally follow from a life rebuilt around God's Word.

This parable answered the question of why there were so many opinions about Yeshua. Belief ranged from love to hatred and all shades in between. The same is true today. The answer, said Yeshua, lies not in the message, for that is always the same. Neither is the problem caused by the preacher or teacher if he or she sows the message appropriately. The answer is that the message falls on hearts that are in varied degrees of readiness. The message will not be accepted in the same way by all who hear it. God had told the prophet Ezekiel, *"Whether they listen or not, this rebellious house will still know that a prophet has been among them! .... You are to speak my words to them, whether they listen or not, for they are very rebellious."* (Ezekiel 2:5, 7)

Yeshua said the seed sown among thorns yields nothing. When we don't obey God, soon our lives become unusable to him. How easy it is to agree with Messiah with no intention of obeying. It is easy to denounce the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth, and still do nothing to change our ways. Considering eternal life with God, are your present worries justified? If you had everything you could want but forfeited eternal life with God, would those things be so desirable? Don't let worldly cares and the illusion of wealth deter you from obeying God.

What are the lessons we can take away from the Parable of the Four Soils or Sower?

- Hear! Listen for the Lord's voice. Those who have ears, let them hear! As His talmidim, we must listen with solemn attention. Wait a minute, what did you just say, Lord? Yes, Lord, you have my attention and I am listening.
- Blessed are those who hear the Savior's voice. The saints of the Old did not have our privileges of hind-sight; let us value them. We really do know that end of the story.
- Perhaps most importantly we need to pray for an honest and good heart. God can soften the hard hearted; He can make the frivolous thoughtful; He can turn men from the cares of the world to the holy love of Messiah. Pray always; despair not. Plant seeds, and expect the Ruach to produce the harvest.

In my next post, we will continue to explore the other parables in Matthew 13.