



Look at the Book (read Matthew 13:1-23)

Jesus, the greatest of all teachers, used parables often in His teaching. Simply put, a parable is an illustration, sometimes in story form, which uses a natural event to explain an important truth. Jesus used parables in a very interesting fashion. While the meaning would be clear to those who understood who Jesus was, at the same time it would not be clear to those who rejected the Lord. This is the case in this very first and foremost of parables.

Jesus' miracles were to authenticate who He was; He had spoken plainly to the Israelites. They should have understood who He was and should have received Him gladly. But they had rejected Him. So Jesus began to speak to them in parables in order that, while they heard His voice, they would not understand what He meant. However, any seekers among them that clearly desired to know would be able to understand because He would explain the meaning to them.

This parable is clearly explained by the Lord to His disciples and is a key to understanding other parables. The seed is the Word of the kingdom, the sower by implication is the Lord Himself. However, the real point is that as the Word is heard, its fruitfulness is determined by the condition of the soil. The soil is the heart or the seat of understanding. Many hear physically, but do not understand the Word of God; and the reason is the condition of their hearts. One heart is not attentive at all, one is shallow in its understanding—it sounds good, but does not grasp the significance of what is said. The third heart has other things that are more important to it in life than the Word of God. But the fourth heart hears, understands, and brings forth fruit. This is not only the evidence of life, but the only purpose for which the seed is sown. The Lord is looking for fruit from the seed sown in your heart. Is it evident?

1. Although frequently used as an application for “sinners of the Gentiles” hearing the gospel, what evidences are there in the parable of The Sower that the Lord Jesus is actually referring to people who are already blest with a certain knowledge of God?
2. Discuss one of the “soils” and how you have experienced it in your own life or could see it happening to you.
3. What reason did the Lord give His disciples for speaking in parables? Reference?
4. What Old Testament passage does the Lord Jesus quote in this regard?
5. Christ was aware that the people did not understand when He spoke in parables. Why do you suppose He continued to use them as a prominent teaching method?
6. In the passage, one verse seems to stand out as the point of the whole lesson. What is it?



A Verse for the Heart

Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. (1 Peter 1:23)