THE PARABLES OF JESUS



Receptivity & Conditions of the Soul
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Matthew 13:3-23
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Matthew 13:3-23
Then he told them many things in parables, saying: “A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. Whoever has ears, let them hear.”

The disciples came to him and asked, “Why do you speak to the people in parables?” He replied, “Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will

be taken from them. This is why I speak to them in parables: ‘Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand.
In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:
‘You will be ever hearing but never understanding;
you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.
For this people’s heart has become calloused;
they hardly hear with their ears,
and they have closed their eyes.
Otherwise they might see with their eyes,
hear with their ears,
understand with their hearts
and turn, and I would heal them.’

But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. For truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it. Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”

Jesus never tells us what the kingdom of God *is*, only what the kingdom of God is *like*.

Matthew 13:10-13
The disciples came to him and asked, “Why do you speak to the people in parables?” He replied, “Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will

be taken from them. This is why I speak to them in parables: “Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand.

Matthew 13:18
“Listen then to what the parable of the sower means…”

Jesus uses parables to reveal the receptivity and condition of the soul, which is what this whole parable is about.

Matthew 13:13
This is why I speak to them in parables:
“Though seeing, they do not see;
though hearing, they do not hear or understand.”

The Seed & the Soil -or- The Words of Jesus & the Receptivity & Conditions of the Soul

Matthew 13:18-19
“Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path.”

All Jesus’ teachings will come to you in seed form

Matthew 13:19
“When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path.”

Matthew 13:5-6; 20-21
“Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root…The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But

since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away."

"When I assented to the faith that was latent within me— and I phrase it carefully, deliberately, for there was no white light, no ministering or avenging angel that tore my life in two; rather it seemed as if the tiniest seed of belief had finally flowered in me, or, more accurately, as if I had happened upon some rare flower deep in the desert and had known, though I was just then discovering it, that it has been blooming impossibly year after parched year in me, surviving all the seasons of my unbelief."

- Christian Wiman, *My Bright Abyss: Meditation of a Modern Believer*

Matthew 13:7, 22
"Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants…The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful."

Matthew 13:23
"But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."