

## *Matthew Lesson 17*

By now, people are making up their minds about who this amazing Rabbi Yeshua is, and many believe He is the promised One, the Messiah sent by G-d.

But, in spite of the power Yeshua had powerfully displayed over every realm including death, the comments of some of the Pharisees and teachers of the day linking Him to Beelzubub and with satanic power, there were many who joined with these and did not believe Yeshua as the Messiah sent by G-d. Yeshua pronounces judgment on that group and moves on to the topic we will begin study today - the mysteries of the Kingdom of G-d and what these mean to both believer and unbeliever!

Yeshua is going to teach in parables. Parables both challenge and teach in a venue that is familiar to the people being taught. Rabbis of Yeshua's day often taught in a field growing produce or in an orchard or vineyard or on a porch of the temple - places where the people spend their time and energy. Parables are to challenge us to think. Today, Yeshua is on the shores of the Galilee. There are so many people gathered to hear Him, that He gets into a boat along the banks to be better heard.

Parable comes from the Hebrew word "mashal." **A mashal is used to teach an unknown reality by making a comparison with a known truth.**

Yeshua's parables reveal truth to true seekers or believers and conceal truth to those who have chosen not to want the truth.

Yeshua is going to emphasize the line being drawn between believers and those who are rejecting Him and His message.

Keep in mind as we get into this first parable that there was a lot of agriculture around the Galilee, so people were familiar with this way of life. **The people of the area know farming, so Yeshua will teach an unknown truth, using a known way of life which is farming.**

**Matthew 13:1-3** On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat 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. Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: **Behold, a sower went out to sow.**

Right away we see this story is going to be told around a farm scene as farmers sowed seeds.

**Matthew 13:4-9** *And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. But 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 and choked them. But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!*

1. Was there anything wrong with any of the seeds? Is the seed bad? Is the sower bad?

What was the problem that caused some seed not to grow?

What is "good ground" to be compared to?

OK - Let's see if we passed.....



**Matthew 13:18-23** 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.

2. This entire parable is about what?

Then Yeshua gives examples of 4 kinds of people, or 4 kinds of hearts, who will hear and react to the message of the kingdom.

1. The wayside or roadside represents an area where the soil is not even able to receive the seed. This would represent the people who were rejecting the message of the kingdom. Later, Yeshua will equate the "birds" with the evil one who snatches away the seed.

2. In the rocky places there is some soil though it is not deep, and the seed immediately springs up. However, the root is not there. Without a root it will wither and die.

It might look healthy for a time, but it will not last when hard times come. If there is no root, hard times or persecution will cause the plant to die, like a tree without roots.

3. The thorny soil could grow seed, but the cares of the world choke out the message of the kingdom. The cares are more important than the kingdom! Riches, He says are deceitful, but this person is more interested in riches than the kingdom. These are unfruitful, their energies go into making money, not adding to the kingdom.

Who needs to guard against this?

4. The bottom line is the good soil produces something. The message of the kingdom is not to be hidden, it is to be shared. It is meant to produce a crop by the one who believes.

Adding to the kingdom produces others who also will go out and add to the kingdom. Being a believer is not a static thing.

Yeshua is sending out His disciples with the message of the kingdom.

We are His disciples. We are to be adding others to the kingdom.

Matthew 13:10-17 And the disciples came and said to Him, Why do You speak to them in parables? 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 it has not been given. 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.' 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.**

In these words we see that the **parables Yeshua is teaching can be either a blessing or a judgment depending on whether one is seeking the truth of G-d's Kingdom.** If those who are **not interested in the truth**, but in their own power of riches, etc, **these parables show judgment.**

Then He quotes Isaiah telling them their hearts had grown dull.

3. Do you think this is a problem today?

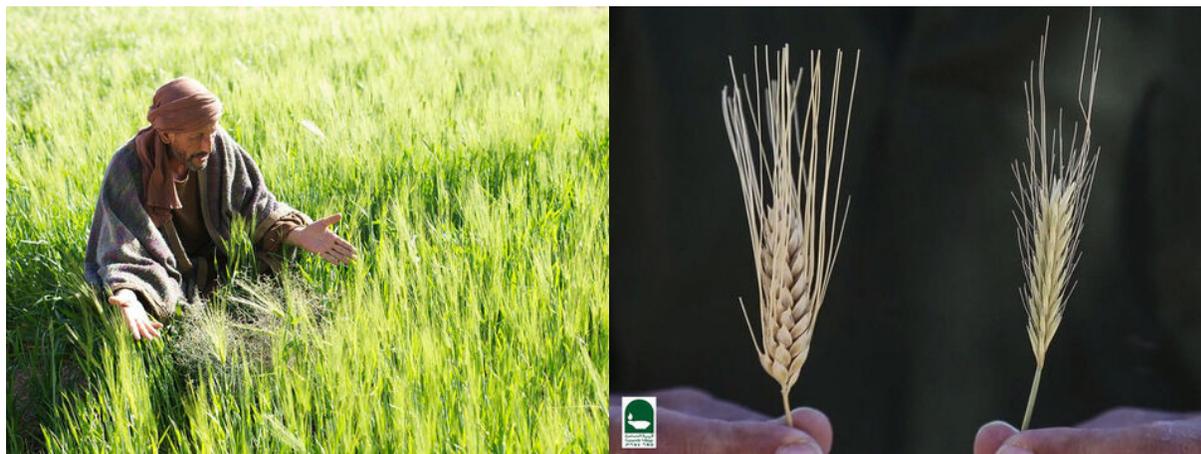
Are people flocking to hear the truth of the Kingdom of G-d?

We pray this is so, but Yeshua tells these people that what they are seeing and hearing the prophets and the righteous desired to see, but they did not see it.

But now, The Kingdom of G-d had arrived, and Yeshua the Messiah was among them, and they would not believe!

**Matthew 13:24-30** Another parable He put forth to them, saying: **The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. So the servants of the owner came and said to him, Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares? He said to them, An enemy has done this. The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up? But he said,**

No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.



Matthew here refers to the Kingdom of heaven rather than the Kingdom of G-d. There is no distinction, these are one and the same. The word "heaven" is substituted for G-d to protect the sanctity of the name, but it is the same Kingdom either way.

The first observation we can make about this parable is that the seed that was sown was good seed. The first example of seed being sown, showed us the problem was with the person - receiving the seed or the gospel of the Kingdom.

Now we are going to see a different problem.

This time, "an enemy" comes. Of course, the enemy is no other than Satan.

He plants his seed - weeds which look like the real thing - until the fruit begins to be produced. The tares do not produce fruit.

The tares do not produce fruit.

First of all, notice that the workers of the field are asleep! They are not watching when the enemy comes right into the field - or the community of Yeshua - and plants the false believers. How do you recognize the tares - the false believers? You look at their fruit. Are they stirring up trouble? Do they bring peace and joy into situations?

Are they bringing people into the Kingdom? Are they excited about the Lord's return? Do they join in the work of the kingdom or are they spreading gossip, standing back and watching everyone else work? Are they serving, are they encouraging?

So the workers ask: Do you want us to go and pull them up?

But Yeshua says, No, leave them; for if you pull them up, some of the true believers may be pulled up also.

4. How does this show the compassion of Yeshua for the baby believer or the immature believer who is growing? Does this give the mature believers responsibility toward these "less grounded" believers?

The tares are the lawless, and they are stumbling blocks to the kingdom moving forward. And what is their end? They will be gathered up, bound and burned. Yeshua says there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Matthew 13:42c

The main point we have to get is that the Messiah is the sower, and He plants good seed - true believers. And what will be their end?

**Daniel 12:3** Then the wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness will shine like the stars forever and ever.

And now Yeshua changes from farming to hidden treasures as He continues to teach in parables.

It is interesting to note that only Matthew records the next two parables, showing us their very Jewish nature.

**Matthew 13:44** Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

Let's discuss the idea that **these two parables about the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price** are tied into the rich young ruler who Yeshua told to go and sell everything he had and follow Him.

5. What was Yeshua saying?

There is a cost to discipleship or servanthood.

You are working for a kingdom that is more valuable than even a rich man's wealth. Even a rich man's wealth is worth giving up for the kingdom!



We see that his reaction is totally different than the rich young ruler.

And there is another aspect of this to look at in

**Proverbs 2:4** So that you incline your ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to understanding; Yes, if you cry out for discernment, And lift up your voice for understanding, If you seek her as silver, And **search for her as for hidden treasures**

This parable is about the kingdom and Proverbs compares wisdom discernment and understanding with hidden treasures also.

7. Can you find the treasures of the kingdom without studying the Torah?

“Rabbi Pinhas ben Yair opened [his discourse with] *If you will seek it like silver and search for it like hidden treasures* [Prov. 2:4]: If you search for even one of the words of the Torah as you would for these hidden treasures [כְּמַטְמוֹנִים], be assured that the Holy One, blessed be he, will not hold back your reward.” {Song Rab. 1.1.9 {ed. Etelsohn, 18}}

8. Does the Kingdom of Heaven become more dear to you, or more of a treasure to you as you study and learn the deep hidden treasures of Torah?

**Matthew 14:45,46** *Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.*

9. What are we willing to do to be servants in this kingdom? What does it mean to be servants in this kingdom?

In Jewish thinking, and as is made clear from these two parables, here are four requirements of a servant of the kingdom:

We are going to compare our servanthood with that of Eliezer's service to Abraham. Abraham trusted Eliezer with everything as Yeshua is trusting us with His Kingdom. He is trusting us to take His Kingdom out to all in the earth and He's trusting us to be establishing His Kingdom on earth.

What is the cost of this servanthood?

The Hebrew word for servant is eved (ayin,veit,daled)

1. We must **know the Master personally and have circumcised hearts** as **Luke 16:13** No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. No tares will be servants of the kingdom.

10. Did we see this with the rich young ruler? He had a divided heart.

2. **Ratzon**: means RUN. You must run to do the Master's will. There is No thought of saying, No.

It is as though you don't have a will of your own. Whatever it takes we will get the job done. Eliezer brought Rebecca back to Isaac even though that must have seemed an almost impossible job. He did not hesitate.

**Isaiah 6:8** Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying: "Whom shall I send? Who will go for Us?" And I said: "Here am I. Send me!" - There was no hesitation in this answr.

**This is a nullification of your own will. In Hebrew called "bitul."**

3. **Expectation**: Have 100% assururity that G-d will act to help and do whatever you are doing for the glory of the Master

**Genesis 24:14** O LORD, God of my master Abraham, he prayed, **please grant me success today,** and **show kindness to my master Abraham.**

**Notice** it says **Please, today!** **This is expectation.**

And Eliezer was willing to go. He did not know the outcome, but he had confident expectation.

4. **Submission (Baruch)**

**Genesis 24:27 Blessed** be to the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has not abandoned his kindness and faithfulness to my master. ... The LORD has shown unfailing love and faithfulness to my master, for he has led me straight to my master's relatives.

The word “blessed” in Hebrew is “baruch,” which means to bow the knee. Recognize that all good comes from our Master, Yeshua. That any good we do is not our might or our power but by the power of the Spirit. As the Lord said to Zerubbabel in:

**Zechariah 4:6** So he answered and said to me: “This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ Says the Lord of hosts. Even Isaiah and Moses knew they were not qualified for the job, we must acknowledge our inadequacy – and at the same time not let our inadequacy prevent us from doing the work.

5. Eliezer is willing to die for the message.  
Eliezer was offered food, but he turned it down saying,

Genesis 24:33 *Food* was set before him to eat, but he said, “I will not eat until I have told about my errand.” And he said, “Speak on.”

Eliezer was not concerned about his own needs. His top priorities were to do His master's will – to get the job done regardless of the cost to him. His zeal was for his master.

Yeshua said John 6:38 **For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.**

Remember He prayed that if the

**Luke 22:42** saying, **Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.**

Yeshua was willing to die to do His Father's will.  
A servant of the King is willing to die to do His Father's will...

To sum up, *A Servant of the Kingdom*

**Knows His Master**

**He Runs** to do His Master's will – canceling his own will.

**He Expects** G-d to send the desired result, so he works with confidence.

**He Blesses** the Lord whose Spirit is working to bring the desired results, acknowledging our inadequacies.

**He is willing to die** to do His Father's will!

Comparing the pearl of great price - whether you are poor or rich, the kingdom of heaven is so valuable it is worth everything you have - it is worth rearranging all of your priorities to obtain it.

*How might you explain the worth of the kingdom of heaven to someone?*