



AND he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, *Behold, a sower went forth to sow;*⁴ *And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up;*⁵ *Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:*⁶ *And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.*⁷ *And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:*⁸ *But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.*⁹ *Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.* (Matthew 13:3-9)

The last verse of the above text is of profound meaning. I hope that the reader will understand, at least in a general sense, the meaning of the Seed and the four different kinds of soil. It is for certain that the world neither cares, nor is able, to grasp the depth of meaning here. Our Lord does not make reference to our physical ears, but rather to those of our spirit. The ears of the world are dead to the spirit. ¹⁷ *For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.* ¹⁸ *For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.* ¹⁹ *For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.* ²⁰ *Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?* ²¹ *For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”* (1 Corinthians 1:17-21)

If we have put on that Mind which was in Christ, we do not need to be mind-readers to understand the mysteries He reveals to His people. *“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:”* Philippians 2:5 But He leaves no doubt in the mind of His people in further explaining what may appear arcane in His parables. For those who persevere in Scripture study and do not stop at the first paragraph, the Lord will add further meaning to fill our lapse of understanding, just as He does to this parable at hand:

“¹⁸ Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.¹⁹ When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.²⁰ But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;²¹ Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.²² He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.²³ But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.” (Matthew 13:18-23)

Clearly, in this parable, our Lord refers to the Word of God being sewn abroad in the world without distinction of the properties of the hearts which hear it. It has its desired effect upon those who hear and believe, as well as those who hear and reject. *“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”* (Hebrews 4:12) The Word of God always accomplishes one of two objects – it either convicts the hearer of the need to repent and turn to God; or, else, it convicts the sinner and renders him without excuse to declare that *“no one ever told me”* before the Judgment Seat of God. The Sower is Christ, or the ministers of His Gospel, in this parable. The sower is not as concerned about the reception of the Seed as he is concerned with the sowing at random.

The farmer sows seed in his field. Once sewn, he has little control over its germination in the darkness of the subsoil. Naturally, he will try to maintain an environment suitable for germination, but the germination itself is done at a far higher paygrade. This is also true of the Word of God. We should not become angry or frustrated that someone to whom we share the Gospel does not accept it. The acceptance was never our responsibility. Our responsibility is to sow the seed and to allow the Holy Spirit to perform the germination process in the dark chambers of the heart of the hearer. The process of conversion has never been a human approach of conviction – that is solely the role of the Holy Spirit following the Providence of our God who foreordains and predestinates.

The Word of God is likened to the very BEST of Seed. It is kept back as the favored quality of the farmer’s crop each year. Likewise, there is no Seed like unto that Word which God sows into the heart of man and causes to germinate in the darkness until the blade and bloom burst forth into the brightness of the Sun. *“. . . thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.”* (Psalm 138:2) *“Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.”* (Psalm 119:140)

The farmer must first prepare the good ground to receive the seed. Frequently, the ground is not suitable to bear fruit, but if that ground is all that is available to the farmer, he must sow and hope for the blessing. The ground must be broken and turned, weeded and fertilized. In comparison to the Word of God, this responsibility falls to the Church in creating a righteous fellowship where the Word of God is freely preached with power and strong conviction. The youth should be taught from earliest understanding. The aged should also feel the love of Christ from others of the church in their waning years. One aspect greatly neglected in churches today is the weeding process. Church discipline of lifestyle and speech must be enforced. The hearts of men are naturally hard as soil left without cultivation. Those hearts need softening by love and teaching.

The farmer, once the Seed are sown, must cover the seed with nourishing soil to protect it from the hot sun and predators. Likewise, the Word of God must be hidden

and covered in the coverts of our hearts just as King David did: *"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."* Psalm 119:11 (KJV) This by no means should be understood to mean that we hide our testimony or faith in Christ, but place that precious Word in the Safe-Box of our Heart to protect our souls from wicked inclinations and bad company.

We may share the Gospel to many people more than once without any apparent acceptance, but underneath the soil of the heart, that seed may be germination (it is not instantaneous) and may sprout forth in times unexpected. When that happens, the farmer, and the preacher, are gladdened in heart.

Though we may not account them so, certain hardships of weather contribute to the germination process of the seed. Snow and frost may kill off menacing weeds from the surface under which the seed are germinating. It is true of the Christian life as well that trials and tribulations often strengthen faith and testimony.

Seed sown early in season will have better time to develop deep root systems and survive future adverse conditions. Youth, taught aright from the time of their first light, will have developed strong spiritual bones and muscles to face any future challenge to their faith. *"Train up a child in the way that he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it."* (Proverbs 22:6) The Bible tells us that children are like arrows in a man's quiver. ³ *Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.* ⁴ *As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.* ⁵ *Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate."* (Psalm 127:3-5) Think about those verses! Arrows require cutting and preparing. They need to be made straight and polished to eliminate air friction and to enhance accuracy of flight. The need to be feather with the guidance of the Holy Ghost for when they leave our bow. The aim of the arrow is critical, for once the arrow is placed in the bow, drawn back for discharge, and released, the archer has no further control on its destination. We must prepare our children as carefully as we safely shelter (in our quiver), prepare, polish, and aim our arrows. Once they are out of our care, we will exercise little influence over their direction.

Remember, too, that the farmer must be up early and home late in order to produce much fruit. Every hour light must be taken to heart. The farmer works in the day while work is possible, for in the night, no man can work.

These are just a few physical illustrations of how seeds are like the Word of God. There are many, many additional ways that time and paper will not allow. It is my desire that the reader will embark on a tour of the fields of God to discover even other ways which illustrate the Seed of God's Word in the natural environment.