

## The Ground of the Heart

Mt 13:3-23 — The sower is the incarnate Word. The seed is the word of the kingdom, the message of His rule and reign now and forever, as we must all confess Him as King, as Sovereign (Rom 10:9-10). Confessing Him as *Lord* implies absolute surrender, as Lk 14:31-33, to His sovereignty, the King of Kings, Sovereign of Sovereigns (Lk 12:24-26).

The four places the seed can fall are:

- 1) Mt 13:4 — pathway
- 2) Mt 13:5 — rocky places
- 3) Mt 13:7 — thorns
- 4) Mt 13:8 — good ground or soil

Mt 13:4 — The wayside, places along the way or path, hardened by the travelers on the path, which makes it difficult for the seeds to go into the ground to penetrate down to the good soil underneath. This pathway is the heart that is hardened by worldly travelers astute in the knowledge of the world, who cannot hear so as to understand or comprehend the words of the kingdom of God (verse 19).

The birds represent the evil spirits of this world which make one inclined to love his life in this world, so the seed could not die as Jn 12:24-25. The birds came and snatched away the word (seed) of the kingdom of Yahshua's reign now and forever, which was sown in his hardened heart, hardened by the love of this world or the love for his own life in this world.

### The Stony Places (Oppositional Thinkers)

The rocky ground which does not have much dirt on top is the heart that is shallow, not willing to receive the word of the kingdom. Down under the soil of his heart it is rocky, which could be a variety of things:

- 1) He is not willing to do the will of God (Jn 7:17);

- 2) he wants to be rich (Mk 10:21-22); or
- 3) he wants to be highly educated, an exalted leader, seeking his own personal glory and recognition (Jn 12:26).

The “rocks” are whatever keeps the seed from taking root in the depths of his heart and soul. The rocks short-circuit the proper response. As verse 6 says, after he took in the word or seeds, the sun rose and scorched what had sprung from the ground, and since the seed did not take root in deep soil, they withered up (verses 20-21). The sun signifies persecution and suffering.

Maybe his worldly parents (or wife, husband, children, possessions, selfish motives) convinced him to not be a disciple, or they paid a deprogrammer to brainwash him, and it worked since it was the shallowness of the soil that caused the seed that was sown to spring up so quickly (verse 5) and then be scorched, because it was so shallow in his heart (or mind). The heat of the sun is for the growth and ripening of the crop, which happens only when the seed has deeply rooted. But because of the seed’s lack of depth of root, the sun’s heat which should have caused the growth and ripening of the plant instead became the destruction of the plant. The vitality of the seed to produce many other seeds was lost (Jn 12:24). The “sun” — hardship, or suffering, or persecution they consider hardship — only removes the insincere from among the good-soil hearts. The abundant life is torture to them.

Mt 13:7 — The thorns represent the cares of this world (verse 22), including family members (Mk 10:17,21,28-30; Mt 10:34-37; Lk 12:49-53), the cares of life (Jn 12:25), the deceitfulness of riches (Mt 13:22), which choke the word of the kingdom and cause it to be unfruitful (Jn 15:8), not bearing the harvest of Jn 12:24 and Mt 13:8. Unfruitfulness may indicate a tare or wicked servant (Lk 19:13,22; Mt 25:14-30).

The good soil or ground means the good, receptive heart of one who is willing to do God’s will (Jn 7:17) upon hearing the word of the kingdom by a righteous sent one (Jn 7:18; Mt 10:40-41; Jn 13:20; Lk 10:16; Rom 10:14-17).

The good soil is the heart of Abraham (Gen 18:19) not hardened by the worldly travelers on the path of death — a heart without hidden, unconfessed sins, a heart without the cares of this life (family, education, job status, riches, drugs, music, parents, friends, skills of one's occupation, recognition; Jn 12:26; Acts 2:40), a heart without the deceitfulness of making it big, wanting to be somebody, a heart which gives all it has to receive the seed of faith (Rom 10:17), giving all of its soil to receive the seed which springs up to eternal life, receiving the word which causes it to surrender as the rich young ruler would not do (Rev 21:6-8, a coward; Jn 3:18,36). Such a heart produces even a hundredfold (Mt 13:23).

Mt 13:34 — The parables remain mysteries only to those who are not willing to do His will. They're "all set" — they say, "No thanks, I'm all set." These things cannot be revealed to the natural mind, but only to the mind of one who has receptive soil, for whom there are no obstacles he cannot overcome by the faith of the word he hears.

The way back to your first joy is opened when you remove the hindrance of a divided heart. Mt 13:9 is the essential need for a teachable, hearing heart in which the seed of the kingdom takes root. Mt 13:43 is the effect of the removal of all hindrances to the seed reaching the depth of the heart.

Stone or rock is formed by the crystallization of learned patterns, iniquities inherited and accumulated in childhood, perversions and thought patterns from the very beginning of a person's life. So what were those rocks in the shallow soil of a man's heart which would not let the seed go down to take root in the deep soil? (Mt 13:20-21)

Rocks are whatever is not forsaken in response to the many other words (Mt 28:20; Acts 2:40), things not yet reached by the "hard words." The person may turn out to be the coward and disbeliever of Rev 21:8 (1 Jn 5:13; 2:4; Jn 12:24-26).

The rocks hinder the word or the seed from reaching the deep soil of the heart. What is it that you did not forsake in your baptism which prevented the Holy Spirit's entry into your heart? In Acts 8:18, what were the rocks in his heart which prevented the

word to reach the depths of his heart? Self-glory, self-seeking, selfishness — Self! Self! Self! These things are what caused the world to be the way it is today (Rom 1:28-31) and Christianity the way it is (2 Tim 2:26; 3:1-14). The rocks will prevent one from continuing as in 2 Tim 3:14, exposing his initial response to be superficial joy, not long-lasting zeal. Acts 5:1ff exposes the rocks of doubt, with which no one can have a trusting relationship with the Master, but remain in the trap of Satan (Mk 8:34-38).

Christians have learned from those who turn one into twice the son of Sheol as themselves (Mt 23:15) — self-seeking preachers (Jn 7:18). But Paul was not so. He had no more rocks in him to throw at anyone anymore. So many have not given up their rocks. They keep throwing them at others besides themselves.

Blame yourself and live.

Blame others and die.

We cannot progress past our failure to forget the past (Phil 3:10-14).

### **Expose the Roots of Selfishness**

In presenting the gospel to anyone, especially the “many other words” of Acts 2:37-40, we must always make sure the seed we plant in them goes all the way into the fertile ground of their heart, not on hard ground or rocky soil or anything that would choke out the Word. Remove all the rocks that may detain the seed from reaching the depth of their heart in order to produce much fruit and not wither at the sun’s rays of persecution, hardship, or the riches of this world.

Remove all obstacles.