

Comparing Parables

by Bill and Karen Bishop

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Matthew 13:11

(11) ... it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

When asked why He taught in parables, Y'shua indicated that not everyone would be given the understanding of the mysteries He was passing along. This is not snobbishness; it is fore-knowledge of the soul condition of many who would hear Him. We will soon begin to realize the importance of this soul condition.

Matthew chapter 13 is known for its listing of parables from the mouth of Y'shua himself. When reading this chapter recently, a phrase jumped out at us in the verse that follows the parable of the sower with these words of "mystery" that Y'shua spoke:

Matthew 13:12

(12) For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

What does this mean? It seems so contrary to natural thought. Why would Elohim remove even the little someone had? In a comparable passage, we find that not only is this little bit removed; but it is given to one who has much - and the one from whom it is taken is chastened because he was unprofitable.

Matthew 25:28-30

(28) Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.

(29) For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

(30) And cast ye the **unprofitable servant** into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The first reference of removing from the one who has little follows closely on the heels of the parable of the "sower", (in Matthew 13:3-9 & 18-23). Since the wording is so similar to the end result of the parable of the "talents" (in

Matthew 25:14-30), let's compare these two parables for a moment.

In the latter parable, a master presents some "talents" to his servants, according to their abilities. Five are given to one, two to another, and one to yet another. They are expected to use these talents in such a way that they multiply their value. This implies the idea of bearing "fruit" for the kingdom of Elohim. Because the servant with only one talent buries his instead of investing it for advancement of the kingdom, he is viewed as a "wicked and slothful servant", and his talent is taken from him and given to the one who wisely uses the many talents he is given.

Now let's look back to the "sower" parable. The seed symbolizes the Word of Yah, and the variances in the end result are due to the value placed on the Word of Yah by the one who receives it. The soil represents the soul condition of the recipient. The productivity of the seed points to the fruit the recipient bears in the kingdom of Elohim.

In the first case the recipient's heart is so denigrated toward Yah that the seed falls away, and the enemy steals it before it can penetrate. As a result, there is no understanding of the Word of Elohim at all, if not complete denial of it.

In the second case, the seed takes root (the Word is somewhat meaningful to the recipient), but the root is pitifully stunted due to the stony shallow conditions of the soil (soul); and difficulties end its growth.

In a third instance, the seed falls into thorny soil. Y'shua informs us that these spiritual thorns are deceptions, as well as worldly riches and interests. The soul is so absorbed with worldly endeavors and so corrupted by the world's deceptions that productivity is curtailed.

It is only in the fourth case that good production results. The yield varies, but each recipient is able to bring forth fruit fit for the kingdom of Elohim – some 30-fold, some 60-fold, and some 100-fold.

Each of the first three cases of the sower parable would be equivalent to the servant in the talent parable who buries his talent. There is no increase or fruitful production for the kingdom use. Those in the sower parable who bare varying amounts of increase would be equivalent to the servants who increase their talents, and are praised as being "good and faithful servants". They are richly rewarded, even being given the talent that had been buried so they can advance it as well.

In a similar typological fashion, our Bible relates consequences for failing to

use what we are given to produce good fruit.

Luke 3:9

(9) And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

As it relates to humans, this fire is a figurative reference to the Divine fire of Yah to burn away the improper mindset. The casting into outer darkness of the unprofitable servant in Matthew 25:30 above is also a similar figure of chastisement.

In the sower parable, it becomes painfully obvious that only the soul that remains steadfast and grows fruit based on the Word of Elohim can be pleasing to Father. That is true for the parable of the talents as well. If the soul is slothful, it will not multiply the talent it was given. The talents imply a Divine impartation, much as the gifts of the Spirit specified in other New Testament pages.

The question then becomes: How do we make use of the gifts imparted to us by the Holy Spirit? If these two parables work together to help us see the importance of producing good fruit, then the "Word" of Elohim ("the seed" in the parable of the sower) and the Holy Spirit aspect (from the parable of the talents) must join hands in our advancement of these gifts. We cannot attain true productivity without looking to both the Word (which is repeatedly called the Truth) and the guidance of Yah's Spirit.

John 4:24

(24) God is a Spirit: and they that worship him **must** worship him in spirit and in truth.

We'll focus first on the Holy Spirit aspect. Paul exhorts us to be led by the Holy Spirit:

Romans 8:14

(14) For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Yet, often we allow the soul to take the lead. The fruit of one being led by his soul will be different from the one being led by Yah's Spirit.

Paul speaks of Believers as being those who build upon the foundation of Y'shua. The **soul** of the Believer can build (produce fruit) based loosely upon this foundation, but it is only when the **Spirit** directs and the Believer carries through those directives that the resulting fruit is actually fruit of the

Spirit. We see these two types of fruit more clearly identified in 1 Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 3:11-15

(11) For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

(12) Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

(13) Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

(14) If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

(15) If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

The fruit of man's walk is brought forth by the soul, but it is to be fruit that is birthed by Yah's Spirit then manifested through the soul. This type of fruit is what we refer to as "**fruit of the Spirit**". When the Holy Spirit is deleted from this process, the soul bears unsanctioned self-initiated fruit, which we designate to be "**fruit of the soul**".

Yah sees this "fruit of the Spirit" as being gold, silver, and precious stones (which will survive the fire); whereas He views the fruit of the soul as wood, hay, and stubble (which will be burned up). It is important to comprehend the admonition at the end of this passage which states that the one who's works are all burned will still be saved, yet so as by fire.

This difference of that which is burned in this fire and that which will survive it appears to be the difference between works (fruit) of the soul and works (fruit) of the Spirit. This differentiation from our vantage point sometimes becomes a blurry picture; but from Yah's vista, the picture is sharp. The works in question are either orchestrated with the wisdom of Yah's Spirit; OR they are originated by the mind, heart, or will of the man (the soul) for any number of rationally derived reasons – and He knows which are which. Both types of works are built upon the foundation of Y'shua (verse 11), as the one performing the works is a believer in Y'shua. A Believer's works of the soul apart from the Holy Spirit can seem to be beneficial, yet such works are not divinely ordained. They may actually work against Yah's greater purposes. Only those directed by His Spirit will be gold, silver and precious stones.

Another verse by Y'shua that especially prompts us to be properly discriminating of our works, and further illustrates the requisite to bearing

fruit of the Spirit is:

Matthew 15:13

(13) But he answered and said, Every plant, **which my heavenly Father hath not planted**, shall be rooted up.

Then the very next verse in Matthew shows us that if a person consistently produces only plants (works/fruit) brought forth through the soul rather than plants (works/fruit) which Father initiates by His Holy Spirit, he is viewed as blind. If he teaches others to do the likewise, both will fall into the ditch.

Matthew 15:14

(14) Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

Paul presents the reality of a spirit of this world:

Ephesians 2:2

(2) Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

It is this spirit that speaks to the soul, and can sound so much like Yah's Holy Spirit when it finds advantage in that delusion. The willfully independent soul will be drawn to this voice and will be deceived into thinking he is in alignment with the Holy Spirit when he is not. This should not be:

John 10:4

(4) And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

His true sheep know the proper voice because the voice of Yah's Spirit aligns perfectly to the full counsel of His Scripture. The soul must learn to reject the alternate voice, and yield fully to the Spirit of Yah. It must be conformed to the Spirit in order for the soil of the soul to be in the proper condition to receive the seed of the Divine Word (as in the parable of the sower). This is where the "in spirit and truth" axiom of the John 4:24 equation (above) enters the picture.

When the desire of the soul is to align to Father's ways, then the seed of His Word can be properly divided. It envelops the heart and enables the recipient to develop the fruit of the Spirit that Yah desires. It is through the conformity to this very Word that the Spirit guides the Believer in his every-

day life.

Conversely, if the deception offered by some well-meaning pastors takes root, the soil of the soul will become terribly thorny, choking off the proper use of the gifts of the Spirit. The thorns of this deception can be deadly.

Matthew 7:16

(16) Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

Properly dividing the Word comes through studying it, while equipped with the wisdom imparted by the Holy Spirit:

2 Timothy 2:15

(15) Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

The word “dividing” in this verse is Strong's #G3718 (“orthotomeō”). Though it means: *to divide*, it is not division in the sense of cutting apart the text into opposing segments. It actually means: *to discern properly; equivalent to doing right; without perversion; to proceed on straight paths; hold a straight course; to teach the truth directly and correctly.*

It is simply to cut away error and derive the straight course of the pure intent of the Word.

The Word of Elohim is first presented in Torah, and then it is repeated and amplified as the Bible expands. However, the foundation of Torah remains intact throughout this progression. Other of our writings address this, so we won't repeat the evidence here. We will simply stress that the STRAIGHT gate is the gate of the eyes through which the Torah is viewed as the foundation. In this gate, there are no twists of distorted understandings due to contrived interpretations which dismiss Torah. This straight gate view is a pure perspective that incorporates Torah Law with its values and parameters into the hearts; so the walk will be one of righteousness.

The narrow path is the one that maintains the parameters of Torah. The Torah instruction remains paramount to the one who receives the seed with joy and produces abundant fruit of the Spirit while traversing the narrow way. Again, other of our writings show the integration of the Word and the Spirit as being of a singular Truth and essence, so we won't belabor that here. We will simply assert that there is but a singular Divine Truth and essence, and the Word and the Spirit will be in total harmony. Our book Two Trees, Two Kingdoms, Two Kings presents our entire perspective that

may be of further interest for your study.

Walking the narrow way produces fruit that is inspired BY the Spirit (fruit of the Spirit), and it will be pleasing to our heavenly Father. Choosing the wide gate and the broad path often leads to the production of the unsanctioned fruit of the soul we have discussed. This happens when the soul takes comfort in the false interpretations of theologians and the traditions of men. This false trust is an entrance into the wide gate, and assures that the recipient will traverse the broad way of non-Torah parameters. The fruit of the soul that typically follows is not pure in the Father's eyes.

Some will even profess the name of Jesus while doing works generated by the soul, but that doesn't mean these works will actually be pleasing to Father, or to Y'shua. While on this path, they will not be following the precepts of Torah instruction that are vital for compliance. They will be building on the "foundation" of "Jesus Christ", but producing wood, hay, and stubble. Furthermore, it appears that they may be viewed as being in lawlessness (termed "iniquity" in much of the Biblical text).

Matthew 7:21-23

(21) **Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.**

(22) Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

(23) And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: **depart from me, ye that work iniquity.**

This iniquity is simply "lawlessness", which may be nothing more than walking without the proper Torah parameters – the very parameters that the Father established to show us what His will is for us. It is simply by honoring the fullness of His Father's precepts that we are viewed by Y'shua as doing the will of His Father.

Have you ever wondered why even theologians sometimes refer to Torah as "the Law" instead of "the Laws" (plural)? Maybe that is because the parameters given by Torah for our way of life are to work together as a unified whole, and not to be splintered apart so we can choose what ones are to our liking, and which ones we wish to delete. When we agree to adhere to one part, but discard another we are destroying the very fiber of the heavenly decrees for mankind. That may be why we can be seen as being workers of "iniquity" – because we choose to simply disregard some critical (to Yah) aspects of His SINGULAR "Law".

Y'shua indicates that leaven can be a type of misguided doctrine in Matthew, and we need to realize that such leaven has crept into our churches today:

Matthew 16:11-12

- (11) How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the **leaven** of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?
- (12) Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the **doctrine** of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

We must remember that we don't answer to our pastors, we answer to our Father, and we are responsible to study to show ourselves approved by rightly dividing His Word ourselves. Let us be certain to come to the right conclusions regarding this matter – integrating the harmony of Yah's complete Word to us with the wisdom of His Holy Spirit's guidance.

This is a plea to each of our readers, as Father has put a burden of tremendous love in our hearts for the brethren. The time of reckoning may be sooner than we think. May we all allow the seed of Yah's Word to penetrate deeply into our soil of the soul, being watered by the Spirit to bear fruitful talents with many rewards.

A soul knit to Yah's Spirit is a heart united!

Psalms 86:11

- (11) Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.