

A STORY ABOUT SEEDS

◆ INTRODUCTION ◆

We can learn a lot about the world when we look around at nature and living things. For example, how do things grow? Think about it. Most plants start from a small seed before they grow. But seeds need good soil to grow into big, healthy plants. Have you ever watched farmers planting seeds? What did they do to make sure the seeds were planted and could grow well? In the following reading, “seed” and “soil” are used together to talk about people and their different kinds of responses to God’s message.

◆ BIBLE READING: MARK 4:1-20 ◆

1 Again Jesus began to teach beside Lake Galilee. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it. The boat was out in the water, and the crowd stood on the shore at the water's edge.

2 He used parables to teach them many things, saying to them: 3 "Listen! Once there was a man who went out to sow grain. 4 As he scattered the seed in the field, some of it fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Some of it fell on rocky ground, where there was little soil. The seeds soon sprouted, because the soil wasn't deep. 6 Then, when the sun came up, it burned the young plants; and because the roots had not grown deep enough, the plants soon dried up. 7 Some of the seed fell among thorn bushes, which grew up and choked the plants, and they didn't bear grain. 8 But some seeds fell in good soil, and the



plants sprouted, grew, and bore grain: some had thirty grains, others sixty, and others one hundred." **9** And Jesus concluded, "Listen, then, if you have ears!" **10** When Jesus was alone, some of those who had heard him came to him with the twelve disciples and asked him to explain the parables. **11** "You have been given the secret of the Kingdom of God," Jesus answered. "But the others, who are on the outside, hear all things by means of parables, **12** so that, "They may look and look, yet not see; they may listen and listen, yet not understand. For if they did, they would turn to God, and he would forgive them." **13** Then Jesus asked them, "Don't you understand this parable? How, then, will you ever understand any parable? **14** The sower sows God's message. **15** Some people are like the seeds that fall along the path; as soon as they hear



the message, Satan comes and takes it away. **16** Other people are like the seeds that fall on rocky ground. As soon as they hear the message, they receive it gladly. **17** But it does not sink deep into them, and they don't last long. So when trouble or persecution comes because of the message, they give up at once. **18** Other people are like the seeds sown among the thorn bushes. These are the ones who hear the message, **19** but the worries about this life, the love for riches, and all other kinds of desires crowd in and choke the message, and they don't bear fruit. **20** But other people are like seeds sown in good soil. They hear the message, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirty, some sixty, and some one hundred."



◆ VOCABULARY ◆

seed (n) — the small, hard part of a plant from which a new plant grows

soil (n) — the earth in which plants and trees grow

parable (n) — a simple story which is told to teach a moral or spiritual lesson

(to) sow (v) — to plant seeds in the ground

sower (n) — the person who plants the seeds

scatter (v) — to spread out or to throw out in different directions

(to) sprout (v) — to begin to grow; to give off shoots or buds

root (n) — the part of a plant that grows under the soil; they help it stay in the ground and get water and food

thorn bush (n) — a large plant (smaller than a tree) that has many sharp points called thorns

(to) choke (v) — to make it difficult for someone or something to breathe or live

persecution(n) — terrible and unfair treatment of a person or group; usually because of religious or political reasons

(to) bear fruit (idiom) — to get or produce good results that can be seen

◆ QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BIBLE READING ◆

1. What happened to the seeds that fell on the path?

2. What happened to the seeds that fell on the rocky ground?

3. What happened to the seeds that fell among thorn bushes?

4. What happened to the seeds that were planted in good soil?

◆ KEY VERSE: MARK 4:20 ◆

“But other people are like seeds planted in good soil. They hear the message, accept it, and bear fruit.”

◆ ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ◆

1. How can a person be like a seed in good soil?

2. What does “good soil” really refer to in this passage?

3. What does it mean to “accept” God’s message?

4. If someone accepts God’s message what should they do?

◆ APPLYING THE VOCABULARY TO YOUR LIFE ◆

*Answer the questions using the **bolded** vocabulary words.*

Example: Who used **parables** to teach people?

Answer: Jesus used **parables** to teach people.

1. What would the “**seed**” in a person’s life be?

2. What would the “**soil**” in a person’s life be?

3. If a person has good “**roots**,” what does that mean?

4. How can you **bear fruit** and produce good results in your life?

◆ CONCLUSION ◆

Jesus wants to plant the “seed” of His message into our lives. He wants us to grow and then bear fruit in our lives. How would you describe the “soil” of your life? Does Jesus’ message have a good place to grow in your life? Or are you like the path or rocky ground? Are there any “thorn bushes” that need to be taken out of your life? If so, what are they?

FOR FURTHER STUDY, SEE JAMES 1:21

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