

הַזֹּרֵעַ וְהַזֶּרַע

The Sower & the Seed

As Yeshua went about the Land of Israel teaching the people about the Kingdom of God, He used stories we call “parables.” It was common for the Sages of Israel to illustrate their teaching by telling stories, and Yeshua was a master at doing this. A parable is a story that the people would understand, using everyday things with which they were familiar.

One day Yeshua was teaching the people about the Gospel, the good news that God had made a way for them to draw close to God by having their sins forgiven. But not everyone believed that Yeshua was telling the truth. Some people thought Yeshua’s words were silly. Other people thought that the message Yeshua was giving was good, but then they talked to other teachers who told them not to listen to Yeshua. Still other people heard Yeshua’s words, and thought they were good, but soon forgot them because they were too busy with other things in their lives. Some people, however, heard Yeshua’s words and believed that they were true. These people became His disciples and lived according to His teachings. For these people, the message of Gospel changed their lives, and they obeyed God’s Torah.

Yeshua told a story about how these different kinds of people responded to the Gospel. Once upon a time there was a farmer who went out into his field to plant wheat. (In the time of Yeshua, farmers planted their fields by taking the seed in their hand and throwing it upon the ground as they walked.) As the farmer cast the seed to one side and then to the other, the seed landed everywhere. The wind even helped the farmer, because as he threw the seed upon the ground, the wind would scatter it all around. When the seed fell to the ground, some of it was immediately eaten by the birds, and so it never was able to grow. Some of the seeds fell on rocky ground, where it was too hard, and so the seed never grew there either. In some cases, the seed fell along the edges of the field that had not been plowed, and where weeds were growing. This seed started to grow, but eventually the weeds took over, so the good seed could never grow as it was suppose to. But some of the seed fell upon the ground that had been plowed, and it did grow, so the eventually the farmer was able to harvest the wheat and use it to make bread for his family’s food.

After Yeshua had finished His story, His own disciples wondered what the story meant. When they asked Yeshua for the meaning, He told them that the ground was picture of a person’s heart. The seed was picture of the Gospel, the good news about God and His kingdom. When the birds came and ate the seed before it could grow, it was like a person who heard the Gospel, but then was immediately told by his teacher not to believe it. The seed that fell on the rocky ground was like a person who first is happy when he hears the Gospel, but others make fun of him for following Yeshua, he forgets the teaching and goes back to his old way of life. The seed that fell where the weeds grow is like a person who at first believes that Yeshua’s teaching is right, but then gets so busy in other things that he forgets what Yeshua had said. But the seed the fell on the plowed field, and actually grows, is like the person that hears Yeshua’s message, believes it, and it actually changes the way he lives. He carefully begins to obey God’s Torah, and practices the mitzvot, so that his life brings forth good deeds more and more.

The question we must ask ourselves is this: what kind of person are we? How is the message of Yeshua growing in our own lives?

