

The Gospel According To MARK
Chapter 4 (Part 1)
“Do You Know the Mystery of the Kingdom?”

(v1-20) JESUS TEACHES THE “PARABLE OF THE SOWER”

> **What is the meaning of a parable?** A short, simple story designed to communicate a spiritual truth, religious principle, or moral lesson; a figure of speech in which truth is illustrated by a comparison or example drawn from everyday experiences. A parable is often no more than an extended metaphor or simile, using figurative language in the form of a story to illustrate a particular truth. The Greek word for parable literally means "a laying by the side of" or "a casting alongside," thus "a comparison or likeness." In a parable something is placed alongside something else, in order that one may throw light on the other. Simply put it is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.

> The **“Parable of the Sower”** yields four illustrations in verses 3-9; in verses 10-12 Jesus shares why He teaches in parables; then in verses 13-20 we have the explanation of the parable.

- **Illustration #1 – “the seed on the wayside and the bird snatches it away”**
- **Illustration #2 – “the seed fell on stony earth and was scorched”**
- **Illustration #3 – “the seed fell among thorns and was choked”**
- **Illustration #4 – “the seed fell into good ground and yielded a crop”**

(v10-12) JESUS TEACHES “THE MYSTERY OF GOD” - Verse 11 is the key to understanding parables, **“To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God”**; born again Christians will understand, receive and follow the teachings of Jesus Christ, but the unbeliever and unwilling will not *perceive, understand, nor repent* (more details are found in Mt. 13:14-15, quoting Isaiah 6:9-10, thus fulfilling prophecy).

> **FYI – There are eleven Bible Mysteries:**

- (1) Mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven (Mt. 13:3-52)
- (2) Mystery of Israel’s blindness (Ro. 11:25)
- (3) Mystery of the rapture of the church (1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thess. 4:13-17)
- (4) Mystery of the church be comprised of Jews and Gentiles (Eph. 3:1-12; Ro. 16:25; Eph. 6:19; Col. 4:3)
- (5) Mystery of the church being the bride of Christ (Eph. 5:23-32)
- (6) Mystery of Christ living in us (Gal. 2:20; Col. 1:26-27)
- (7) Mystery of God and Christ (1 Cor. 2:7; Col. 2:2, 9)
- (8) Mystery of the godliness (1 Tim. 3:16)
- (9) Mystery of lawlessness (2 Thess. 2:7)
- (10) Mystery of Mystery of the seven stars (Rev. 1:20)
- (11) Mystery Babylon (Rev. 17:5)

(v13—20) JESUS TEACHES THE FRUITFUL LIFE! – Jesus shares that the “seed” is the **“Word”** of God and the ground is the human **heart**; here we find four hearts:

#1 – THE HARDENED HEART (v15) (pride, self-righteousness, who cares)
#2 – THE SHALLOW HEART (v16-17) (no root, because of tribulation and persecution they leave Jesus)
#3 – THE UNFAITHFUL HEART (v18-19) (worldliness – cares of this world, deceitfulness of riches, desires for other things)

#4 – THE FRUITFUL HEART (v20) (bearing fruit 30, 60, and a 100 fold) – Jesus said in **John 15:7-8- “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and {so} prove to be My disciples.”** And **John 15:16- “You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit, and {that} your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask of the Father in My name, He may give to you.”** (Joshua 1; Psalm 1; 119; 2 Timothy 2:15; Rev. 3:7-13)

> **What is bearing fruit? Let’s bear the:**

- Fruit of Repentance** - Matthew 3:8
- Fruit of the Spirit** - Galatians 5:22, 23
- Fruitful Thinking** - 2 Peter 1:5-11
- Fruitful Praise** - Hebrews 13:15
- Fruitful Testimony** - Ephesians 5:9
- Fruitful Soul-winning** - John 4:35, 36