

Parable of the Sower

Mark 4

LEVEL 4 - LEARNING THROUGH PARABLES

Why the LORD came into the world

The Lord came into the world to make it possible for all people to go to heaven. The hells had gotten very powerful and were trying to take over heaven. The Lord had to defeat the hells and show people the way to heaven. He did this by teaching truth, doing good, and overcoming temptations.



The LORD performed miracles

The Lord did good by performing miracles. Do you know the miracle of the healing of the paralytic who was lowered through the roof (*Mark*, chapter 2). The Lord did many other miracles, also.

The LORD taught through parables

The Lord taught truth by telling parables.

In this chapter, the Lord told three parables.



What is a parable?

What is a parable? It is a story with a meaning hidden within it. The people and objects in the story stand for (or correspond to) things which teach us about the Lord and how to lead a good life.

You can read the meaning of the parables in the Writings.

The parable of the sower is explained in the *Doctrine of Life* 90:

“The sower here is the Lord, and the seed is His Word...the seed by the wayside is with those who do not care about truth; and the seed upon stony places is with those who care for truth, but not for its own sake...The seed among thorns is with those who are the lusts of evil; but the seed in the good ground is with those who from the Lord love the truths which are in the Word, and who practice them, and thus bring forth fruit.”



The parable of the grain of mustard seed (*Matthew* 13:31) is explained in the *Arcana Coelestia* 1941.



“With a man who is in good...the seed that comes from the Lord is made fruitful and multiplied to such an extent that it cannot be numbered for multitude; not so much while he is living in the body, but in the other life to an incredible degree...just as the seed of a tree springing up from the ground grows into a sapling, then into a great tree, which is afterwards multiplied into a garden of trees.

For all knowledge, intelligence, wisdom, delights and happiness...increase to eternity, and this from the smallest seed, as the Lord teaches respecting the grain of mustard.”

Why did the LORD teach in parables?

Why would the Lord want to hide the truth in a parable?

Some people in those days were not ready to understand the truth, but they could hear the parables and remember the stories.

Then, as they learned more and became ready to understand truth, they could think of the parables and see the truths hidden in them.

If the people who were not ready to learn truth had been told the truth directly, they might not have believed it, or they might have hurt the truth by not doing what it taught.

The disciples were ready to understand the truth. The Lord explained the parable of the sower to them in verses *Mark* 4, verses 13 to 20. The Lord also used other parables and explained them to His disciples:

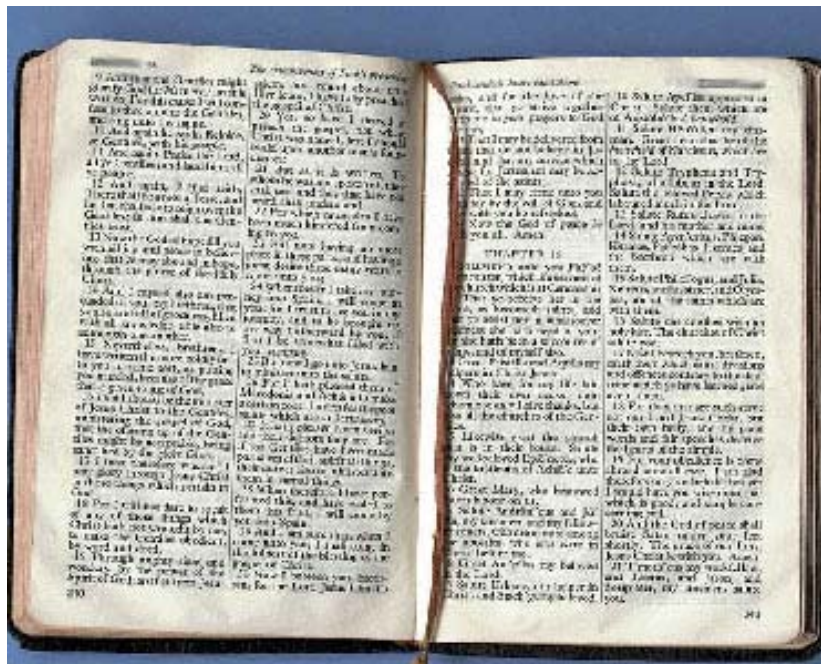
“And with many such parables He spoke the word to them as they were able to hear it. But without a parable He did not speak to them. And when they were alone, He explained all things to His disciples.

(Mark 4:33, 34)

We still learn through parables

The Lord used parables to teach truth while He was in the world. But we still learn truth through parables today.

All of the Word is a parable.



All the stories of the Word have different levels of meanings hidden in them.

We can learn stories from the Word when we are young, and as we got older we will be able to understand more what they mean.

When we become angels, we will understand the meaning so well that we will think and speak in parables.

Your activity for this lesson is on the next page.

Application

1. How did the Lord teach truth?

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2. Why did the Lord choose to teach truth in this way?

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3. The Lord explained the parable of the sower to the disciples. Use the Lord's explanation in verses 13-20 to discover what the following things from the parables (verses 3-8) stand for or correspond to.

ITEM IN PARABLE:	MEANING:
The Seed	
Birds in the air	
The sun scorching	
The thorn choking	
Good Ground	

4. Can you think of a story in the Word which means more to you now than when you first heard it and tell what it meant to you then and what it means to you now?

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