

Parables and Miracles

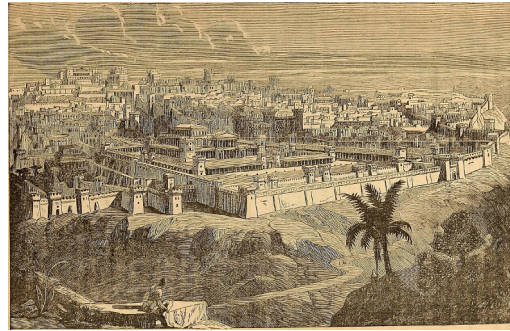
Annie

Scripture:

Luke 8:1-18;22-56

Matthew 13: 10, 11, 14,15

Isaiah 6



In the heat of the day, thousands sat and listened, hanging on every word that He spoke, the God Man, the Healer, the Teacher. Thousands of men, women and children in a time with no sound systems, no microphones and amplifiers, they heard, they listened as He spoke to them in parables. Teaching of the Kingdom of God where there would be no oppressors, no sickness, no disease and no heartache. And they heard Him, they were all able to hear Him.

As the day wore on, Jesus told them of a sower sowing seed, of weeds and thorns and rocks that choked and stifled the young growing shoots, but the flourishing plants that were in the good ground grew tall and strong. He told them of darkness, darkness that could only be shattered by light, light that cannot be hidden under baskets, of how light must be visible so that it is able to drive away the darkness. Parables that they heard, but were the words of Isaiah true of them, did they understand? Is that what Jesus meant when He said "he who has ears to hear, let him hear"?

When Jesus was challenged as to why He spoke in parables, which are essentially easy to remember earthly stories that have a spiritual, heavenly meaning, He quoted the prophet Isaiah. God told Isaiah to tell the people that only by understanding with their hearts would they be saved, but that they would hear and not understand because they had become slow of hearing. Jesus knew that the people who were following Him had a vision of the long awaited Messiah that did not fit with the path that lay before Him. They believed that He was going to overthrow the Roman occupying forces and free their nation, and this preconception was preventing them from tuning into the Voice of Holy Spirit echoing through His words. The parables painted a picture of God's Kingdom that could only be understood through the power of Holy Spirit, and that would only happen if the people were hungry for God Himself, not only as the conquering Victor but as their Eternal Father.

Anyone who believes on Jesus is promised Eternal Life through Christ Jesus Himself. But, for those who not only heard His words but also saw the miracles that clearly attested to Who He was, yet still did not believe He was the Messiah sent from God, God says that their hearts would be hardened so that they would not be able to hear. I cannot imagine how much it must grieve God to do this. He waits, in justice and mercy He waits until their rejection of Him is clear and unmistakable, then, just as He did with the Pharaoh centuries earlier, He hardens their hearts. Although it may break His Heart, He gives everyone the time to change and turn to Him before this happens.

It sounds so strange that God hardens the hearts of those who reject Him. God is only good, every good and perfect thing comes from Him and Him alone, He cannot and will not instigate sin or evil, He never condones sin (Habbakuk 1:13). The hearts of those who make the decision to throw away His offer of everlasting Life, who ignore the parables, the miracles, the ultimate sacrifice of Christ Jesus, are hardened simply by God withdrawing His Grace and protection from their lives. As He does this, the lies of the enemy who is the originator of all sin become truth to them, their hearts become hard as stone.

As Jesus walked among us, He was the visible evidence of the Triune God. The parables He spoke, the miracles He did were for one purpose, to reveal the Father by the power of Holy Spirit speaking through His one and only Son. For all who hunger and thirst for the righteousness of God in their lives, their ears and hearts will be open to the amazing Life revealed in Jesus Christ. As the days drew ever closer when He knew that He would be returning to the courts of Heaven, His heart was overflowing with love and compassion for the crowds. There was only one road to salvation, the road to Calvary, a road Jesus had been walking from the moment He was born. He was, and still is, the only Way, the only Truth and the only Life.

Prayer: Abba Father, as the seed falls may we be ground that is ploughed and ready to receive the precious Seed of Your Word, ground where the Seed will flourish and bear fruit. In Jesus mighty Name we pray for Your Grace and Your Mercy. Amen.