

TRINITY HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH

HOUSE FELLOWSHIP RETREAT (DAY ONE)

SERMON

29th of April, 2023

Preacher: Reverend Sam Tukura

Text: Matthew 13

MESSAGE

Let's look at how we can connect the Parable of the Sower with the Parable that follows it. Matthew 13:1 – 3: “The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side. And great multitudes were gathered unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables....” “Many things!” Many things that can make you many things. One thing he said was “Let there be light” and there was light. Now, the one who said, “Let there be light” is saying ‘many things’, which means if those ‘many things’ should succeed in your life, it can make you ‘many things’.

Matthew 13:3 continues, “...Behold, a sower went forth to sow...” Jesus is the sower. Here, he comes from an agricultural illustration. The sower went forth to sow. Verse 4: “And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side...” and what happened to them? “...the fowls came and devoured them up”. They didn't just eat; that word “devoured” means nothing should be remaining. “Since this person that precious seed is sown in her life doesn't understand what is sown, we better clear it from her.” Remember that Genesis 1:26 says, “And God said, Let us make man in our image after our likeness, let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowls of the air...” so, fowl has now come up in the parable. These fowls are not just normal chicken because when you go to Matthew 13:19, look at the explanation, “When any one heareth the word of the kingdom...” So, the kingdom of God comes in words. Never play with the Word of God because that is the Word of the Kingdom. Matthew 13:19 continues, “...and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one...” Who is the wicked one? The fowls, Satan, devil. When you hear the word of God and don't understand, then the fowl is waiting... waiting to devour it.

It's sad that we only know how to pray against devourers of our money but not the devourers of the Word of the kingdom. Many people are good managers of their money but poor managers of the Word of the Kingdom of God in their lives. Many people will protect every other thing but become careless about whatever God says. Hear me, if you have no respect and proper relationship with what God says, you may never enjoy His Hand. Even in normal life, people who don't respect what you say may never enjoy your hand. The greatest connection to God's Hand is His Word. “When any one heareth the word of the kingdom but does not understand it, then cometh the wicked one...” So, many times the wicked one does not bother about your going to church or

going to hear the preacher because he knows that as long as you don't understand what you heard, he will devour it. People come to church and one hour later, ask them what they heard and they won't know it but if it is money, they keep checking their pocket to ensure it doesn't go out. Have you ever had serious money and you develop tension? You keep checking the money in case anything goes wrong but you are no longer checking if the Word is still there. Nobody becomes serious in the Kingdom of God in whose life the Word of the King has no place. So, understanding is very keen.

We have read from verse 3 that the first seed fell by the way side and you've got to understand that that 'way side' is a life, a person. So, there are people in Heaven whom God says, even though she came to church, that's a 'way side' sister or brother. Anything that falls in this life will not give fruit to the kingdom because the fowls are waiting to have their share in it. So, you can be in church almost all through in your life, ever hearing the pastor and preacher and yet, your life matters not in the kingdom. Matthew 13:10, "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" Because they realized that the people listening to Jesus do not understand. If people were listening to Jesus directly and didn't understand, how sure are we that you understand me right now? That you are nodding your head doesn't mean you understand.

In Verse 11, "He answered and said unto them, because it is given unto you to know...." The word 'know' and 'understanding' are linked. There is no knowledge without fundamentally understanding. You don't know what you don't understand. You can't claim to know the subject that you don't understand. He says to the disciples, "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven...." "Mysteries" can be interpreted "secrets". The moment you understand and know the mysteries – the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, you will not be among those that fear the mysteries and secrets of darkness because the secrets of heaven are higher than the secrets of darkness. You can't fear those in the secret cult when the secrets of God are with you because the secrets of God demystifies the secrets of darkness. No one in light fears darkness. Verse 11, "...but to them it is not given." To you, disciples, it is given to know or understand the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but, even though these people are all around me hearing what I am saying, they are not part of you. So, you can be in the crowd and not decide to be God's disciples so whatever God is saying will remain a mystery to you. Whatsoever the sower sowed, did He get any result from it? No. The fowls devoured it, the heavenly farmer got nothing from it.

In Verse 5, "Some fell upon stony places..." Now, all these grounds are hearts. Anytime the word of God succeeds in a life, it is primarily a heart matter. Your heart is either good ground or bad ground. What does he call the second group of hearts? Stony grounds. You know stony ground? That is when there are not much earth and stones are more than soil because what is very critical in a farm ground is the soil. Apart from how good the seed is, the soil must be good. Now, you come to a ground that is more of stones, will a seed succeed in that place? No. Now, Jesus, our Master, is saying there are people who sit in church and hears God's Word but in heaven, God says, "Ah, this is a stony ground". So, it had not much earth "...and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth." The root had not much room to go deep. There are people

who rose too quickly because there was no place for the root to go deep down first. There are people who spring up earlier than the time God planned. Why? Because they had no deepness of earth because anytime earth has good soil, what happens first? The root goes down and how long would a plant be able to withstand storms will be how long the root had gone deep. Any plant that gets uprooted when the wind blows easily, it's a root matter. Have you discovered that when the wind blows a mango tree, it swings and returns to its position but that is not the same with maize. There are people whom if a little trial blows them, forget it, they are not returning. Why doesn't plants like maize not return after serious winds pass? It's a root matter. The roots are very shallow but for mango, what happens? The roots are as long as the stem. When you are standing taller than you are deep, you won't last, because in the journey of life, you will be tried by what tried others in the faith in the kingdom of God. "Forthwith", that is, quickly, they sprung up. Why? Because they had no deepness of earth for the root to go down and the Bible says, we should be rooted and grounded in love and in the word of God.

In verse 6, "And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away". You can't live your life running after prophecies, like our Pastor earlier talked about. A time will come when no man will defend you, it is the Word of God that you are rooted in that will become your succour. That is a life that withers away – a destiny withered away because the Word of the Kingdom does not succeed in it. There is no earth, it was stony ground. That stony ground is very deceptive. On the surface, there is soil but it is not deep. If you try to go deep, you meet stone. There are some people that look soft on the surface but if you look deep into them, there are hard matters, hard issues that they will not allow God to deal with. May stone not hinder the move of the Spirit in my life, Amen.

Roots are very cardinal for everything that will stand. Any plant that its root cannot go deep down will not last. The sun rose, scorched them and withered away. Oh, what a wasted life that life became. He gave no fruit to the sower, ah! What is the end of the testimony of that life? Withered. Did the sower get any harvest from that life? Nothing. And that is how many life go through: church activities, roaming up and down, preacher to preacher and the sower asks, "When can I get something from this life?" Withered.

Verse 7, "And some fell among thorns..." Now, this is a thorny heart, the other one was a stony heart. "...and the thorns sprung up, and choked them." If we go to verse 20, "But he that received the seed", the ground is a "he" that receives seed. "...into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it..." You can fall into that kind, you love hearing God's word but the same way you rejoice is not the same way we see result. You love hearing God's word, your Bible even is under your pillow but it never moves from your pillow into your heart. Verse 21, "Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while:" Such person doesn't last. "...For when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." So, there are some troubles that will come upon a person because of the Word of God they received. There are some troubles coming your way, not because you did wrong but because you received God's Word in your life and become a candidate for Satan because he knows if the Word should succeed

in your life, you become a carrier to destroy his own kingdom. So, there are tribulations and persecutions meant for those who received the Word of God. When you see some people going through troubles, it could be as a result of the word they had received because the devil knows what a word-affected life can bring to him, so he is going to fight it. “When tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended”, they become offended. They say, “Lord, I have received your word with joy, why do you allow trouble to come my way, God I don’t think you love me.” You don’t understand that the trouble that come your way is not because God does not love you but because the Devil will not fold his hand. You become a danger to the kingdom of darkness when the devil knows the Word of the Kingdom is working in your life. He knows that very soon, you will become a kingdom of God’s agent to destroy his own kingdom. So, what is here? Many have become offended by their troubles. Many people have taken offence against God because of the troubles they are going through. They say, “Lord, I am offended. I have received your word with joy, why do you allow troubles.” Don’t allow offences. Don’t allow persecutions offend you because it means you are falling into a unique class.

In verse 22, “He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he become unfruitful.” To choke is to not allow to breath. The Word of God is alive but these are word chokers. They make sure the Word of God is not free to breathe in your life and make you alive. What are the Word of God chokers? Cares – what you care for. How does care become thorns? Because naturally, every human being has what he should care for but do you remember what He said in 1 Peter? “Cast your cares upon the Lord for he careth for you.” So, when you handle your care by yourself instead of casting them on the Lord, they become thorns (1 Peter 5:7). There is nothing wrong with you having cares, every normal human beings should have a care but you are not designed to handle your care. So, anytime you choose to handle your care by yourself, you are telling the Lord that you care for yourself more than He cares for you. How far can you go by yourself? None of us can handle what we care about more than the Lord can do for us. It is ignorance to think you care for yourself more than the Lord cares for you. And when you think you care for yourself, you are going to find yourself living for yourself, labouring for yourself, everything will be about yourself and so, you make a lot of calculations.

If you don’t allow God to handle your care, your care becomes what will choke you. In your bid to care for yourself, you will be making the Word of God lifeless in your life, you will be choking the Word of God, you won’t be free to allow God work in you because you have taken up God’s role in your life. At the time Jesus was in the boat with the disciples, he slept off. There was a storm and when the disciples couldn’t handle the storm, they went to wake him and tell him, “Carest thou not we perish? How can you be sleeping when we are about to die?” With all your efforts, what can you do? How far can you go with your destiny if the Lord does not care for you? We must repent of thinking that we can care for ourselves more than the Lord can. It’s a great sin before the Lord. It’s called thorns that will choke you and choke the Word of God. People who are more involved in their lives, taking the role of God in their own lives cannot go far.

Stop trying to play God's role in your own life because it is God's role to handle your cares. What's your own role? To cast those cares on him. If you don't cast those cares on Him, they become thorns that will pierce you. The things that are poking and piercing you are the things you care about. Things that make you sleepless are things you have taken upon yourself to handle whereas God should handle them. He said, such are those that receive the Word of God among thorns. No matter what message comes to a person who thinks while caring for themselves, they can do it better than God, in such people, the Word of God never come to pass in their lives; the harvest of God never come in their lives.

Matthew 13:8, "But others fell on good ground..." So, all the other three grounds: way side ground, stony ground, thorny ground, were all bad grounds. Four different kinds of grounds representing four different kinds of hearts and only one represents good ground. It is like saying one-quarter of those who gather around him have good ground, only from them does he have result. There are some people who wait for you to come back from church because they know whatever you bring, they are going to take it from you. Sometimes, you come to church for problem solving and not to have the problem solver in your life. You come for problem solving, not the problem solver. So, you come to church as people go to native doctors repeatedly after a charm has failed. You go to church as people run from place to place until they enter where they will never return from.

The Word of the Kingdom had not succeeded in three grounds but now there is a good ground. In this good ground, good heart, what do you notice? That even in the good ground, there are three levels of results. "Some fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit", do you notice that all the other three grounds never mention fruits but in this good ground, some brought forth fruit, "...Some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold." Meaning if you are a good ground, you don't settle at any level, especially if you are thirtyfold, you go for sixty and hundred because there is no end to the law of fruitfulness. This is found in John 15:1 – 2, "I am the true vine, my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away." Why should a branch be in Him and not bear fruit? That is strange. We should expect that if a branch is in Him, it automatically bears fruit. But when it doesn't bear fruit, he takes it away. It means there are believers who die and it is the Father who takes them off. When God keeps waiting for fruits in you and you are truly connected to Christ but not bearing fruit, He waits for a time to take you off. So, it is not the Devil that takes away the branch that doesn't bear fruit, who does it? The Father. Let's say the fruit you were supposed to bear is to save many souls and your life is helping nobody, God comes and take you off.

"But every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." The moment you bear fruit, he purges you so that you may bring forth more. So, there is no point you get to, relax and congratulate yourself because one of the things the father must purge fruitful branches of is the mindset of comparing themselves to somebody that is not fruitful, because the moment you start this, you relax, saying you are better than him or her. "Lord, purge me from whatsoever will not allow me bear fruit."

In Matthew 13:24, “Another parable put he forth unto them...” This is the immediate parable following the Parable of the Sower. Let’s see the connection. “...saying, the Kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.”

Now, do you realise that in the first parable, it was only one sower we had and what was he sowing? The Word of God. In this second parable, we have two sowers: the Lord sowing good seeds and the Devil also sowing his own. In this second parable, the good seed that the sower is sowing is called the Word of God. In verse 36, “Then Jesus sent the multitude away...” People were all around Jesus from the beginning of chapter 13, but in verse 36, he sent them away. This is the tragedy of the kingdom: that people come to church to hear God and after, God cannot send them on any errand but just send them away. Where will God send you to when what he is saying, you don’t understand it? May God not just send you away after this meeting. May he send you to a definite assignment that you should fulfill for the glory of God.

As he sent them away, did they understand what he was saying? No. They came back empty from his presence to their generation and brought nothing from the kingdom to deliver those that the darkness was still holding. As he sent the multitude away, can you imagine if all those multitudes could understand what he was saying, there would have been a multitude of church ministers, church workers that would have made the work of ministry prosperous. Verse 36 continues, “...Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man,” Remember he was the one sowing in the parable of the sower too. “The field is the world...” Where was the ground in the first parable? The heart. Now, the field is the world, lands, nations, cities, villages. “...the good seed are the children of the kingdom,” not the word of God anymore. Who are the children of the kingdom? Those in whom the first parable succeeded in their lives. Those in whom the Word of God succeeded in their lives. So, the moment your heart is a good ground bearing results, you become a good seed in God’s hand and He begins to think which nation, where do I plant this one? God now looks for lands and nations to post and plant you. Therefore, you don’t just wander around as a Christian to live where you are, it is where the sower wants to sow you that you go. Because you are a good seed in his land, He knows where to plant you. The issue of visa is not a problem if He wants you in a particular land because He will arrange for you to know where to go. The moment His Word began succeeding in my life and He said the nations are my ground, I don’t beg for the door to open. All the five continents of the world, I have physically entered them because I don’t beg for the doors to open. Some of you, He brought you to this church as a good seed because His word has succeeded in your life and He knows that when He plants you here, you will bring results for Him.

“...but the tares are the children of the wicked one”, so, we are in a dangerous time when the Devil is also sowing his own children. Look at the wickedness of the enemy: where did he sow his own tares? Among the wheat. He could have looked for his own field. So, if we sleep, even in our Church where God is planting men, the Devil will also plant his own. The advantage we give the

enemy is our sleep. The first effort of the enemy is to put you to sleep so that he can sow what will give you trouble tomorrow. “Lord, the sleep that will allow the enemy to sow what will cause me trouble, remove it from me.” May you not be sent ‘away’ but to a definite assignment.

Let’s look at Jacob as I close. Genesis 28:10, “And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran.” At this point, Jacob was a young boy about to marry Leah and Rachael on this journey. He stole the blessings from his brother Esau and his mother advised him to flee because his brother was about to kill him. Verse 11, “And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.” An usual ladder! Let’s understand ‘angels ascending and descending.’ Do angels need ladder? No. When do you need ladder? When you are too short for what you want to touch. God was bringing a picture to this young man that look, Jacob, there are prophecies you inherited from your grandfather, Abraham. There are things God has spoken in covenant and you are too short for them on your own. These words I have spoken are settled in heaven and no human hands can touch heaven, you need a ladder. John 1:51 says, “And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.” Heaven shall be opened to you. But these two good things, where will they happen? Upon the Son of man. So, it is upon Jesus, upon the Son of man that we all connect to Heaven. Find your own space upon the Son of Man, Jesus, because these two things are a ‘sure banker’ on him. Heaven cannot close upon Jesus; there is no scarcity of angelic activities upon Jesus. Do you want to see angels? Go upon Jesus. Do you want open heavens? Upon Jesus. Anything you are looking for from God, it is upon the Son of Man. Jacob saw angels ascending and descending.

Genesis 32:1 says, “And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God’s host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.” What does host mean? Army. In Chapter 28, Jacob saw Angles ascending and descending on the ladder, it was in a dream but in Chapter 32, twenty years later, he saw the angels physically. May what you have been dreaming become a reality in your own eyes. In Chapter 32, they met physically. May spiritual things become so natural and physical to you. This man was going back to Bethel and he must pass through his enemy – the man who has sworn to kill him. A host has come down for him because he must pass by Esau who has sworn to kill him. Any man of destiny has enemies of his destiny. What do you see here? There is a host. Verse 3, “And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau...” Do you discover that he doesn’t engage the angels in any discussion? At least, for Joshua, when he saw an angel with a drawn sword, he went to meet him to ask if he was for them, but Jacob rejects the heavenly host.

Genesis 32:3 – “And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom.” Within a space of twenty years after they separated, Esau had become a country. Verse 4, “And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau,”

when did Esau become his Lord? Jacob was using sense. He wants to use sense to fight spiritual war. Angels! Mighty warrior Angels are standing around him yet he ignored them to send message to Esau. "...I have sojourned... And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants..." Is this what to say to an enemy? "...womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight." When has Esau become a grace giver? Jacob is using sense. Where are the mighty angels, they are just standing and watching a man ignore the spiritual to embark on a brain journey. He is looking for grace when one angel can finish all of Esau's country. Genesis 32:6, "And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him." Jacob was afraid of one man, now he is coming with four hundred men. When you use sense, you would soon be overwhelmed because you will meet matters beyond your sense. Verse 7, "Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed..." the angels are still standing but he is living in distress, even though angels are with him. "He divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands." Verse 8, "And said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape." Can you see a man? Has heaven made provision to help him or not? The hosts are still standing. When you ignore the Holy Spirit in you, you will engage in a battle without senses. You are full of calculations when you avoid the help of God.

So, what did God do? Verse 24 "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." God had to send an angel to wrestle with him. Note that it wasn't him who wrestled with the angel, it was an angel who wrestled with him. Look at how strong he was, the angel couldn't defeat him but look at how the Holy Spirit captures this matter in Hosea 12:2, "The Lord hath also a controversy with Judah, and will punish Jacob according to his ways; according to his doings..." Meaning, the major summary of Jacob is a man of his ways and God will punish anything that has to do with your way and not His ways. Any moment you become Jacobic – a man or woman of your ways, you are calling for punishment from God, "For there is a way that seems right unto a man but the end of it is destruction." "...according to his doings will he recompense him. He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God." From his mother's womb, what did he do? Do you know that was not a mistake? It was not accidental, it was deliberate. If a baby knows when to hold somebody from the heel, when he comes out, where will he hold somebody? When you are a man of your ways, you will be full of competition. Wherever you are, you are always struggling with people. You will not hold God, you are holding people.

"...and by his strength he had power with God: Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed. Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept..." You can come to a place of power over angels and power over devils. Now, there was a colon after 'prevailed', what does it mean? That what you would read next will throw more light on what you just read. Therefore, what does it mean that he had power over the angel? It means, "he wept, and made supplication unto him." Anytime a man weeps, it means sense has finished. He has run out of options. Some of you, God has planned that you have power over angels, but He must bring you to a weeping point, where

your options have finished and God is your only option. If it is only God you have and you are crying to him, such men have power. Such men that weep before God and are no longer consulting their senses, you will be amazed at the power they have.

Prayer

Our father, deliver us from every foolishness of sense. Bring us into a place of supplication, pleading with you and depending upon you until we have power over angels and power over devils.

Lord, help us know that you are seeking for fruits, whichever heart is stony, thorny, remove them from us. Follow us up on this matter until you succeed and we begin to have fruits of the Kingdom in our lives. In Jesus Name, Amen.