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The Sun in the Parable of the Sower(*Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23*)

The sun is necessary for growth. Our Master understood the essential nature of the sun in plant life and growth — it produces abundant fruit. There would be no food to eat without the sun. No fruit could be produced. Plants manufacture fruit, and they must use the sun's radiant energy to do so. When the sun shines, the plant goes to work, trapping the energy from the sunlight in its fruit. But before the plant can even come into existence first there needs to be a seed. Then the seed needs the sun to supply the energy for its growth.

So the sun is the essential factor in bringing about plant life and, through plant life, fruit. It is effective in bringing about what the seed was sent for (Isa 55:11).

In the parable of the sower, our Master draws a parallel between the sun in its effect upon the plant, and tribulation in its effect upon the person. The parable in Mt 13:3-9 is explained by Yahshua Himself in Mt 13:18-23. The sun *arises* or *comes up* in verse 6, and in verse 21, tribulation or persecution *arises* or *comes up*.

The Greek word for *arise* in Mt 13:21 is *ginomai* (#1096 in Strong's). Besides *arise*, it also means *to cause to be* or *to generate*. Now the sun does *cause* something to happen to every plant — one is scorched and withers because of the heat and its lack of deep roots; the other gains strength and grows stronger, producing fruit, some a hundred-fold, some sixty, some thirty (Mt 13:8). What then causes the difference in the effect of the sun on the plant? It does not depend upon the seed. We know that the seed (the *good* seed, not that which produces *tares*, Mt 13:25) is always good because our Master's word *by nature* is good.

The Sun either makes what is sown grow, or it scorches it according to the depth of the soil over the seed and the depth of the plant's roots (Mt 13:5). In Mt 13:8,23, the sun only made the plant produce much fruit (Jn 15:8). So the sun is necessary for the plant, and is equated with persecution and tribulation.

In Acts 14:22, Paul strengthened the souls of the disciples and encouraged them to continue in the faith, saying, "Through *much* tribulation we *must* enter the kingdom of God." *Many... much...* Do we have ears to hear? We must go through much tribulation to enter the Kingdom of God.

As a plant needs the sun in order to grow and produce fruit, so we need *much* tribulation in order to become fit to enter the kingdom. But some plants are scorched and wither instead of being strengthened and producing fruit. So if there is nothing wrong with the seed, then what is the hindrance? What is it that makes some plants perish under the sun? It says that seeds fell upon the *rocky places* where they did not have much soil or root (Mt 13:5). The hardness of their hearts kept them from receiving the word implanted (Jms 1:21). They had resistance in them to doing the Father's will. That hardness of their hearts is like the rocky soil. It shuts up their ears so that "hearing they may not hear, and seeing they may not see" (Mt 13:14).

"In the world you have *tribulation...*" (Jn 16:33) — pressure, oppression, anguish, adversity, affliction, crushing, squashing, squeezing (Mt 7:13,14), distress. To go through this hardship one must be as the man in Mt 13:44, who, "For the Joy" over finding the treasure — that is, joy over the prospect of entering the Kingdom of Heaven — sold everything he had (Lk 14:33; 12:31-34).

In Acts 14:21-22, Paul taught how joy over the Kingdom of Heaven and its power and its present authority would cause the one who was like the man in Mt 13:44 to be able to triumph over all opposition and evil (2 Tim 4:8). Rom 16:20 — he also taught that Kingdom people experience trial and suffering to make them grow (2 Ths 1:5). Victory comes through battle, and triumph only follows trials, but only for those who are *not* like the one in Mt 13:20-21. We learn as the disciples in Acts 14:22 did that these things are as necessary for us as the sun is necessary for the normal growth and development of plants (Mark 10:29-30 — *with persecutions*; Mt 13:6,21,23).

Acts 14:22 says must and much. Rev 3:4; 2 Ths 1:5 — We are made worthy of the Kingdom through suffering, affliction, persecution and hardship — circumstances. Hardship to the disciple is as the sun

to plants.

Mt 13:8,9 — *He who has ears to hear...* Mt 13:16,17 — evidently the disciples *did* have ears to hear, therefore He explained the parable to them in verses 18-23.

Mt 13:43-46 — Read it in reverse order.

The sun produces or generates the energy to make a plant grow up to produce fruit (Mt 13:8,23). The sun is the source of the energy necessary to even make the seed die in order to grow and produce fruit — as in Acts 14:22, we **MUST** go through much tribulation.

Tribulations are necessary — as necessary as the Sun (Mt 13:6,21) — but we must *through* them. They must be “much” — the more we go through, the more fruit we bear (Mt 13:23).

Mt 13:21 — The sun in verse 6 is the tribulation and hardship that all true disciples go through. Even false disciples have suffering, but they do not go *through* the suffering. The sun — *tribulation* — scorches them, since they have no depth. Mt 11:6 — They stumble or get offended. Mt 13:21 (Gal 5:19-26) — They get offended so easily, since they do not see the Kingdom as worth suffering for, since they did not receive it with true and lasting joy (Mt 13:44; 13:6-8,19-23).

Mt 11:6 — “Blessed” is he who does not get offended or stumble because of Me” — or what I allow to come into their lives, such as came upon Yohannan the Baptizer in Mt 11:2,3,6. Yohannan “came to his senses” and escaped from Satan's trap (2 Tim 2:26), which was not the vile prison he was in, but the trap of becoming offended because of the difficulties that came into his life.

The brothers in Acts 14:21, when they heard the good news of the Kingdom, rejoiced and were strengthened and encouraged.

Where are you in the parable of the sower? Verses 4,5,6,7, or 8? Verses 19,20,21,22,23, or maybe 24-30?

Our Master gave other pictures of what the “kingdom of heaven” is like. We are like Mt 13:31-32 — a tiny seed that grows into a big tree, or like the leaven in Mt 13:33, which permeates the whole earth as the stone in Dan 2:35. We are the sons of the kingdom, who grow from the good seed in Mt 13:37-43. We are those who were compelled by joy to sell all we had (Mt 13:44-46), the “good fish” of Mt 13:47-52. Aren't we? Are we? Mt 11:25-27 is only for “he who has ears to hear.”

Whom does He will to reveal His Father to? Only those who are as Jn 7:17, whose hearts are fertile soil to receive the seed (Jn 13:20).

Isa 55:11 — It is His word that does not return to Him empty, but it accomplishes, or brings about, what He desires and succeeds in the matter for which He sent it. What He desires is to bring to light what is in people's hearts, be it good or bad. The “sun” of tribulations and afflictions proves whether the seed has taken root in the heart, or is only a shallow emotional experience or mental concept. Without it He wouldn't get a purified people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds (Tit 2:14; Jn 15:5-8).