

## Seeds & their Sowers

Concerned scientists have seed banks around the world, which search for and preserve original seeds. They scour remote places of our earth seeking original seeds, finding some dating back thousands of years. To their amazement, these seeds are often found to be heartier and more nutritious than many seeds planted today. Discovered seeds are harvested and stored in climate controlled vaults. They are ready for use in the event of catastrophic conditions such as famine and other life threatening calamities.

The prophet Amos speaks of another famine that will invade the earth. *“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord and shall not find it.”* (Amos 8:11-12)

In the parable of the sower as recorded in Matthew thirteen, Jesus described certain conditions that prevail when the good seed, the Word of God, is preached. The gospel is broadcast throughout the world where seeking hearts are ready to receive it. Many verses of the parable reveal the conditions of receptive hearts that effect growth after the seed falls.

But what about the seed? What is its significance and uniqueness? The seed is perfect, powerful, and abundantly able to bear much fruit. It is the same Word that spoke creation into being, (Hebrews 11:3) that became flesh and dwelt among us, (John 1:14) and by which believers are sustained. (1 John 2:14) It is also eternal. In Malachi 3:6 we read; *“For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.”* Hebrews 13:8 affirms, *“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.”* Satan has no power over it or the results following a proper planting.

God intends his perfect seed to be sown in its pure, entire, and unadulterated form. As such, it is still capable after thousands of years to bring fruit to the honor and glory of God; some thirty, some sixty and some a hundred fold. Where this seed finds prepared ground, it springs up in a genuine, sincere, and complete conversion. The faithful sower knows the Holy Spirit will work in fully surrendered hearts, ensuring the fulfillment of God’s promises to all who seek him whole-heartedly. (Deuteronomy 4:29; Luke 11:10)

Satan is also well aware of this great truth. He also knows the futility of attacking the incorruptible Seed. It is stronger and wiser than he is. He challenged it (Christ, the word that became flesh) and lost every battle and argument. The empty tomb declared victory over sin and death. For this reason, the Devil’s battle plan changed, and the sowers of the seed became his targets. Presenting himself as an angel of light, he could reason with them using the scriptures as he did against the Lord. Knowing that most people will never receive the gospel, (Matthew 7:13-14, 20:16) Satan makes convincing arguments to the sowers who wish to reach many with the gospel.

He knows the nature of each sower; some are inclined to be open minded, while others are more self-introspective. Initially, both types are sincere and dedicated sowers of the seed. They are encouraged by God's promise to give His increase to their labors.

Because the masses never embrace the life saving message, Satan challenges the open minded sower as he challenged Eve in the Garden of Eden. (Genesis 3:1) *"Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, Hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"* The word of God was challenged, confusing the woman. She became vulnerable prey to the deceiver.

To the eager open minded sower Satan says, "Isn't it a pity that this message you bring seems so restrictive? Something of such great importance should be acceptable to more than just a few. Does God really demand such constraints? Did not Jesus say; *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light"*? (Matthew 11:28-30) Why make it difficult by imposing the details expressed in the rest of the Bible?

2 Timothy 3:16-17 declares, *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."* Satan knows this truth, so he relentlessly press the open minded sower to think instead of how much more fruitful his efforts will be if he adjusts his preaching. Over time, the sower rationalizes this logic and is convinced.

So the sower, halting between opinions, slowly succumbs to the tempter's prompting. A more acceptable menu of preaching and teaching is fed to his growing congregation. The passing of time and the willingness of the sower to continue compromising the scriptures limits the power of the message. The witness of changed lives is ultimately lost. The compromising of biblical principles becomes a spiritual malaise that destroys the spirit of discernment. As a cancer finally destroys a body, so also the church is ultimately relegated to nominal Christianity.

2 Peter 2:22 describes the situation perfectly; *"But it has happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."* A line of demarcation is drawn by God even as man flaunts His counsel. Quenching the counsel of the Holy Spirit ultimately leads to blasphemy and God withdraws himself from man. (Romans 1:24-25, 28) *"Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lust of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which were not convenient."*

To the cautious, self introspective sower, Satan says; *"God declares that his children are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and holy nation, a peculiar people."* (1 Peter 2:9) They are not to be of this world, indeed should come out from among them, and be separate. (2 Corinthians 6:17) The sower sees the carnal lives exhibited by the followers of the open minded

sower and feels more inclined to stress the need for visible evidence that his followers are not of this world. After all, Jesus said; *“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.”* (Matthew 5:14)

Exhortations of the sower to his followers stress the outward examples of piety and humility that can be seen in their austere dress and demeanor. Love and joy diminish as judgment and disputes over customs create discord. Christ’s words recorded in John 13:35 are forgotten in the competition for being the most circumspect: *“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one another to another.”*

The Lord Jesus rebuked the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 15:7-9; *“Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But **in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.**”* Christian sacrifice in resisting the world insidiously replaces the spirit of love and joy. The observer sees being a Christian as an unattractive lifestyle and the witness for Christ is lost.

The Apostle Paul, seeing this condition taking hold of the Galatian churches, wrote; *“O foolish Galatians, **who hath bewitched you**, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain?”* Galatians 3:1-4

Having no power over the seed, Satan instead tempts the sowers to ignore the whole counsel of God. The open minded sower disregards critical portions of the word, and the self introspective sower, finding the scriptures insufficient, adds to them. Taken to their extremes, one arrives in the camp of Nominal Christianity; the other becomes a spiritually dead pharisaical religious order. Satan is satisfied when Christ’s name is attached to any effort that in its propagation fails to present the whole counsel of God. Thus the message of Amos 8:11 concerning a famine “of hearing the words of the Lord is fulfilled. What a tragic pronouncement will accrue to them of whom the Lord spoke in Matthew 7:23; *“And I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”*

But Satan doesn’t have the last word. God does. Like the scientists who search for original seeds, truth seekers with the diligence of the first century Bereans will find it. (Acts 17:11) Jesus said to the Samaritan woman at the well, *“But the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, **for the Father seeketh such to worship him.** God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”* (John 4: 23-24) There will always be a remnant of truth seekers on earth until Jesus comes again.

Hunger for God’s truth is always rewarded. Every soul whom God deliverers from sin will find a true fellowship in Christ. Men of God in every generation become champions and ministers of “the faith once delivered unto the saints.” (Jude 3) Many have testified how God led them to, or began fellowships, faithful to the whole counsel of God, who in turn have become beacons of

truth to others seeking it. What a day that will be that the Savior spoke of in Matthew 8:11; *“And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.”* The redeemed of all ages, forever with the Lord!

The true, entire counsel of God alone defeats Satan every time. If it remains original, complete, and not manipulated by man, the very gates of Hell cannot prevail against it. Sowers must be able to say as the Apostle Paul stated to his fellow elders in Acts. (20: 20-21, 26-27) *“And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly and from house to house, Testifying both to the Jews and to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure front the blood of all men. **For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.**”*