

The Red-Letter Words of Yeshua ~ Part 52

Teaching Through Parables ~ Part 1

We are starting a new Section in our series on the **Red-Letter Words of Yeshua**. Between the many heated confrontations, **Yeshua** continues to teach His **talmidim** quietly about the **Kingdom of God**. As the **Great Teacher**, **Yeshua** uses numerous methods of instructing His **talmidim**. He employs hyperbole, warnings, laments, and denunciations. He presents truth through beatitudes, proverbs, and dialogue. However, of all His methods, perhaps the most exciting and distinctive teaching mode is His use of parables.

In my studies of God's Word, and I assume in yours, I have always wondered why He taught this way.

The Purpose of Parables

¹⁰ Then the talmidim came and asked Yeshua, "Why are you speaking to them in parables?" ¹¹ He answered, "Because it has been given to you to know the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven, but it has not been given to them.

Secrets, KJV "mysteries." Greek *mystêria* means truths hitherto kept secret but now revealed. Both then and now, several religions claim to make available special knowledge or mysteries to an inner circle. Biblical religion is not so. Its truths are available to all who read and believe the Bible. While **Yeshua** walked the earth, there was an inner circle of **talmidim** who precisely received the knowledge necessary to disseminate **God's** truth to all people. But nothing in **Scripture** supports the notion, found today in cultish, occult, and New Age circles, that true **Christianity** depends on teachings above or beyond the Bible.¹

¹² For anyone who has something will be given more so that he will have plenty, but from anyone who has nothing, even what he does have will be taken away.

***¹³ Here is why I speak to them in parables: they look without seeing and listen without hearing or understanding."** ¹⁴ That is, in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Yesha'yahu (6:9-10), which says,*

***'You will keep on hearing but never understand,
and keep on seeing but never perceive,
¹⁵ because the heart of this people has become dull—
with their ears, they barely hear,
and their eyes they have closed,
so as not to see with their eyes,
hear with their ears,
understand with their heart,
and do t'shuvah,
so that I could heal them.'***

¹⁶ But you, how blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they hear! ¹⁷ Yes indeed! I tell you that many a prophet and many a tzaddik longed to see the things you are seeing but did not see them and to hear the things you are hearing but did not hear them.

~ Mattityahu 13:10-17

It should not be surprising that people **look without seeing and listen without hearing or understanding** since **Yesha'yahu** predicts such a phenomenon, as do Jeremiah 5:21 and Ezekiel 12:2. If they were to see, hear, and understand, they would **do t'shuvah (return to God)**, that is, "**repent**," and **God** would **heal them**.

¹ David H. Stern, Jewish New Testament Commentary.

Tzaddik means *righteous one*. In **Jewish** tradition, generally, a godly, holy, righteous man. The implication of vv. 16–17 is that nothing inherent in the **talmidim** earned them the privilege of seeing *the things you are seeing*; the *prophets* and *tzaddikim* may have been more worthy, but **God** reveals Himself not based on human merit by His own sovereign will. In this sense, since **Yeshua** had to be born at a particular time and place (Galatians 4:4–5), there necessarily had to be some to whom *it was given* (v. 11) and others to whom it was not.

In our next post, we continue to focus on **Yeshua's Teaching Through Parables** by returning to Mattityahu 13:1.