

## The Kingdom: Living Within: Part 9

Last week in our study of the parable of the *Sower and the Seed* we studied the thorny soil. That was very difficult, as we really had to humble ourselves and admit that undeveloped fruit is something that simply can't be lied about or ignored. Tonight we are going to study the good soil and I can honestly tell you that it is an absolute privilege to be the one who is going to explain this piece of the parable to you. Still, I hope that you will not let these teachings pass you by and fade into your rear view mirror as time goes on. Please remember that the bad soil doesn't change by itself, you must care and participate for change to happen. Do not let this parable describe and define you, let it change and transform you. Let's get started on the good soil by reading the passage.

### ***Matthew 13:18–23***

“Hear then the parable of the sower. “When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil *one* comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road. “The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no *firm* root in himself, but is *only* temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away. “And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

“And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.”

Seed on the good soil represents what happens to God’s word for those who hear the Word and understand it. In this understanding they hold the truth firm and bear fruit with perseverance, producing fruit some a hundredfold, some sixty and some thirty. Clearly, this word to “understand” is a lot like the word “believe.” You can mentally and emotionally understand the words and the concepts, but unless the truth becomes your truth, you simply do not understand no matter how much you confess your so-called belief. To understand is to believe which is to choose to actively bet your life on the Word of God. To actively bet your life on the Word of God you need to know it for real, not just be able to parrot the concepts. Just because you have an arsenal of really good religious one-liners doesn’t mean you have the power to believe. You must be able to understand why those lines are true and how they apply and play out in your life. True Biblical faith and the fruit that it produces cannot be manufactured or faked. Words are not the proof; the only proof is the fruit.

In this parable, after Jesus addresses the three damaged soils, finally, He discusses seed sown in good soil and yielding fruit. According to the scriptures, fruit is defined as several different things: 1) Our becoming like Jesus in our character and nature (***Galatians 5:22-23; 2 Peter 1:5-8***); 2) Our daily conduct and our participating in thought and deed with the work appointed to us by God (***Matthew 22:37-40; Colossians 1:10; Philipians 1:22; Ephesians 5:9***); 3) Our spreading the

gospel in word and example (**Romans 1:13; 1 Corinthians 16:15**); and 4) Our worshiping the Lord, giving Him glory and confessing His name (**Hebrews 13:15**). So seed grown in this soil is going to strongly express the Kingdom of Heaven through us as the conduits here on earth, the same as it is expressed in heaven.

Jesus states that the seed landing on the good soil will produce fruit some a hundredfold, some sixty and some thirty. Of course when we read this most of us immediately apply our own wisdom and experience to it by thinking we can understand it at face value. Some of us might be tempted to think that sixty is bigger than thirty and a hundredfold is bigger than sixty; and too bad for those poor saps who are only producing thirty, they're probably lucky to have any good soil in the first place. But that is not at ALL what is being communicated. Like there are different soils with different impacts on our lives, so there are different types of fruits. The numbers speak more to the type of fruit than they do the quantity of fruit. I encourage you therefore to open your mind as you listen to this teaching and not read into this verse as a scale of personal accomplishment. Not only would that be a delusion, but it would also cause you to compartmentalize your fruit into boxes that are not consistent with what God is trying to accomplish in your life. What we are about to study is so powerful and you should let it saturate your mind so that you can access the power God is giving you through it. Put your self-judgment as well as your judgment of others down and seek to understand. If you listen closely you will be blessed.

When we look at the statement, "who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty," through the lens of biblical numerology, we are dealing with three yields of fruit that include the numbers 10,

6 and 3. These yields are all paired with the number 10—10x10, 6x10, and 3x10. Biblically, the number 10 speaks of completion (whereas 7 speaks of spiritual completion) and represents, for this example, the completion over a course of time. The number 10 is also closely related to testing. For example, we have the Ten Commandments (**Exodus 20**), ten plagues (**Exodus 7-11**), ten days of suffering (**Revelation 2:10**), and the ten days of testing (**Daniel 1:12; Jeremiah 42:7**). For example, when it is added to the number 4, which is the number of God's creative works, we get global type of testing like in the 40 days and nights of the flood (**Genesis 7**) and the 40 years of wondering in the desert (**Numbers 14:33**). So the number 10 combined with each of the three other numbers (3, 6, and 10) is to represent the completion of an appointed time of testing for producing each particular yield.

Since Jesus started by saying, "a hundredfold," let's start our explanation there. A hundred is 10x10 or a time of completed testing multiplied by a time of completed testing. Because this number represents completion upon completion, I believe the seed that brings forth a hundredfold (10x10) will be bringing forth the fruit of the full, complete, and redemptive work of the cross. I believe a good example of this is at the moment just before Jesus died on the cross when He said, "Telelestai" because He was declaring that it is finished or perfectly completed. What He meant by this was that the perfect time of the testing of man (given through the law and God's separation from man because of sin) was finished with Jesus' death and resurrection. This began a new age of freedom, through faith, from that time forward. The fruit of the divinely designated time of testing (10x10) is a person who is living out the *Design Point* of **Galatians 2:20**—I have been

crucified with Christ and It is no longer I who live but Christ lives in me. Those who yield a hundredfold are living in the fullness of this completed reality of total salvation (salvation from our *flesh*), which is made up of completion multiplied by completion and is represented by the number 100.

This reminds me of Paul's prayer in ***Ephesians 3:16-21*** where he says a few remarkable things. He says that Christ will make His home in your heart as you are empowered with inner strength through His Spirit. And His roots of love will grow deep in your soul in order that you might understand how deeply loved you are, so you can experience the fullness of His love. For then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God and that is because His mighty power at work within you can accomplish infinitely more than you might ever ask or think. Completion multiplied by completion established in His love.

Biblically, and from a general perspective 100 is a strong number that has the concept of "good faith" as its backing. The number 100 legitimizes what it is related to as something honorable, appropriate and acceptable. It speaks of leadership, completion of testing, identity, obedience, and personal responsibility. Abraham was 100 when the full testing of his faith was completed and Isaac was finally born (***Genesis 21:5***). In prophecies from ***Isaiah*** about the new heaven and the new earth, it says the youth will live to be 100 years old (***Isaiah 65:20***). 100 cubits is the length of the courtyard and the fine linen curtains of the South and North walls of the Courtyard of the Tabernacle (***Exodus 27:11***). 100 talents of silver were required to make each of the 100 silver bases for the frames of the sanctuary walls and the 100 silver posts supporting the inner curtain (***Exodus 38:27***). As a side note, silver is a biblical image of redemption (***Psalms 66:10; Malachi 3:3***). So it is very appropriate

for it to be linked to this symbol of completed testing as it speaks of complete redemption or the fullness of Christ in you—the *Design Point*.

Along those same lines, 100 decorative pomegranates hung from chains decorating the tops of the two pillars placed north and south at the entrance of the Temple (**2 Chronicles 3:16; Jeremiah 52:23**). The pomegranate is a biblical symbol of righteousness, fruitfulness, knowledge, learning and wisdom (**Numbers 13:23-27, 20:5; Song of Solomon 4:13, 8:2**). 100 gold bowls were placed on ten tables inside the Tabernacle lining the south and north wall (**2 Chronicles 4:8**). Adding to the theme, Gold is a biblical image of deity. On a more practical level, 100 talents was an appropriate fine to pay for a rebellion (**2 Kings 23:33; 2 Chronicles 36:3**), and an appropriate price to pay for skilled warriors (**2 Chronicles 25:6**). Lastly, a centurion is called a centurion because he is in military command over 100 men. So this hundredfold yield is very powerful and speaks to the fullness of the Spirit of God being manifested through man.

The next yield Jesus says will come is sixty. 6 is the biblical number of man and is used throughout the Bible as a representation of what man produces (**Genesis 30:30; Exodus 16:26, 20:9, 21:2, 23:10; Leviticus 23:3; Joshua 6; Revelation 13:18**). In this parable, what man can produce in his self-sufficiency and pride (6) is multiplied with the time of completed testing (10). I believe those who yield sixty symbolize the time of spiritual maturity where one conquers the *flesh* through humility, puts down the pride of man, and learns to walk in the Spirit of God (**Galatians 5:16**). For example, Isaac was tested for 60 years before he had Jacob who would carry on the promise God made to his people (**Genesis 25:26**). 60 cubits is the height of the prideful golden statue of King Nebuchadnezzar (**Daniel 3:1**).

Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard to the king of Babylon, took some Judean officials and 60 other Judean citizens back to Babylon where they were put to death initiating Judah's exile to Babylon (**2 Kings 25:19; Jeremiah 52:25**). For the peace offering, where one would lay down their pride acknowledging that all things come from God; 60 rams, 60 goats, and 60 lambs were sacrificed (**Numbers 7:88**). In conquering the pride of King Og, 60 towns had to be destroyed (**Deuteronomy 3:4**). The word "Sabbath" is used 60 times in the New Testament and is the seventh day of rest and submission to God, following the sixth day of the work which man is cursed with since the Garden of Eden. So this yield of sixtyfold is a produce of fruit representing those who have allowed their own wisdom, identity, and power as men, to be judged and humbled before the wisdom, identity, and power of Jesus.

Lastly, Jesus says some will yield thirty. 3 is the number of perfection and of the Trinity (**Genesis 18:6**). In this yield of thirty, 3 is multiplied by the time of completion, the time of testing (10) same as the other numbers. I believe those who yield thirtyfold symbolize the completion of the perfect time of testing for producing spiritually mature people dedicated to service in ministry. Saul, David, Joseph, Jesus, Ezekiel, and the Aaronic Priests all started ministry at the age of 30 (**Luke 3:23; Genesis 41:46; Numbers 4:3; 1 Samuel 13:1; 2 Samuel 5:4; Ezekiel 1:1**). David also had 30 mighty men who were the most amazing and well-equipped warriors and leaders for the Jews in the history of the people (**2 Samuel 23:13,18**). Aaron mourned for the death of Moses for the perfect time of 30 days (**Deuteronomy 34:8**). Lastly, there are 30 complete sayings of wisdom from Solomon's Proverbs (**Proverbs 22:20**). So this yield of thirtyfold is powerful in that it represents those who have been prepared to shepherd, protect, and lead the

flock of Christ dedicating their lives to making disciples of Jesus.

The meanings of these yields are significant. They are the yields of: 1) Redemption fulfilled and faith exchanged for the law; 2) The submission of man's pride to God's perfection and dominion, and; 3) Spiritually mature leaders willfully participating in the work ordained for their lives by God. A perfect yield of three perfect yields brought forth at the right time. This is what comes from God's Word planting in the good soil.

I want to add that it is our responsibility as God's people to grow in Him such that we are able to bear the threefold types of fruit. That is part of our ministry and witness while we are here on this earth living out the truth. This is one of the reasons why we spend so much time practicing believing in Him. We practice by taking our thoughts captive, disciplining our bodies, believing the truth, putting off the *flesh* and putting on the Spirit, all resulting in our exhibiting the fruits of the Spirit and His *agape* love. Let's leave this for one moment, but we will circle back around to it at the end. Next, I want to take you on a little journey that is connected to the time when Solomon was the King of Israel King Solomon built the literal Temple of the Lord during his reign over Israel. As I was researching, I came across a passage about his Kingdom which parallels the numerology of the fruit yields from the good soil. Keep in mind, Solomon's Kingdom is a type of the Kingdom of Heaven, represented in the peace, power, and prosperity of His Kingdom. He not only built the Temple of the Lord, but was the wisest man to ever live; and the people who served him were content and happy to submit to him and to serve him. And it is in the people's provision for their king (who is a type of Jesus) that we find the parallel to our parable. Look at this verse in **1 Kings** about the daily provision for his



household.

### **1 Kings 4:22–23**

Solomon's provision for one day was thirty kors of fine flour and sixty kors of meal, ten fat oxen, twenty pasture-fed oxen, a hundred sheep besides deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fattened fowl.

This verse seems to simply tell us the provisional requirements to feed Solomon's household for one day. At first glance we see the number values we have been discussing of 30, 60, 10 and 100. In addition we also see the number 20. This caught my eye because it was quite similar to what Jesus was saying in the parable with this addition of the number 20. To keep this straight let's organize what we are dealing with in terms of daily provision for Solomon's household: 30 kors of fine flour, 60 kors of meal, 10 fat oxen, 20 pasture-fed oxen, 100 sheep, and other various game animals.

Let's start at the top of the list by discussing the 30 kors of fine flour. This is related to the thirtyfold yield from the good seed because they both represent a refined and thoroughly prepared provision for the Kingdoms (Solomon's Kingdom and the Kingdom of Heaven). The neat thing is we get more information about the yield from the verse in **1 Kings** than we do from the parable. Fine flour is produced when grain has been crushed between millstones until it has the consistency of powder. Similarly, as we are well aware, people prepared for the work of the Kingdom are also ground very finely as they are put through the millstones of

training and testing. Once ground, the fine flour was brought to Solomon's Kingdom daily. Likewise, once we are ground and prepared, the heart of ministry is presented daily to the Kingdom of Heaven and to the Master Commander Jesus.

Next we have the 60 kors of meal. This is related to the sixtyfold yield from the good seed because they both represent the crushing of mans pride as a daily provision for the goals of the Kingdoms. Meal is also produced from crushed grains however it is not pulverized to the same fine consistency of the fine flour. Similarly, people who honor God by allowing their wisdom, identity and power to be judged and submitted to God have their *fleshly* ways pulverized and broken down by the millstones of truth. The outer hull of the delusional and prideful nature of humanity does not stand against the power of the Word of God. The 60 kors of meal was brought to Solomon's Kingdom daily. Similarly, our pride and personal wisdom must be presented daily to the Kingdom of Heaven to allow God's wisdom to mill and crush it so we can present ourselves in humility everyday according to truth.

Before we move onto the oxen I would regret if we didn't dig deeper into the significance of the two types of flour, fine flour and meal. Scripturally, fine flour is used to make food and grain offerings (**Exodus 29:2, 29:40; Leviticus 6:19-23**). The Grain Offering was a sacrifice of thanksgiving for provision and worship of God. It often consisted of unleavened bread, which could be either eaten or fully consumed by the fire of the altar depending on the type of offering. Often, the Grain Offering was given along with other offerings such as the Burnt Offering (**Numbers 28, 29**) or the Peace Offering. I want to explain these two offerings because I am going to reference them later. The Burnt Offering was pleasing to God because it atoned for sins against Him whereas the Peace Offering, although still a

sacrifice pleasing to God, was also a supper of thanksgiving shared between God, the Priests, and the one bringing the offering. This supper represented the communion and relationship that God and man share. In contrast, the meal flour was typically used for making a meal and not for offerings. I bring this up because there are two interesting stories about the use of these different flours that illustrate the meanings of the yields thirty and sixty.

The first story relates to the thirtyfold yield and the 30 kors of fine flour. It is in **Genesis 18** and is about the time when the Angel of the Lord (who was Jesus) appeared to Abraham to tell him that Sarah would be pregnant within a year. I'm sure you all remember her chuckling over the idea and Jesus calling her out asking her why she had laughed at what He said. That was just a part of the story, but in this overall interaction, when Abraham saw the Lord standing under the tree he approached Him and bowed, offered water for Jesus to wash His feet, and offered to feed Him. Abraham and Sarah end up preparing a supper of meat and unleavened bread made from fine flour. Abraham offers the supper to Jesus and He eats because it honors Him. I explained what a Peace Offering was earlier because this offering from Abraham is acting as a Peace Offering. Abraham approaches Jesus as God and then seeks to please Him and do His will confirming that they have the same goal. The fine flour is a symbol of the result of the ministry callings on our lives. Jesus eating the offering is a symbol that the fine flour (that has come through training and testing) is acceptable to Him. We come to Him, bow, wash His feet and feed Him with the fine flour of our thirtyfold fruit that has been produced and ground up by the process of Him conforming us into His image. This supper represents the offering of our lives to the Lord from those with a thirtyfold

yield. It also serves as a picture of our responsibility to share a heart for ministry of God's truth to the world and to people. It is not coincidence that Grain Offerings made of fine flour were given at the time of the dedication of the Levitical Priests. Their lives were being dedicated to service to God. This story is a beautiful example and picture of the thirtyfold yield displayed here between Jesus our Savior and the founder and father of our faith, Abraham.

The second story relates to the sixtyfold and the 60 kors of meal flour. It is in Judges 6 and is about the time when the Angel of the Lord (who is Jesus) appeared to Gideon to tell him that he was a mighty warrior and would use him to deliver the Israelites from Midian. Well in contrast to Abraham, Gideon does not bow or wash Jesus' feet, but complains and argues with Jesus about how it's hard for him to see that the Lord is with Israel when they are being pushed around by the Midianites. This goes back and forth until Gideon prepares an offering of meat and bread for Jesus. Gideon knows that if the Angel of the Lord accepts the offering, that the Lord will give him victory against their Midianites. Jesus instructs Gideon to put the offering on a rock and pour the broth the meat was cooked in over the offering making it wet. Jesus then consumes the wet offering in fire and then disappears. In this story, Gideon approaches Jesus selfishly and consumed with his own thinking. When he brings his offering Jesus does not even think about eating it and communing with it like He did with Abraham; He only judges it with fire as a Burnt Offering judges the sin of man against God.

Gideon is a tangible example of the sixtyfold yield before the time of testing is completed. He shows that there is definitely a required time for spiritual maturing where one conquers the *flesh* through humility, puts down the pride of man, and

learns to walk in the Spirit of God. The meal is a reminder that fleshly actions done in our own wisdom will never be a supper the Lord will share with us; no, He will always consume it in His fire of judgment. Besides, an offering was supposed to be made of fine flour, not of meal; so Gideon was all over the place in terms of his logic. We studied Gideon in great detail in our study on **Hebrews 11:32** and there is so much more that I simply do not have time to say right now about this example, but I strongly recommend that if you want to fully connect to understanding the sixtyfold yield from the good soil that you make time to study that teaching. It is an amazing example of this time of testing preparation in a real story.

Additionally, I want to note that Jesus instructs Gideon to pour the broth that he cooked the meat in over the offering before He set it on fire. I believe Jesus commands this because He is not only judging Gideon's sinfulness in his attitude of pride and self-sufficiency, but He is also judging Gideon's wrong belief and unbelief. I say this because there is no other place in the Bible that we see water poured over an offering except when Elijah douses the altar with water only to watch it incinerate with fire, before all the unbelieving priests of Baal (**Kings 18**), when he prayed to God. Why would someone need to do that and why didn't the priests ever do that with their sacrifices? I believe Jesus told Gideon to do this to strongly object to the idea that God is not who He says He is and to oppose the wrong and unbelief deep within the soul of Gideon.

How does this information about the flour apply to us? Understand what the fruit is to look like and how it will come forth. Learn to exchange your offerings of meal for offerings of fine flour so that your sixtyfold yield can be a monument and daily inspiration that the wisdom of God reigns and the pride of man falls. Yes these

types of flour are just metaphors but how they relate to what Jesus is saying is fascinating when we understand the meaning behind the thirtyfold and the sixtyfold which comes from the good soil.

Now let's move on to the 30 oxen. This 30 is related to the thirtyfold yield from the good seed in that it again touches on the heart of those in ministry. The oxen represent a different aspect of the same thirtyfold yield than the fine flour did. This represents another 3x10 time of completion and testing. Solomon's Kingdom receives ten fat oxen and twenty pasture fed oxen (2x10) daily, thirty oxen all together. The ten fat oxen are obviously a delicacy fed and raised for tasty meat. In the bible this Hebrew word for fat "*bare*" is used only a few times. However, in its use it consistently makes reference to excess in which man creates and provides for himself (***Genesis 41; Judges 3:12-31; Psalm 119:69-70***). This word describes the arrogant in ***Psalms 73:3-11*** and states that pride is their necklace and their eyes bulge from fatness while imaginations of their heart run riot.

I believe these ten fat oxen are a symbol of what man provides in the flesh. There are ten of them because they represent that same period of testing that the other yields needed to draw out the fruit evidencing that flesh has been conquered. The ten fat oxen represent the reality that we are not enough in any area of our life and we need the provision of a Savior (similar to the symbolism behind the Ten Commandments). We need God to provide what we cannot provide and in this example that provision is displayed in the adding of the 20 pasture fed oxen. The interesting thing about pasture fed oxen is that unlike the fat oxen they have been raised out in the pasture; they are healthy and well rounded. The bible speaks of God's provision and perfect care coming from "the pasture" (***John 10:9; Jeremiah***

**23:3; Psalm 23:2; Isaiah 33:20**). Even in **Exodus 15:13**, it says that in God's lovingkindness He has led the people who He has redeemed to His holy habitation (the word used for "habitation" in this verse is the same Hebrew word used for pasture). So from this pasture of provision, 20 oxen are taken daily for the Kingdom.

This is the first time we have seen the number twenty in this study so far so let's discuss it a little bit. The number twenty is biblically viewed as 2x10. We already know that the number 10 is described by completion and testing but the number 2 represents both division and unity. In this example with the oxen, the number 2 represents division in that even though there are thirty oxen altogether, this group of 20 pasture fed oxen is divided out as provision from the Lord's pasture separate from the group of 10 fat oxen which are provision from men. Conversely, the number 2 represents unity because even though the 20 oxen are separated from the 10, they must still be linked together with the 10 for us to receive the fullness of the provision God intends to give us. You see in our journey to find God we are so tethered to our humanity that we must first fall short before we can make room to let God come and finish what we cannot finish for ourselves. He ultimately provides for us by letting us see that we fail ourselves. He is our perfect provision where we are not. God allows the 10 fat oxen of man's provision to unify with the 20 pasture fed oxen of His provision because that is the combination that is needed for us to finally submit and let the Lord's testing produce His truth in our lives that He is our true provider. This competition for provision between the fruit of our flesh and spirit (between the fat oxen and the pasture fed oxen) is another layer of development in the lives of those who produce thirtyfold from the good soil. Knowledge of where our help truly comes from is another characteristic of a true

Shepherd.

Finally, let's address the 100 sheep. I believe that these sheep represent the complete body of Christ in us as believers. We studied the number 100 and we said that it speaks of leadership, completion of testing, identity, obedience, and personal responsibility. It also speaks of being chosen.

As a review for everything we just went through let's take a look at this chart:

Solomon's Kingdom – Daily Necessities	Kingdom of Heaven – Good Soil	Meaning
30 kors of fine flour.	30 Yield of fruit.	The part of our hearts that have been crushed, refined, and prepared to be shepherds.
60 kors of meal.	60 Yield of fruit.	The part of our hearts that is submitted to the wisdom of God and turns away from the pride of man.
30 oxen.	30 Yield of fruit. -Layer two	The part of our hearts that has an understanding concerning our perfect neediness for God, which prepares the heart of a shepherd for their work.
-10 fat oxen.	Completion and testing.	The part of our hearts that acknowledges the futility of being our own provision.
-20 pasture fed oxen.	Provision and strength.	The mercy of the Lord's division and unity as a lesson to make us wise and as fulfillment to where we fall short.
100 sheep.	Our hearts, which	The Beloved. Those bringing



	can produce fruit.	forth the fruit of the full, complete, and redemptive work of the cross.
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**1 Kings 6:2** also tells us that when Solomon finally built the Temple of the Lord, it was sixty cubits long, thirty cubits tall and twenty cubits wide: humility, shepherding and provision. Also, don't forget how many representations of 100 I listed in relationship to the Temple earlier in this teaching: 100 silver stands, silver poles, golden pomegranates and golden bowls. We are the Temple and we must take up our role and act like it.

As we conclude this study, keep in mind that we all could have a bounty of each yield coming forth from our hearts. We are all called and equipped to live out the *Design Point*. Likewise, we all have room to lay down our own wisdom and pride letting it be separated from God and judged by fire like Gideon. In addition, I know that not everyone is destined to pastor a church, nonetheless everyone has been called as a priest, part of a divine priesthood that has been ordained to proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness and into His marvelous light (**1 Peter 2:9**). We each have work that has been appointed to us by the Lord (**John 3:27, Ephesians 2:10, 4:12**). These three perfect yields are for us to experience in our lives if we will partner with Jesus to do the work to clear out our corrupt soil and make it good.

And how are we supposed to accomplish that? Jesus says we will bear fruit with perseverance (**Luke 8:15, 21:16-19; Romans 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 15:58; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Philippians 1:27; 2 Timothy 1:13; Hebrews 2:1, 4:14; 2 Peter 1:5-8; Revelation 2:2-3, 3:11**).

***James 1:4***

And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

***1 Corinthians 16:13***

Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.

There is hope and power in the name Jesus Christ; so you have a reason not to give up. Fight the barriers that are standing between you and the good soil of the Lord. Go back over and over again to the 3-simple things we must believe. Meditate on them, meditate on His Name, and simply pursue Him as a person. When your view of God is small, then your life will be dominated by the corrupt soil. But if your view of God is as huge as His Name declares, then you can start truly understanding why you are safe to trust Him with every aspect and every detail of your life (no matter what you feel or think at any moment in time). He is our God; He is good; and He is extracting us from this world so that we might be just like Him. And remember that this parable has given us an example of the way the Kingdom of Heaven and the kingdom of this world interact. Jesus is giving us a cheat sheet so that we can fight and have the victory. We must relent to the reality that even though we are part of this world, we are not of it and we have power through Him to deal with each of these soils of our heart even though the world only offers a life that is hard, stony, and thorny.

He who has ears let him hear.

Let's pray.