

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Luke 8:1-10

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the bible again. This week, we will read Luke chapter 8. Today, we will read verses 1-10.

Verse 1: "Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him,"

At this time, Jesus had already gathered His twelve disciples. Meanwhile, in Capernaum He had gained some renown through preaching, healing the sick, and casting out demons. He then began a traveling ministry, proclaiming the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. By "traveling," we mean that with Capernaum as the center, He would go out for a period of time and then return again to Capernaum. What is recorded here is His first preaching tour: going to the western side of the Sea of Galilee, to the region of the Gadarenes, and afterward returning again to Capernaum. This is the background of this chapter.

"And the twelve were with Him." These twelve disciples had already been living with Jesus daily for some time. Every day they observed how He preached, how He healed the sick, how He cast out demons, and how He ministered to the crowds. Now He began to take them with Him to travel through the cities and villages to preach the gospel. This could be considered their internship, and also their training. We may see this as Jesus' training of His disciples—how He trained the twelve so that in the future they might continue His earthly ministry. Thus at the beginning it mentions the twelve disciples. After Jesus spent time establishing His team, He brought them out for hands-on training.

Verse 2: “and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities—Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons,”

In addition to the twelve disciples, there was a second group—some women who had all been helped by Jesus. Some had been healed of sickness, and some had demons cast out. Luke especially mentions Mary called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out. This sister is one we have always known as one who deeply loved the Lord. She was also the Mary Magdalene who, after the Lord Jesus’ resurrection, remained by His tomb and refused to leave, compelling the Lord, as it were, to appear to her.

These sisters followed Jesus and likely served Him and the twelve disciples—preparing meals, cleaning, and handling practical matters. These were sisters who loved the Lord, who had received His help, and who were willing to dedicate their lives. Although they did not preach publicly before others, what they offered was by no means less than that of the twelve disciples. Therefore Luke specifically records them.

Verse 3: “and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance.”

The third group Luke names is also a group of sisters, but these came from relatively wealthy backgrounds. Two are mentioned by name: Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward, and Susanna, along with many other unnamed women. These women were comparatively well-off and were willing to use their possessions to provide for Jesus and His disciples. Jesus’ own family was poor, and most of the twelve disciples also came from humble backgrounds. When going out to preach, there was always a need for material support. God therefore prepared some wealthier sisters to supply their financial needs.

We should especially notice that the twelve disciples were chosen by Jesus after a whole night of prayer. They were to continue His earthly ministry. In addition, two groups of sisters are mentioned: one group serving in practical matters, and another

providing financial support. Those who have some experience in church life may recognize that often sisters love the Lord more fervently than brothers, are more spiritually sensitive, and are more devoted in giving. Therefore, we especially encourage the sisters in the church: according to your portion and according to your ability, offer yourselves, and God will surely remember.

At this time, Jesus was no longer preaching alone; He had a team with Him—on the one hand proclaiming the glad tidings of the kingdom of God, and on the other hand giving these disciples an opportunity to learn. Beginning in verse 4, it records the first message Jesus preached as this team went out.

Verses 4–5a: “And when a great multitude had gathered, and they had come to Him from every city, He spoke by a parable: ‘A sower went out to sow his seed.’”

Of course, this sower refers to Jesus Himself. He is the first One who went out to sow. The seed is the word of God—the words spoken by Jesus. Certainly Jesus was the first, and afterward He also expected His disciples to continue His ministry and become those who go out to sow. Next, Jesus described several different situations the seed encountered after being sown.

Verse 5b: “And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it.”

The sower must sow generously, regardless of the circumstances. He simply sows. Yet the ground upon which the seed falls differs. The first type falls by the wayside. The characteristic of the wayside is heavy traffic—people coming and going, many carts passing by—so the soil becomes very hard. When the seed falls there, it is trampled down, and the birds of the air come and devour it. Therefore, the seed that falls by the wayside has little opportunity to grow.

Verse 6: “Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture.”

If a seed falls into soil and is covered by earth, there is moisture beneath, and it can slowly take root and grow. But because this seed falls on rock, which is hard and without moisture, as soon as it sprouts, it withers away. This is the second situation.

Verse 7: “And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it.”

All plants need space to grow. If the space is already filled with thorns, then when the seed falls among them, although it may take root and sprout, there is no room above for it to grow. It is choked and cannot bear fruit. This is the third situation.

Verse 8: “‘But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold.’ When He had said these things He cried, ‘He who has ears to hear, let him hear!’”

On the one hand, Jesus was preaching to the crowds, proclaiming the glad tidings of the kingdom of God through parables. In Matthew chapter 13, Jesus told seven consecutive parables, and the first was this parable of the sower. In Matthew’s Gospel, before each parable it says, “The kingdom of heaven is like...,” emphasizing the growth of the kingdom through sowing. But in Luke’s Gospel, only this first parable of the sower is recorded, and it does not say, “The kingdom of heaven is like.” It seems simply to tell us that we are to go out and preach the gospel. After preaching, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.” In other words, you should preach diligently. Whether people are saved or not is not your responsibility; it is the responsibility of the hearer. Therefore He calls upon those who hear—if you have ears to hear, you ought to listen carefully.

If this is part of Jesus’ training of His disciples, then He was also training them to preach the gospel without worrying about what kind of soil it falls upon—whether

wayside, rocky ground, thorns, or good soil. That is not the responsibility of the preacher. The preacher is simply to preach—to sow the word of life, the seed of the gospel, richly and generously. We have no way to judge whether a person's heart is good soil, rocky ground, wayside, or thorny ground. God has not given us that responsibility. Rather, He places the responsibility of hearing and being saved upon the listener: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." Therefore, those who preach the gospel need only follow the prompting within their spirit, cooperate with the opportunities God gives, and preach freely, richly, and generously. Whether someone can be saved is not your responsibility.

Verses 9–10: "Then His disciples asked Him, saying, 'What does this parable mean?' And He said, 'To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that 'Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.'"

A mystery is by nature not easily understood—especially the mysteries of the kingdom of God. Many things cannot be fully explained merely by knowledge or doctrine; they must be experienced and enjoyed in life. To the disciples, Jesus personally explained everything clearly. But to the general listeners, He spoke in parables.

Parables carry two implications. For those without a seeking heart, they may look and not see, and hear and not understand. But for those with a seeking heart, a parable is like a picture that vividly presents the truth of the kingdom before us, enabling us to see more clearly and understand more deeply.

In other words, the truth of the kingdom requires revelation. It is not something that can be grasped by human intelligence alone; God must remove the veil from before our eyes. You may ask, then who can be saved? Jesus has also promised that those who knock will have the door opened, and those who seek will find. As long as we have a seeking heart, God will grant revelation and enable us to understand all that He speaks in parables. But if a person is careless or indifferent, it will be

difficult to understand the gospel, to truly comprehend it, or to receive it. Therefore Jesus proclaimed loudly, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

Let us pray together: Lord, yes, grant us ears to hear. Give us a soft heart, like good soil. May every word You speak to us be like seed falling on good ground, bearing fruit a hundredfold. Lord, just as You trained Your disciples then, train me today in my daily life, that I may become one who is always ready to preach the gospel. Make me prepared, so that whenever You bring someone to my side, I may according to my experience clearly testify of the riches of the kingdom of God. Bless me and make me a messenger of the gospel, expanding Your kingdom. Thank You Lord. We pray in the Holy Name of Jesus Christ.