

## GOSPEL PEARLS

# An authentic explanation

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*On another occasion, Jesus began to teach by the sea.  
A very large crowd gathered around him  
so that he got into a boat on the sea and sat down.  
And the whole crowd was beside the sea on land.  
And he taught them at length in parables,  
and in the course of his instruction he said to them,  
"Hear this! A sower went out to sow.  
And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path,  
and the birds came and ate it up.  
Other seed fell on rocky ground where it had little soil.  
It sprang up at once because the soil was not deep.  
And when the sun rose, it was scorched and it withered for lack of roots.  
Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it  
and it produced no grain.  
And some seed fell on rich soil and produced fruit.  
It came up and grew and yielded thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold."  
He added, "Whoever has ears to hear ought to hear."*

*And when he was alone,  
those present along with the Twelve  
questioned him about the parables.  
He answered them,  
"The mystery of the Kingdom of God has been granted to you.  
But to those outside everything comes in parables, so that  
they may look and see but not perceive,  
and hear and listen but not understand,  
in order that they may not be converted and be forgiven."*

*Jesus said to them, "Do you not understand this parable?  
Then how will you understand any of the parables?  
The sower sows the word.  
These are the ones on the path where the word is sown.  
As soon as they hear, Satan comes at once  
and takes away the word sown in them.  
And these are the ones sown on rocky ground who,  
when they hear the word, receive it at once with joy.  
But they have no roots; they last only for a time.  
Then when tribulation or persecution comes because of the word,  
they quickly fall away.  
Those sown among thorns are another sort.  
They are the people who hear the word,  
but worldly anxiety, the lure of riches,  
and the craving for other things intrude and choke the word,  
and it bears no fruit.  
But those sown on rich soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it  
and bear fruit thirty and sixty and a hundredfold." (Mk 4:1-20)*

The parable of the sower is one of the few that Jesus explains directly to his disciples. The seed is the Word of God given to all of us, whilst we are granted the free will to welcome Him or not. God, desires our love, but does not want to force us with the evidence of His glory, because forced love is no longer such. The ground on which the seed falls is therefore the image of the human heart challenged by the Word of God. To be saved, therefore, we must first welcome the Word of God with Poverty of Spirit and then preserve it by persevering in our faith in Him. Let's prepare our hearts to be that fertile ground which welcomes His Word.