

CHARACTERS: 4 M, 12 either, doubling and tripling possible, Jesus, Birds 1, 2, Seeds 1-5,
Choked Seed, Thorn, Voice of Isaiah, Pewter, Andrew, Owner, Voice of David
SETTING: Israel, time of Christ
SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Mark 4 and 12

The Parables from Mark

Before you begin: What is the difference between a sower and a sewer? How does the sower differ from a modern farmer? How will the type of bird played affect the voice of the birds? Personification is assigning human qualities (like speech and emotion) to non-human things. What is personified in this and other parables? How does one decide what a plant's voice would sound like?

PETER: Again Jesus began to teach by the lake.

ANDREW: The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake

PETER: While all the people were along the shore at the water's edge.

ANDREW: He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said:

JESUS: Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path

BIRDS 1 & 2: *(in unison)* We birds came and ate it up.

JESUS: Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil.

SEED 1: We sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow.

SEED 2: But when the sun came up, we plants were scorched

SEED 3: We withered because we had no root.

JESUS: Other seed fell among thorns,

THORN 1: *(mean)* We thorns grew up and choked the plants

CHOKED PLANT: *(barely able to speak)* Because of the thorns we did not bear grain.

JESUS: Still other seed fell on good soil.

SEED 4: We came up, grew and produced a crop

SEED 5: We, multiplied thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times.

ALL SEEDS: *(in unison)* He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

PETER: When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables.

JESUS: The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables so that,

VOICE OF ISAIAH: They may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!

ANDREW: I don't understand?

PETER: What does the parable mean?

JESUS: Don't you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? The farmer sows the word.

BIRD 1: Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown.

BIRD 2: As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them.

SEED 1: Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy.

SEED 2: But since they have no root, they last only a short time.

SEED 3: When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away.

CHOKED SEED: Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word;

THORN: (*Mean and evil*) But the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful.

SEED 4: Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop

SEED 5: Thirty, sixty or even a hundred times what was sown.

A Lamp on a Stand

JESUS: Do you bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or a bed?

ANDREW: No, Lord. We put it on its stand

JESUS: Whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed, and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open.

ALL: (*in unison*) If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.

JESUS: Consider carefully what you hear. With the measure you use, it will be measured to you—and even more.

ANDREW: That means whoever has will be given more;

PETER: Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.

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The Parable of the Growing Seed

JESUS: This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground.

SEED 4: Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how.

SEED 5: All by itself, the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head.

JESUS: As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

JESUS: What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed,

SEED 3: Which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground.

SEED 2: Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants,

BIRDS 1 & 2: (*in unison*) With such big branches that the birds of the air can perch in its shade.

PETER: With many similar parables, Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand.

ANDREW: He did not say anything to them without using a parable.

PETER: But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.

The Parable of the Tenants from Mark 12

This “bonus skit” was included since the entire gospel of Mark has so few parables. As you read consider why the parts assigned to plants previously were assigned the particular parts they were given. If you were assigning parts, would you have done something differently? Why or why not?

NARR: Jesus began to speak to them in parables:

JESUS: A man planted a vineyard.

PETER: He put a wall around it, dug a pit for the winepress and built a watchtower.

ANDREW: Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey.

PETER: At harvest time, he sent a servant to the tenants to collect from them some of the fruit of the vineyard.

THORN: (*mean*) But they seized him, beat him and sent him away empty-handed.

CHOKED PLANT: Then he sent another servant to them; they struck this man on the head and treated him shamefully.

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THORN: He sent still another, and that one they killed.

CHOKED PLANT: He sent many others; some of them they beat, others they killed.

JESUS: He had one left to send, a son, whom he loved. He sent him last of all, saying,

OWNER: They will respect my son.

JESUS: But the tenants said to one another

TENANT/THORN: This is the heir. Come, let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours

CHOKED PLANT: So they took him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard.

JESUS: What then will the owner of the vineyard do?

BIRD 1: He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others.

BIRD 2: Haven't you read this scripture:

VOICE OF DAVID: The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes

PETER: Then they looked for a way to arrest him because they knew he had spoken the parable against them.

ANDREW: But they were afraid of the crowd; so they left him and went away.