

Bible study ‘Seek first the Kingdom of God’

With this Bible study we are acting on a Biblical commandment. In the Bible is written that we have to seek the Kingdom of God.

Question: where can we find this?

Matthew 6:33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Most of us believe that a physical Kingdom will come, in the near or further future. Whether that is true or not, that is not something we can seek for right now. That is not yet within our reach. Then what Kingdom is this? And how important is it to know? Matthew 6:33 is written as a commandment, so it is not without obligation. And that’s how important it is.

Question: but then what is this Kingdom that we must seek?

John 18:36 Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.”

The Kingdom is not of this world. Yet we must seek it.

Luke 17:20-21 Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.”

Colossians 1:13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.

We can be there right now!

So, it is a spiritual Kingdom. A Kingdom that can be within us.

Question: where in the Word is this Kingdom explained?

In the whole Word, but most clearly in Yeshua’s teachings. Yeshua’s teachings are spirit and they are life. That is what He says in John 6:63. Therefore we must understand His teachings spiritually and that will give us life, spiritual life.

John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

So, His parables are about the Kingdom. Let’s read a few introductions:

Matthew 13:24 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field”.

Matthew 13:31 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field”.

Matthew 13:44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

Matthew 13:45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls.

Matthew 18:23 Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.

Matthew 20:1 For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard.

Matthew 22:2 The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son.

Matthew 25:1 Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

Mark 4:26 And He said, “The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground.

Mark 4:30 Then He said, “To what shall we liken the kingdom of God? Or with what parable shall we picture it?”

Question: so, what was the teaching of Yeshua about?

Matthew 9:35 Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

That is the gospel, the teaching, the message Yeshua preached. The gospel is about the Kingdom. His teaching is about the Kingdom. If that is the subject the Son of Elohim focuses on in His teaching, then how important is it?

Question: why was Yeshua on earth?

Luke 4:43 But He said to them, “I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.”

Yeshua was sent to earth to teach about the Kingdom of Elohim. And that is what we have to teach according to Yeshua:

Matthew 10:7 And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’

Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

But what is it we have to teach? What must the contents of our teaching be?

Back to Luke 17:20-21: *Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."*

Question: what does Yeshua refer to, when He says 'within you'. What is within us?

What is our deepest being: it is our heart and our heart is connected with what we think, what we believe as truth. The Word often makes that connection between heart and mind.

For example in Genesis 6:5, where we can read the reason for the flood: *Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

In this text thoughts and heart are connected.

Question: are there more examples in the Word?

See for example Psalm 139:23: *Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts.*

Here also thoughts and heart are connected. And when you search the Word, you will find many examples.

Question: what does the Word say about our heart and mind?

Genesis 8:21 And the LORD smelled a soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done."

Deuteronomy 5:29 Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!

Joshua 24:23 "Now therefore," he said, "put away the foreign gods which are among you, and incline your heart to the LORD God of Israel."

1 Kings 11:9 So the LORD became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the LORD God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice.

1 Kings 12:33 So he made offerings on the altar which he had made at Bethel on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, in the month which he had devised in his own heart. And he ordained a feast for the children of Israel, and offered sacrifices on the altar and burned incense.

2 Chronicles 12:14 And he did evil, because he did not prepare his heart to seek the LORD.

Job 21:27 Look, I know your thoughts,

And the schemes with which you would wrong me.

Psalm 56:5 All day they twist my words; all their thoughts are against me for evil.

Psalm 94:11 The LORD knows the thoughts of man, that they are futile.

Proverbs 6:18 A heart that devises wicked plans.

Isaiah 55:7-8 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly

pardon. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD.

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?

Jeremiah 18:12 And they said, "That is hopeless! So we will walk according to our own plans, and we will every one obey the dictates of his evil heart."

John 2:25 and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man.

Our own heart and mind of man is far from His. The Word does not speak positive about the heart and mind of man, the Word confronts us with our heart and mind. But the effect of the Word must be a change of our heart and mind, to grow to the heart and mind of the Father. The Word has to change our lives, it is meant for instruction that we may be complete.

Question: where can we find this?

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

The Word commands us to change our mind and heart.

Question: where can we find this?

Ephesians 4:23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind.

Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Ezekiel 36:26-27 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

This renewal of our mind and heart, to be instructed in righteousness to become complete, is spiritual growth. It is spiritual growth of the Kingdom within us. This is visual in the parables of Yeshua. Let's read some of them.

Starting with the parable of the sower in Matthew 13. Yeshua says that this is an important parable to understand.

Matthew 13:17-18 for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

Therefore hear the parable of the sower.

We can find this parable in Matthew 13:1-9:

1 On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea.

2 And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

3 Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow.
4 And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them.
5 Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth.
6 But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away.
7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them.
8 But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.
9 He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

Verse 8 says that the seed fell on good ground and yielded a crop. It resulted in various fruits: hundredfold, sixty and thirty. So where the seed bears fruit, it results in different fruits. We have seen that Yeshua's teaching is about the Kingdom and that it must be understood spiritually. This parable thus refers to spiritual fruit and that is spiritual growth, spiritual growth of our heart and mind. We can also call this sanctification. Hundredfold fruit symbolizes spiritual maturity and the end goal, sixtyfold fruit is on the way and thirtyfold fruit is the starting point. We can consider these different fruits as a yardstick we can measure our spiritual growth with.

Question: where else in the Word can we find this fruit?

Matthew 7:16 You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?

In this text it says that we will be known by our fruits. Our actions display our spiritual growth, the condition of our heart and mind.

John 12:24 Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.

This text refers to dying to ourselves, dying of the desires and will from our own heart of man. In this way we will bear spiritual fruit and grow to much fruit and that is the 100-fold fruit from the parable of the sower.

John 15:4-5 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

We can only bear fruit if we abide in Him. And if we abide in Him, we will bear much fruit and that refers again to the 100-fold fruit from the parable of the sower. This text of John 15 is connected with:

John 5:19 The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.

John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

Yeshua could do nothing without the Father. As He was connected with the Father, we must be connected with Him to bear 100-fold fruit.

Romans 6:22 But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

In this text the fruit is connected with holiness, sanctification.

Philippians 4:17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account.

This text also refers to the growth of fruit: spiritual growth.

These texts make clear that the fruit is spiritual and that it is a process of growth. From 30-fold to 60-fold to 100-fold.

Jeremiah 17:10 I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings.

In this text the fruit is connected with the heart, with what is in our heart, that only YHWH knows.

In Ephesians the fruit is connected with truth:

Ephesians 5:9 For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth.

Question: where can we find this yardstick to measure our spiritual growth with in another form?

Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness.

Note that this text does not describe actions. It describes qualities of our heart. The 100-fold fruit of the parable of the sower is equal to 100% fruit of the Spirit. Yeshua was of course the perfect example.

Another yardstick is of course the Torah. The Torah is a yardstick we can measure our spiritual growth with, and a mirror in which we can see the state of our heart and mind. We can see what the state of our heart and mind is when we reflect on how we succeed in living in obedience with the Torah. Because our actions come forth from our heart. We can see this in a.o.:

Jeremiah 18:12 And they said, "That is hopeless! So we will walk according to our own plans, and we will every one obey the dictates of his evil heart."

Matthew 5:27-28 You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery'. But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

1 Corinthians 7:37 Nevertheless he who stands steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but has power over his own will, and has so determined in his heart that he will keep his virgin, does well.

So, where we see that we do not succeed very well in living in obedience with the Torah, we have to search within, in our mind and heart, for the reason. We have to search for a lie in our heart and mind, or a truth we do not know yet, as the basis for every sinful behaviour is a lie.

Question: what is sin?

Our understanding of sin often is breaking of the commandments. But then we turn it around. Breaking of the commandments is a result of sin, not the other way round. What sin really is, becomes clear when we know the reason for the flood. The reason for the flood is written in Genesis 6:5, we read earlier:

Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

And we earlier mentioned Genesis 8:21 as well, after the flood: the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. Matthew 24:37 tells us that still nothing has changed:

But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

So sin is the 'thoughts of our heart': our mind and our heart. Sin is the mind of man that since the fall is not one with the mind of YHWH. And everything that is not one with Him, is delusion and lie. Sin begins in our mind and can result in actions or in the words that we speak. Sinful acts are a symptom of an unchanged heart, a heart that is not yet in sync with YHWH's heart. The foundation of every sinful thought, action or word, is a lie, that must be destroyed by the truth. One of the biggest lies is that we think we know it better than YHWH. So we have to switch our focus, from the outside: actions, to our inside: a changed mind and heart. When our motivation to keep Torah is because it is in His Word and so we have to keep it, we keep it because of reasoning of man and by power of man. And then we do not act from a changed mind and heart and we fail. When our heart is changed, we automatically do what YHWH wants. When our heart is changed and resembles more and more the image of His heart, we are going to live more and more by the (deeper) meaning of His rules and that as a result of our changed heart and not by power of man. Back to Ezekiel 36:26-27:

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

So, from our heart.

The 3 different fruits are repeated in the parable of the talents.

Matthew 25:14-28

14 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. 15 And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. 16 Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. 17 And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. 18 But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. 19 After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. 20 "So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' 21 His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' 22 He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' 23 His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' 24 "Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25 And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.' 26 "But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. 27 So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. 28 So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents.

In this parable there are again 3 groups. That is not a coincidence.

Question: how can we connect these 3 groups with the 3 fruits from the parable of the sower?

The servant with the five talents to be doubled to 10 represents the 100-fold fruit. The servant with the two talents to be doubled to four represents the 60-fold fruit and the servant with the one talent that is taken from him represents the 30-fold fruit. The growth of talents, spiritual growth, is rewarded.

Let's read another parable: the parable of the treasure in the field.

Matthew 13:44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

In Isaiah 45:3 we find this hidden treasure as well:

I will give you the treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places, that you may know that I, the LORD, Who call you by your name, am the God of Israel.

Question: what is this treasure?

Colossians 2:2-3 that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

It is wisdom and knowledge, hidden in Yeshua. And this wisdom is what He teaches and His teaching is about the Kingdom. When we store up this treasure, it will result in eternal life.

1 Timothy 6:19 storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

The parable of the treasure in the field explains to us that we want to sell all that we have for this treasure. We have already seen that Yeshua's words, His teaching, must be understood spiritually.

Question: what is it that we have to sell spiritually (have to get rid of) to 'buy' (accept) wisdom and knowledge of Yeshua?

Matthew 12:35 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.

We have to sell, get rid of, the evil treasure, the evil things, of our heart. And that is selling, getting rid of, our own 'knowledge', our own 'wisdom' of man. So what we have to sell, what we have to get rid of, are the lies and delusions in our heart that we wrongly think are truth, but that keep us from further spiritual growth. These are our own thoughts, that are not His thoughts. It is everything in our mind and heart that hinders us to live in harmony with Him. When we sell these, when we get rid of these, we then can fill our hearts and minds with this treasure of wisdom and knowledge. When we accept something as truth, the lie disappears at the same time. And that is how the Kingdom grows in us.

Matthew 6:19-21 makes the connection between this treasure and our heart: *Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

In other words: our spiritual growth depends on what we lay up as spiritual treasures. Do we lay up treasures of 'wisdom' of man of the earth, or do we lay up treasures of wisdom and truth from above. To the extent we lay up these treasures, we grow from 30-, to 60-, to 100-fold fruit. In Ephesians 5:9 the fruit is connected with truth: *for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth.*

The parable of the one pearl of great price has the same message.

Matthew 13:46 who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

The lies we buy (accept), and also the wisdom and truth we buy (accept), end up in our mind and then in our heart. To be able to buy the one pearl of great price, or the treasure in the field, we have to sell all that we have. We have to sell, to get rid of, all our own thoughts of man.

Let's read the parable of the men building their house.

Luke 6:46-49

46 But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say? 47 Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: 48 He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. 49 But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great

One man build with a foundation, one man build without it.

Question: what is that foundation?

We have seen it already in 1 Timothy 6:19:

storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

It is the treasure of wisdom and truth.

The wise man builds his house on a rock.

Question: what does rock refer to?

1 Corinthians 10:4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.

The rock is Yeshua. So we have to build our house on Yeshua, on the foundation of His wisdom and truth.

Question: what does house refer to?

Every year this house passes by:

Exodus 12:15 Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.

During the feast of the unleavened bread we must remove leaven from our house.

Question: what does leaven refer to?

1 Corinthians 5:8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

In this text unleavened bread is connected with truth. Leavened bread, leaven, is the opposite: lie and delusion.

Matthew 16:6-12

6 Then Jesus said to them, “Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.”

7 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, “It is because we have taken no bread.”

8 But Jesus, being aware of it, said to them, “O you of little faith, why do you reason among yourselves because you have brought no bread? 9 Do you not yet understand, or remember the five loaves of the five thousand and how many baskets you took up? 10 Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand and how many large baskets you took up? 11 How is it you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread?—but to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” 12 Then they understood that He did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Yeshua compares the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees with leaven. The doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees was not truth, and what isn't the truth is lie and delusion. Leaven is often connected with sin. And that is correct. Because earlier we saw that sin is the lies and delusions in our mind and heart.

Leaven is in bread.

Question: what is the meaning of bread in the Word?

Bread is what feeds us. Literal bread feeds our body, spiritual bread feeds our spirit.

Deuteronomy 8:3: So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.

John 6:27: Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.

John 6:32: Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.

John 6:58: This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.

Matthew 6:11 Give us this day our daily bread.

Spiritual bread is what feeds our mind and heart, spiritual bread is teaching. And that can be truth or lie.

The teaching of the Pharisees and Saducees was lie:

Matthew 16:12: Then they understood that He did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

The bread of Yeshua is truth:

John 6:27 Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.

Spiritual bread can come from heaven:

John 6:32: Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.”

But also from the earth, and that is bread that does not come from heaven:

Proverbs 4:17 For they eat the bread of wickedness.

Proverbs 20:17 Bread gained by deceit is sweet to a man, but afterward his mouth will be filled with gravel.

And this is connected again with the treasures on earth of Matthew 6:19, we must not lay up: *Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

If bread is leavened, it refers to the teaching of lies and delusions. If bread is unleavened, it refers to the teaching of truth.

So, leaven is lies and delusions. And they are in our mind.

Let's go back to Exodus 12:15:

Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.

Question: if the leaven of lies and delusions must be removed from our house, where does house refer to?

House refers to our mind. The parable of the men building houses is telling us that we must build our mind on the Rock Yeshua, on His teaching of truth. That is how we grow to a 100-fold mind, that is a 100-fold house.

This house is mentioned in Matthew 19:29:

And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.

So when we leave everything, all lies of man in our mind, for Him, we shall receive a hundredfold. We shall not receive 100 literal houses, but a 100-fold house, a 100-fold mind.

In Matthew 13:52 things new and old are brought out:

Then He said to them, "Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old."

This text is connected with Matthew 12:35 we read earlier:

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.

The old things are the lies and delusions in our mind, the evil treasure. The new things refer to the truth we accept when we are instructed concerning the Kingdom, the good treasure.

Another text about treasures in a house:

Micha 6:10 Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the short measure that is an abomination?

This text mentions treasures in the house of the wicked. These are the evil treasures of Matthew 12:35: the lies and delusions in our heart and mind. And these are an abomination according to this text. These wicked treasures are in the house, in the mind, of the wicked.

The temple is also a house, the house of YHWH. Matthew 21 tells us about the cleansing of the temple by Yeshua:

Matthew 21:12-13 Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves'."

Our house, our mind, is a den of thieves when it is filled with thoughts of man where the truth of YHWH must be. Unlike beasts, man has received from YHWH the gift of thinking, our intellect. But just as the literal temple was often defiled and therefore destroyed twice, we have made our mind an unclean den of thieves by filling it with lies and delusions of man instead of the truth of YHWH. And Yeshua wants to cleanse us, He wants to cleanse our mind.

Question: how does Yeshua cleanses us?

Ephesians 5:25-26 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word.

Yeshua cleanses us by His Word, the teaching that he gave and is written in the Word for us. His teaching, His Word, confronts the lies and delusions in our mind with the truth.

Question: what is truth?

John 17:17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

John 8:31-32 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

These texts mention sanctification, spiritual growth, as well. Our only source of truth, the only thing to hold on to, is His Word. Correctly interpreted of course, because if our interpretation deviates from the meaning of the Author, we create a lie and we miss the truth. 2 Peter 1:20 warns us for this:

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation.

Back to the foolish, or wicked, man, that builds his house (his mind) on the earth. This is connected with the servant that hid his talent in the earth (ground), from the parable of the talents, and the treasure on the earth we must not lay up, from Matthew 6:19:

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Building our mind on the earth, on our own 'wisdom' and 'knowledge' of man, causes us to fall, like the house of the wicked man fell. The difference between the things which are above and the things which are on the earth is also clear in Colossians 3:1-2:

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

And John 3:31:

He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all.

Colossians 3:1-2 tells us that we must set our mind on things above, that is the truth of YHWH, and not the things on the earth, that are lies and delusions from the mind of man. We must fill our mind with the truth of YHWH above and not with the lies and delusions from the mind of man of the earth. We grow to 100-fold fruit by filling our mind and heart with the truth of YHWH.

Question: where must we grow to, what is the purpose?

Ephesians 4:15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—.

Romans 8:29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

2 Corinthians 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

The purpose of our spiritual growth is Yeshua Himself, it is where we resemble the image of Yeshua.

Maybe you are thinking by now: well, interesting, never looked at it this way. But please realize that this is more than another form of theology or a certain way to read the Bible.

Question: how do we read His Word? What is the purpose of the Word?

2 Timothy 3:7 always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

1 Corinthians 8:1-2 Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies. And if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know.

So, knowledge of the Word does not have to lead to knowledge of the truth.

We have read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 earlier:

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16 tells us that the Word has to correct us, to instruct us in righteousness. It has to change our mind and heart. When the Word does not work deeper in us than giving us intellectual knowledge about, let's say: histories of war of the people of Israel, than we do not let the Word teach us and instruct us in righteousness. 'All Scripture' is intended for spiritual

growth of our mind and heart. So we must learn to spiritually understand all histories about wars as well, to let it change our mind and heart. And when we read Yeshua's cleansing of the temple as a mere event in history we can learn a lesson from but is not directed to us because we were not in the temple on that moment in history, than the text is much further away than when we realize that at the same time this text is telling us that Yeshua considers our house, our mind, a den of thieves. The Word shows us repeatedly how our mind is not yet in sync with the mind of YHWH, how our heart does not match His:

Isaiah 55:8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD.

This text makes clear that our ways are not His ways, because our thoughts are not His thoughts. This text again shows the urgency to change our mind.

The Word repeatedly makes clear how we do not yet resemble Yeshua, Who only did what He saw the Father do:

John 5:19: Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.

The Word is meant to grow spiritually, it has to change our lives. When we begin to truly realize these things and when we begin to see it in the Word, when we begin to see that the Word on every page repeats the message of the urgency to change our mind and heart, when we look further than a.o. the histories of the people of Israel, it is really going to change us. It makes us more and more realize which thoughts in our mind and heart does not match His. And it makes the urgency clear of renewing our mind. It shines light on the lies that hinder us in ways we may not even realize. And unmasking and removing of these lies sets us free, it heals us. It helps us to grow spiritually. It helps us to truly live according to His will and a result is that we are able to live according to His rules, His Torah.

Numbers 16:28 says that Moshe's works did not come from his own will (heart):

And Moses said: "By this you shall know that the LORD has sent me to do all these works, for I have not done them of my own will."

Our mind must be changed, renewed, as written in Ephesians 4:23:

and be renewed in the spirit of your mind.

Accepting and believing of teaching, of truth, is done by the mind. And everything we have accepted for truth is in our heart. We have a free will and therefore a choice. And we make that choice with our mind and with our heart. We must be careful with accepting spiritual truth in our mind and storing it in our heart. We live from our heart and our mind, from what we believe is true. If we accept a truth, it comes in the place of a lie or delusion in our mind. And when our mind changes, our heart changes automatically and then our words and our actions. When we have YHWH's heart, our actions come forth from His heart. Then our ways

are His ways. Then we do His will, we cannot do otherwise. Then we do not sin anymore, because His heart cannot sin. Then we live according to His rules and instructions automatically, because they are His heart. Then we do not have to try it by power of man; power of man will fail. But then we are going to live by it automatically, from our changed heart and mind. This is confirmed in Deuteronomy 6, connected with Yeshua's teaching on how to love Him.

Question: how do we love YHWH?

Hebrew Roots will say immediately: by keeping His commandments, His Torah. And it is true that Yeshua says:

John 14:15 If you love Me, keep My commandments.

But what does YHWH say in Deuteronomy 6?

Deuteronomy 6:5-6 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart.

We must love YHWH 'with all our heart'.

Question: how do we do that?

By filling our hearts ('shall be in your heart') with His words of truth ('these words which I command you today'). We love Him when we fill our hearts with His truth and when we turn away from lies and delusions.

And in verse 9 our house, our mind, is mentioned again:

You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

His words of truth must be in our minds. That is what changes our mind and heart, and a result is that we keep His commandments, His Torah. So Yeshua meant to say that whoever loves Him, whoever fills his heart with His words of truth, is going to keep His commandments as a result of a changed heart.

Yeshua calls us to repent, because the Kingdom is at hand.

Matthew 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

For the Kingdom within us, within our minds and hearts, we must repent from the lies and delusions in our mind.

And this makes us free:

John 8:31-32 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

And this gives life, spiritual life. We have already seen this in Bible texts we studied earlier, but when we repeat them we see it more clearly:

1 Timothy 6:19 storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

His words of truth give life and are a good foundation for the growth of our spirit that transcends our earthly life.

John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

There is life in His words of truth and they are Spirit.

Matthew 19:29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.

We have seen that sin is the lies and delusions in our mind. When the wages of sin is death:

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

than the opposite is also true: the wages of removing the lies and delusions from our mind is life. When we repent from all the lies of man in our mind, we are going to live. When we fill our heart with the thoughts of man, we remain spiritually dead:

Romans 8:5-6: For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

When we fill our heart with the wisdom of YHWH, we grow to His heart. So it is essential to realize what we accept, believe, as spiritual truth and store in our heart. With our mind we decide what we store in our heart, with our mind we decide what we think is truth or lie. Our mind can destroy us (keep us spiritually dead) by lies and delusions. Or we can let the lies and delusions in our mind be destroyed and receive spiritual freedom and life, when we accept the truth of YHWH, His teaching, His Word, that comes to us as spiritual bread.

Lies and delusions we believe in take the place of the truth in our life and hinder us to reach what we are meant and created for. And this makes clear how serious this is!