

Isaiah 28:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the rie in their place?

Analysis

When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the rie in their place? After plowing (v.24), the farmer plants—but not randomly. **When he hath made plain the face thereof** (halo im-shivvah faneyha, הָלוּא אֶם-שִׁיבָה פָּנָיָהּ, when he has leveled its surface) describes preparing a smooth seedbed. Then deliberate, differentiated planting: **cast abroad the fitches** (hefits qetsach, הִפִּיץ קִצָּח, scatter black cummin/nigella), **scatter the cummin** (ve-kammon yizroq, וַיִּזְרֹק וְכַמְּוֹן, and sow cummin), **cast in the principal wheat** (ve-sam chittah sorah, וַיִּשֶׂם חִטָּה שׁוֹרָה, put wheat in rows).

The appointed barley (u-se'orah nismanah, וַיִּשְׂעֹרָה נִסְמָנָה, and barley in appointed place) and **the rie in their place** (ve-kussemet gevulato, וַיִּקְסֶמֶת גְּבֻלָּתוֹ, and spelt in its border). Each crop receives appropriate treatment—some scattered broadcast (fitches, cummin), some in rows (wheat), some in designated spots (barley, spelt). The farmer knows each seed's needs and plants accordingly. God similarly treats people individually—not uniformly but appropriately. Some receive gentle scattering, some orderly rows, some specific placement. Divine wisdom knows what each needs for fruitfulness (1 Corinthians 12:4-6, Romans 12:3-8).

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern agriculture distinguished crop types requiring different treatment. Fitches (black cummin, used as spice) and cummin were scattered in prepared areas. Wheat, the staple grain, was planted carefully in rows. Barley, hardier than wheat, went in less prime areas. Spelt (primitive wheat variety) marked borders. Paul uses similar agricultural imagery: "I have planted, Apollos watered" (1 Corinthians 3:6)—different workers, different methods, one purpose. God's varied dealings with believers (trials, blessings, gifts, callings) reflect His farming wisdom, not randomness.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does God's 'differentiated planting' (treating people individually according to their needs) encourage you?
2. What kind of 'seed' are you—requiring scattering, orderly rows, or specific placement—and how does this shape God's dealings with you?
3. How should understanding God's individualized care affect how you view others' different experiences and callings?

Interlinear Text

הֲלוֹא	אִם	שָׁוּה	פָּנֵי יְהוָה	יֵץ	
H3808	H518	When he hath made plain	the face	thereof doth he not cast abroad	
		H7737	H6440	H6327	
קֵצִים	וְכַמְסִין	וְיָזַר קֵצִים	וְשָׁמֵם	חִטָּה	שׁוֹכֶה
the fitches	the cummin	and scatter	and cast	wheat	in the principal
H7100	H3646	H2236	H7760	H2406	H7795
וְשַׁעֲרֵי הַ	וְנִסְמִין	וְכִסְּתָם	בְּמָקוֹמָם		
barley	and the appointed	and the rie	in their place		
H8184	H5567	H3698	H1367		

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 4:9 (Parallel theme): Take thou also unto thee wheat, and barley, and beans, and lentiles, and millet, and fitches, and put them in one vessel, and make thee bread thereof, according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon thy side, three hundred and ninety days shalt thou eat thereof.

Matthew 23:23 (Parallel theme): Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.