

**‘ACTING THE BIBLE’
at
Beckley School**

**The Sower and the Seed
(Matthew 13 v1-9, 18-23)**

22 May 2025

Joint Benefice of

**The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Beckley St. Nicolas, Forest Hill with Shotover
St. Barnabas, Horton-cum-Studley St. John the Baptist, Stanton St. John**

The Four Parishes 'Acting the Bible' team (previously known as 'Open the Book') leads assembly once a fortnight in Beckley School. The team take stories fresh from the pages of the Bible, and make them into mini dramas, to be acted out by themselves, together with Beckley schoolchildren. Through this, it is hoped that the Bible stories are brought alive, and remembered by the children, especially as they too are involved in the acting.

The team is led by Betty Dye, a Licensed Lay Reader, and includes members from Forest Hill, Stanton St John and Beckley. They meet once a fortnight to write the scripts, with the aim of adhering as closely as possible to the original Bible texts. This often involves comparing different Bible translations and even reading the New Testament in the original Greek!

ACTING THE BIBLE MAY 2025

THE SOWER AND THE SEED Matthew 13 v1-9, 18-23

Cast: Narrator; Jesus; The Sower; Crowd (up to 5 pupils); 4 Seeds, 2 Birds, 2 Weeds (pupils); Peter (pupil); James (pupil); Chorus

(Boat near to curtain side. Action with seeds takes place in the centre. Disciples stand with Jesus in the boat)

BETTY'S INTRODUCTION: Today you have a lot of imagining to do. Our story is all about seeds, and lots of seeds are really tiny, like this tiny, tiny poppy seed, which I have here. Jesus told his followers this story, which was all about handfuls of seeds and what happened to them. But, instead of a handful of little seeds, we will have one person who will roll up into a ball and pretend to be a single seed. In Jesus' story there are 4 different handfuls of seeds, and I want you to imagine that each person pretending to be a seed is really a whole handful of seeds. Then you need to try and remember what happens to those 4 different handfuls!

NARRATOR: Jesus had been walking from town to town, teaching and healing people. He was becoming so popular that huge crowds sometimes followed him around.

(CROWD stand up from Chorus)

CROWD 1: Come on! We must go down to the lake side straight away!

CROWD 2: Why? What is happening?

CROWD 3: Jesus is there with his twelve friends.

CROWD 4: Who is Jesus? Why should we go to see him?

CROWD 5: Jesus is a wonderful teacher and healer. He tells the most amazing stories!

CROWD 2: Do you mean parables?

CROWD 1: Yes, parables, those SPECIAL stories with 2 meanings.

(JESUS walk on and stand in boat, with Peter and James)

CROWD ALL TOGETHER: Look! There is Jesus! Over there!

(CROWD sit down on Chorus bench)

NARRATOR: Because there were so many people, Jesus had to climb into a boat and speak to them from there. Jesus held up his hands and a hush fell on the crowd as he started to speak.

JESUS: Let me tell you a parable. A sower went out to sow his seed. *(Sower walk forward, sweep out an arm).* As he was sowing, some of the seeds fell on the pathway. *(SEED 1 walk forward, drop down, curl up into a ball).* What do you think happened to them?

CHORUS: The seeds on the path had no soil to grow in.

JESUS: You are right. The birds flew down and gobbled them up!

(BIRDS run in from Chorus, and lead SEED 1 back to Chorus)

CHORUS: The first seeds had no chance to grow.

JESUS: The sower sowed more seed. *(Sower step forward and mime sowing).* This time the seeds fell on thin, stony soil. *(SEED 2 walk on and curl up into a ball).* What do you think happened to them?

CHORUS: The seeds on the stony soil had no chance to put down roots.

JESUS: You are right. The seeds started to grow but there was not enough soil for their roots. When the sun came up, they withered and died.

(SEED 2 stretch up tall, then flop over)

CHORUS: The second seeds grew a bit and then died.

(SEED 2 return to Chorus)

JESUS: The sower sowed more seed. *(Sower step forward and mime sowing).* This time the seeds fell on soil that was full of weeds. *(SEED 3 walk on and curl up into a ball).* What do you think happened to them?

CHORUS: The seeds on the weedy soil had no room to grow.

JESUS: You are right. The seeds started to grow but the weeds were too strong for them and crowded the life out of them.

(SEED 3 stretch up halfway, then WEEDS walk up to them, stretch out arms all around and over the top so that SEED bobs down again).

CHORUS: The third seeds grew quite tall but then they died.

(SEED 3 and WEEDS return to Chorus)

JESUS: Finally, the sower scattered some seed on good soil, where there were no birds, no stones, and no weeds. *(Sower step forward and mime sowing).* The seeds grew tall and some of them produced a small crop, some an average crop, some a huge crop.

(SEED 4 walk on, then slowly stretch up as tall as possible with apples in your hands).

CHORUS: The fourth seeds grew tall and strong, and produced lots of fruit.

JESUS: If you have ears to hear, use them!

(SEED 4 return to Chorus)

NARRATOR: Jesus told many more parables, but finally the crowds all went home, leaving just the disciples.

(Jesus, Peter and James get out of the 'boat' and sit down in the centre).

PETER: Jesus, I didn't really understand that parable about the seeds. What does it mean?

CHORUS: What about the first seeds, snatched away by birds?

JESUS: The first seeds are people who hear what I say but do not listen, so that immediately my words are snatched out of their heads and disappear.

JAMES: I see. So, the seeds represent people.

CHORUS: What about the second seeds, growing on thin, stony soil?

JESUS: The second seeds are people who listen eagerly to what I say, but the moment trouble comes, they give up because their understanding is not deep enough.

PETER: That makes sense. Now I am beginning to understand what the story means.

CHORUS: What about the third seeds, that got smothered by weeds?

JESUS: The third seeds are people who really try to follow me, but the worries and attractions of life today are just too much for them and it all comes to nothing.

JAMES: Yes, I know that feeling.

CHORUS: What about the fourth seeds, growing in good soil?

JESUS: The fourth seeds are people who hear what I say and really listen. Their faith will grow and grow, and they will do really wonderful things.

NARRATOR: The disciples listened carefully as Jesus explained that the last seeds falling on warm, wet, good soil were like what happened when his message was really accepted.

The parable helped the disciples to understand why, even though hundreds of people listened to Jesus's words, only a few of them would really try to live good lives.