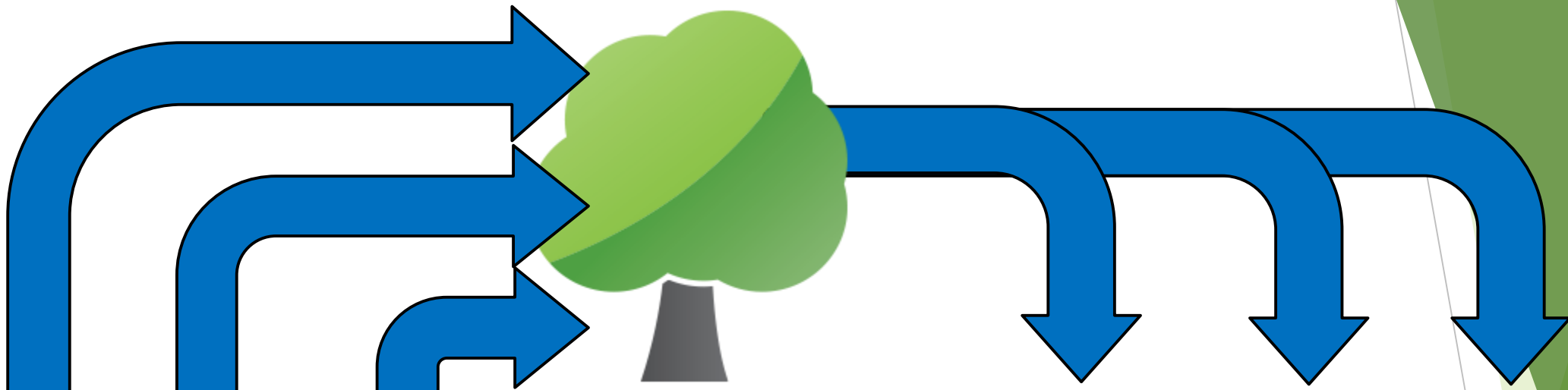


# Trees, Plants and Grasses of the Bible

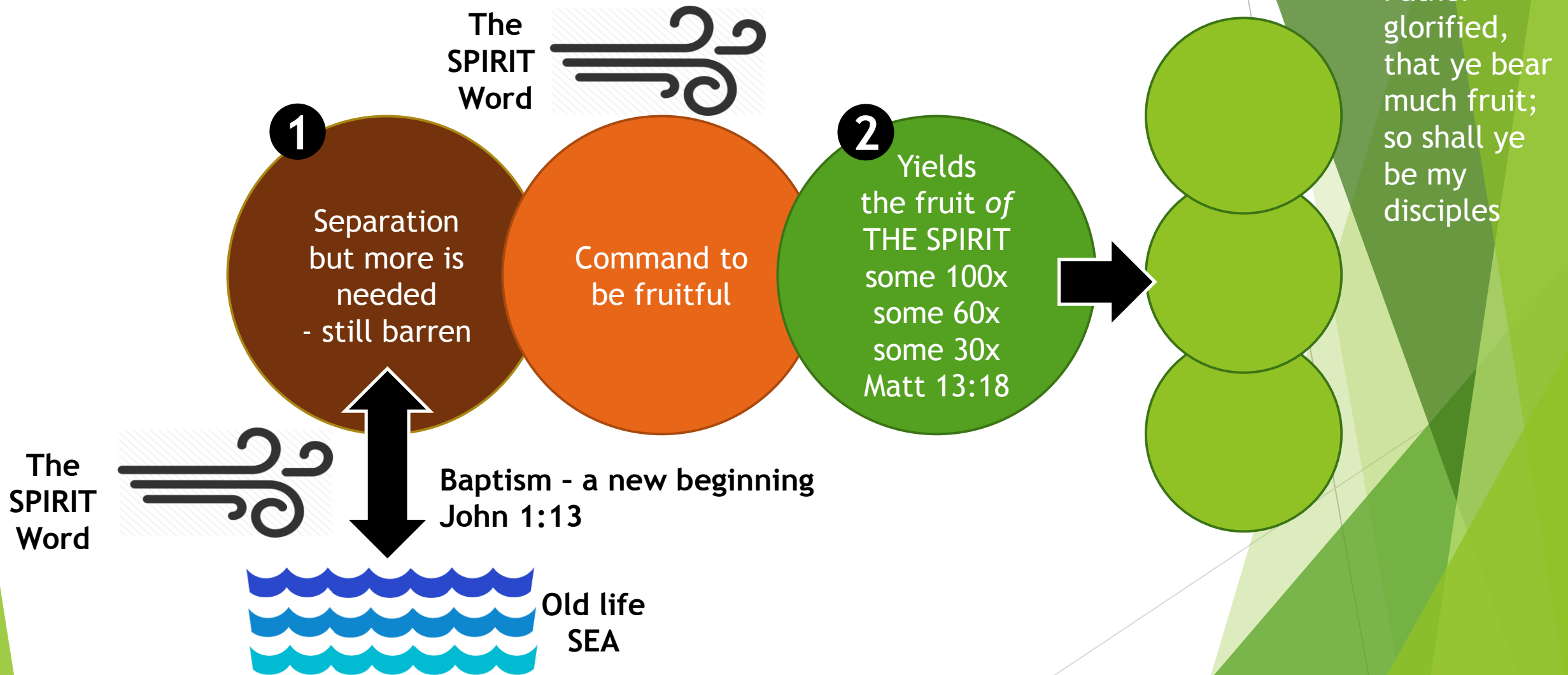
PART 2

# Brief Summary of Part 1

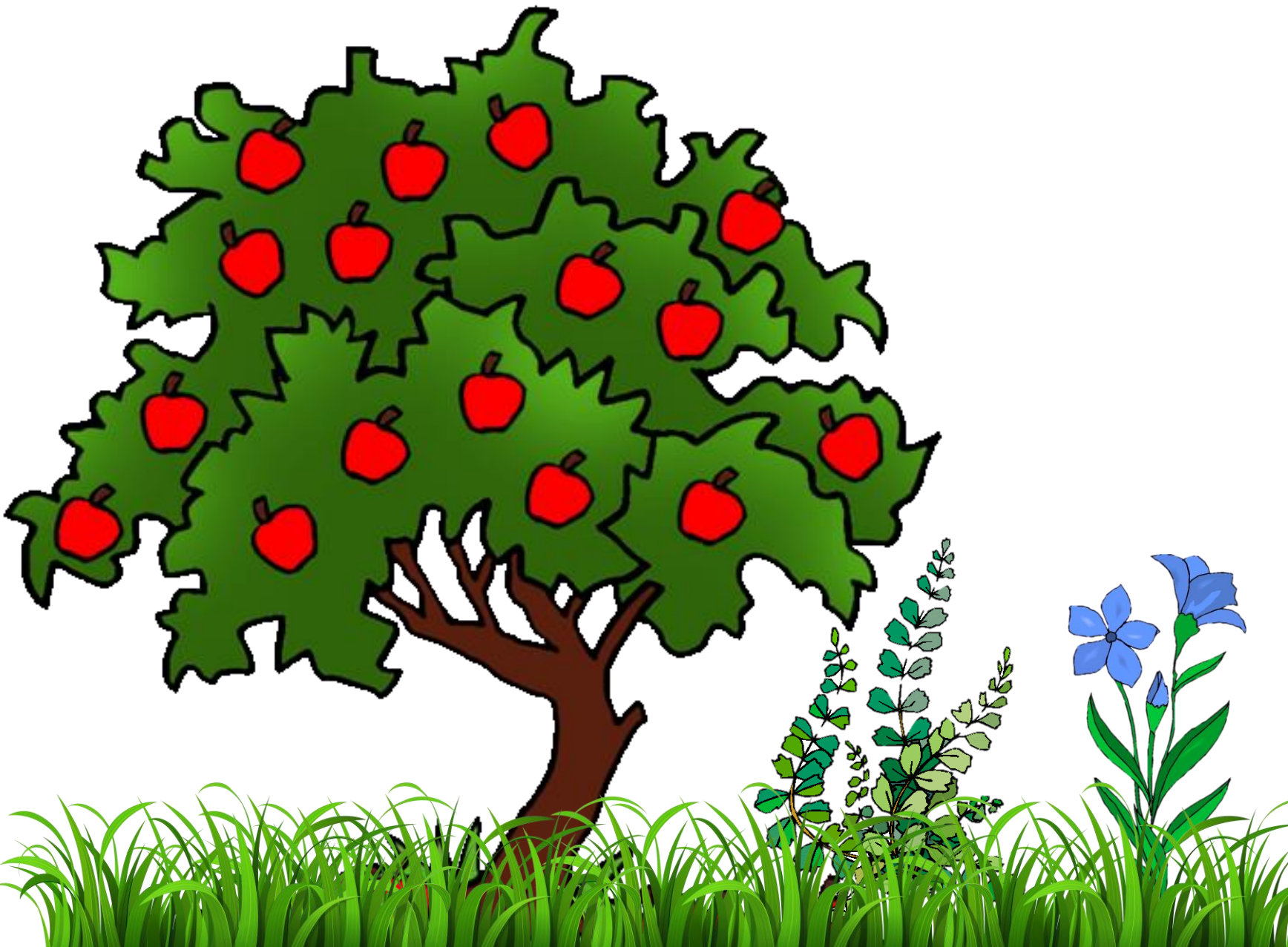


Day 1	Day 2	Day 3a	Day3b	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6a	Day 6b	Day 7
LIGHT	ATMOSPHERE	EARTH & WATER	PLANTS	VISIBLE LIGHTS	AQUATIC & AVIAN LIFE	EARTH LIFE	HUMAN LIFE	REST
Day	Beneath	Dry Land	Grasses	Sun	Fish	Cattle	Male	
Night	Above	Seas	Herb	Moon	Fowl	Creeping	Female	
			Trees	Stars		Beasts		

# The analogy applied to us







EARTH

← 3 **TREES**  
**PRODUCING SEED  
AND FRUIT**

← 2 **PLANTS**  
**PRODUCING SEED**

← 1 **GRASS**



Num 18:12 All the best of the **oil**, and all the best of the **wine**, and of the **wheat**, the firstfruits of them which they shall offer unto the Lord...

**GRAIN**

1

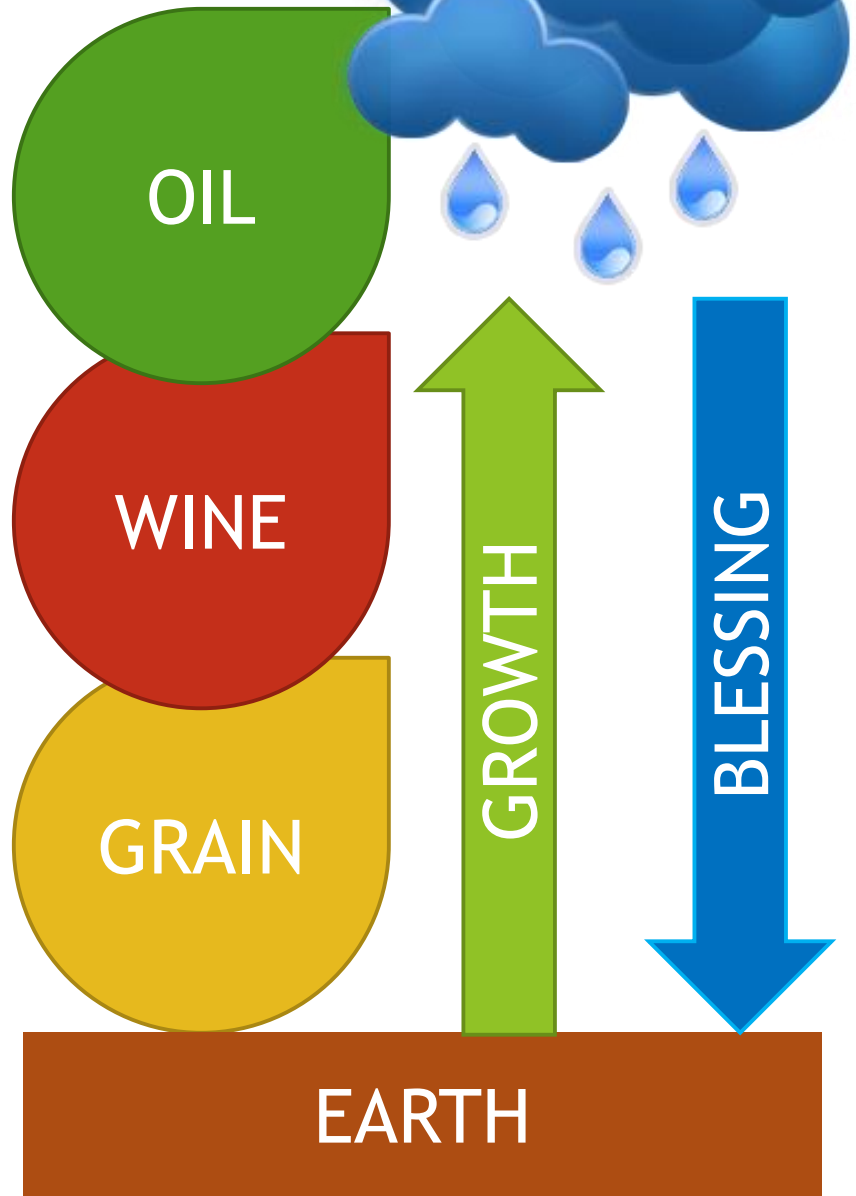
**WINE**

2

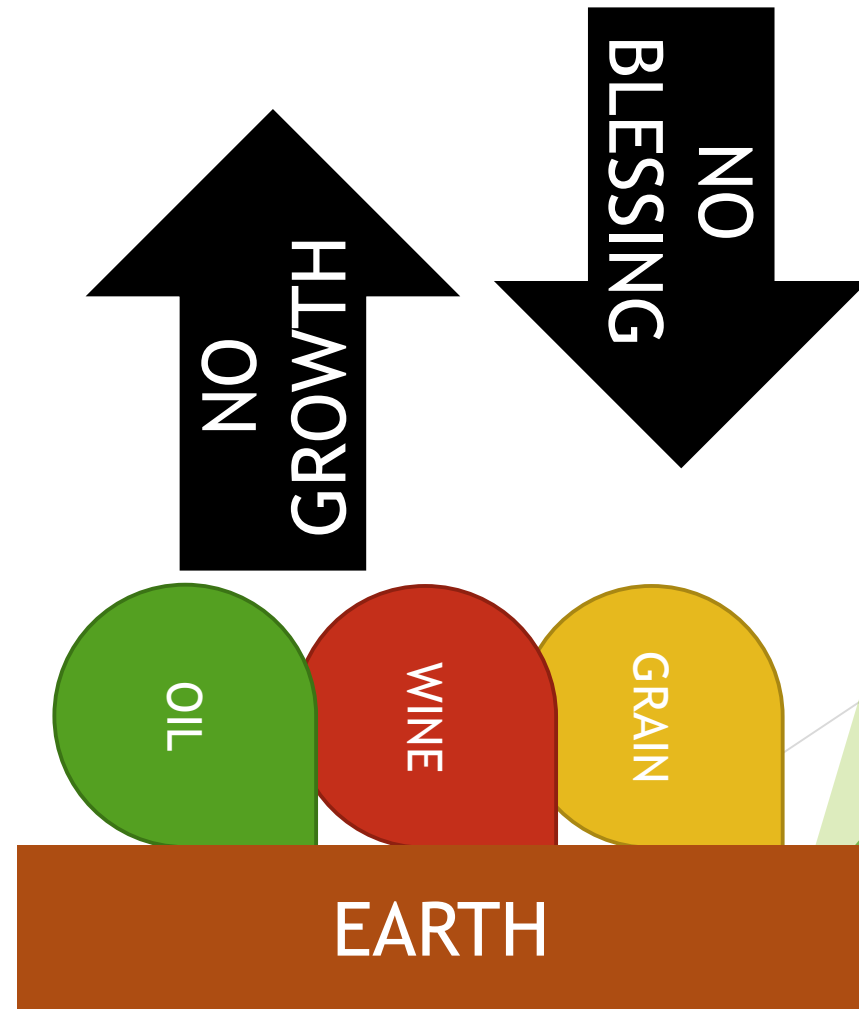
**OIL**

3

Joel 2:24



Joel 1:10





Zech 4:3, 11-12  
Rom 11  
Rev 11:4



To produce the fruit  
of the spirit  
Gal 5:22-23

Matt 21:33-41



Labouring in one  
vineyard - whether Jew  
or Gentile, bond or  
free, male or female  
Gal 3:28

Mark 4:8 the good  
seed that brings  
forth increase



Being seeded from the  
One Seed - Christ  
Gal 3:16

Being rooted &  
grounded in the shared  
faith of Abraham  
Gal 3:29

We emerge from the  
water Gal 3:27

**EARTH**

**SEA**

The background features abstract, overlapping green geometric shapes, primarily triangles and polygons, in various shades of green, creating a modern and dynamic visual effect.

A Special Land  
Special Fruitfulness  
A Special Relationship





Deut 8:7-10

7 For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills;

8 A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey;

9 A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.

10 When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.







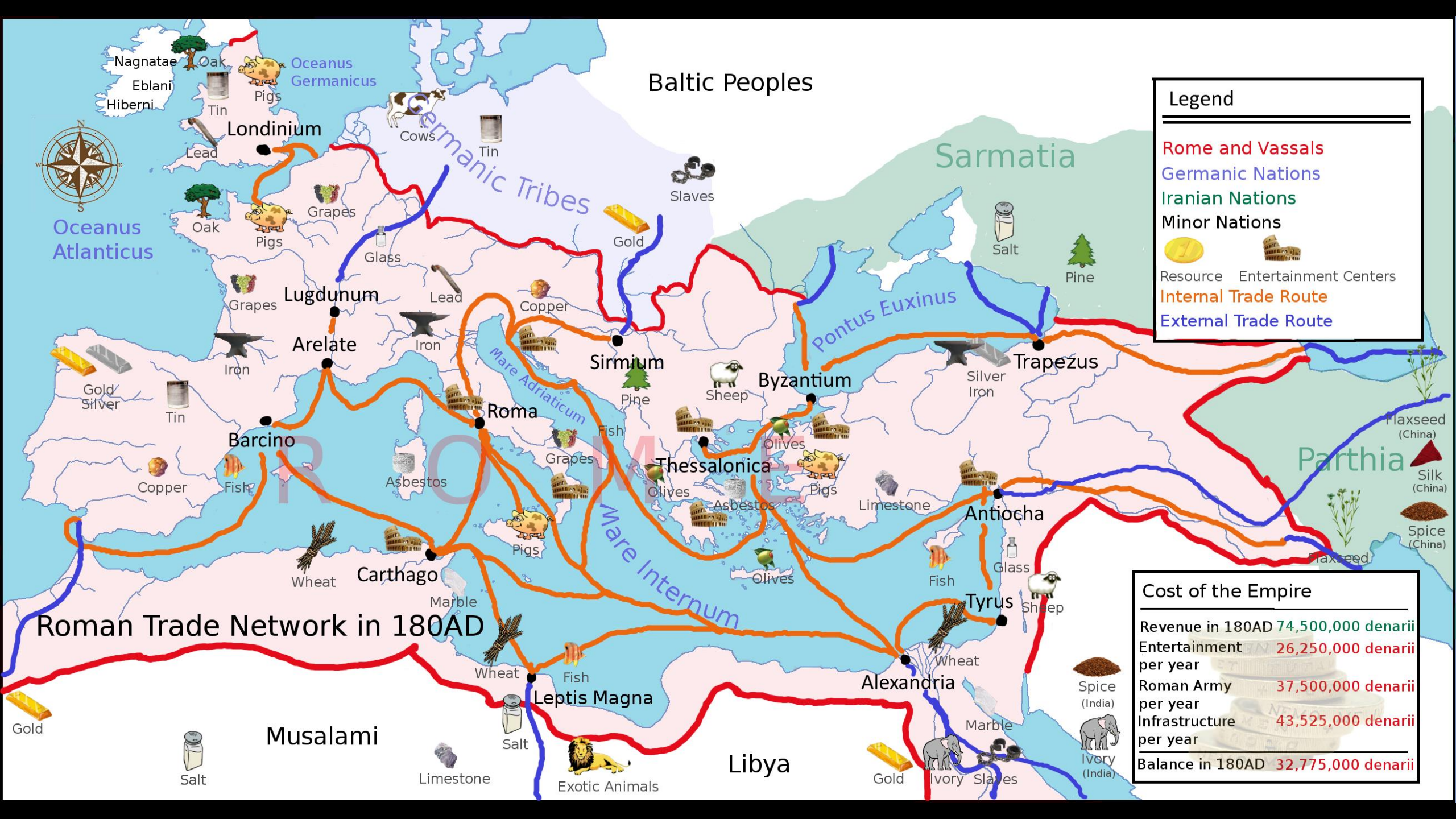
# Farming

- ▶ Land was the main source of wealth
- ▶ Whole economy of the Mediterranean world was dependent on agriculture
- ▶ The main occupation in ancient (mostly peasant) societies was the cultivation of the soil - preparing it for seed to be planted
- ▶ Variables that affect agriculture:
  - ▶ crop types
  - ▶ length of growing season
  - ▶ water resources and micro-climate
  - ▶ implements used
  - ▶ type of land and techniques
  - ▶ economic purpose (use/trade)
- ▶ Skill was therefore required, apart from effort











# Farming

- ▶ Honourable occupation - encouraged by the Mosaic Law (Deut 26:1-3, 10-11)
- ▶ Centred on mixed agriculture and herding
- ▶ Villages were isolated - required self-sufficiency and mutual reliance esp. for labour
- ▶ Water shortage always an issue with only larger rivers being perennial
- ▶ Farmers forced to dig wells and cisterns
- ▶ Highly dependent on the rains and on so many factors beyond their control





# Canaanites



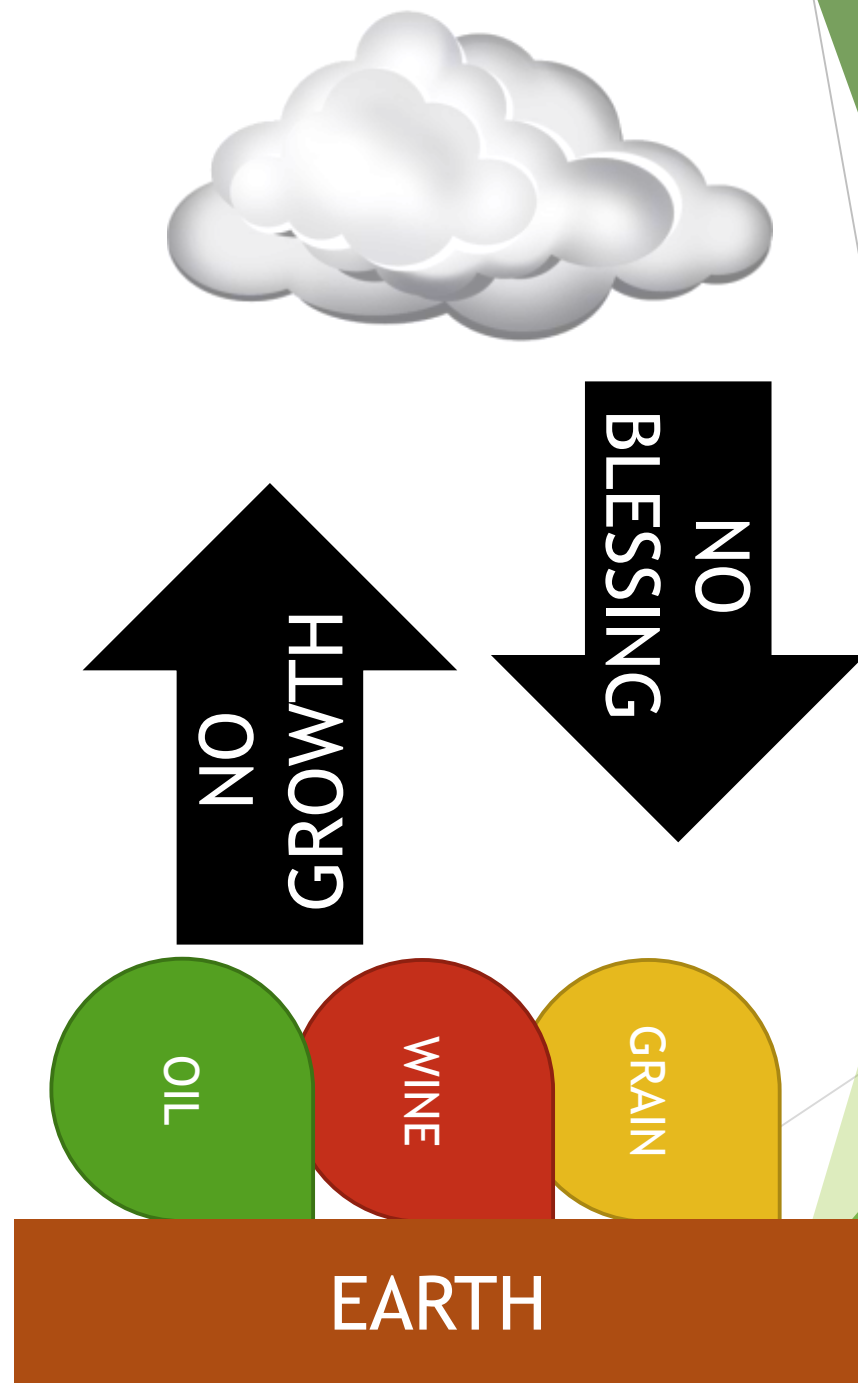
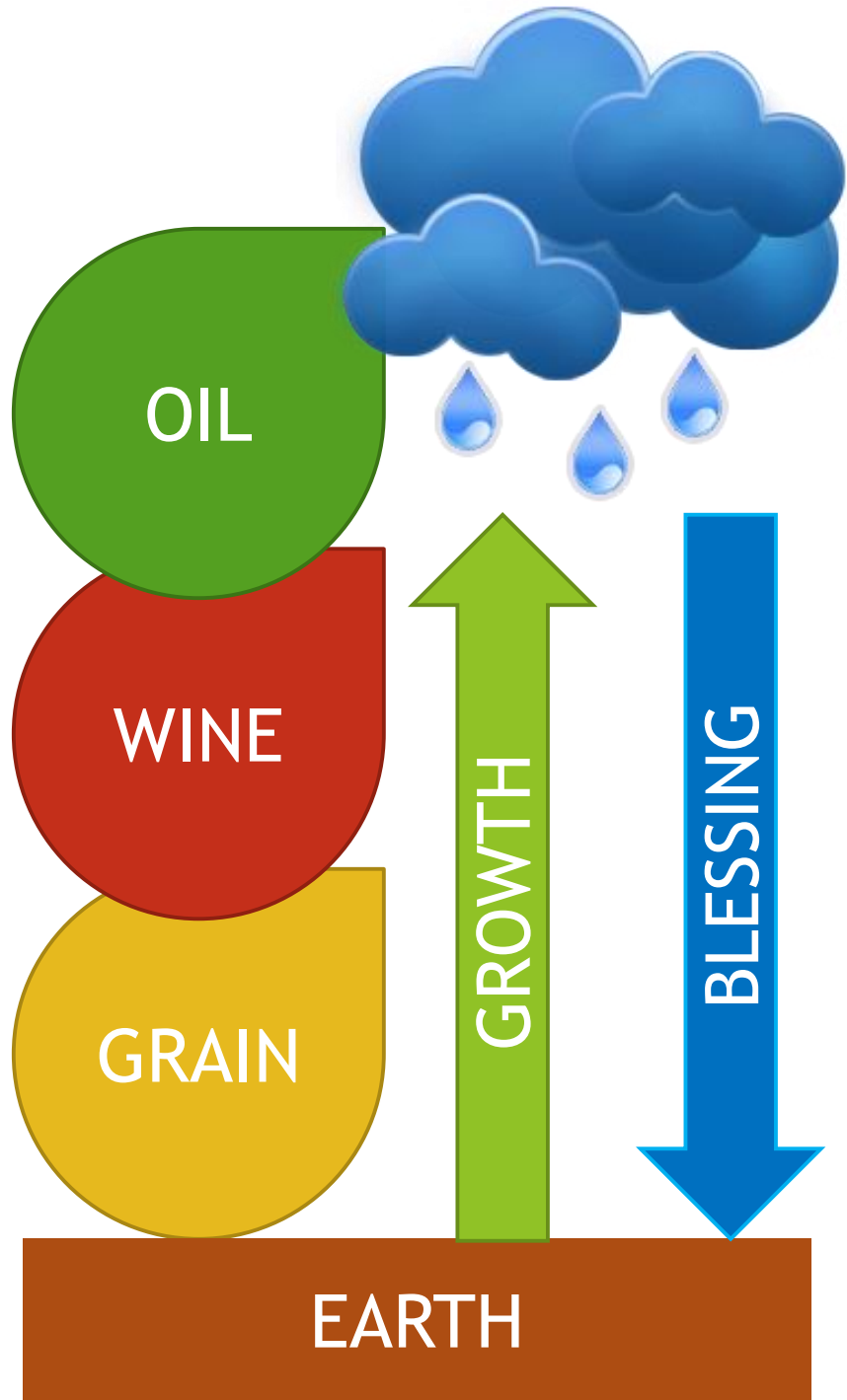
- ▶ Canaanites worshipped fertility gods for rain so crops and animals could flourish
- ▶ Compare with Israel - Lev 26:3-5



Head of Canaanite pantheon of gods was El



tiny (Egyptian) amulets of gods



# Rainfall



## Hebrew words for rain

- ▶ ***mowreh*** [sharp like arrows, also means: teacher] falls at beginning of the rainy season - moist sea air mixes with dry air causing thunderstorms - soften the land for ploughing and sowing seed
- ▶ ***matar*** or ***geshem*** [shower] - rain in general - heavy rain, normally in winter - soaks ground, fills cisterns
- ▶ ***malqowsh*** [spring rain, lit: after the crop] falls at the end of the season - last watering before dry summer - vital for final growth

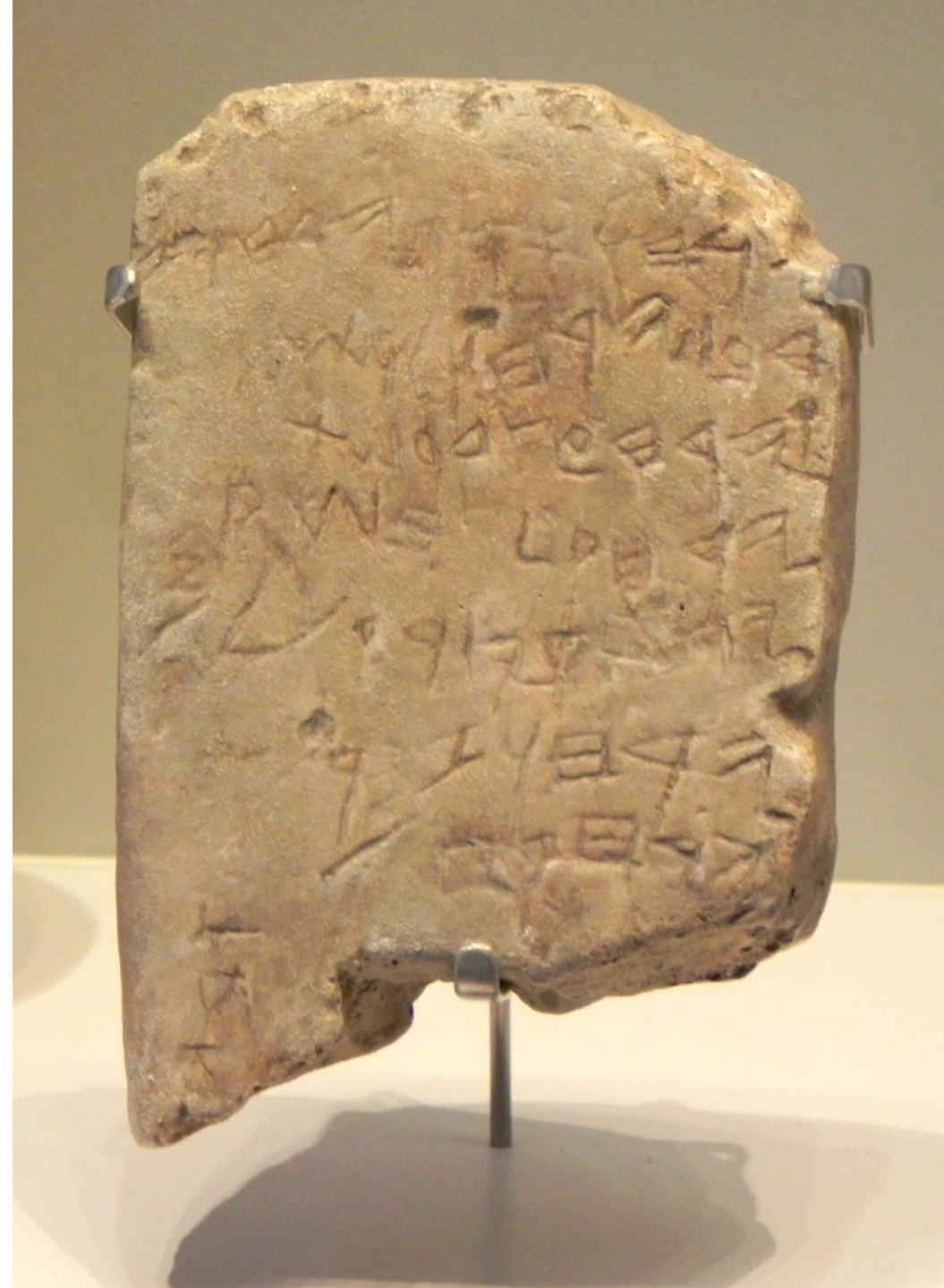


# The Gezer Calendar approx. 925BC

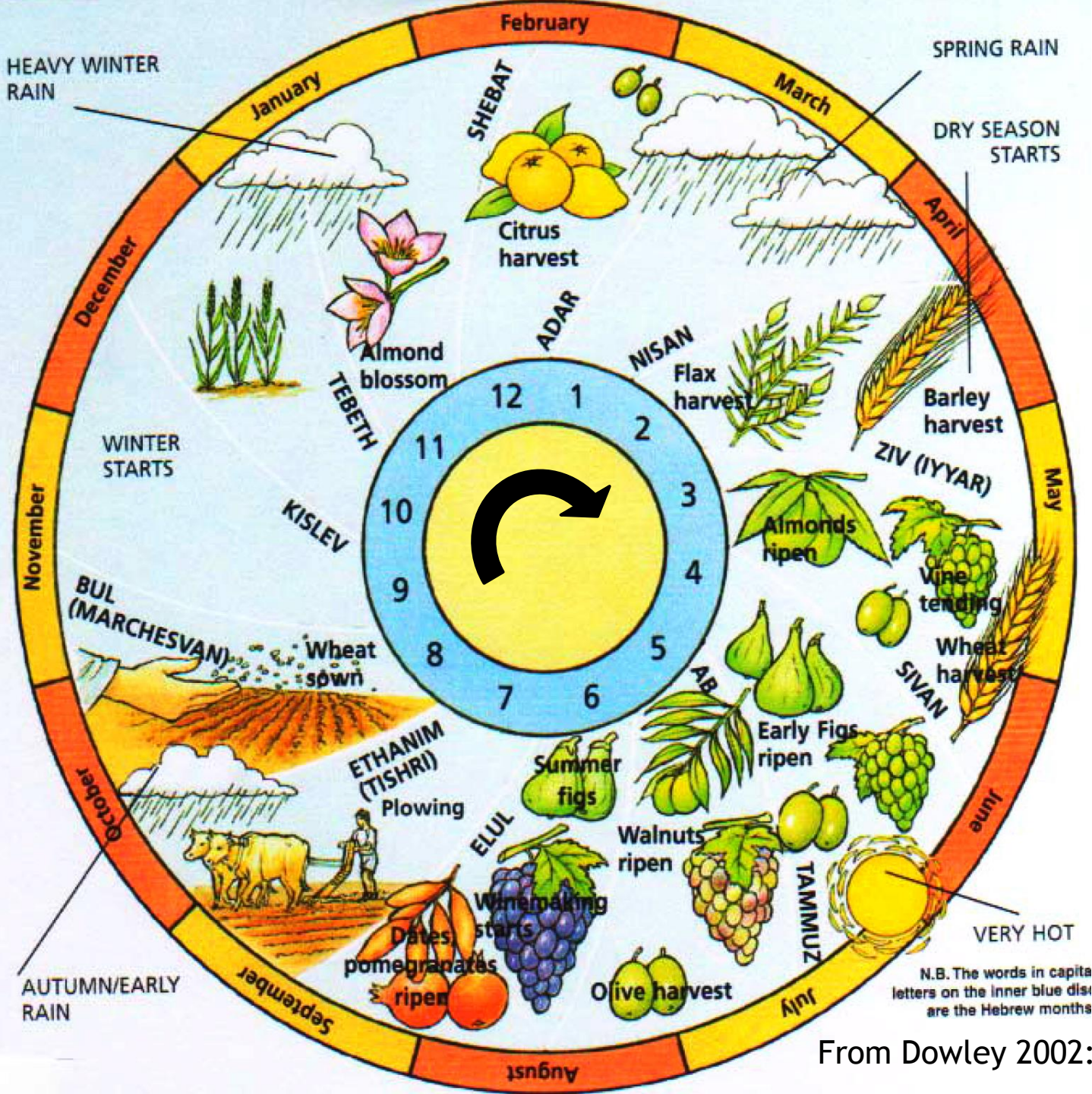
## ► SEVEN PERIODS MENTIONED

- 2 months of olive harvest (Sep/Oct)
- 2 months of planting grain (Nov/Dec)
  - [2 months late planting of millet, peas, cucumbers and melons (Jan/Feb)]\*
- 1 month cutting flax/hay (Mar)
- 1 month barley harvest (Apr)
- 1 month harvest and feasting (May)
- 2 months of vine pruning (Jun/Jul)
- 1 month of summer fruit (Aug)

\*not on Gezer Calendar but practised







# The Agricultural Year

From Dowley 2002: The world of the Bible

► Ps 104:13-15

13 He [God] watereth the hills from his chambers:  
the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works.

14 He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and  
herb for the service of man: that he may bring  
forth food out of the earth;

15 And wine that maketh glad the heart of man,  
and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which  
strengtheneth man's heart.



A close-up photograph of several golden wheat stalks. The wheat heads are in sharp focus, showing the intricate structure of the grains and the long, thin awns that extend from them. The background is a soft, out-of-focus field of similar wheat, creating a sense of depth. The overall color palette is warm, dominated by shades of gold, tan, and brown.

# Grasses



# Wheat & Barley

- ▶ Hybridised and genetically modified grasses

- ▶ **Wheat**

- ▶ Originally just gathered, later farmed
  - ▶ Wild **emmer** and **einkorn** wheat is native to the Fertile Crescent, growing in the grass and woodland hill country from Israel to Iran
  - ▶ Used for bread, flour, animal feed, beer

- ▶ **Barley**

- ▶ The wild ancestor of domesticated barley is **Hordeum vulgare**
  - ▶ Concurrent with first wheat use
  - ▶ Abundant in grasslands and woodlands throughout the Fertile Crescent area esp. disturbed habitats, roadsides and orchards
  - ▶ Also used for bread, flour, beer and currency



# Key soil preparation activities

## Preparation of the land

- ▶ Removal of stones by hand
- ▶ Dig up virgin soil by hoe and levelled
- ▶ De-weeding
- ▶ Setting up landmarks, borders and walls, watch-towers

## Fertilising of the soil

- ▶ Crop rotation, Sabbath year lying fallow
- ▶ Manure - mixed with animal bedding straw (urine) and composted with household waste (animal blood, bones etc. peelings)
- ▶ Animals to graze on fallow land - eat weeds and spread droppings
- ▶ Wood ash for potassium and phosphorus
- ▶ Lime leeching from stones

## ► Isa 28:24-26 CJB

Does a farmer sowing keep plowing forever?  
Does he never stop breaking up and harrowing  
his land?

No — when he finishes levelling it, he scatters  
his dill-seed, sows his cumin, puts wheat in  
rows, barley where it belongs, and plants  
buckwheat around the edges; because his God  
has taught him this, has given him instruction.

# Key soil preparation activities

## Ploughing

- ▶ A man ploughed the field himself
- ▶ A team of oxen was used to pull the plough connected to a yoke
- ▶ Two mules or two oxen could be used, or a single mule or ox could be yoked to the plough.
  - ▶ It was forbidden in the Mosaic Law to plough with a mule and an ox, because of the unequal pull and the suffering of the weaker animal (Deut 22: 10)

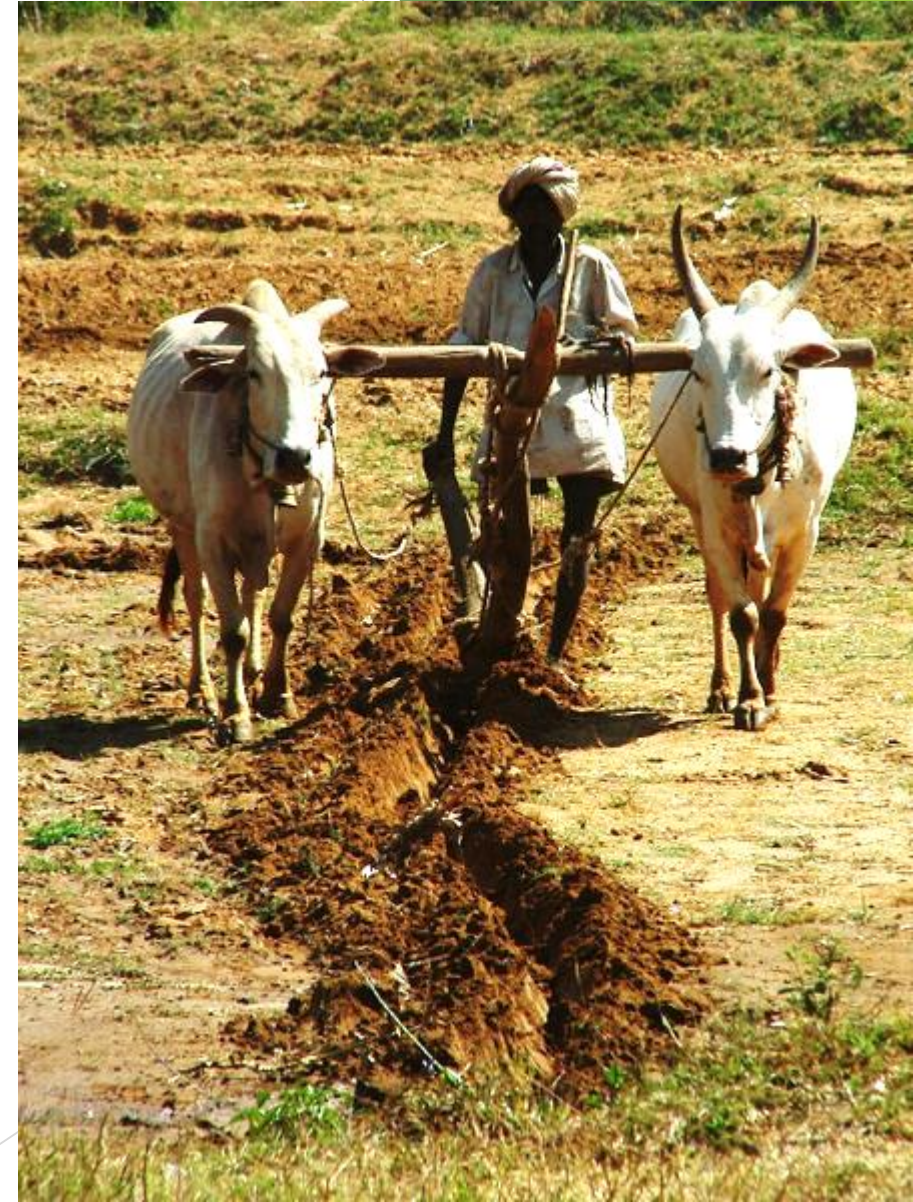




# Key soil preparation activities

## ► Ploughing in FOUR steps

1. Wide furrows (Heb *yefatah*, the opening of the ground) before sowing can begin. Done in summer after reaping, when the ground is dry to allow the winter rains to soak into it
2. Rain furrows (Heb *rev'ia* furrows) ploughed after the first rain. A coarse ploughing leaving a fallow space between furrows forming small mounds of earth to store up rain water and prevent erosion
3. Smooth furrows/harrowing (Heb *yesaded*) is the last ploughing before sowing. Small narrow furrows are ploughed ready for the seed
4. Seed ploughing is the final ploughing. The seeds are ploughed into the ground





# Key soil preparation activities

## Sowing

- ▶ **Broadcasting** - sowing from an open basket or leather bag replenished from a sack. Can be very uneven, and wasteful
- ▶ **Rows** - channeled rows of seeds, either by hand or agricultural “drill”



## ► 2 Cor 9:9-11

9 As it is written, He [God] hath **dispersed abroad**; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.

10 Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;

11 Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.





Wheatfield newly sprouting near Maresha





Wheat newly planted, Neot Kedumim





# Parable of the Sower



Matt. 13:1-9, 18-23; Mark 4:1 -20; Luke 8:4-15





# Parable of Sower

- ▶ As much about soils as sowing - outcome depends on where the good seed lands
- ▶ Contrary to good farming practice - broadcasting sowing - but exactly right for the Gospel
- ▶ Obvious implication: low-yields - poor response to the gospel
- ▶ At issue - response of the soils - the seed is good and the seed is the same to all
- ▶ Can soils change? Certainly - with effort, skill and the wisdom from above





# Parable of Sower

- ▶ “The sower went forth to sow his seed: and as he sowed...”  
(Luke 8)
  - ▶ “The seed is the word of God”
1. Hard-trodden soil - no chance to sprout
  2. Rock-filled soil - sprouts then withers
  3. Weed-infested soil - sprouts then choked - no head of grain
  4. Good soil - exceedingly fruitful





# Parable of Sower

## The Good Ground

- ▶ Hears the word and understands it (Matt 13)
- ▶ Receives the seed (Mark 4) - in the sense of accepting it (RV)
- ▶ Keeps it (Luke 8)
- ▶ And is FRUITFUL - this is the joy of the Lord (Psalms 126:5-6 and Lev 23:11)
- ▶ Process requires PATIENCE - patience by the sower, patient development of seed







Luke 8:18 CJB

Pay attention, then, to how you hear!  
For anyone who has something will be  
given more; but from anyone who has  
nothing, even what he seems to have  
will be taken away.





**Parable of the Wheat & Tares**





Matt. 13:24-30,36-43



# Parable of the Wheat & the Tares

- ▶ A parable of jealousy, spite & eventual vindication
- ▶ Enemy had a great store of tares to sow
- ▶ Tares
  - ▶ Darnel or “bastard-wheat” (*Lolium temulentum*)
  - ▶ Present throughout Middle East
  - ▶ Grow synchronously with wheat
  - ▶ Not from the uncontaminated “good seed”
  - ▶ Normally pulled up and removed from the field
  - ▶ Undistinguishable from the wheat until harvest



# Parable of the Wheat & the Tares

## Jesus explains

- ▶ **Sower** = Jesus (even though Lord, it is his Gospel message alone)
- ▶ **Field** = the world (specifically, the antagonistic Jewish world)
- ▶ **Good seed** = moves from “the word” to become “sons who inherit”! - they become the fruit of the word
- ▶ **Enemy** = the false accuser (RSV v28 has “a man, an enemy”) - mainly Jewish plotters against early Christianity - they sowed and then “went away” into captivity
- ▶ Servants wanted to remove tares urgently - give wheat a better chance
- ▶ Jesus’ advice was not normal farming practice: leave it to the harvest!
- ▶ Why?



# Parable of the Wheat & the Tares

## Jesus explains

- Why? Because of inevitable damage to the good crop





# Parable of the Wheat & the Tares

## Jesus explains

- ▶ “Let both grow together until the harvest” *then* separate - some to burn, some to inherit the Kingdom

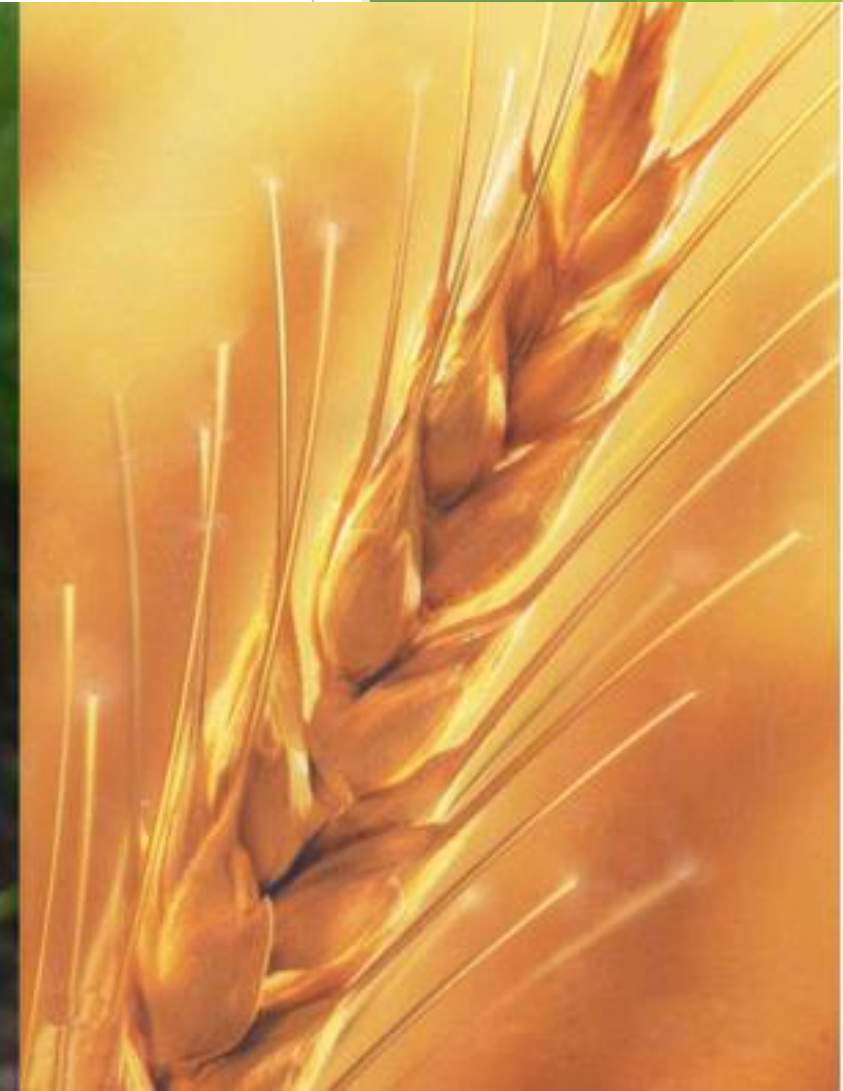




# Parable of the Wheat & the Tares

By their fruits ye shall know them (Matt 7:20)

- ▶ Tares seed - BLACK and POISONOUS producing convulsions and even death when eaten, harbour secondary diseases and parasites
- ▶ Wheat seed - GOLDEN and LIFE GIVING producing yet more growth, are unmixed with other “seeds” and harbour no hidden ill





# Concluding thoughts



Ezek 45:13-14 CJB

This is the offering you are to make: one-sixth of a bushel from every ten bushels of wheat, and you are to give one-sixth of a bushel from every ten bushels of barley ... to make atonement for the house of Israel





The background features abstract, overlapping green geometric shapes, primarily triangles and polygons, in various shades of green, creating a modern, layered effect. The shapes are concentrated on the left and right sides of the frame, leaving a large white central area.

AMEN