

**THE
PARABLES OF
MATTHEW THIRTEEN**

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THE PARABLES OF MATTHEW 13 INTRODUCTORY MATERIAL

I. The Subject Of These Parables. - "The Mysteries Of The Kingdom Of Heaven"

1. The meaning of this phrase is the FIRST KEY to the proper understanding of this Chapter. We shall look at its meaning in two parts.

a. The "Kingdom of heaven"

(1) Compared - with the Kingdom of God - with the Church.

In its unlimited sense we may say that the Kingdom of God is the sovereign, universal rule and dominion of God over "all" (Psalm 103:19) - all objects in time and space, worlds and their contents organic and inorganic, sentient or insentient, material or spiritual.

In its limited sense the Kingdom of God is His universal sway over ALL moral intelligences willingly subject to the will of God, whether Angels, the Church, or saints of past or future dispensations. (Scofield) In this sense it can only be entered by the New Birth. (John 3:3,5)

The Kingdom of Heaven, on the other hand, is a phrase used only in the Gospel of Matthew and refers to the Davidic Kingdom, covenanted to David, which eventually will merge into the Everlasting Kingdom. (I Cor. 15:24) at which time the two terms would be synonymous. During this time of the absence of the King, however, the phrase includes all those in the sphere of profession as subjects of the "absent" King - whether true or false - and thus the term would be synonymous with the term "Christianism".

The "Church" is a group of "called-out", born-again believers being constituted as Christ's Body while the Kingdom is in abeyance.

(2) Covenanted. 2 Sam. 7:11-17; Psalm 89:20-37; Acts 2:25-31)

(3) Prophesied.

- (a) As being Theocratic (that is, God, personally in human flesh being its King) Isa. 7:14
- (b) As being Heavenly in characteristics. Hosea 2:8 and Isa. 2:4
- (c) As being on this earth; Ps. 2:8; Isa. 11:9; Zech. 14:9.
- (d) As being centred in Jerusalem. Isa. 2:1-3
- (e) As being over re-gathered Israel. Ezek. 37: 21-25
- (f) As extending to the nations. Isa. 55:5; Micah 4:2
- (g) To be established at His return. Mal. 3:1-4

(4) Offered.

- (a) By John the Baptist - Matt. 3:1,2
- (b) By Christ - Matt. 4:17
- (c) By His disciples - Matt. 10: 5-7 (see vs. 23 that there was no provision for interruption.) - The Church age is a parenthesis in that program.

(5) Undefined - This term (Kingdom of Heaven) is undefined in its N.T. usage. Thus the disciples would have understood it in its accepted usage from their knowledge of the O.T. See Daniel 2:34-36,44; 7:13,14,23-27.

(6) Rejected

- (a) National repentance was to be the preparation for the establishment of this Kingdom. Deut. 30:1-3; Isa. 24:7; Hos. 3:4,5; Hos.14; Zech.12:10 - 13:1; Cmp.Mal.3:7 and Acts. 3:19.

- (b) Evidence of His rejection.

The imprisonment of John. Matt. 11:2

Here is uttered the first note of judgment.

Matt. 11:20

Here is the first foreign note to Kingdom truth. Matt. 11:28

There are five illustrations in Matt. 12 of opposition and misunderstanding.

Including the warning concerning the unpardonable sin.

Including the announcement of a New Relationship

b. The "Mysteries Of The Kingdom of Heaven.

- (1) **Mystery** has to do with truth heretofore unrevealed. There is a phase of this truth which is now in this chapter being revealed for the first time. See Peter 1: 10.- 12 cmp Matt. 13: 17 &35.
- (2) These truths we are about to study will have to do, then, with the entire period during the King's absence - from his rejection to his future reception.
 - (a) There are three periods which must be **distinct** in the Word of God.
 - A. **Times** of the Gentiles. Luke 21:24. From the captivity of Judah until the time spoken of in Dan. 2:44,45
 - B. **Fullness** of the Gentiles. Rom. 11:25 - the completion of the Gentiles - or - the full number of the Gentiles - thus, the completing of what God is doing in this age - which he began to do on the day of Pentecost.
 - C. **Mysteries of:** from the rejection of the King 'till his reception.

II. THE PURPOSE OF THESE PARABLES. Matthew 13: 11-13

These are designed to reveal truth to his disciples to which the nation at large was to be blinded. These verses, therefore, set forth the seriousness of trifling with the truth we possess and failing to bow in subjection to it, lest it be taken from us. The abilities of spiritual perception my judicially be limited by a Holy God upon those who treat lightly what God has previously entrusted to them.

III. THE PLACE OF THESE PARABLES IN THIS BOOK

This is the **second KEY** to the understanding of this chapter.

1. The theme of Matthew - "The Presentation Of The King and His Kingdom" to the nation of Israel in fulfillment of O.T. Prophecy. Cmp. Matt. 21:4,5 & Zech. 9:9.
2. Outline of Matthew in brief:
 - I. Preparation of the King. 1:1-4:11
 - II. Enunciation of the king's principles 4:12 - 7:29
 - III. Demonstration of the King's power. 8:1 - 11:1
 - IV. Revelation of the King's new program. 11:2 - 13:53
(See I,1,a,(6) (b) above)
 - V. Preparation for the King's passion. 13:54 - 19:2
 - VI. Repudiation of the King's person. 19:3- 26:2
 - VII. Presentation of the King's passion 26:3 - 27:66
 - VIII. Culmination of the King's Passion 28:1-20

IV. THE DIVISION OF THESE PARABLES (4 and 3)

Four to the multitudes speaking of external conditions.

Three to the disciples speaking of internal conditions. (The "treasure", "pearl" and "dagnet")

CHAPTER 1: THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

Introductory observations

1. The first four parables have to do with the sphere of human responsibility.
2. Thus, in this first parable the emphasis is NOT on the sower - we do not even find his identity until the second parable - but rather on the results of the sowing.
3. Basically, one plain teaching of the parable as a whole is the fruitlessness of the sowing - and even the fruitful ground is seen as decreasing.
 - a. Most of the ground would prove unfavorable
 - b. External opposition would be encountered.
4. The sowing is WORLD-WIDE - not limited to Israel as Isa. 5:1,2 shows of His previous undertaking - and which, incidentally was unfruitful. When the Lord Jesus should rightfully now be doing the harvesting of earlier plantings, He must stoop AGAIN to be the sower.
5. Most of the details of the parable have to do, then, with the four kinds of soil, representing the **hard-hearted**, the **shallow-hearted**, the **half-hearted** and the **whole-hearted** hearer.

I. THE HARD-HEARTED - Or, Wayside Hearer. vv. 4, 19

1. Even though the Word is said to be sown in his heart, he is unreceptive to it. The "engrafted" Word is received with meekness. (James 1:21)
2. Note: it is when there is no response to the Word that the wicked one comes and catcheth it away.
3. Though the Bible says that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God - yet he is responsible to do so and ought to understand. He does have the recourse of calling upon God for understanding. See Job 34:32; Psalm 25:9

II. THE SHALLOW- HEARTED - or - Stoney Ground Hearer. vv 5,6,20,21.

1. This seed takes root in a thin layer of soil over stone.
2. This is the case where the emotions are stirred but not the conscience.
3. Light evangelism of our day is slanted in this direction.
4. The flesh can simulate a real experience for a time but eventually gives out.

III. THE HALF-HEARTED - or - Thorny Ground Hearer. vv. 7, 22

1. Comparing the same references in the Synoptic Gospels (Mark 4:19 and Luke 8:14) we learn that there are four things in all which choke out the possibility of fruitfulness.
 - a. The care of the world
 - b. The deceitfulness of riches.
 - c. Lusts of other things entering in.
 - d. The pleasures of this life.

IV. THE WHOLE-HEARTED - or - The Good Ground Hearer. vv. 8, 23

1. Note: Nothing said here about Divine Grace needed to receive the Word - because human responsibility is here stressed. The hearer of the Word must *himself* seek grace to do, if he is to be fruitful
2. Luke 8:15 (a parallel to this verse) say that the Word:
 - a. Must be received in an *honest* and good heart—
 - b. That we must *keep* it—
 - c. That we must bring forth fruit with *patience*.

SUMMARY

Thus the reasons why the preaching of the Word does not produce a spiritual harvest in all who hear it are:

1. Natural hardness of man's heart and the opposition of Satan.
2. The superficiality of the flesh
3. Attractions and distractions of the world.

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CHAPTER 2: THE PARABLE OF THE WHEAT & TARES

--OF--

"The Enemy At Work"

Introduction:

Just as in the previous parable the emphasis was upon the four kinds of soil and the fact that only one-fourth was fruitful, so this parable has a clear point of emphasis. The prominence in this parable is given to the "tares". When Jesus had gone into the house with His disciples, they said, "Declare unto us the parable of the TARES of the field" (vs. 36). Since the tares were clearly the enemy's work(vs. 39), we have set before us here, then, the **time**, **manner**, **place**, and **consummation** of the enemy's fruitless effort to thwart the program of God..

Intro - cont'd

As Dr. Wilbur M. Smith has so adequately set forth in an article in Moody Monthly some years ago, "DECEPTION is Satan's Master-piece of This Age."

I. THE TIME WHEN THE ENEMY WORKS - (We are told clearly that the enemy is Satan)

1. He began his work immediately when the Son of Man began His! We have only to note what the New Testament tells us about the history of the early church to know that this was true. Witness the subject of the book of Galatians ! And Paul's warning to the Ephesian elders in Acts. 20.
2. Again! It was while men slept. (see Ephes. 5:14

II. THE MANNER or METHOD OF THE ENEMY'S WORK

1. The seed which the enemy sows in this case is PEOPLE!
2. Among genuine Sons of God Satan sows spurious professors!
 - a. Thus all unsaved are not children of the Devil, as such, but rather those who have taken on a spurious profession. Religious hypocrites, we might call them!
3. It is only when both are fully ripe that the farmer can tell the difference.
4. This is part of Satan's deceptive ministry:
 - a. He has a spurious Gospel (Gal. 1:7-9)
 - b. His ministers transform themselves into ministers of righteousness. (II Cor. 11:13-15)
 - c. He has an Anti-Christ (instead - of - Christ) in his program. Rev. 13:4)
 - d. He has an imitation church - the woman of Rev. 17.
 - e. Why so long a deception ? Satan is permitted rule until Christ comes again. He is the god of this age. His offer of the kingdoms of this world was not refuted!

III. THE PLACE OF HIS SOWING

1. Among the wheat. But this would not be the Church, as such, for we are told to "discipline" the untrue and unreal from among the visible church.
2. The church, as such, is not seen in these parables.

IV. THE CONSUMATION OF SATAN'S WORK - The Harvest

1. At the end of the age.
 - a. This is the same age referred to in Matt. 24:3; Heb. 9:26
 - b. Comparing Joel 3:9-16 with Rev. 14: 14-16 we pin-point this time in the Day Of The Lord.
2. Again, this is not to be confused with the Church.
 - a. Angels are not operative in it's consummation
 - b. The Church is reaptured, this wheat is left to shine in the Kingdom.
3. The order here is clearly the same as Matt. 25:31; 24:37-41.

THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED
(Matthew 13:31,32)

Introduction:

This parable has suffered more at the hands of the commentators than perhaps any other in the Word. Here are a few observations in an introductory way:

- (i) Note that in the first three parables we have a development of evil: in the first the devil caught away part of the seed, in the second he is engaged in the work of imitation, and - as we will discover - in this third, he is seen to corrupt Christianity.
- (ii) Note again: the reason for the misunderstanding of this parable comes from the failure to arrive at a proper definition of the phrase, "Kingdom Of Heaven". Remember that this phrase stands for PROFESSING Christendom.
- (iii) Note also: that beginning with this parable and including the remaining parables, no explanation is given by our Lord concerning them. It must be, then, that they are to be interpreted by their immediate context and in terms of that which has already been explained.
- (iv) This parable is usually interpreted to depict the rapid growth of the Church until eventually it is world-wide.

WE BELIEVE THIS TO BE IN ERROR BECAUSE:

- I. It is inconsistent with the rest of the subject matter in this parable. See (i) in the introduction above.
- II. A mustard seed which becomes a TREE is a MONSTROSITY. The Christendom of our day is a monstrosity, but surely the Church which is His Body is NOT !.
- III. The Birds, as we have seen before in this parable are the 'fowls' (vs. 4) which snatch away the seed and thus are of the 'wicked one'. They may find lodging in Christendom - not only 'may', but have - but surely the N.T. warns everywhere that they are not to find their place in the true Church.
- IV. Upon comparison with other Scriptures, we discover that the Word of God DOES speak of the gigantic growth of a kingdom - but it is not God's Kingdom. Take your Bible and compare them for yourself. Cmp. Daniel 4:10 -12; Ezek. 31; Rev. 17,18

Conclusion: This parable is designed to teach one truth, that the Kingdom will grow from a small beginning and become a large plant called a Tree. The Kingdom is *Christendom* - NOT the Church !

THE PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN (Matthew 13:33)

Introduction:

The former parable and this one go together; the one showing the corruption of Christendom from an external standpoint, and this one dealing with its corruption internally. Here again Reformation theologians (i.e. Calvin, Luther, etc.), have missed their way. We quote from Archbishop Trench, who has given us one of the greatest treatises on the Parables: " We need not then hesitate to take the parable in its obvious sense - that it prophesies the diffusion, and not the corruptions of the Gospel. By the leaven we are to understand the word of the kingdom, which Word, in its highest sense, Christ himself was". (pg. 117) This is the exact opposite from what we shall teach in these notes, so ponder carefully the truths we are about to consider.

Briefly, here is the over-all interpretation which Christendom has given to this parable: The leaven is taken to mean the Gospel and its power. The woman represents the Church. The woman takes the leaven and puts it into three measures of meal, which, according to this general exegesis represents humanity, the entire human family. Here the leaven does, in a hidden manner, its work in an assimilating process in penetrating the whole mass of humanity. (Lange's Commentary, which is a notable work in its field, also takes the above view)

I. This interpretation flatly contradicts the first parables in this very Chapter.

Comment on this point is hardly needed. Obviously the Christianizing of humanity through the Gospel is not taught in the Word; nor born out in the facts of history.

II. This interpretation is contrary to the use of the word 'Leaven' elsewhere in the Scriptures.

The first time this word occurs in Scripture, it occurs in its negative form. The law of first-mention is a good one to observe as you study the Scriptures. Usually the first place in the Bible that a word is found, you may gather from the context the meaning that God wanted attached to the word. This first ref. is found in Gen. 19:3 where we are told that Lot "did bake UN-leavened bread" for the angels, and that "they did eat". Lot knew better than to give angels anything to eat with leaven in it.

"Leaven"—cont'd

In Exodus 12 the children of Israel were told to purge their house of all that had leaven in it. Ex. 34:25 excludes leaven from any blood-offering.

The word, "leaven" is used in the N.T. just 13 times and in each case stands for something evil. We have not space to take them all; here are but a few:

1. In Matt. 16:6 you have two of them mentioned: leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. The former is mere externalism or hypocrisy; the latter is liberalism, modernism, or the skeptical attitude toward the supernatural.
2. In Mark 8:15 we read of the leaven of Herod: this was worldliness, materialism.
3. In I Cor. 5:6-8 it is used of malice and wickedness.
4. In Gal. 5:7-9 it is used with reference to evil doctrine.

III. "Meal" in the Word of God is a type of Christ in His Perfection and would not, then, in this one case stand for that which is corrupt and needing the purifying work of the Gospel.

1. The meal-offering in Lev. 2 is a type of Christ in His perfection.
2. Gen. 18 - Abraham presents to the Lord three measures of fine meal and a calf; speaking of the person and work of Christ.
3. Meal is the product of wheat - the good seed.
4. It speaks then of the truth or doctrine of Christ in all of his perfection in His devotion to and communion with the Father. This doctrine or truth is corrupted more and more as time goes by.

IV. The "woman" in Scripture stands for that great religious system

- (world-church) mentioned in Rev. 17,18 which all along has been corrupting the truth of the Word of God. The whole is eventually to be leavened - but it is not so yet while the church is here. When the church is removed (and the hinderer of II Thess. 2 is taken away) the entire leavening will be complete and consequently also ripe for judgment. First the professing church is raised to prominence (the mustard seed) then the woman places leaven in the meal and the doctrine is corrupted. (compare with the messages to Pergamos [married to the world] and Thyatira in the 2nd of Rev).

THE PARABLES OF THE TREASURE & PEARL (Matt. 13:44-46)

We discuss these two parables together because they are twin parables and go together..Also, notice that, beginning with these parables, our Lord spoke to his disciples after having sent the multitudes away(vs. 36).

The picture painted for them in the first four parables certainly would tend to discourage rather than encourage any servant of the Lord. So now, as it were, he takes His disciples aside to explain to them that the entire cause is not lost and that a treasure and a pearl are to be secured through this whole process.

Here, again, we must take the space to refute the commonly accepted interpretation of these parables. We live in a day when FUNDAMENTALISM is being attacked and criticized. One of the criticisms is that many of its truths were brought to the surface only as recently as the late 1800's and that this "new fad" in interpretation is not scholarly and is not to be depended on. In rejecting this so-called Fundamentalists' approach to interpretation, the critics are going back to the "scholarly" works of the "Reformers". These two parables give us a good opportunity to compare for ourselves the contrasting interpretations of present-day Fundamentalism and Historical Orthodoxy.

One of our modern Gospel songs says:

"I've found the pearl of greatest price,
Eternal Life so fare;
'Twas through the Saviour's sacrifice
I found this Jewel rare"

This is typical of the general interpretation of these parables. The treasure and the pearl are taken to be the blessings and joys of the Kingdom; the man who finds them is the **awakened sinner**; and this treasure is said to be hid in the Scriptures. Allow me to quote just one or two examples:

"True Christianity is like an unexpected discovery, even in the ancient church. It is the best possession we can find, a gift of free grace. Every sinner must find and discover Christianity for himself. In order to secure possession, even of what we found with no merit of our own, we must be willing to sacrifice all; for salvation, though entirely of free grace, requires the fullest self-surrender."—Langes Commentary.

"Gen. Interpretation"—cont'd

"The parable of the treasure means, that we vainly seek the kingdom of God by our works and exertion, or the works of the Law. For we are not born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man. The Jews had the field, but did not see the treasure in it. But the Gentiles bought the field with the treasure; that is, the LAW WITH CHRIST.....The hidden treasure is the Gospel, which gives us grace and righteousness without our merit. Therefore when one finds it, it causes joy; that is, a good, cheerful conscience which cannot be secured by any good works." - - - -Martin Luther.

"These parables are spoken....to the inner circle of disciples; who are addressed as having lighted on the hid treasure, having found the pearl of great price; and are now warned of the surpassing worth of these, and that, for their sakes, all which would hinder from making them securely their own, must be joyfully renounced."

—Archbishop Trench

Objections To This View are as follows:

- (1) The very fact that these last parables were spoken only to the disciples would preclude the possibility of their being a setting forth of the way of salvation. This is not the subject of this entire chapter.
- (2) In the previous parables, the field is very definitely the world. The Gospel or the blessings of the kingdom are certainly not hidden therein !
- (3) When the man found the treasure, he hid it again. When we find Christ - or blessing through Him, we are not to hide it, but proclaim it!
- (4) And what would it be that an awakened sinner would have to sell in order to buy the world. All of Scripture agrees to the fact that man is **"bankrupt"**!

- I. The **"Man"** who acts in each of these parables is Christ ! He it was, who ("though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor") sold all that he had - beggared himself - in order to purchase the field. There is a sense in which Christ died for the whole world. See I John 2:1,2; II Cor. 5:19; II Peter 2:1; Heb. 2:9. He paid the full purchase price in order that he might secure the treasure and the pearl.
- II. The **Treasure** speaks of Israel. Scripture bears this out. "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar TREASURE unto me....." (Ex. 19:5) "For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his PECULIAR TREASURE". (Ps. 135:4)

The Treasure - cont'd

You will search the N.T. Epistles in vain for a reference such as this with respect to the Church. Christ came to them (John 1:11) as they were scattered among the nations (hid in the field) but was rejected by them. Consequently they are rejected by Him (as previous chapters in Matthew revealed to us) and set aside as a nation (to continue in dispersion). Still He gives Himself on the Cross of Calvary for them (John 11:51) as the basis for their future restoration as His peculiar treasure. (Isa. 62:1-4)

iii. The "Pearl" Speaks of the Church. That the treasure and the Pearl are distinct is obvious. Else there would have been no need for both of these parables; for in the other particulars they are nearly alike. So Israel and the Church are distinct and never confused in Scripture. G.Campbell Morgan reminds us that the pearl was valued, not by the Hebrews, but rather by the Gentiles. Other facts also to be noted about the pearl are as follows:

- (1) He desired - and - sought after that pearl - utterly amazing !
- (2) It is the direct product of a living organism.
- (3) It is the result of injury done to the life that produces it.
- (4) The pearl is an ornament symbolising innocence and purity, and prized for its significance.

"in this parable Jesus shows that the chief, though not the final value of this Kingdom age is that during it there is to be gathered out and presented to God that which will be the finest, fairest, and most resplendent jewel that will ever flash upon His bosom in all the ages of eternity."--G. Cammpbell Morgan, pg. 170.

- (5) The pearl is taken, not out of the earth, but out of the sea. The sea in Scripture speaks of the nations of mankind. It is out of the nations that the church is being gathered.
- (6) The pearl is a unit - a treasure might consist of many parts. So the Church of God is ONE BODY !

"Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it;....that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." -Praise God!

(Ephes. 5:25,27)

THE PARABLE OF THE DRAGNET
(Matthew 13: 47 - 52)

Introduction:

Last, but by no means least, we come upon the parable of the Dragnet. By way of introduction there are several things that must be borne in mind as we study these few simple details of which the parable itself consists. Being the last of the parables, it is only proper that we should rightfully expect that it would have to do with the closing details of the period we have been studying about.

Thus notice, in verse 49 - "So shall it be at the end (consummation) of the age". And, as we think of the age to which these details refer, we must again bear in mind that the end of the Church age and the end of the age the Lord Jesus here mentions are not one and the same. Please review again page 6, IV,1-3; also page 3,b,(2) (a). We believe the age of which our Lord spoke, and in which He, himself, lived has been intruded upon by a parenthetic period during which our Lord is taking out from among the Gentiles His bride, the Church. This "parenthesis" we do not here take time to prove; but we believe, that if space and time would warrant, that it CAN be proven from Scripture. May we quote just one contemporary authority: "Viewed from the standpoint of Israel's NATIONAL place in the history of salvation the present age is thus a parenthesis".—(Eric Sauer, German Theologian in "Triumph Of The Crucified", page 64)

Also: we must remember that the Kingdom in its mystery form has to do with the sphere of profession and, as such, many characteristics prevalent today relative to the sphere of profession will also prevail right on through the close of the age here spoken of; though it outlasts (see again page 3,b,(2),(a)) the parenthetic period.

Bearing these things in mind, let us now take the various details of this simple parable one by one.....Note:

I. The Fishermen.

This is the first time in this series of parables that the pronoun changes to "they". The Lord Jesus has said to his disciples: "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men"(Matt. 4:19). Notice that in the parable itself there is no change of persons employed. The same persons who cast the net also gather it and also separate the fish. In Christ's explanation of the parable He tells us that the angels will sever the wicked from among the just.

"Fishermen" - cont'd.

The angels were not the fishermen however. The fishermen were occupied with the good! Angels in the Word of God are always occupied with judgment upon the wicked. Compare the parable of the Tares and also Rev. 7:1; and 16:1.

II. The Net

That which fishermen use in attracting men from all walks of life to at least adopt a profession is the preaching of the Gospel. Though there is not more than one Gospel, yet there is more than one phase or emphasis given to the "Good News" about God's Son. The Gospel centers in the Lord Jesus Christ. In the O.T. it was preached prophetically (Gal. 3:8); currently we preach the Gospel of the Grace of God - that period when Grace REIGNS (Rom. 5:21) - and just preceding the Coming of Christ to this earth to reign, the Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world for a witness (Matt. 24:14). The Gospel is good news about the Lord Jesus Christ with reference to His death for us. Calvary is the basis for every blessing and future unfolding of the great plan of God - even His reign for a 1000 years.

III. The Fish.

Again, we note that good and bad fish are taken into this net. This confirms to us that the sphere of PROFESSION is being spoken about. The fishermen SEPARATE the good from the bad. They should be able to tell the difference and consequently limit their fellowship (in vessels) with one another, rejecting the bad.

IV. The Angels.

These are not referred to in the parable itself. You will notice that it is only in the explanation that they are mentioned. This is important to notice. It is the same with reference to the tares. They were bundled and prepared for judgment and we are not told what that judgment was until we get to Christ's explanation of it. So here the fishermen were occupied with what was man's responsibility - and the EXECUTION of judgment was NOT one of these duties. The fishermen merely REJECTED the bad fish (cast them aside) but God through His Angels will do more than REJECT - He will EXECUTE JUDGMENT! Judgment, then, as such, is not seen in the parables themselves - only in Christ's explanation thereof as seen from the Divine standpoint.

V. The Order

You will note briefly that the order here is identical with the order mentioned with reference to the Tares; which order is also the same as Matt. 24:37ff and Matt. 25:31 and please compare all of this with Rev. 14:14-20

Conclusion: May the Holy Spirit so enable us to study these matters that we may be so instructed as to be able to bring out some of the things NEW as well as OLD.(vs.52)