

Parable of the Dragnet

Matthew 13:47-50

INTRODUCTION:

A. We have seen where Jesus taught two parables concerning the **"growth and development"** of the kingdom:

- a. **"The Parable Of The Mustard Seed" - Mt 13:31-32**
- b. **"The Parable Of The Leaven" - Mt 13:33**

B. We also saw where Jesus taught two parables concerning the **"value and preciousness"** of the kingdom:

- a. **"The Parable Of The Hidden Treasure" - Mt 13:44**
- b. **"The Parable Of The Pearl Of Great Price" - Mt 13:45-46**

C. Jesus also taught two parables depicting the **"present mixture and future separation"** involving the kingdom of heaven:

- a. The first was **"The Parable of The Wheat And The Tares"**, which we have already studied - **Mt 13:24-30,36-43**
- b. The second is **"The Parable Of The Dragnet"**, which will be the focus of this study - **Mt 13:47-50**

D. In each case where there are two parables seemingly addressing the same subject, there are subtle differences in which different aspects of the kingdom are being stressed

- a. In the two parables describing the "growth and development" of the kingdom...
 - 1) One depicts the "visible" growth (The Mustard Seed)
 - 2) The other depicts the "invisible" growth (The Leaven)
- b. In the two parables describing the "value and preciousness" of the kingdom...
 - 1) One illustrates the value of the kingdom to one "accidentally" finds it (The Hidden Treasure)
 - 2) The other illustrates the value of the kingdom to one "seeking" it (The Pearl Of Great Price)

[In a similar way, we will notice a subtle difference between **"The Parable of The Wheat And The Tares"** and **"The Parable Of The Dragnet"**...]

I. THE PARABLE EXPLAINED

A. THE DETAILS OF THE PARABLE...

1. A "dragnet" was cast into the sea
2. As defined by the Holman Bible Dictionary, a "dragnet" is...
 - a. "A large fishing net equipped with a weighted bottom edge for touching ("dragging") the river or lake bottom and a top with wooden floats allowing the net to be spread across the water (Isa 19:8)."
 - b. "Such nets were normally let down from a boat and then drawn to shore by a crew positioned on the beach. In the case of a large catch the net was hauled to shore by boat (Jn 21:6-8)."
3. Once the dragnet was drawn to shore, the fish were separated; those good for eating were saved in vessels, the inedible were discarded

B. THE MEANING OF THE PARABLE...

1. As with "The Parable Of The Wheat And The Tares", Jesus explains what this parable means - **Mt 13:49-50**
 - a. The kingdom of heaven, in its present state, will be a mixture of good and bad
 - 1) Just like a dragnet gathers in both good and bad fish
 - 2) We saw in "The Parable Of The Wheat And Tares" that this will be due to the influence of Satan, such that there will be those "that offend, and those who practice lawlessness" - cf. **Mt 13:41**
 - 3) Paul wrote that in "a great house" (i.e., the church) some vessels are "for honor and some for dishonor" - **2 Ti 2:20-21**
 - b. But in the future there will be a separation - **Mt 13:49**
 - 1) It will occur "at the end of the age" - cf. **Mt 13:39-40**
 - 2) The agents of this separation will be the "angels" - cf. **Mt 13:41**
 - 3) The "wicked" will be separated from the "just" (i.e., the righteous) - cf. **Mt 13:41**
 - c. The punishment of the "wicked" is described - **Mt 13:50**
 - 1) "cast...into the furnace of fire." - cf. **Mt 13:42a**
 - 2) "There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth." - cf. **Mt 13:42b**
2. In giving His explanation, we see the emphasis of Jesus in this parable, and the fundamental difference between it and "The Parable Of The Wheat And The Tares"
 - a. The emphasis is upon...
 - 1) The "future" separation of those in the kingdom
 - 2) The punishment of the wicked

- b. Unlike "The Parable Of The Wheat And The Tares"...
 - 1) There is nothing in the explanation related to the "present" mixture in the kingdom - contrast that with **Mt 13:24-30**
 - 2) There is nothing depicting the blessedness of the righteous - contrast that with **Mt 13:43**

["**The Parable Of The Dragnet**", then, reinforces the spiritual truths taught in "The Parable Of The Wheat And Tares", especially those relating to the coming judgment and condemnation of the wicked.

That Jesus would emphasize the judgment and condemnation of the wicked in this parable ought to impress upon us that the "good news" of the kingdom of heaven also contains "bad news" for those who reject it.

Since this parable focuses on the "destiny" of the wicked, this might be a good time to review what Jesus Himself taught on the subject...]

II. JESUS' TEACHINGS ON THE DESTINY OF THE WICKED

A. JESUS TAUGHT THE WICKED WILL BE JUDGED...

1. We have seen this truth illustrated in the two parables we have been comparing
2. He warned those cities that rejected Him of the coming judgment - **Mt 11:20-24**
3. He spoke of the condemnation that would come upon His generation - **Mt 12:41-42**
4. The wicked would be raised unto condemnation, unlike the righteous - **Jn 5:24-30**

B. JESUS TAUGHT THE WICKED WILL BE SEPARATED FROM GOD...

1. He spoke of this separation in His sermon on the mount - **Mt 7:21-23**
2. Again, when describing the judgment scene - **Mt 25:41-46**

C. JESUS TAUGHT THE WICKED WILL BE CAST INTO "HELL"...

1. A term used most often by Jesus to describe the destiny of the wicked
 - a. The Greek word is "**geenna**" {gheh'-en-nah}, which in Hebrew is "**Ge-Hinnom**"
 - b. B. W. Johnson comments: "**The term Gehenna arose from the valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, where the Canaanites**

burned human sacrifices to Moloch. After the return of the Jews from the Captivity they made it a place of defilement, where the refuse of the city was thrown and burned. The name was applied to the place of future punishment by the Jews. The word is often used in the New Testament, and always denotes a place of future punishment.”

- c. Found twelve (12) times in the New Testament, and it is used only by Jesus with one exception (**Ja 3:6**)
2. Jesus used the term to describe the final place of punishment...
 - a. In His sermon on the mount - **Mt 5:21-22,29-30**
 - b. When sending His apostles on the "limited" commission - **Mt 10:28**
 - c. In warning against personal stumblingblocks - **Mt 18:8-9**
 - d. Perhaps the most vivid use of this term is in **Mk 9:43-48**
 - Jesus evidently used this word because it properly spoke to His contemporaries the horror and abomination of the eternal destiny awaiting the wicked!
3. This place called "hell" was originally prepared for the devil and his angels (**Mt 25:41**), but will serve as the place of punishment for the wicked as well

D. JESUS TAUGHT THE WICKED WILL SUFFER TORMENT...

1. They will experience "**the furnace of fire**"
 - a. As described in "The Parable Of The Wheat And The Tares", and "The Parable Of The Dragnet" - **Mt 13:42,50**
 - b. This "furnace of fire" is the same as...
 - 1) The "fire" of Gehenna - **Mt 5:22; 18:8-9**
 - 2) The "lake of fire" - **Re 20:12-15; 21:8**
 - c. A fire that is never quenched - **Mk 9:43-48**
 - d. Notice Jesus' description of Hades (the temporary dwelling of the wicked dead) - **Lk 16:22-24**
2. They will experience "**wailing and gnashing of teeth**"
 - a. As told in the two parables we have considered - **Mt 13:42, 50**
 - b. Jesus used the similar expression "weeping and gnashing of teeth" on other occasions - **Mt 8:12 22:13; 24:51; 25:30**
3. They will experience "**outer darkness**"
 - a. As in the punishment of...
 - 1) The "sons of the kingdom" (unbelieving Israelites) - **Mt 8:12**
 - 2) The "unprepared wedding guest" (those who mistakenly believe they are saved?) - **Mt 22:13**

- 3) The "unprofitable servant" (slothful Christians?) – **Mt 25:30**
 - b. And the punishment described by Peter and Jude for false teachers - **2 Pe 2:17; Ju 13**
4. They will experience "**everlasting punishment**"
 - a. The punishment for the wicked is as "everlasting" as the life given the righteous - **Mt 25:46**
 - b. The wicked will be "punished" with "everlasting destruction" from the presence of the Lord - cf. **2 Th 1:9**

CONCLUSION

1. As Jesus went about "preaching the gospel of the kingdom" (**Mt 4:23**), He did not hold back...
 - a. He called upon the people to repent - cf. **Mt 4:17**
 - b. He warned them of the impending judgment and torment to come
 - 1) As seen in "**The Parable Of Dragnet**"
 - 2) As seen in our survey of Jesus' teaching on the destiny of the wicked
2. If we are to proclaim the "gospel of the kingdom" faithfully...
 - a. We must not only preach the "good news" of the kingdom...
 - b. We must also tell the "bad news" Christ revealed through His parables and other teachings!

Dear friend, are you living in view of the coming judgment? When "the great separation" is made, where will you be? Why not be "born again of the water and the Spirit", so you may enter that wonderful kingdom? - **Jn 3:5; Mk 16:16; Ac 2:36-39**

3. God's Plan for Man's Salvation