

Yahweh, the Almighty God of Israel, is with us
"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet,
and shew my people their transgression,
and the house of Jacob their sins." Isaiah 58:1

The Parables

Study Prayerfully & Study Carefully

The Dragnet

Reading:
Matthew Chapter 13: 14-52

1. Why were Parables given?

Psalm 78: 1: ***"Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.***

2: I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:

3: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.

4: We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.

5: For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children:

6: That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children:

7: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments."

Parables are illustrative stories which explain spiritual concepts and truths **about Yahweh's law**. They were used extensively by the Saviour to unveil "**...things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.**" (Matthew 13: 35) Their main purpose is to explain the Almighty's involvement in human affairs. To those who understand parables they impart a wealth of information: but to those who don't, they are a mystery. **The parables of Jesus (Yeshua) teach faith and obedience.** The parable of the dragnet adds some awesome truths. Here is the parable.

Matthew 13: *47: Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:*
48: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the

good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

49: So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,

50: And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

When we analyse this parable we learn the following:

2. The Net

The dragnet may be compared to the different spiritual efforts made to gather souls into the Kingdom of God. Fishermen use a variety of hooks, lures and nets to catch fish: each method having its own particular advantage or disadvantage. Winning souls is similar to catching fish. It includes activities like:

- **Prayer Meetings** ...calling upon Yahweh's assistance to guide the fish to the net. Prayer is the most successful form of fishing for souls. Sad to say few Christians realize this fact. Prayer harnesses Yahweh's power when fishing for souls.
- **Gospel Sermons** ...throwing out the net. Evangelical radio and TV broadcasts, Bible study, Youth activities etc. This is man's part in fishing for souls.
- **Gospel Literature** ...The written word is still one of the most powerful tools in winning souls. The Protestant Reformation owes much of its success to the Bible which began to be printed in large numbers in the 16th century.
- Who knows, the **Inter - (net)** may catch more souls than the printing press. **We'll have to wait and see!**

3. The Fishermen

The chief fisherman in this expedition is the Saviour himself. He is far more interested in catching '**fish**' (human souls) than we ever will be. His understanding of the human mind is all important, and his success in bringing fish to the net is unparalleled. When a fish is caught, it normally brings other fish with it. One could conclude from this fact that a "**captured fish could well become a fisherman.**"

Matthew 4: 19: "*And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.*"

4. The Fish

In this parable the fish represent human beings. You will find every type of individual in the church. Rich and poor, educated and ignorant, black and white, young and old. Yahweh nets every type of fish, some turn out to be good fish, others bad. As in the parable of the **wheat and the tares** every type is found in the church of the Most High - both bad and good alike.

5. The Judgment

But there is coming the Day of Judgment, a time of sifting and sorting when the fish will be **closely examined**. In Bible terms that sort program is called the **Day of Judgment**. Let no-

one forget that the Day of Judgment is near. The Saviour's return is very near, **'even at the doors.'** When he comes the great **'sort program'** will take effect. Unclean fish, those unfit for spiritual consumption (see Leviticus 11:9-12) will be cast out. They are an abomination to God.

Romans 14: 10: *"But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? **for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.***

11: *For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.*

12: ***So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."***

2 Corinthians 5: 10: *"For we must **all** appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."*

For some people the Day of Judgement will be a day of eternal bliss. For others it will be a day of terrifying anguish. Multiplied millions of souls will then realise that they are spiritually unfit for the kingdom. They have been weighed in the balances and found wanting: they are unclean fish! They will be thrown to utter destruction. Oh what a frightening prospect is here displayed! Make sure you are saved.

6. The Destination

Many Christians believe that the Almighty is too good to eternally banish the persistent sinner from the Kingdom of God; and that somehow, perhaps after many years of purification in the fires of purgatory, every soul will eventually make it to paradise. **This is a fallacy!** The Bible teaches the very opposite. It clearly spells out that the destination of the wicked is **Hell-fire**; not some transitional state called purgatory, a word which doesn't even appear in the Bible. Some folks will not accept this fact; but it will not quietly go away to please them. It is scheduled to come to pass: and come to pass it will, no matter what anyone believes. Yeshua the Messiah says this:

Matthew 13: 49: *"So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, **and sever the wicked from among the just,***
50: ***And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."***

In the parable of the wheat and the tares (weeds) the Saviour voices the same truth: that the unbeliever will perish at the coming Judgement. Not that unbelievers are worse than believers. Oh no! Many unbelievers are apparently good people: often better than believers. But unbelievers are sinners. They have rejected pardon for the sins they have committed. **Their greatest sin is unbelief, a sin of the mind which is infinitely more weighty than that of the flesh.** And for those sins - **particularly their unbelief** - they will die. The believer on the other hand has accepted pardon for all his/her sins. He/she will live because of his/her faith.

Matthew 13: 40: *"**As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.***

41: *The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;*

42: ***And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."***

Revelation 20: 13: *“And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: **and they were judged every man according to their works.***
14: *And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.*
15: ***And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”***

7. Summary

The lessons from the **parable of the dragnet** are as follows:

- All are invited to the Kingdom of God and all kinds of 'fish' enter the net, the church.
- But before anyone is permitted to enter the Kingdom of Heaven there will be a time of *sorting, evaluation* and **judgement**. 'Unclean fish' will be thrown out.
- On that Day of Judgement millions will realise that they are not only excluded from the Kingdom of Heaven but are consigned to the fires of hell.
- Every believer should ensure that he/she is living a good life. Only then can they be sure of being sorted with the clean fish: those who have been cleansed by living faith in the Yeshua the Saviour, the Son of the living God.

AMEN!

In the Son's Name — For the Father's glory.
Elder: *Max W. Mader*

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