

Sunday November 6th, 2006

Matthew 13 Part 12
The Parable of the Dragnet Part 2

1). Mt 13:47 *"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, 48 "which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. 49 "So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, 50 "and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."*

2). Let us remember that the subject of this parable, as with all the parables in Matthew 13 is the kingdom of the heavens and specifically the proclamation and offer of that kingdom to the 'one new man in Christ Jesus' – the church. All those who are born from above having put faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross of Calvary.

Mt 13:19 *"When anyone hears the word of the kingdom,*

a). The dragnet cast into the sea is a picture of the proclamation of the gospel of grace. That gathers together some of every kind – the good and the bad.

3). The separation we see in our parable between the good and the bad takes place after the net is drawn from the sea and is therefore dealing with an event that is subsequent to our initial salvation experience not the experience itself. It is only by being born again, born from above that we would be in a position to hear the word of the kingdom.

a). Joh 3:3 *Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."*

b). Our studies over past weeks have shown us that the word of the kingdom involves an inheritance within that heavenly realm. An inheritance, which can be won or lost. And that the reason for the salvation of our spirit is to put us in a position whereby we can obtain that inheritance.

c). 1Pe 1:3 ¶ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (Teach this)*

d). 1Pe 1:9 *receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls.*

4). And we saw last week that scripture is abundantly clear that not all Christians will receive that inheritance - 1Co 6:9 ¶ *Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. (cf. Galatians 5)*

5). What we see then in our parable is the separation made between those Christians who will receive their inheritance and those who won't. We have seen this same separation from different perspectives in the Parable of the Wheat and Tares, the Parable of the Ten Virgins, the Parable of the Wedding Feast and the Parable of the talents.

a). We will recall that these are all pictures of a separation that takes place because of decisions and determinations that take place at the Judgment Seat of Christ when our works will be tried by fire.

b). Ro 14:10b *..For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.*

c). 1Co 3:13 *each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.*

d). Our works will be as a result of faithful obedience to the word or unfaithfulness to that same word - 1Co 3:14 *If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*
(Teach this)

e). The focus of this judgment is not eternal, but millennial – it is in relation to the kingdom of heaven, being a coheir with Christ, our inheritance, the salvation of our soul.

f). Both obtaining the inheritance and being denied the inheritance are purely millennial. They are exclusively for the kingdom age. (Visual)

g). The Kingdom Age is the 7th Day - the culmination of that which God set in place in the beginning – this is the focus of scripture and the purpose for our redemption. And as such is extremely important from God's perspective.

h). Ex 20:11 *For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.*

i). Ex 31:14 *'You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death;*

J). Heb 4:4 *For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all His works" ...9 There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.....11 ¶ Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.*

6). We have taken a long time to lay foundation this morning, but I wanted us to be clear that

- a). We are dealing with the saved
- b). We are dealing with the Millennial Kingdom alone
- c). The Millennial Kingdom, the rest, the Sabbath Day, the 7th Day is the focus of scripture and the purpose of God's revelation to man.

7). The reason we need to understand these things is because of how our parable ends - Mt 13:49 *"So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, 50 "and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."*

- a). We are seeing then Christians, who because of their unfaithfulness, are designated wicked and cast into 'the furnace of fire'
- b). This is identical to the conclusion of the Parable of the Wheat and Tares - Mt 13:40 *"Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. 41 "The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, 42 "and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.*

c). In both instances we are looking at a specific furnace of fire, 'THE furnace of fire' – it is articular. And some Christians will be cast into it.

d). Nor is this the only place in scripture where such a picture is given to us

e). Mt 3:12 *"His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."*

f). Joh 15:5 *"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.*

g). Heb 6:8 *but if it bears thorns and briars, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned. 9 ¶ But, beloved, we are confident*

of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. – Let's hope this is true for us.

8). Please remember we are dealing with entrance into or exclusion from the kingdom and a time frame that is millennial in scope – never eternal.

9). If we were to study the Greek word 'Gehenna' and the phrase 'the outer darkness' we would find exactly the same truth being taught.

10). Gehenna is a word the average Christian may never come across and yet it has enormous significance in teaching what awaits the redeemed should they prove unfaithful.

a). It is a word that appears 12 times only in scripture and on 11 of those times it is used exclusively by the Lord in relation to entrance into or exclusion from the kingdom.

b). Gehenna was a place that had a tangible, specific location. Just as Craig airport.

c). In the OT this same place is referred to as the valley of the son of Hinnom - Jos 15:8 *And the border went up by the Valley of the Son of Hinnom to the southern slope of the Jebusite city (which is Jerusalem).*

d). The valley of the son of Hinnom = Gehenna

e). Its location was just south of the city of Jerusalem and was the place during Jesus time where all the garbage of the city was dumped and burned

11). Let's look at a scripture from what we call 'the sermon on the mount', which is the lifestyle blue print for those who would enter the kingdom, and see where Gehenna is used

a). Mt 5:29 *"If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. 30 "And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.*

b). Did you see it? No and therein is our problem. Every time the place Gehenna is referenced it is indiscriminately translated 'hell'

c). With the word 'hell' comes a notion of eternal damnation and confusion reigns. - 1Co 14:33 *For God is not the author of confusion*

d). The confusion we see here comes from only one place. It is the work of the enemy. It is the leaven in the three measures of meal.

12). What the Lord is making clear within the context of ‘the sermon on the Mount’ is that those redeemed people, who by lifestyle, are found unworthy of the kingdom would find themselves in the equivalent of the Jerusalem garbage dump of His day. Just as the valley of the son of Hinnom – Gehenna – was located south of the earthly city of Jerusalem, so will that place which Gehenna pictures be ‘south’ of the of the Heavenly City, the New Jerusalem, outside the city gates.

a). That’s why we see this recorded in Revelation 22 - Re 22:14 *Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. 15 But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.* (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10)

13). This same truth is taught in the phrase ‘the outer darkness’. ‘This is simply another way in which the Lord dealt with the same issue’. What is in store for those who are denied entrance into the kingdom.

a). The phrase appears only three times. All of which are in Matthew’s Gospel

b). Mt 22:12 *"So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. 13 "Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' 14 "For many are called, but few are chosen."*

14). If we look at this from one direction we see those denied a position with Christ in His kingdom finding themselves in the place where the garbage from the city is discarded – south of the city, outside the gates.

a). Then seeing the same thing from another direction we see these same people separated from the One who said, Joh 8:12 ¶ *Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."*

b). With respect to occupying a position with Christ in His kingdom they will find themselves in a place outside, a place associated with darkness – the outer darkness or the darkness outside.

c). And from yet another direction we see the same group cast into ‘the furnace of fire’

15). Exactly what then are these viewpoints directing us to? Exactly where will those Christians be who are denied a place with Christ in His kingdom?

Mt 7:22 *"Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'"* 23 *"And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"*

16). Fortunately this is not a matter for speculation. Scripture is very clear if we will have ears to hear.

17). Throughout all we have looked at today we have seen a separation between those who through faithfulness have been granted a position with Christ in His kingdom and those, who through unfaithfulness have been denied a position.

a). In the Book of Revelation this thought is pictured in terms of those who are 'overcomers' - Re 3:21 *"To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.* These 'overcomers' are granted a position with Christ and then there are those who are themselves overcome and denied that position – 2Pe 2:20 *For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.*

b). Let's also remember those from the Parable of the Sower who were sown in rocky places and overcome by persecution and those sown in the thorns and briars who were overcome by the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches and the pleasures of this life.

c). Also all those who turned away from the narrow path on our journey of separation that we looked at last week – all of whom were overcome by a desire for self instead of pursuing faithful obedience.

d). Re 3:21 *"To him who overcomes I will grant* – a phrase repeated 7 times in Revelation 2 and 3.

18). And it is in the overcomers promises in Revelation 2 that we find our answer.

a). Re 2:11 *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death."*

b). If the promise to those who overcome is valid and they will 'not be hurt by the second death', then logically those who do not overcome will be hurt by the second death.

c). Re 21:7 *"He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. 8 "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars*

shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

- d). It is difficult to see how this could be any plainer.
- e). Those Christians denied a position with Christ in His kingdom, because of the choices they will have made during their Christian life, will find themselves outside of the heavenly city, separated from the Light, in the lake of fire for the duration of the Millennial Kingdom
- f). Isn't this what scripture teaches?

19). The problem we have with this is that we have been deceived into only equating the lake of fire with eternal damnation. If we understand the reason for its existence and the reason why anyone would be in it, it would not be so difficult.

20). Mt 25:41b*the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:*

- a). The lake of fire was not prepared for man, but rather for the Devil and his angels – those who had rejected God's supreme authority – those who had rejected God's plan for the rulership of the earth
- b). Remember Man was created to replace Satan as ruler over the earth - Ge 1:26 ¶ *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion*
- c). And man's connection with the lake of fire will be only exactly the same basis as that of Satan and his angels – rejecting God's supreme authority with regards to His perfect plan for the rulership of the earth..
- d). Unsaved man will not just have rejected salvation, but the very reason for man's creation, which is regal – 'let them have dominion'. Hence he will have his part in the lake of fire, which will be for eternity.
- e). Re 20:11 ¶ *Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.*
- f). Saved man, having accepted salvation, will have ignored the very reason for his salvation, which is regal – 'let them have dominion' – and will consequently have his part in the lake of fire, which will be Millennial.

g). Ps 97:2 *Clouds and darkness surround Him; Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne.* – righteousness and justice demand nothing less.

h). We could now understand the full implication of this warning in Hebrews - Heb 10:26 *For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people." 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

i). But let us also rejoice - 2Pe 3:9 ¶ *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

j). Heb 12:22 *But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect,28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God is a consuming fire.*

21). The Lord's Supper