

# *Who Do You Say That I Am?*

Seeing and Delighting in Jesus through an Expository  
Journey through the **Gospel of Matthew**

156- Jesus Teaches the People in Parables- Part 12  
The Parable of the Dragnet

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Church June 21, 2026

## **Matthew 13:47-50**

**47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea, and gathering fish of every kind;**

**48 and when it was filled, they drew it up on the beach; and they sat down and gathered the good fish into containers, but the bad they threw away.**

**49 So it will be at the end of the age; the angels will come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous,**

**50 and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**

*To the Glory of God the Father; God the Son;  
and God the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

One of the most profound Truths about the “Kingdom of Heaven” is that it is NOT a geographical piece of Real Estate. In **Luke 17:20b&21**, Jesus said,

**... The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst.**

... which put what Jesus taught about the “*Kingdom of Heaven*” in direct Conflict with what the Pharisees taught the Jewish people about a restored “*Kingdom of Israel*”!

Dear friends, we have to try to imagine how very Strange Jesus’ Teaching about the Kingdom of Heaven sounded to the Jews of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century. Because the *primary* Theology of the Jews concerning their Future- was quite different than what we Christians believe and teach. The “center-piece” of the Teaching about the Future of the Jewish people, back in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century, was a completely restored “Kingdom of Israel”! In fact, according to the Man-made and Unbiblical

Eschatology of the Pharisees- *violently; physically; and militarily* evicting the pagan Gentile Romans from the Land; as well as *restoring* the original geographical Boundaries of the Kingdom of Israel- that was in place under the Reign of Solomon- would be one of the *main* Functions of the Messiah- when He arrived!

And yet, our Lord Jesus NEVER even mentioned this! So, while Jesus taught *extensively* about the Kingdom that was BOTH here, in one Sense; and that would one Day be here in Fullness- He NEVER even hinted at caring one whit about the physical and geographical Kingdom of Israel- that the average Jew longed for!

And so, while Jesus' Teaching about the true and eternal Kingdom- which will NEVER fall- was very Profound- it was also very Confusing to the Men, who heard Him speak. And that is WHY Jesus spoke to them about the Kingdom in Parables.

Now please keep in mind that a 1<sup>st</sup> Century Teacher or Jewish Rabbi- speaking in Parables was commonplace back then. But the Reason those Men spoke in Parables was so that something that was NOT understood very well would become Understandable to the vast Majority of people.

But that is NOT why Jesus spoke in Parables. Our Lord spoke in Parables about the Kingdom- in order to *purposefully* keep the Understanding about the Kingdom *hidden* from the People, God had NOT chosen to believe. And this was *especially* True about the Pharisees. In **Matthew 13: 10-17**, the former Tax-collector gave us this infallible Passage,

**10 And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"**

**11 Jesus answered them, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted.**

**12 "For whoever has, to him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him.**

**13 Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.**

**14 In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, 'YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE;**

**15 FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES, OTHERWISE THEY WOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES,**

**HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I WOULD HEAL THEM.'**

**16 But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear.**

**17 For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.**

... so, Jesus, speaking in Parables about the Kingdom of Heaven is a form of Divine Judgment against the “*Covenant-breakers*”<sup>1</sup> and the false Teachers of that Day!

Now the Subject of all of these Parables here in **Matthew 13** is the “*Kingdom of Heaven*”- in What it is; *How* we are to *understand* this new Kingdom; and *how* genuinely saved people will relate to it.

And the Fact that Jesus had to use more than 7 Parables in just this one Chapter to explain to His Disciples (and us) about the “*Kingdom of Heaven*” shows us that *this* “Kingdom” will be *unlike* any other Kingdom on Earth; and will be completely *distinct* from any other Kingdom throughout all of human History! And that means that *this* Kingdom is totally DIFFERENT from the historical “*Kingdom of Israel*” that all those Men- standing there that Day- listening to Jesus teach- would have been *very* familiar with.

And we also have to take note that- *normally*- nobody has to explain WHAT a natural and earthly Kingdom is- to anyone. Natural Kingdoms- throughout all of History- are always the same. Yet Jesus used eight different Parables- in this single Chapter- to teach His Disciples (and us) WHAT the “*Kingdom of Heaven*” is- and how saved people will relate to it! And then Jesus spent 40 Days, immediately after His Resurrection schooling the Disciples and Apostles about the Kingdom of Heaven! (**The Acts 1:3**).

Yet even today- after all Jesus taught; and after 2,000 years have gone by- there is still great Confusion and great Debates that rage about the Kingdom of Heaven! For Example, back in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, when the godly Men were laboring to translate the “*Textus Receptus*” into “*Middle English*” to produce the original King James Version of the Bible- they *mistranslated* **Luke 17:21** and wrote down,

**... for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.**

... and that “human Error” of Translation literally created all sorts of *cultish* and *unchristian* Teachings that have lasted to this very Day!

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<sup>1</sup> God spoke through the Prophet **Jeremiah (31:31-35)** that those to whom He had given the *First* or the *Old* Covenant had “*broken that Covenant*”.

But we need to know that Jesus NEVER said, “*the Kingdom of God is WITHIN you*” - as though we, somehow, possess the Kingdom *internally in our Bodies or even in our Souls- as some teach!* That is a patently *false Teaching!*

Instead, our Lord said, “**the kingdom of God is in your midst.**”- referring to the Fact that God had taken on Flesh and was now “*tabernacling*” or “*dwelling*” among them as “*Immanuel*” (God with us)! And this Reality had *enormous* Ramifications to those Jews, who understood the Old Testament.

You see, back in **1Samuel 4**, we read about the Philistines killing the two sons of the sinful High Priest (Hophni and Phinehas) and of them taking the Ark of the Covenant away! And when Eli heard that terrible News, he fell off the Seat backwards and broke his Neck! And when Eli’s daughter-in-law, (Phinehas’ Wife), who was pregnant- heard that News- she gave birth to a boy and called his Name, “*Ichabod*”- which meant,

### **The Glory (of God) has departed from Israel!**

... and that was Terrible because the Departure of the Glory of God precipitated the Destruction of Solomon’s Temple!

But then, in his Prophecy about the Future of Israel- we see in **Ezekiel 10&11**- that the Glory of God would depart *again* from a 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple. And that Glory would go Eastward. And it would land on the Mount of Olives! And from there- the Word of the Lord will come to pass that says:

**... you have not walked in My statutes nor have you executed My ordinances, but have acted according to the ordinances of the nations around you...**  
... which is Judgment. But then He also said,

**... I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries among which you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. When they come there, they will remove all its detestable things and all its abominations from it. And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God. But as for those whose hearts go after their detestable things and abominations, I will bring their conduct down on their heads,” declares the Lord God.**

... so, the Promise is:

- The Glory of God will depart from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple

- It will travel Eastward and sit on the Mount of Olives
- From there- will come BOTH Judgment against the Rebels AND Salvation for the Believers

And so, at the appointed Time- God took on Flesh and became Man. And the Apostle John wrote,

**And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us... (John 1:14a)**

Now the word that was translated here into English as “**dwelt**” comes from a Greek word; that had to be *created* from an ancient Hebrew word that takes two Nouns (*Tabernacle or Temple*) and uses them as Verbs: (“Tabernacled” or “Templed”)! So, what John was actually saying was,

**And the Word became flesh, and “tabernacled” or “templed” among us...**

... which attaches Jesus directly to the Temple in Jerusalem!

But there’s MORE! Because John then infallibly said,

**... and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14b)**

... where the phrase, “**the only begotten from/of the Father**” should be understood as meaning, “the one and only from/of the Father”.

But John said “they” (the Apostles) SAW HIS GLORY! So, the Glory of God that had *departed* from Israel had now returned in Jesus! But then John further qualified that this “Glory” was *unique* and *special*, when he said,

**... glory as of the only begotten from/of the Father...**

**...or “glory as of the one and only from/of the Father”!**

But what exactly made THIS Glory so Unique that John could say it was the Glory of the “one and only from/of the Father”? He said, THIS Glory was...

**... full of grace and truth**

FULL! NO room for anything other than BOTH GRACE and TRUTH! And that is truly glorious! But just what IS the Glory John was talking about here? In **2Corinthians 4:3&4a**- the Apostle Paul wrote:

**And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see ...**

So, satan has “**blinded the minds of the Unbelieving- so that they might NOT see**”- something. What is it that satan does NOT want the Unbelieving to see? Paul answers that Question with two phrases that mean the same thing:

**... the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (2Corinthians 4:4b)**

... or ...

**... the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. (2Corinthians 4:6b)**

... which tells you that Jesus IS the very Epitome of the Glory of God! In other words, now that Jesus has lived and died and has risen again- the Glory of God is seen the BEST and the MOST- in the “Person” (Face) of the Lord Jesus Christ! And that’s why the Writer of the **Epistle to the Hebrews** said that Jesus is:

**... the radiance of His [God’s] glory and the exact representation of His nature... (Hebrews 1:3a)**

But Sin stops people from seeing that Glory! And so, God must “MAKE us Able” to “see”; or “behold”; or “understand”; or “believe”; or “embrace”; or “hope” IN Jesus Christ- WHO IS not only the Epitome of the Glory of God- but also the very Zenith of the Kingdom of Heaven! And that “unveiling” of our Minds- the Miracle of the New Birth comes to the chosen Elect- so that we may:

- Behold the Glory of God in the Face (Person) of Jesus
- See the Contrast between that Glory and our Sin- so that we despise our Sin and Repent
- Love the Glory we now behold
- Be changed into that SAME Image

... which is us being allowed to inhabit the Kingdom of Heaven!

And that is what the Old Testament Prophet meant when he said,

**... I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God...**

... which is simply him using “Old Covenant Terminology” to describe a “New Covenant Reality”!

And that goes back to what John MacArthur taught- that, right now- BEFORE Jesus comes back- the Kingdom of Heaven is the “*Sphere of Salvation*” here on the Earth! THEREFORE...

- Wherever the Glory of God is- there is Jesus!
- And wherever Jesus is- there is the Kingdom of Heaven!

And that is what Jesus meant when He said this in **Luke 17:20b&21**,

**... The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst**

And so, in **Matthew 23**, Jesus condemned the false Leaders as well as the City of Jerusalem itself. And then, He promised those sinful, ungodly Leaders that Judgment would come to them BEFORE they all died. And then, in **Matthew 24**, Jesus Christ, acting as “Immanuel”- as well as the very *epitome* of the Glory of God:

- Departs from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple
- Travels Eastward and sits down on the Mount of Olives
- From there- He pronounces BOTH Judgment against the Rebels AND Salvation for the Believers

... in Fulfillment of **Ezekiel 10&11!**

And, of course, this means that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Temple is the Lord Jesus Christ- which is what the Apostle John said in **The Revelation 21:22&23:**

**I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.**

... and what the Apostle Paul infallibly wrote in **Ephesians 1:9&10:**

**9 He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him  
10 with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth.**

... where he taught that the “**Fullness of Times**” IS the “**summing up of ALL Things in Christ**”!

So, EVERYTHING in BOTH Heaven and Earth will be “Summed up”; or “Completed”; or “Finalized”- in the Lord Jesus! EVERYTHING!  
In **Romans 11:36**, the Apostle infallibly wrote,

**For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.**

So, EVERYTHING came FROM God; and we receive our Portion THROUGH God; and, eventually, EVERYTHING will go back TO God! Which is simply another Way of saying,

**When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all. (1Corinthians 15:28)**

... NOT Heaven! NOT the Kingdom! NOT even Salvation! EVERYTHING will be subject to God so that God may be all in all! Just God!

So, the two earthly Temples (Solomon’s and Herod’s) are but TYPES or SHADOWS or SYMBOLS of the *true, eternal* Temple- where we find eternal Rest for our Souls; Mercy; Salvation; Comfort; Stability; and Worship; and where the Glory will NEVER depart! And His Name is, “*Jesus*”!

Now there is a lot to understand about the **Book of Daniel**. And I’m NOT going to get into this in much Detail this Morning- because that would take a Sermon Series all of its own. But back in **Daniel 2**- we read about the Four Kingdoms- which are:

1. Babylonian

2. Medo-Persian
3. Greek
4. Roman

... and in verse 44, we read:

**In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.**

... and that is the everlasting Kingdom of Heaven that Jesus established- during the Time the Nation of Israel groaned under the cruel “Domination of Iron” of the *fourth* Kingdom- the Roman Empire! And the Kingdom that Jesus established 2,000 years ago, “**will never be destroyed**”; and it will “**endure forever**”!

And that is why the Nicene Creed (325AD) says this about the Kingdom:

“... whose Kingdom will NEVER end!”

As the “Forerunner” of the Messiah- John the Baptist began his Ministry- by crying out,

**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. (Matthew 3:2)**

... and as Jesus began His Ministry- the Apostle Matthew infallibly told the Jewish people...

**From that time Jesus began to preach and say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matthew 4:17)**

So, WHAT Jesus was Teaching and WHAT Jesus was doing was NOT Haphazard! It was NOT Arbitrary! It was very Orderly; it was Well-planned out; and it was fully in Accord with the “Pattern” God had established under the Old Covenant!

We must comprehend, dear Friends, that Jesus NEVER operated on His Own! He spoke ONLY the Words God had given to Him; He was being *perfectly* led by God the Holy Spirit; And Jesus ONLY did what He saw His Father do! Please look at what Jesus said about this in **John 10:37&38**:

**37 If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me;  
38 but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that  
you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father."**

... and in **Luke 10:22**:

**All things have been handed over to Me by My Father, and no one knows who  
the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and anyone  
to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.**

... so, in every respect, Jesus *loved* His Father and *obeyed* His Father-  
*perfectly!*

And that means that Jesus speaking to the people in Parables- is  
the very Beginning of several very Important Issues:

- The “Divine Separation” between the true, believing Jews and the Jews in  
Flesh only
- The “Decisive End” of the “Age” of the Old Covenant
- The “Divine Judgment” of the “Covenant-breakers” AND their Leadership
- The “Bringing In” of the New Covenant
- The Establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven

Now, so far, in **Matthew 13**- we have gone over several of the Parables  
concerning the Kingdom of Heaven:

1. The Parable of the four Kinds of Soils (v. 3-9; 18-23)
2. The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares (v.24-30;36- 43)
3. The Parable of the Mustard Seed (31&32)
4. The Parable of the Leaven (v. 33)
5. The Parable of the Hidden Treasure (v. 44)
6. The Parable of the Costly Pearl (v. 45&46)

... and from these six Parables- we have learned many things about the “Kingdom  
of Heaven”- such as:

- Jesus is the “Sower” of the Seed of the Kingdom
- The “Field” is this World

- Unless God the Holy Spirit sovereignly brings new, spiritual Life to the Individual in the Miracle of the New Birth- he will NOT fully receive the Seed of the Kingdom
- The “Seed of the Kingdom” is very small and seemingly Insignificant- but *over a long-extended period of Time*- will grow until it becomes very Large
- The Message of the Kingdom is like Leaven and will *infiltrate* and *affect* every area of Life on this Earth
- Neither Ethnicity; Genealogy; Nationality; nor Bloodline determine who the Children of the Kingdom are. Those whom God sovereignly chose- *both Jew and Gentile*- will inhabit the Kingdom and the others will be cast out
- It is God’s Will to *purify* the Kingdom; and will do so by removing the “Children of the Devil” (Tares)- *FIRST*
- The Treasure is NOT the Kingdom; nor Heaven; nor even Salvation. The *ultimate* Treasure is “being reconciled to God”; “knowing Jesus Christ; and having both the Power and Desire to *know; love; and enjoy* God- forever
- The Pearl of great Value is so Valuable- that giving away EVERYTHING- *including your own Life*- is worth it

... and this morning I want to get into the “*Parable of the Dragnet*” (v. 47-50). So, look what our Lord said in verses 47&48:

**47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea, and gathering fish of every kind;**

**48 and when it was filled, they drew it up on the beach; and they sat down and gathered the good fish into containers, but the bad they threw away.**

Now this Parable is very *similar* to the “*Parable of the Tares and Wheat*”- in the sense that there are two different groups of People described here:

1. Good Fish
2. Bad Fish

... and the “dragnet” captured BOTH Groups!

So, Jesus said the Kingdom of Heaven is like a Net that Fishermen used back in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century around the Sea of Galilee. But all “Nets” are NOT created Equally. And all Ways of fishing back then were NOT the same.

Some men had just a single line with bait on it. And they caught just enough fish to last for a Day or maybe even several Days. Then there were Fishermen, who had large Nets that they drew together and then threw into the water. And those Nets had weights on them- so the Net would sink down in the area where the

Fisherman threw the Net. And then he would drag that Net back onto the Boat and hopefully, retrieve the fish that had been caught in the Net.

And the Greek word for that kind of Net is, “*Amphiblestron*” (ἀμφίβληστρον): This is specifically a circular, weighted, casting Net that a Fisherman would throw out from the shore or a boat. This is the word used in the Gospels when Jesus sees Simon Peter and Andrew “**casting a net into the sea**” (Matthew 4:18).

But that is NOT the kind of Net Jesus was talking about here in this Parable. This Net came from the Greek word “*Sagene*” (σαγήνη) and was a large, heavy “Dagnet” that required *multiple* men to haul from the shore or between two Boats. This kind of Net was used to catch massive Schools of Fish. And some Commentators wrote that a *Sagene* covered one-half mile of Area! So, this was a Net that could not be worked with the hand of a single Man.

And one End of this large Net was attached to the Shoreline. The other End was attached to a Boat. And as the Boat left the Shore- it pulled the Net into a Form where the Net was stretched between the Boat out in the Lake and the Net hooked to the Shore.

Then the Boat would begin to move in a circle. And as it moved in a circle- it would sweep into this massive Net, EVERYTHING that was in front of the Net. So, the Boat would complete an entire Circle, come all the way back to where it was attached to the Shore. And because the top of the Net had Floats, it floated on the Surface of the Water. But the bottom of the Net had weights tied to it- and it sunk to the Bottom. So as the Net moved through the Water- it acted like a vertical Wall- capturing everything in its Path.

So, the Image of this Parable that Jesus wants us to see is this Net is basically two things:

1. The Net was very Big
2. It captured EVERYTHING- both Good and Bad

... so, the Boat has moved through the Sea, and this great vertical Wall has swept up everything- Both the Living as well as the Dead.

Now there are Times when the Net drug the Bottom of the Sea and pulled up all kinds of things- like Seaweed along with every form of Life would be caught in that Net. Then they come back to the Shore and, at that point, we're introduced to verse 48:

**and when it was filled, they drew it up on the beach; and they sat down and gathered the good fish into containers, but the bad they threw away.**

Now, the central Figure of this Parable is a Group of Fishermen. And they're on the shore in verse 48. And lying there at the edge of the Water is this recently drawn massive Net. And it is literally soaking and teeming with Life- filled with the conglomerate of Creatures taken from the Water.

And that is when the slow, deliberate careful, patient, unhurried, accurate, knowledgeable, skillful Process of sorting out the Good from the Bad begins. So, they all sat down. And this was something they did very carefully and very patiently. And this Scene would be very Familiar to the People to whom our Lord spoke- particularly the Disciples, who were almost all Fishermen themselves.

And the Fishermen took the Good and put it into some Vessels- very often water-contained Vessels, to keep the Fish alive if they were to be transported. If they were immediately to be used in some form- they could be put in another Vessel. But the "Bad" was just thrown away! And that's when verses 49&50 hits Home:

**49 So it will be at the end of the age; the angels will come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous,  
50 and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**

... so, *ultimately*, this Parable is about the Judgment of the "Bad". So, this Parable is about Hell.

So, the keynote of this Parable is found in verses 49&50, where Jesus said,

**So it will be at the end of the age; the angels will come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous, and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**

One writer said,

"There is no way to describe hell, nothing on earth can compare with it. No living person has any real idea of it. No madman in wildest flights of insanity ever beheld its horror. No man in delirium ever pictured a place so utterly terrible as this. No nightmare racing across a fevered mind ever produced a terror to match the mildest hell. No murder scene with splashed blood and oozing wound ever suggested a revulsion that could touch the borderlands of hell. Let the most gifted writer exhaust his skill in describing this roaring cavern of unending flame and he would not even brush in fancy the nearest edge of hell."

Yet even though many don't believe this- our Lord spoke very much and very often about Hell! Many think Jesus ONLY spoke words of great Love- yet the four Gospel writers record our Lord saying many things about the "*Abode of the Damned; the Wicked; the Christ Rejecters; the Covenant-breakers; and the false Teachers*". And in one of the most frightening Diatribes I have personally ever read, God's pure Love- *personified* told the Jewish Leaders,

**Matthew 23:33-36**

**33 "You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?**

**34 "Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city,**

**35 so that upon you may fall the guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.**

**36 Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.**

... and then He said this to the City of Jerusalem,

**Matthew 23:37-39**

**37 "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.**

**38 Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!**

**39 For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'"**

... and around 40 years after Jesus spoke these words, BOTH of these Promises were fulfilled!

Yet, even then, the "Pattern" God had already established had to be followed! Now look at the Similarities of this "*Parable of the Dragnet*" with the "*Parable of the Tares and Wheat*":

**So it will be at the end of the age; the angels will come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous, and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 13:49&50)**

**Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn. So just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 13:20, 40-42)**

This again shows us that it is God's Will to remove the "Evil ones" from the Earth while preserving the "Good ones". In verse 30, Jesus said,

**Allow both [Tares and Wheat] to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn.**

... and then in verses 41-43:

**The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father.**

... so, in the "Parable of the Tares and Wheat"- Jesus used two words:

**"FIRST" and "THEN"**

... so, the chronological Order is: **FIRST** the Tares are removed and **THEN** the Righteous will shine in the Kingdom!

And in verses 49&50, Jesus also used two words,

**"FROM AMONG"**

**... the angels will come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous, and will throw them into the furnace of fire ...**

... so, the Pattern is the same!

From the Old to the New- God is constantly "culling out"; or

“purifying” or “Cleaning the Camp”. The *invisible* Church on the Earth IS the “*already Here*” part of the eternal “Kingdom of Heaven”- the “Sphere of Salvation”- where Jesus is, RIGHT NOW, ruling and reigning in absolute Authority! But in the *visible* Church- the “Tares”; the Unrighteous ones”; the “Bad ones”; and the “Children of the devil”; are, RIGHT NOW- *growing together* with the “Wheat”; the “Good ones”; the “Righteous ones”; and the true “Children of God”- the “spiritual Sons of Abraham” on the Earth!

And if God was ONLY interested in spiritual Matters- then that would be that. But He isn't! It is God's Will to purify three things:

1. Heaven
2. Earth
3. Our physical Bodies

... because all three have been polluted with Sin! And He will purify all of them- by FIRE!

But the Chronology is always the same- the Evil ones; the False ones; the Tares are ALWAYS removed “from among” the genuine Believers- FIRST. And THEN the Righteous can shine in the Kingdom!

So, in Context, Jesus is, once again, pronouncing Judgment against those *false* Jews of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century, who think they are God's people simply because they were born Jewish. And that *especially* applies to the Pharisees. But in Application- Jesus is also pronouncing Judgment against the *false* Christians of *our* Day- who think they have been saved by what they have done for themselves!

So, there's a lot that you could say about this Parable. There's a lot you could do with it. There are some very interesting Possibilities. But the *primary* thing the Lord is interested in- is that the sovereign Act of God- in dragging through the Earth- is collecting two Groups of people for a great Separation!

And the “separating Process”- that went on after they got back to the Shore- is a Picture of the angelic Separation in Judgment! That's the main Point of the Parable.

So, all during this History of Man- BOTH the Good and the Evil grow together. And it seems as though God simply *tolerates* the Evil that wicked Men do. And, at Times, it appears as though God doesn't *care*; or that He is *pre-occupied*; or that He is *helpless* to rid the World of Evil! And, throughout the Centuries, people have criticized God about His great Patience with the Evil. “*Why do the Righteous suffer? Why would a Good God allow that? If God is Sovereign and if God is Good- why is there so much Evil in the World?*” These are historic and very common Questions people ask about what CS Lewis called, the “*Problem of Evil*”.

**2Peter 3:3&4** says:

**Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation."**

*... "Why doesn't Jesus come back and rid the World of all this Evil? Nothing ever changes! The Evil ones seem to prosper while the Godly ones seem to always suffer and get the short end of the Stick!"*

But as a people, who have been born again by an incorruptible Seed; as a people, who have been given the Gift of saving Faith; as a people, who have been granted with the Gift of Repentance; and as a people, who have come to believe that God's Word is True- we MUST hold on to this Promise:

**2Peter 3:9**

**The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.**

Now I realize that many people twist this verse in all sorts of crazy shapes and, *supposedly*, this verse proves that it is NOT God's Will that any be Lost- but that EVERYBODY would come to Salvation.

But, of course, this verse doesn't say that or prove that at all! This verse is the Answer to the Question asked back in verse 4. And the Answer the Apostle gives in verse 9 is:

God is not Slow/Apathetic/Weak concerning His Promise [to come back to this Earth], as some [the Mockers/Unbelievers] count Slowness/Apathy/Weakness; but is Patient [persevering] toward all His Beloved; not wishing/willing that any [of those whom He chose to save, but who have not yet been saved] would perish, but for all [those whom the Father gives to Jesus] should/will come to Repentance and Salvation.

... in other words,

**But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. (2Peter 3:7)**

... or in the Words of Jesus...

**The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness,**

**and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father.**

... and...

**... the angels will come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous, and will throw them into the furnace of fire ...**

So, the Time is coming when God will make a great Separation between those who know the King; who are the Subjects of the King; who are Citizens of the Kingdom; who know the Lord Jesus Christ- and those who DON'T!

And that Separation is Inevitable and it is Ultimate! And little by little- *silently*- almost *imperceptibly*- but *relentlessly*- that Net is moving through the Sea of Time- drawing ALL people to the Shores of Eternity for that inevitable Separation! That is the Principle! The Net draws in EVERYTHING! It is Indiscriminate in the Sense that it catches everything in its Way.

And Jesus said the Kingdom of Heaven is like that Net. It moves silently through the Sea of Life, drawing ALL of Humanity- almost without them knowing it- toward the Shore of Eternity- to be separated!

So, NOBODY gets away with ANYTHING! Evil DOESN'T win! ALL will be drawn into the Net; ALL will be examined! ALL will be separated! And ALL will either be cast into the Fire or gathered to shine in the Kingdom!

**Amen! Let's pray.**

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your Pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.