

THE PARABLES OF JESUS, #021

A Chronological Study

*"To Him who opened His mouth in parables and
uttered things hidden since the creation of the world."*
Psalm 78:2

The Mysteries of the Kingdom



"The Fish gathered by the Fishnet" **Matthew 13:47-50**

This parable of Matthew Chapter 13 offer us the knowing of the importance of acquiring "The Kingdom of Heaven" by receiving its King, Jesus. For without acquiring it the eternal destination of the individual is, whether our generation wants to hear it or not, suffering and burning.



A Story

It was long ago now, when I was first saved, that an evangelist friend, John DeBrine (Who I was then working for as a radio studio tech), led me to a "young person in the faith" Moody Correspondence School lesson book titled "The Good News," ¹ and a paraphrase New Testament Bible by J.B. Phillips ², as the starting place for learning about Jesus and my new faith. He then took me under His wing and began teaching me how to study my bible.

So, I'll try to give you a little summary of this little book about "The Good News." The first chapter concerns some people who have had a wonderful miracle in their lives. They were changed from being in some pretty awful situations - drugs, alcohol, illicit sex, etc. At an unexpected moment in their lives they met The Lord and their lives became completely different. The book's first example was a man named George Muller - a drunkard and a rebel - then suddenly he became "a good and godly man." He took on thousands of young people through developing orphanages. He became renowned for his remarkable and practical piety around the world. How did this happen?

He underwent this change because of **"The Miracle of the New Birth."**

1. It is called the *New Birth* because it is the beginning of a new spiritual life, just as ordinary birth is the beginning of natural life (1 Peter 1:23).

¹ McDonald, William, "The Good News," Moody Correspondence School, Chicago, 1954

² Phillips, J.B., "The New Testament In Modern English," The Macmillan Company, NY 1960

2. It is called *Conversion* because it represents an about-face in the direction of one's life, a change from unbelief to faith (**Matthew 13:8**).
3. It is called *Salvation* because it means the rescue of a person from the penalty and power of sin, and also from even the presence of sin in the life to come (**1 Peter 1:9**).
4. It's Spiritual (**John 3:16**).
5. It's Supernatural (**Jonah 2:9**).
6. It's the Will of God (**John 1:13**).
7. It's a Sovereign act of God (**John 3:8**).
8. It's an Instantaneous event (**John 3:36**).

The New Birth is by Faith in Christ Alone

Acts 16:31; Acts 4:12; Acts 9:1-9

The New Birth Story

Read: **John 3:1-17**

Who is God?

He is Holy (**Isaiah 6:3**); He is Pure and Good (**Matthew 19:17**); He hates Sin (**Romans 1:18**); He is Righteous (**Psalms 11:7**); He is Just (**Isaiah 45:21**); He is Perfect (**Psalms 18:30**).

Who are We?

There is not one who is Righteous (**Romans 3:10-12; Psalms 14:1-3; Psalms 53:1-3**). We are Desperately Wicked (**Jeremiah 17:9; James 2:10; Romans 3:12**); (**Galatians 5:19-21**) and (**Romans 3:10-20**).

Man's true character was revealed at Calvary when creatures nailed their Creator to a criminal's cross and watched Him dying there (**Matthew 27:35, 36**). The death of the Son of God was the natural sequel to their rejection of Him as rightful Ruler.

The book continues - headlines & verses only:

How can a Holy God be both Just and Merciful?

1 Peter 1:16; Genesis 18:25; Isaiah 6:2, 3; Matthew 25:41, 46; Isaiah 6:5.

God's Standard is Absolute Perfection

Ephesians 5:5; Hebrews 12:14; Revelation 21:27; Habakkuk 1:13.

The Standard is reflected in God's 10 Commandments (**Exodus 20:1-17**), and Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (**Matthew Chapter 5-7**).

Man Cannot Meet God's Standard

Romans 7:7; Proverbs 20:9; Jeremiah 2:22.

God Must Punish Sin

Can He Approve Man's Sin? No - **Proverbs 15:9**

Can He Overlook Man's sin? No - **Job 10:14; Revelation 18:5; Jeremiah 2:22**

Can He Excuse Sin? No - **Genesis 18:23-25; Isaiah 6:1-7**

Can He Forgive Sin without a just penalty? No - **1 John 1:5**

What Could He do: **Isaiah 13:11; Nahum 1:3; Psalm 32:5**

The Penalty for breaking God's law is Death: **Ezekiel 18:4, 20; Romans 6:23**

GOD Loves The Sinner

1 John 4:8; 2 Peter 3:9; Ephesians 2:4

BUT, How Can He Do It?

An Anecdote:

During the Napoleonic wars, a Frenchman was drafted and was to be sent to a place to which he did not want to go. A friend volunteered to take his place, enlisted in the draftee's name, was sent to the battle zone and died in action.

Some time later Napoleon wanted more men, and, by some mistake, the first man was drafted a second time. The man claimed he could not go because he was dead! A search was made of the records and, sure enough, the man was listed as dead and buried. The LAW had no more claim upon him. A substitute had died in his place.

A good biblical illustration of this principle would be Abraham and the near slaying of his son (**Genesis 22:1-14**). God provided a substitute.

The question naturally arises, "Who is to be the substitute? Who is qualified to take man's place?"

- 1. The Man's Substitute Must Be a Man** (**Hebrews 2:9; Exodus 20:5; Hebrews 10:4**).
- 2. The Substitute Must Be Himself Sinless** (or He would have to die for his own sin)
- 3. The Substitute Must Be Infinite** (He must die for ALL men who have sinned, Therefore He must be God)
- 4. Biblically, He Must Shed His Blood through death** (**Exodus 12:13**).

The Lord Jesus Is Such A Substitute

Is He Man? Yes (**Hebrews 2:16**).

Is He Sinless? Yes (**Hebrews 4:15; John 8:46**).

Is He Infinite (Is He God)? **Yes** (John 1:1; Romans 9:5; Colossians 2:9).

Was He Willing? **Yes** (Luke 22:42; Philippians 2:5-8).

Did He Shed Blood? **Yes** (John 19:34; 1 Peter 1:18, 19).

The Problem Solved:

In this way the problem has been solved. God can now say, concerning the sinner, "Deliver him from going down to the pit. I have found a ransom" (Job 33:24).



It wasn't too long ago when most non-Christians spoke of preachers, especially those of the "Tent Meeting" Variety, as being "Hell-fire and Brimstone" preachers. There's been a not-so-subtle change since those years with preaching more inclined to a more "Love one another" style and avoiding the negative, however much needed, aspects of earth life such as sin and eternal punishment.

A Dire Warning

Here, in this next-to-the-last parable in the 13th chapter of Matthew, we have the very words of Jesus reminding all who read them of the dire consequences of **not** putting one's faith, love, and trust in God's Anointed Savior, Jesus.

One of the first philosophical thoughts I encountered early in my faith was, "Jesus is either telling the truth or he's lying." There's no middle ground in wrestling with this idea. If He is who He says He is... then He can't be lying. If He's not who He says He is... then He's not a great prophet, not a "well meaning" leader of a small band of followers... He's just a man and a liar, and claiming to be God in the flesh... or probably just crazy. Towards the

end of His ministry in Galilee even His family was concerned about His mental health, especially since He was encountering the Pharisees and being very plain and clear as to just who He was.

The proof that He is who He says He is -- is in His recorded miracles and His resurrection from the dead. From healing the blind to raising the dead; fulfilling all the promises and prophecies concerning the coming promised Messiah; recorded and well documented, better documented than Abraham Lincoln or George Washington.

So, as we come to these words and this study, be mindful that this parable cannot be dismissed. There is judgment awaiting all who will die - and eventually, that's all of us.

THE TEXT [Matthew 13:47-50]:

*"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered fish of every kind; and when it was filled, they pulled it up on the beach; and they sat down and gathered the good fish into containers, but the bad they threw away. So it will be at the end of the age: the angels will come forth **and remove the wicked from among the righteous, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**"*

This parable is pretty straight forward. God's sovereignty over the earth is expressed in the term "The Kingdom of Heaven."

So, what's **not** everyone's favorite doctrine? It's the doctrine of Hell. It is an uncomfortable doctrine for most of us and how we understand it will shape our view of Jesus and the Gospel - and God's holiness VS our depravity.

"In the beginning" God created. Part of that creation was man. The "Fall" of mankind created a situation where "There is none righteous, no, not one." [Romans 3:9-20; Psalm 14:1-3]. Without some kind of a pardon all of mankind upon death would face judgment and eternal punishment. Almighty God's plan, already in motion from before creation, included a redeemer. A god/man who would pay the price for the sins of man. He would have to be God in order to pay for the sins of all men. In order to apply this redemption each man (woman, child) would have to individually believe in that God-man and his ability to redeem them. Then they would have to: 1. Believe Him; 2. "believe in" Him and receive Him, individually, as their savior. That revealed God-man was Jesus.

It's an easy fact to check out... Jesus speaks of Hell more than any other person in the Bible. Back in 2017 Leslie Schmucker³ of the Gospel Coalition wrote on this uncomfortable subject. Here's a short list of the verses Jesus spoke of:

Hell is...

A place of eternal torment, [Luke 16:23](#)

A place of unquenchable fire, [Mark 9:43](#)

Where the worm does not die, [Mark 9:48](#)

Where people gnash their teeth, [Matt 13:42](#)

There's no return from there, [Luke 16:19-31](#)

A place of "Outer Darkness," [Matt 25:30](#)

A place of the burning dump Gehenna, [Matt 10:28](#)

She closes her article by saying, "Jesus talks about hell more than He talks about heaven, and describes it more vividly. There's no denying that Jesus knew, believed, and warned against the absolute reality of hell."

It's probably fitting that Jesus speaks of that place here in the last "Kingdom" parables of [Matthew Chapter 13](#). For hell is the end result for those who continue to reject Jesus as their savior and whose hearts continue to say, "No, I will not believe." It is enormously sad to watch the majority of humankind leave this life with only hell as their final destination. The love of God provided Jesus as "The Savior of the Word," and the unborn-again continue to reject that idea even to their final departure.

This parable says that God's sovereignty dictates that righteousness must be done. Man is incapable of attaining to the holiness of the absolutely holy almighty God. His very nature demands that He love every human being... and yet, we demand to rule ourselves, we demand to be our own authority, we demand to be little tiny gods and push Him away saying, "no one is going to tell me what to do!" The result, the parable says, is that like a great fishnet, cast out into the sea, catching all the fish. Some in the net are termed "good fish," and the rest are "bad." The net is cast, those caught are dragged in, and the angels come removing the wicked from the righteous and throw them into that everlasting place of pain, suffering, and burning. The Righteous are brought together into His Kingdom in safety and peace.

³ Leslie Schmucker retired from public school teaching to create a special education program at Dayspring Christian Academy in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. She belongs to Grace Baptist Church. She and her husband, Steve, have three grown children and six grandchildren. She blogs at leslieschmucker.com, and you can follow her on Twitter.

In the background of this parable are all the Old and New testament verses about man, his sin, and the differences between righteousness and evil (sin). The bad fish represent those who have not received any pardon from God for their evil deeds. The good fish represent all those who have done what Almighty God requires - they have put their faith in the Almighty God provided savior that ensures a full pardon for their sin and sins - forever.

Certainly, if you don't know Jesus, if you haven't seen the truth in the Gospels of what He has done to rescue you... get your bible out and read. Start in the Gospel of John and then expand your heart, open your life, and seek Jesus, the Christ, the living savior. Then believe Him and reach out and find a church that worships Him and join them in both worship, praise, and fellowship.

If you are a believer... then let this parable speak to you concerning your family, your friends, your neighbors. Encourage them to find the Love of God and His precious savior. Love them with all your heart and win them to the Lord Jesus. Don't let them travel through this life only to finish up in that great lake of fire forever.

A Summary:

Arthur Pink draws a conclusion of the parables of **Matthew Chapter 13** [edited]: "... the prophetic parables found therein contain an outline sketch of the history of Christendom, i.e., the circle of profession, that sphere where the authority of Christ is nominally owned... the circle of human responsibility, and therefore it is a picture of failure which is presented to us. Look where you will, it is always the same; whenever God has committed anything to man as a responsible creature, he has failed in his trust." ⁴

Dr. Pink then closes his book with the following statement. "The next thing to happen will be the removal of God's saints from the earth, and their translation to heaven: see **1 Thess. 4:16-17**. Following this, after a brief interval, God will pour out His judgments upon the wicked, and then shall "the angels come forth, and sever the wicked from the just, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" [**vv. 49-50**]. These verses will then receive a solemn and literal fulfilment. After this "then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" [**v. 43**], i.e., the upper or heavenly department of Christ's millennial kingdom - **John 1:51** implies the two spheres of the Messiah's Kingdom. May

⁴ Arthur W. Pink, The Prophetic Parables of Matthew 13, Calvary Book Room, Covington KY, 1928

the Lord grant that each reader of these articles shall "find mercy of the Lord in that day" [2 Tim 1:18].⁵

⁵ ibid

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS WITHOUT ANSWERS

- 1. As technology continues to get better we're now able to see extreme distances in the space of the universe. We now can see that (with our current technology) our universe is extremely large. Our little solar system puts us way off into an unimaginably tiny place in our galaxy. Our Galaxy has over a hundred-million stars. Science reports that there are more galaxies in our universe than stars in our own galaxy. All this to ask you the question, "How grand is our God, how Grand is the Son of God who, "Spoke all of creation into existence from nothing?"**
 - 2. What do the "Kingdom" parables of Matthew 13 teach - is there a progressions to them?**
 - 3. Where do you stand in your relationship to God's Son, our Savior, Jesus?**
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His might and holiness are unimaginable. The Bible reports that all of His intentions are to love all those who would choose to love Him. Based on having faith in His Son, God almighty would pardon every hint of unrighteousness and redeem every person - if they would believe. But... He would reject all those who would reject Him. The magnificence of His offer, to become children of God, would require an enormous penalty for rejection. Since all human beings were created for eternal existence... then all who meet God's demands are destined to an eternal life and His blessings, and all who do not meet God's demands are destined to an eternal "life" apart from His blessings and suffer instead eternal suffering in a place noted for its fire and burning.

2. What do the "Kingdom" parables of Matthew 13 teach - is there a progressions to them?

Jesus is making clear statements to His disciples concerning the failure of the men and women of the nation of Israel, as representatives of the world at large, to recognize, love, join with, acquire, follow the requirements of the One Almighty God. Each parable goes deeper into the timeline of human history.

3. Where do you stand in your relationship to God's Son, our Savior, Jesus?

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Deering [AncientPath.net] is the author and editor of this study.

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Jeremiah 18:15

"Don't stumble from the Ancient Path"

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