

**Rev. T. Jefferson Rogers Jr.**  
**Text: Matthew 13:47-50**  
**Title: The Parable of the Dragnet!**

Intro: Jesus again is teaching a parable. The word parable is *parabole* which means “to place beside.” A parable places something unfamiliar beside something familiar for the purpose of teaching. Jesus’ purpose for teaching parabolically is threefold: 1<sup>st</sup> He taught in parables to open the eyes of His disciples to deeper insights into His person and His kingdom (Matthew 13:10-11). 2<sup>nd</sup> To conceal the truth from those who would abuse it (Matthew 13:13-14). Isaiah 6:9-10 says, ***“Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive. Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts and turn and be healed.”*** 3<sup>rd</sup> To fulfill prophecy (Matthew 13:34-35). Psalm 78:1-3 says, ***“Give ear, O my people to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.”***

The kingdom of heaven is not a geographical place. Jesus makes it clear that the kingdom is “within us.” Nobody can say “Look! Over there! There is the kingdom of heaven!” The kingdom of heaven refers to the spiritual realm over which God reigns as King. It is the activity of the King exercising His sovereign power. It is better conveyed as kingship, rule, or sovereignty. The kingdom of heaven is of a purely spiritual nature.

In Matthew 13, Jesus shares seven parables with His disciples to reveal something significant about the kingdom of heaven.

In Matthew 13:3-9, Jesus taught the parable of the sower. The purpose of the parable of the sower is to show that Jesus Christ came to share the Word of God with everyone.

In Matthew 13:24-30, Jesus taught the parable of the wheat and tares. The purpose of the parable of the wheat and tares is to reveal what the kingdom of heaven is like before and after Jesus’ second advent.

In Matthew 13:31-32, Jesus taught the parable of the mustard seed. In the parable of the mustard seed the Lord shows His reign with a feeble and despicable commencement, for the express **purpose**, that His power may be more fully illustrated by its unexpected progress.

In Matthew 13:33, Jesus taught the parable of the leaven. In the parable of the leaven Jesus shows how the kingdom of heaven spreads throughout the earth.

In Matthew 13:44, Jesus taught the parable of the treasure hidden in a field. The purpose for Jesus’ teaching the parable of the hidden treasure is to illustrate the value of the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven is worth more than anything you or I can possess on earth.

In Matthew 13:45-46, Jesus taught the parable of a costly pearl. The parable of the costly pearl is similar to the preceding one, it is geared to signify the value of the kingdom of heaven.

The seventh and final parable Jesus taught in Matthew 13 is the parable of the dragnet. The parable's purpose is to link the kingdom of heaven with the Lord's final judgment. Final judgment is the separation for hell and heaven. At the end of the age there will be a separation.

Several things to notice in the parable of the dragnet:

- I. **Casting of the Net:** Verse 47 says, ***“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind”*** (NIV). A dragnet was the type of net used for fishing in the Sea of Galilee. The dragnet had floating devices at the top and weights at the bottom of the net. Two boats would hitch to the net dragging the net to the shore. Everything in the path of the net would be caught and pulled in.
  - A. The purpose of casting the net is to gather. Jesus called His disciples to catch and pull people in. When He called Peter and Andrew, He said in Matthew 4:19, ***“Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”***
  - B. The period for casting the net is now. We see from the parable there will be no casting after this age is over.
  
- II. **Catch of Fish:** Verse 48 says, ***“When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore.”*** When the net is drawn all kinds of fish are caught in the net. The net is without discrimination.

Jesus is not speaking of sea life. He uses this as an allegory for humanity. The net represents the gospel. The gospel is proclaimed like a dragnet that captures all kinds of people. It captures people of all nationalities, socio-economic status, reputations, pursuits, appearances, sizes, heights, good and bad...etc.  
Caught in the net are both saved and unsaved people.

The idea of a net is used to denote the gathering of people for judgment.

Ezekiel 32:1-3 says, ***“And it came to pass in the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, on the first day of the month, that the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 2 ‘Son of man, take up a lamentation for Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say to him: ‘You are like a young lion among the nations, and you are like a monster in the seas, bursting forth in your rivers, troubling the waters with your feet, and fouling their rivers. 3 Thus says the Lord GOD: ‘I will therefore spread My net over you with a company of many people, and they will draw you up in My net.’”***

Habakkuk 1:14-17 says, ***“Why do You make men like fish of the sea, like creeping things that have no ruler over them? 15 They take up all of them with a hook, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their dragnet. Therefore, they rejoice and are glad. 16 Therefore they sacrifice to their net, and burn incense to their dragnet; because by them their share is sumptuous and their food plentiful. 17 Shall they therefore empty their net, and continue to slay nations without pity?”***

III. Sorting at the End: ***“They gathered the good into vessels but threw the bad away.”***

Jesus explains the parable of the dragnet in verses 49, 50. He said, ***“This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and sever the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”***

Notice the word “sever” in verse 49. The word “sever” is *aphorizo* and means to separate locally, to mark off from others by boundaries, to separate. *Aphorizo* has both good and bad connotation. In a bad sense it is to exclude as disreputable. In a good sense it is to appoint, set apart for some purpose.

Several things to note in verses 49, 50 concerning the separation.

- 1) Separation will happen at the end of the age: The end of the age is also known as the age to come. Jesus spoke of both this age and the age to come.

Examples:

Matthew 12:32 says, ***“Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come”*** (NKJ).

Mark 10:29-30 says, ***“So Jesus answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel’s, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time— houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions— and in the age to come, eternal life’”*** (NKJ).

There is a difference in this age and the age to come. “This age” refers to the present time. “The age to come” is when Jesus returns. The age to come is the period in which believers of Jesus Christ will experience the fullness of eternal life. Separation will not happen in this age; it will happen in the age to come.

- 2) Separation will be done by God’s angels: Verse 49 says, ***“The angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just.”***

The work of separation is not the work of humanity. The Lord has assigned the judgment of separation to angels. Angels of separation are also called angels of judgment.

Genesis 18:25 ***Far be it from you to do such a thing—to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?”***

Psalms 78:49 ***He unleashed against them his hot anger, his wrath, indignation and hostility— a band of destroying angels.***

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 ***Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not***

***the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.***

The angels of judgment will separate the wicked from the just. The “wicked” being the hateful, evil, calamitous, diseased, bad, and bad natured. The “wicked” are those who reject Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The “just” being persons justified by faith and showing forth faith by their works. The angels of judgment will separate those of faith from the faithless, the righteous from the unrighteous, the just from the unjust, the saved from the unsaved, the good from the bad.

- 3) Separation will involve severe punishment for the wicked: Verse 50 says, ***“And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”***

Those found to be evil on the day of judgment—anyone not saved through faith in Christ will be cast into a place of terrible distress. Place of judgment is known as the furnace of fire. Jesus often used this picture to describe hell.

Matthew 13:42 ***And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.***

Matthew 18:8 ***If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire.***

Mark 9:48 ***Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.***

Luke 3:17 ***Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.***

John 15:6 ***If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.***

Conclusion: All who reject Jesus as the path of righteousness through faith are identified as evil. All evil men will be thrown into the furnace.