**PARABLES REGARDING THE GOSPEL AGE HARVEST**

**Wheat and Tares, Wise and Foolish Virgins, Eleventh Hour, Dragnet, Watchful Servants.**

All 5 parables demonstrate the passage of time. Some longer some shorter. Each demonstrate what condition prevails amongst the Lord’s PROFESSED People, both those in name only and those who are of the Little Flock. It is this first parable that Jesus interprets that gives us the term “Harvest”. And he tells us that the Harvest is the “End of the Age”.

(Matt. 13:39).

Similarly, we told in the Dragnet parable that the net is brought to shore and the fish (implied), sorted, this too is interpreted as the “end of the Age” (Mt. 13:49).

1. WHEAT AND TARES.

Matt. 13:24-30 and 36-43.

Like some of the other parables this one takes in the entire Gospel Age.

“The Kingdom of Heaven” = the high calling for the spirit begotten to be the embryo Kingdom now.

Jesus sowed the High calling message and sin atonement.

While men slept = after the 12 Apostles died and slept in Christ awaiting a future resurrection.

The enemy = Satan.

Sowed tare seeds = erroneous doctrines that resulted in growing nominal Christians, i.e. Christian in name only NOT spirit begotten.

Let them both grow together until the time of harvest = It has been God’s plan to allow the true, spirit begotten Christians to grow alongside the nominal Christians throughout the Gospel Age period.

In the time of harvest, the reapers shall gather = the faithful spirit begotten shall work in harmony with their returned Chief Reaper, Jesus (Rev. 14:14), to do a separating and gathering work. This involves using a reaping tool, a Sycle, that is the message of Present Truth, aka The Harvest Message.

Gather together first the tares, bind them in bundles TO burn them = The message of Present Truth being put forth will have the intended effect of driving nominal Christians more closely together in their various different Denominations and Churches. They have a negative reaction to the Truth, they have a sense of safety in numbers.

They are FIRST bundled in order to be burned in bundles AFTER the Wheat are safely gathered into the heavenly garner.

But gather the wheat into my barn = the true Christens, the Little Flock react to the same Harvest Message Truths with great joy and respond to the call “Come out of her MY people”, Rev. 18:4, leaving any false doctrines and practices that are in conflict with the Word of God. They are those eagles gathered unto the carcass of Meat in Due season.

The end of the Age = the closing period of time of the Gospel Age, starting in 1874 when the Chief Reaper sends forth his messenger reapers with the Sycle of Truth. (just like at the First Advent see John 4:34-37).

The Son of man shall send forth his messengers = As above.

They shall gather out of HIS KINGDOM all things that offend = Jesus has begun his reign DURING THE HARVEST and while his enemies are still active i.e. BEFORE the peaceable portion of his Kingdom.

They are cast into a furnace of fire where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth = You cannot burn SYMBOLIC TARES IN A LITERAL FURNACE OF FIRE! No, the tares are nominal Christians who are destroyed from continuing of believing that they are true Christians, disciples of Christ. This is what causes such distress and mental anguish, they realize that they have been deceived by false doctrines and practices.

Summary: This is one of the three assigned parables that demonstrate that the faithful disciples will BE ENGAGED IN HARVEST WORK, EVEN IF ONE IS ONLY ABLE TO PRAY FOR AND ENCOURAGE THEIR FELLOW LABORERS.

Note well that in the Bible, in the Harvest Message and on the DPA Chart, there is no period of time indicated that the Harvest of the Wheat Class would end or culminate BEFORE THE LITTLE FLOCK WOULD BE COMPLETE.

Furthermore, this parable indicates that Wheat Class will all be SAFELY GATHERED INTO THE BARN BEFORE THE BUNDLED TARES WOULD BE BURNED.

Please see CTR’s logic on this in D-578, C-210, Rpt. 2634.

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“The work of Harvest has progressed AND IS STILL PROGRESSING – EVEN THOUGH AT ONE TIME WE SUPPOSED THAT THE HARVEST WORK WOULD HAVE BENN FULLY ACCOMPLISHED WITH THE ENDING OF THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES. THAT WAS MERELY A SUPPOSITION, WHICH PROVED TO BE WITHOUT WARRANT, FOR THE THRUSTING IN OF THE SICKLE OF TRUTH AND THE GATHERING IN THE RIPE GRAIN HAS BEEN PROGRESSING SINCE OCTOBER, 1914, AS NEVER BEFORE.

1. WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS.

Matt. 25:1-13.

While our first parable started with the First Advent and continued until it’s close, this parable starts in 1829 at the end of the 1290 Days found in Daniel 12:10, 11 with the beginning of Br. William Miller’s preaching and teaching on the Second Advent of Jesus.

The kingdom of heaven = the spirit begotten, the embryo kingdom.

10 Virgins = those who are consecrated and betrothed to Christ.

Lamps = The Scriptures.

Went to meet the Bridegroom =- Responding positively to the message Christ’ imminent return for his Bride.

5 Wise took oil in both their lamps and vessels = these took advantage of the opportunity to develop more of the holy spirit, thus preparing their characters to endure any trial of time and hardship.

5 were Foolish and took no oil in their vessels = careless in respect to taking advantage of the time in order to be properly prepared to meet the Bridegroom.

While the Bridegroom tarried they ALL slumbered and slept = yes they were all disappointed when in 1844 Christ did not appear as they erroneously thought.

At midnight a cry – Behold the Bridegroom! Go out to meet him! Then all those Virgins awoke and trimmed their lamps = shortly after 1874 (when Jesus returned), the spirit-begotten had their interest in the scriptures concerning Christ’ returned revived.

The Foolish ask the Wise for some of their oil because their lamps were going out = The Great Company Class realize their mistake in not being properly developed by the indwelling of the spirit of holiness, that would enable them to endure and be found worthy to enter into the Marriage!

The Wise answered saying they could not, because then they would not have enough, rather the Foolish should go and purchase more for themselves = You cannot just give away the influence of the holy spirit, it becomes a part of our character development, it can only be acquired at a cost, not with anything tangible, but rather the cost is one of exchanging worldly pursuits and ambitions to invest time and effort into study, service and devotion to the Lord.

However, while the Little Flock where found acceptable to enter into the Marriage, the Great Company went to do that which allows one to develop under the influence of the holy spirit, but alas, it was too little too late! In the Revelation Chapter 7 it describes that these would have to gain their lesser victory through the time of Great Tribulation.

Summary: this parable teaches us of our own PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY IN BEING BOTH AWAKE AND PREPARED OF CHARACTER IN ORDER TO ENTER INTO THE MARRIAGE.

1. ELEVENTH HOUR.

Matt. 20:1-16.

CTR stated that this parable is rather difficult to interpret all of its parts together harmoniously.

 He offered several interpretations of the Penny – eternal life, or if a Prophetic interpretation maybe the smiting of Jordan. There may be a sense of both.

The household = God.

The Stewart = Jesus.

The Day = Gospel Age.

The laborers = the Spirit-begotten.

The Work = Activity in service of the Kingdom.

The Penny = kingdom honors, eternal life, Smiting of Jordan.

They who labored longer murmured (complained) that the 11th hour workers who had work less time in the Vineyard received the same reward = poor attitude, maybe that of the Great Company.

They did not recognize that they had the additional PRIVILEGE OF LABORING LONGER FOR THE KINGODM OF HEAVEN’S SAKE.

Summary: ATTITUDE THAT LEADS TO CHARACTER.

it is not what we do, but rather who we become that matters, but we cannot separate what we become from what we do.

It is indeed a matter of character development. Do we think that the Apostles murmured because Stephen made his calling and election first? We think not.

Brethren, we must be very careful not to “murmur”: about seeing so many sacrificing for the Truth’s sake all around the world today. Let us WORK TOGETHER IN THE LORD’S VINEYARD AS LONG AS WE ARE ABLE.

Again, this parable shows NO CESSATION OF LABOR FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVENS SAKE.

1. THE DRAGNET.

Matt. 13:47-50.

The net = the Gospel message of invitation to the High Calling.

Cast into the sea = this is equivalent to the sowing work. The message goes out into the whole world.

Net full of every kind and so dragged onto the shore = the predestined number of the Bride for Christ had been gathered along with many others, so a sorting work is now required.

Sat down to sort the catch = this is the same as the Harvesting work.

The good into vessels = gathering the ripe Wheat into the heavenly barn. The 144,000 are complete.

The wicked cast into the furnace of fire = same lesson as the Wheat and Tares. These bad fish or wicked ones, represent the Tares or nominal Christians, realizing in the Great Time of Trouble that they were not really Christian after al and they suffer great disappointment as being deceived.

Summary: Again, a parable showing that there is a SEPARATING WORK DURING THE END OF THE GOSPEL AGE. IT DEMONSTRATES THAT WE HAVE A WORK TO BE ENGAGED IN.

EVEN AS THE REAPERS ARE PART OF THE WHEAT, SO TO THE FISHERS HERE ARE ALSO PART OF THE GOOD FISH.

1. WATCHFUL SERVANTS.

Luke 12:35-48.

The parable is in verses 35 – 40, then Peter asks a question regarding the parable and Jesus then explain it in vss.. 41=48.

It is striking that we have already considered the parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins that clearly teaches that the Bride of Christ is awaiting his return in order to go into the Marriage (as well as other scriptures). But here the Lord choses to emphasis the importance of his servants watching for his return as if from a wedding! How URGENT this was to be.

The servants = the spirit-begotten.

Watching for Master’s return = Urgency and zeal in watching. Extreme interest.

Not knowing what hour he would return, but all are night watches =

Jesus’ return would come unexpectedly.

Blessed are those servants whom their lord so finds upon his return = any of the S.B. that are living during his return and have this expectant ATTITUDE and sense of spiritual URGENCY.

He knocketh = O.T. and N.T. prophecies and parables on the Lord’s return, this would include time prophecies and the chronology.

Open unto him immediately = high level of interest in and a willingness to investigate the Scriptures on this subject.

The Goodman of the house = Satan, as the god of this world.

If he knew the hour…= part of the reason that the Lord’s return is hidden in Scripture is so that Satan would not be able to hinder it or better put – he could not have confused the watchful servants with error on this subject.

The thief = Jesus secret return the Parousia. Known only by the watchful servants who are AWAKE.

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The lord rewards the faithful servants by feeding them = Jesus upon his return provides MEAT IN DUE SEASON. PRESENT TRUTH, THE COMPLETE PLAN OF THE AGES.

Who then is that wise and faithful steward = Bro. Russell was/is the SINGULAR STEWARD THAT JESUS USES TO BE DISPENSER OF SPIRITUAL FOOD TO THE FELLOW STEWARDS.

NOTE: in verse 42 it is clear that one steward is used to feed the household, who is the household but the other servants.

NOTE: While he did say “blessed are those servants” plural in verse 37, but we see here that Steward is singular.

So then, there are multiple faithful, watchful servants who will be feed by the Lord, however, there is only one wise and faithful steward who will be used to dispense the meat in due season to the others.

The evidence is clear, the Harvest Message has been given to create UNITY amongst the returned Lord’s watchful servants, the household.

Any who have tried to contradict the basics of the Harvest Message have fostered confusion, controversy which ultimately lead to divisions.

Summary: This parable teaches us about PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY IN BIENG AWAKE, WATCHFU – SPIRITUAL URGENCY REGARDING OUR LORD’S RETURN.

5 Parable summaries:

Wheat and Tares = Chief reaper PRESENT TO SEND FORTH REAPERS. Harvest Work.

Be both a reaper worker and a ripe wheat.

Wise and Foolish Virgins = Bridegroom PRESENT TO GATHER HIS BRIDE, THE WISE VIRGINS.

Having sufficient Holy Spirit.

Eleventh Hour = WORK UNTIL THE END.

Proper attitude in service and reward.

Be a worker with an attitude of gratitude.

Dragnet = END OF THE AGE SEPARATING.

Engage in sorting work.

Be a sorter worker and a good fish.

Watchful Servants = LORD RETURNS TO REWARD FAITHFUL SERVANTS.

Be a servant worker, with a sense of urgency and extreme interest in the Lord’s return!

Brethren, all 5 parables are still in progress of being fulfilled.

Each one does teach there is to be a conclusion,

HOWEVER, the first four are harmonious with each other in demonstrating that they conclude together:

The ripe wheat csis all gathered in the barn = the good fish are all gathered in to vessels = the wise virgins all go to the marriage = all the workers are paid at days end.

They are meant to give us various insights and instruction during the same period of time, that is, the END OF THE GOSPEL AGE, THE TIME OF HARVEST AND IT IS STILL PROGRESSING UNTIL THE LAST OF THE 144,000 IS COMPLETE.

End.