

WAILING AND GNASHING OF TEETH.

"So shall it be at the end of the world [age]: the angels [messengers] shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." – Matt. 13:49,50.

These words follow one of our Lord's parables which represented the kingdom of heaven as it exists in its incipient and imperfect stage in this age – which in its widest sense is the *nominal* Christian church – as a net cast into the sea (the world) which gathered fish of every kind; which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. In harmony also with this parable are those words of our Lord to the fishermen of Galilee, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." (Matt. 4:19).

This net was first cast into the sea at the beginning of the Gospel Age when the Christian Church was first established. It has been out during the entire age; and now in the time of harvest it is drawn to shore, and the most desirable fish for the purpose for which God is making the present *selection*, are being gathered out and the rest cast away.

The great Fisherman has no special use for any more or other than the one kind of fish *now*, though by and by in his own good time, "the abundance of the sea shall be converted." – Isa. 60:5.

It should also be noticed, that when the net is drawn to shore, the work of the fishermen is not to dive into the sea either with a net or with hook and line to gather more fish: enough have been gathered for the present purpose; the net which the Lord sent out at the beginning of the age is full, and the present work, as indicated by the parable, is to sort and separate the fish already gathered. Let those in the sea remain there for the present, and any in the net not suitable for the *present* purpose (the "high calling") will be rejected and cast one side as unfit for present

purposes. This is another figure of the harvest work, and how clearly it indicates and marks out the exact work of the present hour. When he had finished the parable Jesus said to his disciples, "Have ye understood all these things?" and they answered "Yea, Lord." "Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed into the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure, things new and old" – thus implying that those who understand the parable and the plan of God as indicated by it, and who are instructed from the Scriptures with reference to the kingdom of heaven, will be able to see the new features of his work as well as the old, whenever the new features become due. And therefore they will not reject the new features because they are new, but will be ready promptly, both to work by and teach the new unfoldings of God's plans. They will not insist on keeping the net out to catch more, but under the Master's eye will be ready to attend to the new work of *separating*.

So – in a manner similar to that indicated in the parable – shall it be in the end or harvest of this age. And as we are now living in the very time indicated, we see this very separating work going on in our midst. Truly the great net, the nominal gospel church, has gathered in fish of *all kinds*, and multitudes of them. And now the angels, the messengers of God – the saints who are acquainted with his word and plan, go forth commissioned of God through his Word, and *by the presentation of his unfolding truth* they are now accomplishing the great work of separation in the church nominal – of good and bad fish, of wheat and tares, of loyal and consecrated saints and lukewarm and hypocritical professors. Those in the net who are not *really* of the kingdom of heaven, and who therefore should not be in the net, but should still be in the sea (the world) where they actually belong, shall be subjected to rough handling in this time of *separating*, as illustrated in the parable of the tares being cast into the furnace of fire – the great trouble which shall undermine, overthrow, and finally completely destroy the nominal systems – the nominal churches and the nominal kingdoms of Christ. We say, the nominal kingdoms of Christ; for all the civilized governments claim to be kingdoms of Christ, as moral societies

generally claim to be churches of Christ, while really our Lord recognizes only one church, and one kingdom not yet *set up in power* and authority over the world.

In that great time of trouble there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth – bitter disappointment, great chagrin. The gnashing or gritting of teeth symbolically expresses the vexation and anger of those in whom the truth only awakens a spirit of opposition and hatred against the Lord's messengers and against his plans which run counter to their prejudices, pride and plans. Those who have not the spirit of truth, will not, and do not meet the truth with candor and an earnest effort to prove what is truth and what is error. The truth they do not want, and even so much of it as they see, they endeavor to cover and hide; and their reasonings against it partake more of the nature of sarcasm, sophistry and enmity, than of sound scriptural reasonings. In their fruitless efforts to substantiate errors which they have come to reverence and love, they will contradict each other's arguments, as well as the arguments of their predecessors who helped to found or establish the errors. This, in the symbolic language of Revelation, is called "*gnawing their tongues in pain.*"* All such opposition to the truth is the gnashing of teeth predicted; and we may expect to see more and more of it as the harvest work continues.

Not only will those merely *professors* in the nominal church be thus rejected in this "harvest" separation, but some of the *true* children of God will also be rejected and get into the wailing and gnashing of teeth condition, because they have assimilated with the worldly minded and have become imbued with the "*spirit of the world*" – plans, ideas, aims, etc., which are worldly; for instance, the upbuilding of the various *sects* in numbers, wealth, or both, rather than the service of the TRUTH, and of the true "*body* of Christ." These fish are not "*good*" in the sense of the parable; *i.e.*, they are not *fit* for the purpose of the present selection. They are undeveloped – not overcomers of the world, but are overcome by the world – by the spirit, ideas and disposition of the worldly minded. Their case is mentioned by our Lord in Matt. 24:51.

He says: He will cut him assunder, [separate him from the real "body"] and appoint him his portion *with* the hypocrites – *with* the tares in the trouble, though only an unripe grain of wheat.

It should be clearly recognized by all that our Lord's parables nearly all relate to the Church *only*. In every instance where they refer to "the Kingdom of heaven," it is the Church, not the world surely, except when the worldly are shown as improperly getting into and identified with the church nominal. Thus in these two parables now briefly considered, wheat and tares, as well as good and bad fish, *represent* classes and mixtures IN THE CHURCH, and have no reference whatever to the non-professing "*world*," which in the one parable is represented by the sea, and in the other by the field. So then the great bundles of tares which daily are being bound tighter and tighter – organized more and more thoroughly and systematically, are all parts of the *nominal* Church of Christ. The great Reaper comes to harvest his *wheat*, and separates from his own FREE ones (Matt. 13:30,41) all those *bound* in bundles by human traditions and by a worldly spirit. And the symbolic *burning* of these, represents the trouble coming upon so-called Christendom [Christ's *nominal* Kingdom.] This imposing worldly structure with its many divisions, or sects, will entirely consume: that is, it will cease to be. The people will not perish, but the *systems* will perish, and the *imitation saints* (tares) will cease to be such imitations, and will pass for what they really are – members of the "world" and not of the select church – some of them moral, benevolent, kind, *good people*, but not of the class recognized in Scripture as the "overcomers," the bride and joint-heirs with Christ, to whom alone God has promised and will give the Kingdom. This is the scene in which God will gather out of his Kingdom all things that offend [that are not acceptable to him as joint-heirs with Christ]. None of the sects can claim to be this *one* true church which God has all along recognized, which already contains *all* the wheat. The *true* Church of God throughout the Gospel Age has always consisted only of those wholly consecrated believers "whose names are *written in heaven*;" none of them have ever been missed from their Father's sight and care though often the world

did not at all recognize this true "body of Christ," being attracted to look rather at the many *churches of men* whose names were written on earth, whose outward show and pomp and ceremonies and titles correspond more to the world's ideas. But *now* in the "harvest," it is the Father's plan and the Chief Reaper's work to disabuse the world of its wrong ideas on this and other subjects; and He will show forth soon the living members of the REAL CHURCH as a sample of those he has been choosing all along during the age.

As in the harvest at the close of the Jewish Age, so in this harvest, the "remnant" which the Lord will own as his, will contain few of the Chief Priests, Scribes, Pharisees – few of the Clergy or great ones, many more of the "laity" or "common people," those reckoned publicans and sinners in comparison with the "holier than thou" ministers and priests. So our Lord plainly indicated when in his prayer he said: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the [worldly] wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Luke 10:21. See also 1 Cor. 1:26-31.

The fact then that not many of earth's wise and great receive and preach these "harvest" truths, is not an argument against them. Remember that among the Apostles, only Paul was before a theologian – a Pharisee. How *hardly* shall they that have *riches* [earthly honors and wealth – of talents, of respect, etc., as well as of gold] enter into the Kingdom of God. God chooses such a method in selecting the "little flock" as will *cost each* the loss of these to obtain the prize he offers. Thus God selects and proves the "overcomers." None are so poor that fidelity to the truth will not cost them something – even *all they have*.

Let us, dearly beloved, make our calling and election to this great prize sure, by doing as did the Apostles, following the Lord, one of whom wrote, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the *loss of all things*, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be

found in him ...: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto THE resurrection of THE dead." – Phil. 3:8-11.

"Not many rich or noble called
Not many great or wise;
They whom God makes His kings and priests
Are poor in human eyes."
