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## THE DRAUGHT OF FISHES.

IV. QUAR., LESSON II., OCT. 14, LUKE 5:1-11.

**Golden Text – "He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes." – Mark 1:22.**

This miracle of our Lord, located thus early in his ministry, prior to the choosing of his apostles and also to the sending out of the seventy, was a prophecy of the future work of all such. They were to be fishers of men. And here also was a prophecy [R1716 : page 320] of their success as fishers of men. They were to catch multitudes. This same lesson was again repeated after our Lord's resurrection (See John 21:1-9), and the prophecy has been amply verified in the long fishing season of the Gospel age.

Using the same illustration, our Lord also spoke a parable (Matt. 13:47-50), saying, "The kingdom of heaven [the embryo kingdom of heaven, the Gospel Church] is like unto a net that was cast into the sea and gathered 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. So shall it be at the end of the age: the angels 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."

The gospel net was first cast into the sea (the world, where no distinction was recognized between Jew and Gentile) at Pentecost; and from the day of Pentecost to the present harvest time it has been gathering in all sorts of fish; and together they constitute the great nominal Gospel church, or, as it is sometimes termed, the Christian world, and Christendom. But all of these fish are not of the kind desired of the Lord to constitute the true Christendom – Christ's Kingdom – which is to be set up in glory and power at the end of the Gospel age and dawn of the Millennium. Therefore, in the harvest or

end of the age (a period of forty years – from 1874 to 1915, See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., page 223,224), a separating work is to be accomplished, and those of the kind desired are to be carefully gathered out and preserved, while the remainder are cast away as unworthy of the Kingdom honors to which they were called.

Such a work has been in rapid progress since 1874. The sickle of truth has been the instrument in doing the separating work, and the angels or messengers sent forth to do the gathering are those of the Lord's people whom he has graciously brought to a knowledge of his glorious plan and its appointed times and seasons. This is the harvest message which was not previously due nor known; and it is accomplishing the great harvest work. Those who love the Lord and who partake of his benevolent and gracious spirit readily recognize the divine source from which the harvest message springs, and accept it. Such are the desired kind of fish, but they are few in comparison with the great number in the net.

The catching of the fish in the gospel net, and the sorting of them at the end of the age, are two parts of the one great work of making ready a people prepared for the Lord. This figure corresponds to that of the sower and the reaper; and when the great work is accomplished both the sower and the reaper shall rejoice together. The seed-sowing has been going on all through the age, but those who observe the divinely appointed times and seasons will devote their energies now to the special work of harvest, and not to seed sowing – to gathering the good fish into safety rather than to catching more.

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