



# Time Of Reckoning

**“So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, 50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth” (Matthew 13:49-50).**

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**“Fear not, little flock; for it is your**

**Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom ” (Luke 12:32).**

Teachings about the kingdom of heaven occupies a central place in the New Testament. Jesus assured His followers that it is the “Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32). He further taught that drastic measures should be taken against anything that could hinder us from making heaven, as the alternative is eternity in hell fire. **“And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell”** (Matthew 5:29-30). Paul noted that **“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable”** (I Corinthians 15:19).

Every believer should carefully consider and satisfy the qualifications for heavenly citizenship so as to avoid unpleasant surprises on the last day, spoken of by Jesus in Matthew 7:21-23 - **“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity”**.

In one of His teachings on the subject, Jesus used the illustration of a dragnet to help His hearers understand the qualifications for heaven. “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: 48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. 49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, 50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 51 Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say

unto him, Yea, Lord” (Matthew 13:47-53).

In this parable, fishing with a net represents mass evangelism, and the catch represents those who positively respond to the preaching and join the ‘church’. Jesus is teaching that:

- 1) Not everybody that positively responds to gospel preaching and joins a church is ‘born again’ or ready for heaven (John 6:25-26).
- 2) Just like in the parable of the wheat and tares everything caught is dragged ashore in the net. The pastor may do his / her best to ‘drag’ everyone to heaven, but only those who satisfy God's conditions will get in.
- 3) A day of screening / reckoning (judgment) is coming where the angels of God will examine and separate the good from the bad (Matthew 25:31-46). “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil” (Ecclesiastes 8:11).
- 4) Make the right choice to be ready for Christ's imminent return: “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. 12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. 13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. 14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city” (Revelations 22:11-14). Which category will you fall into when the angels sever the wicked from the good?

Jesus ended the parable with the question “Have ye understood all these things?” (vs 51). What would your answer be? Failure to understand robs one of the benefits of the teachings.