

## THE HARVEST OF MATTHEW 13

Introduction: This parable illustrates by twelve months of the year, a period of Gospel history known as the harvest or judgment. The start is the seed sowing time and at the end a purified church emerges.

Prayer Thought: COL 71, 72

“Christ has plainly taught that those who persist in open sin must be separated from the church, but He has not committed to us the work of judging character and motive. He knows our nature too well to entrust this work to us. Should we try to uproot from the church those whom we suppose to be spurious Christians, we should be sure to make mistakes. Often we regard as hopeless subjects the very ones whom Christ is drawing to Himself. Were we to deal with these souls according to our imperfect judgment, it would perhaps extinguish their last hope. Many who think themselves Christians will at last be found wanting. Many will be in heaven who their neighbors supposed would never enter there. Man judges from appearance, but God judges the heart. The tares and the wheat are to grow together until the harvest; and **the harvest is the end of probationary time.** {COL 71.3}, 72

### 1. Read Matthew 13: 24-30, 36-43

13:24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

13:25 **But while men slept,** his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

13:26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

13:27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

13:28 He said unto them, **An enemy hath done this.** The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

13:29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

13:30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and **in the time of harvest** I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

13:36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

13:37 He answered and said unto them, **He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;**

13:38 **The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked [one];**

13:39 **The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.**

13:40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be **in** the end of this world.

13:41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom **all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;**

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

13:43 Then shall **the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom** of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

## 2. When did Christ sow the good seed?

Christ, the Son of man sowed the good seed, the children of the kingdom after He was born of a woman, after His baptism. *Read*

### **Matthew 3: 13, 16; 4: 1, 17**

3:16 And Jesus, **when he was baptized**, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

4:1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

4:17 From that time **Jesus began to preach**, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

To ascertain what time in the year He was baptized, *read*

### **Daniel 9: 26, 27**

9:27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for **one week**: and **in the midst of the week** he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make [it] desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

Observe that after “sowing the good seed” 3½ years, Christ was crucified. He celebrated the Passover with His disciples on 15<sup>th</sup> day of the first month (**Lev. 23: 5, 6; Matt. 26: 17-21**) and was crucified the next day, the 16<sup>th</sup>. Therefore He was baptized 3½ years before His crucifixion, on 16<sup>th</sup> day of the seventh month during the feast of Tabernacles.

## 3. When and how were the tares sown?

**Mark 13: 34.** [For the Son of man is] **as a man taking a far journey**, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

The tares, the children of the wicked one, were sowed by the enemy, the Devil, *after Christ ascended to heaven*

**Matt. 13: 25;** But **while men slept**, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

**2T 337.2** “Men and women are in the last hours of probation, and yet are careless and stupid, and ministers have no power to arouse them; they are asleep themselves. [Sleeping preachers preaching to a sleeping people!](#)”

**Ezekiel 44: 6, 7** “And thou shalt say to the rebellious, [even] to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; O ye house of Israel, let it suffice you of all your abominations, In that **ye have brought [into my sanctuary] strangers, uncircumcised in heart, and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it, [even] my house,** when ye offer my bread, the fat and the blood, and they have broken my covenant because of all your abominations.”

**RH, May 21, 1901 par. 7, 8** “Only when the Church is composed of pure, unselfish members, can it fulfill God's purpose. [Too much hasty work is done in adding names to the church roll.](#) Serious defects are seen in the characters of some who join the church. Those who admit them say, We will first get them into the church, and then reform them. But this is a mistake. The very first work to be done is the work of reform. Pray with them, talk with them, but do not allow them to unite with God's people in church relationship until they give decided evidence that the Spirit of God is working on their hearts.

“Many of those whose names are registered on the church books are not Christians.”

*When church authorities hastily add names to the church roll.*

**Note:** John the Baptist and the Apostles were wide awake. They saw the tares before they came into the church.

**Matt. 3: 7, 8** “But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O **generation of vipers,** who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:”

**Acts 5: 3, 5, 7-10.**

5:3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back [part] of the price of the land?

5:5 And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

5:7 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

5:8 And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much.

5:9 Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband [are] at the door, and shall carry thee out.

5:10 Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying [her] forth, buried [her] by her husband.

#### 4. What does the field represent?

**COL 70. 2** ““The field," Christ said, "is the world." But **we must understand this as signifying the church of Christ in the world.** The parable is a description of that which pertains to the kingdom of God, His work of salvation of men; and this work is accomplished through the church. True, the Holy Spirit has gone out into all the world; everywhere it is moving upon the hearts of men; but it is in the church that we are to grow and ripen for the garner of God.” {COL 70.2}

Which church? – The church in the harvest or end time – Laodicea, the remnant (SDA) church.

#### 5. The time of the harvest

The spiritual harvest is not a momentary event. It goes on for a *period of time* and brings the end of the world just as naturally as the year’s harvest brings the end of summer.

**Matt. 13: 30** “in the time of harvest”

**Matt. 13: 40** “in the end of this world.”

Read **Jeremiah. 8:20** “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.”

When the harvest is past, the wicked realize that they are lost. In other words, during the time of harvest, they could have been saved, but they squandered their opportunity.

Read **Amos 8:11, 12** “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find [it].”

The wicked look for, but cannot find the Word of the Lord. The same company in Jeremiah 8:20, is again brought to view in this Scripture. This searching takes place at the final close of probation just before the second coming. Thus it is seen that the "harvest" is during probationary time.

Read **COL 71.3** - “The tares and the wheat are to grow together until the harvest; and the harvest is the end of probationary time.”

The "harvest" is a part of probationary time, the last portion of it.

**EW 118.1** - “I then saw the third angel. Said my accompanying angel, "Fearful is his work. Awful is his mission. He is the angel that is to select the wheat from the tares, and seal, or bind, the wheat for the heavenly garner. These things should engross the whole mind, the whole attention.””

It is well known that the Third Angel's work occurs during probationary time. Therefore, the "harvest" or separation in the church takes place during probationary time.

6. Does not the term "end of the world" prove that the harvest takes place at the second coming of Christ?

The term "the end of the world" does include the last day, the second coming of Christ. However, the Scriptures do not limit its meaning to the final day.

**Heb. 9:24-26**

9:24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, [which are] the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:  
9:25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;  
9:26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once **in the end of the world** hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Christ entereth into the veil "once in the end of the world." As Seventh-day Adventists, we are fully aware of the movement of Christ from the Holy to the Most Holy apartment of the Heavenly Sanctuary in 1844, yet this verse terms it "the end of the world." This conclusively shows that the term "the end of the word" is not limited to the last day.

**1Corinthians. 10:11** "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

This Scripture speaks of those who live in the last days of earth's history, which is termed "the ends of the world." Thus, the term "the end of the world" means the last section of probationary time. Truly "the harvest is the end of the world!" Therefore, the harvest begins with the removal of the tares from the Seventh-day Adventist church.

7. The separation of the wheat and the tares

**Matthew 13:40-43** points out that God will gather out of His Kingdom (His church) all things that offend, the tares. Notice also that He will leave only the righteous, resulting in a pure church.

**TM 47.2** "The work of separation is given to the angels of God ..."

**Amos 8:1-3** "Thus hath the Lord GOD showed unto me: and behold **a basket of summer fruit**. And he said, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A basket of summer fruit. Then said the LORD unto me, **The end is come upon my people of Israel**; I will not again pass by them any more. And the songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord GOD: **[there shall be] many dead bodies in every place**; they shall cast [them] forth with silence."

This scripture shows that after the fruits (wheat) are gathered, the end (close of probation) will come for God's people (the church) and many dead bodies (tares) will be in every place.

Read **Isaiah 52:1** "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth **there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.**"

The wicked will be cut off from among the people of God. Just before this, however, a message calling for Zion (the church) to awake and announcing that the harvest is about to begin is to be proclaimed to the church.

Read **Nahum 1:15** "Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for **the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off.**"

The same thought found in Isaiah 52:1 is reinforced in this Scripture.

#### 8. The separation in two sections, yielding two fruits

Read **Rev. 14:1, 4; 7:1-4** - *From Israel, the church, yielding the first fruits; Rev. 7:9; 18:4* from the nations, *Babylon*, yielding the *second fruits*

#### **Rev. 14:14-19**

14:14 And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud [one] sat like unto **the Son of man**, having on his head a golden crown, and **in his hand a sharp sickle**.

14:15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for **the harvest of the earth** is ripe.

14:16 And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

14:17 And **another angel** came out of the temple which is in heaven, **he also having a sharp sickle**.

14:18 And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather **the clusters of the vine of the earth**; for her grapes are fully ripe.

14:19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast [it] into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

Here we see that there are two reaping: the Son of Man gathers the *first fruits* (the harvest of the earth) – verses 14-16 and the angel gathers the *second fruits* (the clusters of the vine of the earth) – verses 17-19. The vine, not the fully ripe grapes, he casts into the wine-press.

#### **Luke 14:16-24**

14:16 Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

14:17 And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

14:18 And they all with one [consent] began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

14:19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

14:20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

14:21 So that servant came, and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into **the streets and lanes of the city**, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

14:22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

14:23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out **into the highways and hedges**, and compel [them] to come in, that my house may be filled.

14:24 For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

From the streets and lanes of the city, yielding the *first fruits*, after those who were bidden were rejected (destroyed) from tasting the supper – verses 16-22; from the highways and hedges, yielding the *second fruits* – verses 23, 24.

Read **Isaiah 66:15-20** - The Lord slays many at His coming in judgment to the church and afterwards, those who escape the slaying, the *first fruits*, are sent to the nations to bring all their brethren, the *second fruits* into a pure church.

**PK 725.1** - “Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness, the church is to enter upon her final conflict. ‘Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners’ (Song of Solomon 6:10), she is to go forth into all the world, conquering and to conquer.”

*Thus a purified church will conquer the world.*

**TM 17.1** “The church is to be fed with manna from heaven and to be kept under the sole guardianship of His grace. Clad in complete armor of light and righteousness, she enters upon her final conflict. The dross, the worthless material, will be consumed, and the influence of the truth testifies to the world of its sanctifying, ennobling character...”

**PK 725.1** “Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness, the church is to enter upon her final conflict. "Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners" (Song of Solomon 6:10), she is to go forth into all the world, conquering and to conquer.”  
{PK 725.1}

Conclusion: We are right now in the last section of the wheat and tares sowing period. The harvest is about to begin. The Angels, the Reapers will soon bind the tares in bundles to burn them (Judgment of the Living) and gather the wheat into the barn, the purified

church or kingdom. Thus the harvest takes place in the last days before the second coming of Christ. May this reality help us to choose wisely.