

Parable of the Drag-net

Again, the kingdom of heaven 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 world: 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.

Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord.

Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.

—Matthew 13:47-52

The word “net,” used frequently in the Gospels as a means of catching “fish,” may be said to symbolize the higher bodies (chiefly the desire body) which form the unseen though extremely important part of man’s complex make-up, and which conduct to the Ego (the indwelling Spirit) the experiences (“fish”) which are transmuted into soul, or food for the Spirit. As stated in *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, “Man is a threefold Spirit, possessing a mind by means of which he governs a threefold body, which he emanated from himself to gather experience. The threefold body he transmutes into a three-fold soul, upon which he nourishes himself from impotence to omnipotence.” The “sea” represents the Desire World, which interpenetrates the Earth and extends out beyond it, and with which each person has contact by means of his individual body.

When the “net” becomes full, or when at the end of an earth life the desire body has been filled with experiences, the physical body is released. Then begins a period of gathering “the good into vessels” and casting “the bad away.” First comes the purgatorial experience, concerning which Max Heindel tells us: “There are two distinct activities in Purgatory. First, there is the eradication of bad habits.

For instance the drunkard craves drink just as much as he did before death, but now he has no stomach and alimentary canal wherein to contain the liquor, so that, although he may go around to the various saloons, although he may even get inside the whiskey casks and steep himself in the liquor, he obtains no satisfaction. There are no fumes as when chemical combustion takes place in a stomach. Thus he suffers all the tortures of Tantalus.

“But, as desire in this world burns out when we realize that it cannot be gratified, so in time the drunkard is cured of his desire for drink, because he can obtain no liquor, and he is born innocent of evil so far as that particular vice is concerned. However, he must overcome that vice consciously, and so at a certain time temptation will come in his way...Then it depends upon whether he yields or not. If he does, he sins anew and must be purged anew, till at last the cumulative pains of repeated purgatorial existence will cause him to have a disgust for drink. Then he will consciously have overcome temptation and there will be no more suffering from that source.”

In the subsequent experiences in heaven worlds the good desires and unselfish acts are the basis of the feelings and desires “built into the Ego by the spiritual alchemical forces generated when they are being realized there, undergoing a transmutation into faculties usable in future incarnations.”

Thus does Christ Jesus describe the religion of the New Age, the religion which will aid man to become a new and higher being. □