

30.—The servants might make mistakes but the angel-reapers will make none. Meantime, unlike the case of the natural grain, the influence of good people may be the means of turning the "tares" into "wheat." What is impossible in the realm of nature is possible in the sphere of action of divine grace.

36.—The public discourse was ended and Jesus had retired to his accustomed abode when the disciples gathered around him for further instruction. They had been particularly struck with this parable and had perceived somewhat of its meaning. They wished to understand it more perfectly.

37, 38.—Men become what they are by the principles which they adopt. They are the children of God or evil according as they follow the one, or the other. There is a higher sense in which believers are children of God by adoption.

39.—Our Lord recognizes a personal devil, the chief of spiritual forces at enmity with God and all good. His power, however, is limited and will be ultimately destroyed. The word for "world" in this verse is not the same as in verse 38. It does not refer to the physical world, but to the present era, or

age. This will close with the day of judgment.

The world harvest will be a time of rejoicing to all those who are gathered into God's garner. The ministering angels who have had charge over us during our earthly life will carry us safely home at last.

40, 41.—Those that "cause stumbling" are the same persons as those that "do iniquity." The two aspects of their guilt are distinguished. Their presence in the Church was a source of evil and scandal, and their personal character was bad.

42.—To say that this language is figurative will not mitigate its fearful significance. The doom of the wicked is unutterably sad.

43.—The expression "shine forth" is striking. The light of the true life, which is within their souls shall burst forth, as the sunlight comes out from the cloud which has obscured it; and this light shall be the joy and blessedness in which they shall abide in the kingdom of their Father. (Dwight.)

God has given us faculties by which we may know his will—let us then use them to know and obey him. We do not hear, not because we are deaf, but because our attention is absorbed with something else.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY.

What other parables are found in this chapter? What do they illustrate? Why does Christ give so many upon our subject? (Isa. 58: 10-13.)

24.—What is the "kingdom of heaven"? Who is meant by the sower? What is the seed which he sows? (1 Peter 1: 23; Jas. 1: 18; John 1: 13.) Where does he sow it? Who sows it for him? Where does it flourish best?

25.—Who is the enemy? (Luke 10: 19; 1 Peter 5: 8.) What are the tares? (2 Cor. 11: 13-15; verse 19.) How does Satan sow his evil seed in our hearts? (1 ch. 21: 1; Job 1: 9; Ezek. 3: 1; John 13: 2; Acts 5: 3; 2 Cor. 4: 4; Rev. 12: 10.) How may we destroy the weeds? What help must we have?

26-29.—Why did not the servants discover the tares sooner? (Hos. 8: 7; 10: 13; Gal. 6: 8; Gen. 3: 11.) God is not the author of evil—Jas. 1: 13; 1 John 1: 5. Why are we not allowed to persecute? Examples of God's patience with the wicked—Gen. 18: 26; Luke 13: 8; 2 Peter 3: 9; Rev. 6: 10.

30.—When is the harvest? (Joel 3: 13; Rev. 14: 15-19.) Why does God spare the wicked so long? (2 Peter 3: 9.) How will God punish the wicked? (2 Thess. 1: 9.) What shall be said to the righteous? (Matt. 25: 34.)

41.—The certainty of a final separation—Matt. 13: 49; 25: 31-33, 46; Dan. 12: 2. The sin of causing others to stumble—Matt. 18: 7; 2 Peter 2: 1, 2.

42.—Similar illustrations of the doom of the wicked—ch. 3: 12; Rev. 19: 20; 20: 10. Their anguish—ch. 8: 12; verse 50.

43.—Who will shine as stars in the kingdom? (Dan. 12: 3; 1 Cor. 15: 42, 43, 58.) Do some have ears and yet not hear? The gospel is designed for all the world—Matt. 24: 14; 23: 19; Luke 24: 47; Rom. 10: 18; Col. 1: 6. Who are sprung from the good seed? (1 Peter 1: 23.) From whom are the evil seed sprung? (Gen. 3: 15; John 8: 44; 1 John 3: 8; Acts 13: 10.)