Exegesis of Mt.13.14,15.

Mt. is the only one of the Synoptics who specifically cites Is. as the author of the saying and who declares that it is fulfilled. The others give a much abreviated version, not in the form of a quotation but more as a summary or condensation. Mt. is full and explicit.

Christ is quoted by Mt. as giving the citation in explanation of the query as to why He spoke in parables. To some had been given the blessing of knowing the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, and to others it had not been given. To the one who has faith, more is given: that is, he understands the parables, and he has abundance: the one who does not have the faith and comprehension is taken even what he has. Jesus says that it is on this account that he speaks in parables, because when they see the manifest evidences of the presence of the kingdom in His person and works, they do not "see" comprehendingly and savingly, nor do they hear so as to truly understand. This strange situation is the fulfillment of the prophecy of Is. What is meant by "fulfilled"?

The word used is not the usual one of Mt. for "fulfill", but a compound giving a little more emphasis to the completeness of the fulfillment. This seems particularly appropriate in view of the fact that it is with reference to Christ Himself that fulfillment is declared. If the people were hardened by the preaching of Isaiah, it an extreme example of the same thing when they do not even respond to tohe teaching of Christ Himself: surely here there is complete fulfillment. Again, we think, not the fulfillment of a specific prediction, but another instance of a predicted situation. The ministry of Christ was like that of Is. in that the very instrument of God's mercy in the preaching and teaching of Christ was the means of hardening the hearts of the people. The irony of Is. is repeated in the very message that hardens there is the love and grace of God offered and His desire and appeal for their repentance expressed. I would tentatively define: a prophecy is fulfilled when the event of situation predicted comes to pass, and completely corresponds to meaning and intent of the prediction. Attention