

Kelham Baptist Church

Men's Bible Study

February 26, 2023

THE PARABLES OF MATTHEW 13 AND THE CHURCH AGE

Lesson 6

The sixth parable of Matthew 13 is the parable of the **Pearl of Great Price**: *Again, the kingdom of heaven like unto a merchant man seeking goodly pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it (Matthew 13:45-46).*

The pearl comes from the sea, which in the bible represents the nations of the world, while things coming out of the ground represents the Jewish nation. Therefore, the previous parable was about Israel being buried in the ground and this parable is about the church of Jesus Christ. The treasure contains many separate pieces while the pearl is just one piece because the church is **one body**. The pearl is the only gem produced by a living thing. It is produced by the agony of a foreign irritation just as the church was produced by the agony Christ suffered while being on earth as a man. An oyster covers the irritation with layers of a beautiful substance of great value just as the

church gets its beauty from the layers of grace and mercy given by the Lord God Almighty. Other gems need shaping and polishing with tools whereas a pearl would be ruined if altered by a tool. Any church that allows worldly cares and doctrines to influence their mission loses its lampstand.

The merchant man in this parable is Christ. The church is to be His bride. He is absent from the earth now. He has gone to prepare a place for His bride. When His Father decides the place is ready for the bride, He will send the Son to get His bride. That is when the bride will be called into the clouds to meet the groom and proceed to the place where the wedding will take place.

This parable is a picture of the faithful church at Philadelphia and covers the time period from about 1750 until the rapture of the true church.

READ REVELATION 3:7-13.

Philadelphia means “**brotherly love**” . This church represents the church during the great missionary movement that began about 1750. Jesus identifies Himself as the one who is holy and true, He has the key of David, and He is the one who opens and no one can shut, and what He shuts, no one can open This church is a “**doer**” of the Word and will continue until the rapture. The Philadelphia type church is taking the gospel to every nation, tribe and tongue.

Knowledge of God's word is growing and people understand bible truths better than ever before. Jesus, who is on the throne of David, opens the door to glory for His bride, but He closes the door to all who reject Him. He commends the church for their deeds. He recognizes that their strength is fading, but they have held on and not denied Him. False Christ abound, but they are all liars. The time of tribulation is coming, but will not come upon this church because He will take them through the open door. Those who remain faithful will be joined with Christ and will never again be apart from Him. He says **He is coming soon.**

THE SEVENTH AND LAST PARABLE OF MATTHEW 13 is THE PARABLE OF THE DRAGNET.

The dragnet represents the separation of the good from the bad after the battle that ends the seven years of tribulation. Jesus had much to say about the last days of this age. Matthew 24 and 25 have many examples of judging between the good and the bad. To the good, Christ will say, "***Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world***". The kingdom is the 1,000 years that Christ will sit on David's throne in Jerusalem to rule over the whole earth. The dragnet is cast into the sea. That means it is the judgment of the gentile nations, Israel is not included. The bad fish are cast into the furnace of fire (not the Lake of Fire).

This same judgment is also pictured as separating the goats from the sheep. The parable of the dragnet pictures the apostate church that will be the predominate church from now until the time of the tribulation that follows the rapture of the true church.

READ REVELATION 3:14-22. To the church at Laodicea Jesus identifies Himself as The faithful and true witness that was with God at the creation of all things. Jesus has no commendation for this church that is neither hot or cold. They are tasteless and He will spew them out of His mouth. This church thinks it is a wonderful church that is rich in assets, well organized and not needing anything. Jesus says they are blind and naked, He is not even in the church. He is knocking on the door. Even in this church there are some believers who will invite Him in, but mostly, this is an unbelieving church

