

Sunday February 21st 2010
Matthew 13 Parables – Part Nine
The Parable of the Pearl

1). Mt 13:33 *Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."*

a). At the conclusion of the Parable of the Leaven we find ourselves at the terminal point for this dispensation. The Parable of the Leaven, along with the Parable of the Sower and the Parable of the Wheat and Tares and the Mustard Seed, have presented to us in a symbolic form the complete dispensational history of the church with regards to the proclamation and offer of the Kingdom of the Heavens to the Church – that which the Lord calls ‘the word of the Kingdom’.

b). These 4 parables we will remember were all given once the Lord had left the house and had gone to the sea picturing the setting aside of Israel with respect to the Kingdom of the Heavens and then offering this Kingdom to the church who would predominantly come from the Gentile nations.

c). At the conclusion of the 4th Parable, that of the Leaven, having come to the terminal point in this dispensation, the Lord then returns to the house to give the remaining 3 parables.

d). And these 3 parables now deal with events beyond the end of this dispensation. Events that must be fulfilled before the Millennial Kingdom can be established. These are events that do not deal directly with the proclamation and offer of the Kingdom of the Heavens as this message ceases with respect to the church at the end of the dispensation. These events then deal with the consequences of the proclamation and offer of the Kingdom of the Heavens rather than the offer itself.

2). At the terminal point in this dispensation the church, the complete body of Christ, all eternally redeemed individuals from this dispensation will be either resurrected or raptured to appear at Christ’s Judgment Seat - 1Th 4:16 *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.*

a). The complete church, all those who are called, appearing before Christ in Judgment is the subject of the first 3 Chapters of the Book of the Revelation and brings to fulfillment the type given in Ruth’s appearance, at midnight, on Boaz’s threshing floor - Ru 3:8 *Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled,*

and turned himself; and there, a woman was lying at his feet. 9 And he said, "Who are you?" So she answered, "I am Ruth, your maidservant. Take your maidservant under your wing, for you are a close relative."

b). Ruth's presence on Boaz's threshing floor is for one reason only; that the inheritance lost through the deaths of Mahlon and Chilion might be redeemed by Boaz and that as a consequence of this redemption Boaz would take Ruth as his wife. And we would note that this redemptive process takes place after Ruth has become a member of the family, after she has worked in Boaz's field and beaten out the grain and after she has prepared herself for meeting with Boaz on his threshing floor.

c). As it is in the type so in the antitype. The Judgments and determinations made at Christ's Judgment Seat reveal those who will be the Bride of Christ, those who are called out of the called, and once the Bride has been revealed the events that bring about the redemption of the inheritance are set in motion. Without the Bride there is no need for the inheritance to be redeemed, as it is for her that the redemption is to take place. Once the Bride is present at Christ's Judgment Seat then, according to God's purpose, it is mandatory for the inheritance to be redeemed.

d). The process of redemption is brought about through the judgments of the seals, the trumpets and the bowls, that we see in Revelation in fulfillment of the type in Exodus, bringing about the complete overthrow of Gentile world power. And this redemption process comes about after those making up the Bride have become a member of the family, after working in the field and beating out the grain and after preparing for the meeting with Christ at His Judgment Seat.

3). Now as we consider this let's keep two things in mind. Firstly, the termination of the present dispensation does not bring Man's Day to an end as there still remains 7 years, Daniel's 70th week, from the previous dispensation to be completed. And the full 6 days of work must be completed before the 7th Day can begin. And secondly God has promised that Israel, during the Millennial Kingdom, will be restored to her position at the head of the nations, something that can only be accomplished as a result of the nation's repentance - Isa 44:22 *I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions, And like a cloud, your sins. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you."*

a). Now it should be evident to us that the only time remaining during Man's Day in which the inheritance can be redeemed for the Bride is the 7 years remaining from the previous dispensation, the time of Jacob's trouble, when God is working with Israel to bring the nation to repentance. Therefore the redemption of the inheritance and the time of Jacob's trouble, that which we call the great

tribulation - Mt 24:21 *"For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.*

b). They are one and the same event.

c). This then is the reason that the Lord returns to the house. Although the focus of the final parables remains the outcome of the proclamation and offer of the Kingdom of the Heavens to the Church the concluding details of this focus beyond the end of the dispensation, judgment followed by redemption cannot be separated from God's renewed dealings with Israel – dealings that also have to do with judgment and redemption.

d). It is God's renewed dealings with Israel, which is presented in a type in Exodus and Esther, which is seen in the Parable of the Treasure –
Mt 13:44 ¶ *"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.*

e). The proclamation and offer of the Kingdom of the Heavens, the word of the Kingdom, is exclusively for those from this dispensation who we would classify as Christians, those who are neither Jews nor Gentiles - Ga 3:28 *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

f). However, the promise that God made to Abraham concerned both realms of the Kingdom, earthly and heavenly and as such Israel must remain within this context as it is to Israel that the earthly part of the Kingdom has been unconditionally covenanted. Israel is the treasure hidden in the field and the purchase of the field, the redemption of the inheritance, results in the acquisition of the treasure. The central focus of the parable however remains the purchase of the field, the redemption of the inheritance.

4). And so all of this brings us to the Parable of the Pearl - Mt 13:45 *"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, 46 "who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.*

a). In this parable, as with the previous parable, our focus remains the consequences of the proclamation and offer of the Kingdom of the heavens to the church, that which the Lord describes as the word of the Kingdom beyond the end of this dispensation.

b). The merchant here and the man from the Parable of the Treasure would be one and the same – the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of Man.

c). That which is being purchased in our parable is 'a pearl of great price', rather than the field of the previous parable. But following on from the previous parable and adding to it, that symbolized in the purchase of the field, the

redemption of the inheritance, remains in view – the sale of all He had is the same event in both parables, taking us to the events of the cross of Calvary, events which in their past finished state make possible Christ's future work of the redemption of the inheritance - Col 1:19 *For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, 20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.*

d). And within the context of the chronology of the events taking place at the conclusion of this dispensation, the entity represented by the pearl, which is purchased along with the field, can only be a reference to the church. But not the church in a general sense, but that group identified at the Judgment Seat – those seed who were sown on good ground who produced a crop – who at the conclusion of the redemption of the inheritance will become the Lamb's wife – Ru 4:9 ¶ *And Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, from the hand of Naomi. 10 "Moreover, Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, I have acquired as my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brethren and from his position at the gate. You are witnesses this day."*

e). The purchase of the Pearl is intimately connected to the purchase of the field and is therefore an event that follows the determinations made at the Judgment Seat. The chronology alone clearly shows that the Pearl of great price is the Bride.

f). We can also note that pearls are seen in connection with foundations, gates and the governmental number 12 in the description of the New Jerusalem in Re 21:21 *The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.*

5). We can also draw on indirect evidence that the pearl is symbolic of the Bride of Christ as we note that oysters, from which pearls come, are taken from the sea and are unclean to the Jew. And we will remember that the sea is used symbolically of the Gentile nations – And it is from this group, the Gentiles, that the majority of the church would be taken in order to receive the Kingdom of the Heavens which had been rejected by Israel - Ac 15:14 *"Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name.*

a). Now although there may be many oysters in the sea, naturally occurring pearls in those oysters are rare, found perhaps in every one of 10,000. A perfectly spherical pearl is extremely rare making it prized above all. - Mt 7:14 *"Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.*

Mt 22:14 *"For many are called, but few are [called out of the called] chosen."*

b). In the natural the pearl's shape and size are determined by such variables as temperature and the chemistry of the water as well as the health of the mollusk.

c). And the formation of the pearl begins, not with a grain of sand, but with a trapped particle of food.

d). The pearl's growth is an ongoing process and is only revealed through the death of the oyster.

e). The luster that a pearl possesses results from the reflection of light not only from the surface, but also from the concentric inner layers. It literally shines from the inside out.

f). And you might be encouraged to know that natural pearls have minor imperfections and irregularities. But remain of great price to the one who purchases them.

g). Now although this information is entirely anecdotal rather than scriptural we do see a scriptural process that would parallel our natural picture of the formation of the pearl.

6). To begin at the beginning – In Genesis Chapter 1 God creates Man in His own image and likeness, in three parts, for the specific purpose of rulership over the newly restored earth in the place of Satan - Ge 1:26 ¶ *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion*

a). However, in order to fulfill God's purpose for His creation the man needed a helper, 'comparable' to him to help him in the process of dominion. Both would rule but would have distinctly different roles and within God's economy neither could rule apart from the other - Ge 2:18 ¶ *And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."*

b). Ge 2:21 ¶ *And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. 22 Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. 23 And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." 24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.*

c). And here God set in place a Divinely perfect law for the governance of the earth – The rulership of the earth can only be by a man and a woman in a marriage relationship. This is unalterable, unchangeable and must be fulfilled. It is of course God's idea and therefore we have nothing to say about it.

d). Now we know that Adam and the Woman did not at this time fulfill God's purpose for them, because of sin, resulting in the forfeiture of the inheritance – the earth and all that was in it.

e). As a result of their sin they experienced spiritual death, their souls became corrupted and their physical bodies began to decay.

f). However, this is of course not the end of the story - Ro 5:14 *Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.*

7). Just as we see Adam taking on his wife's sin in the hope of his wife's redemption, so we find Christ doing exactly the same for us - 2Co 5:21 *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

a). Christ became sin for us in the certainty of purchasing eternal redemption for all who would believe on Him and then beyond eternal redemption making provision for the salvation of the soul for those who would be the Bride, those who would come from within this larger group of the eternally redeemed, those who He would call to Himself - Song 4:7 *You are all fair, my love, And there is no spot in you.*

Re 3:20 *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.*

b). Jesus' final words on the cross speak of finality and bring to completion that which had been set in place from the foundation of the world - Joh 19:30 *So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*

c). Re 13:8b.....*the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

d). 1Pe 1:20 *He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you*

e). Heb 9:26b.....*but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.*

8). That which had been set in place before the foundation of the world was now present in its completed state within the boundaries of time. The Second Man the Last Adam had through His finished work made possible the redemption of that lost in the Garden. And subsequent to His finished work He made possible a present work with a future completion, the salvation of the soul. That very thing that characterizes those who are pictured in the Pearl.

a). As a result of His sacrifice on the cross eternal separation from God, spiritual death, because of sin would be done away with for all who would believe

on Him - Ac 16:31 *So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."*

b). Eph 2:1 ¶ *And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,*

c). This is salvation by grace through faith, the free gift of eternal life, the salvation of the spirit.

d). And as a result of Christ's finished work at Calvary, as we have previously seen, He is the One who has proven worthy to open the scroll and redeem the inheritance - Re 5:4 *So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. 5 But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals." 6 ¶ And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7 Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.*

9). From a human perspective there is of course a significant amount of time that elapses between Christ's finished work on the cross and the events of Revelation Chapter 5 and this is because there are events that must take place between these two points in time - 2Pe 3:9 ¶ *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

a). That which was typified in Adam, must be fulfilled in Christ – that which God had set in place at the beginning must be completed at the end.

b). In God's perfect plan for rulership, after the pattern He had set in Genesis which we saw earlier, the One found worthy, within God's economy, cannot rule without a wife at His side. The way that God established it in the beginning cannot be changed.

c). And at the point of the completed work, at the cross of Calvary, there was no Bride for the Son, just the body of the last Adam in a deep sleep. Those who could attain to the position of Christ's Bride could only be brought forth after Christ's death and resurrection. And just as in Genesis where God built a wife for Adam from part of Adam's body, so it would have to be with Christ and His Bride.

d). Joh 19:34 *But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.*

e). The blood that comes from Christ's side here is not the blood of eternal salvation, that comes from the blood which was shed at His death. This blood, the blood from His side, comes after His death, after He has been put into a deep sleep and points to the present High Priestly ministry of Christ on behalf of the eternally saved, a ministry He carries out in the Heavenly Tabernacle where His blood is

placed upon the Mercy Seat for the sin of the saved. This present work as our High Priest deals with the second part of Man's being, that which was not eternally redeemed though faith in Christ – the salvation of the soul. In the same way, it is the word of God symbolized in the water that comes from His side that makes our sin known to us and transforms us by the renewing of our minds, making the salvation of the soul possible. It is a present work with a future completion.

f). Eph 5:25 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*

g). Jas 1:21 *Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

h). 1Jo 1:7 *But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 ¶ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

i). This High Priestly ministry is needed because those who would be pearls have imperfections as we still have a sin nature. And our propensity to sin must be dealt with if we are ever to ascend the Throne with Christ.

j). Heb 4:15 *For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

k). Le 17:11 *'For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.'*

10). The finished work of Christ on the cross creates 'the one new man', the body of Christ comprised of all those who embrace the free gift of eternal life and then the subsequent opening of His side makes possible the building of the Bride, those who will be taken from that Body as a result of their faithful obedience, those who properly engage with the blood and the water, beyond the point of their eternal redemption – this is the process that purchases the pearl of great price. A process that is continuous for 2 days, for 2000 years in the lives of every Christian within that period of time who would have ears to hear.

a). It is a process that is also seen in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit to the church, that of searching out a Bride for God's Son – typified for us in Abraham's oldest servant's search for a bride for Isaac in Genesis Chapter 24 – Ge 24:4 *"but you shall go to my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son Isaac.....8 "And if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be released from this oath;*

b). There is as we know a personal choice to be made to follow where the Holy Spirit is leading. It is our choice as we see in v8. And being not willing to follow we would see in Orpah who turns back and in - Lu 9:62 *But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."*

c). And this present search for the Bride has everything to do with those who would draw deeply from the well of water, those who would be built on the rock of the revelation that He is 'the Christ, the Son of the living God'. This would be the particle of food that we need to have trapped within us if we are ever to turn into a pearl.

d). These would be those Christians who would respond like Ruth – Ru 1:16 *But Ruth said: "Entreat me not to leave you, Or to turn back from following after you; For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God."*

e). It was on the 6th Day that Adam was created and the Woman was built to rule together and it will be at the end of the 6th Day from Adam, at the end of 6000 years that the Woman will be taken from the Body of Christ and the last Adam and His wife will ascend the throne together and God's stated purpose from the beginning of time will be completed.

11) The Pearl is of great price because it is the blood of God in the person of His son that has made the purchase of the Pearl possible - 1Pe 1:18 *knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*

a). 1Co 6:20 *For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*

b). The Pearl is of great price because she will have led a life of faithful obedience to the word of Christ

c). She will have made the journey from the land of her birth to the land of her calling, to receive her inheritance.

d). She will have worked from morning to night in the field and produced a crop – some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

e). She will have prepared herself by washing herself, anointing herself and will have put on her best garment.

f). She will have overcome the world, the flesh and the devil.

g). She will have run the race according to the rules.

h). She will have looked from this world unto Jesus.

i). She will have patiently endured trial and tribulation and persecution.

j). She will have suffered with Christ so as to be a coheir with Christ.

k). She will have laid down her life now so that she will find it then.

l). Her works will have been tested by fire at the Judgment Seat and will have remained.

m). She will have achieved the goal of her faith – the salvation of her soul – that which scripture calls, ‘so great a salvation’ – that which angels desire to look into.

12). For 2000 years God has been producing this pearl in the lives of individual Christians who have embraced the process and at the conclusion of the 7 years of the Tribulation when the redemption of the inheritance is complete, not only will the field have been purchased containing the treasure, but the Pearl purchased by the blood of God, in the antitype of Ruth and Boaz, will become the wife of the Lamb and will receive the inheritance that has been redeemed.

a). He gave all He had at His first coming to make possible the purchase the Pearl at a time yet future because - Eph 1:4 *just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,*

b). Isa 46:10 *Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'*

c). Behold then the lustrous Pearl of Great price - Da 12:3 *Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.*

d). Pr 4:18 *But the path of the just is like the shining sun, That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.*

e). Mt 13:43 *"Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"*