

Episode #812 Matthew 13 Part 6-Treasure, Pearls, and Nets

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being “in Israel,” in contrast to believers today who are “in Christ.”

II. In Matthew 13, the Lord explained the Parable of the Tares of the Field to his disciples privately in the house. Now, He is going to tell these devoted learners of His more parables revealing truths regarding the government of the heavens.

III. The Parable of the Treasure in the Field. Matthew 13:44.

- A. “Again” marks out these last parables told privately to the disciples (Bullinger).
- B. Another parable of heaven’s government. Keep in mind the purpose of the parables. In one parable the kingdom of the heavens is compared to a grain of mustard seed, something very cheap; while in another it is compared to a pearl of great price. We can only understand when we realize each parable deals with a different aspect of the kingdom: its subjects, its rapid growth, its ability to permeate and leaven (change) everything it touches, and its great value when found in the world.
- C. This is not speaking of Israel, or the gospel, or Christ, for He is not the treasure hid in the field. Christ is not purchased; the gift of God is eternal life. This likeness is of the great value of the kingdom of God, and faithful men will interpret it accordingly.
- D. When the kingdom of God comes, men will have to discover the true value it has, and many will, and be willing to give up their former, governmental ideas. The staunch communist, capitalist, socialist, monarchist, etc., will not be able to hold on to their pet theories. Government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall perish from the earth. We will have government of God, by God, and for God. Men prefer governments they can resist and laws they can disobey. There will be no freedom of speech or of worship. Such features make this kingdom undesirable to many. When some pray, “Thy kingdom come,” they may not like it when it comes! Yet when men discover the true nature of God’s government, and realize those aspects which seem most severe are for man’s highest good and God’s glory, then nothing will hold them back from becoming its willing subjects. What will motivate Israel to give up home, country, and wealth to head back to the land of Israel? They will see the true value of what God is offering them, and they will be willing to sell everything have to get it.
- E. He buys the field only because that is the only way to get the treasure hidden in it. It does not due to force and stretch the illustration beyond this.

IV. The Parable of the Expensive Pearl. Matthew 13:45-46.

- A. Verse 45. Pearls are the Greek *margarites*, the name and the drink coming from this.
- B. Verse 46. Many apply this phrase to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is indeed a pearl of incomparable value, but that is not what this parable is about, nor is the gospel. The pearl stands for heaven’s government, or else it is not a likeness of the kingdom of the heavens but of something else. Intellectual honesty demands that we recognize this.
- C. Good men have always sought for the best government, one seeking the good, health, and prosperity of its subjects. The debate as to which form is best has gone on, and endless variations have been tried to solve all mankind’s problems. Honest observers realize none of these forms are perfect and will solve every difficulty. Those who honestly seek the best form of government will find it at the advent of heaven’s government. They will sell their former ideas for this one, priceless government.

V. The Parable of the Dragnet in the Sea. Matthew 13:47-50.

- A. Verse 47. Speaks of a large fishing net or a dragnet. We must avoid extremes in interpreting this parable. The central figure is a dragnet, a likeness of heaven's government. This dragnet has never yet been cast into the sea. In the Acts period, the gospel was to the Jew only from Acts 1-10 and to the Gentile first from Acts 11-28. The kingdom has never acted like a dragnet to draw all men into it. When it does, it will gather of every kind, good and bad, reaching out and embracing all of mankind. It will not ask any permission. It will not accept any repudiation. It is not just for Jews!
- B. Verse 48. This is once the initial casting is over and all have been drawn into the kingdom. The first gathering was random, but this gathering is purposeful. When that net is cast into the sea, some men will be eliminated at once: Ezekiel 20:38, Matthew 3:10. These are the openly rebellious. Yet many will come under God's government, pledge allegiance to it, and become subjects of it, but will never be assimilated by it. These will need to be removed later by careful inspection at leisure by God's agents. It requires sitting down and going through fish by fish.
- C. Verse 49. This is not the interpretation of the parable, but a second sorting of a similar kind. The dragnet takes place as the kingdom is first cast into the world. The consummation of the eon is at the end of the kingdom as it moves into the Parousia and the millennium. When the eon of God's government comes to its conclusion, then the messengers will come forth and sever the wicked from the just. Many who come into the kingdom by birth will not incorporate the kingdom into their hearts. They will become followers of Satan in the end. They maintain their place in the kingdom by the restraining influences that are put in place by God. When these restraints are removed and they are given the opportunity, they will commit open rebellion, proving themselves sons of Satan. That rebellion will be short-lived. The angels will come and sever the wicked from the just, just as in Matthew 13:41. This parable demonstrates that the kingdom of heaven precedes the second coming of Christ.
- D. Verse 50. One aspect of a furnace of fire is that it consumes or melts everything that comes into it. "Wailing" is often translated "weeping." The hostile crowd gnashed their teeth at Stephen. This can indicate utter repudiation of God's truth.

VI. Conclusion: The kingdom of the heavens will be a government unlike any other. Though some have been staunch adherents to other forms of government, when they come to discover this last, greatest form, they will be willing to give anything, leaving all their former ideas behind, in order to become a part of it. The kingdom will take in all kinds of individuals, good and bad, as it takes control of the world, but then it will act to weed these out and leave only the good behind. Do you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, so that you can be sure that you will be a part of God's future, glorious plans for His kingdom?