

The Parables of Jesus

- The Hidden Treasure
- The Pearl of Great Price
- The Great Net

(Matthew 13:44-50)

The parables of "The Hidden Treasure," "The Pearl of Great Price" and "The Parable of the Great Net" are found only in the Gospel of Matthew. They are very much linked with each other. That is why we have decided to review these parables together in our discussion. They were given by Jesus towards the end of His first year of public ministry. He and His disciples

were on the northwestern shores of the Sea of Galilee near the city of Capernaum. In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, we are given different aspects of this time of teaching by Jesus. Many parables are found in each of the Synoptic Gospel accounts while some are only found in just one Gospel account.

In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, Jesus had been teaching to the multitudes. Later on that day Jesus went into a house. He was alone with His disciples. He was asked to explain to them the meaning of the parables He had just spoken that day to the multitudes. In Matthew's Gospel we read that the disciples had asked Jesus to explain the "Parable of the Wheat and the Tares," which He did. (Matthew 13:36) Jesus then begins a series of parables concerning what the Kingdom of God upon this earth is to be "liken" to.

In the Gospel of Matthew, the first three parables He brings forth are the "Parable of the Hidden Treasure," "Parable of the Pearl of Great Price" and the "Parable of the Great Net." With these parables, Jesus now enters into a new series of lessons for the twelve to grasp concerning the Kingdom of God on the earth. What He was about to teach was just for them to hear, for the time being. He was "turning a page in their discipleship lesson plan" and beginning a new lesson. This lesson would be teaching them something that may seem very strange for them. It was time for them to begin to "expand the chords of their tents." Let's join in with the disciples in this time of teaching with Jesus.

The Parable of the Hidden Treasure - Matthew 13:44 - *"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."*

As we begin our discussion of the "Parable of the Hidden Treasure," let us review the "characters" involved in this parable.

1. The "field" - When Jesus uses this term, He is always referring to the land of Israel and in a broader sense, the world and all of its inhabitants.
2. The "man" - As in all His parables and analogies, Jesus uses this term to refer to the Son of Man, Jesus himself.
3. The "treasure" - This is referring to something very precious to "the man's" heart. It is figuratively referring to the Jewish people who God has always referred to as His "peculiar treasure."
 - Psalms 135:4 - *"For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure."* Other scriptures referring to this are Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 14:2; Deuteronomy 26:18; Ecclesiastes 2:8.
4. There is another "unseen" character in this parable - the owner of the field before it was purchased. We shall discuss this "character" a little later.

So what was Jesus teaching to His disciples through this parable? The first thing we need to realize is that the "field," as we discussed previously, represents the land of Israel, as well as the whole earth. It was "owned" at that time by someone other than "the man" in this story. The "man" in the parable was on the land but He did not "own" it at the time. The "man" found something very precious. He did not want it to be stolen. Not wanting it to be stolen away from him, the "man" went and "hid" the treasure.

It is important to note that the Greek word translated to the word "hid" (*kryptō*) used in this parable should not be confused with the Greek word used for "hid" (*egkryptō*) in the "Parable of the Hidden Leaven." They are two very different words but they are both translated into English as "hid." In this parable, the Greek word translated "hid" is the word "*kryptō*" which means "*to conceal, to escape from being noticed.*" It was more of a word used to infer protection rather than deception as the word used in the "Parable of the Hidden Leaven" when the woman "hid" or sneaked the leaven into the three measures of meal.

The "man" in our parable found something very precious. Before the man could legally take possession of the treasure as his own, he needed to purchase the land that the treasure was on. Otherwise he would be illegally "stealing" the treasure. As we previously mentioned the "man" is referring to Jesus. Jesus came to earth and found something very precious to His heart - He "found" the Jewish people whose hearts were open to Him. They were Jewish people who believed in the promises of God concerning Messiah. They were Jewish people who would hear Him, follow Him and would put their faith and trust that He was their Messiah.

This "Man" (Jesus, the Son of Man) "hid them" or in other words protected them from being stolen and taken forever by the "owner" of the "field." The "owner" of the field is the "unseen" and "unspoken" character in our parable. The "owner" of the field represents the "prince of darkness", the "god of this world" (2Corinthians 4:4). The earth became his domain because of Adam and Eve's "fall" back in the Garden.

This parable is directly speaking of Jesus who loves His "precious treasures," the Jewish people. Jesus was telling His disciples that He would "pay the price" with His blood and "purchase the field" to become the legal owner, the heir of all things. Through Jesus' death, burial and resurrection, He paid the price and purchased man's redemption. The debt that was owed because of sin would be paid in full. Jesus took the "keys" of authority and "ownership" over this earth and its people that the devil had stolen through the fall of Adam and Eve.

After Jesus had paid the price, He would come and reveal Himself as the legal "owner" of this world as the King of kings and Lord of lords. Upon His return, He shall rule and reign over this "field" that was purchased by His own blood. He will also reveal, for all to see, who His beloved "treasured" ones are that He paid the ultimate price for - the Jewish people that He loves so much and desires for them to see Him for who He is and believe and receive Him as their Messiah.

- Titus 2:14 – *“Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a **peculiar people**, zealous of good works.”*
- 1Peter 2:9 – *“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a **peculiar people**; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:”*
- 1Peter 1:18,19 - *“Forasmuch as you know that you were not **redeemed with** corruptible things, as silver and gold...But with **the precious blood of Christ**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”*
- 1 Corinthians 6:20 – *“For ye are **bought with a price**: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.”*
- 1 Corinthians 7:23 – *“Ye are **bought with a price**; be not ye the servants of men.”*

The Parable of "The Pearl of Great Price" - Matthew 13:45,46 - *"Again, the kingdom of heaven is 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."*

As we begin our discussion of the "Parable of the Pearl of Great Price", let us also review the "characters" involved in this parable.

1. Obviously, the "merchant man" represents the Son of Man, Jesus.
 - The term "merchant" man is used here. It refers to a person who journeys and searches "high and low," on "land or by sea" to find something very specific. He goes out of His way to find it.
 - Notice He is "seeking..." after the "goodly pearls."
 - Luke 19:10 - *"For the Son of Man is come to **seek** and to save that which was lost."*
2. The "goodly pearls" that the "merchant man" is seeking for represents those Gentiles that are lost but desire to want and know truth.
 - They are Gentiles that may not be "in the truth" at the time but are willing to change their heart once that "Truth" is revealed and shown to them.
 - The word "goodly" used here comes from the Greek word, "*kalos*," which means "good, excellent in its nature and characteristics, and therefore well adapted to its ends; beautiful by reason of purity of heart and life."
 - The Gentiles were just as valuable to the heart of God as the Jewish people were.
3. The "merchant man" finds "one pearl" and goes and sells all that He has to purchase just that "one."

So what was Jesus teaching His disciples? Jesus was teaching His disciples that just as He paid the price for the Jewish people (the precious treasure), He would be doing the same for any Gentile who would hear and believe in Him. He was teaching them that the Gentiles are also very precious and valuable to Him. We are all His creation, created in His image and likeness. His heart for each one, Jew and Gentile, is a heart that is willing to pay the "highest price" for even just "one."

Here again, we see that the pearl was "owned" by someone else. It had to be purchased by the "merchant" before it could become his. As in the parable of the "Hidden Treasure," the unmentioned, but implied "owner" of the "pearl," represents the "prince of darkness", the "god of this world" (2Corinthians 4:4).

Jesus would "pay the price" and purchase that "pearl" that was worth so very much to Him. He thought so much of them that He was willing to purchase and redeem with His blood any Gentile who would believe on Him. (1Peter 1:18-19) They would become a part of the Father's "Household of faith." This aspect of the Kingdom of God would be very different for the disciples to truly grasp. The Gentiles were always considered enemies of the Jewish people, as well as to God. To now hear that the Kingdom of God would be open to them would be very difficult for any Jew to comprehend. However, this was the heart of the Father and Jesus.

Jesus was breaking "tradition." He was breaking the anti-Gentile views of the Jewish people and leadership of that day. This also goes for all believers today. There should be absolutely nothing within any believer of anti-Semitism, discrimination or prejudice towards any person in any way or for any reason. God is not a respecter of persons and neither should His people. (Acts 10:34) Every single person is precious to the heart of the Lord. Jesus paid the price for every person's sin. He paid the price, by His blood for all to have the opportunity to come and be restored back into relationship with the Father.

The beautiful aspect of these two parables of the "Hidden Treasure" and the "Pearl of Great Price" is that Jesus was saying that He would die and be that final sacrifice for **both** the Jewish people and the Gentiles. Together, Jewish believers and the Gentile believers now become **new creations** in Christ. (2Corinthians 5:17) As believers we now lose our own fleshly identity. Believers are no longer looked upon as a Jew or a Gentile, male or female but rather all believers are now called the "One New Man in Christ." (Ephesians 2:15; Galatians 3:28)

After giving the parables of the "Hidden Treasure" and the "Pearl of Great Price," Jesus wraps up this time of teaching with His disciples with this last parable – "The Parable of the Great Net."

The "Parable of the Great Net" - Matthew 13:47-50 - "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

The disciples were to represent Jesus and His heart of love towards all people as they would go forth to spread the Gospel to the world. They were to be the ones who would bring the "revealed Truth" of God's Word and everything that was "hidden" within God's Word for a time such as this. The "revealed and manifested Truth" of God's Word is found in Jesus. It is Jesus who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. He was now to be revealed to all the earth.

The disciples would be the one to express to the world the Father's heart towards all of His creation - all of Mankind - Jew and Gentile, male and female. They were to express His passionate desire to restore relationship between Himself with His most precious of all His creation. The Father and Jesus desire **all** to be restored back into "oneness" with Him. (2Peter 3:9) Unfortunately, as this parable expresses, some will hear and receive the message of the Gospel and some will not.

This concluding parable in this time of teaching was a summation of the thoughts expressed in the previous two parables that Jesus had just given to His disciples. In this parable, Jesus actually gives the explanation to His disciples.

The parable of "The Great Net" is about the end of the age - the end of time. All people, from Adam and throughout the ages will come before the "Great White Throne" judgment of God, the Father. All nations, Jew and Gentile, will be brought before Him. The angels will come and separate the "just" - those that have been justified through the blood of the Lamb of God and accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior - and the "unjust" - those who have not believed but have rejected Jesus.

All the parables Jesus gave to the multitudes at this time of teaching by the shores of Galilee as well as privately to his twelve disciples were given to express how much God "so loved the world," Jew **and** Gentile, that He sent Jesus to bring salvation and redemption to all people. (John 3:16)

As with the parables of the "Sower and the Four Soils" and the "Good Seed Planted," some will receive it and grow to bring forth much fruit and some will not. As with the parables of "The Wheat and the Tares," "The Mustard Seed" and "The Hidden Leaven," Jesus taught that the enemy will come and try to do all that he can to pervert God's truth, His Word and bring deception into the Church. The enemy will try to corrupt those within the Body of Christ and try to draw them away from a true, pure relationship of "oneness" with the Father and His Son, Jesus.

In the parables of the "Hidden Treasure," the "Pearl of Great Price," and the "Great Net" Jesus taught the twelve disciples, as well as His disciples today, that He came to bring salvation to the whole world - Jew and Gentile. As his ambassadors and representatives, they would now be sent to go and bring the full truth of God's Word, as well as the Good News of salvation, redemption and restored relationship back to God, through His Son, Jesus.

This must have been very difficult for the disciples to truly grasp. It went way beyond their "tradition," especially when it came to the Gentiles. As we know, they really did not get this until the Holy Spirit was given to them. Even then God had to "bypass" their resistance to this fact until Peter and the rest of them finally understood.

Jesus, in this setting presented the whole purpose of His ministry on earth. Therefore, the ministry of the His disciples, both at that time and of anyone today who calls themselves a disciple of Jesus, is to bring that same message. The purpose being that when that "great net" is drawn at the consummation of the ages there will be many that will be placed "into the boat," into God's "Household of Faith." Unfortunately, some will reject and refuse to hear and choose not to receive this "Good News." Those, unfortunately, will be separated unto the fires of torment and eternal damnation.

Revelation 20:11-15 - "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

I pray that we all finally grasp this truth that "God so loved the world..." That includes every single person that has, is and will be walking this earth until that final day. I pray that we truly grasp and walk in the understanding that God is no respecter of persons and neither should we in presenting the Good News of salvation to everyone and anyone whom the Lord brings our way.

Let those who have ears to hear... let them hear!!!