

# In the Fulness of Time – Part 95

by Dr. Thomas O. Figart

## **The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price. Matthew 13:45-46**

13:45-46 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant man, seeking fine pearls, Who, when he hath found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.”

With all that has been said of the previous parable, it only remains to identify more specifically the distinctions of this parable. First, the merchant man seeking fine pearls is Christ, the Son of Man Who has “*come to seek and to save that which was lost*” (Luke 19:10). As in the previous parable, He “*sold all that he had*” to purchase the pearl.

Second, the “*pearl of great price*” represents all the saved of all the ages, since He gave Himself, “*not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world*” (1 John 2:2). Third, the later revelation concerning the “*mysteries*” of the Church and of Israel’s blindness would be part of *this* parable also. The pearl, then, emphasizes that the salvation provided for and intended for the whole world, is efficient and effective only to those who believe in Christ and accept His salvation. Fourth, this interpretation of these two supplementary parables avoids the contradiction of buying free salvation; it avoids the error of going back to the Old Testament to compare the treasure with God’s treasure, Israel (Exodus 19:5), since that would not be a mystery; and it avoids making the Church exclusively the pearl, which would not account for any who were saved before Pentecost or after the Rapture of the Church. At the same time, this interpretation preserves the mystery aspects of both parables and provides conformity and continuity of thought with the other parables in the series.

## **The Parable of the Dragnet. Matthew 13:47-50**

13:47-50 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like 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 age; the angels shall come forth, and separate the wicked from among the righteous, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

In order to picture this parable in the proper manner, the “*net*” must be defined. It is a *sagene*, a very large dragnet, fastened between two boats, which covered a

considerable area, and required a team of fishermen to drag it to shore when it was full. It would trap “*of every kind*” including good and bad fish, and any other sea creatures in its path.

Several commentators prefer to interpret this parable as being restricted to the “*end of the age*” (verse 49); however, there is evidence of a time period, since they only drew it to shore “*when it was full*” (verse 48). This would correspond with the time period required for the sowing and growing of the wheat and tares in the second parable, and with the very fact of the mixture of tares with the wheat (just as good and bad fish were gathered into the net until it was full).

Jesus interprets the separation of the bad fish from the good fish at the end of the age, just like the angels did in the second parable. There is an emphasis in this parable concerning what will happen to the wicked; verse 50 is identical with verse 42. Thus, the “*mystery*” in this seventh parable is the same as in the second; that is, the Age of the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven involves a time-frame during which there will be wicked and righteous together in the kingdom of heaven until the time when the angels come and separate the wicked from the righteous. The wicked are cast into “*the furnace of fire,*” and the righteous will “*shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father*” (verse 41).

### **Conclusion of His Message to the Disciples. Matthew 13:51-52.**

“Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord. Then said he unto them, therefore every scribe who is instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a man that is an householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.”

When Jesus asked His disciples whether they understood “all these things” they replied, “Yea, Lord.” Further, in Mark 4:33-34: “And with many such parables spoke he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it. But without a parable spoke he not unto them; and when they were alone, he expounded all things unto his disciples.” Up to this point, therefore, they understood Jesus’ teaching. He could then exhort them to teach others, as “scribes” instructed in the doctrine of the “kingdom of heaven.” Some things will be “new” as “mysteries” newly revealed to them, and other things will be “old” referring to Old Testament prophecies concerning Messiah. This by no means infers that the disciples had nothing more to learn. As noted before, they would be perplexed when He repeatedly predicted His death. They had much to learn from the future revelation He would impart to them before His death, such as the fact of the future Church in Matthew 16:18. Even after His resurrection they asked if He was about to restore the kingdom to Israel (Acts 1:6), and in Acts 10:15 and Ephesians 3, God revealed just how the Gentiles would relate to the Jews in that Body of Christ, the Church. All the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven would eventually be revealed to them (as listed in the discussion of the parable of the wheat and tares), so that their understanding would be expanded, “***in the fulness of time.***”

2BPFigart0807 Fulness Part 95