

# Matthew 13 – The Parables of the Kingdom

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## Parable 4: The Leaven in the Meal (v33) – The Corruption of the Kingdom

Leaven consistently speaks of that which is evil & sinful (Matt 16v6, Luke 12v1, 1<sup>st</sup> Cor 5v8).

It has a pervasive property, fermenting to produce sourness detrimental to the whole.

Leaven is here symbolic of evil doctrine & false teaching that has come in to corrupt the sphere of Christian profession, e.g. Gal 5v9 *“A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump”*.

The woman hides the leaven in *“three measures of meal”* (see also Gen 18v6); Abraham knew he was entertaining deity, a divine Person; 3 is the number of the Godhead.

Meal is used to represent the Person of the Lord Jesus, e.g. the fine flour of the meal offering (Lev 2).

So the leaven corrupting the meal would particularly emphasise evil doctrine that corrupts the pure doctrine of Christ & denies fundamental truths regarding the Person of God’s Son.

There is much satanic activity, working surreptitiously, a secret working of evil, to corrupt the kingdom of God, *“the mystery of iniquity doth already work”* (2 Thess 2v7).

We must carefully preserve doctrinal rectitude, in relation to our Lord Jesus and the true gospel of God.

**NB. Parables 5-7, in the privacy of the house, depict the character of the genuine Kingdom in reality, as seen by God, who will purify the Kingdom and secure everything for His own glory, according to His own eternal purpose.**

## Parable 5: The Treasure in the Field (v44) – The Worth of the Kingdom

Applying a consistency in interpretation, the *“field”* would still apply to the world.

The *“treasure”* indicates a thing of appreciated value or worth in the sight of God.

In OT scripture, God speaks of the nation of Israel as His *“peculiar treasure”* (Ex 19v5, Ps 135v4, Mal 3v17).

When the Lord Jesus came into the world, He found that nation of Israel to be nationally lost & hidden, in bondage & subjection to Gentile nations. Because the nation rejected their Messiah, He left it where He had found it, hidden in the field of this world, under Gentile domination & dispersed; Luke 21v24 *“and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled”*.

But the Lord Jesus went to Calvary, with a desire to secure Israel’s ultimate deliverance & salvation, and thus secure the treasure for God and ultimately to share in all the joy of the restored nation; *“But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new (i.e. in a new way) with you in My Father’s kingdom”* (Matt 26v29).

At Calvary, the Lord Jesus sold all He had, *“He became poor”* (2 Cor 8v9), to purchase this whole field of the world; He would *“taste death for every man (i.e. every thing)”* (Heb 2v9).

In submitting to that death, He temporarily renounced all His rights; His rights as Son of David to Israel’s throne & His rights as Son of man to a position of universal glory, i.e. He sold all He had.

This was the great sacrifice the Lord Jesus made in order to secure the *“treasure”*, which ultimately will be displayed in glory in this world, when the nation of Israel will be restored as the head of the nations.

A new day of displayed governmental glory will dawn for Israel as a nation (read Isaiah 60).

In that millennial day, the glory of the secured treasure of Israel will be fully displayed in this world; Jerusalem, the city of the great King will be *“Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth”* (Ps 48v2).

## **Parable 6: The Pearl of Great Price (v45-46) – The Beauty of the Kingdom**

There is in the Kingdom something special to the Lord, of particular & unique beauty to Him. The Lord is going to secure His Bride the Church, the “*one pearl of great price*”.

It is “*a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls*”; this was the great motivation & business of the Lord Jesus in His pathway of service & sacrifice in this world, this was what He had in prospect for the coming age, namely “*I will build My Church ...*” (Matt 16v18), see also John 10v16.

This “*one pearl of great price*” emphasises the unique singular oneness of the Church in divine estimation; the “*one flock*” (John 10), the “*one body*” (1<sup>st</sup> Cor 12 & Eph 4), the “*one new man*” (Eph 2).

But it required the payment of a “*great price*”, the merchant man “*sold all that he had, and bought it*”; at Calvary, our Saviour gave His all, “*Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it*” (Eph 5v25).

The Church as depicted by a pearl:

- A pearl cannot be divided; so the Church will never be divided for all eternity.
- A pearl is the product of injury & suffering within a living organism; so the Church is the product of the great wounding & suffering of our Saviour at Calvary.
- A pearl is taken out of the sea; so the Church is being formed by men & women taken out of the nations of this world, “*to take out of them a people for His Name*” (Acts 15v14).
- A pearl is steadily enlarged day upon day, layer upon layer; so the Church is steadily being added to daily, “*the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved*” (Acts 2v47), until one day it will be complete in divine purpose, when Christ will present to Himself that beautiful complete pearl (Eph 5v27).

The object of greatest beauty in the Kingdom to the Lord Jesus is His Church; His “*one pearl of great price*” will be eternally precious to the heart of Christ.

The Church as the Bride of Christ will be eternally distinct & closer to the Lord Jesus than any other.

## **Parable 7: The Net Cast in the Sea (v47-50) – The Final Judgment of the Kingdom**

After the rapture of the Church, there will be the 7 years of the Tribulation period, prior to the Lord’s return again to this earth, the latter 3.5 years being “*great tribulation*” (Matt 24v21).

But as God meets out His measured judgment upon the world that has rejected His Son, He will still be moving in infinite mercy to further evangelize the Gentiles, and to save a great innumerable company; Rev 7v14 “*These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb*”.

The Lord’s commission of Matt 10, to preach the gospel of the Kingdom, will resume again and there will be a great catch of Tribulation saints who turn to God.

In the parable of the wheat & tares, angelic reapers at the time of final harvest separate the wheat from the tares; here angelic fishers separate the good from the bad, the just from the wicked, the saved from the lost.

Other parables in Matthew 24-25 depict further this final judgment of the Kingdom at the time of the Lord’s return to this earth prior to the establishing of His millennial reign.

The angels “*cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth*”, as the dread finality of eternal separation from the Creator God is realised.

## **A Final Parable (v51-52) – Appreciation of the Kingdom**

These parables are to be regarded as our “*treasure*”, giving us instruction for our day.

They declare “*things new*” in divine revelation, “*and old*” in divine purpose (see v35).