

**The Parable of the Wedding Feast  
Matt 22:1-14**

**Scripture Ref:**

1. Update – pray and fast - Haiti – Safe Harbor
2. Before Christmas we started a three part series of parables that Jesus gave to the Pharisee's
  - a. The parable of the two sons – an illustration of the nation of Israel rejecting the Father
    - i. Recall the one son that outright defied the father, but eventually repented and came around
    - ii. Vs the other son that said “I will obey”, but went about his own business. This son was actually more rebellious than the first!
  - b. The parable of the wicked vinedresser – an illustration of the nation of Israel rejecting the Son
    - i. An illustration of how Israel had rejected the prophets, and then rejected God's own Son – contained in the parable was Jesus prophesying His own death at their hands.
3. This last parable (well, not really the last, but the last in this mini-series!) deals with something even more troubling... the nation of Israel's rejection of the Holy Spirit. (read entire parable)

**The Peoples Response**

22:1 And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: 2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, 3 and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. 4 Again, he sent out other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.'" 5 But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. 6 And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them.

4. The first part of this parable puts everything into context...
  - a. It is interesting that we are told that the Father is preparing a marriage for his Son – who was *killed* in the last parable...
  - b. So it could be that this parable is set after Jesus death and resurrection,
  - c. So in spite of what the people did to His Son, God is still extending an invitation to the Jewish people for salvation.
5. Why do we know this? Because the account tells us that the gospel went to the “Jew first

**Matt 15:24**

*"I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."*

6. But even after Jesus death/burial/resurrection we see in the account of Acts the gospel message going out to the Jewish people first...
  - a. Acts 2 Peter preaches to the "Men of Israel", with the result that 3000 Israelites came to the faith that day.
  - b. In Acts 3 Peter preached to the Jews right on the Portico of the temple
7. But then in Acts 4 we see the rejection beginning...
  - a. Peter and John were arrested, the Jewish religious leaders forbid them from even saying the name of Jesus.
  - b. In Acts 5 the Apostles were arrested again and put on trial before the Sanhedrin
  - c. In Acts 6-7 Stephen (one of the first deacons!) was brought before the council, he preached an incredible sermon to them detailing Israel's rejection of God and His Son Jesus Christ,
  - d. and he was subsequently stoned to death, with none other than Saul, the future Apostle Paul, overseeing the event.
8. Finally in Acts 9, Saul, on his way to arrest and persecute those in the church, is called by the Lord to be missionary to the Gentiles. (*gentile being anyone NOT a Jew*)
  - a. Then in Acts 13 Paul preached...

**Acts 13:46-47**

*..., "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us:*

*'I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, That you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.'"*

**(later Paul wrote)**

**Rom 1:16**

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

9. But what is more important to look at than the historical context is the response of the people in the parable:
  - a. Some are ambivalent to the invitation, and pay no mind
  - b. Some are focused on their "business", and have no time for the wedding.
  - c. Some are openly hostile, seized his servants, treating them spitefully, and even killing them.

10. Now we know the parable is directed at Israel, but we also see the same parallel today, in the way people respond to the gospel message.
- a. Some people you talk to are ambivalent to God or spiritual things in general.
    - i. This might be the atheist or the agnostic (definition of agnostic: Don't know and don't care)
    - ii. Those that see God as the creation of man, something to "help weaker people glean some meaning from life."
    - iii. They're not hostile, they just don't care.
  - b. Then there are those who believe in God, in a general sort of way.
    - i. If you ask them "do you believe God is real, they'll and "sure"... but they really don't want to give any part of their lives to discovering God, or building a relationship with Him.
    - ii. They have places to go, people to see, they will say "I just don't have time",
    - iii. but what they are really saying is *"its not important enough to me to take the time"*
  - c. The last group are those who are openly hostile to God,
    - i. Whether it be those who want to kill Christians outright (as in some Muslim countries),
    - ii. ...or the person that feels the need to verbally attack Christians, and eliminate any sign of the Christian faith from public view.
11. We can all picture someone we have known or seen in each of these groups...
- a. But the interesting thing about these three types of people, is that in the parable they all suffer the same fate.
  - b. The person that is hostile to God and His people get the same fate as the person that believes, and just doesn't do anything about it.

**The Kings Response**

7 But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

12. Sounds sort of harsh, doesn't it? But Jesus is speaking prophetically about what is to come...
- a. In 70 AD, about 40 years after His crucifixion, the Roman General Titus leveled the city of Jerusalem, and destroyed the temple.
  - b. Luke's account gives a little more detail

*"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. **Luke 21:20***

**13. (Just as a note, we shouldn't condemn the Roman's as bloodthirsty savages, in fact the invasion of Judea was a last resort of Vespasian to the rebellious and corrupt Jewish governor Gessius Florus. According to Josephus, General Titus' intention was to preserve the city and the temple, and he gave the Jews many opportunities to end hostilities. But the Israelites stubbornly held out to the last man, holding up in the temple as a last stand.)**

- a. It was truly a dark day in the history of Jerusalem, even Titus reportedly refused to accept a wreath of victory, as he was said to proclaim "there is no merit in vanquishing people forsaken by their own God."
- b. The discipline of the Lord is nothing to trifle with

**Heb 10:30-31**

*For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

**14. This can be hard to comprehend in our minds – that God allows these things to happen.**

- a. Some have looked at the devastation in Haiti and thought...
  - i. How could God let this happen?
  - ii. Is this some judgment from God?

**15. Pat Robertson is getting major criticism for his comment about Haiti making a pact with Satan**

- a. I don't know if that is true – I know that my son goes to school with a young Christian boy from Haiti, whose father is a doctor and pastor in Haiti – and he confirmed it...
- b. But regardless – God is greater than any pact with Satan!
- c. We know that sin and corruption of the leaders is responsible for much of the suffering, and even the unpreparedness of the country.
- d. We know that Christian missionaries have been active in Haiti for many years now, and that many people have come to the Lord in that country – we received reports of believers singing hymns in the street after the quake.
- e. And even those who died – God is not unaware of anything that is coming...
- f. We think death is terrible – why? If we believe that God is real, then heaven is real, how could we think God is cruel for allowing people to come home to heaven?

- g. and those Christians that died are with the Lord – in a much better place – they have been promoted!**

**16. But the main thing we want to look at is the next act of the “King”**

8 Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. 9 Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' 10 So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests.

**17. We may want to focus on the destruction of the one group, and endlessly debate whether that is “fair” or not.**

- a. But the real story is that God – The “King” – extends His invitation to the marriage feast to ALL PEOPLE –**
- b. Into the highways and byways He sends his servants, asking them to go to everyone they can find, both bad and good, and invite them to the feast.**

**18. Guess what – those servants – that is YOU AND ME! We have been called to go out and invite everyone to the Wedding Feast of the Lamb – WE are the bride of Christ!**

- a. Those missionaries in Haiti – they were inviting all those people who were steeped in Voodoo and demonism into the light!**
- b. Check it out - both “good and bad” are able to come into the wedding feast.**
- c. In other words – It’s not the present state of the person, but whether or not they receive the invitation.**
- d. That is the beauty of the gospel – it doesn’t matter how good or bad you were, what matters is “will you accept the invitation?”**
- e. That reality levels the playing field – and it takes me and my performance completely out of the equation!**

**Rom 4:4-8**

*4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. 5 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, 6 just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works...*

11 "But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. 12 So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. 13 Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' 14 "For many are called, but few are chosen."

**19. What does this tell us? In ancient times when you went to a wedding that was hosted by royalty, you were given a robe to wear, so that everyone was the same.**

- a. You didn't have some in Gucci robes, and others in Walmart robes... everyone was clothed in the robe of the host**
- b. This tells us that in heaven we will not be clothed in *our* righteousness, but in the righteousness of Jesus Christ!**

**Rev 7:9-10**

*After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"*

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