

# THE WEDDING SUPPER

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In Matthew 22:1-14, Jesus taught a parable about a great marriage supper. Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son" (Matt 22:2). The ones who were invited to the wedding "would not come" when the king's servants called them (Matt 22:3). When other servants were sent to call them (Matt 22:4), "they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise" (Matt 22:5). "And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city" (Matt 22:6-7). The king then told his servants that the ones who had been invited "were not worthy" (Matt 22:8). He then sent his servants "into the highways" to invite as many as they could find (Matt 22:9). The servants then "gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests" (Matt 22:10). "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen" (Matt 22:11-14).

## **Those who refused to come when called**

There are actually three categories of people in this parable. First, there are the ones who refused to come when the king called. The Jews were the first ones called by God unto his kingdom (Matt 10:5-7; 15:24; Luke 13:23-30; John 1:31; Acts 5:31; 10:36). Because of the faith and righteousness of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the people of Israel had been chosen by God (Deut 4:37; 7:6-8; 10:15; 14:2; 1 Kgs 3:8; 1 Chr 16:13; Psa 33:12; 105:6,43; 135:4; Isa 41:8-9; 43:20-21; 44:1-2; Ezek 20:5; Acts 13:17). They had been given the advantage of having God's law given to them (Deut 4:8; Rom 3:1-2). Then, most importantly, the Jews had John the Baptist (Luke 1:16,80), Jesus Christ (Matt 15:22-28), and the apostles (Matt 10:5-7; Acts 1:8; 10:36-37) sent to preach the kingdom of God to them. But many of them were making excuses and refusing the Lord's invitation by not believing in Christ (Luke 7:29-30; 14:16-24; Matt 21:28-46). Not only that, but as the parable suggests, they also killed God's servants, the prophets, who were sent to them, and even killed God's own Son (Matt 21:33-39; 23:29-39; Mark 12:1-8; Luke 11:47-51; 13:34-35; 20:9-15). Those who reject Christ are also guilty of rejecting the Father (Luke 10:16; John 5:23; 8:19; 12:44; 14:7-9). Those many Jews (and anyone else) who rejected the Father by rejecting Christ are the ones who made themselves unworthy of attending the marriage of the king's son. They will never enter heaven (Luke 19:26).

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(continued)

## **Those who came but were not prepared**

Second, there are the ones who came to the wedding supper when they were called, but were not properly prepared. As Jesus taught in the parable of the wheat and tares (Matt 13:24-30,36-43), and also in the parable of the net (Matt 13:47-50), there are some who enter the kingdom (the church, Matt 16:18-19), but then fall away. These unfaithful servants will be cast into the fires of hell. The parable of the sower also warns about Christians who fall away either because they have no root to endure persecution (Matt 13:20-21; Mark 4:16-17; Luke 8:13), or because they are choked by the cares, riches and pleasures of this life (Matt 13:22; Mark 4:18-19; Luke 8:14). Those “unprofitable servants” who bury their talents in the ground will be cast into outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt 25:24-30; Luke 19:20-26). Jesus has warned his servants, those who are in the kingdom (i.e. have responded to the Lord’s invitation and call as per the parable), to “watch” and “be ready” (Matt 24:42-25:30; Mark 13:33-37; Luke 12:35-48; 1 Cor 16:13; 1 Thes 5:6; 2 Tim 4:5; Titus 3:1; Rev 3:2-3; 16:15). Those servants who are not prepared and ready will be given a portion with the hypocrites where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt 24:48-51; Luke 12:45-48). Those who are unprepared for the wedding, like the five foolish virgins, will not be received by the bridegroom (Matt 25:1-13). *“And that servant, which knew his lord’s will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes”* (Luke 12:47).

## **Those who heed the call and are ready**

Third, there are the ones who answered the king’s call and properly prepared themselves. These ones from the highways that were gathered for the marriage reminds us of the fact that the Lord sent the gospel to the Gentiles, and many of them came to Him (Rom 11:1-32). They had not been His people before, but now they are (Hos 1:10; 2:23; Acts 10:34-35; Rom 9:24-26,30; 10:19-20; 1 Pet 2:4-10; Rev 5:9-10). But among the ones who hear the Lord’s call (and “whosoever will” may come, Rev 3:20; 22:17), only those who have their “wedding garment” will attend the marriage supper of the king’s son. They are the good ground (Matt 13:22; Mark 4:18; Luke 8:14), the wheat in the kingdom (Matt 13:24-30,36-43), the wise virgins (Matt 25:1-9), the good and faithful servants (Matt 25:14-23; Luke 19:11-19), and the ones who are watching, ready, and doing God’s will until the end (Matt 24:45-47; Luke 12:35-44; Rev 2:10). They are the ones spoken of in Revelation 19:7-9: *“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife has made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.”*