Guests at the Wedding Feast

Matthew 22:1-14
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Texts:

Matthew 22:1-14,

1. And Jesus answered and spoke unto them again by parables, and said,
2. The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,
3. And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.
4. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.
5. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:
6. And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them.
7. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.
8. Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.
9. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.
10. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.
11. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:
12. And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.
13. 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.
14. For many are called, but few are chosen.

Introduction:

I. James Burton Coffman in his commentary on The Gospel of Matthew lists the following analogies based on this parable:

A. King – God.

B. King’s Son – Jesus Christ.


D. Messengers, servants – evangelists.

E. Mistreatment of servants – hostility of Pharisees against the apostles and persecution of preachers through all the ages.

F. Destruction of their city – destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

G. Invitations to those in the byways, at the corner – the preaching of the gospel to the entire world.

H. The man without a wedding garment – those who profess faith in Jesus as Christ but don’t live as he directs, who don’t appreciate being invited to the Lord’s banquet.

I. Arrival of the king – the final judgment.

J. The casting of the guest without a wedding garment into darkness bound hand and foot – casting the wicked into eternal punishment, into hell fire.
K. The speechlessness of the guest that was thrown out of the wedding hall – the lost are totally without excuse.

II. Now, let’s study this parable in detail.

**Commentary:**

Matthew 22:1, And Jesus answered and spoke unto them again by parables, and said,

I. Jesus spoke to the crowd again.

A. The crowd evidently included chief priests and Pharisees, enemies of Jesus.

B. The crowd also included many common people who regarded Jesus as a prophet.

C. The parable was directed toward Jesus’ enemies, especially the Pharisees who had set about to kill Jesus.

Matthew 22:2, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

I. The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son.

Matthew 22:3, And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.

I. The king sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet.
A. The servants told them to come now to the banquet because “dinner was served.”

B. However, the invited guests refused to come to the dinner.

II. The Old Testament foretold the coming of the Messiah.

A. John preached the soon coming of the anointed one, the Messiah, the Christ, but John was beheaded.

B. The apostles were persecuted.

Matthew 22:4, Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.

I. The king, in view of the invited guests’ refusal to honor their acceptance of his invitation, sent more servants who were to deliver the following message to those discourteous people:

A. “I have prepared a really wonderful dinner. Everything is ready, I insist that you come to the banquet.”

II. These invitations refer to the teaching of the gospel as the church spread beyond the Jews only.

A. The Book of Acts tells about the history of the early growth of the church.

B. God still invited those who had crucified Jesus to reconsider their rejection of his Son.

1. Acts 3:17, And now, brethren, I perceive that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.
2. Romans 1:16, For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Matthew 22:5, But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:

I. Those who had been invited now three times paid no attention to the king’s servants, but rudely:

A. went off to their fields, farms.

B. went off to their business, merchandise.

II. They made light of the king’s invitation.

A. These were acting in an insulting manner to the kind gracious king.

B. Those engaged in agriculture and business cover essentially all manner of people who have rejected the Lord.

Matthew 22:6, 7, 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.

I. The rest of the invited guests seized the kings servants, mistreated them and killed them.

A. Why? ... because they had been invited by a gracious host to a fabulous banquet in honor of the marriage of his son?

B. You just can’t please some people!
II. The king was enraged, wroth, not just a little peeved.

A. The king sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city, Jerusalem.

III. The New Testament is filled with examples of God’s people being shamefully treated.

A. Stephen was stoned.
B. James was killed with the sword.
C. Peter was imprisoned.

IV. As Coffman said, “... the wrath of God is the ultimate answer to all human perversity.”

Matthew 22:8, 9, Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

I. The king then said to his servants,

A. The wedding banquet is ready.
B. Those I invited did not come when bidden to the banquet, showing that they did not deserve, nor were they worthy, to be in attendance at the banquet. Their place will be given to others.
C. Go to the street corners and invite everyone to come to the banquet.
II. God’s purposes are never thwarted by sinful man.
   A. There will be guests at the feast!
   B. The Pharisees did not honor Jesus, but Hosannas filled the air anyway.
   C. The king did not cancel the wedding feast because some decided not to attend.
   D. He simply invited others, the Gentiles.

Matthew 22:10, So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

I. The servants did as they were told, and the wedding hall was filled with all kinds of people, both good and bad.
   A. Those who accept the gospel invitation include some who remain faithful unto death and some who don’t.
   B. Matthew 13:47, 48, 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.
   C. These guests did not merit or earn their invitations to the banquet feast. They were permitted to attend the banquet because of the grace of the king.
   D. So it is now!
Matthew 22:11, And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:

I. When the king came in to see the guests, he noticed:
   A. a man who was not wearing wedding clothes.
   B. He was dressed inappropriately for the occasion.

II. At the final judgment God will “behold” us all. “Will we pass inspection?” This is the question of all time.

   A. 1 Peter 4:17, For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

Matthew 22:12, And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.

I. The king addressed this guest as “Friend.”

   A. God thinks of us all as Friend. That is, God wants to be our friend and he wants us to be his friends.

II. The king asked, “How did you get in here without wedding clothes?” ... how did you get past security?

   A. The man’s apparel, attire was an insult to the host.
   B. He had no excuse for his lack of proper attire. He could have obtained a suitable wedding garment if he had made the effort.

III. The guest was speechless. He had no excuse for his failure to dress appropriately for the occasion.
Matthew 22:13, 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.

I. The king ordered that the attendants tie him hand and foot (handcuff and shackle him) and throw him out of the party.

A. Outside it was dark. It was there that people wept and gnashed their teeth.

B. 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.

C. Matthew 25:46, And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

Matthew 22:14, For many are called, but few are chosen.

I. The conclusion of the matter is, “Many are invited, called, but few are chosen.” Note that not being "chosen" is the choice made by those who reject the invitation. The only way to be chosen (Greek "elect") is to be in the chosen one, Jesus Christ.

A. Church membership is not sufficient to save.

B. We must be sure we are clothed in the garments of righteousness.
C. Revelation 3:18, I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

Reference: James Burton Coffman, Commentary on Matthew, copyright Abilene Christine College Press, Abilene, Texas.
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Questions

1. Parabolic analogies:

   King: ____________________________________________

   King’s son marriage supper: _____________________________

   Messengers, servants: ________________________________

   Mistreatment of servants: ______________________________

   Destruction of their city: ______________________________

   Invitations to those in the byways, at the corner: ________

   The man without a wedding garment: ________________

   Arrival of the king: ________________________________

   Casting of the guest without a wedding garment into darkness bound hand and foot: __________________________

   The speechlessness of the guest that was thrown out of the wedding hall: ________________________________
2. Which, judged by your life, is more important to you, the Lord’s invitation or your businesses? __________________________

3. As Christians how can we better go out into the highways and bring more to salvation? __________________________

4. What is the significance of bringing the “good” and the “bad” to the wedding? Do we spend more effort evangelizing the “good” or the “bad”? __________________________

5. How did the guest without a wedding garment get into the wedding, get past security? __________________________