

## ***The Life and Ministry of Christ, Part 44***

### **Passion Week - Tuesday**

While continuing the dialogue with the religious leaders of the Sanhedrin, Jesus spoke about the Marriage Feast of the Lamb. In Matthew 21:28-46, the Lord addressed Israel's rejection to enter the kingdom in three parables. The first parable of two sons emphasized doing the will of the Father. In the second parable, Jesus referred to Israel as a vineyard that was under the Father's care. When God looked upon them expecting respect and fruit, He found none. When He sent His Son, they rejected and despised Him.

The Marriage Feast is the third of the parables that Jesus spoke to the disciples and the religious leaders, Matthew 22:1-14. All of these parables were addressed to those following Him on Tuesday. Earlier while traveling, Luke 14:15-24 recorded another parable about the wedding feast. The two parables on the wedding feast have different features that addressed the various crowds that heard Him. One of the most important moments in the Jewish community is when a bride and groom get married. The most important weddings are those of the community's spiritual leader. The event is so important that the whole community gathers to celebrate. Both of these parables refer to the future wedding feast of the Lamb that is recorded in Revelation 19:6-9.

**Revelation 19:6-7 NKJV** And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."

Notice the sound of celebration at the announcement of the wedding of the Lamb. The sound of the voice of celebration was like the sound of many waters and mighty thunderings. The reason for the sound of rejoicing is two-fold. First, the time for the marriage has come. Second, the bride of Christ had made herself ready.

**Revelation 19:8-9 NKJV** And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!' " And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

Everything about that momentous occasion will be a celebration of the Lamb of God and the redeemed of the LORD. Listen to what Jesus says

in the parable of the marriage feast.

**Matthew 22:1–3 NKJV** And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: “The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come.”

It is noteworthy that in the Jewish community, it is not only an honor but a duty of the whole community to be prepared and come to the wedding feast of a community leader. In the parable, the “King” represents God and the “Son” is Jesus Christ. In the first stage of the parable, the invitation is personally sent out and carried by the king’s servants. This announcement was sent out in advance. It is evident that the first invitation went to Israel. In this parable, Jesus said nothing about the preparations that are made for the banquet. Knowing the culture, it would be an honor for anyone to receive an invitation. The number of guests would be expected to be extremely large because it was the king’s son.

### **What was their response to the invitation?**

When all the servants called those who were invited, “they were not willing to come.”

**Matthew 22:4 NKJV** 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.” ’

This is the second stage of the invitation. Notice the extensive preparation for the feast. The Lord said everything had been prepared for those who were invited. Nothing was lacking in the preparations for their response and the wedding feast. Now, watch their response.

**Matthew 22:5–7 NKJV** But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

God takes this invitation very seriously. Jesus was referring to Israel’s rejection of Him and those whom God had sent. God has made plans for a great celebration. The response of the Jewish leaders to Jesus was completely unnatural. A royal wedding and invitation should have been almost a sacred duty to attend. Much more, the gracious royal invitation of the King of heaven should have been obliged with joy. Although John the Baptist, Jesus, and the disciples had been ignored and persecuted,

Jesus said the banquet was prepared. In Luke's parable, those who were invited made excuses for why they would not come. In Matthew's parable, Jesus said they laid hands on his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. They assumed they could do whatever they desired with the king's messengers because they did not respect him and had no fear of him. Remember that Jesus was talking about their rejection of God's invitation. Notice how Israel and its leaders' rejection opened the door for the Gentiles.

**Matthew 22:8–9 NKJV** Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.'

**Matthew 22:10–11 NKJV** 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. "But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment.

Now watch those who responded to the call to come to the wedding banquet. In a traditional Orthodox Jewish wedding, everyone wears a special wedding garment. When this second invitation went out, all they could find, both bad and good were invited to come. This is the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. "*Whosoever will may come.*"

**Revelation 22:17 NKJV** And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

The king in Jesus' parable expected the wedding to be filled with guests. God's purposes are going to be fulfilled and the heavenly feast will be filled with those who respond.

**Although the invitation is to "whoever desires," God has certain expectations and demands.**

God's grace and mercy that is presented in the Gospel message to include us does not relieve us from individual preparedness.

**What does it mean to not have on a wedding garment?**

Several things could be implied by this. One thing is obvious, the man knew he should have on the wedding garment, but he refused to put it on.

**Revelation 3:18 NKJV** I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your

eyes with eye salve, that you may see.

**Revelation 19:8 NKJV** And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

According to the parable, the king has certain expectations that will not be compromised for all who attend. The prophecy in Revelation indicates that we are to be clothed in righteousness. Since God requires a certain righteousness, how do we meet His requirement?

**Romans 8:3–4 NKJV** For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

**Matthew 22:12–14 NKJV** So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. 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.’ “For many are called, but few are chosen.”

The king was surprised that he came in without a wedding garment and commanded that his servants throw the man out into the outer darkness. The free gift of God is readily available to any who put their trust in Jesus Christ. Pay attention to that last sentence in the parable: “For many are called, but few are chosen.” Jesus was saying everyone that is called will not be finally chosen. This is the doctrine of God’s election. The invitation (call) has gone out into all the world, only those who respond and receive God’s grace and salvation will be saved.

**Ephesians 2:8–9 NKJV** For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

After hearing the three parables, the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might entangle and trap Jesus with His Own words.

***Tuesday – Question of Taxes , Matthew 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17; Luke 20:20-26***

**Mark 12:13–14 NKJV** Then they sent to Him some of the Pharisees and the Herodians, to catch Him in His words. When they had come, they said to Him, “Teacher, we know that You are true, and care about no one; for You do not regard the person of men, but teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?”

The Herodians were staunch supporters of Herod and the Roman

Empire.

**Mark 12:15 NKJV** “Shall we pay, or shall we not pay?” But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, “Why do you test Me? Bring Me a denarius that I may see it.”

**Mark 12:16–17 NKJV** So they brought it. And He said to them, “Whose image and inscription is this?” They said to Him, “Caesar’s.” And Jesus answered and said to them, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” And they marveled at Him.

The Pharisee and Sadducees came up with a series of attempts to trap Jesus. Their attempted flattery began with, “We know that you are true and teach the truth of God’s ways and do not regard the consequences.” Jesus reminded them that they had an obligation to the state and to God. He said, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” The obligations that we have to God covers every aspect of life.

**After the question from the Pharisees, the Sadducees questioned about the resurrection, Matthew 22:23-33; Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-40**

**Matthew 22:23–24 NKJV** The same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him and asked Him, saying: “Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother.

Pay attention to the fact that the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection. The Sadducees regarded the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible, as their authoritative text. In Deuteronomy 25:5-6, the law required the widow who has no son to be married to her husband’s brother. This was done to preserve a deceased’s man’s name and maintain his family inheritance in Israel. It was called the law of the levirate marriage.

**Matthew 22:25–27 NKJV** Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother. Likewise the second also, and the third, even to the seventh. Last of all the woman died also.

**Matthew 22:28–30 NKJV** Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her.” Jesus answered and said to them, “You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven.

To the Sadducees, the resurrection of the dead posed so many problems for them that they believed it was not reasonable and could not be possible. They had the assumption that if there is a resurrection from the dead, life would be much like life here but without the bad influences. They felt their question was unanswerable, “Whose wife will she be?” Jesus’ reply had two points. First, they were ignorant of the Scriptures. The Bible never says the husband-wife relationship will continue in heaven. Men and women will be as the angels that never marry nor or given in marriage.

**Matthew 22:31–33 NKJV** But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” And when the multitudes heard this, they were astonished at His teaching.

Second, they were ignorant of the power of God. When the Lord said that, He was proclaiming the continuance of those who die who are in His presence, and His resurrection of the dead. Although the Sadducees did not accept the resurrection of the dead, Jesus made it clear that they were wrong because they did not know the Scriptures nor the power of God. If God is able to create men from the dust of the ground, can He not refashion those who died into new and glorious bodies? Abraham believed that even if Isaac was to die on the altar, God was able to raise him from the dead, (Hebrews 11:19). Notice that God did not say, “I was the God of your father,” but “I am the God of your father.”

The resurrection of the dead is clearly taught in the Old Testament.

**Job 19:25-27 NKJV** For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth; And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, That in my flesh I shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!

**Psalms 17:15 NKJV** As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.

**Daniel 12:2-3 NKJV** And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.

Jesus declared the truth of life after death and the resurrection on many occasions, (John 5:28-29; John 6:39-40, 44, 54) where He said, “I will

raise him (the believer) up at the last day.” This message of the resurrection became one of the major emphasis of the disciples ministry after the resurrection of Jesus. (Acts 17:18; Acts 24:15; Acts 17:31; 1 Corinthians 15; Philippians 3:20-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13, 16, 17). The doctrine of the resurrection is part of the hope of the believer that our lowly body will be conformed to the image of His glorious body, (Philippians 3:21). Our resurrection and change will be the completion of our salvation.