

Matthew 22

The Parable of the Marriage Feast

Matthew 22 v 1-15

1 Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying, 2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who held a wedding feast for his son. 3 And he sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast, and they were unwilling to come. 4 Again he sent other slaves, saying, 'Tell those who have been invited, "Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fattened cattle are all butchered and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast!"' 5 But they paid no attention and went their separate ways, one to his own farm, another to his business, 6 and the rest seized his slaves and treated them abusively, and then killed them. 7 Now the king was angry, and he sent his armies and destroyed those murderers and set their city on fire. 8 Then he said to his slaves, 'The wedding feast is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. 9 So go to the main roads, and invite whomever you find there to the wedding feast.' 10 Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good; and the wedding hall was filled with dinner guests. 11 "But when the king came in to look over the dinner guests, he saw a man there who was not dressed in wedding clothes, 12 and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' And the man was speechless. 13 Then the king said to the servants, 'Tie his hands and feet, and throw him into the outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth in that place.' 14 For many are called, but few are chosen." 15 Then the Pharisees went and plotted together how they might trap Him in what He said. The parable centres around a king, a wedding feast and the king's son; but the point of the story is to expose the attitudes of the invited guests. The feast is now ready and they refuse to come, it is the Jews who are being invited and they reject the invitation to share in the Kingdom of God, to eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus.

John 6 v 52-58

52 Then the Jews began to argue with one another, saying, "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" 53 So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. 54 The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. 55 For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. 56 The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood remains in Me, and I in him. 57 Just as the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, the one who eats Me, he also will live because of Me. 58 This is the bread that came down out of heaven, not as the fathers ate and died; the one who eats this bread will live forever."

Jesus is of course addressing the Jews who refuse to accept Him as their promised Messiah. He is also making a prophetic statement to the future generations that there is an open invitation to come to Christ in repentance, to receive forgiveness for sins and receive the faith towards God to live an abundant life. **Isaiah 55** offers us another invitation of the same kind.

Isaiah 55 v 1-6

1 "You there! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; And you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk Without money and without cost. 2 Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And delight yourself in abundance. 3 Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, According to the faithful mercies shown to David. 4 Behold, I have made him a witness to the peoples, A leader and commander for the peoples. 5 Behold, you will call a nation you do not know, And a nation which does not know you will run to you, Because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel; For He has glorified you." 6 Seek the Lord while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near.

One man had come to the feast dressed in clothes that are unsuitable . We may have a name that we are Christian, but our *garments* are to be suitable. We come to Christ in true repentance and we are to have a complete change of garments. God may give us time to be clothed in garments that He approves of, but we do have to change our clothes.

Ephesians 4 v 20-24

20 But you did not learn Christ in this way, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, 22 that, in reference to your former way of life, you are to rid yourselves of the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, 23 and that you are to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24 and to put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. There are old clothes to take off and new ones to put on. In our so-called modern society, casual clothes, jeans and tee shirts are an acceptable way of dress. Some hotels and restaurants still insist that formal dress is required before you are allowed to go in. In the Kingdom it is not the outward appearance that God looks at, but the heart. These are the *clothes* He refers to in Ephesians (old self/new self). It is good to dress up to go out for the evening , it shows that you have respect for your appearance and for the people or place that you are visiting. The church should also be a place to be respected. Sometimes, not always, our external dress will either reflect our respect or disrespect for God and one another.

Revelation 19 v 7-8

7 Let's rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, because the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His bride has prepared herself." 8 It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

The final stages of the church age are with us, the bride will clothe herself in fine linen. Jesus ends the parable with a warning; we are to be grateful that we are called but we need to make certain that we live our lives and have attitudes that are in keeping with the name that we have, Christian, otherwise we may not

be chosen. We shall look at this a little more when we come to the subject of resurrection.

Tribute to Caesar

Matthew 22 v 15-22

15 Then the Pharisees went and plotted together how they might trap Him in what He said. 16 And they sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that You are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and do not care what anyone thinks; for You are not partial to anyone. 17 Tell us then, what do You think? Is it permissible to pay a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?" 18 But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, "Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites? 19 Show Me the coin used for the poll-tax." And they brought Him a denarius. 20 And He said to them, "Whose image and inscription is this?" 21 They said to Him, "Caesar's." Then He said to them, "Then pay to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's." 22 And hearing this, they were amazed; and they left Him and went away.

The Pharisees planned to trap Jesus in what he said. They first of all flatter him to win His confidence, their motives are not pure. They hope that he will say something that will put him in trouble with the authorities. They even had poll tax at that time too! Jesus tells them, and today says the same thing. *Pay your taxes , pay the things that you are required by law to pay. We are not to cheat the authorities. There is a command here to pay our dues, TV license, car tax, etc. and we should not defraud the Social Security system. We are not to tell lies about our earnings to the Income Tax man. We are called to be honest in every respect. The Lord will not bless us if we behave in this way, He will see the dirty garments and tell us that these clothes are unsuitable for the Kingdom. If we continue in the same way then we may run into a spiritual brick wall. Give to Caesar (the authorities) but also give to God that which is His due, this is like the first great commandment.*

First we are to give to God, these are the first fruits of our everything; me , my body, my mind, my emotions, my strength, my time, my money. To wear the perfect wedding clothes is to do these things. We are all in debt to God right now, we owe Him everything, don't we? The solution is to first realise that all things that we possess are His, we are simply stewards for His things and secondly we need to acknowledge it. This will almost certainly mean that we have to look at our own lifestyle and what we do with what He has entrusted to each one of us.

We continue through Matthews gospel, approaching the time about Jesus' warnings about the *end times*. We are rapidly coming to the end of the *church age*; we need to pay attention to our lives and our life style.

Jesus Answers the Sadducees

Matthew 22 v 23-33

23 On that day some Sadducees (who say there is no resurrection) came to Jesus and questioned Him, 24 saying, "Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies having no children, his brother as next of kin shall marry his wife, and raise up children for his brother.' 25 Now there were seven brothers among us; and the first married and died, and having no children, he left his wife to his brother. 26 It was the same also with the second brother, and the third, down to the seventh. 27 Last of all, the woman died. 28 In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her in marriage." 29 But Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, since you do not understand the Scriptures nor the power of God. 30 For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. 31 But regarding the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God: 32 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living." 33 When the crowds heard this, they were astonished at His teaching.

The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection.

Acts 23 v 8

8 For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor an angel, nor a spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.

Although it was clearly stated in several old Testament scriptures, of which the Sadducees were familiar, they refused to believe in the word of God and chose to see the continuation of life through the child of the father and that in this natural way the family line is maintained.

Isaiah 26 V 19

19 Your dead will live; Their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy, For your dew is as the dew of the dawn, And the earth will give birth to the departed spirits.

Daniel 12 v 12

12 Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.

In **Matthew 22 v 23-33** Jesus has to point to their ignorance of the scriptures and the power of God, both they and we too sometimes, made assumptions based on human and natural evidence and experience. What follows is a very important revelation.

Matthew 22 v 30

30 For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.

I have to ask on your behalf *What are angels like?* That is the subject of another study!

Marriage is ended when we die. After the resurrection we shall appear before God for our works on earth.

2 Corinthians 5 v 10

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

As individuals the God of Abraham, Issac and Jacob is the God of the living not the dead. These three patriarchs are dead yet they are alive in God's safekeeping until the resurrection of the glorious dead in Christ.

Matthew 22 v 34-46

34 But when the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered themselves together. 35 One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, 36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" 37 And He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the great and foremost commandment. 39 The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets." 41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question: 42 "What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He? "They said to Him, "The son of David." 43 He said to them, "Then how does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying, 44 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Until I put Your enemies beneath Your feet"'? 45 If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his son?" 46 No one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day on to ask Him another question.

The final part of **Matthew 22** sees the Pharisees once again confronting Jesus to test Him. He confounds them by answering one question and posing another. The first and second commandments will fulfill the whole law and the Prophets, worshipping God, loving Him totally and then loving our neighbour is the purpose of life. All this is in line with the Mosaic law that Moses taught the Jews. The expert lawyer was unable to find anything wrong with Jesus' answer and Jesus asks them a question; **Matthew 22 v 42** "What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He? " They said that He was the son of David. **Psalm 110** that Jesus quotes to the Pharisees brings them into confusion, they were expecting the promised Messiah to come looking like and being a mighty warrior like David, yet Jesus came as a lamb, humbly and powerfully bearing little resemblance to the fighting man of God, King David.

They all accepted that *Psalm 110* was written by David, yet Jesus turned the Psalm to read '*The Lord (God) said to my Lord (Jesus), "Sit at My right hand (God's right hand), Until I (God) put Your enemies beneath Your feet"*' (a picture of Jesus' final victory over all and everything that opposes Him). In this statement Jesus destroys the image that the Pharisees had for their Messiah. Jesus would not adopt military or political methods like David had done, rather He was to be the suffering servant King; the Prophet and Priest sent to redeem the world. It is no wonder that they rejected Him from being the Messiah and planned to crucify Him. The amazing thing was that Jesus allowed them to reject Him and was led like a lamb to the slaughter. They could not answer Him on that day and from then onwards we see that they stopped asking questions.