

WHAT HAPPENS AT A WEDDING!

MATTHEW 22: 1-14; Luke 14: 7-14

Wedding Invitations and Guest Lists:

Matthew 22:1-14

Good interpreters of the Bible always ask this question first: “What did the scripture mean to the original audience?” To answer that question for this parable, we look to the immediate context (what comes before or after our verses). Our parable, the parable of the wedding banquet, is a continuation of the message in the parable of the tenants (Mt. 21: 33ff).

Read the Parable of the Tenants.

How could you summarize this parable?

- > *The people of the Kingdom reject the King’s son (Jesus) and thus, the kingdom is torn from them and given to a different group of people.*

What is the message of this parable?

- > *The Jewish people (esp. religious leaders) have rejected Jesus and in doing so, have relinquished their place in God’s kingdom. All who believe in Jesus, Jew AND Gentile, are now welcomed into the Kingdom!*

Now, let’s consider the Parable of the Wedding Banquet!

1. Those invited would not come! (22: 1-7)

- > What do we know about ancient royal weddings?
 - * *They were countrywide celebrations that would last for several days.*
- > What’s so bad about refusing an invitation to a wedding?
 - * *What happens when we get wedding invitations?*
 - * *To refuse a direct invitation from the king would be an extreme insult and direct affront to his authority – and would have dire consequences!*
- > Who do these invitees represent? *Jewish people (esp. religious leaders)*
 - How does this part of the parable relate to me??
 - **We must ACCEPT the King’s INVITATION!**
 - What 2 things did the invitees do instead of attending the wedding?
 - (1) They attended their **FIELDS** and **BUSINESSES**.
 - * These represent **SELF-SUFFICIENCY!**
 - * How many people reject Christ’s invitation because they simply don’t believe they need to be saved?? (How do we evangelize these people?)
 - (2) They **PERSECUTED** the King’s servants.
 - * In our society, Christ has been **marginalized** or **villainized!**
 - > How has Hollywood generally portrayed servants of the King?
 - III: *David Schwimmer’s character: blind date?*

→ What are the consequences of ignoring these invitations? (v.7)

a. For the Jews? Possibly an allusion to the destruction of the Temple in AD 70.

* Significance? The glory / presence of God HAS DEPARTED!

* This type of destruction was extreme punishment reserved for serious treason

b. For us?

> Food for thought: See v.8 – what makes of deserving of the Kingdom of God?

→ 1 thing: ACCEPTING THE INVITATION!

2. An Expanded Invitation (22: 8-10)

> Who do these “new” invitees represent?

→ This 2nd wave of invitations anticipates the spread of the Gospel to the GENTILES!

> “Highways” – symbolic of the Roman roads – a clear “Gentile world” reference

> Why “both good and bad?”

→ The invitation is not given to those who deserve it!

3. Inappropriate Dress (22: 11-14)

> Ill: Todd’s denim shorts; people not coming to church; wedding rehearsals??

> Why would the king bring someone in off the street and then punish him for not being dressed right? We need some “cultural perspective!”

-- It was ancient custom for hosts to provide guests with wedding garments.

-- This guest CHOSE NOT TO WEAR what was provided.

(“The man was speechless.” – no defense)

> How does Christ “clothe” us? (Job 29:14; Isaiah 61:10; Eph. 6:14)

→ How does this part of the parable relate to me?

-- We must be CLOTHED with RIGHTEOUSNESS!

→ Practically speaking, how do some come to the wedding banquet, but refuse to wear the right clothes? *I want to know God without knowing Jesus! The Crown without the Cross!*

Ill: Catholics who aren’t saved? Other examples? My cousin?

→ How do we make sense of the last verse in this parable, v.14?

“For many are invited, but few are chosen.” (NIV)

-- ill: *The US Open tennis qualifiers.*

Assigned Seating at the Reception:

Luke 14: 7-14

To whom was Jesus speaking? Where was Jesus when he spoke this parable?

Let’s summarize: Let CHRIST EXALT you ... don’t EXALT YOURSELF! (see *Prov. 16:18*)

Such a lifestyle demands:

(1) PATIENCE. We have to wait for the Lord’s perfect timing. 1 Peter 5:6

(2) TRUST. Fight the temptation to elevate yourself ...

(3) Willingness to be OVERLOOKED.