

Your Invitation to the Kingdom, Mathew 22:1-14

John the Baptist preached in the wilderness saying “repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” and Jesus instructed his disciples to “preach, saying ‘the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ ” Since that time the kingdom has been among us, and God has been preparing the final celebration, the coming marriage feast of the Lamb. This parable is an allusion to that feast, and in it we see the winnowing of the invited and the rejected, of those called but not chosen, and of those who abused the invitation.

Audience and Cultural Setting

- Addressed primarily to Jews and particularly to the Pharisees.
 - 2 thousand years ago, _____
 - “Wedding culture” then and now, _____
- Messianic implications: the Jewish expectation of the Messiah during that period. _____

The King’s Party, v.1-6

- A parable about the kingdom of heaven (or God.)
 - The extent of allegory when comparing temporal with eternal. _____
- The invitation, v.3-4.
 - Not actually the first invitation: they had *been* invited previously. _____
- The refusal, v.3-6.
 - The first refusal, *apathy*: they were unwilling to come. _____
 - The second refusal, *irritated and violent*: they seized his slaves and mistreated them and killed them. _____

Application for today: at this point the allusion was directed toward historical Jewish rejection of God’s leadership and apathy toward the Messiah, who would threaten the comfort and indulgence of its leaders. But there is also a further application to future rejection by the world and its religious leaders.

The King’s Reaction, v.7-10

- Anger (rage) and retribution, v.7.
 - The history of God’s use of Assyria and Babylon as his hand of vengeance. _____

- Inviting a new class of guest, v.8-10.
 - Former invitees no longer worthy. _____
 - Their unworthiness was not the result of something beyond their power. _____
 - New guests: offensive to the old group.
 - Jew/Gentile division. _____
 - “Classes” in many churches. _____

The Undressed Guest, v.11-12

- A simple observation by the king.
 - *Not dressed in wedding clothes*, _____
 - Rev. 7:14, Robes washed “white” in the blood of the Lamb.
 - Guests provided proper attire. _____
 - An implied issue: the guest was unwilling to conform. _____
 - “Friend,” not a term of endearment in this case. _____
- Our calling: to be dressed for the occasion.
 - Isaiah 61:10, *garments of salvation*. _____

Oops, cast into “outer darkness, v.13-14

- A couple of doctrinal takes on this phrase.
 - Heaven’s “suburbs.” _____
 - Or Hell. _____

There is a hyper-critical doctrinal issue hinted at in the last 4 verses of this passage. The majority of the parable is easy to apply, but what is implied by “wedding clothes?” What was Jesus implying?

- The “broad” approach.
 - Salvation on different terms. _____
 - Negotiating heaven with God. _____
 - Negating repentance and faith. _____
- The “narrow” approach.
 - Salvation based on repentance and faith alone. _____
 - Our “clothes” provided by God. _____
 - Our “good works” are evidence, not prerequisites. _____

Good people don’t get a ticket to heaven, redeemed sinners do. How annoying to the world that Jesus saw the riff-raff as more worthy than the aristocracy. If we desire to be part of the eternal kingdom, perhaps we would be well advised to consider ourselves riff-raff also. Then we would receive clothing we cannot weave ourselves.