

22:1

And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, This is the 3rd parable in a row. 21:32's parable had a declaration that the non-Jewish rulers would get the kingdom. Then, 21:38 seems to be saying the same thing (especially when considering 21:45-46). Verse 46 contains a 3rd group: the multitude (in addition to the chief priests and the disciples). This multitude has their new king. He heals; he feeds; he can probably slay an army. Then, he tops it off by raising the dead (John 11). Jesus is their hero.

This parable is aimed at, first: the priests; then, the multitude **and said,**

22:2

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage [feast] for his son, The bride is not the big deal of this marriage.

22:3

And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: invitations had gone out, and now it was time to get those who would have been flattered to attend...right? "We don't know when the ceremony will be, but when we know...you'll be expected." **and they would not come.** What audacity! The king calls but they do not come!

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, blood was spilled for this feast. Great expense and cost were expended by the King. **and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.** Everybody should be saying "how lavish! How generous!" It's not every day you get invited. It's not everybody that gets an invitation. This is a reflection of the character of the Lord. You don't have to like that He didn't invite everybody at first. Those who "were bidden; for whom it was prepared." Certainly you can see that the chief priests and Pharisees were in view here.

22:5

But they made light of it, think it weird or futile or secondary in importance; making light of a King's invitation to a feast for His son. One might say, "That's ridiculous! Who would do that?"

Exactly, that's the point. Why would anybody look at the lavish invitation from the King, and think "lightly about it?"

and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:

22:6

And the remnant Those who did not go to check on the crops or resume their place at the market. **took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them.** The bride is of such insignificance in this parable, that she's not mentioned (or in 25:1-11) because the focus is the bridegroom.

22:7

But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: Very angry. His teeth were grinding. **and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.** Take this in for a moment. In A.D. 70, approximately 40 years later, the King burned their city because of this generation of priests—this crowd—not just because they were so flippant as to tend their farms in lieu of a feast, but to also kill heralds of this fantastic news. They weren't coming to collect taxes. So before anybody says "How severe a judgment! This is worth burning a entire city for attacking a few servants?" I would say "How depraved is man to look at the invitation of the King who owes us nothing and say 'I have to tend the animals and my business. I have a system and money is on the line, and I really don't have time...'"

Some who were not complacent, were caustic. Some were flippant, others flagrant. The bottom line is that they all burned up together in the city. "I'm just passive! I'm not angry, I'm not attacking him! I'll just get to it sometime!" They all burned up together. We know the Lord rewarded this generation according to their

works (Matthew 16:27-28), but I want to remind you not to hang out in the same crowd with those who are antagonistic killers. We often see ourselves as “not too bad,” and we often think the King as over-reacting and say stupid things like “Why is the King so angry?”

But if you think that’s bad,

22:8

Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, nothing has changed. *While a military campaign is taking place, dinner is getting cold. To burn a city over a spurned dinner invite seems extreme, but Christ was rejected by an entire nation* (D.A. Carson said this somewhere). **but they which were bidden were not worthy.** If I were in this position, I would find “worthy ones.” What does he do?

22:9

Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, That’s not very high criteria: “Just find them.” **bid to the marriage.** “What do they need to look like, Lord?”

“They need to look like they can walk to the palace.”

It’s startling that He deems some “unworthy” and then finds more unworthy people to take their place. Really, I guess that’s how Bill Sturm got saved. The Lord blinded Israel as a nation “that the purpose of election might be fulfilled” (Romans 11).

Matthew 21:28 is the man who “repented” and is “publicans and harlots that enter the kingdom.” “Who in the world wants extortionists and traitors and women of the street to be a part of their kingdom?” Jesus does. He changes them anyway...into saints. Matthew of all people can testify to that. Nobody goes into the kingdom as a harlot or a publican and stays that way. Once they get to the dinner, they are changed.

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. That is when I would back up and say “they lived happily ever after.” There is, after all, a full table at the feast. Isn’t that just what the King wanted? Many songs have been written on it. Many sermons have been preached on it. Many have gotten lost in the glory of simply arriving at the feast. However, we must be qualified guests. All kingdom participants are qualified guests...

22:11

And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: This seems strange. There must be something cultural we don’t understand here.

22:12

And he saith unto him, Friend, This also seems strange...particularly since Judas Iscariot is greeted the same way in the Garden of Gethsemane later in the drama. I wonder if Jesus was trying to communicate with him?

It’s also used in the parable at the beginning of chapter 20 where those who toiled all day think they got ripped off—working only for a penny in the heat of the day. The owner responded with...“Friend?” How tender is our Lord? Imagine, here, the King looking tenderly and sternly at a man and saying, “Friend, how did you get in here?”

how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? My first question was, “Why are we experiencing this sort of two-climax account? Why are we indicting the Pharisees and chief priests, and then we indict the guests? We thought one of the points of the parable was that the chief priests were not worthy and their city was burned. It must be, then, that Jesus is talking to the multitude since they were just sure He was a prophet. They have been with Jesus, eating the loaves and fish, watching the miracles, and they are now pictured as sitting pretty at a wedding feast...naked. Isaiah 28:20 speaks of those in judgment as those with a bed too short and a sheet too narrow. They may as well be nude. You will not be comfortable and you will not be covered.

Hebrews 4:13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest before the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do.

All of the sudden, we don't have a man that feels like a guest anymore. We have a man that feels like an imposter. Those people that were in the crowd for weeks or months may have been thinking, "Well at least we're not being condemned with the priests and Pharisees" and here Jesus then includes them on the parable with a stern warning to them: "Make sure you have the proper garment." Honestly you wouldn't even know where this came from if you didn't have Isaiah's reference.

Isaiah 61:9 And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the LORD hath blessed. 10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; **for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.**

I cannot find in Matthew where the Lord requires a garment; we're dealing with a garment. Isaiah is the only place where we find a garment and where we find a wedding context. With Matthew's mind so often on Isaiah's prophecy, it is not surprise that Isaiah gives us light on this.

So whose fault is it that the man has no garment? It is not the Lord's! In this custom there was a time when the man putting on the feast would supply the garment. The King's surprise at the lack of garment is proof we're not dealing with some sort of "particular atonement" application. No, the idea is that this man was provided the necessity and chose to leave it unemployed. How audacious is it to say "I have another place to be?" Very. But how audacious is it to leave a garment at home which a man provided for you to attend his garment.

Romans 11 speaks about the "goodness and severity" of God, and in this parable we find both. "How did you get in here thinking you were 'good to go'?"

And he was speechless. This is after Matthew 7:21-23, apparently, since there was an answer on the lips of those under examination in 7:22-23 where they appear to be saying "we have been sitting at your table for years!" There He doesn't argue with them, but they were not righteous as "workers of iniquity." Apparently, in this story, he has run out of arguments or defenses. "You provided me a garment and I chose not to wear it."

Matthew 13:38 introduces the tares among the wheat that exist undetected, in the kingdom. You don't belong in the kingdom if you are one "who does iniquity" and it can, therefore, be summarized as "having the proper garment." It is, as Isaiah says, a "robe of righteousness," after all.

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. If I was a king with all of this power, where he can just say, I am not sure I would go through the trouble of "binding hand and feet." This seems so extreme and "over the type." If I'm not careful here, I find fault. "It's so excessive." It's a little like the conversation that says "Why an eternal Hell for sins done in time? How severe indeed!" I will come back and say "How depraved are you to not wear the garment of which you have been provided!" The fault lies not with the King who punishes, but the man who despised the provision of the King!

If He seems extreme, then "kiss the Son, lest ye perish from the way when His wrath is kindled but a little" (Psalm 2:12). Be on the right team. Choose Christ. Jesus preached election, and then laid the blame at the foot of the man who did not wear His garment.

22:14

For many are called, but few *are* chosen. The man who was kicked out of the marriage feast wasn't kicked out because the food wasn't prepared for Him; because the animals weren't slain for his pleasure. The death that took place for that supper to be furnished was for him too. The man couldn't say "What a trick! This dinner

wasn't for me!" No, the prohibition for his attendance at the feast has more to do with what the man was wearing. The meal, the garment, the invitation were provided.

Some of those who were not **chosen** were a part of the **many**. Think that through. Same week in Jesus' life:

*Matthew 20:28 The Son of Man came to give His life a ransom for **many**.*

Some say "Ah! He didn't die for all; he died for many."

Two can play that game. In that cute, wonderful system, you have fewer than the many getting into the kingdom (Matthew 22:14). Who did He die for? "Many." Not all the "many" stayed at the wedding. You will never be able to say, "God, I wasn't called! I wasn't paid for!" Again, if the King didn't provide the garment to the man, why was He so surprised the man didn't wear it? This is why Peter said "Make your calling and election sure." Church folks, looking like they belong in the kingdom, are a fantastic mission field some times.

This man was thrilled about the Son being married. Who wouldn't be? He is tickled about the wedding. He is thrilled about being able to be at the feast. You couldn't get this many any more excited about the Son. He loved being "churchy" around the "church folk." Somehow, he didn't wear the salvation garment Jesus provided. If you don't, the King will be shocked and so will you.

The man was unlike those who couldn't find time to consider the marriage. There are a plethora of bible studies today, it seems. Here is a man who never told himself He couldn't take time to be around the Son. He probably walked miles. He gave much thought to the marriage. Imagine the distance he walked to get there. Every step was a step of contemplation concerning what the feast would be like. He was tickled it was at the castle, and when he got there...he didn't belong there. He was **worthy** in that he came (22:8). How many people couldn't even find the time to come!?! He is like a lot of people today who "made a commitment and came to Jesus."

Based on 22:10, **this man may have been a good guy.** We find no where that he was a **bad** guy. We don't have any evidence that this guy was beating his family, driving recklessly, or laundering money, do we? This could have been a good man. He was probably starting to fit in, and then...the King showed up. Now, he realizes He doesn't belong with God's people.

Regarding this garment, we consider 2 Corinthians 5:21. Regarding the warning of verse 14, we remember 2 Corinthians 13:5. When He "comes in His kingdom" (Luke 23), you do not want to be found without His salvation garment.