19 Minutes With the Messiah

Jesus' Body as the Temple
The Living Water
New Cloth
New Wine in Old Wineskins
The Salt of the Earth
The Light of the World
The House Built on the Rock
The Two Debtors
The Sower
The Weeds
The Growing Seed
The Mustard Seed
The Yeast
The Hidden Treasure
The Fine Pearl
The Net
I AM the Bread of Life
Becoming Childlike
The Unmerciful Servant
I AM the Light of the World
I AM the Gate
I AM the Good Shepherd
The Good Samaritan
The Friend at Midnight
The Rich Fool
The Wise Servant
The Barren Fig Tree
The Great Banquet
The Lost Sheep
The Lost Coin
The Lost Son
The Shrewd Manager
The Rich Man and Lazarus
The Unworthy Servants
I AM the Resurrection and the Life
The Persistent Widow
The Pharisee and the Tax Collector
The Workers in the Vineyard
The Ten Minas
The Two Sons
The Wicked Tenants
The Wedding Feast
The Fig Tree
The Householder
The Ten Virgins
The Talents
The Sheep and the Goats
A Lesson About Foot Washing
I AM the Way
I AM the True Vine
The Woman in Labor
I AM the Alpha and the Omega

The Wedding Feast

(Matthew 22:1-14)

Jesus spoke the following parable in the temple courts on the Tuesday of Holy Week. Although the parable was addressed to Israel's unbelieving spiritual leaders, its message about sinful history from the fall to judgment day is timeless.

1 Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: 2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared
a wedding banquet for his son. 3 He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell
them to come, but they refused to come. 4 Then he sent some more servants and said, 'Tell those who
have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and
everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.' 5 But they paid no attention and went off—one to his
field, another to his business. 6 The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. 7 The king
was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.
8 "Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to
come. 9 Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.' 10 So the servants went out
into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall
was filled with guests.
11 "But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding
clothes. 12 'Friend,' he asked, 'how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' The man was speech-
less. 13 Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the dark-
ness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'
14 "For many are invited, but few are chosen."

1. In Jesus' parable, whom do the king and his son represent?

2. After reading the following passage, describe the banquet table that God has prepared for all people. What does it cost to have a seat?

   "On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine—the best of meats and the finest of wines. On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. In that day they will say, 'Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation'" (Isaiah 25:6-9).

3. Comment on the responses of those who were invited first to the king's wedding banquet.

   How were the responses like those of the Jews in Jesus' day? Like those of many people today?

4. Verse 7 was prophetic in more ways than one. Explain.

5. After having had his invitation treated with such contempt, the king, nonetheless, continued to extend invitations to his son's wedding. Why? Whom do those on the "street corners" represent?

6. Kings and nobles of Jesus' day would honor invited guests by generously supplying them with beautiful garments to be worn at the wedding. After reading the following passages, explain Jesus' words about the man without "wedding clothes" by completing the paragraph below.

   "All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6).

   "You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ" (Galatians 3:26,27).

   The man without "wedding clothes" represents anyone who seeks to enter the great wedding feast of heaven robed in his own "_____ _____" or _____ _____. Defiled by _____, these acts are detestable "_____ _____" in the eyes of a God who is absolutely _____. God himself offers and supplies, free of charge, the acceptable attire for his banquet. By _____ in Jesus as _____, God robes us in Jesus' perfect _____. Those who by _____ reject this dress insult God and, covered only in their sin, will be _____.

For Further Study

7. How do each of the following serve as a foretaste of God's heavenly wedding banquet?

   - The Lord's Supper

   - The union between a husband and wife

8. What added thoughts about God's heavenly wedding feast are found in the following passage?

   "I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem [the holy Christian church], coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away' " (Revelation 21:2-4).

Helps: **(1)** God the Father and his Son, Jesus. **(2)** Verse 4 indicates a lavishly laden table with ample food. God has likewise prepared a lavish spiritual feast for all people. Through Christ, God graciously offers as a free gift the forgiveness of sins, peace, endless joy, salvation, eternal life, a heavenly home, and with these, everything we need for daily life. **(3)** The two different reactions are timeless. Some, immersed in earthly pursuits, respond with indifference. Others, driven by sinful pride, respond with enmity toward the message of law and gospel. Each rejects God's gracious invitation, refusing to come. **(4)** This verse was fulfilled in A.D. 70 when God allowed the Romans to destroy the city of Jerusalem. It is also fulfilled whenever God's wrath falls on those who persistently and repeatedly refuse his gracious invitation. **(5)** The king represents God who has a gracious and compassionate heart, wanting all people to come to the banquet he has prepared. Those on "the street corners" represent Gentiles. **(6)** righteous acts . . . good works . . . sin . . . filthy rags . . . holy . . . faith . . . Savior . . . righteousness . . . unbelief . . . condemned **(7)** In the Lord's Supper, God offers the feast of his eternal banquet table: the forgiveness of sins won by Christ and with it the assurance of salvation and eternal life. Although tainted by sin, marriage provides a unique opportunity for a man and woman to express the love of God and to reflect the intimate union between Jesus and his bride, the church. Recall the words of Ephesians 5:21-33. **(8)** Heaven consummates the marriage of Jesus to his bride, the church. During our time on earth, Jesus courts us, robes us with his righteousness, and wins us over by his grace. In heaven, we will no longer have to contend with a sinful nature that desires to throw off Jesus' robe. Furthermore, since there will be no sin in heaven, all the grief and trouble produced by sin will be absent. We will be eternally happy in the presence of our Savior-God.