

# The DAILY JESUS NEWS #255

Tuesday of Passion Week... Day of Testing and Teaching

Jesus Rebukes the Leaders With The Parable of the Rejected Marriage Banquet

MT 22.1-14

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 So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.'*

10 *"The servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good, 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 He asked, 'How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?' The man was speechless.*

13 *"Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

14 *"For many are invited, but few are chosen."*

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = <sup>MT</sup>, Mark = <sup>M</sup>, Luke = <sup>L</sup>, John = <sup>J</sup>, Acts = <sup>A</sup>. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

	CONTEXT DIGEST
Location	The Temple Courts in Jerusalem
Timeline	Early April (Month 39)
Jesus' Life Context	Stage VIII: Passion Week
	C. Tuesday: Day of Testing and Teaching
Title	5. Jesus Rebukes the Leaders With the Parable of the Rejected Marriage Banquet

COMMENT:

In today's reading Jesus delivered this—his third parable in a row—to the Jewish leadership describing their disobedience and its consequences. The combined information from Matthew, Mark and Luke show us that Jesus had to quickly engage them in this story. By the time he was through with the second parable their ears were

## The DAILY JESUS NEWS #255

bright red with humiliation and anger. The last thing they wanted was to be the target of yet another parable. Yet they had no choice but to hear it. Jesus had pounced before they could make their escape.

This is another parable unique to Matthew's gospel. However, it is quite similar to the parable of the Wedding Banquet that Jesus had spoken at a dinner at a Pharisee's house in Perea in late December, just a few months earlier (DJN #205; LK 14.15-24). Jesus had been confronting the Pharisees for a long time concerning their rejection of him. Several important differences between the stories in Luke and Matthew stand out.

In Matthew Jesus describes the banquet as specifically a wedding feast that God gave for his Son's royal wedding. The prominence of the "Son" motif was critical during Passion Week. Note also that in this parable the King destroys his enemies who make excuses to reject participation in the wedding banquet. Their rejection of his Son was absolute; so was God's coming judgement.

Matthew's parable also included reference to a man who showed up, but neglected to wear clothing appropriate to such a high-class occasion--the marriage of the crown prince. This pointed out the importance of being clothed in the righteousness of Jesus himself, in order to be qualified for life in the kingdom. Self-righteousness could never reach God's standard--yet it was the pride of the Pharisees to be seen as righteous in the eyes of people. Their righteousness was filthy rags in the sight of God.

Finally, Jesus concluded with the parable with the statement: **"Many are invited, but few are chosen."** The offer of eternal life in the kingdom is open to all people, for everyone is invited to participate by God. However, he chooses to include only those who respond to his invitation by faith, by clothing themselves in the righteousness of Christ.

This parable made it painfully obvious that the Jewish leadership, and the nation, were headed for the outer darkness--separated from the King, and his kingdom by their own decision to reject the Son. No wonder we will see Jesus weeping over Jerusalem again in the afternoon of this fateful day.

### APPLICATION:

*Jesus' three parables did not hold back any punches when it came to speaking the truth in love. It is hard to conceive of the courage and confidence it took for our Lord to single handedly take on the leaders of his people like this. Jesus was fearless of men, and consumed with zeal for his Father and the kingdom. Look long and deep at his shining example.*

*Is there some person, or consequence of following Jesus that makes you fearful?*

*What does Jesus' example in this reading say to you about your fear?*

*How will you trust him to fill you with himself in a way that makes you overcome your fears?*