

The Wedding Garment

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While speaking to His disciples in parables, Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son – Matt. 22:2-14. Here we actually have two parables woven together. The first parable deals with the king inviting his guests to the wedding feast (vs 2-10); the second parable is the wedding feast itself when the king comes in to look over his guests (vs. 11-14). It was then that he saw there a man who was not dressed in the proper wedding clothes.

In the first parable servants were sent out once and again with invitations but the people paid no attention and were unwilling to come (vs. 3-5). When others actually seized his servants mistreating and even killing them, the king was enraged and sent his armies and destroyed those murderers and set their city on fire (vs. 6-7). After the first invitees proved unworthy, new invitations were sent out to as many as the servants could find, both evil and good, and the wedding hall was filled with dinner guests (vs. 8-10).

The first parable actually mirrors God's first invitation to the Jews when He bore them on eagles' wings and brought them to Himself out of Egyptian bondage. He wanted to make them a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, and a people of His own possession (Ex. 19:4-6). But the Jews paid no attention and went their own way. They persecuted and killed the prophets and finally even murdered the Son of the King (Mt. 21:37-39; Acts 7:52). The destruction of Jerusalem is no doubt referenced in verse 7. Jesus wanted to save them but they would not (Mt. 23:37). He wept when He approached Jerusalem (Lk. 19:41).

The Second Parable

In the second parable, the king came in and saw there a man not dressed in wedding clothes. The guests did not bring their own clothes, but the king always provided the wedding garments for the invited guests. Jews would be familiar with this custom. You remember Jehu provided garments for all the worshipers of Baal before he murdered them in a solemn assembly (2 Kings 10:22). I guess you could say they were all dressed fit to kill!

Christ and His Pure Bride

The apostle Paul writes about Christ's love for His bride the church and how He was willing to die to purchase her with His own blood (Eph. 5:23-24; Acts 20:28). He also wrote the Corinthians not to be deceived by Satan that he might present them as a pure virgin to Christ (2 Cor. 11:2). Now let us fast-forward to Revelation 19 where we read about the marriage of the Lamb. God is the King; Christ is the Son; and the bride is the

church who has made herself ready – Rev. 19:7-9. The wedding garment of fine linen, bright and clean, was given to the bride and is called the righteousness of the saints which came from God through Christ. All true righteousness must come from God – Psa. 119:172; Rom. 1:17a. Isaiah wrote of God's righteousness: "...He has clothed me with garments of Salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness..." (61:10). Paul realized his own righteousness of the Law was not enough but that which must come from God on the basis of faith – Phil. 3:8-11.

Judgment Will Be Individual

We will not be judged in mass on that day, but individually! "He saw there a man." We shall see the King some day and when He comes in to look over His guests, what will He find? Will we have on the breastplate of righteousness provided by God through His Son, Jesus Christ? Or, will we try to enter the wedding feast with our own brand of righteousness which Isaiah said was like a filthy garment (Isa. 64:6). The resurrection of Christ is God's assurance that there will be a judgment – Acts 17:31. On that day will you be clothed in your wedding garment- the righteousness of Christ?