



Lectionary Bible Study Our Savior Lutheran Church

Lectionary 2
Readings Readings and Psalm
Isaiah 25:1-9; Psalm 23
Philippians 4:1-9; Matthew 22:1-14

[Click here](#) to join Pastor Mark for a Live Zoom conversation each Wednesday at 10am.
Meeting ID: 868 8793 0554
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Or dial in for audio only: 1-301-715-8592

Matthew 22:1-14 (NRSV)

¹ Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: ² "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. ³ He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. ⁴ Again he sent other slaves, saying, 'Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.' ⁵ But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, ⁶ while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. ⁷ The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. ⁸ Then he said to his slaves, 'The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. ⁹ Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.' ¹⁰ Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so 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 a wedding robe, ¹² and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?' And he was speechless. ¹³ Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' ¹⁴ For many are called, but few are chosen."

"Once more, Jesus spoke to them in parables." Remembering context, consider these three questions:

1. When and where is this parable (among a string of parables) being offered by Jesus?
2. What have we come to know Jesus' use of parables?
3. Who is the "them" Jesus is referring to (see Mt. 21:23)?

While this parable comes across as a difficult text about judgement, it has some important and useful aspects that point us to the good news of God in Jesus Christ.

4. What place does judgment have in in the gospels?

Some good news thoughts:

Notice the language of sending and inviting is used repeatedly. The king sends out his messengers with the good news again and again. The picture this parable paints is of a God who will not give up on us!

There is the delightful surprise (exaggeration?) that the king invites everyone to the wedding banquet, both good and bad. In a world of blame, shame, and exclusion, this is good news indeed.

5. *Where else might we find good news in this parable?*

The parable of the wedding banquet of the king's son has other significant surprises and exaggerations (especially if we consider the culture of the day and the gap between those understood as insiders/outsideers or elite/non-elite).

6. *What do you find surprising? What do you find exaggerated?*

Looking at today's gospel of Matthew 22, the first 10 verses have a parallel in Luke gospel (14:16-24). In Luke's gospel, a variety of excuses are offered by those initially invited to the wedding feast, but in Matthew's gospel they simply "made light" (the Greek word implies a response of apathy and disregard) of the invitation (vs. 5).

7. *What excuses might have been offered?*

The final five verses, unique to Matthew, find the banquet hall filled and attention is turned to the attire of the wedding guest. Why the concern about dress? There is a scriptural reference to a king providing robes for the invited guests (2 Kings 10:22). Also keep in mind that many times in Paul's writings, the Christian's life is described as "putting on" the new life of faith. (Romans 13:12-14; Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 4:24.)

8. *If clothing isn't the issue, what is the point of these last verses of the parable?*

The final verses include this commentary: "*For many are called, but few are chosen.*"

9. *What do you make of these closing words?*

Remember that the imagery of the wedding banquet is a common theme in both the Old and New Testament. Isaiah speaks of a promised feast of rich foods which God will provide (Isaiah 25:6-9). Revelation 19 describes the final, victorious banquet with the Lamb. Invitation, apathy, rejection, response – all echo in this parable. For Matthew, the new community of the church was a strange assortment of people. God acted with a marvelous disregard for the old rules of what was acceptable and bestowed grace overflowing.