

Matthew 22:1 ¶ And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,
Matthew 22:2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,
Matthew 22:3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.
Matthew 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, and all things *are* ready: come unto the marriage.
Matthew 22:5 But they made light of *it*, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:
Matthew 22:6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated *them* spitefully, and slew *them*.
Matthew 22:7 But when the king heard *thereof*, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

At the opening of this chapter we continue the narrative from the previous chapter, and Jesus is telling yet another parable. His stated purpose—describing the kingdom of heaven. The parable...

The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a great feast for his son's wedding. He sent out his servants to inform the invited guests that all was prepared, but they refused to come. The king then sent out more servants to urge the invited guests to come and enjoy the wedding celebration dinner, but again the invitees refused to come. Most of the invited guests went on about their business, but some abused the messenger servants and even killed them. When the king heard what had happened, he was very angry; and sent out his armies to destroy the murderers and burn their city.

Already, the parable presents a very unusual situation. Most people would be thrilled to be invited to the wedding celebration of the king's son. Also unusual, is that the king would give the invited guests a second chance to be a part of the celebration having once dishonored him by rejecting his invitation. Even more unusual is the horrendous treatment of the messenger servants by some of the invited guests.

Matthew 22:8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.
Matthew 22:9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.
Matthew 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.
Matthew 22:11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:
Matthew 22:12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.
Matthew 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.

Matthew 22:14 For many are called, but few *are* chosen.

The king then told his servants that since the invited guests had proven unworthy, they were to go out into the highways and bring as many as were willing to come—both bad and good (from man's point of view)—to provide guests for the dinner. When the king came in to see the guests, he saw that one person was not dressed with a wedding garment; and he asked the man why he presumed to come without the appropriate garment. The man had no answer. The king then told his servants to bind the man's hands and feet, take him away and cast him into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Jesus then ended the parable by declaring that many are called, but few are chosen.

The king is God; the son is Jesus. The guests that were invited but refused to come picture the Jewish people as a whole. The servants represent the messengers of God's word. Those who killed the messengers would be the religious leaders in particular, and the destroyed city pictures Jerusalem. The people who ended up enjoying the wedding feast pictures the Gentiles.

This is basically a teaching declaring that those who reject Jesus, the very Son of God, as their Messiah will not enjoy the blessings of the kingdom. It is important to note that all the invited guests had the freedom of choice as to whether or not to accept the invitation. It is also important to note that the refusal of the invited guests to attend the wedding feast did not thwart the plans of the king.

The one guest that stood out because he was not wearing a wedding garment represents those who want to enjoy the blessings of God without showing any honor to God; they think they can come to Him on their own terms. The Greek for the word "see" in verse 11 states "to look closely," implying an inspection; only those that passed inspection would be allowed to stay—a picture of the coming judgment of God. The king's treatment of this guest demonstrates that though the invitation is open to all, one can be accepted only on the king's terms. The fact that the guest is speechless when questioned by the king shows that he knew he was in the wrong; he had no valid response. The fact that the man was thrown into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth—in light of the context of the parable about the blessings of the kingdom of heaven—is a picture of being thrown into hell.

JFB noted that Jesus was using the language of the prophet Zephaniah.

*Zephaniah 1:7–8 "Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: for the day of the LORD is at hand: for the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests. And it shall come to pass in the day of the LORD'S sacrifice, that **I will punish the princes, and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel.**"*

JFB also has another enlightening comment: "The custom in the East of presenting festival garments, even though not clearly proved, is certainly

presupposed here. It undoubtedly means something which they bring not of their own — for how could they have any such dress who were gathered in from the highways indiscriminately? — but which they *receive* as their appropriate dress. And what can that be but what is meant by “putting on the Lord Jesus,” as “THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS?”

The conclusion—All are invited, but few will prove to be part of the elect. Paul explains clearly in his letter to the Romans that God has known from the very beginning those that would choose to accept His gift of salvation and entrance into His kingdom; they are the chosen, the elect.

Romans 8:29 “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son....”

Matthew 22:15 ¶ Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in *his* talk.

Matthew 22:16 And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any *man*: for thou regardest not the person of men.

Matthew 22:17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?

Matthew 22:18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, *ye* hypocrites?

Matthew 22:19 Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny.

Matthew 22:20 And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription?

Matthew 22:21 They say unto him, Caesar’s. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s.

Matthew 22:22 When they had heard *these words*, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

“Herodians” = From Easton’s Dictionary: “a Jewish political party who sympathized with the Herodian rulers in their general policy of government, and in the social customs which they introduced from Rome. They were at one with the Sadducees in holding the duty of submission to Rome, and of supporting the Herods on the throne.”

“tribute” = taxes

The Pharisees response to the teaching of Jesus was to gather together to formulate a plan to find an excuse to arrest Him using His own words. They sent a delegation of their own along with the Herodians hoping to trick Him into disregarding Roman law and dishonoring Caesar. It is interesting to note that these two groups were on different sides of the political equation. The Pharisees wanted independence from Rome; the Herodians willingly submitted to Rome. If Jesus gave an answer supporting submission to Rome, the Pharisees could drum up support against Him for denying God’s authority. If His answer

denoted disobedience to Rome, the Herodians could charge Him with promoting rebellion against Rome. Isn't it interesting, and still holds true today, that when focused on a common cause, the enemy of my enemy is my friend.

This delegation approached Jesus with the following question, preceded of course with a bit of flattery intended to disarm Him: "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?"

Jesus immediately understood that their motive was evil. He didn't hesitate to respond with a rebuke and by identifying them as hypocrites. He then told them to bring Him a coin, and they brought Him a penny (a denarius, a normal day's wage). He asked them whose image was on the coin, and they answered, "Caesar's." He then told them that they should give to Caesar what belonged to Caesar and to God what belonged to God.

The obvious question: Where do you see the image of God? The answer is found in Genesis.

Genesis 1:26 "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...."

I liked this comment by Adam Clarke: "This answer is full of consummate wisdom. It establishes the limits, regulates the rights, and distinguishes the jurisdiction of the two empires of heaven and earth. The image of princes stamped on their coin denotes that temporal things belong all to their government. The image of God stamped on the soul denotes that all its faculties and powers belong to the Most High, and should be employed in his service."

His answer amazed them, and they left. There was just nothing with which to accuse Him in His answer.

Matthew 22:23 ¶ The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

Matthew 22:24 Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

Matthew 22:25 Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother:

Matthew 22:26 Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh.

Matthew 22:27 And last of all the woman died also.

Matthew 22:28 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.

Matthew 22:29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

Matthew 22:30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.

The Sadducees must have heard that the Pharisees and Herodians had failed in their endeavor, so that very same day they sent a delegation of their own. They hoped to trip Jesus up with a question concerning the resurrection—a truth they

did not believe. I am not sure what they hoped to accomplish except to get Jesus to admit that the belief in resurrection was absurd and to further alienate Him from the Pharisees.

They posed the following scenario: Suppose a man died having no children and left his wife to his brother. According to the established custom, a brother married the woman to raise up offspring to his brother...

Deuteronomy 25:5–6 “If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband’s brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband’s brother unto her. And it shall be, that the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel.”

...but he also died without having any children. This scenario was repeated with each brother until the final one, the seventh died; and then the woman died. The question: “Whose wife shall she be in the resurrection since she had been married to all seven?”

Jesus immediately responded by telling them that they did not understand the scripture or the power of God. In the resurrection one is neither married nor given in marriage. When we are resurrected, we are as the angels in heaven—not married, free from the desires of the flesh and pure in every way.

With this answer Jesus identifies another truth in which the Sadducees did not believe—the existence of angels.

Matthew 22:31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,
Matthew 22:32 I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.
Matthew 22:33 And when the multitude heard *this*, they were astonished at his doctrine.

As He so often does, Jesus then makes reference to scripture to support His answer.

Exodus 3:6 &14 “Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.... And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”

In context, God is identifying Himself to Moses at the burning bush. The language implies that He is declaring present truth. Jesus boldly declares, “God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” For that to be true requires that the resurrection be true since Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were already dead. For the resurrection to be true requires an all powerful God.

Once again, Jesus astonished the people with His teaching.

There are other Old Testament passages that teach the resurrection.

Job 19:25–27 “For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.”

Psalms 17:15 “As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.”

Psalms 49:15 “But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me.”

Isaiah 26:19 “Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.”

Daniel 12:1–2 “And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”

It is posited by many commentators that the Lord quoted from the Pentateuch because it was believed that the Sadducees accepted only that portion to be valid.

Matthew 22:34 ¶ But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.

Matthew 22:35 Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying,

Matthew 22:36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

Matthew 22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

Matthew 22:38 This is the first and great commandment.

Matthew 22:39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Matthew 22:40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

News traveled quickly in the temple precincts, and the Pharisees learned that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees. One of their members, a lawyer, approached Jesus with yet another question: What is the greatest commandment in the law?

Mark seems to indicate that this man's question resulted from his respect for the way Jesus answered the Sadducees.

Mark 12:28 “And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?”

Jesus immediately answered by once again quoting the pertinent scripture, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." He then identified the second as, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Deuteronomy 6:4–5 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might."

Leviticus 19:18 "...thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD."

In fact, Jesus said, these two commandments form the hinge point of the whole of God's word as declared in the law and by the prophets.

One who loves the Lord with all one's heart, soul and mind delights in obedience to His will. One who loves his neighbor as himself mirrors the heart of the Son of God, our Redeemer, our Savior. If you look at the Ten Commandments, you will note that obedience is predicated on these two truths.

It is important to note that one cannot love one's neighbor as self without first loving God with all of one's heart, soul and mind.

Mark provides some further information regarding this encounter.

Mark 12:32–34 "And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question."

The lawyer quickly affirmed the truth of Jesus' answer referencing scripture in the process.

1 Samuel 15:22 "And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

Because this man showed respect and evidenced some spiritual understanding, Jesus encouraged him and declared that he was close to becoming part of the kingdom of God.

After this, no one else posed any further questions to Jesus.

Matthew 22:41 ¶ While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Matthew 22:42 Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, *The Son of David.*

Matthew 22:43 He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying,

Matthew 22:44 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?

Matthew 22:45 If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?

Matthew 22:46 And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.

The questions from others having ceased, Jesus took advantage of the opportunity to pose a question of His own, "What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?" His purpose is to cause them to think about their understanding of the promised Messiah.

They immediately answered that he would be "The Son of David." Jesus then quoted scripture and posed a question.

Psalms 110:1 "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

David is identified as the author of this psalm, and Jesus points out that it is through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that he wrote. Jesus notes that David declared that God will address his Lord (the Messiah) declaring that He (the Messiah) should sit on His (God's) right hand until He (God) makes His (the Messiah) enemies His footstool."

The question—If David calls the Messiah Lord, how is he His son?

Jesus was God incarnate in the flesh.

John 1:14 "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

Luke 1:30–35 "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

Only as the man Jesus was He David's son; but as the Messiah, He was David's Lord and the Son of God. This truth comes through loud and clear in the writings of the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 9:6–7 "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his

kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."

Isaiah 11:1–5 "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins."

No man, none of the religious leaders, was able to answer Him a word. The fact that they did not refute the use of this Psalm testifies that it was recognized as referencing the Messiah. Ellicott notes, "It was a received tradition that the Christ should sit on the right hand of Jehovah and Abraham on His left."

From that day forward neither did they ask Him any more questions.

I know that it is easy to read through scripture without really thinking about what it is saying—just as these men had. That is why I am pursuing a personal verse-by-verse journey through scripture. If you are seeking the truth, it makes you carefully think through what is being said.