

## Episode #851 Matthew 22 Part 1-Parable of the Royal Wedding

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being “in Israel,” in contrast to believers today who are “in Christ.”

II. The Lord was having a final, conclusive confrontation with the corrupt, religious leaders of Israel in Jerusalem. He had told a parable of a vineyard with wicked, rebellious vinedressers who refused to yield the proper fruits of the vineyard to the owner, mistreated his servants, and even killed his son! These vinedressers would be destroyed by the landowner and other vinedressers be put in their place who would yield him the fruits he was owed. Now, the Lord continues His confrontation with these wicked men.

III. The Parable of the Murderous Vinedressers. Matthew 21:33-46.

- A. Verse 43. It will not be until the Lord searches for His sheep and seeks them out, Ezekiel 34:11-13, not until He brings them out from the peoples and gathers them out of the countries where they are now scattered, that He will cause this nation, the seed of Israel to whom the promises are made, to come into existence. The kingdom of God will be given to that new nation in that day. The Lord started to build that nation in the Acts period. It was founded on the apostles and prophets He called, like the twelve and Paul. See Acts 5:29-32. God was giving authority to those who obeyed Him, and taking it away from rebellious men like the Sanhedrin. If it were not for the interruption of the dispensation of grace at Acts 28:28, the Acts period company of Israelite believers would have grown right into the Israel of God of the kingdom of God. Yet that time was interrupted, and so these things await a future fulfillment, when God returns to His kingdom purposes once more.
- B. Verse 44. They should have fallen on Him and been broken, so that He might put them back together again. Bullinger says “grind him to powder” is found in a second or third century papyrus with the meaning of ruining a thing in some way. This is for Him to fall upon you in judgment. All who are thus crushed are lost and destroyed. These religious leaders would not fall on Him, so He will fall on them, and they will be destroyed and brought to ruin.
- C. Verse 45. The “chief priests” are again the archpriests. We too should realize that He spoke of the chief priests and Pharisees. All too many make this parable to be about the nation of Israel itself. This is contrary to God’s Word. The vineyard is Israel, the Lord’s vineyard, Isaiah 5:7. Israel cannot be taken from Israel and given to someone else! The point is that they were going to lose the leadership, and it would be given to Christ’s disciples. They got to know or realized He was referring to them.
- D. Verse 46. Their fear of the multitude is what stopped them from attempting to kill Him earlier. The idea that He was rejected by Israel does not fit the record. It was the corrupt national leaders in Jerusalem who rejected Him, not the common people. It was the opinion of the common people that kept these wicked rulers from harming Him earlier! The crowd held Him to be a prophet, as we read earlier.

III. Parable of the King’s Son’s Wedding. Matthew 22:1-14.

- A. Verse 1. This is the third parable in this series of parables, all meant to condemn His enemies who rejected Him.
- B. Verse 2. In Luke 14, He told a similar parable at a dinner, but He used the phrase “the kingdom of God.” “Heavens” was used by the Jews as a synonym for God, since they

were reluctant to actually say His name. Again, this is a likeness of one aspect of the kingdom. The main character is not the son, but the king.

- C. Verse 3. “Sent out” is the Greek *apostello*, meaning he sent them forth with authority; that is, to invite the guests to the wedding feast. Notice that this was the marriage celebration, not the betrothal, which would have taken place long before. “Servants” is the Greek *doulous*, meaning “slaves.” “Call” is *kaleo*, meaning “invite” or “bid,” as *kaleo* means in about a third of its occurrences. In the others, it means to name, designate, or position. The next words are repeated: to call the called, or to invite the invited. “Willing” is *thelo*, meaning the will as in the wish or desire. This is what first John the Baptist, then the Lord, then His twelve, and then His seventy did. They invited the initial guests to the kingdom. These were those who were already Israel’s leaders, who would have had first chance to enter and be leaders in the new Israel of the kingdom. Yet they utterly rejected the offer and the One offering
- D. Verse 4. “Sent forth” is *apostello* again. He sent them with his authority or commissioned them. “Servants” is slaves again, *doulous*. The “fatted cattle” were grain-fed cattle.
- E. Verse 5. One on the one hand went to his farm, one on the other hand to his business or trade. It is obvious that they did not respect the king nor value his kingdom.
- F. Verse 6. The “rest” were those left after some went to their fields and others returned to their trades. “Servants” are again slaves. “Spitefully” or with hubris, Greek *hubrizo*. This was insolent, shameful treatment.

IV. Conclusion: The religious leaders, invited to God’s kingdom, refused it, and even mocked and killed those who offered it to them. They would be destroyed, and others invited to His kingdom. That was the Lord’s point in the parable of the king’s son’s wedding. This is not about God rejecting Israel and giving their kingdom to “the church,” but about Israel’s leaders rejecting God and getting replaced by the Lord’s apostles. Let us reject the anti-Semitic, self-serving interpretations of traditional Christianity and keep this parable in the context in which the Lord spoke it: against Israel’s wicked, religious leaders.