

## Matthew Lesson 21

Last week we heard Yeshua speak of the prophecies that were being fulfilled before people's very eyes. This week His parables (mashal's) continue, and He begins with an event that is very well understood - a Jewish wedding, and compares it to something that is not well understood, which is the kingdom that is to come.

Also important to note that though we have gone on to another chapter, the group to whom Yeshua was speaking is still the same.

Yeshua is still addressing the teachers and religious leaders of His day, and He had just spoken a strong indictment against them in the last two parables He taught. They were eager to trap Him and wanted to arrest Him, but feared the people who perceived that he was a prophet.

Matthew 22:1-14 And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: **The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son**, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and **they were not willing to come**. **Again**, he sent out other servants, saying, Tell those who are invited, See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding. **But they made light of it and went their ways**, one to his own farm, another to his business. And the rest **seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them**. But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers and burned up their city.

This is no doubt an allusion to the coming destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem that is yet to come in 70 AD. This could also be related to the destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem when Nebuchadnezzar's army came in to conquer and destroy in 586 BC.

This had already occurred and would occur yet again! at Hanukkah. History is cyclical.

**Then he said to his servants, The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.**

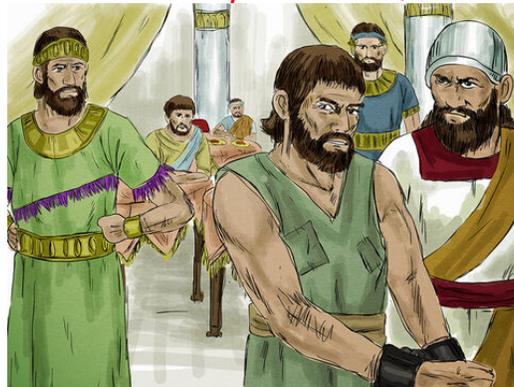
We need to ask ourselves what made them unworthy. The people had made light of the message of the coming kingdom, and they made light of the message of the coming Messiah that the prophets had brought. Their main interest was their own

lives and livelihoods. They killed the prophets and went to take care of their own interests.

**\*\*Do we see this cycle repeating itself in history?**

Now the king is going to try a third time, and he says:

Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find invite to the wedding. So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen.



The apparel had to be in line with what the king had approved.  
Our apparel begins with our relationship with Him.

**Galatians 3:27** For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

**Isaiah 61:10** I will rejoice greatly in the Lord, My soul will exult in my God;  
For He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,  
And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

**Revelation 19:8** It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

**Colossians 3:9-12** Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all. Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

\*\*How would you sum up the garment that is acceptable apparel for the wedding?

Now the Pharisees are going to challenge Yeshua saying to Him:

**Matthew 22:17,18,21** Tell us, therefore what do You think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, **Why do you test Me, you hypocrites?** And He said to them, **Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's.**

And what was the outcome? **Matthew 22:22** When they had heard these words, they marveled, and left Him and went their way.

Imagine - He had just called them **hypocrites** and they marveled when they heard His answer. It is important to remember that a hypocrite is: someone who is being deceitful in what they appear to be doing; they are behaving under false pretense.

**Luke 12:1** Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

He clearly told them to be good citizens and pay their taxes, and He reminded them to keep G-d first with their money. In saying this He was affirming the 1st commandment - You shall have no other gods before Me - including money. At this point, they knew He could not be trapped. He was no ordinary rabbi.

They probably left to ponder their next move.



And now the Saducees (Tza'dukim) come along with their challenge.

Who are the Sadducees? Their name means "righteous ones." They were a rather aloof and aristocratic sect of the Jews, when compared to the Pharisees who were more like modern day Orthodox Jews. The Pharisees would have controlled the synagogues, whereas the Sadducees were a priestly line that controlled the Temple.

**Matthew 22:23-33** The same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him and asked Him, **24** saying: "Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. **25** Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother. **26** Likewise the second also, and the third, even to the seventh. **27** Last of all the woman died also. **28** Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her."

Jesus answered and said unto them, **You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.**

Yeshua could say this as the Sadducees believed only in the Torah, not in other writings of the Tanach. Therefore, many scriptures were left out of their doctrine.

They did not believe in the afterlife, though clearly it is written in both the prophets and the writings:

**Daniel 12:1-2** At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt.

**Isaiah 26: 19** Your dead shall live; their bodies shall rise. You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy! For your dew is a dew of light, and the earth will give birth to the dead.

**Psalms 16:10** For you will not leave my soul among the dead or allow your holy one to rot in the grave.

((So, Yeshua is telling them plainly that they do not know the Scriptures. If they had known, but would have known that there is coming a resurrection of the dead.))

Now He proceeds with more information for them, saying:

For In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven. But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. And when the multitudes heard this, they were astonished at His teaching.

**Romans 8:11** If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

**Philippians 4:13** I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

\*\*Remember Yeshua told the Sadducees that they were mistaken because they did not know the power of G-d? What do you think the Lord wants us to know from the above two verses?

\*\* Why are the above two verses so encouraging?

Another fact too amazing to leave out is that Yeshua spoke to these Sadducees using a rabbinic method known as pilpul. This type of dialogue, Pilpul, was used by the sharp-witted scholarly types who were debating or discussing an issue.

And Yeshua says, from the Torah that they believed, saying

I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead but of the living.

The verb Yeshua used to state this fact is **anochi**. The other word that can be used here and is used more than twice as much throughout the Tanach is ani.

but here Yeshua quotes exodus 3:6 Then He said, **"I am - anochi -** the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."

Ani means I am. This "I am" makes the one speaking **distinct** from the audience.

Anochi means "I am" with special connotations.

Anochi shows the audience the intimacy with them. He wants to strengthen them, give them confidence, make them His own special people, give them blessings.

G-d used Anochi (the intimate G-d) when He gave the people the 10 commandments!

Amazingly it is related to the Egyptian word - **anoch** - meaning love and endearment. The people receiving the 10 Commandment just came out of Egypt and would have known this is a term of great endearment.

I am the G-d of the living! - Anochi am the G-d of the living!

**Matthew 23:3** Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do.

**Matthew 23:1,2** Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.

Moses' seat was a place of authority in the synagogue where the Torah was read. but do not do according to their works; for they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

**\*\*Why would Yeshua go to such lengths to address the wrong of these leaders? This entire 36 verses in Matthew 23 addresses wrong attitudes of pride and arrogance and of not teaching the true meaning of the Torah, so He reminds the people.**

**Matthew 23:8** But you, do not be called Rabbi; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren.

**\*\* Are the positions of men or titles of men suppose to make them greater than others?**

**Matthew 23:24** Blind guides who strain out a gnat and eat a camel.

These teachers were literally straining their soup to be sure no unkosher gnat accidentally flew into it, but to make a point, Yeshua says but you will sit down and eat an entire camel - a totally unkosher animal. He was making the point that they were appearing to be so pious and perfect, but Yeshua says No, they are forgetting the important things like taking care of the widow while wanting everyone to see how careful they were to follow Torah and not eat that unkosher gnat.

They were totally missing the heart of Torah. Yeshua wanted the people to know about leaders who wanted power and recognition.

**\*\*Can you equate these kinds of actions by any groups of people today that we need to be aware of?**



**Matthew 23:37-39** O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'

He says Jerusalem, Jerusalem twice, as though beckoning her to come to Him, and to receive all that He has for her.

**Luke 19:41** tells us: As Jesus approached Jerusalem and saw the city, He wept over it.

