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~ **The Banquet, the Coin, and the Son** ~

You can learn much more about this story by doing these three things:

1. Read Matthew 22.
2. Discover key cultural and historical insights.
3. Answer the reflective questions.

1. Read the text of the story.

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Matthew 22 NASB	Matthew 22 NLT
<p>Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying, ²“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son. ³And he sent out his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast, and they were unwilling to come. ⁴Again he sent out other slaves saying, ‘Tell those who have been invited, “Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fattened livestock are <i>all</i> butchered and everything is ready; come to the wedding feast.”’ ⁵But they paid no attention and went their way, one to his own farm, another to his business, ⁶and the rest seized his slaves and mistreated them and killed them. ⁷But the king was enraged, and he sent his armies and destroyed those murderers and set their city on fire. ⁸Then he <i>said</i> to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. ⁹Go therefore to the main highways, and as many as you find <i>there</i>, invite to the wedding feast.’ ¹⁰Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered together all they found, both evil and good; and the wedding hall was filled with dinner guests.</p> <p>¹¹“But when the king came in to look over the dinner guests, he saw a man there who was not dressed in wedding clothes, ¹²and he <i>said</i> to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without wedding clothes?’ And the man was speechless. ¹³Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ ¹⁴For many are called, but few <i>are</i> chosen.”</p> <p>¹⁵Then the Pharisees went and plotted together how they might trap Him in what He said. ¹⁶And they <i>sent</i> their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying,</p>	<p>Jesus also told them other parables. He said, ²“The Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a king who prepared a great wedding feast for his son. ³When the banquet was ready, he sent his servants to notify those who were invited. But they all refused to come!</p> <p>⁴“So he sent other servants to tell them, ‘The feast has been prepared. The bulls and fattened cattle have been killed, and everything is ready. Come to the banquet!’ ⁵But the guests he had invited ignored them and went their own way, one to his farm, another to his business. ⁶Others seized his messengers and insulted them and killed them.</p> <p>⁷“The king was furious, and he sent out his army to destroy the murderers and burn their town. ⁸And he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, and the guests I invited aren’t worthy of the honor. ⁹Now go out to the street corners and invite everyone you see.’ ¹⁰So the servants brought in everyone they could find, good and bad alike, and the banquet hall was filled with guests.</p> <p>¹¹“But when the king came in to meet the guests, he noticed a man who wasn’t wearing the proper clothes for a wedding. ¹²‘Friend,’ he asked, ‘how is it that you are here without wedding clothes?’ But the man had no reply. ¹³Then the king said to his aides, ‘Bind his hands and feet and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’</p> <p>¹⁴“For many are called, but few are chosen.”</p> <p>¹⁵Then the Pharisees met together to plot how to trap</p>

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“Teacher, we know that You are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and defer to no one; for You are not partial to any.¹⁷ Tell us then, what do You think? Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?”¹⁸ But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, “Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites?¹⁹ Show Me the coin *used* for the poll-tax.” And they brought Him a denarius.²⁰ And He *said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?”²¹ They *said to Him, “Caesar’s.” Then He *said to them, “Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and to God the things that are God’s.”²² And hearing *this*, they were amazed, and leaving Him, they went away.

²³ On that day *some* Sadducees (who say there is no resurrection) came to Jesus and questioned Him,²⁴ asking, “Teacher, Moses said, ‘IF A MAN DIES HAVING NO CHILDREN, HIS BROTHER AS NEXT OF KIN SHALL MARRY HIS WIFE, AND RAISE UP CHILDREN FOR HIS BROTHER.’²⁵ Now there were seven brothers with us; and the first married and died, and having no children left his wife to his brother;²⁶ so also the second, and the third, down to the seventh.²⁷ Last of all, the woman died.²⁸ In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had *married* her.”

²⁹ But Jesus answered and said to them, “You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures nor the power of God.³⁰ For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.³¹ But regarding the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God:³² ‘I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB’? He is not the God of the dead but of the living.”³³ When the crowds heard *this*, they were astonished at His teaching.

³⁴ But when the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered themselves together.³⁵ One of them, a lawyer, asked Him *a question*, testing Him,³⁶ “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?”³⁷ And He said to him, “‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’³⁸ This is the great and foremost commandment.³⁹ The second is like it, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”

Jesus into saying something for which he could be arrested.¹⁶ They sent some of their disciples, along with the supporters of Herod, to meet with him. “Teacher,” they said, “we know how honest you are. You teach the way of God truthfully. You are impartial and don’t play favorites.¹⁷ Now tell us what you think about this: Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

¹⁸ But Jesus knew their evil motives. “You hypocrites!” he said. “Why are you trying to trap me?”¹⁹ Here, show me the coin used for the tax.” When they handed him a Roman coin,²⁰ he asked, “Whose picture and title are stamped on it?”

²¹ “Caesar’s,” they replied.

“Well, then,” he said, “give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God.”

²² His reply amazed them, and they went away.

²³ That same day Jesus was approached by some Sadducees—religious leaders who say there is no resurrection from the dead. They posed this question:²⁴ “Teacher, Moses said, ‘If a man dies without children, his brother should marry the widow and have a child who will carry on the brother’s name.’²⁵ Well, suppose there were seven brothers. The oldest one married and then died without children, so his brother married the widow.²⁶ But the second brother also died, and the third brother married her. This continued with all seven of them.²⁷ Last of all, the woman also died.²⁸ So tell us, whose wife will she be in the resurrection? For all seven were married to her.”

²⁹ Jesus replied, “Your mistake is that you don’t know the Scriptures, and you don’t know the power of God.³⁰ For when the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage. In this respect they will be like the angels in heaven.

³¹ “But now, as to whether there will be a resurrection of the dead—haven’t you ever read about this in the Scriptures? Long after Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had died, God said,³² ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ So he is the God of the living, not the dead.”

³³ When the crowds heard him, they were astounded at

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<p>⁴¹ Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question: ⁴² “What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He?” They *said to Him, “The son of David.” ⁴³ He *said to them, “Then how does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying,</p> <p>⁴⁴ ‘THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, “SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I PUT YOUR ENEMIES BENEATH YOUR FEET”’?</p> <p>⁴⁵ If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his son?” ⁴⁶ No one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day on to ask Him another question.</p>	<p>his teaching.</p> <p>³⁴ But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees with his reply, they met together to question him again. ³⁵ One of them, an expert in religious law, tried to trap him with this question: ³⁶ “Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?”</p> <p>³⁷ Jesus replied, “You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰ The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.”</p> <p>⁴¹ Then, surrounded by the Pharisees, Jesus asked them a question: ⁴² “What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?”</p> <p>They replied, “He is the son of David.”</p> <p>⁴³ Jesus responded, “Then why does David, speaking under the inspiration of the Spirit, call the Messiah ‘my Lord’? For David said,</p> <p>⁴⁴ ‘The LORD said to my Lord, Sit in the place of honor at my right hand until I humble your enemies beneath your feet.’</p> <p>⁴⁵ Since David called the Messiah ‘my Lord,’ how can the Messiah be his son?”</p> <p>⁴⁶ No one could answer him. And after that, no one dared to ask him any more questions.</p>
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2. Discover key cultural and historical insights

These insights are from Craig Blomberg – *Interpreting the Parables*

1. The meal was a standard metaphor for the end time banquet of the kingdom of God.
2. The refusal to attend the banquet for the king’s son would be considered high treason.
3. The violence done to the king’s servants would be a sign of insurrection against the king.
4. Kings in ancient times provided festal clothing for those attending a banquet such as in this parable.

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5. In the Mishnah it is said, “This world is like unto a vestibule before the world to come; prepare yourself in the vestibule, so that you may enter the banqueting hall.”

These insights are from Bruce J. Malina – *A Social Science Commentary on the Synoptics*

1. The excuses are an indirect, Mediterranean way of showing disapproval to the king.
2. The first invitations were to the elites in the city. The second invitation would be to non-elites who would not normally dine in the presence of a king. The king was crossing social barriers.
3. The word highways refers to crossroads, city squares and the normal places of communication with the non elites.
4. The king would have proper garments ready for the non-elites.

Answer these reflective questions.

In the story of the marriage feast of the son, what does the banquet represent? Who is God sending an invitation to today?

In the story, we find some of the people making excuses to attend the banquet. What excuses have you heard as to why people do not follow Christ?

In the story, one man refused to wear a wedding garment that the king provided. How did this insult the king? In what ways do people insult God today?

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Jesus was asked a question about taxes to Caesar, about the resurrection, and about the greatest commandment. Which of the answers that Jesus gave is your favorite and why?

Jesus said the greatest commandment was to love God with all one's heart, soul, and mind and the second was to love one's neighbor as oneself. How would you rate your love for God according to this commandment?

Read Psalm 110:1. How can the Messiah be David's son and at the same time David's Lord? What does this teach us about the Messiah?

Have you made the Messiah the Lord of your life?
