

Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost

OLD TESTAMENT – Micah 3:5-12

. ⁵ This is what the LORD says: “As for the prophets who lead my people astray, if one feeds them, they proclaim ‘peace’; if he does not, they prepare to wage war against him. ⁶ Therefore night will come over you, without visions, and darkness, without divination. The sun will set for the prophets, and the day will go dark for them. ⁷ The seers will be ashamed and the diviners disgraced. They will all cover their faces because there is no answer from God.” ⁸ But as for me, I am filled with power, with the Spirit of the LORD, and with justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression, to Israel his sin. ⁹ Hear this, you leaders of the house of Jacob, you rulers of the house of Israel, who despise justice and distort all that is right; ¹⁰ who build Zion with bloodshed, and Jerusalem with wickedness. ¹¹ Her leaders judge for a bribe, her priests teach for a price, and her prophets tell fortunes for money. Yet they lean upon the LORD and say, “Is not the LORD among us? No disaster will come upon us.” ¹² Therefore because of you, Zion will be plowed like a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble, the temple hill a mound overgrown with thickets.

3:1–12 Verses 1–4 deal with the sins of the leaders of Israel, vv. 5–7 with the false prophets and vv. 9–12 with the leaders, priests and prophets. (CSB)

3:5 *prophets.* False prophets misled the people by telling lies. (TLSB)

proclaim ‘peace.’ The false prophets predicted peace for Judah while Micah predicted destruction and captivity (see v. 12; 4:10). See also Jer 6:13–14; 8:10–11. (CSB)

Jeremiah later voiced similar complaints about false prophets who promised peace (Jer 8:11). (TLSB)

That is, who, if they have anything to bite with their teeth, when they receive a sufficient amount of bribe money, proclaim peace, prophesying as it pleases the heart of men. (Kretzmann)

something to eat. False prophets’ message was based on how well the people fed them (v 11). (TLSB)

3:6 Those who abused their prophetic office would totally lose their ability and privilege to speak the true Word of the Lord. They would experience a blackout of God’s favor. (TLSB)

NIGHT WILL COME... – Four time, as if to emphasize this awful judgment, he uses similar expressions. All would be gone! The Lord Jesus described their loss this way, “Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him (Matthew 13:12). (PBC)

3:7 *seers.* An older term for “prophets” (see note on 1Sa 9:9). (CSB)

Those who claimed to be able to predict the future. (TLSB)

Be disgraced on account of the fact that their predictions are not fulfilled. Blushing with shame on account of their miserable failures in trying to uncover the future. (Kretzmann)

cover their lips. Gesture of uncleanness and mourning (Ezk 24:17, 22). (TLSB)

Literally, "their beard," their face up to the nostrils, as a sign of shame. (Kretzmann)

NO ANSWER FROM GOD – He refuses to vouchsafe them any kind of information that might establish their false claims. (Kretzmann)

3:8 One of the chief purposes of Micah was to declare to Judah its sin. (CSB)

filled ... with the Spirit. The prophets were Spirit-filled messengers (see Isa 48:16). (CSB)

Micah, unlike the false prophets, was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke a message that came from God. (TLSB)

The Spirit gave him “might,” the courage fearlessly to denounce the sins and transgressions of Israel, no matter what the consequences; the false prophets spoke only to satisfy the whims and fancies of the people. (PBC)

transgression ... sin. Micah’s message offered no false security to Jacob (Israel) but proclaimed God’s wrath and announced His justice. Luth: “He is boasting of his own power and boldness in the ministry of the Word which God has entrusted to him. It is as if he were saying: ‘Although all the princes and priests resist me, yet I go on preaching because I must. I do not forsake the established office of teaching, no matter how much their frenzy rages against me. I pay no attention I have started with God’s help, even if I am going to be killed, because by the efficacy of the Spirit of the Lord I am filled with both power and a sense of justice. This “sense of justice” is that I am sure that I am teaching correct things. Therefore, even if the enemies of the Word of God threaten me with death, I pay no attention to it. The Spirit of the Lord is with me. He enlivens and comforts me.’ Surely, to accuse so freely the princes and all those who are in positions of power and who rage against the truth is not characteristic of human boldness but of the boldness of the Spirit of the Lord” (AE 18:232). (TLSB)

3:9 YOU LEADERS – The very leaders whose wickedness had been described in the first part of the chapter. (Kretzmann)

3:10 BUILD ZION WITH BLOODSHED – Caring only for gain and bloodshed in building their stately mansions, their wealth being obtained by the condemnation and murder of the innocent. (Kretzmann)

According to archaeological evidence, much building was going on in Jerusalem during Micah’s time. (TLSB)

blood ... iniquity. Parallel terms suggest oppressive practices such as forced labor and excessive taxes. (TLSB)

3:11 *heads ... money.* Judges, priests, and prophets abused their authority by giving false judgments, teachings, and oracles. They did this for personal gain, rather than carrying out their duties in the fear of the Lord and for the good of the people, esp for the protection of the needy in the land. (TLSB)

they lean on the LORD. Despite their wickedness, the leaders acted as though they relied on the Lord, claiming that His presence in their midst guaranteed their security. (TLSB)

for a bribe. See Isa 1:23; 5:23. (CSB)

Micah focused on the chief sin that was common to each of the three groups. Priests had been appointed by God to instruct the people in His Word without compensation. They were to receive their sustenance from portions assigned by the Lord (Deut 18:1-5). Yet, here they were teaching “for a price,” thereby losing their impartiality. (PBC)

3:12 The destruction of Jerusalem occurred in 586 B.C. This verse was quoted a century later in Jer 26:18. Jer 26:19 indicates that Micah’s preaching may have been instrumental in the revival under King Hezekiah (see 2Ki 18:1–6; 2Ch 29–31). (CSB)

Ground would go fallow after Babylonian forces conquered Judah and took its inhabitants into captivity. Micah’s words were quoted about a century later by defenders of the prophet Jeremiah, who argued that he should not be killed for what he had spoken against the temple (Jer 26:16–19). (TLSB)

Ch 3 The very people charged by God to administer justice, to give sound teaching, and to preach His Word are abusing their authority for personal gain. Micah proclaims that God will refuse to hear their cry for deliverance when judgment comes. If we abuse our authority as parents, employers, pastors, or teachers, we kindle God’s wrath and displeasure. When we serve our own interests at the expense of others, especially those who are powerless and needy, may we confess our sin and ask forgiveness. And as we have received God’s mercy in Christ, may we show mercy by looking after the interests of others (Php 2:1–7). • Lord Jesus, save me from serving only my own needs. Give me freedom to look to the interests of the poor, the sick, and the powerless. Amen (TLSB)

EPISTLE – 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12

you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more. ² For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. ³ It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; ⁴ that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, ⁵ not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; ⁶ and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. ⁷ For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. ⁸ Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit. ⁹ Now about brotherly love we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. ¹⁰ And in fact, you do love all the brothers throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers, to do so more and

more. ¹¹ **Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands, just as we told you,** ¹² **so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.**

4:1 *Finally.* The main section of the letter is finished, though much is yet to come (see Php 3:1 and note). (CSB)

live. Lit. “walk.” Paul uses this metaphor often of the Christian way (see Ro 6:4; 2Co 5:7; Eph 4:1; 5:17; Col 1:10, “live a life”; 2:6; 4:5, “act”). It points to steady progress. (CSB)

The Law is given as a guide for those who are already saved. Paul gives a guideline to those already saved through faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. (TLSB)

we ask you and urge you. Paul is not arrogant, but he does speak with authority in the Lord Jesus. He has the “mind of Christ” (1Co 2:16). (CSB)

more and more. Abundance of good works results from being grafted in Christ as a branch to the vine (Jn 15:4). (TLSB)

4:2 *instructions.* Used of authoritative commands and has a military ring (see Ac 5:28; 16:24). (CSB)

Given to Paul by the Lord Himself, who gives it authority. (TLSB)

4:3 *sanctified.* See note on 3:13. (CSB)

Referring to the ethical or moral implications of the Gospel. A person who has been re-created in Christ must not continue to live in an immoral manner. A Christian’s body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who enables the believer to live a holy life (1Co 6:15–20). (TLSB)

sexual immorality. In the first century moral standards were generally very low, and chastity was regarded as an unreasonable restriction. Paul, however, would not compromise God’s clear and demanding standards. The warning was needed, for Christians were not immune to the temptation (see 1Co 5:1). (CSB)

4:4 *how to control his own body.* Our sexuality is God’s gift for use within the parameters of marriage. “Good people will know how to control the use of marriage, especially when they occupy public offices” (Ap XXIII 43). (TLSB)

4:5 *like the heathen.* The Christian is to be different. (CSB)

Unbelievers outside of the Church who live by gratifying their lustful passions in wanton self-indulgence. (TLSB)

not know God. Humans have an inherent sense that God exists (Rm 1:19–20), yet they sinfully corrupt that knowledge into idolatry (Rm 1:21–23). (TLSB)

4:6 *wrong his brother.* Sexual sin harms others besides those who engage in it. In adultery, e.g., the spouse is always wronged. Premarital sex wrongs the future partner by robbing him or her of the virginity that ought to be brought to marriage. (CSB)

Having an intimate relationship with someone else's wife or husband. (TLSB)

The Lord will punish. A motive for chastity. (CSB)

“The wages of sin is death” (Rm 6:23). The anger and wrath of the Holy God will be on those who have not repented of their sin and are not covered by the blood of His Son (Eph 5:6; Col 3:5–6). (TLSB)

beforehand. While teaching in their city (Ac 17:1–9). (TLSB)

4:7 *called us.* Just as God sought for Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and called them when they sinned, so He seeks and calls us by the Gospel into faith in His Son. (TLSB)

Another reason for chastity is God's call to holiness. (CSB)

4:8 *God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.* Still another reason for chastity is that sexual sin is against God, who gives the Holy Spirit to believers for their sanctification. To live in sexual immorality is to reject God, specifically in regard to the Holy Spirit. (CSB)

Reception of the Holy Spirit is not our achievement. The Holy Spirit is given when the Word about Christ is heard and the Sacraments are received by faith. The Holy Spirit reveals the meaning of the Word and the Sacraments by testifying for Christ. (TLSB)

4:9 *brotherly love.* Translates *philadelphia*, a Greek word that outside the NT almost without exception denoted the mutual love of children of the same father. In the NT it always means love of fellow believers in Christ, all of whom have the same heavenly Father. (CSB)

This passage is another masterpiece of pastoral exhortation, for it combines a ready acknowledgment of the progress already made in sanctification with a tactful reminder of the fact that the goal has not yet been reached: But concerning brotherly love you have no need to be written to, for yourselves are people taught of God to love one another. With what effective skill Paul brings out his point! By representing the situation in such a way as to call them men taught by God Himself, through the Holy Ghost in the Word, and stating that under the circumstances his writing concerning brotherly love would be superfluous, he places this virtue before their eyes with the sharpest accentuation, putting all those to shame that were not practicing this love at all times.

taught by God. Cf. Isa 54:13; Jn 6:45; 1Co 2:13. (CSB)

By the words of Jesus and the Spirit Paul passed on to them. (TLSB)

4:10 MORE AND MORE – The apostle names a case of which he personally knows: For, indeed, you do it toward all the brethren in entire Macedonia. There was a lively intercourse between the Christians of those days, not merely in the home congregation, but also with the brethren in Philippi, Berea, and elsewhere in Macedonia. Toward all these Christians the members of the Thessalonian congregation were practicing brotherly love as it was required. (Kretzmann)

4:11 Some Thessalonians, probably because of idleness, were taking undue interest in other people's affairs. (CSB)

Paul warns against being overzealous for spiritual matters. The Christian life is balanced. "It is not only necessary for our life that our body have food and clothes and other necessities. It is also necessary that we spend our days in peace and quiet among the people with whom we live and have dealings in daily business and conversation and all sorts of doings" (LC III 73). (TLSB)

work with your hands. The Greeks in general thought manual labor degrading and fit only for slaves. Christians took seriously the need for earning their own living, but some of the Thessalonians, perhaps as a result of their belief in the imminent return of Christ (see 2Th 3:11), were neglecting work and relying on others to support them. (CSB)

4:12 *not be dependent on anybody.* Or "have need of nothing." Both meanings are true and significant. Christians in need because of their idleness are not obedient Christians. (CSB)

Paul urges them to live on the fruits of their physical labor. (TLSB)

4:1–12 Paul gives advice on some practical matters dealing with sanctification so that their witness for the Lord may go forward blamelessly. We Christians must lead a sexually pure life so that we may not grieve the Holy Spirit. Our love to one another should not be superficial but honest and from the heart. We should live by our labor without improperly depending on others for support. The Lord—through His Spirit poured upon us—fights for us against the "flaming darts of the evil one" (Eph 6:16) so that we may live pure and blameless lives. • Thank You, Lord, that we are victorious through You and that Your victory is our victory. Mold us by Your Word so that we may imitate Your apostles and You in our daily walks of life. Amen. (TLSB)

GOSPEL – Matthew 23:1-12

Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: ² **"The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. ³ He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come. ⁴ "Then he sent some more servants and said, 'Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.' ⁵ "But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. ⁶ The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. ⁷ The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. ⁸ "Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. ⁹ Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you**

find.’¹⁰ So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and 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 wedding clothes.¹² ‘Friend,’ he asked, ‘how did you get in here without wedding clothes?’ The man was speechless.

Jesus graphically portrays God as reaching out to people, bar none, with his inviting grace. God is anything but the *deus absconditus*, a hidden, silent God. Proactively he not only prepares the finest feast but also invites . . . and invites . . . and invites. Thus Jesus signals our accountability to the God who cares enough to search us out, and he welcomes our arrival in the Kingdom with celebration and whistling bells. We need to value these times of worship and celebration. Though our divine services here still bear the stigma of human limitation, they are true foretastes of the eternal banquet. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 9, Part 4)

All who choose to ignore our accountability to God cheapen God’s grace. In fact grace is supremely costly—it cost his Son! Bonhoeffer wrote: “Grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it cost a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life” (Quoted by Thomas F. Loftus in *Augsburg Sermons, Gospels, Series A*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1974, p244). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 9, Part 4)

We can understand the king’s anger when his servants who carried the invitation were put to death, especially when the final Messenger was’ his own Son. But when the king sends a servant to the “streets and alleys . . . [to] bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame” (Luke’s parallel), we know that God’s grace is truly nondiscriminatory. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 9, Part 4)

22:1 *them*. This parable is addressed to the religious leaders of Israel and primarily speaks a word of judgment and warning against them. (CC)

AGAIN IN PARABLES – Although the son was killed in the previous parable, here he is alive again. As Jesus tells these parables on Tuesday of Holy Week, He is saying that Good Friday will most certainly be followed by Easter Sunday. That point may have gone right over their heads at the time, but After Jesus’ resurrection, when His disciples had the benefit of hindsight, they were able to see things they had missed before. And that is one good reason why we should read the Scriptures over and over again. Nobody gets it all the first time. (PBC)

This parable repeats three important themes from the previous one (21:33-46), specifically Jesus’ divine Son-ship, Israel’s persistent rejection of its prophets, and the inclusion of Gentiles in God’s kingdom. (TLSB)

A vivid description of the elaborate preparations for an Oriental wedding-feast, to point a moral in the matter of the kingdom of God. For Christ always had a definite purpose in

telling His parables, in most cases to teach the proper qualification for becoming a member of His great kingdom (Kretzmann)

22:2-7 Jesus is offering stern truths about the reign of God in Israel at the present time with his ministry underway, as some have followed him and some now are opposing and hating him. Here in Jerusalem, as Jesus moves toward the cross and the empty tomb, his enemies have come against him in open and unrepentant opposition. How should this rejection of God's reign rightly be understood? The parable answers the question. (CC)

22:2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN – *hōmoiōthē hē basileia tōn ouranōn*, “the kingdom of heaven may be compared to.” Only the third of the three consecutive parables of this discourse (also Mt 21:28–32, 33–44) begins with the familiar formula, but they are all descriptive of the kingdom that has come in Christ. Jesus presents a similar parable in Lk 14:16–24, but it is clearly a separate occasion and delivers a somewhat different message. The Luke parable is told on a Sabbath (14:1) and presumably earlier in Jesus' ministry; this one is spoken in the middle of Holy Week, probably on Tuesday. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 18, Part 4)

WEDDING BANQUET – A wedding is a great cause for celebration and joining together of family and friends. When royalty is involved, the celebration becomes a national event because of the bond between the people and their head. As in the previous parable, the identity of the characters is scarcely veiled: God the Father is the king, and Jesus is the son. The Jewish hearers would have been quite familiar with the image of God as King (Ex 15:18; Is 40:10; Ps 24; 29:10; etc.) and prophecies of the Messiah/Christ as God's Son (2 Sam 7:14; Ps 2:12). Just a day or two previously, during His triumphal entry on Palm Sunday, the crowds had acclaimed Jesus as “Son of David” (Mt 21:9), a title that combines the concept of a king (David) and his son – the Son, who is also David's Lord (Ps 110). (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 3, Part 4)

The wedding feast of celebration might last 7 days (Jud 14:12) or even 14 days (Tobit 8:20). Certainly it was quite an honor to be invited, and the host would have made lavish and expensive preparations. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 3, Part 4)

The provisions of God for the happiness of men are most abundant and free, and His invitations to them to come and receive according to their wants, are most urgent and sincere. (Concordia Bible)

Jesus' ministry already now is manifesting the great messianic feast and even more remarkable, should be understood as an eschatological fulfillment of the OT theme of God as Israel's Husband and Israel as Yahweh's bride. The feast is a wedding feast. As was foreseen by perhaps no one in the Second Temple period until John the Baptizer, the presence of the Messiah is, at the same time, the presence of Israel's God and Husband. Jesus, the Messiah, is already now the Bridegroom. Those who oppose

Jesus, then, are also opposing and rejecting God's invitation to his wedding banquet, that is, God's invitation to be his bride, his people. (CC)

Isaiah 25:6-9 compares the messianic age to a great feast hosted by God. That imagery along with Jesus' self-identification as the Bridegroom in Mt. 9:15, makes it plain in the parable the father represents God and Jesus is the Bridegroom. (TLSB)

22:3 HE SENT OUT – At the appointed time, servants were sent out to announce that fact to those that had received an invitation, probably the princes, the rich and powerful people of the kingdom. (Kretzmann)

WHO HAD BEEN INVITED – This second invitation seems in accord with Eastern custom (Esther 6:14). We are told that among the distinctions of the inhabitants of Jerusalem is mentioned that none of them went to a feast till the invitation had been given twice. The Apostles called those who had already been invited.

The invitation should not have been a surprise. Those to whom the slaves were sent had already been called; had they never read the Scriptures (cf. 21:42). (CC)

Esther 6:14 and note – KJV – **And while they were yet talking with him, came the king's chamberlains and hastened to bring Haman unto the banquet that Esther had prepared**, for the Oriental custom required a special message to be sent to the guests just before the hour appointed for a feast to announce that all things were now ready. Cf. Matt. 22:3-4; Luke 14:17. (Kretzmann)

Those invited represent the people of Israel. Inexplicably, they refuse to come to the banquet prepared for them. (TLSB)

THEY REFUSED TO COME – Throughout the Old Covenant and especially when Christ came, God, in Christ, humbled himself deeply and treated the Jews most courteously in the Gospel. But, they refused to come.

On the level of the story, in refusing the king's invitation, they expressed a deadly insult. The sorts of reasons given in the parable (22:5) are no excuse, and the exaggerated and deadly response of the rest who had been invited (22:6) is an almost unthinkable act of shaming the king and his son. To repeat for emphasis: in all of this, the culpability of those who refuse the invitation consists in their dishonoring and insulting their king and his son. (CC)

22:4 AGAIN – Note that again occurred in verse 1. It showed Jesus' great patience. Under ordinary circumstances a king would certainly not have extended another invitation after the first and second had been rejected.

MORE SERVANTS – More Apostles, missionaries and evangelists.

I HAVE PREPARED MY DINNER – Wholly God’s doing. A meal like this was the consummation of the spiritual marriage.

MY OXEN AND FATTED CATTLE – Compare the sumptuous fare laid out at this feast with the fare prophesied in Is 25. (TLSB)

He sent other servants with a more urgent message for the invited guests. They are given the very words to commend the feast, to stimulate desire for its offering. The attention of the invited guests should be called to the fact that the midday meal, with which the festivities began, was even now fully ready for them. The oxen and the fatted rams had been slaughtered and cooked, nothing of the usual delights of the table was missing. The wealth of the king had overlooked nothing in the endeavor to honor both himself and his guests. (Kretzmann)

22:5-6 Some of those invited to the feast ignore the second invitation. Others greet these messengers with violence. Such refusals represent Israel’s reaction toward the prophets sent to them. The cause for this contempt for the Word is not God’s foreknowledge, but the perverse human will. The human will rejects or perverts the means and instrument of the Holy Spirit, which God offers it through the call. It resists the Holy Spirit, who wants to be effective, and who works through the Word. (TLSB)

22:5 PAID NO ATTENTION – Showed a total lack of interest.

Here was a case of studied insolence and insult. They were indifferent to the urgent call, they paid absolutely no attention to it, in the majority of cases. (Kretzmann)

TO FIELD...BUSINESS – Both of these groups are sophisticated people of earthly means. The point is that they are sunken in mere material and earthly matters, materialists who care not about their own souls.

The fault is not with the king, but with the inexplicably unwilling guests! They greet the invitation with apathy: *ameleo*, “to neglect, be unconcerned, disregard,” a word used elsewhere for people spurning salvation (Heb 2:3) or failing to use their spiritual gift (1 Tim 4:14).

22:6 REST SEIZED HIS SERVANTS – This group is not just indifferent but hostile. We think of John the Baptist, Stephen and James. The book of Acts is not only an account of the Apostles preaching justification by faith but also an account of how the people treated God’s messengers with violence and death.

But a few of the invited guests were not satisfied with merely indicating their disapproval of the king and their contempt for the wedding-feast in this fashion. They vented their spite on the messengers. Having laid hold on them, they treated them with every mark of contempt, and finally killed them. These were acts of open rebellion, naturally followed by war. (Kretzmann)

KILLED - *apekteinan*, “killed.” In interpreting a parable, close attention should always be given to any element that does not seem to fit the story or illustration. It may be understandable that some invited guests would be indifferent to a gracious invitation, but it would appear absurd for them to kill the servants delivering the word. Therefore, Jesus’ inclusion of this misfit element is intentional and highly emphatic. In the previous parable, it was specifically the son who was murdered (21:37–39). Here again Jesus is warning the Jewish leaders in no uncertain terms to cease and desist from their murderous plans—which are indeed still aimed at the Son. (Another “misfit element” will occur in v 13.) (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 18, Part 4)

22:7 To apply specific referents to characters and actions in this first part of the parable, we can work backward from this verse. In light of the temple incident in 21:12-17, Jesus’ lament over Jerusalem in 23:37-39, and the first half of the Eschatological Discourse (24:1-35), it is crystal clear that 22:7 in the parable predicts that Jerusalem will be destroyed; this coming destruction should be understood as divine judgment. This will come because the Jewish religious leaders have, by and large, rejected God’s Son and the reign of God present in his deeds and his words. (CC)

burned their city.† A common military practice. (CSB)

Anticipates the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 during the first Jewish revolt. (TLSB)

Though men have the power and the disposition, yet they have no right to reject the invitations of God, or to stay away from Him and perish. It is a great dishonor to Him, as well as a great wrong to themselves. (Concordia Bible)

22:8 WEDDING BANQUET IS READY – God did not abandon the marriage-feast of his Son. Man’s indifference toward the Gospel or even his destruction of God’s messengers in no way inhibits or stops the process of the Gospel. In fact it is the other way around. Think on that when you consider all your labor in vain.

DID NOT DESERVE TO COME – Faith in the promises of God makes a man deserving. Rejection makes him unworthy.

Their steadfast refusal to accept the invitation disqualified them. (TLSB)

22:9 GO – *poireuesthe* reminds us of Matthew 28:19. It is a present imperative referring to the whole NT era.

This expression of divinely extravagant grace must not be misinterpreted. Yes, the parable proclaims a gracious reign of God that will be offered to all the nations in the generations to come. (CC)

STREET CORNERS – *diedzsdous* has received a variety of translations: Highways, main highways, where roads leave the city, street corners, thoroughfares,

main streets, crossroad, main thoroughfares. All of these get at it in one way or another. It means “where people are congregations.”

Representing the offering of the gospel to the Gentiles and people of all descriptions. (Concordia Bible)

ANYONE YOU FIND – Time was pressing; great hurry was demanded. So they should go out on the highways, to the place where there is a crossing over of roads, either a crossroads from which the roads radiate in every direction, or a place near the gates where the roads from all directions *ran together*. (Kretzmann)

22:10 SERVANT WENT OUT – The turning point came at the time of Pentecost. From that point on, no distinction between Jew and Gentile was to be made.

GOOD AND BAD – Parables in Mt repeatedly depict the Kingdom as including “bad people” or hypocrites (cf 13:24–30, 36–43, 47–50). In the end, however, there is always a separation of the true and false believers. (TLSB)

pantas . . . ponērous te kai agathous, “all . . . both bad and good.” The emphasis is on the gracious and universal invitation, rather than on anything—even the faith—of those who are invited. Some will prove to be without faith (vv 11–13). Compare those who are invited in Lk 14:21–23. There, the lowly and helpless quality of the invitees is indeed in view. In the Lukan passage, Jesus is specifically responding to the self-exaltation of the dinner guests who are hearing his parable (Lk 14:7, 12–14). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 18, Part 4)

All of the people who are invited to the king’s banquet are unworthy of His invitation. (PBC)

Every sinner who receives this invitation in penitent faith must confess together with Martin Luther, “I believe that I cannot by my own things or choosing believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to him. But the Holy Spirit has called me by the gospel. (PBC)

wedding hall. Representation of the earthly Church. (TLSB)

22:11 *not wearing wedding clothes*.† It has been conjectured that it may have been the custom for the host to provide the guests with wedding garments. This would have been necessary for the guests at this banquet in particular, for they were brought in directly from the streets (vv. 9–10). The failure of the man in question to avail himself of a wedding garment was therefore an insult to the host, who had made the garments available. To come without the wedding garment is to despise the grace of the king, an act which invites judgment. (CSB)

Israelites expected invited guests to wear festive wedding garments, which the host could provide. Thus, this fellow’s failure to dress in appropriate clothing, which was freely given to

him, offends the host. This garment signifies the righteousness of God, which covers our sin (cf Is 61:10; Gal 3:27). (TLSB)

This man was there deliberately dishonoring the king and his son. Like the initial group of those who had been invited, this man deemed the wedding feast only something to be treated lightly. (CC)

The garment is a gift from God. Is 61:10 uses wedding imagery and speaks of God clothing His people in garments of salvation. Eph 5:26-27 describes Christ washing His bride to make her holy and spotless, and in Baptism we are clothed with Christ (Gal 3:27). Rev. 19:8 says of Christ's bride, "Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear. Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints." As in Jesus' two previous parables, good works are the fruit of faith. Good works are made possible solely by the grace of God. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 3, Part 4)

It was customary for the man who made a wedding feast, to provide wedding garments for those whom he invited. If they would not come, or if they did come but would not put on the wedding garment, it was a great dishonor to the master of the feast. By this incident of the parable, our Lord shows that an outward acceptance of His gospel is not enough. We may join ourselves to the number of His visible followers; but if our souls have not the wedding garment of faith, love, and holiness, we shall be cast out. (Concordia Bible)

The man who was not wearing wedding clothes calls to mind the traditional prayer of preparation for Holy Communion, Strip of from us the spotted garments of our flesh, and of our own righteousness, and adorn us with the garments of the righteousness that Thou hast purchased with Thy blood. (Notice how this imagery seems to be drawn from Revelation 7:13-14.) (PBC)

22:12 GET IN HERE – This does not mean that judgment will take place inside of heaven. In application Jesus is talking about a hypocrite. He seemed to accept the invitation but did not in reality.

WAS SPEECHLESS – Without imputed righteousness a man will be muzzled on Judgment Day.

He knew that he was inexcusable. (Concordia Bible)

A time is coming when God will examine into every man's character, and when those who have trusted to their own righteousness, without submission to or acceptance of the righteousness of Christ will, with hypocrites and the openly vicious, be cast into outer darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Concordia Bible)