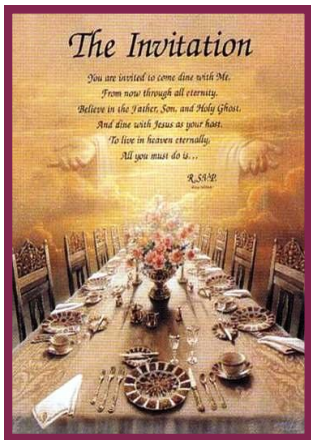


You will remember that in the parable, when the King's servants are killed, the King sends forth an army to destroy their city and punish them. So it was, Saint John writes, that less than four decades after Christ's Ascension, Jerusalem fell to the armies of Vespasian and Titus, and it was utterly destroyed and the people there killed or dispersed to the four corners of the earth.

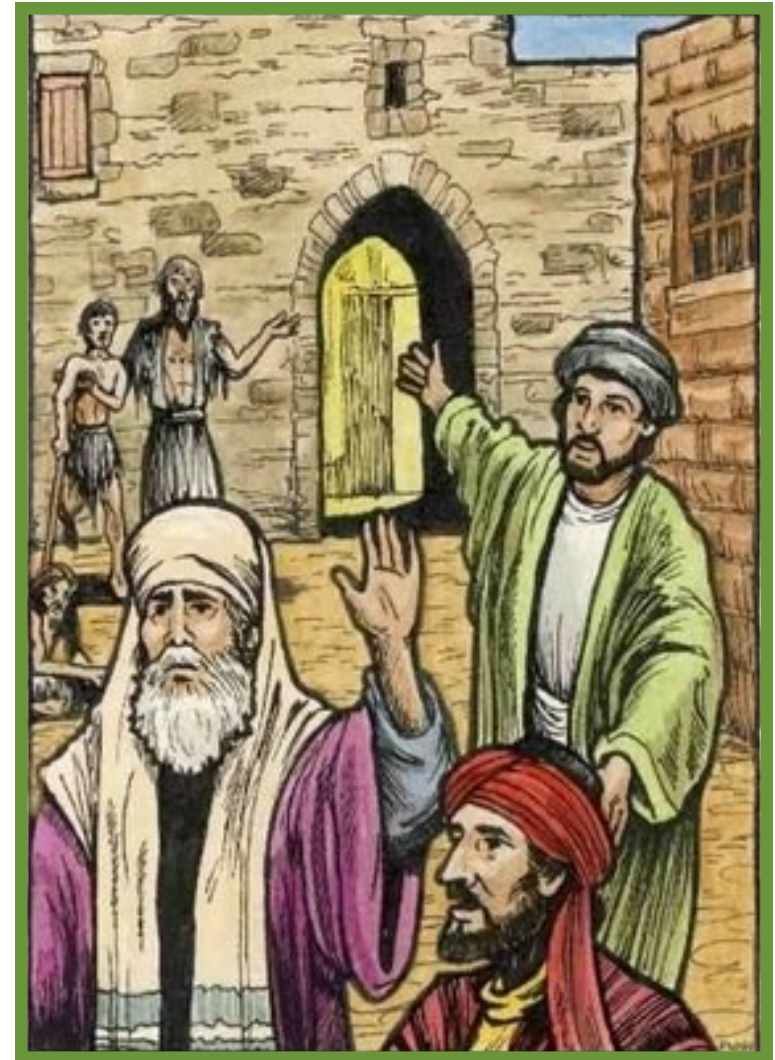


Now, Christ, as I said, has summoned us to His feast, that is to His Church, so that here we may partake of His sacred foods, those that are filled with grace-- the Holy Mysteries -- and that prepare us spiritually for eternal life with Him, for life in that eternal aspect of the Church. But, for this feast we must prepare, we must attire ourselves with the proper garment or we shall be cast, like the man in the parable, into the outer darkness. This garment is of course, a spiritual one. Without it, without preparing ourselves for the wedding feast, we are no better than those who rejected and crucified Christ, since failure to prepare ourselves is a form of rejection -- it is a gross insult to the King -- and therefore our ultimate fate too, in the life to come, will be no better.

*(excerpted from: orthodoxinfo.com)

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The Parable of The Wedding Feast



***"When spiritual things call us, there is no press of business
that has the power of necessity."***

THE PARABLE OF THE WEDDING FEAST

A parable is a short, fictitious story that illustrates a moral attitude or a religious principle. Parables are never meant to be taken for the letter of their word. When taken literally, at face value, the entirety of its meaning is lost.

*On the parable of the wedding feast, Christ compares the Kingdom of Heaven to a great marriage feast. He says that "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a certain King, which made a marriage for his son..." (Matthew 22: 11-14)

The King, we are told, sent forth his servants to invite certain people to the wedding feast, but none responded at all. The King sent his servants a second time, and this time the servants told those invited of the wonderful things that had been prepared for the feast. Again, however, no one came, but instead the people gave excuses that they were too busy with the farm and with business to attend the feast. Then some of these men even seized hold of the servants and murdered them. The infuriated King, sent his army to punish and destroy the murderers. The King then sent his servants out into the highways to bring in strangers, so that there would be guests for the wedding and the feast.

Finally, the King saw a man at the feast who had failed to wear the proper garments, and challenged by the King as to why he was there without a wedding garment, the man remained silent. The King had him bound up and thrown into the outer darkness.

What lessons are we to draw from this parable? Saint Gregory the Dialogist writes that the King is God Himself, and the marriage is symbolic of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, the union of Christ's divine and human natures into one Person. The feast is symbolic of Christ's Church, the Orthodox Church, which exists in heaven and on earth. Saint John Chrysostom's' commentary is similar to this interpretation. He adds that, at first, Christ invites the people of the Old Covenant, the Jews, to join this great marriage feast, which is the Church. But they fail to respond. He invites them a second time, and they are too busy with earthly concerns, to which Saint John Chrysostom states that "when spiritual things call us, there is no press of business that has the power of necessity."

When Christ persists with His invitations to the Jews, they kill Him, they crucify Him, just as they killed the Old Testament Prophets. Saint John comments that Christ sought to win them over before His crucifixion, and even after it "He still urges them, striving to win them over." However, they refused Him, and so it is then that the ordinary people of the "highway," the Gentiles, are invited, since the wedding feast, the Church, must be filled. Saint John writes that when the Jews "were not willing to be present at the marriage, then He called others," He called you and me.