

# Matthew 22 - Parable of the Marriage Feast; Pharisees & Herodians Plot Against Jesus; Rejection by the Sadducees & Pharisees; The Greatest Commandment

## IV. Formal presentation and rejection of the King (Matt 20:29—23:39)

(3) Questions and parables demonstrating Israel's rejection of Christ (Matt 21:23—22:46)

(D) Parable of the wedding feast (22:1-14)

(E) Reciprocal questions (22:15-46)

(a) Three questions from Israel's leaders trying to trap Christ (22:15-40)

(i) Taxation (22:15-22)

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(iii) Greatest commandment (22:34-40)

(b) Christ's question: whose son is David? (22:41-46)

## Matthew 22

(D) Parable of the wedding feast (22:1-14) (Cf. Luke 14:15-24)

1 Jesus spoke to **them** again in parables, saying,

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1 Again Jesus spoke to them in parables. He said,

1 And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,

- "...them" - the antecedent is the Jewish leaders (Cf. 21:45-46), but there were many other Jews in the temple courtyard listening to His teaching

2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a **king** who held a **wedding feast** for **his son**.

2 "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son.

2 "The kingdom from heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son.

2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

- The kingdom is similar to what the following story illustrated...
- "...king" - God the Father
- "...wedding feast" - the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, which will take place on earth at the beginning of the kingdom (8:11-12; 25:1; Cf. Ps 132:15; Is 25:6-9; 65:13-14; Rev 19:)
- "...his son" - the bridegroom, Jesus

3 And he sent his **slaves** to call **those who had been invited** to the wedding feast, and **they were unwilling to come.**

3 And he sent out his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast, and they were unwilling to come.

3 He sent his servants to call those who had been invited to the wedding, but they refused to come.

3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.

- "...slaves" - *douloi*, as in the previous parables, represent the Prophets

- "...those who had been invited" - national Israel; the prophets announced the coming of the banquet and urged those whom God invited to it (the Jews) to prepare for it

- "...they were not willing to come" - in John 1:11, John talks about Israel, how Jesus came to them, but the Jews rejected Him

— However, John 1:13 notes that there were some who received Him

— The whole idea is that Jesus came first to Israel, who rejected Him, then He went to the Gentiles

4 Again he sent other slaves, saying, 'Tell those who have been invited, "Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fattened cattle are *all* butchered and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast!"'

4 Again 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 *all* butchered and everything is ready; come to the wedding feast."

4 So he sent other servants after saying, 'Tell those who have been invited, "Look! I've prepared my dinner. My oxen and fattened calves have been slaughtered. Everything is ready. Come to the wedding!"'

4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and *my* fatlings *are* killed, and all things *are* ready: come unto the marriage.

- The king repeated his invitation and urged those who previously showed no interest to attend

— He emphasized the imminency of the feast

— This demonstrates the grace and compassion of the king

This parable reveals the important fact that the offer of the kingdom was a genuine offer.

5 But they paid no attention and went their *separate* ways, one to his own farm, another to his business,

5 But they paid no attention and went their way, one to his own farm, another to his business,

5 But they paid no attention to this and went away, one to his farm, another to his business.

5 But they made light of *it*, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:

- The invitees showed more interest in their own possessions and activities than they did in the banquet

6 and the rest seized his slaves and treated them abusively, and *then* killed them.

6 and the rest seized his slaves and mistreated them and killed them.

6 The rest grabbed the king's servants, treated them brutally, and then killed them.

6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated *them* spitefully, and slew *them*.

- Some of those invited not only refused the gracious invitation, but abused and even murdered the king's servants who were sent to inform them about it

— Those whom the king invited and desired to attend the banquet killed those who were sent to invite them

— This can be seen in many ways: the slaughtering of the OT prophets (Acts 3:19-21), the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7)

7 Now the king was angry, and he sent his armies and destroyed those murderers and set their city on fire.

7 But the king was enraged, and he sent his armies and destroyed those murderers and set their city on fire.

7 Then the king became outraged. He sent his troops, and they destroyed those murderers and burned their city.

7 But when the king heard *thereof*, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

- Enraged at their conduct, the king "sent forth his armies" and "burned their city"

— This was Jesus' first prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD

8 Then he \*said to his slaves, 'The wedding feast is ready, but those who were invited **were not worthy.**

8 Then he \*said to his slaves, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.

8 "Then he told his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.

8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.

- After stating that "everything is ready" (v4), the king postponed the feast because those who were originally invited were not worthy, because they disregarded the king's invitations  
- "...were not worthy" - the majority of Jews were not worthy to attend the messianic banquet because they rejected God's gracious offer of entrance by faith in His Son

9 So go to the main roads, and invite whomever you find *there* to the wedding feast.'

9 Go therefore to the main highways, and as many as you find *there*, invite to the wedding feast.'

9 So go into the roads leading out of town and invite as many people as you can find to the wedding.'

9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

- So the king sent out his servants again, this time to the main highways and street corners, to invite everyone to the feast (the Gentiles)

10 Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good; and the wedding hall was filled with dinner guests.

10 Those 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.

10 Those servants went out into the streets and brought in everyone they found, evil and good alike, and the wedding hall was packed with guests.

10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

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,**

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,

11 "When the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes.

11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:

- "...man...not dressed in wedding clothes" - a person was present who was unprepared for the banquet; he did not have on his formal dinner wear

— He was there because he accepted the king's gracious invitation. However, he was subject to the king's scrutiny because he was improperly dressed.

— "wedding clothes" - Cf. Rev 19:8,14

12 and he \*said to him, '**Friend**, how did you get in here without **wedding clothes?**' And the man was speechless.

12 and he \*said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without wedding clothes?' And the man was speechless.

12 He asked him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' But the man was speechless.

12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.

- "...Friend" - the king addressed the man courteously

— The "friend" is obviously a believer, otherwise he would not be invited to the banquet

- "...wedding clothes" - the wedding clothes required to enter the banquet will be "given to her" and made up of "fine linen, bright and clean" which is symbolic of the "righteous acts of the saints" (Cf. Rev 19:8)

— Rom 10:3 says that the Jews, not knowing about God's (imputed) righteousness, and seeking to establish their own (by works of the Law), they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God (Cf. Phil 3:9)

— It is the host's job to provide the garments for the guests; the guests were expected to be wearing the robes provided by the king

13 Then the king said to the servants, 'Tie his hands and feet, and throw him into the outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth in that place.'

13 Then 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.'

13 Then the king told his servants, 'Tie his hands and feet, and throw him into the darkness outside!' In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth,

13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

- This verse is the key to proper interpretation of the "outer darkness" passages (Cf. 8:13; 25:30). First, consider the context: Matt 21 is the key to understanding the parable itself.

- Matt 21 opens with the triumphal entry.

- Shortly thereafter, Jesus entered the temple complex, where he was confronted by a delegation of the chief priests and elders who asked, "By what authority are You doing these things, and who gave You this authority?" (21:23). By "these things" they are referring to His Triumphal Entry and subsequent events (reception of praise from people, His clearing of the temple, His healing of the blind and the lame (21:8-14), and His teaching (21:23).
- The leaders understood Jesus was claiming authority as Messiah and wanted to know where He got such authority. Their challenge to his authority led to a discussion of the authority of John the Baptist (21:24-27), followed by three parables aimed at discrediting these Jewish religious leaders.
- Matt 22:15 makes note of their departure, marking the end of this extended confrontation. Thus Matt 21:23—22:14 must be seen as a unit in which Jesus answers the challenge to his authority through a series of parables.
- Significantly, each of these parables is aimed at the religious leaders of the nation who had rejected him as Messiah. This led to Jesus' trial before the Sanhedrin, in which he was falsely charged with blasphemy, officially rejected as Messiah (26:57-68), and finally crucified.
- Each of these three parables reflected Jesus' response to the challenge of His authority:
- **Parable #1: Two Sons Working in the Vineyard (21:28-32)**
  - This parable concludes with the pronouncement, "The tax collectors and prostitutes will get into the kingdom of God before you" (21:31). In 21:32 the verb "believe" is used 3x to emphasize the leaders' failure to respond to Jesus in faith. These religious leaders had refused to acknowledge John's authority, and now (ironically) Jesus revealed that their lack of faith at John's message would result in their exclusion from the kingdom of God.
- **Parable #2: The Vineyard and the Vine Growers (21:33-44)**
  - In this parable, which draws on the vineyard parable of Is 5, the issue was the murderous nature of those responsible for the vineyard. These Jewish religious leaders had been entrusted with the care of the nation—God's vineyard. They had an obligation to recognize and submit to the Messiah who would rule over the kingdom of God. The killing of the son obviously depicted their rejection of Jesus and putting him to death. Jesus declared, "The kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing the fruit of it" (21:43).

- In Ex 19:6, God offered Israel the role of being his unique people: "You shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." The religious leaders were the caretakers of God's earthly kingdom, but that privilege was now being withdrawn. Up to this time the Jewish religious leaders were the principal means by which God exercised His reign over His people. But the leaders failed so badly in handling God's "vineyard" and rejecting God's Son that God gave the responsibility to another people who would produce the kingdom's fruit. This new "people"—the messianic community of believers, which would eventually come to include Gentiles—would be given oversight of God's kingdom work. They would be God's "people," knowing no national boundaries.

A brief interlude follows the second parable before the third and final parable. Although only two verses long (21:45-46), the interlude is crucial for understanding the third parable. According to v45, "When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them." Despite the chapter break that follows, 22:1 must be understood in light of this comment. The third parable begins by saying, "Jesus spoke to them again in parables" (22:1). Just as the first two parables of the trilogy were aimed at the Jewish leaders who rejected him, so was the third parable.

- **Parable #3: The Improperly Dressed Guest at the Wedding Feast (22:1-14)**
  - Jesus introduced the parable with the words "the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for a son" (22:2). The issue of the kingdom had been prominent in each of the preceding parables (Cf. 21:31,43). More specifically, each parable conveyed God's view of the religious leaders with respect to the kingdom. This third parable, centered on a wedding feast, conveyed truths about the banquet to inaugurate the messianic kingdom (for background imagery, see Is 25:6-9). As the invitation to the feast went out, some were unwilling to come (22:3), while others reacted with hostility, mistreating the king's slaves and even killing them (22:6). This prompted an angry reaction by the king; he sent armies to destroy the murderers and set their city on fire (22:7). This was a specific allusion to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

- The final scene of the third parable shows the king entering the wedding hall and noticing a man improperly dressed. To say that the man's presence shows that he is "saved" pushes the details of the parable too far. His presence depicts an ultimate confrontation with the Jewish religious leaders. The change of setting at v11 does not mean that the Jewish religious leaders are no longer in view. It would be very strange for a parable that began by addressing the religious leaders (22:1)—as did the parables before it—to suddenly shift to the topic of the judgment seat of Christ for Christians. Notice that the religious leaders do not depart until v15. Nor does the fact that the king calls the man "friend" in v12 suggest that the man is saved (Cf. Judas Iscariot, Matt 26:20).
- The improperly clothed man was simply unqualified to participate in the wedding feast, and the story places him in the wedding hall to highlight this fact. His fate was to be bound hand and foot and thrown into the outer darkness (22:13). The man was not merely consigned to a place of lesser light (as some commentators believe); he was also bound hand and foot, totally restricted. This is what was in store for each of the Jewish religious leaders. They may have expected to enter the kingdom, but they would not be able to while rejecting Jesus as Messiah and being dressed in self-righteousness. The striking similarity of Matt 22:13 to 1 Enoch 10:4 suggests that the "outer darkness" imagery must have been a commonly understood way of speaking of eternal damnation.
- To say that the weeping and gnashing of teeth in Matt 22:13 merely describes the regret a carnal believer will feel over having wasted his life on earth does not do justice to the context or the terminology employed here.
- Furthermore, it does not square with the final statement of the parable: "Many are called, but few are chosen" (22:14). In this context, "called" (*klētos*) is used of being invited to the wedding feast, not in the Pauline sense of "called" of God (Rom 1:6).
- Notice the cognate verb "to call" (*kaleō*) in Matt 22:3. Many were "called," that is, invited; but most despised the opportunity and refused the invitation. Yet God has His "chosen ones."
- "Chosen" (*eklektos*, v14) is commonly used in the NT of God's elect (Matt 24:31; Luke 18:7; Rom 8:33; Col 3:12). Jesus also uses it in 24:22,24 to designate God's true people, threatened but protected through the time of trial, and in 24:31 for those summoned from all over the world to make up the new people of God after the failure of the old regime.



- Matt 22:14, then, explains why the king refused the improperly dressed man entry and pronounced such a harsh sentence on him. He was not one of God's "elect" (His covenant people). The fate awaiting him was "outer darkness." God's purposes, however, would not be thwarted by the rejection of the religious leaders, for his "elect" would ultimately emerge victorious and would make up the new *ethnos* promised in Matt 21:43. This third and final parable was the most sobering of the trilogy of parables that Jesus spoke to the Jewish religious leaders who challenged his authority.

14 For many are called, but few are chosen."

14 For many are called, but few are chosen."

14 because many are invited, but few are chosen."

**14 For many are called, but few are chosen.**

- Here is where the idiom or the mechanic of the parable yields to the reality which Christ is focusing on. He is obviously talking about something far broader in impact than simply a wedding and a breach of etiquette.

- Saul of Tarsus: At first he would have tried to come by his own righteousness, but he was confronted on the Damascus Road and accepted Christ's robe of righteousness (Rom 10:1-13; Phil 3:7-9; Acts 4:12)

— This parable shows the need to be properly attired for the wedding feast. Not all whom God has "called" (invited) into the kingdom will participate.

Only those who respond to God's call and prepare themselves by trusting in Jesus will do so. At first glance it may seem inappropriate to refer to the "*kingdom of heaven*" as a marriage feast for the son (Christ) of the king (the Father) since the Church had not even begun. Indeed, how could Christ be presented to Israel in this royal fashion before His death? But when the parable is taken as a whole, it can be seen as including the rejection of the Son, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the judgment of unbelievers at the return of Christ to the earth. The fact is the Jews had already rejected Him by the time this parable was given, it is His way of showing some of the events which pertain to the succeeding years, even up to and including His return to earth.

This parable is a picture of the wedding feast or supper that will take place in the kingdom, but many of those who thought they would be there (non-elect Israel) will be absent.

Likewise, many who were thought to have not even been invited will show up as legitimate guests at this important event in history. This is why it says in Rev 19:9, "Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb."

The King (God) prepared a wedding banquet (Kingdom Age) for his son (Jesus) and sent His servants (prophets) to inform the invited guests (Israel) that all was ready. After first

ignoring the invitation, they finally set upon the servants He sent and killed them. Enraged, the King sent his armies and burned their city (Jerusalem). Then He sent his servants to find anyone they could and invite them to the banquet. The servants gathered up everybody they could find (Gentiles) and the banquet began. The King noticed a man not dressed in wedding clothes. When the man had no excuse for his improper attire, he was thrown out into the darkness.

In the context of the parable, the wedding clothes represent the righteousness with which God clothes believers when they accept His invitation into His kingdom. The guest trying to gain admittance wearing his own clothes (in his own righteousness) was expelled. The man was saved (otherwise he would not be admitted to the kingdom at all), but upon judgment, was found to have no eternal rewards and thus lost his inheritance.

(E) Reciprocal questions (22:15-46)

(a) Three questions from Israel's leaders trying to trap Christ (22:15-40) (Cf. Mark 12:13-17; Luke 20:20-26)

(i) Taxation (22:15-22)

**15** Then the Pharisees went and plotted together how **they might trap** Him in what He said.

**15** Then the Pharisees went and plotted together how they might trap Him in what He said.

**15** Then the Pharisees went and planned how to trap Jesus in conversation.

**15** Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in *his* talk.

- The dialogue continued in the temple courtyard

— Israel's leaders proceeded to confront Jesus three times. It was necessary for the Lamb to be examined before Passover (Ex 12:3-6). If any blemish whatsoever was found on the lamb, it could not be sacrificed. Here, Jesus is examined publicly by His enemies, and they could not find any fault in Him.

- "...they might trap" - *pagideuo*, to ensnare, entrap; an attempt to elicit a remark from someone who can be turned into an accusation

## Pharisees

The Pharisees came into existence during the Babylonian exile. The word "Pharisee" means "separate one." During the Exile, the Jews were in danger of assimilation by the Gentiles.

The Pharisaic party was started because the Jews wanted to maintain their distinctiveness from their pagan neighbors. This was a good thing then. However, as time passed and the Jews returned to the Promised Land, the Pharisees' separation became too much of a good thing. It resulted in isolation as those Jews built up traditions designed, not just to keep the Mosaic Law, but to enforce the rabbis' interpretations of the Law. The result was

what we have seen in this Gospel, namely, Pharisaic devotion to the traditions of the elders that surpassed devotion to the Word of God.

16 And they \*sent their disciples to Him, along with the **Herodians**, saying, "Teacher, we know that You are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and do not care what anyone thinks; for You are not partial to anyone.

16 And they \*sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, "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.

16 They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. They said, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere and that you teach the way of God truthfully. You don't favor any individual, because you pay no attention to external appearance.

16 And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any *man*: for thou regardest not the person of men.

- "...Herodians" - a group of pro-Roman Jews who favored cooperation with the Herods, who ruled Israel under Rome's authority

— They were joined with the Pharisees politically, as both were powerful groups even though they had some very substantial differences (the Pharisees being ultra-Judaistic and the Herodians being pro-Roman).

— The Pharisees and the Herodians were enemies, but their common foe brought them together. Here, they are both trying to entrap Jesus.

17 Tell us then, what do You think? Is it permissible to pay a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?"

17 Tell us then, what do You think? Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?"

17 So tell us what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?

- In asking this question, they thought that Jesus would have to side with one of the groups: either pro-Roman or pro-Temple

18 But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, "**Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites?**

18 But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, "**Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites?**

18 Recognizing their wickedness, Jesus asked, "**Why are you testing me, you hypocrites?**

**18** But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, **Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?**

- Jesus immediately points out the motive behind their question, for the benefit of the crowd

- "...testing" - *peirazo*, to demonstrate intrinsic quality

— This was a more gracious word than the word Matthew used to describe their real intent (v15)

- The question did not intimidate Jesus, even though he knew the motive behind their question. He saw it as an opportunity to reveal His identity.

- "...hypocrites" - they came under a pretense of great respect, but they really had little respect for Him

19 **Show Me the coin used for the poll-tax.**" And they brought Him a denarius.

19 **Show Me the coin used for the poll-tax.**" And they brought Him a denarius.

19 **Show me the coin used for the tax.**"

They brought him a denarius.

19 **Shew me the tribute money.** And they brought unto him a penny.

20 And He \*said to them, **"Whose image and inscription is this?"**

20 And He \*said to them, **"Whose likeness and inscription is this?"**

20 Then he asked them, **"Whose face and name is this?"**

**20** And he saith unto them, **Whose is this image and superscription?**

- The coin bore the image of the emperor on one side, and *pontifex maximus*; both inscriptions were offensive to Jews.

21 They \*said to Him, "Caesar's." Then He \*said to them, **"Then pay to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's."**

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."**

21 They told him, "Caesar's." So he told them, **"Then give back to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."**

**21** They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, **Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.**

- Jesus followed OT teaching that people should pay taxes, because rulers ultimately owe their positions to God (Prov 8:15; Dan 2:21,37-38; Cf. Rom 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17)

- Jesus lays down the principle of separation of religion and state, and pointed out that there are two areas of authority: divine authority and delegated authority

— Divine authority comes from God; delegated authority came from Caesar, or today, from our civil government

— The payment of taxes did not nullify God's rule; it recognized God's delegated rule through government

- Jesus also advocated giving to God what belonged to Him. The coin had Caesar's image, which testified to his ownership of it. Similarly, human beings bear God's image, which

testifies to His ownership of us.

— God has an even more fundamental claim on people than Caesar

- Jesus' instruction was that Jews should acknowledge Caesar's claim and pay their taxes.

But, more importantly, they should acknowledge God's claim on them by obeying Him.

22 And hearing *this*, they were amazed; and they left Him and went away.

22 And hearing *this*, they were amazed, and leaving Him, they went away.

22 When they heard this, they were amazed. Then they left him and went away.

22 When they had heard *these words*, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

(ii) Resurrection (22:23-33) (Cf. Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-40)

**23** On that day *some* Sadducees (who say there is no resurrection) came to Jesus and questioned Him,

**23** On that day *some* Sadducees (who say there is no resurrection) came to Jesus and questioned Him,

**23** That same day some Sadducees, who claim there is no resurrection, came to Jesus and asked him,

**23** The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

- The Pharisees believed in resurrection a from the dead; the Sadducees did not, because they could not find it explicitly taught in the Torah. They were the "liberals" of that day.

— The Sadducees only believed in Moses' writings in the OT (Gen-Deut)

— The Sadducees like to ask the Pharisees trick questions to make them look stupid, and often succeeded. Here, they try one of these trick questions on Jesus...this time it didn't work out so well.

24 saying, "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.'

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.'

24 "Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies having no children, his brother must marry the widow and have children for his brother.'

24 Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

- The Sadducees approached Jesus with the same hypocritical respect as the Pharisees and Herodians

— This is only the second (recorded) time that Jesus had come into public conflict with the Sadducees (16:1)

- They came to him with a question of biblical interpretation involving Deut 25:5-10 and levirate marriage
  - This custom pre-dated the Mosaic Law (Cf. Gen 38:8); the Law incorporated and regulated it
  - It encouraged the younger brother to marry his deceased brother's widow, and have children by her. People considered the first child born to the older brother as the heir.
  - The purpose of this custom was to preserve a man's name should he die without a male heir
  - In a nation like Israel, where family inheritance was a major thing, it was important that each home have an heir
- This was an unlikely question for the Sadducees to ask, since they did not believe in resurrection. Likely they knew Jesus believed in resurrection and wanted to create what they thought was an impossible situation in order to embarrass Him.

25 Now there were seven brothers among us; and the first married and died, and having no children, he left his wife to 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;

25 Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married and died, and since he had no children, he left his widow to his brother.

25 Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother:

26 *It was the same also with the second brother, and the third, down to the seventh.*

26 so also the second, and the third, down to the seventh.

26 The same thing happened with the second brother, and then the third, and finally with the rest of the brothers.

26 Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh.

27 Last of all, the woman died.

27 Last of all, the woman died.

27 Finally, the woman died, too.

27 And last of all the woman died also.

28 In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her *in marriage.*"

28 In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had *married* her."

28 Now in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be, since all of them had married her?"

28 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.

- This was obviously a trick question meant to entrap Jesus. It was also their way of poking fun at the Pharisaical belief of a resurrection.

— They are not trying to get at this Levitical law, but rather the idea of a resurrection

29 But Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, since you do not understand the Scriptures nor the power of God.

29 But Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures nor the power of God.

29 Jesus answered them, "You are mistaken because you don't know the Scriptures or God's power,

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

- They didn't know the Scriptures because the Scriptures clearly teach a resurrection

— Interestingly, Jesus did not quote the three classic OT passages on resurrection (Dan 12:2; Is 26:19; Job 19:25-26)

— He didn't quote these verses because the Sadducees believed that all doctrine had to originate from the *Torah*. You could confirm doctrine that originated in the Law by either the Prophets or the Writings, but doctrines could not originate from these sections.

— Quoting Daniel, Job or Isaiah would've been authoritative for the Pharisees (who believed you could derive doctrine from anywhere in Hebrew Bible), it would've had no impact on the Sadducees

30 For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.

30 For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.

30 because in the resurrection, people neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like the angels in heaven.

30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.

- First, Jesus points out that marriage relationships as we now know them will not exist after our resurrection

- His reference to angels was an additional correction to their theology since they did not believe in the existence of angels

— He does not say that angels are sexless, just that they do not marry (Cf. fallen angels in Gen 6, as opposed to Jesus' subject here, "angels in heaven"). So this is a statement about marriage, not sex.

- Jesus did not say that in the resurrection state, all memory of our former existence and relationships will end. This is a conclusion drawn without evidence.

31 But regarding the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God:

31 But regarding the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God:

31 As for the resurrection from the dead, haven't you read what was spoken to you by God when he said,

31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,

32 'I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB'? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

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."

32 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

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

- Quoted from Ex 3:6, which the Sadducees believed was inspired by God...Jesus is beating them with Scripture that they believe is inspired

— There are 14 provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant, but resurrection is not mentioned as one of them. So where does the resurrection exist in the Torah?

— Jesus illustrates a simple principle: If God makes a promise to an individual, but that individual dies before the promise is fulfilled, God is obligated to resurrect that person back to life in order to fulfill His promise(s).

— Every promise of God must be completely fulfilled to whom it was made

Replacement Theology believes that God made the promises to Israel, but these promises were later transferred to the Church. However that's clearly not how God keeps His promises. If a father promises his first child a bicycle, then has a second child and give the bicycle to the second child, the father has not fulfilled his promise. No matter what you may want to do for the second child, until you buy a bicycle for the first child, you have not



fulfilled your promise. Whatever promises God may want to give to the church, they cannot nullify the promises that God has already given to Israel.

God promised the land not only to the patriarchs, but also to their descendants. When the patriarchs died, they only owned a cave (which they paid for), one plot of land near Shechem (which they also paid for), and some wells. This was the extent of their real estate holdings at the time they left for Egypt. So for God to fulfill His land promises to the patriarchs, He must resurrect them. This was the principle in Abraham's mind when he was offering Isaac...he knew that if he went through with sacrificing Isaac, that God would have to raise Isaac back to life in order to keep His promises. Even though God said nothing to Abraham about resurrecting Isaac, Abraham knew by this time in his life that God was a promise keeping God, and God had given individual promises to Isaac that were at that time unfulfilled.

33 When the crowds heard *this*, they were astonished at His teaching.

33 When the crowds heard *this*, they were astonished at His teaching.

33 When the crowds heard this, they were amazed at his teaching.

33 And when the multitude heard *this*, they were astonished at his doctrine.

- Matthew records the reaction by the crowds, but not the Sadducees

— The Sadducees likely did not change their theology based on Jesus' response, but Jesus' teaching had a powerful impact on the crowds

— To the unprejudiced crowd, Jesus' arguments and understanding of the OT were astonishing

(iii) Greatest commandment (22:34-40) (Cf. Mark 12:28-34)

**34** But when the Pharisees heard that *Jesus* had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together.

**34** But when the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered themselves together.

**34** When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they met together in the same place.

**34** But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.

- When the Pharisees learned that Jesus' response silenced the Sadducees, that they would no longer oppose Him, they renewed their attack

35 And one of them, a **lawyer**, asked Him a question, **testing** Him:

35 One of them, a lawyer, asked Him *a question*, testing Him,

35 One of them, an expert in the Law, tested him by asking,

35 Then one of them, *which was* a lawyer, asked *him a question* , tempting him, and saying,

- "...lawyer" - *nomikos*, an expert in the law; he would have been a teacher of the OT who was knowledgeable in both theology and the law

- "...testing" - *peirazon*, to prove His quality

36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?"

36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?"

36 "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

36 Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law?

- This was another controversial question to which various interpreters gave various answers

— The 613 OT Laws were categorized as "heavy" (more important) or "light" (less important)

— The Pharisees taught that the Jews needed to give attention to all the laws, but particularly the "heavy" ones

— This Pharisee was asking which of the "heavy" laws Jesus considered most important

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."**

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."**

37 Jesus told him, **"You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind."**

**37** Jesus said unto him, **Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.**

- Jesus is quoting Deut 6:5, then Lev 19:18

- "...HEART" -

- "...SOUL" -

- "...MIND" - *dianoia*, used to describe "the place where thinking occurs"

— Note that Deut 6 says "with all thy strength" vs. Jesus' quote of "with all thy mind"

— Jesus' intentional word exchange raises the bar for Christians. We are not only to love God with all our heart, soul, and might, but we are also commanded to use our mind and our intelligence to understand the truth of Christianity.

38 This is the great **and** foremost commandment.

38 This is the great and foremost commandment.

38 This is the greatest and most important commandment.

38 This is the first and great commandment.

- "...and" - explanatory; this one command is great because it is primary
- Jesus adds the part about the "mind"; Paul discusses "renewing" one's mind (Rom 12:1-2), a NT concept

39 The second is **like** it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'

39 The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'

39 The second is exactly like it: 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.'

39 And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

- Quoting Lev 19:18; love is the controlling principle (2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 3:10-18; 4:7-21; 5:1-2)
- All of the Law is summed up in love (Rom 13:8-10)
- The law is like a chain: it's no stronger than its weakest link (James 2:10)
- "...like" - similar in character and quality

40 Upon these two commandments hang the whole Law and the Prophets."

40 On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

40 All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commandments."

40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

- The rest of the OT (the entire Law and the Prophets) flows out of these two commandments
- All the other laws deal with specific application of one or the other of these two commands

Jesus had a deeper meaning to convey in this marvelous answer. The Jews were afraid of idolatry. When Jesus claimed to be God, they opposed Him because they could not believe it was right to worship a creature. Jesus received worship and did not rebuke those who honored Him. Was this idolatry? No, because He *is* God! But if the Law commands us to love God *and our neighbor*, then it would not be wrong for the Jews to love Jesus. Instead, they were plotting to kill Him.

He had said to them one day, "If God were your Father, you would love Me" (John 8:42).

They accepted the authority of the Law, yet they refused to obey it in their lives. Since these are the same answers the Pharisees themselves would have given and is what they believed, they were not able to take hold of Him at all. At this point, the Pharisees were silenced (Mark 12:34).

Jesus had now answered three difficult questions. He dealt with the relationship between religion and government, between this life and the next life, and between God and our neighbors. These are fundamental relationships, and we cannot ignore our Lord's

teachings. But there is a question more fundamental than these, and Jesus asked it of His enemies.

(b) Christ's question: whose son is David? (22:41-46) (Cf. Mark 12:35-37; Luke 20:41-44)

41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question:

41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question:

41 While the Pharisees were still gathered, Jesus asked them,

41 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,

- After fielding several questions from His critics, Jesus now asked the Pharisees one

— He wanted them to explain what the Scriptures taught about the Messiah

— This was bring them and the crowd to the reality of who He really was

42 "What do you think about the Christ? **Whose son is He?**" They \*said to Him, "**The son of David.**"

42 "What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He?" They \*said to Him, "*The son of David.*"

42 "What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?"

They told him, "David's."

42 Saying, **What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?** They say unto him, *The Son of David.*

- On this question hangs *our* entire life...

- "...Whose son is He?" - Jesus broached the subject of the Messiah's identity

— Jesus had previously asked the disciples a similar question about His identity (16:13,15);

Peter, speaking for the disciples, had given the proper, full answer (16:16)

- "...*The son of David*" — that is a standard correct answer, based on a number of OT passages (2 Sam 7:13-14; Is 11:1,10; Jer 23:5)

— However, that was not the full answer...

43 He \*said to them, "**Then how does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying,**

43 He \*said to them, "**Then how does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying,**

43 He asked them, "**Then how can David by the Spirit call him 'Lord' when he says,**

**43** He saith unto them, **How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying,**

- Jesus pointed out a problem with the Pharisees' answer...

— How could the Messiah be David's son if David called Him his "Lord"?

44 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY **RIGHT HAND**, UNTIL I PUT YOUR ENEMIES UNDER YOUR FEET"'?

44 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Until I put Your enemies beneath Your feet"'?

44 'The Lord told my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet."'

44 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?

- Quoted from Ps 110, the most quoted OT chapter in the NT (Cf. Prov 30:4)

- Jesus regarded Ps 110 as messianic, as did the Pharisees. Every orthodox Jewish scholar interpreted this to refer to the Messiah as well.

- "...RIGHT HAND" - the position of highest honor and authority

- The Jews believed that the Messiah would be David's son (John 7:41-42), but the only way David's son could also be David's Lord would be if the Messiah were God come in human flesh!

- Jesus here is revealing to the Pharisees that David's son would also be the Son of God Himself

- The answer, of course, is the miraculous virgin birth (Is 7:14; Matt 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38)

45 Therefore, if David calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his son?"

45 If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his son?"

45 If David calls him 'Lord,' how can he be his son?"

45 If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?

- The Pharisees could not answer this question, because the answer lies in the concept of the God-Man: as to His humanity, Jesus is David's son, but as to His deity, He is David's Lord.

- Only the Messiah could sit at the right hand of Jehovah God

- Jesus believed in the inspiration and accuracy of the OT Scriptures, for He said that David spoke these words "in the Spirit."

- See [Present Ministry of Christ](#) for more details on Jesus' present ministry

46 No one was able to offer Him a word in answer, nor did anyone dare from that day on to ask Him any more questions.

46 No one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day on to ask Him another question.

46 No one could answer him at all, and from that day on no one dared to ask him another question.

46 And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any *man* from that day forth ask him any more *questions*.

- This question silenced the public criticism of the Jewish religious leaders permanently

- This ended the confrontation with them. His enemies could not escape the logical consistency of Jesus' biblical arguments.
- Rather than submitting to His authority, they plotted His destruction

