

Preparing to Enter God's Rest

Hebrews 4:9-11

⁹There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; ¹⁰for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. ¹¹Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.

The Parable of the Wedding Banquet

The phrase "Kingdom of Heaven" is only found in the gospel of Matthew and means the "Kingdom from Heaven". Both terms are synonymous.

Matthew 22:1-14

1 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.

13 "Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

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

Verse 2: Here the “*kingdom of Heaven*” is referring to the Kingdom that Christ will set up here on the earth at His Return. “*King*” I would understand as referring to our Heavenly Father.

Verse 3: Jesus Christ was sent to Israel (**Matthew 15:24** *He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel."*) These are the “*invited*” ones spoken of in this verse.

“*His servants*” refers to the prophets and John the Baptist.
This was the 1st Invitation.

Verse 4: The 2nd Invitation

Verse 7: This happened in A.D. 70 at the hands of General Titus with the Roman Legions.

Verse 9-10: We are now one in Christ:

Ephesians 2:11-16

¹¹*Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men)—*¹²*remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.*¹³*But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.*¹⁴*For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,*¹⁵*by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace,*¹⁶*and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.*

Verse 11: “*Wedding clothes*”

Revelation 19:7, 8

7 Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. 8 Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)

In Greek, the middle voice is often reflexive, denoting that the subject acts on or for itself, such as "The boy washes himself", or "The boy washes". Here "his bride has made herself ready" is in the middle voice. She did it, she had made prior preparations.

Psalm 132:16

¹⁶I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints will ever sing for joy.

Matthew 13:41-43

⁴¹The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. ⁴²They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

1 Thessalonians 1:2-3

²We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. ³We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

So we learn 3 things about the saints in Thessalonica:

- Their work was produced by faith;
- Their labor was prompted by love and
- Their endurance was inspired by hope in Christ.

Verse 14: "Many are invited ("called" in KJV) but few are chosen"

The Narrow Door

Luke 13:23-30

²³Someone asked him, "Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?"

He said to them, ²⁴"Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to. ²⁵Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, 'Sir, open the door for us.'

"But he will answer, 'I don't know you or where you come from.'

²⁶"Then you will say, 'We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.'

²⁷"But he will reply, 'I don't know you or where you come from. Away from me, all you evildoers!'

²⁸"There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out. ²⁹People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God. ³⁰Indeed there are those who are last who will be first, and first who will be last."

The Parable of the Ten Virgins

Matthew 25:1-7

¹"At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish and five were wise ³The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. ⁴The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. ⁵The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep. ⁶"At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!'

⁷"Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps

1 Thessalonians 4:16

¹⁶*For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.*

Matthew 25: 8-13

⁸*The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.'*

⁹*"No,' they replied, 'there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.'*

¹⁰*"But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut.*

¹¹*"Later the others also came. 'Sir! Sir!' they said. 'Open the door for us!'*

¹²*"But he replied, 'I tell you the truth, I don't know you.'*

¹³*"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.*

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

¹*Now, brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, ²for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.*

⁴*But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. ⁵You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. ⁶So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled. ⁷For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. ⁹For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁰He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.*