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## The Parables of Jesus Christ: The Wedding Guest with no Wedding Garment

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# THE PARABLES OF JESUS CHRIST

## PARABLE FORTY-ONE: The Wedding Guest With No Wedding Garment (Mt. 22:1-14)

### SURVEY

A king prepared a wedding banquet for his son and set forth his servants, carrying special invitations to certain selected guests. But they all refused, ignoring the royal messengers, mistreating them, and actually killing some. The enraged king thereupon destroyed them and invited any and all, rich or poor, bond or free to attend, thus filling up the banquet hall. However, during the celebration the king was insulted by a rebellious guest who had refused to wear the proper wedding garment which had been freely issued to all guests. This disrespectful person was quickly seized and imprisoned.

### SIGNIFICANCE

This parable records the first of two occasions where God refers to a disloyal person as "friend." Compare Mt. 22:12 with Jesus' reference to Judas Iscariot in Gethsemane (Mt. 26:50).

### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- In this parable, the millennial kingdom of heaven is likened to a royal wedding prepared by the king for his son. The entire kingdom is invited to attend. As we have already seen, many refused to come.
- There were three separate stages in a mid-eastern wedding:
  1. The betrothal stage

This consisted of the selection of the bride and the payment of the dowry. This step often occurred when both bride and groom were still children. They were then considered engaged.
  2. The presentation stage

When the couple was old enough, the bride was brought to the house of the groom's father, where the wedding service took place.
  3. The celebration stage

Following the private marriage ceremony, the public marriage supper would begin.

- It was during this joyous stage when the king saw an invited wedding guest not wearing a wedding garment.

1. The anger of the king

Often at royal weddings each guest would be provided with his or her own wedding garment which bore the imprint of both the king and his son. To refuse to wear this garment was looked upon as a terrible insult directed toward the groom himself.

2. The silence of the guest

We are told "and he was speechless." In reality, what could he have said?

- a. He could not have pled ignorance, for he knew exactly what was expected of him.
- b. He could not have pled poverty, for the garments were given out at no charge.

- This necessary but free royal robe pictured here may serve to illustrate the divine robe of righteousness, freely given to all repenting sinners. Paul testifies of this:

*"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."* (Phil. 3:7-9)