

Building Community

Key Verse: *“The lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.”*
—**Luke 14:23**

Selected Scripture:
Luke 14:7-24

THE MARRIAGE SUPPER

and the great banquet, are the allegorical subjects of this lesson. The initial and exclusive invitation from God to be part of the wedding feast was first given to the children of Israel. The Key Verse, as recorded by Luke, teaches in symbolic language how God’s house would ultimately be completed. Gentiles were thus called upon to make up this number because

the Jews were careless in their appreciation of the invitation that had been extended to them.

When guests are bidden to a wedding feast it would be appropriate for them to take inconspicuous places in which to sit, realizing that the host might have others who, in his estimation, might be more worthy of being seated in one of the more prominent places at his table. It would be the host’s prerogative to reseat them to a more honored position according to his own plan and desire. (Luke 14:7-10) “Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” (vs. 11) “God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.”—James 4:6

Another lesson to be learned by our Lord’s teachings concerns those who should receive an invitation. “Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a

dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.” (vss. 12-14) Rendering kindness to those who are unable to return the favor will be more blessed now, and in the future kingdom.

When one of the guests who was seated at the table heard these great truths, he said, “Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.” (vs. 15) Jesus took the opportunity of the guest’s remarks to continue with his teachings. He spoke of a man who made a feast and invited many to attend. But those who had been invited began to make excuses as to why they would not be able to come. The children of Israel, also, had been given advance notice through their prophets concerning the great blessings of the kingdom that would be offered to them. However, when Jesus came unto his own, the Jewish religious teachers rejected him and his message. “That servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.” (vs. 21) The majority of our Lord’s later ministry was preached to the poor from among his own people, the publicans and sinners of Israel.

“The lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.” (vss. 23,24) This is applied to those Gentile believers who respond to the spiritual calling of the kingdom of heaven throughout the present Gospel Age. Ultimately the number will be completed, and those who are found worthy will be granted a place at the table of God’s great feast. ■