

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning Week 12 (March 13-19, 2016)

We will continue to follow Jesus on the last week of His earthly life. His teachings during this week all focus on being prepared for His return.

Sunday, March 13 (read Matthew 22:1-14)

“The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son.” (Matthew 22:2)

Jesus continues to teach of our responsibility to be ready to hear God’s call in the rapture of His Church. In this parable, the king obviously represents God who is preparing a wedding supper for His Son, Jesus Christ. His original invitation goes out to the Jews, but they refuse to accept the generous offer (v. 3). Then He patiently issues another invitation to them through other prophets (v. 4), but they go on about their business, ignoring the urgent request (v. 5). They mistreat the messengers, even killing some of them (referring to the treatment that the Old Testament prophets received). The king is enraged over this insult, so he sends his army to burn their city (v. 6). This actually took place in 70 A.D. when the Roman army burned the entire city of Jerusalem, destroying even the temple. We will continue the parable in tomorrow’s devotion.

Monday, March 14 (reread Matthew 22:1-14)

“But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes.” (Matthew 22:11)

Since God’s chosen people, the Jews, have rejected the king’s generous offer, the servants are now sent to invite the Gentiles to the banquet (v. 8-9). Because of the generosity of the king, the invitation goes out to everyone, both to those who are considered **good** in the eyes of the people as well as those who are considered **bad**, so that the wedding hall is filled with guests (v. 10). In ancient weddings, the host would supply wedding clothes to all the invited guests so that the attention would be on the bride and groom and not on the guests. Unfortunately, one of the guests thinks his clothes are worthy of the banquet, so he refuses to wear the robe being worn by all the others (v. 11). In other words, this man thinks his own deeds are adequate to allow him to come into the presence of the generous host. The king is enraged as he observes the disrespect being shown (v. 12). We will conclude the parable in tomorrow’s devotion.

Tuesday, March 15 (reread Matthew 22:1-14)

“For many are invited, but few are chosen.”

Even today, many professing Christians think they have earned their ticket to the Lamb’s Wedding Supper (see Revelation 19:1-8) through their own good deeds. The Bible says that, “all our righteous acts are like filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6). Therefore, God “has clothed (us) with garments of salvation and arrayed (us) in a robe of righteousness” (Isaiah 61:10). Everyone at the Lamb’s Supper will be dressed in His righteousness alone! The king expels the guest that refuses the acceptable attire and has him thrown “outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (v. 13, symbolic of hell). Likewise, God’s generosity goes out to everyone during the Day of Grace in which we live, but only a small percentage will accept His offer on **His** terms (v. 14).

Wednesday, March 16 (read Matthew 22:15-22)

Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap Him in His words. (Matthew 22:15)

On the way to the cross, Jesus has to deal with the agendas of His enemies. In today's text, the Pharisees and the Herodians come together to try to trap Jesus in His words. This is odd because these two groups hate each other, but their hatred of the Lord unites them for a common cause. As many people do today, they use flattery before asking Him a "trick" question about payment of the temple tax (v. 15-17). The Pharisees resent the Roman government under King Herod, but the Herodians are supporters of the administration. Their question poses a problem for Jesus. If He says "yes," the Jews will accuse Him of disloyalty to the Jewish nation, but if He answers "no," the Herodians will accuse Him of treason against the Roman government. We'll examine how Jesus deals with this dilemma in tomorrow's devotion.

Thursday, March 17 (reread Matthew 22:15-22)

Then he said to them, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." (Matthew 22:21b)

The poll tax is used to fund the salaries of the Roman soldiers, so the Jews hate it more than any other tax. Jesus is well aware of the trap laid for Him by these two opposing sides, so He rebukes them severely (v. 18). The coin in question is a denarius, the value of an average day's pay for a Roman soldier. It has an image of Tiberius on each side so it is idolatrous to the Jews. The Lord points out that the coin and the image belong to Caesar's kingdom, not God's (v. 19-21); therefore, it is acceptable to give the coin back to the one who minted it, regardless of the purpose for which it is to be used (v. 21). This command from Jesus is confirmed by the Apostle Paul in Romans 13:1-7. Someday the government of man will be turned over to the government of God (see Isaiah 9:6-7). Until then, we must "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's" while we await the arrival of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Friday, March 18 (read Matthew 22:23-33)

That same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him with a question. (Matthew 22:23)

The Sadducees do not believe in the resurrection or in anything supernatural (That's why they are **sad you see**), so they come up with a ridiculous case problem, based on Deuteronomy 25:5-10, trying to trap Jesus (v. 23-28). As always, the Lord sees through their selfish motive, rebuking them for not knowing "the Scriptures or the power of God" (v. 29). He teaches them and us that there will be no marriage or procreation in heaven, because we will be like the angels that the Sadducees do not even believe in (v. 30). He then reminds His listeners that His Father is the "**I am**" and not the, **I was** (v. 31-32). He rebukes them for not making application of the Scriptures that they should know so well. I hope and pray that He will not have to ask you, "Have you not read what God said to you?" (v. 31b)

Saturday, March 19 (read Matthew 22:34-45)

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" (Matthew 22:36)

The Pharisees are thrilled that Jesus has silenced their rivals, the Sadducees, so they return with another question (v. 36). This is to be the last one they will ask Him (v. 46). Jesus uses a quote from Deuteronomy 6:5 along with another from Leviticus 19:18 to silence them once and for all. He teaches that, "All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments" (Matthew 22:40). The Lord then uses more Scriptures that further disarm His critics (v. 42-45). Jesus loves a seeking heart and is ready to answer any question from a person who wants to learn; however, He knows the difference between sincerity and entrapment. I pray that any question you ask will be to obtain truth and not to create doubt (v. 46).