

Notes for Next Sunday

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

The Point of this Week's Readings

Old Testament (Isiah 25:6-9). The Lord's judgment throughout Isaiah is a call to repentance. In the midst of his judgment, there is a place of hope. Mount Zion is the place of the Lord's work of salvation for all. Immediately before our text, Isaiah proclaims the inevitable judgment of the Lord on all the earth. It is a terrifying and inescapable thing. Sin and rebellion will be overcome. Sin will be vanquished; death will be swallowed up (25:8). The Lord Almighty prepares a feast of victory. He swallows up sin and death forever. He loves and forgives his people with a gracious, everlasting love.

Epistle (Philippians 4:4-13). Paul wrote this while in prison. He knew that outer circumstances do not need to affect our inner feelings. Paul's joy came because he knew the Lord was with him no matter what happened. His repetition of the exhortation to rejoice suggested he knew conditions at Philippi might make his exhortation seem a little unrealistic. While believers often have situations in which we cannot be happy, we can always rejoice and delight in the Lord and His impact on our lives. Paul was not calling for smiles to be "painted on our faces," but for a genuine joy possible only in the Lord.

Gospel (Matthew 22:1-14). This parable repeats three important themes from the previous one (21:33-46), specifically Jesus' divine Son-ship. Israel's persistent rejection of its prophets, led to the inclusion of Gentiles in God's kingdom. Jesus graphically portrays God as reaching out to people, bar none, with his inviting grace. Proactively he not only prepares the finest feast but also invites . . . and invites . . . and invites. A wedding is a great cause for celebration and joining together of family and friends. When royalty is involved, the celebration becomes a national event because of the bond between the people and their head. Those invited represent the people of Israel. Inexplicably, they refuse to come to the banquet prepared for them. Next the invitation goes out to all nations. The man without the wedding garment refused God's grace by insistently wearing his own garment (self-righteousness) even though the proper the wedding garment (grace) was being supplied by the host (God).

For more in-depth commentary on each reading, read the notes found after each text below.

OLD TESTAMENT – Isiah 25:6-9

.⁶ On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine—the best of meats and the finest of wines. ⁷ On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; ⁸ he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. ⁹ In that day they will say, “Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation.”

25:6 on this mountain. The place where God dwells and dispenses his grace through his appointed means. On Mount Calvary, God dwelling in Christ, procured grace for us. In our present age Zion's equivalent is the church, wherein the means of grace are found.

25:6 feast ... banquet. God's people eat of this banquet of grace every time they hear the gospel or receive the sacraments. As God's people read and study the Word, they eat from God's banquet table and receive nourishment for their souls. (PBC)

25:6 *rich food*. The ESV has “rich food full of marrow” at this point. Healthy and desirable. Descriptive terms refer to the absolute best that money could buy. This will be a feast like no other. (TLSB)

25:6 *aged wine*. Left on its fermented sediment to improve strength and flavor. (TLSB)

25:8 *swallow up death*. Now, death “swallows” life. On that day, death itself will die. (TLSB)

25:9 *In that day*. His salvation may seem a long time in coming. It did for Israel as she awaited the Messiah. Our lives may be prolonged in suffering. But those who wait for the Lord will not be disappointed.

EPISTLE – Philippians 4:4-13

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ⁸ Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. ¹⁰ I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. ¹¹ I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. ¹² I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. ¹³ I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

4:5 *near*. The Lord is near to give you patience, wisdom, and help. The Lord is near in coming for you. This is life from a resurrection and eternal perspective. (TLSB)

4:6 *in everything, by prayer*. Anxiety and prayer are two great opposing forces in Christian experience. (CSB)

4:7 *peace of God*. Not merely a psychological state of mind, but an inner tranquility based on peace with God—the peaceful state of those whose sins are forgiven. (CSB)

4:8 *true ... praiseworthy*. Paul understood the influence of one’s thoughts on one’s life. What a person allows to occupy his mind will sooner or later determine his speech and his action. (CSB)

4:8 *seen in me*. Paul’s entire life bears witness and demonstrates how to live for Christ. He is not only a teacher in Word but also a mentor in life. Church workers today have the same calling. (TLSB)

4:12 *content ... whether well fed ... whether living in plenty*. Paul knows all things work together for good to those who love God, our sinful human nature is our own worst enemy and disciplining the body makes it possible to thrive spiritually. (TLSB)

GOSPEL – Matthew 22:1-14

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. ⁶The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. ⁷The 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. ⁹Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.’ ¹⁰So 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.”

22:3 who had been invited. This second invitation seems in accord with Eastern custom (Esther 6:14). We are told that among the distinctions of the inhabitants of Jerusalem is mentioned that none of them went to a feast till the invitation had been given twice. The Apostles called those who had already been invited.

22:5 paid no attention. Here was a case of studied insolence and insult. They were indifferent to the urgent call, they paid absolutely no attention to it, in the majority of cases. (Kretzmann)

22:5 to field...businesses. Both of these groups are sophisticated people of earthly means. The point is that they are sunken in mere material and earthly matters, materialists who care not about their own souls.

22:5 rest resized his servants. This group is not just indifferent but hostile. We think of John the Baptist, Stephen and James. The book of Acts is not only an account of the Apostles preaching justification by faith but also an account of how the people treated God’s messengers with violence and death.

22:7 burned their city. Anticipates the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 during the first Jewish revolt. (TLSB)

22:10 servant went out. The turning point came at the time of Pentecost. From that point on, no distinction between Jew and Gentile was to be made.

22:10 good and bad. All of the people who are invited to the king’s banquet are unworthy of His invitation. (PBC)

22:11 not wearing wedding clothes. † It has been conjectured that it may have been the custom for the host to provide the guests with wedding garments. This would have been necessary for the guests at this banquet in particular, for they were brought in directly from the streets (vv. 9–10). The failure of the man in question to avail himself of a wedding garment was therefore an insult to the host, who had made the garments available. To come without the wedding garment is to despise the grace of the king, an act which invites judgment. (CSB)

22:13 throw him outside, into the darkness ... weeping ... gnashing of teeth. Jesus is not talking about an earthly party but about salvation. The exclusion and punishment is a description of hell. (TLSB)

22:14 14 many ... invited ... few ... chosen. Not every seed that is sown springs up and bears fruit (13:3-9). “Few” here, in combination with and in contradistinction to “many,” probably does not have a numerical sense of “not very many.” Rather, “few” simply contrasts with “all.” Jesus is not teaching here that only an extremely small number of people will be finally saved. (CC)