

JESUS' TEACHINGS AT THE PHARISEE'S SUPPER

BIBLE TEXT : Luke 14:1-24

LESSON 148 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 14:11).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Luke 14:1-24

¹ And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him.

² And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy.

³ And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?

⁴ And they held their peace. And he took *him*, and healed him, and let him go;

⁵ And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?

⁶ And they could not answer him again to these things.

⁷ And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,

⁸ When thou art bidden of any *man* to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him;

⁹ And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

¹⁰ But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

¹¹ For whosoever exalteth himself

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I At the Pharisee's House

- 1 Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath Day, Luke 14:1-6
- 2 *Jesus* teaches humility in the choice of a seat, Luke 14:7-11
- 3 Jesus instructs the Pharisee as to which guests to invite to supper, Luke 14:12-14

II The Refusal of Those Who Were Bidden to the Gospel Feast

- 1 A great supper is prepared and the invitation extended, Luke 14:15-17
- 2 Temporal interests are put ahead of the divine call,
 - (a) "A piece of ground" is considered more important than the "promised land," Luke 14:18
 - (b) "Five yoke of oxen" are deemed of more value than heavenly possessions, Luke 14:19
 - (c) "A wife" is regarded as of more importance than the things of God, Luke 14:20

III The Invitation to the Poor, the Maimed, the Halt, the Blind

- 1 The call reaches out into the streets and lanes of the cities, Luke 14:21
- 2 It is extended even to the countryside, to fill the house, Luke 14:22, 23
- 3 The first group are excused and excluded from the feast, Luke 14:24

NOTES:

The Sabbath and the Lord's Day

The Pharisees were very zealous for their Sabbath Days. The Lord had commanded them to remember the Sabbath and keep it holy, but they had gone far beyond the laws of God with their traditions as to what could and could not be done on the Sabbath Day. As Jesus entered a Pharisee's house on the Sabbath Day they watched with critical eyes to see if He would keep all their traditions concerning the day. Jesus did not wait for them to ask the question; but, knowing their thoughts, He put the question to them, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?"

This question arose frequently in the ministry of Jesus. The ruler of a synagogue once told the people not to come to be healed on the Sabbath (**Luke 13:14** ¹⁴ And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day). On one occasion when the question came up, Jesus said, "It is lawful to do well on the sabbath days" (Matthew 12:12). He told them, "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath" (Mark 2:27, 28). The Law commanded that the Sabbath be kept. Christians today are not under the Law but under Grace. We do not observe the Jewish Sabbath (Saturday), but we observe the Lord's Day (Sunday), the day on which Jesus rose from the grave, for our justification. Christ was the "firstfruits" of the resurrection. The Mosaic Law pointed forward to this day when it instructed that the first fruits be offered on the "morrow after the sabbath," which would be

shall be abased; and he that humbled himself shall be exalted.

¹² 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.

¹³ But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:

¹⁴ And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

¹⁵ And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed *is* he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

¹⁶ Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

¹⁷ And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

¹⁸ And they all with one *consent* began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

¹⁹ And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

²⁰ And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

²¹ So 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.

²² And the servant said, Lord, it is

Sunday.

The "first day of the week" was the day on which Jesus rose; it was the day on which He made His several appearances to His disciples after His resurrection; it was the day on which the power fell (Acts 2), at which time Christ established His Church; it was the day on which the disciples met to break bread in commemoration of the Lord's Supper, and brought their offerings unto the Lord; it was the day which the early church observed from 100 A. D. to 324 A. D., according to the universal testimony of the fathers from Ignatius to Eusebius.

The first day of the week was not instituted as the "Lord's Day" by Constantine, by the Catholic pope, or by any other prelate. It became accepted as the day of worship immediately after Jesus' resurrection, and has been observed by all true Christians, under the new covenant, from that time down to the present day. As Christians, today, we should regard the Lord's Day and not transact business, do shopping or unnecessary work, on Sunday. (**Nehemiah 13:15-23** ¹⁵ In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all *manner of* burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day: and I testified *against them* in the day wherein they sold victuals. ¹⁶ There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. ¹⁷ Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing *is* this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day? ¹⁸ Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath. ¹⁹ And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and *some of my* servants set I at the gates, *that* there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day. ²⁰ So the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Jerusalem once or twice. ²¹ Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do *so* again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they *no more* on the sabbath. ²² And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and *that* they should come *and* keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day. Remember me, O my God, *concerning* this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy. ²³ In those days also saw I Jews *that* had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab: **Isaiah 58:13-14** ¹³ If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, *from* doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking *thine own* words: ¹⁴ Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*.)

Choosing the Chief Rooms

Jesus watched the guests which were bidden to dine with Him at the Pharisee's house. He noticed how they chose the places of honor. This was contrary to their Law. Solomon had told them, "Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men: for better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldst be put lower in the presence of the prince" (Proverbs 25:6, 7).

We are instructed to "let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" (Philippians. 2:3). We are to humble ourselves "under the mighty hand of God" and let Him exalt us in due season. Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased. It is better

done as thou hast commanded,
and yet there is room.

²³ And 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.

²⁴ For I say unto you, That none of
those men which were bidden
shall taste of my supper.

that we humble ourselves instead of waiting for the Lord to humble us. He will do that, if need be, but we may find it hard to take. Jesus humbled Himself. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow." God has prepared great things for us, if we will walk before Him in humility here below.

The Right Guests

When you make a feast, call the "poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind." Our love should go beyond those of our own household, our friends, relatives, or rich neighbors. "If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye?" (Matthew 5:46). Christ died for the ungodly. God loved us while we were sinners. We are exhorted: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:44, 45). If we are children of God we will manifest some of that same love that He has shown toward us. It is good to entertain friends for the sake of friendship, but God has promised us a blessing in the Resurrection Day if we show kindness to the "poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind."

The Gospel Call

The parable of the great supper sets forth the attitude of the mass of humanity to the call of God from the beginning of time to the present day. Primarily, it shows the rejection of Christ by the Jews, the bidden guests. However, the same puny excuses that were made by the bidden guests of olden days are being made by the world at large today.

A Great Supper

This was a great supper. It was prepared at an infinite cost. The price of our redemption cannot be reckoned in temporal values. It cost the life of the divine Son of God. God spared no effort that He might reconcile the world unto Himself. Jesus, in His ministry on earth, came to His own, the Jews. He said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24). Israel lightly esteemed her opportunities and rejected and crucified the Savior and said, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Matthew 27:25). Today, the universal call has gone forth, "Come; for all things are now ready."

Excuses

The guests were informed of the feast that was to come. Jesus told the Jews, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). When supper-time came the servant went out to call those which had been bidden. "And they all with one consent began to make excuse." And what excuses! The first man had bought a piece of ground and had to go and see it. Apparently, he had already bought it without looking at it, and now he was going to see it at suppertime in the dark. The transaction was closed; the land was not going to move away; but he could not wait until after the supper. He let a business deal stand between him and eternal life. Many a man today is engrossed in the affairs of the world to the extent that he is neglecting eternal life. He is letting eternal issues slide, in order to obtain a few perishing things of this world.

People today are making every sort of excuse for not

accepting the Gospel invitation. Many are not willing to give up the fashions and sinful pleasures of this world. They do not realize the seriousness of neglecting God. God said. "None of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper." All the excuse-makers were excused and excluded from the feast.

QUESTIONS

- 1 Enumerate the various healings that Jesus performed on the Sabbath Day.
- 2 Why do we observe the Lord's Day (Sunday) instead of the Jewish Sabbath?
- 3 What answer did Jesus give to the question, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?"
- 4 What embarrassment are we likely to encounter if we choose the chief places?
- 5 What will happen to the man who exalts himself?
- 6 When will we be repaid if we invite the poor or lame to supper?
- 7 What is the meaning of the parable of the great supper?
- 8 What were the excuses offered by those who were bidden to the feast?
- 9 What happened to those who offered the excuses?
- 10 What are some of the excuses given today for not serving God?