

## The Parable of the Banquet and the Reluctant Guests

MATTHEW 22:1-14	LUKE 14:12-24	THOMAS (SECTION 63)
<p>Once more Jesus spoke to the people in parables, saying: <b>“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come.</b> Again he sent other slaves, saying, ‘Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.’ But they made light of it and went away, <b>one to his farm, another to his business,</b> while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. <b>Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.</b>’ Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.</p> <p>“But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?’ And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ For many are called, but few are chosen.”</p>	<p><i>[He said also to the one who had invited him, ‘When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbours, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.’ One of the dinner guests, on hearing this, said to him, ‘Blessed is anyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!']</i> Then Jesus said to him, <b>‘Someone gave a great dinner and invited many. At the time for the dinner he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, “Come; for everything is ready now.” But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, “I have bought a piece of land, and I must go out and see it; please accept my apologies.” Another said, “I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please accept my apologies.” Another said, “I have just been married, and therefore I cannot come.” So the slave returned and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and said to his slave, “Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.” And the slave said, “Sir, what you ordered has been done, and there is still room.” Then the master said to the slave, “Go out into the roads and lanes, and compel people to come in, so that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those who were invited will taste my dinner.” ’</b></p>	<p>Jesus said, <b>"A man was receiving out-of-town visitors. And having prepared the dinner, he sent a slave to invite the visitors.</b> The slave went first and said to that one, 'My master invites you.' That person said, <b>'Some wholesale merchants owe me money; they are coming to me this evening, and I shall go and give them instructions. I must decline the dinner invitation.'</b> The slave went to another and said to that one, 'My master invites you.' That person said to the slave, <b>'I have bought a building, and I am needed for a time. I am not free.'</b> The slave went to another and said to that one, 'My master invites you.' That person said to the slave, <b>'My friend is about to get married, and it is I who am going to give the dinner. I cannot come; I must decline the dinner invitation.'</b> The slave went to another and said to that one, 'My master invites you.' That person said to the slave, <b>'I have bought a village; I am going to collect the rents. I cannot come, I must decline.'</b> The slave came and said to its master, 'The people you have invited to the dinner have declined.' The master said to his slave, <b>'Go outside into the streets; bring in whomever you find, to have dinner.'</b> Buyers and traders [will] not enter the places of my father.”</p>