

PARCHMENT

AND HE SAID UNTO ME, WRITE: FOR THESE WORDS ARE TRUE AND FAITHFUL.

REVELATION 21:5



*“A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.”
Luke 14:16-17*

PEACE, HAPPINESS, AND HONOR, FOR WRETCHEDNESS, INFAMY, AND DESPAIR

We are well acquainted with the parable of the wedding feast. In it, the master sends out three invitational calls in order that his “house may be filled”.

At the start, the master invites only the most elect. Yet to his great disappointment, when all things were ready and those bidden were called to attend, “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. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.” Luke 14:18-20.

When the master heard what his guests had said, he was angry, for the feast had been provided for at great cost. A second call was afterward given to those in “the streets and lanes of the city”, to this time invite “the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind”.

Although many of these poorer citizens heeded the invitation with gladness, not all chose to attend. And there was still room in the master’s banquet. At last, the master’s servant was instructed: “Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.” Luke 14:23.

Those first bidden to the supper are in the one sense a representation of the Jewish people. Indeed, Israel’s greatest privilege “lay in their possession of light concerning the kingdom of God.” (RH January 17, 1899, par. 6) Yet while rich with knowledge and the heritage of Abraham, this chosen people rejected Jesus as the Son of God, and thus excluded themselves from the rich feast which He had provided. Moreover, this highly honoured class considered themselves self-sufficient, and hence denied God’s offering of incomprehensible love for the gains of property, work, and human relationships.

Although we often see ourselves as being vastly different to the Jews of old; what is our excuse for refusing to take upon us the yoke of Christ, that we may be partakers of his rest?

As Sister White states, “This parable correctly represents the condition of many professing to believe the present truth. The Lord has sent them an invitation to come to the supper which He has prepared for them at great cost to Himself; but worldly interests look to them of greater importance than the heavenly treasure.” (3T 383.3)

Our privileges as Godhead-believing Sabbath-keepers are far greater than those belonging to the Jews. In spite of that, are you guilty of failing to multiply your talents for



God, in order to fulfil the demands of your career or labour? Are your affections directed more to the enhancement or acquirement of earthly property, than to your entrance into the heavenly land? Do you meditate more upon earthly relationships than on your relationship with God? Or on the contrary, do you ignore your relationship with God because you're frustrated that your worldly relationships are not as they should be? Are you the person Ellen White is speaking about when she describes "hearts so overgrown with thorns and with the cares of this life that heavenly things can find no place in them"? (3T 384.2)

Thankfully, the case-story need not end there. Sister White's testimony to you continues: "Jesus invites the weary and heavy-laden with promises of rest if they will come to Him. He invites them to exchange the galling yoke of selfishness and covetousness, which makes them slaves to mammon, for His yoke, which He declares is easy, and His burden, which is light." (3T 384.2)

We need to be continually aware of the magnitude of the work before us. Every person seen in public is someone God is trying to reach. Sister White declares that "precious souls are perishing for the light which God has given to men to be reflected upon the pathway of others. But the precious light is hid under a bushel, and it gives no light to those who are in the house." (3T 385.3)

Let us not excuse ourselves from the work which it is our responsibility to do because of our worldly cares and burdens. Always remember that "souls for whom Christ died might be saved by [your] personal effort and godly example." (3T 385.3)

And it is not only the salvation of others at stake, but that of our own souls. Our duty is to live our lives according to heavenly priorities and godly values. The Lord commands: "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." Luke 17:10.

Or else, your invitation will be given up to someone else. Just as the master "turned from those who had thus insulted the bounty offered them; and invited a class who were not full,—who were not in possession of houses and lands, but were poor and hungry, and would appreciate the bounties provided, and

in return would render to the master sincere gratitude, unfeigned love and devotion." (RH January 17, 1899, par. 4)