

**Matthew**

**Chapter 22**

By

**Don Stewart**

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## MATTHEW CHAPTER 22

This chapter consists of Jesus teaching a parable of the wedding banquet, the question of taxes, the greatest commandment, and the issue of the resurrection of the dead. Jesus will then question the religious leaders.

### THE PARABLE OF THE WEDDING BANQUET (22:1-14)

Jesus continues to teach by parables.

**Matt. 22:1** And answering, Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying,

**And answering, Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying,** This parable continues the dialogue between Jesus and the religious rulers. Now, after giving the two previous parables (21:28-43), He is about to comment upon their failure to meet God's requirement and the composition of the new people of God.

**Matt. 22:2** "The kingdom of heaven is like a king, who made a wedding banquet for his son.

**"The kingdom of heaven is like a king, who made a wedding banquet for his son.** As in 8:11, and in 25:1 ff., the banquet symbolizes the blessedness of God's salvation.

**Matt. 22:3** And he sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the marriage feast, and they were not willing to come.

**And he sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the marriage feast,** Those who had been invited had already received and accepted an earlier invitation.

**and they were not willing to come.** They had a change of heart.

**Matt. 22:4** Again he sent other slaves saying, "Say to the ones who were invited, 'Behold, I have prepared my meal, my bulls and the fatted ones have been slaughtered, and I have prepared all things. Come unto the wedding feast.'

**Again he sent other slaves saying, "Say to the ones invited, behold, I have prepared my meal, my bulls and the fatted ones have been slaughtered, and I have prepared all things,** It was customary to tell the ones invited when the meal was ready.

**come unto the wedding feast.** The second invitation (vs. 3) is now repeated to those who have been invited.

**Matt. 22:5** But they paid no attention and went away—one to his own field, another to his business.

**But they paid no attention** The idea is one of culpable negligence or indifference (Hill)

**and went away—** This makes a double refusal. Although they originally agreed to come, they have now refused the invitation twice.

**one to his own field, another to his business.** They have gone back on their original promise as with

the case of the disobedient son (21:30) and the tenants (21:35,36). This would make the parable aimed at the religious person, not those who rejected the Lord's word at their first hearing. They gave a higher priority to their farm and business.

**Matt. 22:6** And the remaining ones seized his slaves, shamefully treated them and killed them.

**And the remaining ones seized his slaves,** Those that neglected the offer but did not go away.

**shamefully treated them** Again a reference to Israel's shameful treatment of God's messengers—the prophets.

**and killed them.** Some were killed.

**Matt. 22:7** And the king became angry, and sent his army and they destroyed those murderers and burned their city.

**And the king became angry, and sent his army and they destroyed those murderers and burned their city.** Jesus made it clear that the rejection of Him would result in the judgment of them and their city. This statement of judgment recalls the preceding parable (21:35,39).

**Matt. 22:8** Then he said to his slaves, 'The wedding banquet is prepared, but the ones who were invited are not worthy.'

**Then he said to his slaves, 'The wedding banquet is prepared, but the ones who were invited are not worthy.'** Now He picks up the theme of a different, unexpected people to take the place of those who had been originally invited and who had originally said they would come.

**Matt. 22:9** Therefore, go unto the street corners and whoever you find, invite them to the wedding banquet.'

**Therefore, go unto the street corners** This probable refers to the intersections of the road in the center of town—the place where the poor would gather.

**and whoever you find, invite them to the wedding banquet.'** The gospel goes out to everyone, both Jew and Gentile.

**Matt. 22:10** So those slaves went out into the streets and gathered together all whom they found, both good and evil, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.

**Note on a variant reading:** Some manuscripts read *the marriage feast was filled* instead *the wedding hall was filled*.

**So those slaves went out into the streets and gathered together all whom they found, both good and evil,** The fact that they gathered both evil and good will necessitate a further explanation of the meaning of the parable.

**and the wedding hall was filled with guests.** The wedding can now proceed.

**Matt. 22:11** But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there that was not clothed with

a wedding garment.

**But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there that was not clothed with a wedding garment.** A wedding garment was not a special type of garment but was rather clean clothes. To come in dirty clothes was an insult to the host. “The question of how the guests could obtain wedding garments, since they were just called in from the streets is irrelevant to the parable” (Hill). In this context, the wedding garment is probably a symbol of righteousness.

**Matt. 22:12** And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here not having a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless.

**And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here not having a wedding garment?’** Each guest was responsible for his own clothing. As the new tenants were supposed to produce fruit, those who come to God’s banquet must have the appropriate change of life. Coming in the old, unconverted nature will not be satisfactory for admittance. Without a genuine conversion, there is not access to the kingdom of heaven.

**And he was speechless.** No case to be made by the man who did not belong.

**Matt. 22:13** Then the king said to his servants, “Tie his feet and hands, and throw him out into the outer darkness; where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.

**Then the king said to his servants, “Tie his feet and hands, and throw him out into the outer darkness; where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.** As with the parable of the weeds and the net, it is only the final judgment that will determine who belongs in God’s kingdom.

**Matt. 22:14** For many are invited, but few are chosen.

**For many are invited,** Those who went back to their farm and business were invited.

**but few are chosen.** In each case the fault for not coming was their own. However the word chosen suggests that their fate was based on someone else’s choice (God’s). This raises the familiar problem of the doctrine of election. The word translated “chosen” (Greek *elektoi*) could be seen as a technical term for the believers. This term then would emphasize not the means of achieving salvation, but rather it would be stressing the fact of salvation. The message of the parable would be the same as the parable of the sower—many who first start out claiming to be genuine believers eventually reveal their true nature by lack of fruitfulness.

### THE QUESTION OF PAYING TAXES (22:15-22)

The issue of paying taxes now arises.

**Matt. 22:15** Then the Pharisees went out and took counsel so that they might entrap him in his word.

**Then the Pharisees went out and took counsel so that they might entrap him in his word.** It was the imposition of direct Roman taxation that sparked the revolt of Judas of Galilee in A.D. 6, and Judas ideology was the basis for many a resistance movement that arose which we place under the general title of “zealots.” To approve of Roman taxation was to come out against the will of the people who detested paying taxes to the hated Romans. No doubt, the questioners felt that Jesus would lose many of His

followers had He agreed to Roman taxation. If He agreed with the popular sentiment of not paying taxes to Rome, He could be accused of treason. They could take His statement to the Roman governor to use it against Him. This question, therefore was a clever trap.

**Matt. 22:16** And they sent their disciples to him together with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are true, and the way of God you teach in truth, and do not care about anyone, because you do not have regard to anyone.

**And they sent their disciples to him together with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are true, and the way of God you teach in truth, and do not care about anyone, because you do not have regard to anyone.** The Herodians, which appear only in Matthew, were part of Herod’s supporters and consequently owed their allegiance to Rome

saying, “Teacher, we know that you are true, and the way of God you teach in truth, and do not care about anyone, Note the words of flattery used.

**because you do not have regard to anyone.** This idiomatic expression means, “to show partiality.”

**Matt. 22:17** Tell us, therefore, what you think? Is it right to pay the poll tax to Caesar or not?

**Tell us, therefore, what you think? Is it right to pay the poll tax to Caesar or not?** Tax is *singular* in Greek, thus referring to the hated poll tax. There were other taxes but this one was the main contention between the Jews and the Romans—it stood for their political subjection to a foreign power.

**Matt. 22:18** Jesus, knowing their evil, said, “Why are tempting me, hypocrites?

**Jesus, knowing their evil, said, “Why are tempting me, hypocrites?** He sees through the trap. Hypocrites has the idea of insincerity.

**Matt. 22:19** Show me the coin used for the poll tax.” And they brought him a denarius.

**Show me the coin used for the poll tax.” And they brought him a denarius.** Notice He did not have a coin. The money used to pay the tax was a Roman denarius.

**Matt. 22:20** And he asked them, “Whose image and whose inscription is this?”

**And he asked them, “Whose image and whose inscription is this?”** Whose image is on this coin? The inscription would have read as follows (note the V represents our U) :

**Front**

TICAESARDIVI AVGFVGVSTVS

Tiberius Caesar Augustus  
Son of the Divine Augustus

**Back**

PONTIF MAXIM

High Priest

**Matt. 22:21** And they said to him, “Caesar’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to Caesar that which belongs to Caesar, and to God the things that belong to God.”

**And they said to him, “Caesar’s.”** The image of Caesar was on the coin which strict Jews found

objectionable because it bore a portrait of the Emperor on the front side while the back side had him seated on a throne (the ten commandments forbids making images of any Deity). For normal business copper coins were used that did not have the image of Caesar.

**Then he said to them, “Give therefore to Caesar that which belongs to Caesar, Since they were using Caesar’s money they should pay his taxes.**

**and to God the things that belong to God.”** As Caesar deserves his, so also does God. Jesus shows that both the secular and the sacred have their proper place. Honoring God does not mean dishonoring the government in power (see 1 Timothy 2:2; 1 Peter 2:17). In addition, the answer Jesus gave showed that the Emperor should be paid that which belongs to him. Yet some of the things that the Emperor claimed (such as Divine honor) did not belong to him but to God alone. Therefore believers are to refuse to give worship to the Emperor. Consequently the title Pontifex Maximus (Highest Priest) is to be rejected by those who follow God. When it comes to choosing between the two, the believer must choose God (Acts 5:29).

**Matt. 22:22** And after hearing this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.

**And after hearing this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.** They marveled at the cleverness of the answer. He did not totally alienate the Zealots and He was not guilty of insurrection against Rome. Furthermore, He laid down an important principle for His followers—we should give what we owe to both God and Caesar.

#### **THE SADDUCEES QUESTION JESUS ABOUT THE RESURRECTION (22:23-33)**

After quieting the Pharisees, the Sadducees bring their question to Jesus.

**Matt. 22:23** In that same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him, saying,

**Note on a variant reading:** Instead of *saying* some manuscripts read *who say that*.

**In that same day** This would be Tuesday of Passion Week

**the Sadducees,** The Sadducees will now make their attempt to trick Jesus. They were the secularists of that day..

**who say there is no resurrection,** The Sadducees believed that the soul perishes along with the body (Josephus, *Antiquities*, xviii. 16). Their question is no more serious than that of Herodians.

**came to him, saying,** They now bring him a question they thought was unanswerable. It was designed to ridicule the belief in the resurrection.

**Matt. 22:24** saying, “Teacher, Moses said, ‘If a man dies without having children, his brother will marry his widow and will raise up children for his brother.’

**saying, “Teacher,** Like the Pharisees they address Jesus with the designation, “teacher.” They do not address Him as Rabbi, Lord, or Son of David as others in Matthew’s gospel have addressed Him.

**Moses said, ‘If a man dies without having children, his brother will marry his widow and will**

**raise up children for his brother.'** This is based upon Deuteronomy 25:5,6.

**Matt. 22:25** Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one died after marrying, and since he did not leave behind children, he left his widow to his brother.

**Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one died after marrying, and since he did not leave behind children, he left his widow to his brother.** His brother would have married his widow.

**Matt. 22:26** The same thing happened to the second and the third brother, and so on until the seventh.

**The same thing happened to the second and the third brother, and so on until the seventh.** The story continues through the whole family.

**Matt. 22:27** Finally, the woman died.

**Finally, the woman died.** She outlasted them all.

**Matt. 22:28** Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven? For they all had her.

**Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven? For they all had her.** They thought they had Him.

**Matt. 22:29** Jesus answered and said, “You are in error, because you do not know either the Scriptures or the power of God.

**Jesus answered and said, “You are in error,** The word translated “error” is the Greek *planao* where we get the English word “planet” (wandering star). They should have known that the law of levirate marriage has nothing to do with life after death.

**because you do not know either the Scriptures or the power of God.** Jesus lists the source of all error. Those who deny the truth of God’s Word either do not know His power, or are ignorant of what His Word says. How true this is today! People who reject the Christian faith are ignorant of these two things—they do not know what the Bible really says and they do not know the power of the God of the Bible.

**Matt. 22:30** For in the resurrection, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but they are like the angels in heaven.

**Note on a variant reading:** After *angels* some manuscripts read *of God*.

**For in the resurrection, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but they are like the angels in heaven.** There is a difference in sexual relationships in heaven. People, like angels, do not marry.

**Matt. 22:31** But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying,

**But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying,** The Sadducees based their belief on the Torah (the first five books of the Old Testament). Jesus is going to show them that the Torah taught the resurrection of the dead.

**Matt. 22:32** ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?’ He is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”

**Note on a variant reading:** Instead of *He is not the God of the dead*, some manuscripts read *God is not the God of the dead*.

**I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?’** Jesus bases His argument upon the present tense of the verb.

**He is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”** God is, not was, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were long since dead when He spoke to Moses in the bush.

**Matt. 22:33** And when the crowds heard this, they were astonished at his teaching.

**And when the crowds heard this, they were astonished at his teaching.** The crowds again respond with amazement.

#### THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT (22:34-36)

A lawyer will now question Jesus about the greatest commandment.

**Matt. 22:34** And when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered themselves together,

**And when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered themselves together,** The Pharisees will now try their question.

**Matt. 22:35** and one of them, a lawyer, asked a question testing him.

**Note on variant reading:** Some manuscripts do not have the word *lawyer*.

**and one of them, a lawyer, asked a question testing him.** A lawyer was a scholar of the law. Like the two previous groups, the question was meant to entrap Him.

**Matt. 22:36** “Teacher, what is the greatest commandment in the law?”

**“Teacher, what is the greatest commandment in the law?”** This legitimate question was frequently discussed by Rabbi’s.

**Matt. 22:37** And he said to him, “You will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all you mind.

**And he said to him, “You will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all you mind.** This refers to the total person. Every aspect of our life is to be utilized in following the Lord.



**Matt. 22:38** This is the first and greatest commandment.

**This is the first and greatest commandment.** Loving God is primary.

**Matt. 22:39** And the second is similar to it, ‘You will love your neighbor as yourself.’

**And the second is similar to it, ‘You will love your neighbor as yourself.’** Likewise, we should love our fellow man.

**Matt. 22:40** All the Law and the Prophets hang upon these two commandments.”

**All the Law and the Prophets hang upon these two commandments.”** These two are the basis for all the other commandments.

### **THE QUESTION OF JESUS TO THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS (22:41-46)**

Jesus will now ask them a question regarding David’s Son.

**Matt. 22:41** And while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus questioned them.

**And while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus questioned them.** Now it is time for Jesus to question them.

**Matt. 22:42** saying, “What do you think concerning the Christ? Whose Son is he?” And they said, “The Son of David.”

**saying, “What do you think concerning the Christ?** He will now ask them their idea of the Messiah.

**Whose Son is he?”** Who does the Messiah descend from?

**And they said, “The Son of David.”** They correctly state the identity of the Messiah, He is David’s Son.

**Matt. 22:43** He said to them, “Why then did David, in the Spirit, call him, ‘Lord,’ saying,

**He said to them, “Why then did David,** Jesus attributes the authorship of this Psalm to David—something liberals deny.

**in the Spirit,** This was done by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

**call him, ‘Lord,’ saying,** How can your son be your master?

**Matt. 22:44** ‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand, until I place your enemies under my feet?”

**‘For the Lord said to my Lord,** Jesus will cite from Psalm 110 (109 in the Septuagint), written by David. Here “the Lord” is not Yahweh but Adonai.

**“Sit at my right hand,** The right hand was the place of authority.

**until I place your enemies under my feet?”** This pictures an enemy lying in the dust before someone.

**Matt. 22:45** If therefore, David calls him ‘Lord,’ how can he be his son?”

**If therefore, David calls him ‘Lord,’** If David calls his son, the Messiah, Lord

**how can he be his son?”** He is not saying the Messiah cannot be David’s son. The one whom David called Lord (not *Yahweh* but *Adonai* “Master”) shows that He has a superior position to David. Therefore, the Son of David, is superior to David himself.

**Matt. 22:46** And no one was able to answer him a word, neither did anyone dare any more to ask him a question from that day.

**And no one was able to answer him a word, neither did anyone dare any more to ask him a question from that day.** He has silenced His critics. They quit while they were behind.

### SUMMARY TO CHAPTER 22

Parabolic teaching continues. He gives the parable of the wedding banquet where the ones originally invited decided not to attend. Others were invited in their place.

The question of paying taxes comes next. Jesus does not fall into the trap that the religious leaders laid for Him.

Another question comes to Him—this time from the Sadducees. Again Jesus stifles their attempt to trick Him.

Jesus then answers a question about the greatest commandment. First we are to love God above all else and then we are to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Jesus has His own question about David’s son that they are unable to answer. After this confrontation, the religious leaders asked Him no further questions.