

The Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost (2020)

Holy Spirit, Light Divine: Shine upon this heart of mine;
Chase the shades of night away; turn the darkness into day;
Let me see my Savior's face; let me all His beauties trace;
Show those glorious truths to me which are only known to Thee.
Amen.

Matthew 22:1–14 Again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. Again he sent other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.’ But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.’ *And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.*

“But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ For many are called, but few are chosen.”

In the Name of Jesus.

Rejoice in the Lord, always! Again, I say it: Rejoice!

For the Lord Who is Jesus Christ saves us FROM our suicide called ‘idolatry’—the only way.

Imagine a two-year-old, if you can. It is hypothetically possible for a two-year-old boy to get his hands around a hefty piece of metal that his grandpa wisely put in his hands to inspect. ‘This is

called bismuth crystal!’ Grandpa remembered too late how the life of twos is two-thirds made up of heaving heavy objects toward breakables: TVs, windows, skulls.

Little claws need peeling back—but without harming the little one; too much. The danger there is that it all may end, as the Lord Jesus states, with weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

The kingdom of heaven ‘MAY’—IT MAY, JESUS SAYS—MAYYYYYY.... be compared to some king who nabs guests for his son’s wedding feast, dresses them just so, yet STILL has it in him to ‘bind a man hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness, blah, blah, blah.’

OK. You know what you’re in for when you bring your ears within the sound of this fool’s voice! Hang on.

The kingdom of heaven MAY be compared to such a hostage situation. But I—your poor pastor—DON’T WORRY WHAT UNSEEN GOD guarantees. I—THIS MAN—I guarantee you today that YOUR kingdom, ruled by YOUR King Jesus, is NOT and IT...WILL NOT be revealed at the End as some king-crank with fist clenched growling, ‘There’ll be no sad faces at THIS party! Arghh!’

Oh, how will your poor pastor be saved? The same way y’all will be saved:

By the Lord prying back your little clenched—mine—loving, carefully, heaven-ly, prying our cold, dead fingers away from what WE must have or our little world crumbles into weeping and wailing and the rest. And then: LIFE!

If anyone understood God’s wrath and rejection it was the holy people of Israel. The great disaster came—the FEAST for the nations!—foreseen and forewarned by Isaiah. Violent folk! Norwegians! Like my grandson, Samuel Paul, and me! And whatever the rest of y’all are. Springing from our Viking long

boats to take—Matthew eleven, and verse twelve—to take by VIOLENCE the Kingdom now defined by the King headed to the cross. ‘Violence’ means no pretense: we are good, hard-boiled law-breakers!

The Jew first; then the Greek, the Gentile, the Scandinavian—and then, whom COULD heaven disqualify?!

The Gospel According to Saint Matthew was written that way: to the Jew first; then, like throwd-ing a dawg a bone, or scraps from the table: even Americans; even our little, self-centered burg.

But the Jew first—it does not do to forget our place, my dearies:

³⁰ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? ³¹ Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

³⁴ “Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. ¹

This is the bind Almighty Jah made Hissself with Old Israel: all those other ‘things’ He showered on people who are, at heart, JUST...LIKE...US! Idolaters! SECURE, when our little hands momentarily GRIP what the moment insists cannot be lost. CRUSHED, when ANY THING is cruelly ripped away.

YOU get mad—idolater!—when you get robbed.

YOU get HOPPIN’ MAD—idolater!—when, like me, you is proper and the next man is improper and heaven takes no notice.

¹ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Mt 6:30–34). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

‘Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?!’ We can even complain in Hebrew!
 ‘Dear God is heaven of mine: why ME of all people?!’

In a word, anxiety. The Lord Jesus came to His people first; and we was not invited. And He asked them:
 WHAAAHHHHYYY—do you act like the Norskis?! The Swedes? The Fins?! And the French?! THEY seek things; Y’ALL have the Thing-Maker! WHAAAHHHHY the anxiety?

So, seven centuries before Christmas, and six centuries before Christ, The Almighty peeled the Jews fingers OFF all those pretty things and sent them to exile. They came back; and David’s Son came to them; and He reminded them that to OBSESS over CREATION while IGNORING the Creator is NOT a psychological problem. It is wickedness itself—a real thing, NOT from God; and it ruins God and ruins men and ruins, finally, even our treasures.

Had the Jew learned from the Exile? Saint Matthew tells us.

¹¹ Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus said, “You have said so.” ¹² But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer.

Matthew 27:29–30

And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” ³⁰ And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head.

Matthew 27:37–38

³⁷ And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.” ³⁸ Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left.

Matthew 28

¹¹ While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. ¹² And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers ¹³ and said, “Tell people, ‘His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ ¹⁴ And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” ¹⁵ So they took the money

and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.² ³

Lemme be crystal clear: you—Norwegian; you others—you see a Jew in ANY kind of danger, YOUR LIFE is forfeit and you MUST protect him. For you and I owe them----owe them Christ.

And this wedding feast horror story is NOT—again, I CANNOT be a normal Christian preacher! God help me: I will not be!

This story of the most anxiety-ridden wedding imaginable CANNOT launch from the lips of Jesus King of the Jews—the Crucified—to open ANY CRACK for us to stick in OUR little fingers and say, ‘Aha! I DONE GOT hold of what THEY foolishly lost!’

No way.

The King of the Jews told this story as a desperate last shot at moving HIS people from the type of idolatry and anxiety that we GENTILES...CALL...LIFE! To raise them up to God the Giver and God the Father and God Who when you peel Him down to the Core is nothing but ATTACHMENT to those who never need prove themselves, ever. Love unknown; my Savior’s love to me; love to the loveless shown that they might lovely be.

What has gone on, in Heaven, that the Jew rejects this King and believes lies about His body being stolen by: Peter?! Come on! Well, THAT is none of our business. That’s the business of the unseen ways of heaven that is all—Rejoice!—BENEATH us!

What IS our business—our life—our kingdom—our King: you and I have been torn OFF the wide and easy path we Gentiles

² [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Mt 28:11–15). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

³ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Mt 27:11–28:15). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

call home—that WOMB—slapped on the buh-hind and given new life by a water spritz and the teaching we can never master but yet REJOICE to call ‘our OWN’: Trust your Baptism; trust your King’s Spirit; and LIVE the LIVE of attaching yourself to those who hate you most, those you hate more than any; and you are perfectly aligned with heaven....

One poor man was singled out, cast out. Does the King not have one more set of fancy go-to-meetin’ clothes for that guest who is not dressed for the occasion? Horror. And no joke.

Rejoice in the Lord: Today! The King gives YOU—gives even ME!—His Body to eat and His Blood to drink; to clothe, to cover, to hide: us.

Talk about anxiety! Not ours! The Holy Spirit’s! Until God, in His mercy, finally removes US...FROM all our false securities—His reign is all about prying back our little fingers from gross idolatry: STUFF; and even from the idolatry that damns us for sure: ‘Well, THERE SHE GOES AGAIN! I WOULD NEVERRRRR.....’

The Spirit’s heavy lifting. But He prefers that work to us being bound hand and foot and cast out where we insist on going. Again, I say, Rejoice!

No pain, no gain in the Name of Jesus.