

presence. To eat bread in this sense signified, to a Jew, the attainment of his spiritual hopes. **In the kingdom of God.** That kingdom was the Messianic kingdom. But this was not supposed to be set up till after the resurrection, when the just, the elect of God, the Jews, would all be raised and together enjoy the delights and comforts prepared for them. This is the Jewish millennium, and the Millenarians in the early Church adopted similar notions. Jesus distinctively opposes all such interpretations of Scripture and all such rabbinical teachings, and widens the thought of the kind of people that will be at the feast in the kingdom of God to the possibility of all classes and races of men being included among those who shall sit down with the patriarchs in that kingdom.

16. Then said he. This parable of the supper is not the same as the parable of the king's son's marriage. The two are often confounded, but they were both spoken on different occasions, under different circumstances, and in different places. This of the supper was at an entertainment; that of the marriage of the king's son was spoken in the temple. This was addressed to those who presumed on their supposed relation to God; that was directed to the Pharisees who had begun to plot for the Redeemer's life, and from whom divine justice, he declared, would take away their kingdom and give it to the heathen. **Bade many.** The invitation went in the first instance to a certain class of people belonging to the social plane of the generous host. This class, in the thought of our Lord, may have represented the Jews, and the different individuals employed in the picture may, as Alford thinks, stand for the different classes among the Jews.

18. They all . . . began to make excuse. They would not openly and expressly reject the invitation as desiring to have nothing to do with the host, but the secret determination of their hearts was veiled under various pleas of necessity in personal affairs. **The first said . . . I have bought a piece of ground.** We are to interpret this according to an idiomatic use of the Greek aorist tense in order to preserve the natural truthfulness of the picture, and render, "I am buying a piece," etc., which fact afforded a reason for the going to **see it**, unless we suppose the man bought first and examined after, which is not natural. The excuse of this one is based on a supposed necessity.

19. Another said . . . five yoke of oxen. This man offers no plea of necessity. In purpose he has already started, interested in the quality of his oxen. He has his own plans and purposes in life, and while sitting at a feast may be agreeable, yet his own personal desires exercise over him a predominating influence.

20. Another . . . I have married a wife.

That there is a gradation in the character of the excuses will be seen by every one: (1) Land, possessions of every description; (2) oxen, the activities of mercantile life; (3) wife, social influences. The excuses are of a threefold nature, but one spirit underlies them all—the spirit of this world.

21. Go . . . streets and lanes. That is, everywhere. The invitation now is not to one class, race, or nation, but to all. Over the application of the parable to men everywhere who defer obedience to the call of God, there hovers the national application of it to the Jews as a people. The Jewish nation will not accept the Gospel, the call now made by the **servant of Jehovah**, hence the invitation is given to all races of earth. **The poor, . . . maimed, . . . halt, . . . blind.** The good host, the Giver of all good, calls the spiritually destitute. Those who are satisfied with themselves excluded themselves, and are rejected in turn by him.

23. Highways and hedges (walls). Seek the most hopeless, the abandoned, the lost. Here is the call to the Gentiles. **Compel them to come in.** The only compulsion this one servant could use was persuasion. They are to be entreated, for the idea that they are really invited to the rich man's house and bounty will be difficult for them to believe. **That my house may be filled.** The kingdom of God does not depend on any one people. The gracious purposes of God shall not be frustrated because his call is rejected.

24. Shall taste of my supper. Remember, these last words, we think, must be understood not as the words of the householder to his servant, but as a direct address of our Lord to the company present. Christ's habitual form of speech when announcing some fact of special application, "I say unto you," leaves little doubt of the correctness of this interpretation, although Meyer affirms that the statement, "None of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper," is not an assertion of Jesus, but of the master of the house. The teaching of the Lord was that, since the Jews had rejected the invitation to accept the Gospel—for which purpose they had been originally called into nationality and preserved through ages—the call would be given to the nations of the earth, and they would come into the kingdom of God without the instrumentality of the Jews, as was originally intended, and the Jews, as such, would themselves be rejected. The same principle underlying this parable is as applicable to-day as then. If we fail to fulfill the purpose of our call in history, the law of rejection will grind us as it ground the Jewish Church, and God will find some other way to carry out his plans and to fulfill his purposes in humanity without us.