

## Notes for Matthew –Chapter 22 (Page 1 of 7)

### Introduction Part 1 – “The Silence is Deafening”

1. That’s an old cliché that means the lack of a verbal response by a person or a group can say as much as if the person did verbally respond.
2. In Chapter 22 we have 5 stories. All five end with a “very loud silence” from the crowd.
3. The first story is Jesus telling a parable about a wedding feast. (Verses 1-14).
  - a. The purpose is to tell who is and who is not coming to heaven.
  - b. The purpose was to put-down the religious Jews and to show their lack of faith in Jesus will cost them their eternal salvation.
  - c. What is noticeable about this parable is a lack of response by the Pharisees.
4. The 2<sup>nd</sup> story is Jesus answering the question, “Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar? (Verses 15-22).
  - a. The Pharisees sent their disciples to trap Jesus into taking sides on a controversial debate.
  - b. When Jesus gave his answer, again “their silence is deafening”.
5. The 3<sup>rd</sup> story is about the Sadducees asking about the resurrection. (Verses 23-33).
  - a. Sadducees were a Jewish “denomination” that didn’t believe in the resurrection concept.
  - b. They were attempting to trap Jesus with their question.
  - c. Again, when Jesus gave his answer, again “their silence is deafening”.
6. The 4<sup>th</sup> story is some Pharisees asking, “Which is the greatest commandment?” (Verses 34-40).
  - a. This may have been another attempt to trick Jesus as the Pharisees debated among themselves which is the greatest of all the bible commandments.
  - b. Again, the text has a very loud lack of response to Jesus’ answer.
7. The 5<sup>th</sup> and final story is Jesus asking the Pharisees about just who is the Messiah. (Verses 41-46)
  - a. Notice the last verse in this chapter: “No one could say a word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions.” (Matthew 22:46, NIV).
8. In every case, you can see how Jesus is the final authority in a debate.
  - a. One cannot “out debate Jesus”, or the word of God for that matter.
  - b. The mistake we make is we try to use our own wits to defend Christianity as opposed to simply quoting the bible itself.

### Introduction Part 2 – Clues about life in heaven:

1. Several of these stories also give us a few clues as to what life in heaven is like:
2. The first parable about the wedding banquet teaches us who is invited to heaven.
3. The third story talks about lack-of-marriage in heaven and how believers are “like angels”. We will discuss that point when we get there.

### Chapter 22 Verse 1: “Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying:”

1. The last part of Chapter 21, Verses 28-46 had two parables:
  - a. The parable of the two sons (one did what father wanted, other did not).
  - b. The parable of vineyard owner and the tenants who refused to pay the rent.
2. Chapter 22 now opens with the 3<sup>rd</sup> parable in a trilogy on the theme of salvation.
3. In the first 2 parables, Jesus commented after each one how they are illustrations about salvation.

### Verse 2: “The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son.

1. The term “kingdom of heaven” has several meanings in the bible.
  - a. It can refer to believers on earth, here on earth or it refers to believers in heaven.
2. We, as believers in the church, are the “Bride of Christ”.
  - a. “Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb (Jesus) has come, and his bride (us) has made herself ready.” (Rev. 19:7, NIV)
  - b. “Then the angel said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!’” (Rev. 19:9a, NIV)

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### Verse 2 (cont.)

3. Religious Jews also understood that the Jewish nation is referred to in the Old Testament as the "God's bride" in the sense that even though they have been unfaithful many times, God is committed to Israel despite of her faults.
  - a. "The LORD said to me (Hosea), "Go, show your love to your wife again, though she is loved by another and is an adulteress. Love her as the LORD loves the Israelites, though they turn to other gods and love the sacred raisin cakes (the raisin cakes refers to other gods)." (Hosea 3:1, NIV)

Verse 3: He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.

1. A custom of that time for a king's banquet is to have a "double-invitation".
  - a. First, the invitations are sent saying the king is going to have a banquet and give the rough time (as opposed to exact time) of the banquet.
  - b. The second invitation is when the wedding announcers say, "Come on, now is the time."
2. The last phrase of Verse 3 is one of the saddest in the chapter: "but they refused to come."
  - a. The point is Jesus is "the king's son", and even though Jesus is legitimately the king's son, the resentment by Pharisees of that fact means they wouldn't come.

Verse 4: "Then he sent some more servants and said, 'Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.'

1. The invitee's refused the invitation, so God sent more messengers.
2. God knows all things. God knows in people's hearts that they refused the first invitation. But out of God's love, he is pleading with those who were invited to please come. God understands the consequences of eternal hell better than those who were invited.
3. This parable refers to the Nation of Israel. Remember that because God "picked" the Nation of Israel to bring the Messiah into the world, they get the first invitation to the "wedding banquet".
  - a. Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile." (Romans 1:16, NIV)
3. What if the Jewish nation accepted Jesus?
  - a. We don't know the answer. We do know that God knows all things in advance, and knew they would reject Jesus. That was part of God's "overall plan" to have people of all races as believers in Christ.

Verse 5: "But they paid no attention and went off--one to his field, another to his business."

1. The people invited to wedding were more interested in "their business" than the kings.
2. Nothing much has changed today. Most people are more interested in other activities than going to church.

Verse 6: "The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them."

1. I take the view the largest number of people in hell will be those who simply "ignored" Jesus and tried to be neutral. Those are the people in Verse 5.
2. Verse 6 represents another group: Those who actively opposed the Gospel message.
  - a. The group in Verse 5 "paid no attention..." The group in Verse 6 "killed them..."
  - b. Verse 6 also represents those who don't want to hear the Gospel message.
  - c. They don't want anyone to convict them of their sins, so they "kill the messenger".

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Verse 7: The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.

1. This verse implies that non-believers only get “so many chances” and that’s it.
2. Remember that the people who refused to come were busy “doing their business”.
3. Here in Verse 7, the king burned their city.
4. Stop and think of all the effort people do to “have more stuff”. They work so hard as to ignore God to get more stuff. Now the king is “burning their stuff”.
5. I’m not saying we have to take a vow of poverty. We just have to have the proper perspective of life on this earth as compared to eternal rewards.

Verses 8-10: “Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come.’<sup>9</sup> Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.’<sup>10</sup> So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.

1. Notice in Verse 8 it says, “those I invited did not deserve to come.”
  - a. Jesus was speaking to people who spent their life studying the Old Testament. Yet, the message is they don’t deserve to come.
  - b. That’s the Gospel message. Your entrance into heaven is not based on how good you are, but on the question, “What have you done with my son Jesus?”
2. Verses 9-10 say in effect, “I’m the king and I’m having a party and a party needs guests. Go get anybody who’s willing to come. I don’t care what they are like as long as they are willing to come (notice the phrase “good and bad” in verse 10).
3. Remember that Matthew wrote this to a Jewish audience. Their view of heaven is that it is only for Jews or Jewish converts who obey God’s commandments.
  - a. For Jesus to imply that “anyone” could come to heaven simply by accepting the king’s (God’s) invitation is a difficult concept to accept.

Verses 11-12: “But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes.”<sup>12</sup> ‘Friend,’ he asked, ‘how did you get in here without wedding clothes?’ The man was speechless.

1. A wedding banquet of that time, especially one given by the king, required special wedding clothes. There is a garment-at-the-door waiting for you as you come in.
  - a. For someone to not wear that garment, you are making the statement, “I’m here, but I don’t want to be here.”
2. A few verses back, we had those who refuse to come be killed. So in this parable, who does this not-dressed-properly person represent?
  - a. Most commentators argue that it represents false believers within the church. It represents those who come to church but don’t really have a heart for Jesus.
  - b. It can refer to cult members, or false-teachers or simply anyone claiming to be a Christian, but denying the fundamental facts about God the Father and Jesus.
  - c. Some people compare this to the church “kicking out” non-believers.
3. Going back to my opening theme, notice that when this not-dressed-properly person is questioned about it, “He is silent”.
  - a. When we approach God for the wrong reasons (i.e., trying to please him on our own efforts, there is nothing we can say in our defense.
  - b. Paul said, “For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.” (Romans 1:20, NIV)

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Verse 13: "Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

1. The term "weeping and gnashing of teeth" has already been used three times by Jesus previously in the Gospel of Matthew (ref.: 8:12, 13:42 and 13:50). It refers to eternal hell.
2. My personal view of eternal hell is not a fire pit, but complete darkness. Imagine being deep in a large cave with no light. I think that eternal separation from God is what causes the weeping and the gnashing of teeth in pain.

Verse 14: "For many are invited, but few are chosen."

1. If you want a good balance between "pre-destiny and "free-will" there it is in Verse 14.
  - a. God gives us the free will to choose to be with him for eternity. ("many are invited")
  - b. God knows all things. Therefore he "choose" who will be saved. ("few are chosen")
2. Remember the expression: "The river of truth runs between the banks of the two extremes".
  - a. Christianity requires both "free will" and "chosen by God". They are difficult to reconcile.

Verse 15-16a: Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. <sup>16</sup> They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. (I'm stopping in the middle of Verse 16).

1. Notice the Pharisees didn't go themselves. They sent their own disciples.
  - a. By this time, Jesus would recognize their faces. In order to trap Jesus, they had to send others Jesus would not recognize.
2. History is a little vague on who are the "Herodians".
  - a. They were probably Jewish people who were pro-Roman Empire.
  - b. King Herod ruled over the Sea of Galilee area, thus the name "Herodians".
  - c. The area around Jerusalem was Pontius Pilate's territory.
  - d. The Pharisees hated Rome and wanted Israel's independence. They hated Jesus so much they were willing to work with political enemies (The Herodians) in order to trap them.
  - e. Yassar Arafat is famous for the quote, "The enemy of my enemy is my friend". It is amazing to think what people will do out of their hatred of Jesus.

Verses 16b-17: "Teacher," they said, "we know you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren't swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are. <sup>17</sup> Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

1. Notice how these guys tried "buttering up" Jesus before asking the question.
2. The Pharisees thought they got Jesus in a trap:
  - a. If Jesus says he is in favor of paying the taxes to Caesar (i.e., Roman Empire) than he would be against the Jewish independence.
  - b. If Jesus says he is against paying the tax, the Pharisees could turn Jesus over to the Romans for being a traitor and someone wanting to overthrow Rome.

Verses 18-20: But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, "You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me?

<sup>19</sup> Show me the coin used for paying the tax." They brought him a denarius, <sup>20</sup> and he asked them, "Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?" "Caesar's," they replied. Then he said to them, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."

1. Jesus knew they weren't interested in His opinion, which is why Jesus called them hypocrites.
  - a. It is only after pointing out their sin that Jesus dealt with the question itself.

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Verses 18-20 (cont.): A discussion of "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."

1. Jesus is not giving a down-the-middle or make-both-sides-happy response.
2. Jesus is saying in effect, "I'm not here to overthrow Rome. Yes you the Jews were conquered by Rome. God allowed Rome to rise as a great power and to conquer you for greater purposes than you can comprehend right now. (The spread of Christianity is much easier under one empire and one set of rules!)"
3. Modern translation: Pay your taxes and obey God's commandments.
4. All authority is God-ordained. This is why we pray for our political leaders.
  - a. "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established." (Romans 13:1a, NIV).
  - b. "(Pray) for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. (1st Timothy 2:2, NIV).

Verse 22: When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.

1. The silence of those asking the questions shows their defeat in their purpose.
2. You can't "out-debate" Jesus. He is the final authority in all things.

Vs. 23-28: That same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question.

<sup>24</sup> "Teacher," they said, "Moses told us that if a man dies without having children, his brother must marry the widow and have children for him. <sup>25</sup> Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married and died, and since he had no children, he left his wife to his brother. <sup>26</sup> The same thing happened to the second and third brother, right on down to the seventh. <sup>27</sup> Finally, the woman died. <sup>28</sup> Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?"

1. The last group was the religious-conservatives. Now comes the religious liberals (Sadducees).
  - a. The Sadducees believed the first five books of God (The "Torah" in Hebrew) were God-inspired as good-moral stories, but they didn't believe the other Old Testament books were God inspired.
  - b. When Jesus rebukes these guys, Jesus sticks only to the "Torah" to rebuke them.
2. In this paragraph the Sadducees were making fun of the idea of the resurrection.
  - a. The Sadducees were correct in that it is a biblical idea of when a man dies without children, his brother is supposed to take the women and have children in his brother's name. It is not a binding requirement, but if the surviving brother won't do it, he is to be publicly put to shame. (Reference: Deuteronomy 25:5-10).
  - b. God says when two people become married, "they become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24).
  - c. Therefore, the Sadducees thought they had Jesus in a "conflict" because they assumed that marriage would continue into the next life (which they didn't believe in, but their rivals, the Pharisees did) and thus they gave the "7 grooms/1 bride" problem.

Verses 29-32: Jesus replied, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God. <sup>30</sup> At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven. <sup>31</sup> But about the resurrection of the dead--have you not read what God said to you, <sup>32</sup> 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not the God of the dead but of the living."

1. The key word in Verse 32 is the word "am": "I am the God of Abraham..." as opposed to "I was the God of Abraham..." God speaks in present tense of Abraham after he died.
2. The mistake of the Sadducees was not taking the scriptures seriously.
3. Remember the rule: "If the plain sense makes perfect sense, seek no other sense". If God says He is the God of Abraham (as opposed to "was"), then Abraham is resurrected.

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### Verses 29-32 (cont.)

4. The second mistake the Sadducees make is not knowing the power of God.
  - a. The opening verse of the bible is, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1, NIV)
  - b. If you can "handle" that verse, you can handle the rest of the bible.
5. We get a few clues about heaven from these scriptures.
  - a. The first is that "people will neither marry nor be given in marriage."
  - b. The reason there is no marriage is that, in a sense, we are all "the bride of Christ". Our focus in heaven will be on our relationship with God the Father and with Jesus.
  - c. Therefore, marriage to anyone else but Jesus is no longer necessary.
  - d. If you read through the entire bible, we don't have a lot of information about the next life. The bible spends most of the time dealing with our lives here on earth.
    - i. I interpret that fact this way, "Here are your instructions (the bible) for life here on earth. Keep your focus on the eternal perspective, but don't worry about the details. I, God will take care of that, and it will be wonderful.
6. The bible clearly teaches that Jesus is the "first to rise from the dead". This is what is meant by the bible-term "firstfruits".
  - a. "But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:20, NIV)
  - b. Critics will say, "If God "is" the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, how could Jesus be the "first" to be in heaven?"
    - i. Jesus himself tells the answer in Luke 16:19-31.
    - ii. This is the account of a poor man named Lazarus who is "comforted in the bosom of Abraham. The same story mentions another man who is tormented. There is a "great chasm" (Verse 26) between Lazarus and the tormented man.
    - iii. A point of this story is that there is a "temporary holding place" for those who were saved, prior to Jesus being resurrected.

Verse 33: When the crowds heard this, they were astonished at his teaching.

1. Jesus just silenced the Sadducees, as stated in Verse 34.
2. I'm sure there were many in the crowd who heard the Sadducees teaching and the Pharisees teaching and were not sure who was right.

Verses 34-36: Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together.<sup>35</sup> One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question:<sup>36</sup> "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

1. The put-down of the Sadducees gave their rivals, the Pharisees "a second wind".
2. Reading these verses, one cannot tell if they were asking Jesus this question out of genuine curiosity or if were they trying to trap him.
3. If one reads through the five books of Moses there are hundreds of commandments that Moses gives to the Israelites. (The best estimate is 613 commandments!) The "10 commandments" are something special in that God "hand-wrote" those on stone tablets for everyone to see.
  - a. So here are some Pharisees asking Jesus in effect, "Of the 613, which is #1?"

Verses 37-40: Jesus replied: " `Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'<sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: `Love your neighbor as yourself.'<sup>40</sup> All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

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### Verses 37-40 (cont.):

1. If you take all 613 commandments, or even just the 10 commandments, you can categorize them into two groups:
  - a. Our relationship with God (The first 4 of the 10 commandments).
  - b. Our relationship with other people (The last 6 of the 10 commandments).
2. Verse 37 (again): "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."
  - a. This is a quote from Deuteronomy 6:5. It is not part of the "10 commandments."
    - i. Verses 4 and 5 from Deuteronomy Chapter 6 are called the "She-ma" in Hebrew. Together they are two of the most famous verses in Judaism as many Jews recite these two verses together.
    - ii. Verse 4 says, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one."
    - iii. The word for "God" in Verse 4 is "El-o-heem". This is a plural-compound.
    - iv. Think of "plural one" like "one group of people". It is a clue of the Trinity!
  - b. Jesus said, "Love the Lord your God...heart, soul, mind and strength":
    - i. If you love God that much, all you want to do is focus upon Him, be with him and do what he tells you. All the other commands about our relationship with God will fall into place if we obey this command.
    - ii. "Love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, mind and strength and then do whatever you want". If you love God that way, you want to obey Him!
    - iii. Heart, soul, mind and strength: God works through our inner-being (our heart), affecting how the spirit works within us (our soul), affecting how we think (our mind) and how we act (our strength).
3. Verse 39 (again): "Love your neighbor as yourself." (A quote of Leviticus 19:18.)
  - a. It is similar to the "Golden Rule" taught in "The Sermon on the Mount":
    - i. "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 7:12, NIV)
4. If Jesus is saying these are the two greatest commandments, why don't we pray these more often?

Verses 41-45: While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, <sup>42</sup> "What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?" "The son of David," they replied. <sup>43</sup> He said to them, "How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him 'Lord'? For he says, <sup>44</sup> " 'The Lord said to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.' " <sup>45</sup> If then David calls him 'Lord,' how can he be his son?"

1. Jesus was done listening to questions. It was time for Jesus to fire back.
2. In Jewish thought, a father is always superior in stature to a son.
3. The promised Messiah is a descendant of David. Yet, David called him "Lord".
4. A Jewish father would never call one of his descendants "Lord".
5. In Verse 44 Jesus is quoting Psalm 110:1 with the phrase "The Lord said to my Lord".
  - a. How could David call his "son" Lord, and the Lord be superior to him as a deity?
  - b. Jesus is showing how the Messiah is both a man (son of David) and deity (Lord).
6. Verse 44b: "Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet." (Psalm 110:1b, NIV)
  - a. When David wrote this Psalm, the crucifixion were hundreds of years in the future.
  - b. In the sense of time and history, Jesus didn't do "anything" until his appointed time to pay the price for our sins. Therefore the Psalm is predicting he "sat" until His time.

Verse 46: No one could say a word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions.

1. This leads back to my chapter theme of "The silence is deafening".