

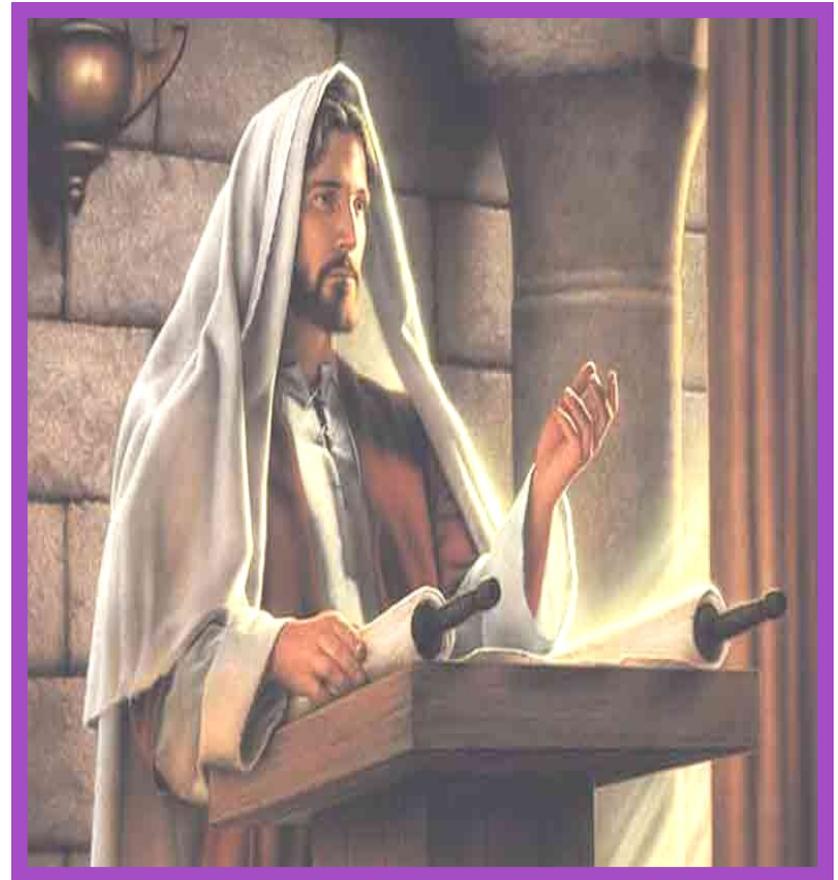
garment, and he said to him: *Friend, how camest thou in hither not having on a wedding garment?* Then since he was a sinner, and not renewed, and had not put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and being without any ground of excuse, he is silent. And so it is written; *But he was silent.* Nor is it enough that he is sent forth from the wedding feast who had proved unworthy of his invitation; the king's jailers must also bind fast the wickedness which had not suffered him to do what he should have done, and the power of action he had not used to do good. Not alone is he cast forth from the wedding, he is also condemned to the place that is a stranger to all light, where there is a darkness deeper than darkness, and called *exterior darkness.*

And if there should be one of us, coming at the invitation of the king to the wedding of his son, and should he appear to have obeyed the call and to have come with those who were called, but has not put on the wedding garment of which we have been speaking, he shall suffer these things and, bound hand and foot, shall be

thrust out into exterior darkness, there, according to the words: *Woe to ye that now laugh; for you shall mourn and weep* (Lk. vi. 25); to weep with those who have committed sins deserving of mourning and weeping. They shall weep, mourning their own miseries. Then that the Word might show us the fear and trembling, the sadness, the sorrow and pain in which they shall be who have not put on a wedding garment, He says: *There shall be weeping, but gnashing of teeth.* And that he may teach us that though many are called, not all, but only a few of these, have come, he brings the whole parable to an end with the words; ***For many are called, but few are chosen.***



## **SERMON ON ON THOSE CALLED TO THE WEDDING FROM THE FATHER'S OF THE CHURCH # 115 - 1**



***JESUS, OUR FIRST PREACHER!***

**19<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

## Based on the Divine Office-Douay-Rheims Version

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Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew 22: 1-14

by: Origen, Priest and Confessor

*And Jesus answering, spoke again in parables to them, saying: The kingdom of heaven is likened to a man king, who made a marriage for his son. And he sent his servants to call them that were invited to the marriage, etc., to the words: For many are called but few are chosen.*

This parable also appears clear and easy to understand. In it a man, indeed a king, is put before us as a figure of God and the Father of Christ; the nuptials of the king's son as the restoration of the Church, the Bride of Christ, to Christ her Spouse; the servants sent to call those invited to the wedding stand for the prophet who by their prophecies strove in due season to recall the people from error of their ways, to lead them to the joy of the restoration of the Church to Christ.

But those first called would not come; and they are those who would not hear the prophets. The other servants sent are another group of prophets. The dinner prepared, and for which the kings beeves and fatlings were slain, is the strong and rational food of the soul of God's mysteries. So too that *all things are prepared*, means the divine revelation which shall make known to us all things; so that when that which is perfect shall come (1 Cor. xiii. 10), they shall eat and drink who have obeyed the summons to the feast.

Since however of those called by the prophets, some neglected only their words, and turned themselves to profane and earthly things, but did no evil against them, so wishing to show this difference, He says: But they neglected, and went their ways, one to his farm, and another to his merchandise. But the rest laid hands on his servants, and having treated them contumeliously put them to death. Then following this simple outline, we understand the anger of the king; of which the Apostle says, speaking of the Jews: The wrath of God is come upon them to the end (1 Thess. ii. 16). Here the war against the Jewish nation, the capture of Jerusalem and the destruction of its people, that followed Christ's advent is foretold; *And sending his army*

*He destroyed those murderers and burnt the city.*

The words that follow; *Then he saith to his servants; The marriage indeed is ready; but they that were invited were not worthy. Go ye therefore to the exits of the ways; and as many as you shall find, call to the marriage*, may be referred to the Apostle of Christ saying to the Jews: *To you it behoveth us first to speak the word of God; but, because you reject it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold we turn to the Gentiles* (Acts xiii. 46).

The *exits of the ways* (highways) are therefore the state of those outside Israel, among whom those *found* by the Apostles are *called* to the wedding; the Apostles gathering in all whomsoever they found. And they found those who gave ear to them; and calling them, they did not concern themselves as to whether they were bad or good before the call: for they called all they found. The good are here to be understood as the more virtuous of those who gave themselves to the service of God, to whom these words of the Apostle can be applied: *For when the gentiles, who have not the law, do by nature those things that are of the law; these, having not the law, are a law to themselves: Who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness to them* (Rom. ii. 14, 15).

And when the marriage of Christ and the Church is filled with guests, and the restoration of those found by the Apostles is complete, they sit down to enjoy the wedding. Then, since they had to call both bad and good, not however that the bad were to remain bad, but so that taking off and casting aside the garments unfitting the wedding, they should put on wedding garments, that is, the bowels of mercy, benignity, humility, modesty, patience (Col. iii. 12): for these are the wedding garments; because of this then the king goes in to see the guests before the dinner; the beeves, namely, the slain fatlings and all that was *made ready* is put before them, so that He may note carefully those who have on a wedding