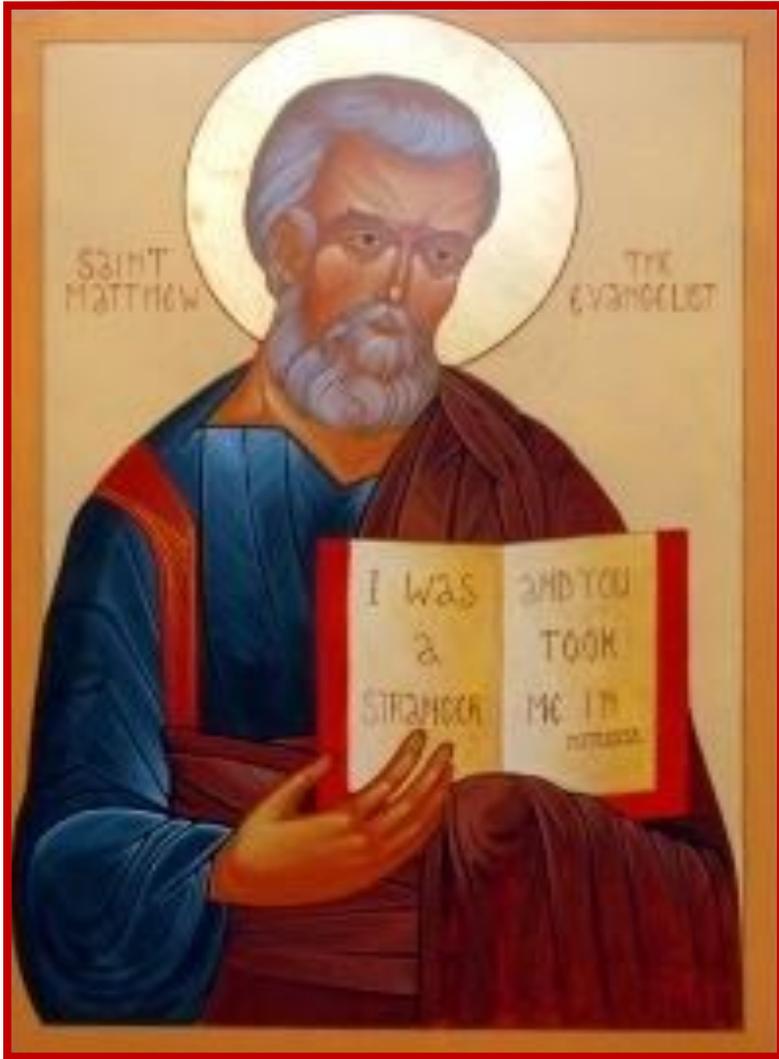


than to raise it from the dead." Christ here touches upon the double root of the Sadducean error. The first was ignorance of the Scriptures, which clearly teach the Resurrection. The other was ignorance, or want of consideration, of the omnipotence of God. This caused them to interpret the Scriptures which treat of the Resurrection as referring to a mystical resurrection from vice to virtue.



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For the Catholic Church, God's Revelation is found in Sacred Tradition, understood as God's Revealed Word handed down by the Living Teaching Authority established by Christ in the Church. That includes both Written Tradition (Scripture) and Unwritten Tradition received from Christ and handed down Orally by the Apostles and their Successors. The Church founded by Christ on Peter, and only that Church, has been Empowered by Christ to 'Interpret' His Teaching Authoritatively in His Name.

Scripture is *Inspired*; *Inspiration* really means that God Himself is the Chief Author of the Scriptures. He uses a Human Agent, in so marvelous a way that the Human writes what the Holy Spirit wants him to write, does so without Error, yet the Human Writer is Free, and keeps his own Style of Language. It is only because God is *Transcendent* that He can do this - insure Freedom from Error, while leaving the Human Free. To say He is Transcendent means that He is above and beyond all our Human Classifications and Categories.

Matthew writes his gospel account to give us the view of Jesus as the King. He records Jesus' authority in calling the disciples: "Follow me" (Matthew 4:19), and he also records more than any of the others about Jesus' teaching concerning God's kingdom and heavenly rule.

Considered one of the most important Catholic theologians and Bible commentators, Cornelius à Lapide's, S.J. writings on the Bible, created a Scripture Commentary so complete and scholarly that it was practically the universal commentary in use by Catholics for over 400 years. Fr. Lapide's most excellent commentaries have been widely known for successfully combining piety and practicality. Written during the time of the Counter Reformation, it includes plenty of apologetics. His vast knowledge is only equaled by his piety and holiness.

Matthew 22: 1-29

Douay Rheims Version

*The parable of the marriage feast. Christ orders tribute to be paid to Caesar.
He confutes the Sadducees, shews which is the first commandment
in the law and puzzles the Pharisees.*

1. And Jesus answering, spoke again in parables to them, saying:
2. The kingdom of heaven is likened to a king who made a marriage for his son.
3. And he sent his servants to call them that were invited to the marriage: and they would not come.
4. Again he sent other servants, saying: Tell them that were invited, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my beeves and fatlings are killed, and all things are ready. Come ye to the marriage.

commands when he says, 'Vow, and pay unto the Lord your God; all ye who are round about Him bring presents.'" (Ps. lxxvi. 12).

Verse 22- *And when they heard, they marvelled, &c.* They marvelled at the wisdom of Christ, who thus easily extricated Himself from the snare which to the Pharisees seemed so impossible of escape, and twisted it round their own necks, who had laid it, according to the words of the Psalm, "In their own net which they laid privily is their foot taken." And again it is said (Prov. xxi. 30), "There is neither wisdom, nor prudence, nor counsel against the Lord."

Verse 23- *Then there came unto Him, &c* The Sadducees had heard Christ teaching the Resurrection, and by means of it persuading men to repentance and a holy life. They oppose Him therefore with this question, which seemed to them unanswerable, in order that they might confute and overthrow Christ and His doctrine by the absurdities in which they thought to involve Him.

Verse 24- *Saying, Master, &c. Seed, i.e., posterity, a son,* as the Syriac translates, who should be called after the name of the dead, that so the dead man might seem still to survive in him. This law is found in Deut. xxv. 5.

The Sadducees expected by this question to confound Christ. For if He should say the woman was the wife of one of the men, it would incite the other brothers to wrath, and envy, and perpetual strife, since there was no reason why she should be given to one more than another. For the first husband, who might seem to have had the best right to her, lost his right by death. If, on the other hand, Christ had said that she was the wife in common of all the seven, they would have accused Him as a teacher of shameful doctrine and public incest. It was as though they said, "Such are the absurdities which follow from the doctrine of the Resurrection. Thou therefore, O Christ, ought not to assert it. And thus your silly followers imagine, in their stupidity, that you are wise." Then Christ, by a word, brushes aside their fallacy, as it were a spider's web, and shows them their ignorance, by adding what these men with their crass and carnal minds never took into consideration, namely, that in the world to come this widow would be no one's wife at all.

Verse 29- *Know not the Scriptures,* which clearly declare the Resurrection, as Job xix. 25; 2 Macc. vii. 9 et seq. and xii. 44; Isa. xxvi 19 and lxvi. 14; Ezek. xxxvii. 1, 9; Dan. xii. 12, &c.

The power of God; Gr. δύναμις. He means, "Ye know not that God is omnipotent, and therefore can raise to life again the bodies which have been reduced to dust, even as He created them out of nothing at the beginning. For greater power is required to create a thing out of nothing

which do no harm to piety and religion to pay them. For the tribute, or toll, which is opposed to virtue or the faith, is the tribute and revenue of the devil” And S. Hilary says, “If we have nothing in our possession which belongs to Cæsar, then we are free from the obligation of giving him that which is his.” Which is as though Christ said, “If ye wish to be exempt from tribute, renounce all things, as I and the apostles have done; for where there is nothing, there Cæsar hath no right.”

Politically: Christ here tacitly admonishes Cæsars and sovereigns that, being contented with what belongs to them, they must not intermeddle with the affairs of God and the Church. Wisely and piously did Constantine the Great, as Eusebius testifies (*Vita Constant.* iv. 24), say to the prelates of the Church, “You are bishops within the Church; I have been appointed by God a bishop without the Church.” And Valentinian the Elder said, “It is not lawful for me, who am a layman, to interfere in such matters as this.” When his son, Valentinian the Younger, was instigated by his mother, Justina, who was an Arian, to ask for a church from S. Ambrose (as he himself relates, *Epist.* 33 *ad Marcellinam*), he heard the following reply: “Do not burden yourself, O emperor, by thinking that you have any imperial rights over things divine. Do not lift up yourself; but if you desire a long reign, be subject to God; for it is written, ‘Give the things of God to God, the things of Cæsar to Cæsar.’ To the emperor pertain palaces, but churches to the priest. You have authority over fortifications, not sacred buildings.” And Hosius of Cordova said to the Arian emperor Constantius, “Do not intermeddle with matters ecclesiastical, neither give us orders with respect to such things, but rather learn them from us. To thee God has entrusted the imperial power, to us the things of the Church.” And Theodosius the Younger said (*Epist. ad Conc. Ephesin.*), “It is wickedness for one who has not been enrolled in the catalogue of the holy bishops to thrust himself into ecclesiastical affairs and deliberations.”

Tropologically: S. Hilary says, “We are bound to render unto God the things of God, our body, soul, and will; for the coin of Cæsar is in gold, in which his image is engraven; but God’s coin is man, in whom is the image of God. Give your money then to Cæsar, but keep for God the consciousness of your innocence.” And S. Augustine says, “To God must be given Christian love, to kings human fear.” And S. Bernard, or whoever was the author of the book on the Lord’s Passion, says (*cap.* 3), “Render unto Cæsar the penny which has Cæsar’s image; render unto God the soul which He created after His own image and likeness, and ye shall be righteous.”

Symbolically: the author of the sermon to the Brethren in the wilderness (*apud S. Augus. tom.* 10, *sum.* 7) says, “Then do we render to Cæsar the things of Cæsar, when we pay to the Saints the reverence (*dulia*) which is due to them; and we give the things of God to God, when we render unto Him that Divine worship (*latría*) which is due to Him alone.”

Lastly: S. Augustine (*in Sententiis, Sent.* 15) rightly applies these words to vows, and those who make vows. “Whosoever thinks well of what he may vow to God, and what vowing pay, let him vow and render himself. This is required, and this is due. Let Cæsar’s image be rendered to Cæsar, God’s image to God. This is what the Psalmist

5. But they neglected and went their ways, one to his farm and another to his merchandise.
6. And the rest laid hands on his servants and, having treated them contumeliously, put them to death.
7. But when the king had heard of it, he was angry: and sending his armies, he destroyed those murderers and burnt their city.
8. Then he saith to his servants: The marriage indeed is ready; but they that were invited were not worthy.
9. Go ye therefore into the highways; and as many as you shall find, call to the marriage.
10. And his servants going forth into the ways, gathered together all that they found, both bad and good: and the marriage was filled with guests.
11. And the king went in to see the guests: and he saw there a man who had not on a wedding garment.
12. And he saith to him: Friend, how camest thou in hither not having on a wedding garment? But he was silent.
13. Then the king said to the waiters: Bind his hands and feet, and cast him into the exterior darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.
14. For many are called, but few are chosen.
15. Then the Pharisees going, consulted among themselves how to insnare him in his speech.
16. And they sent to him their disciples with the Herodians, saying: Master, we know that thou art a true speaker and teachest the way of God in truth. Neither carest thou for any man: for thou dost not regard the person of men.
17. Tell us therefore what dost thou think? Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?
18. But Jesus knowing their wickedness, said: Why do you tempt me, ye hypocrites?
19. Shew me the coin of the tribute. And they offered him a penny.
20. And Jesus saith to them: Whose image and inscription is this?
21. They say to him: Caesar's. Then he saith to them: Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God, the things that are God's.
22. And hearing this, they wondered and, leaving him, went their ways.
23. That day there came to him the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection; and asked him,
24. Saying: Master, Moses said: If a man die having no son, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up issue to his brother.
25. Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first having married a wife, died; and not having issue, left his wife to his brother.
26. In like manner the second and the third and so on, to the seventh.
27. And last of all the woman died also.
28. At the resurrection therefore, whose wife of the seven shall she be? For they all had her.
29. And Jesus answering, said to them: You err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.

30. For in the resurrection they shall neither marry nor be married, but shall be as the angels of God in heaven.

31. And concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was spoken by God, saying to you:

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.

33. And the multitudes hearing it were in admiration at his doctrine.

34. But the Pharisees, hearing that he had silenced the Sadducees, came together.

35. And one of them, a doctor of the law, asked him, tempting him:

36. Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

37. Jesus said to him: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind.

38. This is the greatest and the first commandment.

39. And the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

40. On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets.

41. And the Pharisees being gathered together, Jesus asked them,

42. Saying: What think you of Christ? Whose son is he? They say to him: David's.

43. He saith to them: How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying:

44. The Lord said to my Lord: Sit on my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool?

45. If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?

46. And no man was able to answer him a word: neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.

Verse 1- *And Jesus answered, &c.*, refuting the incredulity of the Scribes. The meaning is: it is the same in the kingdom of Heaven, *i.e.*, in the Church militant here on earth, as if a king made a marriage for his son, &c. For in other respects the kingdom of Heaven is not directly and precisely like a king, but a kingdom. S. Gregory treats this parable at length (*Hom. 38, in Evang.*).

The parable is similar to that which Luke records (xiv. 16). Maldonatus thinks it is the same with that, and that Matthew has not here observed the historical order. With more reason S. Augustine (*l. 2, de consens. Evang. c.71*), S. Thomas, Jansen, and others think that this is a different parable from that in Luke; or if the same, that they were uttered upon two occasions, and in different words. It is clear on comparison that they have numerous differences. For, not to speak of other things, Luke says that the parable was spoken in the house of a Pharisee. Matthew here asserts that it was spoken publicly in the temple. This is plain from ver. 23. Again, Luke calls this marriage feast *a supper*; Matthew, *a dinner*.

Verse 3- *And sent his servants, &c.* For marriage, the Syriac version has throughout *feast*, meaning *marriage feast*.

The whole parable may be expounded and applied as follows:—1st *The king* is God the Father; the *son of the king*, the *bridegroom* is God's Incarnate Son, Jesus Christ, whose spouse is the Church, whose nuptials were begun in the

accuser does not prove his charge, the accused is absolved. In this case the accusers were the Pharisees, the accused the Romans, whom the accusers wished to deprive of their possession. Christ therefore, in this place, does not choose to enter into the question whether the Roman dominion over Judea, and their imposition of tribute, was just or unjust: but He takes for granted that, as a matter of fact, that which was strengthened and confirmed by the various titles specified above was just. For the Pharisees, in propounding this question about the payment of tribute to the Romans, did not put forward the plea of *justice*, but of *religion* and *piety*; that is to say, that it was neither lawful nor becoming that they, who were the alone people of God, should pay tribute to Cæsar, a Gentile and a heathen. They do not ask, "Are we *bound* to pay tribute to Cæsar?" but, "Is it *lawful* to pay tribute to Cæsar?" And they imply that to do so was contempt of God, a disgrace to the Jews, and an injury to their religion. Christ answers, on the contrary, that it was not an injury to God and the faith, nor an indignity to a faithful nation, if the people of God were subject to Cæsar, a Gentile; and that the Jews themselves might both profitably and honourably obey both God and a Gentile prince, if they would but render to both their due; and if they would do this with prudence, so as to arouse against them neither God nor Cæsar, and so destroy their whole nation, as they did not long afterwards. For it is better to pay money than to lose life and everything.

Render therefore, &c. That is, give to Cæsar the *didrachma*, which he rightly exacts from you to sustain the burdens of the state, and especially to maintain soldiers to defend you against the attacks of enemies. But give God also the *didrachma*—*tithes, oblations, victims*, as S. Jerome says, such as are prescribed in Leviticus, which He, by the right of supreme dominion, demands of you as His creatures, and as faithful to Him. "Because," says Origen, "a man renders to Cæsar what belongs to Cæsar, it is not a hindrance to him in rendering to God what belongs to God." The rights which belong to Cæsar are different from those which belong to God. Political obligations are not adverse to religion; neither is religion adverse to political duties. "Wherefore, since Tiberius Cæsar reigns over you, and you are his subjects, which clearly is the case, because he has the right of coining money, I mean the *denarius* of such a weight and value as seems good to him; and inasmuch as you yourselves, by receiving the coin of the census from Tiberius, as your prince, acknowledge that you are his subjects, and bound to pay his taxes, —therefore by this very fact you are under obligation to pay." "What Christ spoke with His mouth," says S. Bernard (*Epist. 42*), "He was careful to fulfil in act. This Creator of Cæsar delayed not to pay tribute to Cæsar." Hear Tertullian (*lib. de idololat. c. 15*), "*Render to Cæsar the things of Cæsar, and to God the things of God*, *i.e.*, the image of Cæsar, which is in money, to Cæsar; and the image of God, which is in man, to God; so that thou mayest give money to Cæsar, to God thyself." And S. Chrysostom, "When thou hearest that the things of Cæsar must be rendered to Cæsar, doubt not that those things only are spoken of

name and image of the prince who coins them. Hence the Arab. has, *Whose figure and inscription is this?*

Verse 21- *They say unto Him, Cæsar's*, i.e., Tiberius Cæsar's, who then reigned. Christ already knew this, but He put the question that He might draw from their own mouth a reply which He could turn against them and convict them. The cognomen Cæsar was first given to Julius Cæsar, from whom it passed to the succeeding emperors. Servius and Spartianus, and from them Charles Sigonius (*lib. de Nomin. Rom.*), say that Cæsar was called originally from the slaughter of an elephant. For Caesar signifies elephant in the Punic tongue. I have seen on some silver coins, on one side an elephant, with the inscription Cæsar; on the reverse, instruments by means of which the Romans were wont to slay elephants.

Then saith He, &c. As though He said, "Since ye, O ye Jews, are now subject to Cæsar, and use his coins, do ye not so much *give as render or restore (reddite)* to him the *denarius* which is due to him as tribute. But spiritual things, that is to say, worship and piety, *give ye (date)* to God. For this God exacts as what is rightly His due. So shall it come to pass that ye will offend neither against God nor Cæsar."

Observe: that Christ is here unwilling to enter into the question whether the Jews were justly or unjustly subjects and tributaries of the Romans. For this was a doubtful question. For *prima facie*, the negative, that they were not justly subject, would seem the more correct. For Pompey, who first reduced the Jews under the Roman yoke, was only called in by Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, the grandsons of Simon the high priest, to decide between them which of the two was to succeed to the Jewish sovereignty and high-priesthood. By what right then did Pompey pass them over, and transfer the sovereign power over Judea to the Romans? For this is Turkish justice. For when the Turk is called in to aid them by Christian princes quarrelling between themselves, he seizes upon and enslaves both. And yet, if we examine what happened more carefully, we shall perceive that the contrary proposition is the more probable, namely, that Pompey seized upon Judea by the right of a just war. For when Pompey had justly decided in favour of Hyrcanus, as being the elder, his younger brother, Aristobulus, attacked Jerusalem, and filled it with his soldiers, who fought against both Pompey and Hyrcanus. Then Pompey took Jerusalem by storm, and made it subject, with the consent of Hyrcanus, to the Roman yoke. Hyrcanus being unable to keep it by himself, delivered it to Pompey, with the consent of the elders and nobles of the Jews, who preferred to be subject to the Romans rather than to Hyrcanus and Aristobulus. For they saw that without the Romans, the Jewish state would be annihilated by schisms and seditions. See the relation in Josephus (*lib. 24, c. 5, &c.*).

Lastly, prescription was on the side of the Romans, for they had been in peaceful possession of Judea for about a hundred years, with at least the tacit assent of the Jewish people. And without doubt the position of the possessor is the stronger. Wherefore, if the Pharisees wished to deprive the Romans of this possession, the *onus probandi* lay upon them of showing that they had acquired it unjustly. Since they were not able to do this, the Romans rightly retained possession. For when the

Incarnation of Christ, for in it Christ espoused human nature to Himself, hypostatically, and the Church, that is, all faithful people, mystically, to be His Spouse by grace. But in Heaven these nuptials shall be consummated with glory. So Origen, SS. Hilary, Jerome, Gregory, and others. Wherefore, *tropologically*, "by marriage, understand," says Origen, "the union of Christ with the soul; and by *offspring*, good works."

2d. God the Father made *a marriage feast* for Christ, since in Judea, and in the whole world, He hath, through Christ, spread a table of evangelical doctrine and sacraments, especially the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

3d. To this nuptial feast the Jews were invited by God, through Moses and the prophets, as the servants of God, both before and after the incarnation of Christ, that they might believe first that it was about to take place, and then that it had taken place; that so, believing in Christ, repenting and seeking grace from Him, they might obtain justice and salvation.

4th *Bulls and fatlings* have only the general signification of rich provision for a banquet. They denote the grandeur of the doctrines of the Gospel, says S. Jerome, and of the Sacraments.

Moreover, *fatlings (altilia, Vulg.)* do not mean winged creatures, birds and fowls, but bulls and calves, and other creatures which are fed up. *Altilia* is derived from *alo*, to *nourish*. The Greek is *σπιστά*, *fatlings*. Wherefore the Arabic translates, *and my calves are now fed, and have been killed*, Greek *τεθυμένα*, i.e., *have been immolated*. For in olden time, as now, weddings were wont to be inaugurated by a sacrifice, and marriage feasts were kept with victims slain and offered in sacrifice. So also the marriage feast of Christ, which is here parabolically described, took its beginning from the sacrifice of the Cross. *Symbolically*, by *bulls (Vulg.)* S. Gregory understands the Fathers of the Old Covenant, who, by the permission of the Law, smote their enemies with the horn of corporeal strength. But the *fatlings*, saith he, are the Fathers of the New Testament, raised by contemplation from the things of earth to things above. But Chrysostom says, "*fatlings* are Prophets; *bulls*, those who were both Prophets and Priests." As bulls are leaders of the herd, so are Priests the princes of the people. S. Hilary says, the *bulls* are martyrs, who, like victims, have been immolated.

The *fatlings* are spiritual persons, filled as it were with spiritual bread. Lastly, Origen says, *the dinner* is the word of God. *Bulls* signify the strong meat of the word; *fatlings* its sweeter portions.

5th. The *field*, the *farm*, whither those who were invited went away, despising the invitation, signify temporal good things, which drew away the Jews from the faith of Christ, and from heavenly good things; and which led them to slay the servants of God, yea, even Christ Himself. Wherefore,

God sent Titus, who *slew* the Jews as being *murderers, and burnt up their city*, namely, their capital, Jerusalem.

Christ in this parable has an allusion to Isa. xxv. 6, “And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined;” and Isa. xxx 23, 24, “Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures. The oxen likewise and the young asses that ear the ground shall eat clean provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan.”

Learn from hence that Christ always sets before us in the Church a rich spiritual banquet of holy doctrine and grace, abundantly seasoned with sacred lections, sermons, exhortations, and with innumerable examples in every kind of virtue, of Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Virgins, with frequent receiving of the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, which is “the corn of the elect, and the wine that maketh virgins,” as Zechariah saith (ix. 17); with the Sacrifice of the Mass, with such great adornment of the sacred ministers, altars, and temples, and with the heavenly harmony of music and organs, and many other things which feed, delight, inebriate the souls of the faithful, so that Christianity is to the pious one continual banquet, according to the words in Isa. lxvi. 23, “The feast of the new moon shall be from one month to another, and from sabbath to sabbath.”

Lastly, Christ Himself, Incarnate, is the perennial food and joy of the faithful. For He, through the Incarnation, really communicates to them not only all the gifts of His grace, but Himself, in all His fulness, and therefore His very Deity itself. And this He gives them to taste, to eat, to enjoy, as it is said in S. John vi 51, “I am the Living Bread, who came down from heaven. Whosoever shall eat of this Bread, shall live eternally.” This is the reason why Isaiah, when declaring beforehand the delights and happiness which were to come to the new Church from Christ Incarnate, everywhere rejoices and exults, and invites all Christians evermore to rejoice and exult with him. See chaps. ii. vii.; chaps. xxx., xxxv., lx., lxi., lxii., &c. Let Christians therefore, and especially Priests and Religions, take care to feed in these feasts in their souls; and serve Christ in righteousness and holiness, that thus they may begin that life of beatitude with Him now, which by and by will be perfected and consummated in Heaven.

Verse 8- *Then saith he*, &c. This is the second part of the parable of the guests. *Then*, that is to say, when these who were invited, meaning the Jews, refused to come to the nuptial table of the evangelical doctrine of Christ, because *they were not worthy of it*, because they despised it—*then saith the King*, that is God, to *His servants*, the Apostles—

Verse 9- *Go ye into the highways; Vulg. the ends of the ways; Gr. διεξόδους ὁδῶν, the passages, the outlets of the ways.* The meaning is, Traverse and run through all the ways, and the turnings, and corners, and bendings of the roads. Let there be no nook

Master, to whom they paid tithes and tribute. By Cæsar, Tiberius Cæsar, the successor of Augustus, is meant.

The occasion of this question being propounded to Christ, was as follows. About this time one Judas, of Galilee, had taught that it was not lawful for the Jews to be in subjection to the Romans, and pay them taxes. Now Christ and the Apostles were regarded as Galilæans; and the Jews professed to look upon them as upholders of this teaching of Judas the Galilæan, as being their countryman. And for this reason they frequently repudiated this error of theirs. Hear S. Jerome (*in cap. 3, ad Tit. ver. 1*), “I think,” says he, “this precept was given by the Apostle, because at that time the teaching of Judas the Galilæan was still in vogue, and had many followers. Among their other tenets, they held it probable that, according to the law, no one ought to be called lord, except God only; and that those who paid tithes to the Temple ought not to render tribute to Cæsar. This sect increased to so great an extent as to influence a great part of the Pharisees as well as the rest of the people, so that they referred this question about the lawfulness of paying tribute to Cæsar to our Lord, who answered prudently and cautiously, *Render*, &c. S. Paul’s teaching is in agreement with this answer, in that he bids believers be in subjection to princes and powers.”

Verse 18- *When Jesus knew*, &c. It is as though He said, “You pretend to be friends, and to desire to maintain a good conscience, that you may know what you ought to do in this case truly and justly, according to the law of God, when all the while you are My enemies, and are thirsting for My blood.” “The prime virtue,” says S. Jerome, “in one who gives an answer is to know the mind of him who asks the question.”

Verse 19- *Show Me the coin of the census.* That is, Show me the coin which Cæsar exacts as a tax from each person. The Arabic has, *Show Me the figure of the denarius. And they brought unto Him a denarius.* You will say that, according to chap. xvii. 17, it appears that the Jews paid a capitation-tax of a *didrachma*, or a *half-shekel*. But the Roman *denarius* was only worth about half a *didrachma*, or ninepence. My answer is, that the *didrachma* was, for the sake of convenience, divided into two *denarii*, and that each individual paid two *denarii*, or one *didrachma*. So Jansen and Maldonatus. Lastly, it would appear that Tiberius and the other emperors ordered a *denarius* of this value to be struck off, which coin they required to be paid by the Jews in the way of tribute. As Baronius shows from Lampridius, the Romans were in the habit of striking off coins of such weight and value as they required to be paid in the way of tribute, and of greater or less value, according to the necessity of times and requirements.

Verse 20- *And Jesus saith . . . superscription; Gr. ἐπιγραφή;* for which the Vulg. in Mark has *inscription*. For coins are wont to be stamped with the

There was Dositheus, prince of the Samaritans, who rejected the prophets. There were the Sadducees, sprung from his root, who went on to deny the resurrection of the flesh. There were the Pharisees, divided from the rest of the Jews on account of certain superfluous observances. There were the Herodians, who took Herod for their king instead of Christ." Theophylact, Euthymius, and Philastrius say the same, with the exception, that for Herod of Ascalon, they substituted his son, Herod Antipas, who put John the Baptist to death. But they are mistaken in their assertion that Herod Antipas was ever regarded by the Jews as Messiah.

The Pharisees, therefore, who took the opposite side, namely, that Herod was not the Messiah, and that tribute ought not to be paid to the Roman Cæsar, who put themselves forward as vindicators of the law of Moses and of Jewish liberty, suborned these Herodians to go together with their own disciples to Jesus, as to a prophet and teacher, and proposed this question to Him concerning giving tribute to Cæsar. This they did with the crafty design that if Christ should assert that tribute ought to be given to Cæsar, He would incur the hostility of the Jewish populace; if, on the other hand, He should say that it was not to be paid, He might fall under the anger of Cæsar and the Romans, who would condemn Him to death as being guilty of sedition.

Master; Heb. *Rabbi*. *Rabbi* means not only a doctor of the law, such as are the *Rabbins*, but a *potentate* and a *prince*, endowed with authority. *We know . . . the way of God*, i.e., *the law of God* For the *law* is the *way* by which we go to God, and to His grace and glory. For the law teaches what is pleasing to God, what He wills us to do, that we may be justified and blessed by Him.

And carest not, &c. Thou fearest neither the anger of Herod nor the power of Cæsar, so as to be afraid to give a true answer, and deliver your opinion in behalf of your countrymen, even though you should expose yourself to the hostility of Herod and Cæsar; even as John the Baptist, when he rebuked Herod's adultery, did not shrink from incurring his anger. For they trusted that Christ would pronounce in favour of the Jews, as being faithful against Cæsar, an unbeliever. So S. Chrysostom, "By means of flattery they hope to urge Him on to boldness, that He might say something against the existing institutions, and the existing state of things;" "that He might come into collision with Cæsar on a charge of rebellion."

For Thou regardest not the person; Syr. *the face*, &c. To look whether it be the face of a rich man and a prince, or a poor man and a plebeian, so that Thou shouldst flatter and defend a prince, and condemn a poor man. Rather wilt Thou, as it were, shut Thine eyes, and give sentence in favour of truth and justice, and say, Cæsar is My friend, but truth is a greater friend." The Gr. *πρόσωπον* signifies both *person* and *face*.

Verse 17- *Tell us therefore . . . tribute*; Syr. *capitation-tax*, because each head or each person was assessed. The Jews, as God's faithful people, held aloof from the Gentiles, as idolaters. And many of them thought that it was not lawful for them to acknowledge Cæsar as their lord, and pay him tribute; because God alone was their

which you do not traverse. Do ye, O ye Apostles, travel over the whole world; go into all the countries of the nations, that ye may preach the faith of Christ to them, and invite all men to it. He also bids the Apostles to transfer the Gospel from the invited guests, that is the Jews, to all nations. Wherefore He adds—

Verse 10- *And his servants went out*, &c. The Apostles were to go and preach the Gospel in all nations unto the ends of the earth, according to the words in Ps. xix., "Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the end of the world." *Mystically*: the *servants* are angels who preside over the conversion of the Gentiles, says Origen.

Symbolically: the *highways* are the various and contradictory errors and sects of the Gentiles, which the Apostles destroyed. So Remigius. 2d. S. Chrysostom says, *The ways* are the various *professions* of men in the world, as the profession of philosophy, arms, &c. Christ therefore bids that men of every profession shall be invited to believe. 3d. S. Hilary says, "*The way* is the time of the world. They are bidden to go out to the end, because the past is forgiven to all." 4th. S. Gregory says, *The ways* are *actions*: their terminations (*exitus*) are defects.

They gathered together all, &c. This is an ornament (*emblema*) of the parable, and only signifies that all men, without any distinction whatsoever, are invited to the faith of Christ.

And the wedding, &c. The Church has been filled with a copious multitude of all nations.

Verse 11- *When the king came in*, &c., that he might survey and examine them. This shall take place when God shall come to the general judgment at the end of the world, to judge, and reward or punish all mankind. So Origen, &c.

And he saw . . . wedding garment; Syr. *a festal garment*. *The garment for the wedding*, that is, one which is clean, precious, and splendid, is not faith, as the heretics say. For all who were at this feast of the Church, indeed, could not have entered in except by faith. Therefore this garment is charity, and holiness of life. A pure and holy life is like a clean and splendid robe, woven of virtues and good works, which are a glorious adornment of a man. So SS. Jerome, Hilary, Tertullian, and others. S. Gregory explains *the not having a wedding garment* to mean faith without works of charity, by which the Lord comes to unite the Church in marriage with Himself. But S. Augustine (*lib. 2, contra Faust. c. 19*) explains it to mean one who seeks his own, not the Lord's glory. But S. Hilary says, *the wedding garment* is the grace of the Holy Spirit, and the brightness of heavenly conversation, which being received by the good answer of confession, is preserved spotless for

the celestial company. S. Jerome says, works which are fulfilled out of the Law and the Gospel, form the garment of the new man.

Many in the day of judgment who believed in Christ shall be found without this robe of charity and sanctity; yet one only is mentioned, because this matter is spoken of, as it were, by the way. For the direct object of Christ in this parable was to declare that when the unbelieving Jews were rejected, the Gentiles were called to Christ. This one, however, denotes all who are like Him. It also signifies that not even one wicked person can lie hid in the day of judgment, or go away unpunished.

Verse 12- *And said to him, Friend (Syr. my comrade), &c.* The word *friend* signifies that God will speak thus to the wicked, not out of hatred, or a desire to condemn them, but in a friendly manner, from zeal of justice. S. Jerome adds, he calls him *friend*, because he was invited to the *wedding feast*. Therefore he rebukes him for his impudence, because he came in a rude manner without a wedding garment. Whence S. Gregory says, "It is marvellous how he calls him *friend*, and yet rejects him." It is as though he said plainly, "Friend, and not friend; friend *by faith*, but not friend *by works*."

But he was speechless. For, says S. Jerome, that was no place of denial; for God shall there "bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart," according to the words, "I will search Jerusalem with candles." (Zeph. i. 12).

Verse 13- *Then said the king—to his servants, his angels, as is plain from Matt. xiii. 39.* And as Daniel saith concerning them, "Thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him."

Bind him, &c. This is an emblem, signifying that the damned cannot resist the sentence of God, nor from thenceforth do any good thing; altogether as if they had their hands and feet, their mouth and souls, their will and judgment bound. For as S. Augustine says (*lib. II, de Trin.*), "The binding of an evil will is a chain." And S. Gregory says, "They who now are willingly in bonds to sin, shall then, against their will, be bound in punishment."

Cast him . . . teeth. These are the *teeth* which delighted in gluttony, says S. Gregory. And again the same S. Gregory says appositely, "*The inner darkness* is the darkness of the heart; the *outer darkness* is the night of eternal damnation."

Verse 14- *Many are called, &c.* Because all who were first invited and refused to come were rejected, that is to say, all the Jews, who would not believe in Christ, to whom this parable bears special reference. Besides these, *one* was rejected, even of those who were called, and did come, who entered in, not having a wedding garment, who represents all wicked Christians. For inasmuch as Christ did not intend in this place specially to refer to these, it sufficed that by naming *one*, He should refer to that matter by the way, to signify that not all who believe in Christ shall be saved, but those only who adorn their faith with a wedding garment, that is, with love and

holy works. This saying of Christ ought to raise great fear and awe. For no one knoweth whether he be elect or reprobate. Every one therefore ought to strive, by means of good works, to make his calling and election sure.

S. Gregory gives the example of his three paternal aunts. The first of these was named Tharsilla. She lived in holy virginity, and was called away to Heaven by her grandfather, who was already among the blessed, in these words, "Come, that I may receive thee into this mansion of light." Then she, looking up, beheld Jesus, and cried aloud, "Depart ye, depart ye, Jesus cometh," and so delivered up her soul to Him to be eternally blessed. The second sister, Emiliana, was called away to Heaven by Tharsilla herself on the Feast of the Epiphany; and being anxious about her third sister Gordiana, she answered, "And if I come alone, to whom shall I leave Gordiana?" Again she heard her sister's voice saying, "Come, for Gordiana hath chosen her lot with the world." For, shortly afterwards, Gordiana, forgetful of her consecration to virginity, married her bailiff.

Ver. 15. *Then went the Pharisees . . . entangle, &c.* For entangle, the Greek has *παγιδῶσαι*, i.e., *ensnare*; for *παγίδες* are *snares*. And so the Syriac has *prepare gins like bird-catchers*. The Pharisees put captious questions to Christ with the design that whatever way He might answer, He should incur blame; and that so they might, as it were, entrap Him in His answer, and that He might be open to the charge of treason against either human or Divine Majesty. "They laid a plot by means of a dilemma," says S. Augustine (*l. I, contra Crescen. c. 17*), that whichever He should choose of its two horns, He might be caught. If He answered that it was lawful, He would be a traitor to the people of God; but if He said it was not lawful, He would be punished as an enemy to Cæsar.

Verse 16- *With the Herodians; Syr. with those who were of the house of Herod.*

The Herodians were a Jewish sect, who favoured the Roman Cæsar, and the payment of tribute to him. They were named from the first Herod of Ascalon, the infanticide, who was entirely devoted to Cæsar, inasmuch as he had been made king of Judea by Augustus Cæsar and the Roman Senate. So S. Jerome, Origen, and others. S. Epiphanius (*lib. I, hæres. 20*) and S. Jerome (*Dialogo cont. Luciferanos*) add that these Herodians were Jewish sectaries, or heretics, who held that Herod of Ascalon was the Messiah or Christ promised by the prophets, because they saw that in him the sceptre had failed from Judah. Herod eagerly encouraged these flatterers. And the reason why he slew the infants at Bethlehem was that he might kill Christ, that no one but himself might be accounted Christ. For the same reason, he built a most magnificent temple for the Jews, vying with that of Solomon, as Josephus shows (*Lib. Ant. 15, c. 14*). Listen to S. Jerome briefly enumerating the Jewish sects, "I say nothing about the Jewish heretics, who, before the coming of Christ, made light of the law delivered to them.