

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

(Matthew 22:1-14)

(*Poem*, Vol. 2, p. 350-3; *Gospel* Vol. 3, pp. 352-5; *Notebooks 1943*, pp.118-9)

(Jesus is speaking about the Kingdom of Heaven, to His apostles, some disciples, and some peasants...)

'... Listen, and you will understand better, how worldly cares, riches and orgies prevent one from entering the Kingdom of Heaven.

Once a king celebrated the wedding of his son. You can imagine the feast at the palace. He was the only son, and having reached the perfect age, he was getting married to his beloved bride. The king wanted the joy of his son to be surrounded with joy, as he was at last getting married to his dear fiancée. Among the many celebrations, he gave a sumptuous dinner. And he prepared it in good time, watching every detail, to ensure it was a magnificent and worthy wedding of the king's son.

He sent out his servants early, to tell friends and allies - as well as the mighty ones of his kingdom - that the wedding was to take place on a certain evening, that they were invited, and that they should come to form a worthy supporting body to the king's son. But friends, allies and mighty ones of the kingdom did not accept the invitation.

The king then, doubting that the first servants had not spoken clearly, sent out some more invitations, which would insist by saying: "Please, do come! Everything is now ready. The tables are laid in the hall, rare wines have been brought from everywhere, oxen and fattened cattle are already in the kitchen to be cooked, and women slaves are kneading flour to make cakes, and are crushing almonds, to make the finest delicacies, flavoured with rare spices. The most clever dancers and musicians have been engaged for the feast. Come, therefore, or all the preparations will be useless!"

But friends, allies and great ones of the kingdom either refused, or said: "We have other things to do". Or they pretended to accept the invitation, but then they attended to their own matters: some to their fields, some to their business, some to even less noble affairs. And finally there were some who, bored with so much insistence, took the servant of the king and killed him to keep him quiet, even though he insisted, saying: "Do not refuse the king's invitation, or you may find yourself in trouble". The remaining servants went back to the king and reported the situations, and the king flared up in a temper. He sent his soldiers to punish the murderers of his servants, and to chastise those who had scorned his invitation - whilst he intended to reward those who had promised to come.

But at the fixed hour, on the evening of the feast, no one came. The king was very angry, he called his servants and said to them: "On no account will my son be left without people who will give him a hearty welcome, on the evening of his wedding. The banquet is ready, but the guests we invited are not worthy of it. And yet the nuptial banquet of my son is to take place. Go therefore to the squares, along the streets, stand at the crossroads, stop the passersby, gather together those who are standing there, and bring them all here. Let the hall be filled with joyful people".

The servants went out along the streets, they spread out on the squares, they stood at crossroads, they gathered as many people as they could find - good and bad, rich and poor - and took them to the royal palace. And they gave each of them the means to be worthy, to enter the hall of the nuptial banquet. Finally, they led them into the hall, which was full of jubilant people, as the king desired.

But when the king went into the hall, to see whether the feast could begin, he saw one man who, notwithstanding the assistance given to him by the servants, was not wearing a wedding garment. He asked him: "How did you get in here, without a wedding garment?". And the man did not know what to say, because he had no excuse. The king then called his servants and said to them: "take this man, bind him hand and foot, and throw him out of my palace, into the dark and icy mud. He shall stay there, weeping and grinding his teeth, as he deserved: through his ingratitude, and because he offended me, and offended my son more than me, by entering

the banquet hall with a poor dirty garment. Whereas nothing must enter it but what is worthy of it, and worthy of my son".'

Then Jesus says: 'As you can see, worldly cares, avarice, sensuality and cruelty bring down the king's wrath on people, and cause the children of such cares never to enter again the palace of the king. And you can also see how among those who were invited - for the sake of his son - some were punished.

How many such people there are nowadays, in this land, to whom God has sent His Word! God has really invited the allies, the friends, the great ones of His people - through His servants. And He will invite them again, and more urgently, as the hour of My Wedding approaches.

(Louder...)

But they will not accept the invitation, because they are false allies, false friends. And they are great only by name, because they are base. (Jesus' voice is rising louder and louder, and His eyes are flashing like two gems, in the light of the fire lit between Him and His audience, on this moonless night) Yes, they are base. And because of their baseness, they do not understand that it is their duty, and an honour, to accept the King's invitation. Pride, harshness, and lust act like a wall in their hearts. And wicked as they are! they hate Me, and so they do not want to come to My wedding. They refuse to come. They prefer to be connected with filthy policy, with even filthier money, and with the most filthy sensuality, rather than come to My wedding. They prefer shrewd calculations, conspiracies, underhand conspiracies, snares, crimes.

I condemn all that, in the name of God. Consequently, the voice which speaks, and the feasts to which they are invited, are hated by them. Those who kill the servants of God are to be looked for among this people: including the Prophets (who have been the servants till now); and My disciples (who are the servants from now onwards). The swindlers of God, who say: "Yes, we will come" - whereas inwardly they think: "Never on your life!" - are to be found among this people. All that is in Israel.

And the King of Heaven will send to gather at the crossroads those who are not friends, not great ones, not allies, but only people passing by, so that His Son may have a worthy wedding celebration. And through Me (the Son and the servant of God), the gathering has already begun. They will come, whoever they are... And they have already come. And I help them to be clean and properly dressed for the wedding feast. But there will be someone, who for his own misfortune, will misuse the magnificent generosity of God, Who gives him scents and regal garments, to make him appear what he is not, that is, a rich and worthy person. And he will take abominable advantage of such bounty, to seduce and to make a profit... Such an individual (with a wicked soul, embraced by the revolting octopus of all vices)... will embezzle scents and garments to make an unlawful profit, as he will not use them for the wedding of the Son, but for his own wedding, with Satan.

All that will happen. Because many are called, but few are those, who, knowing how to persevere in their vocation, are chosen. But it will also happen that those hyenas - who prefer putrid food to living nourishment - will be punished by being thrown out of the Banquet hall, into the dark and mud of an eternal pond, in which Satan grins horribly at each triumph over a soul, and where there is an eternal sound of desperate weeping, of the mad people who followed Crime, instead of following Bounty, Who had called them...'

(Jesus says to Maria Valtorta:)

'Now I will explain to you the twofold parable.

The guests are those whom I call, with a special vocation: a freely-given grace which I grant as an invitation to intimacy, in my palace, with Myself, and as an election to my Court.

The poor, the blind, the maimed, and the deformed are those who have not received special calls and aids. By their own means alone, they have been unable to conserve and reach spiritual wealth and health... They are the poor sinners, the weak souls, poor and deformed, who do not dare to present themselves at the door, but roam about the vicinity of the palace, waiting for an act of mercy to refresh them.

The passers-by... who do not care about what is happening in the Lord's dwelling, are those who live in the more or less revealed religions - or in their own personal one - which has a name: money, business, and wealth. They believe they have no need to know Me.

Now it often occurs that those guests called by Me neglect my appeal, lose interest in it, and prefer to deal with human matters - instead of devoting themselves to supernatural ones. Then I have the poor, the blind, the lame, and the deformed brought in; I dress them in the wedding robe, have them take a seat at my table, declare them to be my guests, and treat them as friends. And I also call those passers-by who are outside my Church; I attract them insistently and courteously; and I even force them with sweet violence.

In my Kingdom there is a place for all, and my joy is to have many of you enter. But woe to those who, chosen by Me through a vocation, neglect Me, preferring to devote themselves to other matters. And woe to those who, kindly received (though not deserving to be), and robed by my generosity in the grace which covers over and annuls their ugliness, take off the wedding garment, failing to show respect for Me and for my dwelling, where nothing unworthy must circulate. They will be expelled from the Kingdom because they have trampled upon God's gift.

Among sinners and converts, I sometimes see souls that are so beautiful and so grateful that I choose them to be my spouses, in place of others, previously called, who have rejected Me. You, Maria, were a poor thing, a beggar, hungry, agitated, and unclothed. After having tried to satisfy your hunger by yourself - to calm your anxiety, to cover your wretchedness, but without success - you approached my Dwelling. You understood that only in my Dwelling are peace and true refreshment to be found. And I received you, positioning you in the place of another who, called by Me, rejected grace. On seeing you grateful and willing, I chose you as my bride. The bride does not remain in the banquet hall. She penetrates into the spouse's room, and comes to know his secrets. But woe to you if good will and gratitude were to slumber. You must go on working: to please Me more and more...; to thank Me for having called you; and to work for the other, who rejected the mystical wedding, so that she will be converted and come back to Me. One day you will know who it is...'
