

The Invitation

by Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian church

Matthew 22:1-14 tells of the marriage supper of the king's son. All was prepared and the guests were told that it was time to come to the feast. Servants were sent to those who knew ahead of time that the marriage supper was drawing near. Those that were invited would not come. The king sent other servants but still the people would not come.

When the second group of servants brought the invitation, those who were invited made light of it. While the KJV says they made light of it, the Living Bible says that they laughed and went about their business. The Simple English version says they just didn't care, and the New Jerusalem version says that they weren't interested. Then another says that they gave no heed to the invitation. And if that was not enough, some of them killed the king's servants who had brought the invitation.

Much of this sounds like today. The king, God, sends his invitation to the people of the world saying whosoever will let him come. The response is

often like in the account in Matthew, the majority of people are not interested, give no heed and in general, just don't care about it. God has made the way of salvation for each of us by sending his son to give his life for our sins. All we have to do is to accept his offer of forgiveness and come to him in faith.

Those that were first invited were the Jews. They had the promises given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God gave them the law, the prophets, and sent his son, Jesus. Like those in the story told in Matthew 14 they made light of it, rejected the prophets and the Messiah. Many were beaten and killed because those that God sent were called heretics. In their ignorance and pride they, like their counterparts today, didn't realize that they were rejecting the mercy and blessings of God.

The king told his servants to go into the highways and to bid anyone that they found to come to the marriage supper because those that had been invited were not worthy. In the same way the gentiles were invited to come to the Lord because of the blindness of Israel. **Acts 13:46.** "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you:

but seeing ye put it from you, and judge your-selves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."

When the king came in to see the guests he saw one who had not put on a wedding garment. The man had no answer for the king when asked why he had not prepared. What could he say in his defense? These were provided, remember the guests came from the highways and were the poor of the land. This man represents the hypocrites who don't accept the grace of God and make no effort to prepare to stand before the Lord. Many will not live the life of a Christian, but want to have the benefits of grace. As someone has said, "There are those who will not live as a child of God, but want to die as a Christian."

God has made the way of salvation for all who will come to him in faith and obey him. Many say that they will obey but do not accept what he has said for us to do. Everything from the plan of salvation to serving the Lord and living for him are mocked by some who say that they love the Lord. Remember **Luke 6:46** says, "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

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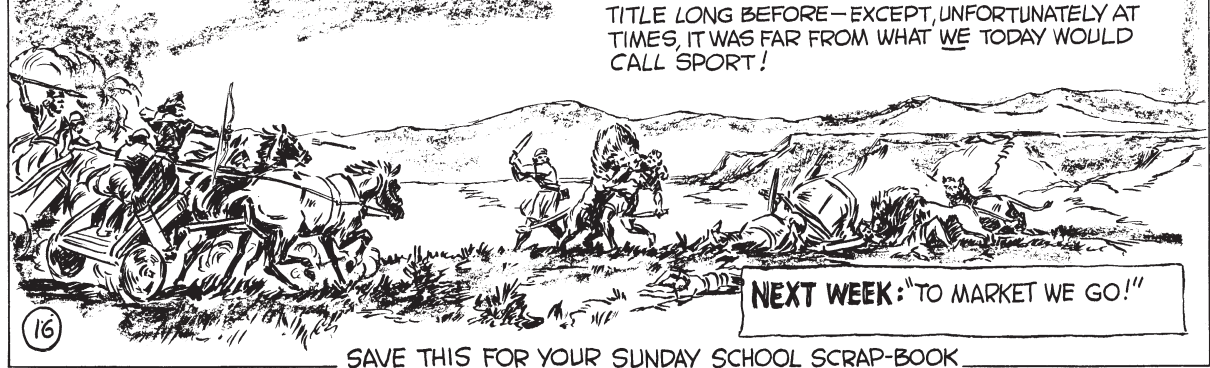
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"LET'S GO HUNTING!" IN TODAY'S LANGUAGE THAT PHRASE BRINGS TO MIND A PLEASANT DAY IN THE FIELDS WITH A GOOD DOG, THE TAKING OF A PHEASANT OR TWO—FINE SPORT! NOT SO, IN BIBLICAL TIMES! TOO OFTEN IT WAS A CALL TO THE UNPLEASANT DUTY OF RIDDING THE COUNTRYSIDE OF SOME BEAST OF PREY—USUALLY THE FEROCIOUS LION! THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE CONTAIN MANY REFERENCES TO THE LION AND, ALTHOUGH HARDLY A ONE CAN BE FOUND TODAY IN WHAT IS TERMED THE BIBLE LANDS, THE AREA ABOUNDED WITH THEM IN THOSE TIMES.



ANCIENT WRITINGS, PAINTINGS, AND SCULPTURE, HAVE REVEALED MANY RECORDS OF LION HUNT'S. THE PLENTITUDE OF YOUNG KIDS, LAMBS, ELDERLY PEOPLE, AND SMALL CHILDREN, ALL EASY PREY, ATTRACTED THESE BEASTS AND, WHEN THEIR DEPREDATIONS BECAME TOO NUMEROUS, A LION HUNT WAS ORGANIZED TO WIPE THEM OUT, OR AT LEAST DRIVE THEM OUT OF THE AREA.

THIS DUTY USUALLY FELL TO ROYALTY AND THE UPPER CLASSES BECAUSE THEY HAD HORSES AND CHARIOTS AND PLENTY OF SOLDIERS OR SERVANTS WHO WERE EXPERT WITH BOW AND ARROW. ALTHOUGH HORSE RACING HAS BEEN CALLED "THE SPORT OF KINGS," YOU MAY BE SURE THAT LION HUNTING EARNED THIS TITLE LONG BEFORE—EXCEPT, UNFORTUNATELY AT TIMES, IT WAS FAR FROM WHAT WE TODAY WOULD CALL SPORT!



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