The Love Story

*Matthew 22:1-14*

*(Reading: Matthew 6:25-34)*

*Matthew 22:1-14*

 *1Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: 2"The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. 3He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.*

 *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.'*

 *5"But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. 6The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. 7The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.*

 *8"Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. 9Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.' 10So 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.*

 *11"But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. 12'Friend,' he asked, 'how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' The man was speechless.*

 *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.'*

 *14"For many are invited, but few are chosen."*

***Big Picture: God loves us and is seeking a people who would love Him back willingly.***

*Intro: The nuclear attack*

1. *The chosen people reject the invitation (v. 5-7)*
2. *Anyone willing to come is invited and accepted (v. 8-10)*
3. *Fakers are rejected (v. 11-14)*

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***(Be excited about “The Story” with energy, and get through the verses before continuing on)***

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* *(How do you view God? Is He a loving God, angry God, ignorant God, etc)*
* *Talk about how many of us feel God is an angry God – how else can you explain the calamity and death?*
* *Some people believe Old Testament and New Testament are different – how can we explain the difference? (God is an angry God in OT, and a loving God in NT)*
* *I like the loving God – and not the God of the Old Testament*
* *If God was really a loving God, why am I in all this pain and suffering now?*

*Intro:*

*Imagine there was a major nuclear attack that wiped out every single person on the planet, except for all of us – our church members creates some special force field around the church building and protects all of our families (Qi programs it, Yuri takes charge with her business knowledge and direct the people to get the shelter together, Jason and Alex helps to set up, and our sound engineer Dave fine tunes the force field) . . . what happens next? (think through the steps of how we would rebuild society. Will we be technologically advanced? When we don’t have much, we’ll probably trust in God to help us to get through the day. And we’d have community. Our generation would be people who believe in God.*

*But as we have children, and teach them new things, do you think they’ll become smarter and build a “better” society than we build? Then their children, and their children, etc? They’ll find security in the work of their hands, and eventually realize there is no need for God – why? b/c we have made so much security for ourselves that we are just as “good as God.” We have security, we have riches, we have power, what else do we need from God?*

***Then what do you suppose God would do for these kinds of people?***

*Deuteronomy 7:7-9*

*7 The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. 8 But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. 9 Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands.*

*Make sense?*

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*Explain what a parable is:*

*A story to illustrate a point*

*Not to have wedding clothes (v. 11-14):*

*Jesus is the soap, and we are sweaty jocks – we need to be cleansed*

*We are all “dirty” or sinful, but those that are at the feast, the weak, the poor, the crippled, they are forgiven (cleansed by Jesus)*

*Garment may be referred to as their hearts*

*Is your heart ready?*

*But there are some who are fake “cleansed” – or religious people who do not accept Jesus, but wants to be at this banquet on their own strength (be cleansed by works, by religion, by living a good life) . . . they will try to get in, but will be kicked out.*

*Maybe this is intellectual knowledge for you, but it’s to let you know of the HEART of God*

*After today, I want all of you to be able to say I understand the general view, the big picture of the Bible*

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*History (start with discussing how we made happy-sad charts – we’ll be looking at “Love God”-“I don’t need God” charts)*

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* There was no way in human terms to be reconciled with God, so He sent Jesus – to finish the work (only God can bring forgiveness and salvation) – so we celebrate His finished work every week, and should daily. Those who trust in God’s finished work are now the chosen people **(Chosen people) – you and me**

**The problem is Jesus finished the work, but we keep trying to make things on our own**

* Then time went by, church started making administration – and with lack of education for all, like today’s days, they started imposing their own laws.
* There was also crusades that killed the faith of many
* A revival hit at reformation, where Martin Luther and other theologians believed we should be able to read/hear the Bible on our own (The advent of printing press helped)
* People broke up into denominations for small reasons (Baptist, Presbyterian, etc) – and in each denomination started to build more rules (though with good intent). People broke into smaller churches, with the initial intent to reach more people, but now, it’s a picture of scattered churches with their own administrations – showing lack of unity, separation, and even competition between churches – we’re back to exile times (the Bible calls this the end times) – what will you do?

**Points to remember**

1. **God never blessed people in an instant – it was always through a life of faith (so, don’t get discouraged and discount God when you say a quick prayer and it doesn’t get answers – God is not Santa Claus)**
2. **This is the last cycle – He’s given a chance for all to come in – this was his plan all along – to build a chosen people**
3. **We should lower our association with a particular church, but glory in the forgiveness through Jesus!**

 *(Back to original questions)*

* *Talk about how many of us feel God is an angry God – how else can you explain the calamity and death?*
* *Some people believe Old Testament and New Testament are different – how can we explain the difference? (God is an angry God in OT, and a loving God in NT)*
* *I like the loving God – and not the God of the Old Testament*
* *If God was really a loving God, why am I in all this pain and suffering now?*

*So, God is a loving God – He’s merciful and gives many chances . . . but He’s showing that it’s not by man’s strength to be pure enough to be close to God – He’s showing that only He can forgive, and we must receive His forgiveness. But if we’re like a wayward son (though many chances are given to us, we reject Him), what can He do?*

*Review the parable – only the chosen people are accepted – and though many failures, God allowed many chances. We stand at the last times, when it’s hard to distinguish what it means to be people who chooses God, through His finished work. What would you do?*

***God wants a relationship with a people He created***

***In The Beginning . . .***

* *Adam and Eve* ***(the chosen people)***
* *Rejects God by eating the forbidden fruit* ***(Rejected God)***
* *God stays in relationship with the people; but people wanted to be independent from God. They began to build a kingdom for themselves, and acquire their own securities . . . they felt safe, they had a king, and did what they wanted. They didn’t need God.*
* *But there was a man through whom God wanted to start over (Noah), and build a people who would trust in God only* ***(the chosen people)*** – **NOTE\* here, God promises to never start life over again like He did with Noah’s family (he’ll always provide a way for a person to receive God’s promises through His grace**)
* *Noah’s son’s had other sons, and after a few generations, they became pretty smart and wanted to build a tower to make a name for themselves (to call themselves God, and nullify the need for God)* ***(Rejected God)***
* *God scatters them, and chooses another*
* *Abraham is called to build a family that would represent God* ***(the chosen people)***
* *God tells Abraham to go to the promised land Canaan (Gen 12:5)*
* *Abraham gets Isaac as his son, then Jacob (who is then given the name of Israel) – his children go to Egypt and end up settling there (this was not the promised land, but they felt they can prosper there – which they did for a while* ***(Rejected God)***
* *They now end up in slavery (Exodus 1), and are cruelly treated by the Egyptians*
* *God calls them out through Moses* ***(again, becomes the chosen people)***
* *They are told to be people who represent God (see Exodus 20) – they are to have no god before God.*
* *They build a golden calf (Exodus 32)* ***(Rejected God)***
* *People repent, and are restored* ***(chosen people again)***
* *People reach Canaan, 12 spies are sent out – 10 of them comes back and says, we’ll never beat these armed men. It would’ve been better to be slaves in Egypt – some even say let’s go back to Egypt. (Numbers 14:1-4)* ***(Rejected God)***
* *The entire generation was rejected by God (except for the 2 spies, Joshua and Caleb), and the next generation was able to enter the Promised Land of Canaan* ***(chosen people) 🡨 Note, we either succeed as a generation or not – let’s succeed together!***
* *Israelites make it to the Promised Land – they are blessed! They have so much that they now put believe their security is in their wealth and their fortified land. Though the parents have experienced what God has done, they fail to tell their children about God. The next generation trusted in the wealth passed down from their parents (Judges 2:10) (****Rejected God)***
* *God’s hand was not with the Israelites, and other nations attacked Israel and won.* ***(Does this relate to us?)***
* *Israelites called out to the Lord repenting of their wayward ways, and put their trust in God again. God saved them by raising up judges (people empowered by God) to win impossible battles (you guys remember the 300 vs 135,000 – with Gideon empowered by God)*
* *Cycle occurs here where people put their trust in God (God accepts them to be* ***chosen people*** *again), then when things are good, they turn away from God (****Rejects God****)*

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| ***List of Judges*** |
| *Othniel, the son of Kenaz from the tribe of Judah (3:7-11)* *Ehud, the son of Gerah from the tribe of Benjamin (3:12-30)* *Shamgar, the son of Anath from the tribe of Levi (3:31)* *Deborah (and Barak) (4:1-5:31)* *Gideon (also named Jerubbaal), the son of Joash from the tribe of Manasseh (6:1-8:32)* *Tola, the son of Puah from the tribe of Issachar (10:1-5)* *Jair, from the tribe of Gilead (10:1-5)* *Jephthah, from the tribe of Gilead (10:6-12:7)* *Ibzan, from the tribe of Judah (12:8-15)* *Elon, from the tribe of Zebulun (12:8-15)* *Abdon, the son of Hillel, the Piratoni, from the tribe of Ephraim (12:8-15)* *Samson, the son of Manoah, from the tribe of Dan (13:1-16:31)* *Epilogue: Israel's Decay (17:1-21:25)* *Micah's Idolatry and the Danites (17:1-18:31)* *Crime at Gibeah and War Against Benjamin (19:1-21:25)* |

* *By the end of the book of Judges, Israel is in a terrible state – temples (modern-day churches) are out of shape and they don’t have devotion to God – God’s not pleased. God raises up prophets to declare His Word, what He needs the Israelites to do to come back to God*
* *Samuel initially kicks butt, as the last ”judge” – but guess what the people felt? They looked at other nations and liked the security other nations had. You see, other nations had kings, fortified cities, the people in this generation didn’t know about the mighty power of God* ***(Kind of like our times?)****. They wanted kings, and trust in power of administration, organization, power (****Does this look like modern-day church? – is this why God is not able to work in our churches?****)*
* *God gave them Saul, one that, with God’s strength was unstoppable. Israel was in power again* ***(Chosen People)****. The problem is, Saul didn’t rely on the strength of God, but his own strength* ***(Rejected God)***
* *God anointed David to be king in Saul’s place. David loved God and God was with him and his people Israel* ***(Chosen People)****.*
* *David’s son Solomon became king. He loved God too, but as he received favor from God (wealth, wisdom, reputation), his heart lusted after foreign women, whom God forbade – they turned his heart toward other gods (1Kings 11:4-8)* ***(Rejected God)***
* *The kingdom split apart – Solomon’s son Rehoboam became king, and the other tribes of Israel (11 of the 12) refused to listen to Rehoboam (1Kings 12:16 – see why on verse 11) – Israel (from here on, it refers to the 11 tribes)*

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| **Kings of Judah (1 of 12 tribes)** | **Kings of Israel (11 of 12 tribes)** |
| 1 Rehoboam | 1 Jeroboam I |
| 2 Abijah | 2 Nadab |
| **3 Asa (I Love God)** | 3 Baasha |
| **4 Jehoshaphat (I Love God)** | 4 Elah |
| 5 Jehoram | 5 Zimri |
| 6 Ahaziah | 6 Omri |
| 7 Athaliah (mother of Ahaziah – killed all her sons and other princes to be take throne) | 7 Ahab |
| **8 Joash (son of Ahaziah) (I Love God)** | 8 Ahaziah |
| **9 Amaziah (I kind of love God)** | 9 Joram |
| **10 Uzziah (Azariah) (I kind of love God)** | **10 Jehu (I Obeyed God, but not fully loved God) – See 2Kings 10:31** |
| **11 Jotham (I kind of love God)** | 11 Jehoahaz |
| 12 Ahaz | 12 Joash |
| **13 Hezekiah (I love God)** | 13 Jeroboam II |
| 14 Manasseh | 14 Zechariah |
| 15 Amon | 15 Shallum (one month reign) |
| **16 Josiah (Found the “Book of the Law”) (I Love God)** | 16 Menahem |
| 17 Jehoahaz | 17 Pekahiah |
| 18 Jehoiakim | 18 Pekah |
| 19 Jehoiachin | 19 Hoshea |
| 20 Zedekiah | (Fall of Israel) Assyria takes overNo More Israel – 721 BC |
| (Fall of Judah) Babylon takes overNo More Judah – 586 BC | All of God’s people (the Jews) are scattered (only a few hold to the belief of God, many (as prisoners of other countries) merge in with other cultures and “religions” |

*After 586 BC, Judah and Israel were ruined.*

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| **DATE** | **EVENTS** | **JEWISH WRITING** | **FOREIGN POWER** | **JEWISH LEADER** | **PROPHETS overlap** |
| **722** | **DEPORTATION OF ISRAEL TO ASSYRIA.** "Lost tribes of Israel" do not return. Samaritans live in the land of Israel | Isaiah, Micah, Hosea | Assyria  | Hosea (Israel) Hezekiah (Judah)  | Isaiah, Micah, Hosea  |
| **605** | Battle of Carchemish – Egypt & Assyria defeated & end of Assyrian Empire. Daniel and group deported to Babylon |  Jeremiah | Assyria  |  | Jeremiah  |
| **597** | Ezekiel and 10,000 captives deported |  Lamentations | Babylon  |  | Daniel |
| **586** | **FALL OF JERUSALEM & TEMPLE BURNED**  |  |  Babylon |  | Ezekiel |
|  | 40,000 deported to Babylon (II Kings 24:1, 10–16, 18; II Chron. 36:11–21; Jer. 52:1–11; Ezek. 1:1–2; Dan. 1:1–7) Jeremiah and group flee to Egypt (Jer. 42:15–22; 44:26–28) |  |  |  |  |
| **538** | Babylon surrenders to Cyrus "the Great"  **RESTORATION PERIOD BEGINS** |  | Medo–Persia  |  |  |
| **537** | First group return from Captivity under ZERUBBABEL (Ezra 1:2–4). Restore the Altar & worship  |  |  | Zerubbabel | Zechariah |
| **535** | Second year of Return – Foundation of the TEMPLE begun and stopped by opposition  |  |  | Ezra |  |
| **520** | Rebuilding of Temple Resumed  |  |  |  | Haggai  |
| **516** | Temple Finished and Dedicated  |  |  |  |  |
| **473** | Esther is Queen of Persia  | Esther |  |  |  |
| **458** | Second group returns to Jerusalem. Synagogues & Scribes founded  | Ezra  |  | Nehemiah | Malachi  |
| **445** | Nehemiah Rebuilds the Walls of Jerusalem  |  Nehemiah |  |  |  |
| **433** | Nehemiah returns and institutes Reforms  |  Malachi |  |  |  |
|  | **OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY ENDS WITH THE BOOK OF MALACHI**  |  |  |  | 400 silent years |

*\*Period of Restoration*. Retrieved on October 8, 2009 from From http://www.abideinchrist.com/messages/eznetime.html

**A good reference with historical dates - http://www.wordsight.org/btl/000\_btl-fp.htm**

* People are having hard time “finding” God, let alone figure out how to get close to Him or even “serve” him. The religious leaders take the lead and builds administration and “rules” so that they become the ones in power. They were the “scholarly” ones that could interpret the scriptures and translate that into how people “should” live. There was no or very little hope.

**God saw this sadness, and brought forth revival by sending Jesus in a time like this. There was great revival in the land.**

Through Jesus’ finished work, we now become the Chosen people, those who choose Christ. **(The Last Chosen People)**