

Sunday, October 11, 2020 - 19th Sunday after Pentecost

The First Reading, Psalm, and Gospel all talk about God as the host for a great feast.

What is the most incredible meal that you have ever had?

Many of our happiest times involve sitting at a table with other people and eating with them.

The image of God as host for a great feast is even more powerful when we remember that food was not as plentiful during Biblical times as it is today – especially meat.

Isaiah 25:1-9 (NRSV) Praise for Deliverance from Oppression

⁴You have been a refuge to the poor, a refuge to the needy in their distress.

The one time recorded in the Bible when Jesus chose a passage of Scripture to read He read a passage about God's concern for the poor. See Luke 4: 18 (the poor) – cf. Isaiah 61: 1 (the oppressed).

Jesus also showed His concern for the poor in His last recorded sermon in the Bible – in Matthew 25.

⁴You have been a shelter from the rainstorm and a shade from the heat.

⁵You subdued the heat with the shade of clouds.

⁶The LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear.

⁸He will swallow up death forever. Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces.

The Old Testament does not have a clear teaching on the resurrection to eternal life, as there is in the New Testament. But there are passages, such as these, that give a glimpse of what is to come.

Job 19: 25-26 – I know that my Redeemer lives. And though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh will I see God.

Psalm 16: 10 – You do not give me up to Sheol or let your faithful one see the Pit.

Daniel 12: 2 – Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to eternal life.

Revelation 7: 17 – God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

Psalm 23 (NRSV)

Verses 1-4 – God as the Good Shepherd / Verses 5-6 – God as the Perfect Host

⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Whom would you find it most difficult to sit down at a table with?

If you were to have a meal with them, what would you most want to talk about? What would you most want to say to them?

Philippians 4:1-9 (NRSV)

² I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³ Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women.

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

⁵ Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.

⁶ Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

⁹ Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me.

Matthew 22:1-14 (NRSV) The Parable of the Wedding Banquet

God wants heaven to be full.

² The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son.

³ He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet.

⁴ Again he sent other slaves, saying, "Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet."

³ But they would not come.

⁵ They made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business.

⁶ While the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them.

*Why would people today turn down God's invitation? Why would they make light of it?
Why would some even become hostile?*

⁸ Then he said to his slaves, "The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. ⁹ Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet." ¹⁰ Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so 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 a wedding robe.

Philippians 3: 9 – not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law