

(Matt. 22:1) – Consider that the privileges God had given to the nation Israel were numerous. He gave them His law, the tabernacle, the priests, sacrifices, and prophets by whom He gave them His Word. It was through them (the lineage of Abraham and David – Matt. 1:1) that the true Messiah entered into the world. But, as illustrated in the earlier parables, they bore no spiritual fruit, despised the abundant mercies of God, and killed the prophets. Finally, they rejected and would murder His Son. When we consider all of this sin and rebellion, let us remember that by nature we are no better than they, and we who believe would be just as they were if it were not for God's grace and power to save us from our sins, give us life and faith to believe in Christ and to repent of our dead works and idolatry (John 1:11-13).

We know also that even though the Lord God is not the author of sin, all of this was done according to His determinate council and foreknowledge for the salvation of His people, both Jew and Gentile (Acts 2:23; 4:27-28; Rev. 13:8). We are assured that the Lord had determined before He made the world that the Gospel of Christ would be taken from Israel and given to the Gentiles that He would call out a people unto Himself from every nation (Gen. 12:3; 18:18; Acts 28:24-28; Gal. 3:6-9, 26-29; 6:14-16; Rev. 5:9-14). This judgment upon Israel was certainly deserved due to their sin and willful unbelief. Here, Christ speaks another parable of the kingdom.

(Matt. 22:2) – *“THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE UNTO A CERTAIN KING, WHICH MADE A MARRIAGE FOR HIS SON”* – The kingdom represents divine grace in salvation for God's chosen people (Jew and Gentile) and divine judgment for those who die in their sins without Christ. The Lord uses an illustration from their culture – a wedding feast which represented to the Jewish mind the highest form of celebration and joy. Spiritually, it sets forth a cause for joyous celebration that the Father has chosen a bride for His Son. She was set apart in covenant grace and given to Christ her everlasting Husband and Surety (Heb. 7:22; 2 Thess. 2:13-14). As a sinful and unworthy bride, she was loved unconditionally by her Savior Who died in her place to save her from sins (Eph. 5:25-27).

(Matt. 22:3-6) – This portion of the parable illustrates the general call of the Gospel that goes out to people everywhere telling them, *“BEHOLD, I HAVE PREPARED MY DINNER: MY OXEN AND MY FATLINGS ARE KILLED, AND ALL THINGS ARE READY: COME UNTO THE MARRIAGE.”* This speaks of the salvation that God has fully prepared in and by His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is totally the work of Christ as all of salvation was conditioned on Him alone, and by His one offering of Himself as Surety, Substitute, and Redeemer of His chosen people, He accomplished all that was required for their complete salvation. Those who are called are told not to bring their works or

accomplishments. The Gospel is the revelation of the righteousness of God which is solely the meritorious work of Christ to provide and give all things necessary to save, preserve, and bring His people to glory.

But notice the response of those who are called only with this general calling: *“THEY WOULD NOT COME...; THEY MADE LIGHT OF IT, AND WENT THEIR WAYS ...; AND THE REMNANT TOOK HIS SERVANTS, AND ENTREATED THEM SPITEFULLY, AND SLEW THEM.”* This shows the response of the natural, unregenerate man to the Gospel if left to his own will (1 Cor. 2:14; John 1:11). This is the main evidence of man’s fall in and by Adam (Rom. 5:12), and of the sinfulness, spiritual death, depravity, and unbelief of all men by nature (Rom. 3:10-12). God’s Word says, *“Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely”* (Rev. 22:17). The problem is that man by nature is unwilling. He has no natural hunger or thirst after the things of God in salvation. Such is the spiritual deadness and darkness of the human heart (Jer. 17:9). None will or can come to the Lord in true faith apart from the effectual drawing power of God (John 6:44).

(Matt. 22:7) – This speaks of God’s wrath falling on Jerusalem in A.D. 70 when the Roman legions completely destroyed the city and the temple. This physical destruction illustrates the eternal condemnation and destruction of sinners who live and die in unbelief. The Gospel they rejected is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16-17), and he who does not believe in Christ is condemned (John 3:18-21,36).

(Matt. 22:8) – The Lord emphasizes here that that salvation is ready and complete, but the ones who were called with the general call *“WERE NOT WORTHY.”* What is it to be worthy of salvation? We know that none of us are worthy of ourselves due to who we are or what we have done, are doing, or try to do. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, not the worthy. How, then, can any of us be counted as worthy of salvation and eternal life in God’s eyes? It is only by His free and sovereign grace and by virtue of the merit of Christ’s obedience unto death as our Surety, Substitute, Redeemer, Life-Giver, and Intercessor. Christ alone is worthy, and He is our worthiness before God. We stand in Him, washed in His blood and clothed in His righteousness imputed, and this is evidenced by the gift of faith that brings us to believe in Him. The one sacrifice of Christ opened up access to God for every sinner who believes in Him (Heb. 10:14,19-22). The next verses show once again how the Lord took the Gospel away from the unbelieving Jews and sent it out to the Gentile nations. But we must remember that that this in no way says that there is no hope of any Jew to be saved. God has a people whom He chose and has given to Christ, and they are His elect among both Jews and Gentiles (Rom. 11). God’s Word tells us that all who call upon His name (as revealed in the Gospel) shall be saved (Rom. 10:13).