

## Episode #901 Matthew 22 Part 3-The Wrong Garment

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being “in Israel,” in contrast to believers today who are “in Christ.”

II. The Lord was having a final, conclusive confrontation with the corrupt, religious leaders of Israel in Jerusalem. He was in the midst of telling them a parable of a king who was putting on a wedding feast for his son. After the originally invited guests were outrageously scornful, he sent his soldiers and destroyed them, and then populated the wedding with everyone they could find.

III. Parable of the King’s Son’s Wedding. Matthew 22:1-14.

A. Verse 11. He wanted to observe the guests. It was customary at that time that, when a man gave a wedding feast, he would provide a wedding garment for all to wear, so all would be well clothed and clothed equally. The word for “having on” and for “garment” are related in Greek: not clothed in wedding clothing or not garbed in a wedding garment.

B. Verse 12. Again the idea of “friend,” as in Matthew 20:13, is of a friendly address, but more distant relationship than a friend, like saying “comrade.” This word occurs four times, only in Matthew. He had no excuse. The garment was provided, but he thought his own clothes were good enough. In the same way there are some who reject the robe of righteousness the Lord offers them, Isaiah 61:10, and think to enter His kingdom with a righteousness of their own. These will find that their righteousness is not only not good enough, but it is an insult to the One Who died to provide His garment of righteousness for them. See Isaiah 64:6, Hebrews 10:26. In the same way, the religious leaders the Lord was condemning were trying to get into God’s kingdom with their own righteousness.

C. Verse 13. “Servants” is in this case it is his ministers, *diakonois*, from which we get deacons. The fate of those cast out of the kingdom is the darkness of the grave and of death. See Matthew 8:12: this stands for being cast out of His kingdom. This is the fourth of six times “weeping and gnashing of teeth” occurs in Matthew. It only occurs one other time, in Luke. It refers to great sorrow and great regret, or great repudiation of rightful rebuke, Acts 7:54.

D. Verse 14. We could take this verse to mean, “For many are positioned, but few are elected.” How does this follow on what came before? Perhaps we need to go back to verses 9-10, when many were called to the wedding. Many are invited, but few are elected to exalted positions. People take “elected” to be invited, as if many are not invited and so cannot come at all. That is foolish. We already saw many invited who refused to come, so being invited is not the same as being chosen to be saved. The “invited” in Matthew are Israelites. “Called” often means “positioned,” and to be elected means to be chosen out of those who are thus positioned for special service. The Lord had many disciples who were positioned as disciples, but twelve He elected out to send them out as heralds, as His special messengers. That is what “election” is all about. It is never that only those whom the Lord elects to be saved can be saved.

IV. Taxes Rendered to Caesar. Matthew 22:15-22.

A. Verse 15. They wanted to entrap or trip Him up in something He said so they would have means to criticize and slander Him. “Talk” is *logos*, in the way He expressed

Himself. This is ever a tactic of wicked men: to manipulate a person into saying something that can be used against him.

- B. Verse 16. Sent is *apostello*, sent with their authority. The Pharisees had disciples too who were learning to become like they were; perhaps young. The Herodians were adherents to Herod's party. Bullinger, "It is uncertain whether this refers to Herod's servants, officers, household, or to a political party. Prob. = courtiers." The Pharisees and Herodians were not typically friends, but they are united in seeking to trap the Lord. The Pharisees could have accused Him if He said to pay tribute to Caesar, whereas the Herodians could have attacked Him if He said not to. "The person" is literally "the face," standing for a person's status, etc. This is a true principle of justice, that it is blind. These men, however, meant these words only as flattery, attempting to make Him pleasantly disposed toward them in order to trick Him into answering their question unguardedly. "Men" here is *anthropos*, people.
- B. Verse 17. The taxes was actually census money, a head tax demanded by the Roman government. Everyone who enrolled in the census had to pay it.

V. Conclusion: The king provided a wedding garment for his guests, yet one man refused to wear it. God has likewise provided us with a rich garment of righteousness, purchased by the death of His Son. Do we accept this amazing gift, or are we offensive enough to try to come to God in the garment of our own works? Let us take His garment! The Pharisees and Herodians tried to trap the Lord. We will see what a foolish attempt this was in our next program.