

Parables (Part 30) - The Wedding Feast (G) May 31, 2025

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://www.cornerfringe.com/media/hv9hqc9/parables-part-30-the-wedding-feast-g>

*Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserve the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document is printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliteration into the English alphabet. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.

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The Wedding Garment of Righteousness

This message from Daniel Joseph of Corner Fringe Ministries focuses on the Parable of the Wedding Feast, particularly addressing the King's inspection of guests and the consequences for those without a wedding garment. Daniel asserts that the wedding hall filled with guests symbolizes the **great judgment**, where individuals will face eternal life or punishment based on their actions. Referencing Daniel, Isaiah, and Revelation, the text emphasizes God's **holiness** and the idea that a river of fire or living water flowing from His throne represents the **Holy Spirit** and the power of God's **Word**, which will be used for judgment. Daniel strongly connects the wedding garment to **righteousness and obedience** to God's commandments, arguing that while salvation is by **grace through faith**, true faith is demonstrated by **works**. The sermon concludes with a call for believers, "called" by God, to be among the "chosen" by **humbling themselves, praying, seeking God's face, and repenting from wicked ways**, which are defined as lawlessness or disobedience to God's law.

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[Video montage]

And He taught them many things by parables. He said unto them in His doctrine; Hearken, behold, there went out a sower to sow; it came to pass as he sowed, some fell by the wayside, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up, and some fell on stony ground where it had not much earth. He said unto them, he that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

[Daniel Joseph]

We are going to be finishing up this parable today. Where we left off is right here: —Matthew 22:9— 'Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' The king gives the commission that you are now to go take this invitation to the wedding, the Gospel of the Messiah Yeshua, take it to the nations, and bring this to the people you haven't been to before.

How do they respond? —Matthew 22:10— So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. So, the servants heeded the king's instructions. They took the gospel to go out, and there is a response; they're coming in by the droves, Jew and Gentile. It's at this point that we begin to hit the crescendo in this parable, because then we read this: **And the wedding hall was filled with guests.** (Emphasis added). The wedding hall was filled with guests. The

verbiage being used here is a parabolic expression, and I've got to tell you, this is incredibly delicate. It's a very soft expression in light of what's actually being communicated.

What is being communicated? What's being communicated is the great judgment; that's what we're talking about. This talks about the finality of everything. This right here, Matthew 22:10, where the guests have come into the wedding hall, is the most intense moment in the history of all humanity. The next step, as they come in, will either be to step into eternal life or to step into the fires of hell. It's going to be one or the other.

To capture this whole idea, this notion of what is going on here, the intensity of this moment, I'm going to take you to the Book of Daniel because Daniel actually saw this. And how he saw it looks like this in Daniel 7:9a—"I watched till thrones were put in place... Notice he doesn't say throne, singular; he watched until thrones, plural, were put in place.

What is this alluding to? Well, fortunately, we don't really have to hypothesize because as we go to the New Testament, we're given very important bits of information that illuminate this reality. Number one, when you go to Matthew 19:28, Yeshua says to His disciples, ...**"Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.** So, we know there are multiple thrones in the Kingdom of Heaven, twelve of which are established for the apostles themselves.

Then it gets even more interesting when you read Paul's letter to the Corinthians, this Gentile church. He says this:—I Corinthians 6:2—**Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?** (Emphasis added). And Paul is baffled because what's going on in Corinth is that you have Christian believers trying to bring resolution to conflict in a secular setting, by a secular court. And Paul's states this is an epic failure. What are you doing? Do you not even understand how this is going to go down? We are going to judge the world.

Then Paul goes on and says this in I Corinthians 6:3—**Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?** (Emphasis added). This begins to make a lot of sense when you understand how this is going to go down.

Then, going back to Daniel, we read this in Daniel 7:9—... *Ve'attik yomin* (וְעַתִּיק יוֹמִין), **And the Ancient of Days was seated.** Who is the Ancient of Days? We're talking about our Father in Heaven; He is the Ancient of Days. He is seated, and **His garment was white as snow, And the hair of His head was like pure wool...** (Emphasis added). What is this describing? Daniel was taking time to describe what he was seeing, the characteristics of our Father. His garment—Daniel is attracted to this garment; he's looking at it, and he says, "Brilliant white," white as snow. His hair was brilliant white. What is this conveying? It conveys the purity of His Holiness. This is conveying He is holy. And everyone around the throne, what are they crying out? Holy, Holy, Holy!

It's interesting because the structure we see embedded right here is also found in Isaiah. We read this in Isaiah 1:18— ... **"Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as what? white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.** (Emphasis added). And what's amazing is this is the context where you started with an unclean state and it was made clean. You were impure; now you're pure. You were unholy; now you're holy. That very structure is found in the character of our Father.

So, when Yeshua says in Matthew 5:48, "Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect," we're to take on His character. And when we're redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, we resemble—we become sons and daughters of the Living God; it's awesome.

And then we read this; it gets more intense. —Daniel 7:9b— **... His throne was a fiery flame, Its wheels a burning fire.** (Emphasis added). His throne is on fire. This is incredible, as he's looking at this, and obviously, when we see this, His throne is outfitted with wheels, indicating that He moves. He goes here; He goes there; He's always on the throne.

When He descended on Mount Sinai, what did Israel see? They saw fire. The mountain was consumed by fire because God Himself came down. That's what they saw. The pillar of fire that led them at night—who was that? That was God. You think about how, throughout Scripture, God is literally likened to fire. —Hebrews 12:29 — **For our God is a consuming fire.** Look at 1 Kings 18:24, **... the God who answers by fire.** Elijah said, "He is God." Fire is so significant. What does fire indicate? Holiness, purity, and holiness—that's what this entire picture is echoing: Holy, Holy, Holy.

Then we read this in Daniel 7:10a—**A fiery stream issued And came forth from before Him...** In other words, literally what it's saying is a river of fire is coming out from the throne. Now, this is where things get really interesting. When you go to the Book of Revelation, John, like Daniel, is looking at the setting of the throne. And John sees something very, very similar to what Daniel perceives, but interestingly enough, it's described quite differently. I want to take you there because this is relevant. — Revelation 22:1— **And he showed me a pure river of water, mayim chaim (מַיִם חַיִּים), living water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.** Amazing.

Daniel, the prophet, looks in the vision at the throne of God, and he sees a river of fire coming forth from the throne. When John looks, he sees *mayim chaim*; he sees living water flowing. Well, isn't this interesting? Both of these descriptions, fire and living water, are used to describe the Holy Spirit; both of them. The Holy Spirit is likened to *mayim chaim*; it's living water, but it's also likened to fire. Read Luke 3:16, that we're to be baptized, believers in Yeshua; **...He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.**

Now, peeling back another layer to this, why is it that the imagery John sees is different than Daniel's? And the answer to that is because we're in a different time. The timing of what Daniel sees is very specific; Daniel sees judgment. The timing of what John saw was after judgement, and this is going to come out; I'm going to flesh this out, no pun intended.



It says in Isaiah 66:16—**For by fire and by His sword The LORD will judge all flesh; And the slain of the LORD shall be many.** (Emphasis added). "For by fire and by His sword," this is a hendiadys, and I want to show you this real quick; we've got to get this. "By fire and by His sword" are two descriptors of the exact same thing; it's a couplet. So, the Word of God is actually described at times in Scripture as

fire, and the Word of God is described at times as a sword. In fact, Yeshua says in judgment that He will

open His mouth, and (Revelation 19:15) **Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword**; it's His Word. Hebrews 4:12— **For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword...** We are talking about the Holy Word of God, which is described as fire, and it says, "By fire, the LORD will judge all flesh." By fire, i.e., by His Word, He is going to judge all flesh. For me as a believer, I want to immerse myself in His Word; it is pure fire. I want to know what it says because this is how we're going to be judged.

Then we continue in Jeremiah 23:29a— **"Is not My word like a fire?"** (Emphasis added). He says it is like a fire. — Psalm 29:7— **The voice of the LORD divides** or it hews forth **the flames of fire**. (Emphasis added). So, we're dealing with some awesome imagery that has great meaning here.

Moving to the back half of Daniel 7:10b— **A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated**. Some translations say "the judgment was set." What an awesome situation. Daniel is painting the reality of the wedding hall that is filled, and when you look at what this is saying in Hebrew, scholars recognize this is idiomatic, that it's beyond number. This is beyond being numbered; there are so many. Then we see this, **And the books were opened**. (Emphasis added). Notice it doesn't say book singular; this is in the plural; the books were open.

It's interesting, the great medieval rabbinic sage, Rashi. He came out with his viewpoint, and his understanding of what these books are is that these books contain all the wicked deeds of the evil people. And actually, it's interesting; Rashi was onto something because the Book of Revelation says this: John says in Revelation 20:11, **"Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it."** (Emphasis added). I want to stop because this is interesting. He's looking at the throne of God, it is white being total purity and holiness. And as a side note, it is interesting when Solomon built his throne, it was all 100% ivory; it was white. He's a typology of the Messiah Yeshua. Solomon built a great white throne, and what does he do? It's interesting; he overlaid it with gold. In other words, a representative of pure holiness, fire. The only way gold would be applied is through the fire. And so, we see these things, all these things talking about the throne of God. The LORD gives us this trail of breadcrumbs for us to put all of this together, and when we see this, it is awesome; it's humbling.

Revelation 20:11-12—¹¹ **Then I saw a great white throne** and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. ¹² **And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened**. Plural, books were opened. **And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life**. Notice he drew a line, if you will, in the sand. The Book of Life is over here; it's very specific. The Book of Life contains those who are going to inherit the Kingdom of God. But what about these books in Revelation 20:12a? What do these books contain? Well, it's not unrelated to the Book of Life, we find out as we continue. **And the dead were judged according to their works**, by what? **by the things which were written in the books**. (Emphasis added). These books contain all the deeds of humanity.

Now take this in because your life is going to be read back to you at the end. And what does that look like? All the things you did are going to be read back to you. For some of us, that could be a very terrifying thought. Ecclesiastes says this, and we covered this a couple of weeks ago: —Ecclesiastes 12:13— **Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter**: Meaning, I'm going to boil everything down for you. Listen to the simplest teaching. This is all that matters: **fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all**. This is the whole Council of God that we are supposed to embrace. We're called to fear Him and keep His commandments; it's man's all. In fact, these were the very words Peter spoke to the Gentiles in Acts 10:34-35 when he said, ³⁴ ... **"In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality."** ³⁵ **But in**

every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him. And I say that again because this is going to matter in a moment. Everyone who fears Him and works righteousness, who keeps His commandments, is accepted by Him—critical.

A little motivation for all of us. —Ecclesiastes 12:14 — **For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.** (Emphasis added). Whether good or evil, you will be rewarded; it's coming; every work. And see, this gets into the problem and the concern I have for so much of the church is being led to believe that what they do in this life is irrelevant; it doesn't matter. Then they come out and start talking about how salvation is not codependent upon your works. Your works, they would tell you, have no place in regard to salvation. Everywhere I read in the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, it tells me the exact opposite. Works, your obedience, and your faithfulness will directly impact whether or not your next step is into eternity or into the fires of hell.

It's interesting, when you go to Revelation, and I didn't put it up here, but Yeshua is talking to the seven churches, and there is a phrase that He uses with every single church without fail; not one of the churches does He fail to say this to. Four words: **"I know your works."** He tells every single church, "I know your works." Well, if works aren't salvific, if salvation isn't codependent upon how you behave, who cares? At the end of the day, what does it matter? Oh, it matters.

When Yeshua talks to the church at Sardis, He actually says in Revelation 3:2, **..."I have not found your works perfect before God."** Well, if works are not salvational and they don't matter, who cares? Well, as He proceeds to talk to the church at Sardis, He tells them, you better repent, because I'm going to come to you and I'm going to destroy you if you do not repent. —Revelation 3:3— **....Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief...** This is as serious as it gets.

When we go to the end, Revelation 22:12—**"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work."** (Emphasis added). The more you study the Word of God, the more you see how serious the situation is and that everything we do matters.

James says this: James 2:17, **Thus also faith by itself, cognitive belief—this is what he's talking about—if it does not have works, is dead.** (Emphasis added). There is nothing to your faith. You are deceived; you're delusional. Faith without obedience to God's commandments is a lie. It's not faith; it's faithlessness. God is looking for the faithful.

It really blows the mind when you study the life of Martin Luther and his disdain for the Book of James; it actually escalates. You can follow Luther, and some scholars make the joke, well, if you're going to talk about Martin Luther, what version are you talking about? Because he had this morphing throughout his believing life. And as he went further and further into his faith, he became anti-Semitic. He had animosity towards the Book of James to the point he called James an "epistle of straw," and he went further than that. I think, around 1540, he goes further than that, and he actually makes the statement he looks forward to using the epistle of James to fire his stove. That the epistle of James is totally the opposite of the gospel and is in stark contrast in his opposition to the message that Paul brought. He actually believed, he basically came out and said, I've come to the conclusion this is obviously written by a Jew and not by a Christian, and then he threw the book out in 1542, I think, out of the school at Wittenberg; he threw James out of the camp.

Why did he do that? Because of this very statement in James 2:17, because James had the audacity to say Abraham was justified by works. Luther couldn't wrap his head around it. It went against everything

that he understood in Scripture. Rahab, the writer James says, was justified by works. Even Yeshua says (Matthew 11:19), "Wisdom is justified, my translation says **"by her children,"** but that's not what it says in Greek; it says, *ergon* (ἔργον), Wisdom is justified by her works. And so there is this radical emphasis on us being faithful in righteousness and in obedience to the Living God.

Peter throws his hat into the ring, and he says in 1 Peter 1:17, **And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear.** (Emphasis added). Because of this, judgment is coming; judgment is coming upon your behavior. Man, now I'm going to fear God, and I'm going to keep His commandments; I'm going to tremble.

Paul says this in Titus 1:15: **To the pure all things are pure,** or to the holy all things are holy. Now, Paul is not talking about, well, now you just sanctified sin, so if I consider myself to be holy, whatever I wave my little magic wand at, that all of a sudden becomes holy. This is not what Paul is saying. What he is saying when he says, "To the pure all things are pure" means to a righteous, God-fearing believer in Yeshua, when he goes to the Word and God says, "This is acceptable, this is holy, this is pure, this is righteous," that man steps out and says, "Yes." That is holy, that is faithful, that is true, and that is righteous. These are people who confirm the Word of the LORD.

Then he continues in Titus 1:15— **... but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled.** (Emphasis added). Welcome to moral relativism, right? Those who are defiled and unbelieving basically say, "You know, there really is no truth." You know, "I have my own truth. What's your truth?" And your truth isn't any better than my truth, because there really isn't truth. We can both contain our own feelings on things, and we can all live harmoniously in this beautiful utopia of self. It's moral relativism; it's absurd. Paul is actually talking about this mentality, this thing we see plaguing our society right now. He warns us; he comes out against us. People who reject the Bible are unbelieving. When we start selecting parts of this book to overlook, to not fear, to not literally implement into our lifestyle, that is a very scary place to be, I can tell you that.

Here's the worst part. —Titus 1:16— **They profess to know God.** They're professing to know Jesus; I'm in a relationship with Him. They say I am a Christian, but they don't say yes to all the holiness; they don't say yes to the instructions; they don't bend the knee to the will of the Living God. They profess to know Him, **but in works they deny Him,** being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work. (Emphasis added).

Quoting 1 John 2:3-4—³ **Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.** ⁴ **He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.** And that's where we're at. And this is exactly what Paul is professing here in Titus 1:16. And Yeshua in Matthew 7:20, **Therefore by their fruits you will know them.** By their fruit, by their works, their *ergon*, their deeds—are they obeying the commandments of God? Are they faithful? Do they love God, and do they love their fellow man? Are you showing that love? We'll know.

I can tell you right now, it's so easy. If Yeshua's telling us to look at people to understand who they are, whether they're a wolf in sheep's clothing or whether they're authentic, He's saying, Look at their works; look at their deeds. Are they humble? Are they obedient? You know, it's really simple to find out who is the master over people's lives by their deeds. Yeshua says in John 8:39, **"If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham."** He goes on to tell this specific Jewish crowd in John 8:44— **You**

are of *your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do...* This is how we know. We know who you serve.

Now, that said, this doesn't mean our effort in Torah, our own personal effort in the commandments of God in and of itself, is going to save us, that we have the power apart from Yeshua to be saved; we don't. It's Ephesians 2:8— For *by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.*

(Emphasis added). This is what I call the double helix of the faith, the double helix. You notice it says, For

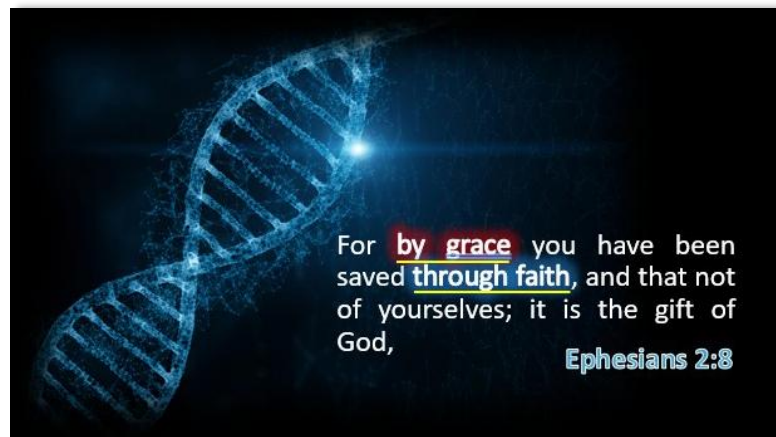
by grace you have been saved through faith. We are not saved by grace alone; compartmentalize this for a second. I won't even go there to the five solus, where it said, We're saved by grace alone, and then it says, Oh, now you're saved by faith alone. There are so many problems with that because we are not saved by grace alone. If we were saved by grace alone, here's what I know: that Yeshua dying on the cross and rising on the third day, all of humanity would be saved. All of humanity would be saved, and that's not the situation.

Grace, everything is established on the testimony of two. Hence, the beautiful design God created in DNA is this double helix, right? It's by grace through faith. Now I can argue the same argument: we're not saved by faith alone. You can't be; even the demons believe and tremble. Faith in and of itself, which, if it doesn't have works, is dead, true faith is faithfulness, but even in that belief and in that obedience. In faith alone, I can't be saved because I need grace because I've already failed.

This is the one thing that astounds me today: when the Christian Church does not understand salvation. It's through mercy, a grace that I do not merit, that I do not deserve. It's through the mercy of God through faith that I receive salvation. And again, faith is not simply cognitive; faith without works is dead. This is salvation.

Going back to Matthew 22:10-12—¹⁰ So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. ¹¹ “But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment.” ¹² So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless.

I want you to see that this isn't some random observation. The king walks in and just says, "Oh man, I kind of noticed, Steve, you don't look like other people. You look a little different, right? That's not what this is. This is not some random observation. The king has come into the great wedding hall. The setting is judgment, and he's inspecting the garments. Which now puts all our focus and emphasis a wedding garment? Because this is what matters, right? This guy is in the great wedding hall, but he doesn't have the proper attire. And so, to put this into context, we're going to dig into how important this really is, what the king is looking for, and what he sees.



The way I want to begin this is by taking you to Zachariah 3:1-3—¹ Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him. You know what's interesting? Biblically, the accuser would come in, and to be in the right position to accuse, he would go to the right hand of the one he's accusing. This is biblical; this is how you would do it. So, Satan takes his position as the accuser. ² And the LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?". ³ Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel. (Emphasis added).

I didn't put it up here, but filthy garments in Hebrew is *begadim tzo'im* (בגדים צואים). The reason that's important is that it's human excrement. And so, you're talking about garments that are soiled. I think we're all good with the translation. These are filthy, filthy, unclean garments. One of the things, not to get too graphic, is that when you go to Deuteronomy 23:13, it says that your human excrement is to be buried. It's to be totally out of sight because the LORD dwells in your camp. You can't have this filth out here, and his garments are filled with it.

Well, let's peel back a layer here to understand really what is being said. And so we go to Zechariah 3:4— Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, "Take away the filthy garments from him... What does that mean? What's going on here? And the rest of verse four, And to him He said, "See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes." (Emphasis added). This is all about garments. And now we get this insight as it pertains to garments: that right here on this first layer, we see that to have this filthy, disgusting garment taken away and to be given rich robes means you've been redeemed. You have been forgiven. The mercy of God is clothing. This is an awesome thing.

When you peel back this layer of removing your iniquity, what we read here in the Greek is *aphērēka anomias sou* (ἀφῆρκα ἀνομίας σου), which means I've removed your lawlessness. This is how the Septuagint renders it. —1 John 3:4— Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. And so, the whole aspect of what's going on here, we really need to appreciate, and it is echoed in Revelation 7:13-14—¹³ Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" ¹⁴ And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. (Emphasis added). This is what Joshua experienced. The mercy, the grace of God, once donning filthy garments but now brilliant, pure, holy garments. That happens because of grace, and Yeshua is the grace of God.

But that's not the only expression we're given in regard to white garments. There is a second expression given later on in Revelation, and it reads as follows, and they go together: — Revelation 19:8— And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright; it's talking about the bride of the lamb, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. (Emphasis added). And so you literally have those two components, the double helix of the grace of God and faithfulness, obedience to God, and by that, you have these garments, beautiful garments.

In fact, Job says in Job 29:14, I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; My justice was like a robe and a turban. (Emphasis added). It clothed me. —Psalm 119:172— ... For all Your commandments are righteousness. Put those on, put the commandments of the LORD on; they will clothe you. Job said, My justice was like a robe and a turban. —Ecclesiastes 9:8— Let your garments always be white, And let your head lack no oil. (Emphasis added). Let your garments always be white. In other words, don't mess

with the world; don't get involved with the love of the world (1 John 2:16), **the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life— is not of the Father, but is of the world.** Let your garments be white.

Matthew 22:12— **So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless.** (Emphasis added). As we look at this in our parable, how did you come in here without a garment? What do we know? We know what we're dealing with. We're dealing with a situation where one of two things happened—we're going to flesh this out, but one of two things we know: this guy has not accepted Yeshua as Savior, or he has not put on righteousness; he has not been obedient.

Well, here's what I can tell you. When you analyze this carefully, unfortunately, what is being expressed is the latter. And how do we know this? Well, I want to draw your attention to a small detail here. And that detail is this: notice what the king calls him. —Matthew 22:12— **So he said to him, 'Friend...** (Emphasis added). He calls him a friend. Well, hold on, considering the context here, this guy doesn't belong, and he's calling him a friend. It's somewhat perplexing until you go four chapters later. And four chapters later, we see the very same context reiterated in a kind of unusual way.

As you go to Matthew Chapter 26, Judas Iscariot confers with the chief priests and the elders to betray Yeshua. They send him with a delegation with swords and clubs, and Judas tells these gangsters, if you will, listen, the one whom I kiss, that is the one you take into custody. So Judas Iscariot goes up to his LORD and says, "Greetings, Rabbi," and kisses Him. This is Yeshua's response: — Matthew 26:50— **But Jesus said to him (Judas), "Friend, why have you come?" Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him.** (Emphasis added).

The details matter in this parable. And the fact that he's using this term, friend. What do we know about Judas Iscariot, whom Yeshua calls a friend? We know this: Judas was an apostle. He went out casting out demons in the name of Jesus. He went forth doing the ministry, the most awesome ministry that has ever existed. He was a part of those sent to go out and build the Kingdom of God. Demons were subject to him in Yeshua's holy name. And it was this guy who, because of covetousness, because of his love for the world, fell away and betrayed Yeshua. He was a believer. So, when we see this little detail of this particular individual in Matthew 22:12, "Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?" This was a believer who was not faithful.

Now, we will build on this. Matthew 22:13—**Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness.'** To be cast into outer darkness, this is the term that is utilized when you're cast out of the presence of the light; you will have no hope. There will be no salvation, there are no more chances, and you're completely cut off for all eternity. And **there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.** (Emphasis added).

Weeping and gnashing of teeth. Yeshua explains this very moment using a little different terminology, going back to Matthew 13, and I want to put this up here. Yeshua says in Matthew 13:41-42—⁴¹ **"The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness,** ⁴² **"and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.** (Emphasis added). There will be Christians on that day who will be stunned, who will be surprised that they're not getting into the Kingdom. Christians who believe there is no law, Christians who bought into the deception that Jesus did away with the law. It is horrifying when you see this plaguing the church right now, and you listen to the words Yeshua is speaking, and they're not being absorbed.

We read in Matthew 22:13-14—¹³ Then the king said to the servants, 'bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Emphasis added). And this is where the parable ends with what Yeshua says next: ¹⁴ "For many are called, but few are chosen."

See, we're dealing with believers. Believers that responded to the call. But when it says few are chosen, *eklektōi* (ἐκλεκτοί) in Greek, few are accepted. Few will be saved; few will be received—few. They responded to the call, but they're not going to get in. And notice He says many are called, but only, only a remnant will experience the goodness of God.

Luke 13:23-24—²³ Then one said to Him, "Lord, are there few who are saved?" (Emphasis added). I want to unpack this deeper; the LORD's going to get quite detailed. And He said to them, ²⁴ "Strive, *Agōnizomai* (ἀγωνίζομαι) in Greek. When you look at this, typically that word, 'strive,' is translated as 'fight.' Paul says to Timothy (1 Timothy 6:12), "Fight the good fight of faith"; it's the exact same Greek. —to enter through the narrow gate—when he says, Fight to enter through the narrow gate," this goes back a couple of weeks ago when I talked about the only way you're taking the land is by war. You will have to fight principalities and powers. You will have to fight temptation. You will have to fight bitterness and unforgiveness. You will have to fight the lies and the deceptions of the enemy, telling you what you want to hear. You're going to have to fight to get in, to get into the narrow gate—for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. (Emphasis added). Terrifying. It doesn't say they don't care; they don't want to get in. They're seeking to get into the Kingdom of God, but they don't get in. Many are going to be professing Christians seeking to get in, and they're not able. Why? They don't have the proper attire; they don't have their garments.

Luke 13:25-27—²⁵ When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' they're professing to know Jesus. Jesus, Jesus, open the door, and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,' ²⁶ then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' Here we are in Luke's version. Matthew's version says this, even more intensely. We cast out demons in your name. We prophesied in the name of Jesus, and we did many wonders in the name of Jesus. We were spreading the gospel. This is who we are. Now, what is Yeshua's response? ²⁷ But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.' (Emphasis added).

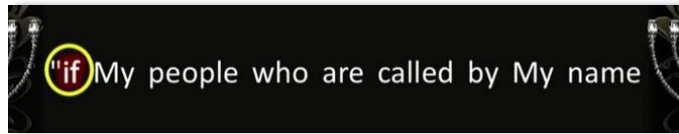
He specifically isolates one strand of the double helix. It's not the fact that they didn't cognitively believe in Jesus. They're calling on His name. They did great works in His name. What is He attacking? The lawlessness, the obedience, Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity. In Matthew 7:23, lawlessness is the verbiage used— 'depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' (Emphasis added).

So, when Yeshua says in Matthew 22:14, "For many are called, but few are chosen," take that in; tremble. May your entire being tremble before God. Whatever level you think you are at walking with the LORD, every one of us has to take it to the next level. How many? In my office, I shudder to even have the thought of how many in Corner Fringe are not going to get in, but they're going to be begging outside the gate. It's too personal for me. I'm so fearful of just that thought that I don't want one person who comes to this community to be the person crying out. That is an agonizing thought. Let the words of Yeshua sink in so it doesn't happen.

Many are called, but few are chosen. There is a passage which peels back layers to this statement that I want to take you to. It's one simple passage that most of you can recite by memory—2 Chronicles

7:14—**if My people who are called by My name**, we're talking about the calling, right? The king in our parable sent out a servant; it was the invitation, it was the call, and many are called. But now we see it's conditional;

it's not simply responding to the call cognitively. It says, If, the conditional conjunction, if My people who are called by My name **will humble themselves**, (emphasis added), actually, humble themselves. We're told in James 4:6, **"God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."**



We think about Luke 18:10-14: two men go up to the temple to pray; we've talked about it multiple times. One is a Pharisee, and one is hated; he's a tax collector. The Pharisee is all excited to share with the LORD how great he is and how much he has done, and the tax collector can't even lift his eyes. All he can say is, **'God, be merciful to me a sinner!'** That is the one the LORD lifted up. —James 4:10— **Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.** We cannot come into the presence of this kind of holiness, where His throne is on fire, His garments are brilliant white, and He is absolute pure holiness, and think we have anything to brag about. You come in before the King, you're on your face recognizing how holy He is and how unworthy we are.

2 Chronicles 7:14— **if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves**, and the second point, **and pray...** (Emphasis added). Pray. I love what David says in Psalm 32:5-6—⁵ **I acknowledged my sin to You, just like the tax collector, and my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah.** The key part is confessing, not wallowing in pride, saying, I'm justified; I didn't do anything wrong. No, it's confessing with your heart, being broken, confessing your sin, and He forgives the iniquity of the sin. Listen to David's words here: ⁶ **For this cause everyone who is godly shall pray to You—this is a huge aspect—in a time when You may be found...**

We're told throughout Scripture, that we're to pray without ceasing. If my people who are called by my name will pray, that means they're going to be men and women who immerse themselves in prayer; they pray without ceasing. Yeshua, in Matthew 26:41, warns us, **Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation...** See, when I'm busy with the LORD, I can't be busy with the devil, and that's prayer, the vehicle of prayer. I keep telling you, we know the barometer of our faith is measured in our prayer lives. I'm telling you right now, it's huge.

2 Chronicles 7:14— **if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face...** (Emphasis added). In Psalm 27:8, David recognized, he said, **When You said, "Seek My face," my heart said to You, "Your face, Lord, I will seek."** —Psalm 27:4— **One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple.**

What does it mean to seek the face of the LORD? It means to (Matthew 6:33) **seek first the kingdom of God.** That means you are a believer in Yeshua, who is not building your kingdom here; you're not worried about the things that are going on here. Your concern is getting into Heaven; your concern is dwelling and being able to see Yeshua face to face. If you were raised with Christ, Colossians 3:1, **...seek those things which are above...** Everything we do in this life should be planning and investing in the

kingdom to come. Do you want to know what it looks like to bear wedding garments? This is it; we have to humble ourselves, we have to pray, and we have to seek His face.

2 Chronicles 7:14— **if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways** (emphasis added)—you have to repent. We must turn from our wicked ways, and there is only one way we can define wickedness. It's not what we think; it's not what we feel. There's only one way to define sin: lawlessness. Therefore, we must know what the law says. If there's someone trying to convince you there is no law, or that Christ did away with the law, that is a lie from the pit of hell. Because this is part of the wedding garments, this is the part we must get right. We have to (Matthew 3:2) **“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”**

I love the Psalmist; he says in Psalm 119:9, **How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.** And then he goes on, ¹⁰ **With my whole heart I have sought You; oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!** ¹¹ **Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.** That he might not go into the land of lawlessness. That's repentance.

Isaiah 55:7— **Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; And to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.** That means you take every thought captive (2 Corinthians 10:5) **to the obedience of Christ.** He says in Proverbs 1:23, **Turn at my rebuke; Surely I will pour out my spirit on you...** We're coming up to Pentecost; “turn at my rebuke, and I will pour out my spirit”. 2 Chronicles 7:14 is what it looks like to have wedding garments.

With that said, let's close with verse 14, and then we'll close in prayer. — 2 Chronicles 7:14— **... then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.**