

A SUMMONED OR AN ELECT ONE?

Which are You? Mt. 22:1-14

Introduction: On the last day of His teaching in the Temple on Wednesday, 12 Nisan, A.D 33, two days before His crucifixion, what statement did The Lord Jesus Christ make after He told the parable about the king who made a marriage feast for His Son? “Many are called but few are chosen!” (Mt. 22:14 AV). And how does this statement relate to us today?

There are many kinds of calls in life to which humans may respond? There are calls to the mountains for sportsmen and outdoorsmen, calls to the field for farmers, calls to the wild for hunters, calls to the seas for sailors, calls to the air for pilots and stewardesses, calls to the streams for fishermen and boaters, calls to be authors and poets, calls to be teachers, calls to commerce to be sales and business people, calls to finance and to be accountants or bank tellers, calls to be doctors, nurses, and veterinarians, calls to fight crime through law and order, calls to fight fire or deplorably to set fire, calls to be horsemen and jockeys, calls to be politicians, calls to various sports, calls to be actors and entertainment, calls to religion to the clergy, or sadly calls to crime. All these calls are to worldly vocations for earning a living. Many are worthy and helpful to humanity, while some are Satanic for evil. But there is a call that is far more important than all of these, that is the call or summons by The God for Salvation and Discipleship to live for and to persistently serve The True God and His Son forever in addition to whatever calling or station in life your lot may be.

Some of these calls in life are pursued successfully for the good of others or regrettably for evil. Many calls are ignored or disregarded. Consequently many are said by the world to have missed their calling. The saddest and costliest failure of all is to miss the call or summons by The True God which comes by hearing His Summons on radio, television, or in person, or by reading His Summons in Scripture or in various types of literature (tracts, pamphlets, booklets, books, etc.) or by observing it through nature. But to miss His Summons or to ignore or postpone a response to this Summons results in Eternal Disaster, even though it was intended to, and by worldly standards, esteemed to be good. However, ignoring or failing to respond properly, promptly, and timely to this Summons, results in a negative response with tragic, damnable, and eternal consequences. Whatever good works you may do in your earthly vocation, they shall **not** enable your entrance into Heaven (Mt. 7:21-27; Lk. 13:25-28; Eph. 2:8,9).

To fully understand the meaning of this statement and the summons to which The Lord Jesus referred, it is absolutely necessary to examine these four aspects: The Content of The Statement, The Chronological Context or The Progressive Revelation of The God, The Cultural Context, and The Costly Consequences to those who ignore, postpone, or delay a positive response to The Summons of The Lord Jesus Christ.

I. The Content of His Statement

Please read the content of the words of The Lord Jesus Christ leading up to the text of this parable in Matthew’s Gospel before reading on (Mt. 22:1-14). “Many are called, but few are chosen!”

A. The Many Versus the Few

The Greek word translated many is the nominative masculine plural substantival adjective of **πολύς** (poh-lús) is **πολοί** (poh-loí), which means ‘great in multitude or quantity,’ ‘great majority.’ A masculine

plural substantival requires a pronoun that includes both genders, male and female, therefore is translated ‘ones.’ The Lord Jesus compared **πολοί** (poh-loí) in comparison to **ὀλίγοι** (oh-léegoi), another nominative masculine plural substantival adjective which means ‘few in number,’ but in the singular number it means ‘small, little, or meager.’ Since it is a masculine plural substantival it requires the pronoun ‘ones.’ In comparison these substantival adjectives occur together eleven times in The New Testament. The Lord Jesus used it on ten occasions, six in Matthew (7:13,14; 9:37; 20:16; 22:14; 25:21,23) and four in Luke (7:47,48; 10:1,2; 12:47,48; 13:23,24), and Paul used it once in 2 Corinthians (8:15). An illustration of the true value of **ὀλίγοι** (oh-léegoi) in contrast is given by Peter in the context of the exact number of souls saved in the ark that Noah built for salvation through the great flood that covered the Earth (1 Pet. 3:20), that is ‘eight’ souls. It is estimated that those who perished which ignored Noah’s preaching for 120 years while he and his family were building the ark (cf. Gen. 3:5,6) were at least a million and a half people (men, women, and children). This provides some concept of the extreme contrast between **πολοί** (poh-loí) the ‘many’ or ‘great majority’ and **ὀλίγοι** (oh-léegoi), the ‘few’ to which The Lord Jesus Christ referred. This extreme ratio illustrates the vast difference in number between the summoned, who do not respond and perish, and the elect who do respond, are eternally saved, and persist in being discipled and are persistently faithful unto death. [By the way to which group do you belong? The majority or the few? Your definite answer reflects your definite destiny!]

From this study, it can be seen that a more precise translation of this statement is: “Many are summoned ones but few are elect ones!”

Now lets consider the latter contrast which The Lord Jesus made.

B. Summoned Ones Versus Elect Ones

The Greek word **κλητοί** (klaytói) translated ‘called’ (AV) is the nominative plural substantival adjective of **κλητός** (klaytós), which means ‘a summoned one.’ It derives from the verb **καλέω** (kahléhō) ‘to summon (by legal authority or royalty)’; ‘to invite cordially (to an occasion by a friend or relative)’; ‘to title (give a name to),’ which use is differentiated by the context. Since the king in the context represents The True God, the royal use of **κλητοί** (klaytói) is translated in this passage. Thus it is translated ‘summoned ones,’ since ‘summoned’ demands a personal appearance before royalty for a specific purpose.

The Greek word translated ‘chosen’ (AV) is the nominative plural masculine substantival adjective of **ἐκλεκτός** (ehklehktós) and is derived from the verb **ἐκλέγω** (ehkléhgō). This is a compound verb composed of the prefixed preposition **ἐκ** (ehk) meaning ‘out of’ and the verb **λέγω** (léhgō) which means ‘to say, to tell, or to claim’ according to context. Thus the compound verb literally means ‘claimed out of’ or more precisely ‘elect’ in this context, since ‘elect’ indicates being claimed out for a high vocation with The God. As with **πολοί** (poh-loí), **ὀλίγοι** (oh-léegoi) and **κλητοί** (klaytói), so with **εκλεκτοί** (ehklehktói).

In New Testament Scripture **ἐκλέγω** (ehklehgō) and **ἐκλεκτά** (ehklehktói) are theological terms that refer to the selection and determination that The God made out of the ‘many’ or the ‘majority’ and summoned them to Salvation and discipleship among the few.

II. The Context -

Since The Holy Scripture is the pure and complete Word of The God, the complete supernatural revelation of The God, and His means of com-

munication to mankind, we must give careful and deliberate attention to fully understand and obey The Truth, The Written Word Of God with prompt, precise, and persistent obedience.

If we are to interpret any part of The Bible accurately, it is absolutely obligatory to interpret according to context. “To interpret contrary to context is to teach falsehood for Truth” (Dr. Earl D. Radmacher). Generally the rule of considering the context is taken to mean the immediate context, that portion of the book in which the text is found, that is a paragraph or chapter. But there are five contexts to be considered: the context of the progressive revelation of The God (or the chronological context), the context (or thrust) of the Book, the immediate context, the context of The Whole Bible, and the cultural context.

It is not enough to consider the immediate context only. Nor is it acceptable, as so many well-meaning preachers and teachers have done and still do today, to confine one’s interpretation to, nor build a doctrine upon, a single verse even though it is repeated several times elsewhere in the Bible. By doing so they fall into the trap, wile, and condemnation of the devil. Even as Eve was deceived into misquoting The God’s Word and enticed to eat the forbidden fruit (Gen. 3:1-6 cf. 1 Tim. 2:13,14).

It is essential to consider all five of these contexts. But the most vital context in attempting to unfold and understand in the interpretation of The New Testament is the chronological context which considers the progressive revelation of The God. As we progress it will become apparent why this chronological context is so important.

A. The Context of The Progressive Revelation of The God or The Chronological Context

1. The Progressive Revelation of The Kingdom in The Old Testament.

There were numerous Old Testament prophecies concerning the coming Messiah-King given to the Israelites through the two thousand years before His birth. Firstly in mid-late 2083 A.C. or 2044 B.C. (Gen. 12:7), The LORD God promised the land of Canaan unto Abraham (17:7-9). Then in 2107 A.C. or 2020 B.C., The God commanded Abraham and his seed after him to keep His covenant (Gen. 17:10-14). Then c. 2200 A.C. or 1927 B.C. a famine came in the land and The God promised to give Isaac the countries of the Gerar region if he would stay in the land and not go down to Egypt (Gen. 26:1-6).

Years later when Moses led Israel out of bondage to Mt. Sinai and gave them the Law early in 2508 A.C. or 1619 B.C., Israel was intended to be a holy nation, a peculiar treasure, a special people, a Kingdom of priests, to **The LORD God** (Ex. 19:5,6; Deut. 14:2; 26:18). He promised to give them the Land and set the bounds of it to be theirs. But they must cooperate with and completely obey The LORD, which included driving out the inhabitants from the Land. Israel was not to allow them to dwell in the Land (Ex. 23:30-33).

Then 585 years later Nathan, king David’s prophet and friend prophesied of the Davidic Covenant to David (3093 A.C. or 1032 B.C.). The God promised that of David’s Seed after him would come The God’s Son and sit upon David’s throne, which shall be established as the throne of David’s kingdom forever (2 Sam. 7:4-16; 1 Chr. 17:7-14). Then David himself was used of The God to include in several of his Psalms (written in 3092-3123 A.C. or 1033-1002 B.C.) which contain Truth concerning The Messiah’s rejection, betrayal, trial, crucifixion, resurrection-ascension, and priesthood. Then in

(3135? A.C. or 992? B.C.) Solomon wrote his Book of Love, The Song of Solomon, which depicted the marriage of the shepherd-king on a journey typologically, a parallel to The New Testament account of The Shepherd-King, The Lord Jesus Christ, Who promised to return to take with Himself His Bride, The Church to Heaven for the Marriage Supper.

The Law was given to Israel to be observed meticulously in order for them to fully enjoy His blessings and maintain a close relationship with Him. Failure to persist in keeping The Law resulted in disaster for those who did not continue faithfully. The first commandment demanded that there be no other gods before The God and the second commandment in essence forbade other gods to be served after or beside The True God, who is a Jealous God. The True God was to occupy the minds of all Israelites, so that He had all their concentration, attention, and devotion. But little by little Satan was successful in distracting them away from The Law and to obtain mediocrity in obedience. (He does the same to those who make initial commitment to The Lord Jesus Christ to day.) Consequently the nation of Israel forced The God to chasten them both individually and corporately as a nation and ultimately enslave them to a heathen nation, whose gods the Israelites also served.

Between c. 3415-3420 A.C. or c. 712-707 B.C. Isaiah completed The Book of The Prophet ISAIAH, in which he recorded the protest against the nation calling upon them to come and reason together to cleanse them from their sins (1:18) and then prophesied of the birth of The coming king, God's Son (9:6,7), His coming millennial Kingdom reign and the restoration of Israel (11:1-12;32:1,2; 35:1-10), also of The Messiah, The Foundation Corner Stone (28:16), and Messiah's earthly ministry and suffering in death (42:1-7; 50:4-6; 52:13-53:12; 61:1-3); then of His provision of clothing for Eternity (61:10).

Later Jeremiah prophesied that the servitude for Judah would last seventy years from 3521-3591 A.C. or 606-536 B.C. During those years Ezekiel and Daniel prophesied concerning what would transpire on the world scene, to warn Israel and to encourage them to return and maintain explicit obedience to The God.

Jeremiah's prophecy came to pass as prophesied with 49,697 Jews returning to Jerusalem to dwell there and began to restore the altar (Ezra 1:2-4; 2:64; 3:3). But it was only two hundred years before immorality set in again and The God's prophet, Malachi wrote to rebuke their wickedness (3727-3730 A.C. or 400-397 B.C.). But the nation did not heed and were later put under the servitude of Rome.

Then after Ezekiel was taken to Babylon among 18,000 captives in mid 3529 A.C. or 598 B.C. he prophesied of Israel's restoration, The God's intention to resurrect David to reign as The Christ's Viceroy, and of the results of the Great Battle when The Christ returns (Ezek. 34:23-31; 37:23-28). Then he emphasized details of the new millennial Temple under the millennial reign of The Lord Jesus Christ, conditions in millennial Jerusalem, the inheritance of Israel in Jerusalem and in the land, and worship in the millennial Jerusalem (40-48).

B. The Progressive Revelation of The Kingdom in The New Testament.

Then The Lord Jesus Christ was born in December-January, 5-4 B.C. Satan's first attempt to stop The Lord Jesus Christ from becoming king was to impel Herod the Great to evil jealousy and issue a decree to massacre all male children in Bethlehem and the surrounding area. But The God's determined plans cannot be thwarted. So in a sleeping

vision The God told Joseph to take Mary and his Son, The Lord Jesus to Egypt until Herod's death. Then in Egypt, after Herod the Great died, The God told Joseph in a sleeping vision to take his family to Galilee.

At the same time that Mary was carrying Jesus in her womb, she visited her relative (translated cousin' in AV) Elizabeth, who also was carrying a male child six months older, who was John the Baptizer. Thirty-two years later (A.D. 29) John the Baptizer began proclaiming repentance and The Gospel of The Kingdom (Mt. 3:1,2). After three (+ or -) months Jesus was baptized by John and entered the desert to be tempted by the devil (another attempt to stop Him from going to the cross) for forty days and nights (Mt. 4:1-11). When He returned from the desert, The Lord Jesus began His 3½ year ministry in early December, A.D. 29 performing miracles of healing and teaching.

Some time after Passover in Spring, A.D. 30, Jesus went to the Jordan in Judah land (just south and southeast of Jerusalem - **Baythahbahrāh** area) for a season to baptize disciples while John the Baptizer baptized in Ainōn. John's disciples reported to John the Baptizer that Jesus was baptizing more disciples than John (Jn. 3:26); John responded to that report (27-36). The use of the imperfect tense (Jn. 4:2), the statement of the report to the Pharisees (v. 1), and the report to John by His disciples (Jn. 3:26), all indicate that initially Jesus was baptizing disciples. Later His disciples continued baptizing while Jesus ceased to baptize.

After one year of Jesus' ministry, in December, A.D. 30, John the Baptizer was imprisoned by Herod the Tetrarch (Lk. 3:19,20). Then when The Lord Jesus heard of John's imprisonment in Tebet (December), A.D. 30, He began to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom in Galilee (Mt. 4:12,17; Mk. 1:14,15). He walked along the seaside in Galilee proclaiming as a herald and making disciples to learn more of Him. His disciples baptized those new disciples into The Kingdom of Heaven and they followed Him.

In Elul (September), A.D. 31, The Lord Jesus testified of John the Baptizer (Mt. 11:7-15); berated His generation for rejecting His own ministry and for refusing to repent at the proclamation by John the Baptizer (Mt. 11:16-19). Then He condemned the cities on the north shore of Galilee for rejecting the miraculous works that He performed among them (Mt. 11:20-24). Since they rejected His message proven by numerous signs, He rejected Israel as a nation. Then He publicly extended His invitation to individual Jews to take His yoke of Discipleship upon them to learn by practice by means of intimate training with Him and His disciples (Mt. 11:27-30). Matthew did not record how many responded if any, but only that Jesus continued journeying and ministering (12:1).

Almost eight months later Matthew resumed his record of Jesus' life on Pentecost Sunday, 7 Sivan (June 16), A.D. 31. The Pharisees, the religious leaders that represented the nation, initiated a controversy with The Lord Jesus over the lack of observance of the Sabbath because the disciples repeatedly picked ears of grain and ate of it. He transferred from there (Mt. 12:1-8 cf. Lk. 6:6-11), then Jesus entered into the synagogue to teach and He restored an atrophied hand on the Sabbath Day. This enraged the Pharisees to senselessness (Lk. 6:11) and they took council together to plan to utterly destroy Him (Mt. 12:9-13; Mk. 3:6). One week later, Sunday, 14 Sivan (June 23), A.D. 31, another Sabbath dispute arose when a blind and deaf-mute demoniac was brought to Jesus and He healed him. The Pharisees

maligned Jesus by claiming that He cast out demons by **Beh-elzheboul**, the ruler of the demons (Mk. 3:22-30).

Later in Heshvan (October) A.D. 31, Jesus began to teach many things by means of parables. Since this statement of His (Mt. 22:14) that The Lord Jesus Christ Himself made at the conclusion of the parable that is now under consideration before us, it is necessary to keep in mind the reason that He gave to His disciples for speaking in parables. Earlier in His public ministry, a year and a half before, back in Heshvan (October), A.D. 31, in the Autumn of the second year of His ministry before John the Baptizer was executed, Jesus began speaking in parables. He answered their question as to why. It was to convey and reveal Truth to His disciples who will respond properly and obey **ALL** Truth and at the same time hide it from those who will, not commit to The Truth and persist in discipleship with Him. However, occasionally the Jewish religious leaders realized that Jesus was referring to them (Mt. 21:45). His answer as to why He spoke in parables was: (Mk. 4:10-13 APT).

“¹⁰But when He emerged in privacy, the⁺ ones around Him [in association] with the[&] twelve asked Him with reference to the parable.

¹¹And He was saying to them, To you[&] it has been given to know[from experience] the mystery of The Kingdom of The God. But to those who are the ones without[off away from], all /things~ occur[become] in parables ¹²in order that[indirect discourse, partial quote of Isa. 6:9,10] by means of seeing, they [subjunctive] see and they not [subjunctive] behold and by means of hearing, they [subjunctive] hear and they not [subjunctive] understand, lest ever they [subjunctive] convert and their[article as pronoun] sinnings [subjunctive] be forgiven to them. ¹³And He says to them, You[&] do not perceive[aware] this [the key to interpreting all parables]parable, do you[&]? And how will you[&] know [from experience] for yourselves all the parables?” (Mk. 4:10-13).

Notice that this passage explains how to understand all the parables that relate to The Mystery of The Kingdom of The God. Therefore it will assist us in understanding this parable that The Lord Jesus Christ told about the king who made a marriage feast for His Son (Mt. 22:1-14). And since this parable was given by The Lord Jesus Christ just two days before His crucifixion, there is no need to consider further progressive revelation except to recognize that which applies to the costly consequences when they are considered later.

Now consider the cultural context.

III. The Cultural Context - A Marriage of Eastern Royalty

A. The Marriage Feast (Mt. 22:1-14)

Unlike western marriages in which the bride's parents provide the reception and invite the guests of both families, Eastern royal males provide the marriage feast for their sons' weddings and invite the guests.

1. The Initial Invitation (Mt. 22:2,3 APT).

a. The king sent the Initial Standing Invitation to the guests to attend the marriage feast for his son, giving them ample time for preparation by the guests. The parable does not indicate that a reply was requested, but since the invitation was from the king, attendance was expected.

b. The recipients were the king's selected privileged subjects who were invited but did not promptly arrive at the marriage feast.

2. The Responses of the Invited Guests to The King's Patience (vs. 3-5):

a. Firstly, Determinedly Willing **Not** to Come;

The king sent bondslaves to all those tardy and rude invited guests with the summons, obligating them to attend. But they were determinedly willing **not** to attend (v. 3).

- b. Secondly, Neglected the Summons and went on about their Business: Again the king sent other bondslaves to say,

“Tell the⁺ ones standing^[intensive perfect passive participle, cf. v. 8] being invited, Lo! I prepared my /brunch^[first cooked meal of the day]. The bulls and the fatlings of mine have been sacrificed and all~ things ^{larel} ready. Come now unto the marriage feast!” (v. 4).

The originally invited guests neglected the summons and went on about their business: one to his own field, and another to his merchandising (v. 5).

- c. Thirdly by the remaining ones, Antagonism against the Bondslaves. They grabbed, degraded, and killed them (v. 6).

3. The Twofold Reaction of The King to the Arrogance of all the Rude, Invited Guests (v. 7).

- a. Anger (v. 7);

(1) Sent out his troops to utterly destroy those murderers and

(2) Destroyed their city with fire;

- b. Reassigned his bondslaves with a summons to the marriage feast to **everyone** they could find on the way going through and out of the city, since the ones standing invited were not worthy ones (vs. 8,9).

4. The Bondslaves Obediently Filled the Feast with Guests (v. 10).

The bondslaves gathered the wicked ones and the beneficial ones together with ones lying back to eat. All His redeemed bondslaves today should fulfill this same requirement.

5. Wearing Wedding Clothing Is Absolutely Essential in order to Partake of the Marriage Feast (vs. 11,12). {This is clarified in The God’s final progressive revelation.}

One of the guests heeded the summons to come to the feast but failed to obtain the wedding clothing supplied for the guests. The king intently gazed upon the guests reclining to eat and noticed one who was not wearing wedding clothing. So the king asked him how he entered without being properly clothed for the occasion. The guest was unable to answer, being muzzled and met his fate.

6. The Costly Consequences of Accepting the Summons but Failing to Obtain Wedding Clothing (v. 13).

The king commanded his domestic servants to bind his hands and feet and carry him off and cast him into The Outer Darkness (Hell and the Lake of Fire) to join the loud weeping and gnashing of teeth there.

B. The Meaning of the Parable

Keep in mind that Jesus presented this as a parable, which is a fictitious story with a spiritual or moral Truth. Many details may, but not all details, have significance or parallel Scripture Truth. We must seek to understand the main Truth that Jesus was emphasizing. He stated that He was illustrating to what the Kingdom of Heaven is likened. It is composed of two classes of people, the summoned ones and the elect ones, just professors and persistently committed possessors of The Truth who persist in discipleship. It strictly deals with the period of time before the Return of The Messiah as King.

1. The Initial Invitation

The Gospel was proclaimed first to Jews in Israel but not everyone nor very many who heard or learned of The Gospel Summons responded positively the first time they heard it. But of those who do

respond, there are two classes, those who are just professors who never earnestly submit to discipleship and learn The Whole Truth and nothing but The Truth and those who are persistent committed possessors of The Truth and Eternal life. Some are definitely **not** willing to come, while others neglect the summons, and still others are antagonistic and violently opposed to the messenger-disciples. However Scripturally, retribution for all is not imminent, but delayed partially until physical death and fully at the end of all time.

2. The Reassignment of the Bondslaves

The Gospel Summons must go out to all places and locations to fill The King's House. But the summons includes provision of wedding garments: garments of Salvation and the Robe of Righteousness (Isa. 61:10; 28:10-13) and involves discipleship and ever learning Truth (Mt. 11:28-30; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10) and persistent obedience to Truth.

“²⁴And clothe yourselves[&] at once! with the new human, the one created according to The God in union with righteousness, and with earnest devotion to The Truth!” (Eph. 4:24).

“... ¹⁰and clothe yourselves at once with the new one, [namely] the one continually being renewed in oneself in knowledge according to ⁰image of [Him] Who created him!” (Col. 3:10).

How else can one accomplish this gain of knowledge according to The Christ's Image of Righteousness and Truth?

3. The Costly Consequence of Accepting the Summons but Failing to Obtain Wedding Clothing (v. 13).

The ultimate consequence is being cast into The Outer Dark which Jesus called **Géh-eh-nah** elsewhere (Lk. 12:5 APT). Both terms are used to name the place of torment forever. The costly consequence of ignoring, postponing, or delaying positive response to The Summons of The Lord Jesus Christ is an eternal, tragic, and damnable consequence.

C. The Application That Jesus Made (v. 13)

“Many are summoned ones but few are elect ones!” Which are you?

After The Lord Jesus told this parable of the marriage feast and emphasized the costly consequences on the one hand of refusing to heed the invitation and on the other hand heeding the invitation but refusing to obtain the proper wedding clothing which is provided by The Lord Jesus Christ, The King is to share the same fate, cast into The Outer Dark where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth in the Eternal Lake of Fire.

CONCLUSION:

Today we considered The statement that The Lord Jesus made at the end of the parable about the king who made a marriage feast for His Son, Many are called but few are chosen! After noting many various kinds of calls in life, we laid the foundation for a full understanding of the meaning of this statement and the summons to which The Lord Jesus Christ referred. It is absolutely necessary to examine these four aspects: The Content of His Statement, The Chronological Context, The Cultural Context, and The Costly Consequences to those who ignore, postpone, or delay a positive response to The Summons of The Lord Jesus Christ. We examined the parable in detail and concluded that the consequence of failing to make the vocation (summons) and election sure is vital but misunderstood and often postponed disastrously to their own detriment. Do **not** be among that number against which The Lord Jesus Christ warned us!

APPLICATION: What will you do beginning now to determine your Eternal Destiny?

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