

BROOKLYN TABERNACLE

BIBLE STUDIES

"MANY ARE CALLED BUT FEW ARE CHOSEN"

Matthew 22:1-14.—September 11.

MANY of us have not in the past sufficiently discerned that none of the lessons of the Great Teacher were given in literal language—that they were all symbolical; as we read, "Without a parable spake he not unto them."—Matt. 13:34.

In today's Study we have another beautiful parabolic lesson respecting the Kingdom. We might inquire why the Bible is so full of these lessons concerning the Kingdom? Is it not because the Kingdom of God is the only hope of the world? Are we not learning this more and more? Faith in the coming Kingdom of God under the whole heavens began to grow dim within less than two centuries after the death of the Apostles. Instead of longing, hoping, to become the Bride of Christ, to be associated with him in his glorious Kingdom for the overthrow of Sin and Satan and Death, and for the uplifting of mankind during a reign of a thousand years, a new faith and a new hope came in, contrary to the Scriptures. This unscriptural hope instructed Christians that they should expect an earthly Kingdom of their own establishment, in which the popes would reign as representatives of Jesus, and the cardinals and bishops as representatives of the apostles and the "little flock," to whom the Kingdom is promised. Thenceforth the work of the Church, to "build one another up in the most holy faith," gave place to the unscriptural course of neglecting the Church and laboring for the world, under the unwarranted assumption that it is the duty of the Church to convert the world. As to how much injury has thus been done it is difficult to estimate. For the sake of numbers standards have been lowered and worldliness has been recognized, until today Christendom is in a sad plight as respects true doctrines and high moral standards.

As Messiah is to be the Great King of earth during the period of his Mediatorial reign, it is the Father's good-pleasure that he should have a "Bride." And this Gospel Age is set apart for the finding and development of this Bride class of many members. The Kingdom is the great prize which the Father is to bestow upon his Son—to be shared by the Church, the Bride of Christ. The parable of today's Study outlines the call of this Bride class or Kingdom class from Jesus' day down to the completion and glorification of this company. Nowhere is Jesus represented as calling his own Bride. This is foreshown in Abraham, who typified the Father, and Isaac, who typified Jesus; and Abraham's servant, sent to call Rebecca to be the Bride of Isaac, typified the holy Spirit, whose work during this Gospel Age is bringing to Christ the Bride class—"the very elect."

So this parable shows that the King sent forth the call to the Marriage. The Jewish people, the children of Abraham, according to the flesh, had been invited to this high honor from the time of the giving of the Law Covenant at Sinai. Century after century they waited for the announcement to be made to them that the nuptial feast was ready. Finally, when Jesus came, the announcement went to them, All things are now ready! Come to the feast! Meantime, they had become overcharged with the cares of this life—business, politics and religious schemes of their own concocting. They manifested no interest in the announcement and even beat some of the servants, the Apostles and others, who sought to help them, and to draw their attention to the Great Feast, which was their special privilege.

The Almighty was wroth and sent the Roman Armies and "destroyed those murderers and burned up their City," Jerusalem, in A. D. 70. Then the King said to his servants, The wedding must take place even though those who were bidden are not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways and as many as ye find bring to the marriage feast. As the city represented the Jewish nation, so the highways represented the world in general—the Gentiles—to whom the message of the Kingdom was sent after fleshly Israel had first enjoyed the offer and but partially improved it. Another statement of the parable shows three different classes:—

- (1) The Jewish rulers who rejected him.
- (2) Those called from among the streets and lanes of their city and gathered to the spirit plane by Jesus and the Apostles.
- (3) Then the report was given, "We have done as thou hast commanded and yet there is room." Then the message went forth to go everywhere among the Gentiles and urge them to come in, until the house should be filled—until the elect number for whom the feast was provided would be found. Our Study states that the wedding was furnished with guests—good and bad. In other words, the offer of a share with Christ in his Kingdom has attracted some naturally very fallen, as well as some better favored by nature. But the arrangements of the Great King are such that the "wedding garment" covers all the blemishes of the most imperfect as well as those of the least imperfect.

The latter part of our Study shows a discrimination and judgment ultimately to take place amongst those invited to the wedding and accepted. As none were permitted to enter in without a wedding garment—without an acknowledgment of the merit of Christ's sacrifice—so none will be permitted to remain and participate in the wedding festival except those who maintain their standing of confidence in Christ. Any who take off the "wedding garment" will be sure to be expelled from the privileges enjoyed and will go out from the light and blessings afforded to this favored class, into the "outer darkness" of the world and of nominal Christianity, in which shortly there will be a great time of trouble, symbolically represented by the "weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Are we not even now in the time of this inspection of the guests? And are not all Christian people who cast away their confidence in the sacrifice of Christ and who accept Evolutionary theories and Higher Criticism taking off "the wedding garment," and will they not all eventually find themselves in outer darkness, in confusion, in bewilderment? And will they not be sadly distressed in the great time of trouble which the Scriptures declare to be near?—Daniel 12:1.

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MISS BYRD KRAMER,
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