

God's Eternal Plan #19
The Marriage of the Lamb
Revelation 19:5-10

Spiritual truth is often difficult for us to appropriate because we know so little of spiritual things, therefore, God uses object lessons to teach us. For instance, because it was so difficult for the disciples to understand the close relationship between Christ and believers in John 15 He used the analogy of He being the **“Vine”** and believers being the **“branches.”** You see, the disciples were familiar with the vine, and they knew the relationship that must exist between the branches and the vine if the branches are to live and be fruitful.

One of the familiar figures used in the Word of God, to teach us spiritual truths, is the figure of marriage. Why marriage? The answer takes us all the way back to Genesis 2:24, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” When speaking of marriage, Jesus used this same statement in Matthew 19:4-5, “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?’” The emphasis here is on the words “two shall become one flesh.” **But why does the Bible use the figure of marriage?** Because it was almost inconceivable that any man could actually become *one with God!* Even today it is difficult for us to realize the great work of Christ at the Cross has made it possible for sinners and enemies to come together in close and intimate fellowship with holy God, to the point that it could be said that we are “one” with Him. **And yet, that is exactly what the Bible teaches!** Listen to 1 Corinthians 6:17, “But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.” Paul put it this way in Ephesians 5:30-32, “For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.” Notice the words, “This is a great mystery, but I speak *concerning Christ and the church.*” And this figure of marriage, used both in the Old and New Testaments, gives to us the doctrines of the oneness with Christ, just as two in marriage become **“one flesh,”** so also the one who accepts Jesus Christ as personal Savior becomes **“one”** with Him.

Therefore, as we consider the prophecy that relates particularly to the Church, we find the Word of God has a great deal to say about the fact that we shall participate in a *wedding* in heaven.

As we begin our study concerning the **“Marriage of the Lamb,”** look at Paul’s statement in 2 Corinthians 11:1-2, “Oh, that you would bear with me in a little folly - and indeed you do bear with me.” Paul is referring to the marriage customs of that day, and he continues in verse 2, “For I am jealous for you with

godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” **The Greek word translated “betrothed” in translated “espoused” in the King James Version and is the same word used to describe Mary’s relationship to Joseph when she became pregnant with Jesus.** In that day, it was the responsibility of the father of the girl to arrange a marriage for his *daughter*, just as it was the responsibility of the father of a son to arrange a marriage for his *son*. There was no such practice that included meeting, dating, falling in love, and deciding to get married. Marriage was by contract, and that contract was between the father of the bride and the father of the groom.

Therefore, the word “betrothed” referred to a legal and binding marriage contract that was arranged by the parents of the two people involved. The betrothal period extended for a period of at least one full year, and although the marriage was twelve months away the contract was so binding the man is referred to as the “**husband**” in the contract, and it could be broken only by death, or by immorality, but it always required always required a “**divorce**” to break the contract.

Therefore, the church is under a spiritual contract to be the bride of Christ, and that contract has been sealed by the presence of the Holy Spirit, “Who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory,” as seen in Ephesians 1:14.

And what we have in Revelation 19 is the reality of the consummation of that spiritual contract, “for the marriage of the Lamb has come.” You will notice this event is ushered in by the call for *shouting* and *praise*, as seen in verses 5-6, “Then a voice came from the throne, saying, Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great! And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thundering, saying, Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!” God said to the heavenly host, “Shout hallelujah, for something great and spectacular is about to happen.” Then in verses 7-8 the tremendous ovation continues with this exalted announcement, “Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.” **What a day! What a prospect! What a consummation! What a victory! What a triumph!** “For the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife (the Church) has made herself ready. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen.” **“Linen” that is lustrous, iridescent, white like the light of the glory of God!** That “**fine linen**” is the righteous acts and deeds of the saints.

Notice he says, “His wife has made herself ready.” **She has her garments beautiful and white, ready to go to her marriage with her Lord.** When did she make herself ready? **When were all of those rewards given to her? How was that**

beautiful robe so arrayed and adorned? The answer is found in 1 Corinthians 3:11-15, “For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is. If anyone’s work, which he has built on, it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.” **We have already seen that every child of God shall stand before Christ as the Judgment Seat of Christ, and there shall our works be tried as if by fire.** If our works are wood, hay, and stubble (that which represents things done in the *flesh* and for the glory of *self*), they are burned (they are destroyed). If our works are gold, silver, and precious stones (that which represents things done in the power of the Holy Spirit for the glory of Christ), that shall abide as an ad ornament for the beautiful wedding garment that we have wear when we are presented to the Lamb as His wife who “has made herself ready.”

Remember, the “crowns” are given for our faithfulness and stewardship, but the “ornaments” are given for our works. There is a great difference between the two. The crowns will be cast at the feet of our King, while the ornaments will permanent fixtures on our wedding garment. (much like the wedding dress that brides keep tucked away for safekeeping).

You will also notice we are not only told about the “marriage,” we are told about the “marriage supper.” Look at verse 9, “Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb! And he said to me, These are the true sayings of God.” Obviously, the Bible makes it very clear the “marriage supper” is something altogether different from the “marriage.”

The “marriage of the Lamb” is an event that has particular reference to the Church and takes place in heaven. The “marriage supper” is an event that involves Israel and takes place on the earth.

The purpose of the “marriage supper” is an event that will reveal to the rest of the world the “mystery” that has been hidden in God through the ages. Paul refers to this truth in Ephesians 5:30-32, “For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.” Revelation 19:11-13 tells us as soon as the “marriage of the Lamb” is complete, heaven is opened and Christ rides forth on a white horse, clothed in brilliance, crowned with many crowns and with eyes reflecting the *shekinah* glory of God, “Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on

His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.” And Revelation 19:14 continues, “And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.” **The description of the attire reveals just who this army is – it is none other than the “Bride of Christ.”** This event is known as the, “Second Coming of Jesus Christ to the earth.”

To prepare the earth for this great marriage feast, Christ must, first of all, rid this earth from the presence of evil. The details are revealed for us in Revelation 20:1-3, “Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.” **After Jesus has rid this earth of the presence of evil He will then complete the first resurrection, which will involve the Old Testament saints, the tribulation saints who had been slain for their faith, as well as those who were saved during the tribulation.** Revelation 20:4-6 gives us this insight, “And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”

Let me give you a biblical example of one of the guest that will be present at the “marriage supper” – John the Baptist. John the Baptist died before the Cross. He belonged to and he died in the “old dispensation.” That is why he said in John 3:29, “He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled.” **John the Baptist is not a part of the bride. He is not a part of the Church.** John is a “guest.” **John is a friend who stands and rejoices in the favor of God on the couple that is married.** That is why Jesus said in Matthew 11:11, “Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven (in the dispensation and age of the Church) is greater than he.” **Why would Jesus have said such a thing about John the Baptist? Because the least of us who has been saved, the most humble, the weakest believer, belongs to the bride of Christ!** We belong to the Church. These others are the guests who are invited to the “marriage supper” of

the Lamb, but they do not belong to the body that God is now calling out in this age of grace!

But do not make the mistake of thinking the *guest* are not happy because Revelation 19:9 says, “Blessed are those (the guest) who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!” **This is a special blessing for the saved of the Old Covenant.** With holy imagination we can see the guests come in to the *marriage supper of the Lamb*. I suppose John the Baptist will be the most honored of all. He comes in and is seated at the great banquet of our Lord. **Then, maybe, Abraham is next, who saw the day of our Lord and rejoiced in seeing it.** Abraham will be followed by the prophets and all God’s children who were saved by faith in the Old Covenant. Surely this is what Jesus had in mind when He spoke these words in Luke 13:28-29, “When you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God...They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God.” **What a glorious day that will be!** What a grand victory for the people of God, as they *feast and fellowship* with the blessed Savior.

There is an awesome eternity waiting for those of us that are saved!