

the bride of the lamb

## ***The Bride of The Lamb***

JOY THOMAS

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*[www.oilnwine.org](http://www.oilnwine.org)*

*[joythomas@oilnwine.org](mailto:joythomas@oilnwine.org)*

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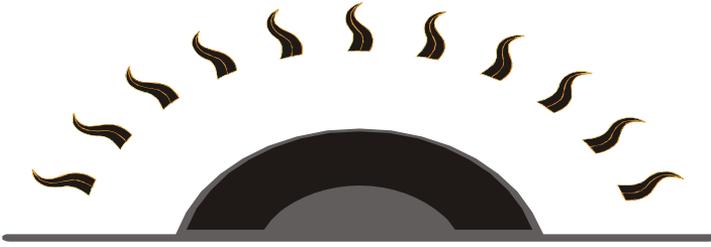
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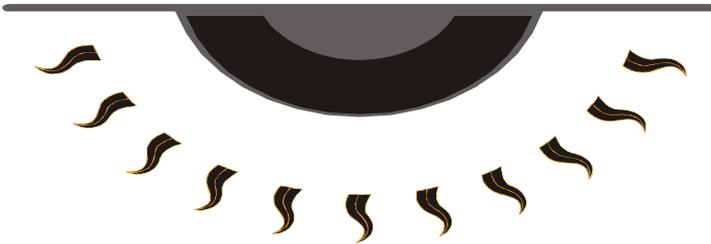






*Heaven is My throne and earth My footstool !!  
Where is the house you will build for Me?  
Who of you will meet the cry of My heart?  
And where will My resting place be?*

*Here O Lord, have I prepared for You a home.  
Long have I desired for You to dwell.  
Here O Lord, have I prepared a resting place.  
Here O Lord, we wait for You, O Lord !*





# CHURCH – ESPOUSED TO ONE HUSBAND

## 1

*“For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin.”*      **I Corinthians 11:2**

**T**he eyes of the apostle Paul, more than any other apostle, were opened by the Spirit of God to see the mysterious and intimate relationship that exists between the church and the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit has unraveled these hidden things in this particular age so that we may be able to walk and live in the context of this truth. As we embark upon this study concerning the church, the very “bride” of Christ, we do solemnly pray that the Holy Spirit will direct our minds to grasp and comprehend the burden of the Spirit for His churches today.

Let our prayer be that we, as the local expression for the body of Christ, may be joined together in unity of Spirit and be made a glorious church, qualified and acceptable in every way to be the precious and beautiful 'bride' of the heavenly bridegroom, our Lord Jesus Christ. God's longing and desire is to have a bride for His Son, a people who would be joined with Him in everlasting union.

When we think of a bride our thoughts naturally go to one who is beautiful, dressed in all finery, and decked with ornaments; we think of one who is clean and pure of heart, who is waiting expectantly for the day of her marriage, and who has spent a long time to prepare herself for the most momentous event in her life. But none can really claim that the churches we see all around us fit this picture of a 'bride'. In reality the condition of the church is far from what the Word of God envisages. We read in Ephesians 5:25 to 27 that the church ought to be subject to Christ; she ought to be sanctified and cleansed, she must neither have spot or wrinkle nor any such thing; she ought to be holy and without blemish. Can we really see the churches of today embellished and adorned with these qualities? The answer is a definite and indubitable 'No', not in the least measure! She is far from being obedient and answerable to Christ; she is a far cry from being holy and chaste; she is anything but pure and clean! But let us draw strength from the knowledge that God has preserved a remnant people — here a few, there a few; here some, there some; here a cluster, there a sprinkling; some in this place and others a far off. Hallelujah!

The Lord is committed to His Word and He shall have unto Himself a bride, a pure and holy church despite her tattered, torn and ravaged condition. God is restoring His church and He shall have a chaste virgin for the heavenly Bridegroom, the Lamb of God. He is preparing a people that shall respond to the sanctification, cleansing and preparations of the Word and the Holy Spirit. God will apprehend a people in order to recreate His church and sanctify His 'bride' even in these last days. But the Lord will not be satisfied with anything less than His own heavenly standards. He will never admit to compromise and to half-heartedness and to complacency. The Lord shall be gratified and comforted only with a 'bride' who will stand beside His Son in the affairs of the kingdom. Can the church arise to this desire of God?

## HOLINESS LIES BEYOND FORGIVENESS

The Scriptures distinctly show us that God created man so that He may have fellowship with him, dwell with him, and live in him. The God who made man and placed him in the Garden is the same God who came down to man, walked with him, and made him His habitation. *"And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day:"* (Genesis 3:8). There is no mention of how long the Creator and His first human creations (Adam and Eve) walked and lived in total oneness. But this we know that a day arrived when God came to Adam & Eve, but they did

not come to God because of the sin in their hearts. That day sin tore apart and divided that Divine fellowship and unity! God cannot have a Divine togetherness with men except on His terms and conditions of purity, holiness and absolute obedience. Adam and Eve chose to go their own way, they chose to turn their backs upon God and deny themselves a special place of closeness and togetherness. We know that God wants to have a special relationship with men because they are made in His own image and likeness.

Man turned his back to God but with God there is no shadow of turning. His desire to have a people with whom He can truly commune has not waned; His longing to have a people who will qualify to be the 'bride' for His eternal Son has not abated; His yearning to walk with people who are holy, pure, and who display the fruit of the Spirit, has not faded away. O what love is this! God did not despise man because he fell in sin and deliberately walked out of His purposes. He chose instead, to restore this man to Himself. In His sovereign heart He determined to recreate man through His precious Son. He came down to meet man through His Son so that He may yet fashion for Himself a 'bride' for His Son, the very Son who would first die in agony that from His ashes may arise a 'new man', even a bride people. Who can match this love of God? Who can compare with this God who spared not His own Son; who sent Him to die, that through His death He might initiate and give birth to a people who would be made according

to His own image and likeness. Though man had fallen and chosen to go his own way in deliberate disobedience, yet God did not give up His eternal plans. Despite sin, He turned to sinful man to raise for Himself a people who would eventually become a 'bride' for His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. What love and mercy has come upon sinful man!

## INNOCENCE AND NOT HOLINESS

There is a need to understand that mankind's firstlings, Adam and Eve, were made in His image and in His likeness but they were not holy as He is holy. They were innocent of sin but they were not holy. Had they been holy they would have had no problem in dealing with Satan's temptations!

The serpent said unto the woman, "*Ye shall not surely die.*" This was an outright lie, for God had said, ". . . . *for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*" (*Genesis 2:17*). If Adam and Eve had been holy they would have said 'no' to Satan and obeyed God. According to God's plan, the first man and woman had to become holy through obedience.

Beloved, holiness needs to be learnt. It takes the workings of God to become holy. It involves separation, sanctification and dedication. We become holy as we give ourselves to obedience, trust, and faith in the Word and in the triune God. Holiness is a standing before God that incorporates His righteousness and His very nature. It is

expressed through one's obedience, devotion and commitment. When the church was formed on the day of Pentecost and three thousand believers were baptized at Jerusalem, they were filled with the Holy Spirit, but they did not become holy automatically or straight away. In its birth the church, like Adam or Eve was born innocent. But she has yet to come into the state of holiness expected of her wherein she shall be without spot or wrinkle or any blemish.

In our generation God's saving grace is available for all who repent and turn to God. We are saved by grace and receive God's forgiveness because of the blood shed at Calvary. We are washed by the precious blood of the Lamb of God and we become 'innocent' as were Adam and Eve at the very beginning. Though we are saved from the power of sin we have yet to grow into holiness. Beloved, we need to know that God's grace is not only enough for our salvation, but it takes us beyond the state of forgiveness of sins. There is a greater dimension of His grace available to each one of us that will equip and clothe us with garments of holiness. The Scriptures say, "*For the grace of God that bringeth salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;*" (Titus 2:11, 12). The grace of God is available to take us into a higher realm of holiness and godliness.

Many people are satisfied that they have been freed from the terrible corroding effect of sin. After being born-

again they are content and at ease to stand before God in Christ's righteousness as ones without sin, spot or wrinkle. It is true that the precious blood of Christ washes away all our sins and yet we need to be sanctified. The grace of God is not limited to our salvation; it is available to take us beyond the state of forgiveness into the realm of holiness. Beloved, God wants to give us His grace and mercy to bring us to a place of holiness that we may be His holy, chaste bride. So let this foundation be formed in us that God desired the first Adam to be a 'holy' vessel – one who would use his own free will to obey and follow the Father. He wanted Adam and Eve to become perfect (mature) by the conscious, willing and deliberate choice of their volition. It is here that they failed. Today God wants us not only to be born-again but also to become mature Christians by the working of His Spirit and our active cooperation with Him. We continuously need His grace to be fashioned into a holy and chaste people in the image of the last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The first Adam was 'innocent' but not holy; the last Adam became holy by suffering. "*He learned obedience by the things He suffered*" (Hebrews 5: 8, 9). In this way He was made perfect (i.e. mature or complete) and thus became the author of our salvation. He was not satisfied with being born of the Spirit, which talks of an innocence in terms of sin. The forgiveness we receive when we turn to the Lord and confess our sins only deals with our past life. "*Even*

*when we were dead in sins, (God) quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved)” (Ephesians 2:5).* The Lord washed away our past sins by His precious blood. But what about the life that lies ahead of us? It is not enough to receive God’s forgiveness for the way we have lived in the past. We need the riches of His grace to see us through our whole life from spiritual birth to spiritual maturity and on to the perfect union with Him as a chaste, virgin bride. We need to be made holy; we need to be made perfect (mature) by the same grace of God that saved us from our past. God would like to pour out the riches of His grace upon us so that we may go beyond the blessed state of forgiveness and salvation into a realm wherein we shall be a chaste virgin, without spot or wrinkle, unto the Lord. Let us therefore experience the love, pardon, mercy and great grace of the Lord in our lives.

The apostle Paul had a great burden to take the Corinthian believers beyond their blessed state of forgiveness to a spiritual realm of maturity in Christ. He told them that they had been espoused to one husband in 2 Corinthians 11:2. He had a godly jealousy and an ambition for them as well as a godly fear that they might miss that which was due to them as sincere believers.

*“I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God because I betrothed you to only one husband, even to Christ, that I might present you unto Him in virgin purity.*

*“But I fear lest, as Eve was beguiled by the craftiness*

*of the serpent, so your imagination should be corrupted and you should be seduced from your single-minded faithfulness to Christ.”*

**2 Corinthians 11:2, 3** (W.J. Conybeare)

In Paul's eyes, the Corinthian church was like a fresh, unspoiled girl whom he was presenting to her true husband, even the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet he was afraid that they would abandon their pure devotion to Christ because of the cunning ways of Satan who deceived Eve. The ambition of the apostle Paul was to lead the Corinthian believers to a deeper realm, namely that of Christian maturity. He was concerned not only with the past becoming sinless but also with their holiness and their future daily walk. He desired that as a body of believers they would become pure and holy like a chaste virgin unto Christ, their heavenly husband. This is the desire that each of us should cherish within our hearts. We should think of ourselves as ones who have been promised and espoused to Christ. We should constantly maintain a single-minded devotion to Him and guard ourselves against the filthiness of the flesh and the spirit.

## WHAT WAS HER NATIVITY?

Let us now turn to the book of Ezekiel Chapter 16 where we shall see the burden of the Holy Spirit for the churches today to be holy and pure as a chaste bride who is espoused to one husband. We shall see various aspects concerning the 'bride', which could aptly be applied to the

church today.

*“Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,*

*“Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations,*

*“And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto Jerusalem; Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite.”*

**Ezekiel 16:1-3**

The Lord wants His church to know and realize that her sins have made her disgusting, detestable and vile. Jerusalem here represents Israel in those times and the church in these days. The Amorites and Hittites were immoral people and therefore through these verses we are reminded that once we belonged to the devil for we did the work of the devil and gratified the desires and lust that characterizes the works of Satan (see John 8:44). This is what the apostle Paul told the Corinthian church. He said that her nativity was of the world; her past was obnoxious and odious.

*“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,*

*“Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.*

*“And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of*

*the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”*

**1 Corinthian 6:9-11**

The apostle Paul tells the Corinthians that they were once from amongst the most revolting kind of people. He provided them a list of the kind of people they were and belonged to at one time. Their nativity or their background was of the worst kind. Paul mentioned this not to condemn the believers but to remind them about their origins of sin and shame so that they may realize the extent of God’s great love. God had called them out from the lowest level of humanity. And He had given them the highest of callings! The calling God wanted them to have, was to be espoused to one husband. And Paul desired to exhibit them before God as a chaste and pure virgin who has been promised in marriage to one Man only, Christ Himself. O what a high calling God has called us to have!

In the eyes of many people we may still be linked to our nativity. Some may still see us as ex-drunkards, revilers, ex-thieves, cheaters and defrauders. And surely some of us were such kind of people in the past – foul-mouthed liars, slanderers, covetous and greedy graspers, extortioners and even robbers, sexually immoral people, — the very dregs of the human species. But praise be to God that in the eyes of the Lord we became a chaste virgin!

“AND I SAID UNTO THEE ‘LIVE’”

*“And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all.*

*“None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the lothing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born.*

*“And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live.”* **Ezekiel 16:4-6**

In these verses the Lord tell His people that when they were in their nativity and in their worldly habitat, steeped in sin and filth, there was some one to take pity on their lamentable condition. There was none to even cut the umbilical cord at their birth; there was no one to wash the new-born babies; or wrap the babes in warm clothes. No one loved them for they were thrown into the open field, which is the world. But then the Lord passed by and saw His people squirming in their own blood. He said, “LIVE, my son, LIVE my daughter”! He would not let them die. O the love and the grace and the mercy of our Lord!

Who can deny that we are immersed in sin and shame? We were wallowing in our own sins; there was none to take us out of the miry clay; there was none to take pity

upon our feeble spiritual condition. But His glory passed by! The Lord, Jesus Christ passed by! He held our hand and said 'LIVE'. He came our way and He stopped at the sight of our predicament. Praise be to God! He moved, in His mercy and love, and brought us to life. He washed our wounds and cleansed us of our sin. Hallelujah! He spoke one word in our lives. He said, 'Live'. In His love and mercy He said 'Live'. And each and every one of us know that from that day a change came upon us. We often wonder why He had mercy upon us and not upon hundreds of others who are still wallowing in their sin. O, it is His love! He passed by and had compassion upon our sad plight. He looked at us, picked us up, and freed us from every sin. Glory to His name!

### “AND THOU BECAMEST MINE”

*“I have caused thee to multiply as the bud of the field, and thou hast increased and waxen great, and thou art come to excellent ornaments: thy breasts are fashioned, and thine hair is grown, whereas thou wast naked and bare.*

*“Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine.”*

**Ezekiel 16:7-8**

We see here that the Lord having said, “Live” did not walk away! He stands besides those He picks up; He nurtures the ones He brings to life. He continues to care for those He brings into His kingdom; He causes them to grow and mature in His purposes. The Lord not only wouldn’t let her die, but He made her grow strong and tall till she became a lovely young woman. It is so with every believer. God touches our lies and causes us to repent and turn to Him. But that is not all. He causes us to grow spiritually and brings us to a place of maturity.

The Lord ‘passes by again’ to further touch our lives cover our nakedness and bring us to a place of true fullness and unity in Him. O how beautiful is our Saviour. He is not satisfied with an initial work of salvation but He desires to bring us to a full salvation. New life in itself is a wonderful thing but God wants us to become His bride; to be wedded to Him in eternal oneness. This is what the Sovereign Lord says.

In these days the Lord desires to prepare His church to become a bride unto Him. He wants to raise her up, clothe her, adorn her and bring her into His presence. He desires to separate her, sanctify her and clothe her with garments of righteousness and godliness so that she will eternally be His. This is the tremendous calling upon the church o the firstborn, seen in allegorical terms. May God help is to lay this truth as a firm foundation in our lives. The ultimate purpose of God is to prepare a ‘bride’ people to

stand alongside His Son, the eternal Lamb of God. This is the longing upon the heart of God today.

God has not passed by or come on our way merely to bring us some happiness or hope of heaven. He has a definite purpose in our lives. We need to see the purpose of God in our lives so that we can give ourselves to His preparations. The Lord says he has made a covenant with His people. He says, "Thou art Mine." The Lord, our God is determined to make us His very own people.

Beloved, God is apprehending a people who shall be a 'bride' unto the last Adam. It is not enough to say that the Lord has saved me and given me new life. It is not enough to say that by God's grace I am hearing His word and that I am a member of a lively church. It is not enough to have been baptized in the Spirit and to have some gifts of the Spirit. All these are necessary but there is something more upon God's heart. His grace is available for salvation and also to grow into maturity, but to what end, and to what purpose? It is because God has chosen to express Himself through a people. He wants to develop the character of His people so that they may qualify to be the bride for His Son. Growth and development comes through obedience and relationship and God's grace operation through the ministries. There is a 'life' that God wants us to have. The Lord says 'live', but it is not that we can live in any way we like. We are to 'live' according to the new living way pioneered by the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace is given to

us to implement the purpose of God and follow the Lord. Let us remember that Adam was created in God's image but God wanted more than anything else for Adam to be obedient to God's will. He fell because he had not become holy and obedient to the Father's will. But where the first Adam failed, the last Adam succeeded, because through suffering He learned to obey. Hallelujah!

God has spoken the word 'live' to us but He has not left us to fend for ourselves. He has come our way and cleansed us by his blood. He causes us to grow and enlarge in His purposes. And then He passes by again to see if we are prepared and ready for the ultimate purpose of unity and harmony with his Son. And He reminds many of us through His word, "You have been espoused to one husband".

### "I WASHED THEE AND I ANOINTED THEE"

*"Then washed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil."*  
**Ezekiel 16:9**

This verse not only talks of a washing by the baptism of waters but also of a washing by the Word so that the church may be without sport and wrinkle (Ephesians 5:27). God is preparing His people for the heavenly calling of being a 'bride' to his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The preparations of God began when

He said, 'Love'. He watches over us as we grew in His purposes and began to be formed with His foundations. He passed by again to cover our weaknesses and strengthen our faith and commitments. And He loved us and assured us by His promises and His covenants so that we may know Him in His love and grace.

Yes, in these verses we now see that the Lord has yet to wash away much of our past before He can bring us to a place of unity and togetherness in Him. In this verse the blood talks of old habits and desires, much of the previous worldly passions and interests, the ambitions and longings of the past which must be purged before God can sanctify and consecrate us. All the earthly ideas, the wisdom and understanding of our nativity must first be washed away before He can do a further work in us, even to become His precious possessions. The promises of God shall certainly come to pass, but there must first be a discarding and a washing away and a getting rid of all that belongs to our disconcerting past. It is here that many are not able to respond with the right choice. The Lord looks at our choices and our responses. It is through our daily choices and preferences that the Holy Spirit slowly develops our character and forms the right attitudes with each one of us. He watches every move we make and gives us the grace and the strength to make the

right choices. Let each one of us therefore determine to respond to His call positively and correctly. We are now qualifying to take our places in God's eternal kingdom at the side of the Bridegroom. But there is also a taking place by His side on a daily basis. Let us desire to choose Him first, for we are espoused to one husband.

The Father shall choose His 'bride' people with care just as any father chooses a bride for his loving son with utmost care. Would a father choose a bride who has got a past that has not been fully relinquished and set aside? Would a father consider a person as a bride who is interested in marrying another person? The Father heart longs for a bride for His Son but He shall wait patiently for the church to be ready. Meanwhile He shall watch our responses, our choices and our reactions to His dealings.

The heavenly Father will anoint the ones of His choosing. The anointing speaks of a divine preparation and enablement. The people that God chooses, ordains and prepares will be those who have made the right responses and are prepared to pay the cost to go all the way. They will be those who unhesitatingly, willingly and joyfully abandon the things of the past and all the things that make them yet unclean in His eyes. He will

pour forth His grace and mercy in the lives of those who are willing to surrender and consecrate everything to attain the character necessary to be the bride of the Lamb.

Beloved, the marriage of the Lamb is going to be a celestial event of overriding significance in the history of God's people. It will usher in a new era and it will conclude the present age. In the book of Revelations Chapter 19 verses 6-9, we see the great 'Hallelujah' that is proclaimed in all creation because of the momentous event of the marriage of the Lamb to the bride who has made herself ready. This is not the imaginations of a man and the philosophy of escapism. Let us give pre-eminence to this will of God. He will not settle for a bride who says, "It is enough that I come to be with you on Sunday morning and on Wednesday evening." We cannot be his if we have other interests that are contrary to His eternal purposes; we cannot be a bride people if we hesitate to surrender every thing so that we may have the privilege of being conformed into His likeness. Jesus gave us His all. He desires nothing less than He gave. In marriage we do not settle for a part of the spouse – we give our all for the joy of becoming one with the husband.

What a picture of the grace of God! What love

and mercy has come from the Father upon the fallen  
sons of Adam that we should become the holy,  
faultless, pure, clean, virgin bride of Christ!

He that hath an ear let him hear!

# EXCEEDINGLY BEAUTIFUL

## 2

*“I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badger’s skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk*

*“I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck.*

*“And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head”*

***Ezekiel 16:10-12***

**W**hat a beautiful description of the bride (or church) that God is preparing for His precious, eternal Son! We have already seen that the prophet Ezekiel was prophesying about Jerusalem, which is a picture of the church. In her nativity she was wallowing in her sins and in her filth. There was none to lift her up and care for her. She would have surely died had the Lord not passed by and said, “Live”. May God

open our eyes to see the love of God that has also come our way and brought us life. But not only did the Lord come our way and have compassion upon our sad plight, He also saved us and said, “Live”, that we may have new life from that moment. Then He began to watch over us and bring about a spiritual growth in our lives.

Now we read that the Lord began to do a new work in the life of His church. And we can apply these verses to our individual lives, since we are members of His body, which is the church. The Lord dressed her in embroidered gowns and gave her shoes of the best leather. He decked her with jewels (bracelets and necklaces) and ornaments of gold and silver. She wore cloths of fine linen and silk. She ate bread made of the best flour and honey and olive oil. Then the Word of God says, her beauty was dazzling and she became fit to be a queen.

The Lord anointed and clothed her with beautiful garments. He girded her with fine linen. Symbolically fine linen is the righteousness of saints (Revelation 19:8) The Lord would like to adorn His church spiritually with the garments of righteousness. Beloved, there is a spiritual adorning that is necessary before we can qualify to be the bride of the Lamb. We shall see the righteousness of saints in some detail and later. Suffice it to say, here, that God would desire a righteousness of his people before He takes them further on. God has made a way for His church to

put on fine linen garments and silk coverings through His divine workings.

She is also decked with costly ornaments. The bracelets upon her hands symbolize her service to the master. The true church is prepared of God to serve Him alone in all sincerity and truth. The Lord has put a chain on her neck. This shows that she is under submission to the heavenly bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not to be taken as a mark of servility and bondage but speaks of a willing obedience that is the product of awe and respect. In Genesis 41:42 we read, "*Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck.*" We also have a reference from the Song of Solomon 4:9 "*Thou has ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, and one chain of thy neck.*" There is a spiritual adorning that the bride of Christ must experience. The chain that is around the neck of the bride is an ornament of the Father's grace. There is a service and a submission that is the hallmark of a 'bride' people. And this spirit of submission shall be seen as a beautiful ornamental chain on the people. "*For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head and chains about thy neck.*" (Proverbs 1:9) There are many people that walk with stiff-necked pride and arrogance; they have a spirit of rebelliousness and disobedience very much like the Israelites in the wilderness. But the true church of the firstborn shall have a chain about her neck that will exhibit her spirit of obedience and

submission toward her master.

The next verse of Ezekiel says that God put a jewel upon her forehead. This suggests a partaking of the mind of Christ. The bride church shall be distinguished by having the mind of Christ, her heavenly spouse. She shall be in absolute harmony and accord with the one she is to wed. In Revelation chapter 7 we read of sealing upon the saints, *but not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.*” (Rev 7:3) This symbolizes a divine protection upon the saints of God. The ‘bride’ church shall have the Father’s name upon their foreheads (Revelation 14:1) and they shall be kept from every evil. But what is it that will cause them to have a jewel upon their forehead? It is their submission to the will of Christ in their lives! *“Ye shall know them by their fruit”*, Jesus said. Yes, the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) – love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. The Lord Jesus Christ exhibited these spiritual fruit in all abundance. The bride shall be in His likeness.

God also adorns His ‘bride’ church with earrings on her ears and a crown upon her head. The earrings signify a hearing that proceeds from the Lord so that she might clearly hear the voice of her beloved that is the voice of the Bridegroom. Aaron, the priest, asked the Israelites to give their golden earrings and from these he made a molten

image (Exodus 32:4) that led the people to disobey the very first commandment of the Lord their God. The people “*turned aside out of the way which I commanded them*” (Deuteronomy 9:12) the hearing of His voice failed and they were led into rebellion and disobedience. But to the ‘bride’ church the Lord shall give earrings for both ears that her hearing of His voice may be perfect. This is the work of His grace and love toward His church.

The crown upon head is a spiritual crown, which is given to those who truly love the Lord.

*“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him”* **James 1:12**

God’s people shall undergo trial and testing to prove their love for Him who is going to soon appear. I shall also be a ‘*crown of glory that fadeth not away*’ (Rev 2:10) Beloved, there is a crown that the church has yet to receive from the Lord. She has yet to undergo tribulation upon this earth before she can receive this crown for it is a crown that shall be made from the tree of life. The heavenly Bridegroom has borne and suffered a crown of thorns so that His bride may have true spiritual life. It is then only that she will be allowed to enter the Garden of Eden once again by the cherubim, with a flaming sword. (Gen 3:24)

## “THUS WAS THOU DECKED”

*“Thus was thou decked with gold and silver and thy raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and brodered work; thou didst eat flour, and honey, and oil; and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a Kingdom.”* **Ezekiel 16:13**

The glory that she displayed is not her own. The Lord is the one who clothed her and decked her with ornaments. The raiment’s and ornaments we wear need to be spiritual ones that are given of the Lord. Our raiment’s and adornments must not be carnal in nature but of the Spirit. In 1 Peter 3 we are encouraged to pursue the adornment of our inner life and that hid with God.

*“Let not yours be the (merely) external adorning with (elaborate) interweaving and knotting of the hair, the wearing of jewelry, or changes of clothes;*

*“But let it be the inward adorning and beauty of the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible and unfading charm of the gentle and peaceful spirit, which (is not anxious or wrought up, but) is very precious in the sight of God.”* **1 Peter 3:3,4.**

A meek and quiet spirit is like unto gold and silver ornaments. It is the Lord who shall deck her with these precious ornaments. Gold in the Bible represents His deity, while silver represents redemption. The true ‘bride’ shall exhibit His very nature and character. Her own natural desires, needs, yearnings and cravings will not be seen for she shall be covered with His deity. She shall radiate His glory and

His brightness. She shall be emptied of her own self-confidence and self-sufficiency. She shall fulfill God's desire and purpose for mankind to partake of His nature and to emanate His beauty of character.

Many people prefer to reflect God's nature by doing good. They often quote verses from the Bible concerning good works to support whatever they are doing. But they fail to see that there is a human goodness that emanates from the corrupt nature of man. More than often there is a hidden personal motive in their good deeds or they are deceived in one way or another to truly believe that their actions proceed from a pure heart. O the culpability of a sinful soul! Jesus constantly did good. He helped and served others. He gave of Himself that others may be lifted up. But His goodness was borne of the Spirit. It was a manifestation of the nature and character of God the Father. We cannot do good except that it be initiated by God and be done in God's way.

The silver in the ornaments upon the 'bride' church refers to the ransom paid by Jesus to redeem the lives of His people. In the tabernacle of the Old Testament the sockets upon which the pillars stood, were made of silver. They were a foundation for the structure. The true church cannot stand on any foundation other than Jesus Christ who shed His blood for the redemption of mankind.

The Lord fed her bread made of flour, honey and oil. She was given bread from which came real life. And the bread was the Lord Jesus Christ. *“The bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.”* Jesus said (John 6:33) the bread of life is a Person and *“he that cometh to Him shall never hunger”* The ‘bride’ church is fed with his precious Eternal Bread so that she never hungers. There is only one Bread. We are to partake of this Bread of life. It is not enough to be decked with beautiful garments and dazzling jewels. We can be thankful to God for covering our nakedness and for imparting an inner beautify to us, but what is vital is to eat and drink of the Bread of heaven and the Living water so that we may live the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our spiritual diet governs our spiritual health. If you feed upon the bread that does not come from the corn of wheat, which fell to the ground and died (John 12:24) you will find that your spiritual health deteriorates and eventually decays; for there is bread that is man made. It is made of “wheat and barley, and beans and lentil and millet and fitches” (Ezekiel 4:9); it is baked in a fire made of dried human excrement (Ezekiel 4:12) Beware of this bread that the Israelites ate and that several churches feed upon today. The bread we eat must be mingled with oil, which is the anointing of the Holy Spirit. We read in 1 Cor 10:17 that *“because there is one loaf of bread, all of us, though many, are one body, for we all share the same loaf.”* The oil in that heavenly loaf brings the members together and enables us to cleave

or be joined to one another. Not only is Jesus Christ the bread but we too are the bread – we are all partakers of the one bread, which is made of fine flour, honey and oil. And eating this bread that comes from the Lord we shall grow into maturity and prosper spiritually in the days ahead. Oh there is only one way for the church to grow – the way is to feed upon Him and to yield to Him so that we are formed into one living bread.

In the last portion of Ezekiel 16 we read that God will bring His church to “prosper into the kingdom”. The NASB says, “*So you were exceedingly beautiful and advanced to royalty*” (vs 13). *The NIV says, “you became very beautiful and rose to be a queen.”* This is a picture of God’s grace upon His ‘bride’ church. He will bring her to a place where she shall be spiritually beautiful and worthy to be queen to the King of Kings. Beloved, God is seizing a people for Himself in these days. He is causing some to feed upon the Lord Jesus Christ and to bear fruit and multiply.

Beloved people of God, He has espoused us to one husband. Though mankind turned away from God yet God has not abandoned His purpose and His design. The grace of God is that He is turning once more to man to bring forth a bride for His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is looking to man to raise unto Himself, a bride who shall be holy, pure and worthy, to be of royal estate. God is looking not to the heavenly beings or to the angels for a bride but He is looking upon fallible, fallen, faltering mankind to produce

from them some lives that will qualify to be His bride. He is not looking to angels and archangels who sing “Holy, Holy, Holy” unto God continually to find a bride for His Son but He is looking once again to man who is made in His own image and likeness. This is the beauty and extent of His love for us. How much we need to be thankful to God for His mercies. The grace of God has visited our lives. He passed by our ruptured, shattered lives and spoke one word, “live”, despite our nativity and our past. Then He began to nurse us back to health and we grew. He put upon us garments of righteousness, peace and joy; He fed us with the living Bread and adorned us by His Holy Spirit. And soon His ‘bride’ church shall become exceedingly beautiful in His eyes. There is a great calling upon our lives, beloved ones! It is not enough to be saved and to be forgiven of our past sins. The Lord is seeking a people who will desire to possess a life of quality and perfection. We are to be presented to God as the holy and chaste bride of the Last Adam without spot or wrinkle. It is for this reason that we need to depend upon His great grace to bring us to a place of maturity wherein we shall radiate His very life. Let us, therefore, not frustrate the grace of God nor limit His merciful hand.

### “THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB IS COME”

*“Let us rejoice- and shout for joy exulting and triumphant! Let us celebrate and ascribe to Him glory and honour, for the marriage of the Lamb (at last)*

*has come and His bride has prepared herself”*  
**Revelation 19:7** (*Amplified*)

The book of Revelation declares quite positively that the marriage of the Lamb will come. The Word and the Spirit of God affirm and solemnly profess that come what may this celestial celebration will definitely occur. A day will surely come when there shall be a tremendous jubilancy in the entire heavenly realm. The angels and archangels shall rejoice for the great event that they have been eagerly anticipating has finally come, because the ‘bride’ church has prepared herself and made herself ready. As the bride is now preparing herself for that momentous day, the very day of the Lord, there is a rejoicing in the heavenlies. This is something we need to understand by the Spirit of God. Even as the ‘bride’, the church of the firstborn, is getting ready to meet the Bridegroom there is a great rejoicing all around in the heavenlies. The angelic hosts are not scornful, nor are they sardonically saying, “Look at those people! How can these self-centered egoistic people ever be the bride of the Lord Jesus!!” They are overjoyed, delighted, jumping for joy because at last they see a people progressing in maturity and salvation. There is not one single angelic host who would accusingly point their wings or fingers at you and me and say, “I know your past and I know what you were once.” They would not condemn us, censure us, or convict us for they have been waiting for these very days wherein the bride church would come into her final stages of preparation.

There is something that the angels long to know. They long to know the mysteries of salvation, of redemption and of the church. God in His wisdom has revealed some things to men but not to angels. What He has unfolded to you and me has not been shown to them. That is why they long to look at these things. As it says in 1 Peter 1:12(b) *“Into these things (the very) angels long to look!!”* They must truly wonder why they were not chosen to be bride of the Lamb! But glory to God, they are not jealous or envious; they heartily rejoice to see what God is doing in the midst of His people. They have been waiting to see the day of the marriage of the Lamb for thousands of years; and now at last, it seems a reality for the bride is preparing herself. God is bringing a people into the final stages of preparation. But He shall not compromise on the quality of the bride. He shall sanctify and wash her with the Word till she is ready to take exalted place beside the lamb. That day is coming for the Word of God says so.

In a normal Christian wedding, as the bride and the bridegroom stand before the priest, he asks the people, “Now, if any one present can give any lawful and just reason why this man should not take this woman to be his lawful wedded wife, let him now speak or forever hold his peace.” A similar challenge shall be proclaimed by the heavenly Father when the Lamb and His bride stand before Him to be joined together in holy matrimony. The heavenly Father

will say, “If anyone can give any lawful and just reason why the Lamb and the bride (which is His church) should not be joined together, let him now speak or forever hold his peace.” And the Spirit of God assures us that no angelic hosts, nor evil powers or principalities, nor celestial beings or rulers or darkness will ever be able to raise their hands and say anything against the bride of the Lamb of God for her preparations are in the hands of the Almighty Himself.

Beloved, the time is coming when there is going to be a joining of the Lamb with His bride.

When God created man and brought forth woman from the side of man, He had a greater work in mind. The divine bisection or partition of man was preparatory to His greater work of divine amalgamation. Even in the Garden of Eden He brought them together that they may be joined as one flesh (Gen 2:4) but this was only a shadow of what was to happen in reality. The apostle Paul, who had a revelation of this mystery, also tells us *“for this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and the two shall be one flesh. (Ephesians 5:31)* This was nothing but a shadow of the joining of the church with the Lord Jesus Christ, the heavenly bridegroom, in divine wedlock. Glory to God!

So beloved, the time is truly approaching when this celestial marriage is going to happen. It was not enough

that woman (the church) be brought out of the side of man (Christ); God purposed that the woman (the church) and man (the Christ) be brought together in eternal everlasting union. And He shall make her exceedingly beautiful. And there shall be a rejoicing that the marriage of the Lamb has come. Many people think it will be so wonderful when we all get to heaven where we will all be joined in glorious union with our Lord! It is not so, beloved. These preparations will have to take place here upon this earth.

## THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF SAINTS

*“And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.      **Revelations 19:8***

*“She has been permitted to dress in fine (radiant) linen, dazzling and white for the fine linen is (signifies, represents) the righteousness – the upright, just and godly living (deeds, conduct) and right standing with God of the saints (God’s holy people)  
**Revelations 19:8 (Amplified)***

The ‘bride’ church shall be arrayed in ‘fine linen’, pure and white. She shall be considered to be ‘ready’ when the living saints lead righteous lives, that is, when they are upright, just, and godly in their deeds, conduct and conversation. The bride has to walk upon the earth in the

character and nature of the Lord. We should note this very carefully. We need to lay aside all that is religious and get into the truth of God. She has been 'permitted' to dress in fine linen, which talks of the radiant righteous lives of the saints in the church. Their lives will radiate the glory of the risen Lord. The bride shall walk in union with the Bridegroom on this very earth. Many think that the purpose of Christian life, the object of becoming a believer and a disciple of Christ is that one may go to heaven after death. But the Bible says that the saints will rule this earth with Christ, not from heaven but upon this earth. It will be wonderful when one dies and goes to be with the Lord in heaven but there is greater blessedness unto which God has called us and that is to be in union with the Bridegroom, even the Lord Jesus Christ upon this earth. Hallelujah!

Let us thank the Lord for imputed righteousness, which flows from the Lord Jesus Christ for we are justified by faith. We are reckoned to be righteous because of faith in Christ who is our righteousness for we know that our own righteous acts are like filthy rags before God. Imputed righteousness can be thought of as a hidden garment that we all need to wear in our lives. The Old Testament priests had to wear a linen undergarment to hide their nakedness (Exodus 28:42). This is a type of imputed righteousness, for this garment was the only garment, which was hidden from view. Without an imputed righteousness from Christ we would be as ones who are naked in the flesh before

God and there is no way that any flesh can glory in God's presence. We need the righteousness of Christ to cover us without which the Father would not so much as look at us. But we ought to understand that there is a righteousness of our own that we also need to possess as saints of God.

# PERFECT BEAUTY!

## 3

*“And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I have put upon thee, saith the Lord God”.*

**Ezekiel 16:4**

**T**he study of chapter 16 of the book of Ezekiel has so far shown us that it is God’s great desire and longing to bring His church to a place where she shall be a beautiful bride for our Lord Jesus Christ. The Father did not look among angels, cherubim’s and other angelic beings for a bride but He stooped to fallen Adam’s race to have for Himself a bride for His eternal Son. Though the church had become perverted and depraved, yet God passed by and spoke a redeeming word, “*Live*”. He not only saved His people but He clothed her and decked her so that she became exceedingly beautiful.

Now, in Ezekiel 16:14 the Lord tells His people, the church of God, that she had become famous in every nation for her perfect beauty because He was the one who had made her so lovely. So, the Lord will surely bring His church to full maturity and perfection, here upon this earth, in the days to come.

Many Christians find it difficult to accept the Word of God relating to spiritual maturity and fullness for a people. Nevertheless the Word is true or flawless for Jesus said, “*Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect*”. It may seem impossible to walk in all holiness, to love our enemies with a love borne of God, to love our neighbor as ourselves, to be like Jesus in every way; but this nevertheless is what Jesus tells us in no uncertain way.

*“ Everyone that is perfect shall be as His master.”***Luke 6:48**

*“That they may be made perfect in one.”*  
**John 17:23.**

We know that Jesus lived upon this earth in the full glory of His Father - “*and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father*” (John 1:14). He lived for a little more than thirty-three years but in this short time He fulfilled all the desire and the perfect will of the Father. In those few years He lived the word He preached. He would not tell us to be perfect (mature and whole) unless it were possible. Jesus is the seed of God (Galatians 3: 16) and He shall surely bear fruit that is wholesome in every way just like “*the earth*

*bringeth forth fruit of herself, first the blade, then the ear. after that the full corn in the ear”* (Mark 4:28). The Lord is raising a new generation - a people after His kind, after His own nature and His own likeness. He completed all that was required of The Father to bring forth a new generation having fallen into the ground and died so that there may be much fruit (John 12:24). God’s purpose was not to wipe out the old generation or to somehow renovate them or make the old into new by taking them to a new place. Never, God’s desire has always been to transform the old life by crucifying the flesh and slaying it at the cross so that from the ashes of Calvary a ‘new man’ might be born.

Why do some say that it is not possible to be absolutely sinless in our conscious area or absolutely righteous, absolutely unselfish or absolutely (i.e. perfectly) pure in thought, word or deed? Perhaps they think of it as I something to be achieved. They fail to understand that the Lord Jesus Christ has done all that is needed for us to live an abundant life free of sin. He has made a way to experience total deliverance from the tyranny and bondage of sin, the flesh and the world. Those believers who deny the possibility of a ‘perfect’ life, do so because they choose to practice sin in their lives. They know there is deliverance in the blood of our Savior and they can walk in it, but they have decided in their minds to serve the Lord and practice sin at the same time. Beloved, God will never change His mind about sin; He will never close His eyes to sin. The bride of Christ must be spotless; she must be pure as a chaste virgin. The Lord

has made a way and provided strength to walk in it. The question, therefore, is whether you want to go that way? Are you desirous of radically giving up your sinful life? Our purity and spotless life is a matter of our own choice, for God has already purposed us to be in that company of a chaste bride. We have to accept God's terms and not our own. There are no short cuts to spiritual reality. Just because the majority is not willing to be freed from the bondage of sin, it does not mean that some cannot attain to that excellent state of spotlessness.

The 'bride' church shall be perfect in her beauty. She shall be arrayed in all godliness and perfection. The zeal of the Lord shall perform it. *"For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this."* (II Kings 19:31 / Isaiah 37:32).

After Jesus ascended into the heavenlies He began to minister His word to us by His Spirit. There is a greater administration of His plans and purposes from the heavenly realm; there is a greater working of His Spirit now to fulfill that, which was accomplished when He was upon the earth. Not that the Lord did not complete what He had begun. Let us understand this by the Spirit. He accomplished everything - the whole will of the Father - upon this earth. The work of redemption was perfected in Christ. *"And ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power:"*(Colossians 2:10). Yes, the work of redeeming, cleansing and purging the old Adam has been accomplished at the

cross but now He ministers from heaven for the fulfillment of the same for which He had humbled Himself.

So the Lord is still ministering to us from the heavenlies and the effect of this ascension ministry of intercession is to be seen in your life and mine today. Beloved, there is an on-going ministry that is pouring out of the heavenlies to change us and conform us to His image. The Lord is alive and He shall not rest till the Father's will of having a bride for his Son, is not perfected. He shall come when the bride has made herself ready. Till that perfect time of restoration that was spoken by the prophets the heaven shall retain the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21). When He has brought His people to fulness and maturity worthy of His bride, he shall come and join her upon this earth. They shall rule and reign together. And the heavens will rejoice for the marriage of the Lamb has come. (Revelation 19:7).

The preparation of the bride and the coming of the Lord are divinely connected. We know the Lord is coming soon; so the bride must also prepare herself now. The Lord Jesus Christ does not neglect His bride to- be. He is ministering to her so that there may be a work of conformity in the lives of his people. Oh seeing the present condition of the church, the Lord God Almighty, could so very easily wipe out the entire human race, but it is His supreme desire to bring forth a bride from a remnant people. It is the lives of a few dedicated wholehearted people that the Lord shall change and bring to perfection so that the glory may be His

and His alone. He is committed and determined to have a 'bride' people for His Son. -They will be without spot or wrinkle, as the Word says.

## PERFECTED THROUGH HIS SPLENDOUR

The Lord Jesus accomplished all things concerning our salvation while He was here, upon the earth. He sowed the seed to bring forth a new generation of people who would choose to walk by the cross. The love of God is this, that through the cross there will arise a new man with a new life. Many who have been born again are experiencing this very upsurge of newness in their lives. The foundation for our redemption and deliverance was laid, once for all, at the Cross of Calvary. So also has the foundation of the church been grounded at Calvary. Glory to God!

The Lord Jesus is now in the heavenlies. He is at the right hand of the Father. How then is He helping us now? He who is the Head, is not satisfied by merely laying the foundation of a building, He Himself is erecting it. Yes, He is the foundation stone of our lives and that of His church. But He is also building the super-structure, upon the foundation. By His grace the edifice will be completed. Remember, He is our high priest He is ministering to the Father in the Most Holy Place of the heavenly tabernacle.

*“Now of these things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on*

*the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens;*

*“ A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. “*

**Hebrews 8:1,2**

The Lord Jesus Christ has obtained a more excellent ministry now. His ministry at this time concerns the house of God, the lives of the people who walk in the new covenant promises and have their hopes set upon receiving His fullness. Jesus spoke wonderful words to us when He was upon the earth. They were words of life. The apostle John says, *“that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled of the Word of life.”* (1 John 1:1). He is the Word and His Words alone are life. But now we see that He is speaking *to* His people from the heavenly realm. Let us therefore not attach importance to the words He spoke upon the earth only. We must also hearken and heed to all that He is speaking now from the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary. The words He speaks today into the depths of our beings are in no way of less significance than the words He spoke two centuries ago. His words today are as powerful and life forming as His words then. We know that the Shepherd continues *to* speak to His sheep and His sheep hear His voice for it is the very same Voice (John 10:3). He is the same yesterday and today and forever (Hebrews 13:8). His words are the same; His voice is the same. Yet, He now speaks before the Father’s throne, in His

presence surely His' words will not be in vain. Let us hold to this truth; let us appropriate the present ministry of the Lord; let us listen *to* Him now and harden not our hearts. For it is NOW that we need His help even to overcome the world; to live an overcoming, victorious life and *to conform to* His image. This is the time of our preparation and performance. Therefore, surely these are very critical, eloquent and momentous times. For He is preparing for Himself a bride upon the earth. God is determined to have a bride, despite the present pathetic condition of His people! He shall not rest until the church has been brought unto maturity. His ministry shall take us to maturity and the church's beauty shall be known among the nations, "*for it was (made) perfect because of My splendour which I bestowed on you.*" (Ezekiel 16:14 N A S B). The Lord is jealous over his people with a godly jealousy for He has espoused her unto one husband.

## THE DANGER OF BEING BEGUILED

The apostle Paul says, "*But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from simplicity that is in Christ*" (II Corinthians 11:2) So while we are encouraged by this high calling to be His bride, let us also heed Paul's warning to the Corinthians, and receive it in our hearts with reverence and fear. We too can easily be beguiled and seduced from wholehearted devotion to Christ. The church, in the book of Acts, was singularly devoted to Christ; she was truly given to the things of God

but then she was misled, beguiled, and duped by the very same serpent as met with Eve and eventually the church could not be presented to Christ as a chaste virgin. It is necessary to once again consider Satan's tactics against Eve as given in the book of Genesis.

*“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat”* **Genesis 3:6**

The woman ‘saw’; there was a ‘seeing’ by her natural faculties. What she saw pleased her. It was a delight to her eyes. Satan seems to always use our physical needs as a target for attack. He provoked her in the physical realm and then enticed her soul. She was hoodwinked into believing that she would be like God, that her eyes would be opened to see the good from the evil. She saw the tree was good for food, which is nothing but lust of flesh. She was easily ensnared by the fowler's net. She succumbed to Satan's temptation because she was not under the control of the Spirit. On the other hand we see Jesus who, when He was tempted by Satan to turn stone into bread said, “It is written *‘man should not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of God.’*” The Lord denied his physical and natural needs because He knew the spiritual needs to be more important. Beloved, it is vital for us to give priority to the needs of our spirit rather than the needs of the flesh. To fail in this is the first step in falling to the wiles of the evil one.

Many of God's people are beguiled and deceived by Satan who is still using the very same tactics he used with Eve.

The apostle Paul warns us to be careful that our "*minds are not corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ*" (II Corinthians 11:2). This refers to an abiding in Him. A faithful believer who would abide in the anointing of Christ would not be diverted. Eve moved out of her calling of being subject to Adam. One can be led astray from one's calling to obey Christ. When one moves out of the anointing of Christ one can easily be beguiled by Satan. Our minds can be captivated and deluded when we move outside the boundaries of our calling or our anointing in Christ. In other words we must always be careful to stay in a place of subjection to Christ for fear that Satan may somehow tempt us into sin and disobedience. Eve was to subject herself to Adam and then both were to subject themselves to God who created them. So also it is with our lives. Wives are to subject to husbands and they both are to subject to Christ. Similarly the saints are to subject to the ministers and together as God's people they are to subject to Christ. Many times instead of subjecting our minds to Christ we allow ourselves to reason and exercise our intellect, our judgment, our logic, our mentality, our rationality. Thus we lose the simplicity that is in Christ and give ourselves to justifications and vindications. How often Satan uses our minds to corrupt us from the purity and beauty of His teaching and His ways. ,

The "simplicity that is in Christ" thus refers to the

singleness of our devotion to Christ. It involves an abiding in His presence. It is subjecting one's will to His Spirit and remaining in a place of obedience to His word. This calls for a renewing of our minds for our natural mind is hostile towards God. It is through the renewing of our mind that we shall be conformed to His image. This is what Paul declares in Romans 12:2.

*“Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”*     **Romans 12:2 NASB**

The Holy Spirit who indwells in us brings a renewal or change in our minds as we permit the Word of God to find entrance into our lives. Through the instrumentality of the two edged sword, which is the Word of God, our minds are changed and we are brought into conformity. So conformity to the Word and to His will originates in our minds. Similarly non-conformity also begins in our minds. For instance, we may have a desire to waste some time chatting with friends. If we apply our natural mind to this desire then we shall move in that direction, but if we have a mind renewed by the Spirit, then we shall resist that desire, knowing it to be something natural and not spiritual. The indwelling Spirit of God will give us the Word that comes from our heavenly High Priest and this Word renews our mind.

Many a time the church moves out of the stark

simplicity, which is in Christ. This is what happened to the Corinthian church despite Paul's warning. By the end of the first century the church was split and scattered and disintegrated for they had fallen victims to the cunning and enchanting ways of the devil. Even in our lives we may move out of the simplicity, which is in Christ; we may forsake the anointing and grace available to us. The deceiver often whispers and calls us to indulge in some activity that seems harmless and reasonable on the face of it. He beguiles the people of God to follow a path that will eventually lead them away from the anointing of God. When Adam and Eve moved away from the simplicity of their calling and the anointing of God, they sinned and discovered their nakedness, for the glory of God, which had covered them, had been removed. The deception that came upon Eve is very strong in the church today.

### TAKE HEED THAT YE BE NOT DECEIVED”

*“And it is no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades (i.e. disguises) as an angel of light, “So it is not surprising if his servants also masquerade as “minister of righteousness.”*      **2 Corinthians 11:13,14.**

At the close of this, Satan the deceiver will be very particular and anxious to deceive the children of God for he knows that the Lord is coming soon. His main weapon is deception. He shall lead many astray by deception concerning the things of God. In appearance they shall be ministers of

righteousness, but in reality they shall be servants of Satan.

We always need to remember that being in the house of God or being sincere in one's faith is no guarantee of protection from deception. The prince of the world comes in the guise of something which may seem to take one Godward and good-ward but in essence it would be just another of his many traps. His objective is to get us to disobey God and he shall say, as he said to Eve, "ye shall be like God".

Sometimes we take up some new activity or enter a course of training to further our careers. It may seem good in our eyes but in reality it may take us away from God's perfect will. We have to be extremely careful, therefore, not to be caught in any of the devil's tricks of deception. Through out the history of man Satan has been deceiving the servants of God. We read in I Chronicles 21:1 that, "*Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel. So David said to Joab and to the rulers of the people, go number Israel -*". David failed to recognize that the suggestion to number Israel came from the devil. It seemed good to him to number Israel. But the Scriptures say 'God was displeased with this thing' (verse 7). Beloved, the devil has been actively engaged in deceiving and misleading men, specially the chosen ones of God. We should realize that it is not a matter of what is right and wrong, or what is good and bad. What matters is whether it is God's will to do this or that. God wants us to have the "life" of His Son. This is what matters. He is dealing with the manifestation of life in us and it is this

life that must increase in us. So it is not important whether the step you take is good or bad, right or wrong, effective or non-effective; whether it has a long term value or not; whether it would open up further avenues for some religious activity or not. What is vital is that the life of Christ should develop and grow within each one of us. And this is what the devil wants to destroy. It may seem, as we take up some new work or activity, that it would be spiritually profitable and that it would not cause a loss of one's fellowship with God. But we shall know, as the days go by, whether the source of that suggestion to us was of satanic origin or not, for when and if we are outside God's will, our spiritual life will definitely be adversely affected.

Was not Peter deceived when he lied and said, "*I know not the Man*"? (Mathew 26:74). Yes, he was. We need to be very careful these days. The word of God reminds us at several places that there will be false apostles, "deceitful workers" and alleged "ministers of righteousness".

Satan in the area of wisdom and knowledge traps many believers. They are caught with the bait of being "wise" and "like God" as Eve was blinded and deceived because there is a natural longing in most of us to acquire "knowledge" for the sake of "knowledge". Just like Eve many want to be "wise". And the enemy will invariably whisper and say 'yes there is no harm in being wise for you must know God'. The prince of this world may even quote Scripture as he did to our Lord Jesus. He may say, "The

wise in heart will receive commandments”. (Proverbs 10:8) or “only fools hate knowledge” (proverbs 1:22). Satan delights to make us a prey of his wisdom that will take us far away from God. This is the nature of Satan’s deception. He deceives believers as regards the truth. Through ignorance a Christian who wants to be ‘true’ and ‘faithful’ will often open his life to receiving of knowledge from any source. Not having discernment of the kind of knowledge he is receiving, the believer is then led astray through all kinds of books, pamphlets and literature. So many are ignorant of “devices of the Devil”. While we are liable to be “deceived” by the Devil because of ignorance, he makes use of our desire for more knowledge leading us into all kinds of counterfeit spurious, fake, and bogus knowledge that is sure to bring confusion to the mind.

There is a lot of Christian literature that circulates the stands regarding doctrinal *errors* or deception. Many believers would like to know the common errors or deception so that they could avoid them. This seems reasonable and even advisable. But see the cunning of the evil one. An alarming factor is that the first deception in the Scripture, that of Eve is not mentioned in most of the writings which deal with deception! He will use the believer’s desire for knowledge to feed him with lots of Satan’s knowledge. Oh! It is truly diabolical. The evil one will cater to the appetites of young believers for more knowledge by providing them with literature that will confuse them, bring doubts and eventually lead them away from God. And the

innocent believers have no idea that they are being sidetracked. They begin to read every book they can get hold of and in this way Satan keeps them in a place of eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:9). Today, among believers there is a natural desire to read whatever they can get so that they may grow spiritually and not be deceived. But little do they know that such a desire also opens them to Satan's deception. Christ would not have warned His disciples, "*Take heed that ye be not deceived -*" (Luke 21:8) if there had been no danger of deception. We must always be aware that it is possible to be deceived. And deception in the area of knowledge nowadays often prompts Satan to send his "ministers of righteousness" into the midst of unwary believers. We may find ourselves feeding upon the tree of knowledge to satisfy our deep desire for knowledge and wisdom and spiritual growth, but we have to be extremely cautious because this the very route that Satan takes to take us away from God and bring us into conformity to his own desires. Eve was the first to fall into this trap but she, no means is the last to succumb to this tactic of the evil one.

Now the question arises, "how can we know what is evil and, what is good unless we eat of this tree?" We must understand that God wants us to discern what is good and what is evil. He wants to renew our minds and our conscious so that we can lie aside all that is false and counterfeit. But the Lord wants to renew our mind by feeding us with the fruit upon the tree of life. This is

something we all need to apprehend. It is by eating of the tree of life that we shall know the truth and not by eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It is here that the enemy creeps in to deceive and beguile the believers. We are to be wise, we are to have wisdom; we are to have knowledge; but it has to be the wisdom and knowledge of God that is available from the tree of life. Eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil will not deliver us from unrighteousness and evil. God commanded Adam and Eve not to eat of this tree because it would never lead to true life. All it does is to fill us with a worldly knowledge that has no power to rid us of our evil ways. But if we walk in the light (truth) as He is in the light (truth) then we shall partake of the tree of life. Only the truth delivers us from evil and the truth of God is available only from the tree of life.

There is a lot of knowledge that believers feast upon. In reality they could be eating of the “tree of knowledge of good and evil.” The quest of right understanding and the search for pure doctrine may deceive many people and cause them to feed upon this tree of knowledge. God, of course, wants us to ‘discern good and evil’ but we should do that only as we grow in Christ, come to maturity as we eat of the ‘tree of life’.

May we, therefore, sincerely look into our own lives and upon the condition of the church. In the past we may have read and heard a great deal but what we need to see is whether our growth and our victories have been in

proportion to the knowledge of good and evil we may have acquired. It is a reality that our knowledge did not bring victories in our lives. Several things we knew to be right but we failed to do them. Do you perceive the deception that lurks in the darkness? We may have been sincere and hungry in the past but which tree did we really feed upon? Eating of the 'tree of life' alone will deliver us from evil. It would mean, "walking in the light as He is in the light"; it would mean learning to love Him who is the Truth and the Word. It is then that the Word becomes alive and a light unto our path. Eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil only brings haughtiness and headiness and a lot of head-knowledge. It results in a lack of the life that flows from the Spirit. This is what has ruined the church through the centuries.

Beloved, each of us needs to pause and honestly ask ourselves whether we are eating from the tree of life. The Lord would like us to sit under the shade of the tree of life and to eat of its fruit so that we may grow and have an increase of the life of Christ in us. Are we eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which fills us with a kind of knowledge, and wisdom that appeals to the flesh but is unprofitable to the spirit? The church has been led astray again and again because she ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. She became worldly wise but in the bargain she lost the life of Christ

Take heed, beloved people, lest we also fall.

# SHE TRUSTED IN HER OWN BEAUTY

## 4

**T**he lord has been helping us to meditate upon the bride of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is the church. We have seen that God is determined to have a ‘bride’ church for His Son. From chapter 16 of the book of Ezekiel we have seen allegorically that the Lord passed by and saw her immersed in her sins and then He said, ‘Live’ and brought her to life. The Lord began to clothe the church and beautify her with many lovely garments and ornaments, till she was exceedingly beautiful and became like a queen. Her fame went forth among the nations because of her ravishing beauty; for it was a work of the Lord’s grace and splendor. Now in Ezekiel 16, we read of the tragic results.

*“But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown, and*

*pouredst out thy fornications on every one that passed by; his it was.*

*“And of thy garments thou didst take, and deckedst thy high places with divers colours, and playedst the harlot thereupon: the like things shall not come, neither shall it be so.*

*“Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold and of my silver, which I had given thee, and madest to thyself images of men, and didst commit whoredom with them,*

**Ezekiel 16:15-17**

Here we see that despite what God had done to make her beautiful, she chose to be unfaithful. Instead she trusted in her own beauty and wisdom and in her very own talents or abilities. Perhaps this is the main reason for the failure of the traditional church. She forgot that Christ is made unto her wisdom from God; righteousness and sanctification and redemption (I Corinthians 1:30). She was made beautiful by the Lord; she was clothed with beautiful spiritual garments but alas she became proud of her beauty and her good works. She thought her beauty was of her own making and she began to neglect the Lord thinking she did not need Him. She became presumptuous and began to treat the things of God with familiarity and contempt. Finally she began to worship other gods; she began to adopt worldly customs, the practices and the traditions of the heathen became her joy! History reveals that whenever God gave some precious truth to the church, there arose haughtiness and a pride among the people that led them to disobey God and to persecute other Christians. The word says, “they began

to think they were wise and beautiful” (Isaiah 3:16).

The priests Nadaba and Abihu, who were sons of Aaron offered strange fire before the Lord in their pride. They knew that God had commanded them not to bring strange fire but their pride, presumptuousness and conceit led them to a place of deliberate disobedience. (Leviticus 10:1.2). The result was that the consuming fire of Almighty God enveloped them and they died. God judged them so that none may try to worship God according to the desires of their heart of conceit! Today, if the Lord seems to wink at the pride filled service of priests in the house of God it is because of His grace, mercy, love and long suffering. However, never will pride and self-righteousness and self-confidence be pleasing to the Lord.

In the wilderness, the Israelites repeatedly gave in to their pride and haughtiness. Every act of disobedience stemmed from a heart that was blemished by pride. They relied on their own works. They had been delivered from slavery but they were still in bondage to their sins of unbelief, pride and disobedience. They had been freed from slavery but they had not learnt to be eh slaves of righteousness.

In our lives also pride can surface so very easily. We may know that we are what we are because of the grace of God. Yet, many a time we feel proud of our spiritual attainments and move out of the place of subjection and grace. There can be a very real danger to our spiritual

lives because of the presence of pride which if unchecked leads to disobedience and rebellion against God and His ministries. Just as redemption and restoration of ‘God’s people is always attributable to the sovereign work of grace, so also the fall of God’s children is invariably the result of pride and of disobedience that follows from a proud heart. The book of Proverbs says, that there is more hope for a fool than for a man wise in his own conceit (Proverb 26:12). Help is ever available even for one who has foolishly strayed away from God but little can be done for those who are egoistical and puffed up or have head swelled with self-importance. The history of Israel reveals that despite the pride and the judgments of God upon a hard hearted nation, God moved again and again to restore Israel and bring forth a people who would walk in His ways.

In the old testament there is ample evidence to show that the unstable condition of the Israelites was due to their pride. Time and time again we see that God brought forth a people unto Himself despite their pride but after some time they would rise up in pride , disobey the Lord and fall form His purposes. God then says, “Harden not your hearts as in the days of the provocation”. There was stubbornness, which the Lord revealed to Moses, “I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff necked people”. It was pride that caused Israelites to disobey God’s commandment. “yet He sent prophets to them to bring them again to the Lord and they (prophets) testified against them but they would not give ear” (2 Chronicles 30:8).

## BEING A GOOD EXAMPLE.

In the history of the church we see that there was an absence of a continual forward progressive movement with God. God's people could not maintain a regular stance of advancement or furtherance of God's purposes. One generation would take great strides in God's purposes and maintain a profile of diligence and perseverance but the next generation would decline, diminish and degenerate.

We cannot fail to notice this fluctuating rhythm in the history of God's people both in the Old as well as in New Testaments. Generations alternately go from one extreme to the other, as does a pendulum. One generation would appropriate the Word and follow the Lord's commandments, but the very next generation would lapse into lethargy, pride and disobedience. As I see it, each generation is responsible to walk before God according to all that God has revealed up to that point of time.

In the matter of salvation, a generation cannot inherit what their father's had received. All persons are individually responsible to the Lord. Our children cannot receive the Kingdom of God as an inheritance from us – they have to turn to the Lord in repentance and acceptance without depending upon the blessings their parents may or may not have received.

Let us receive the counsel of the Lord in Ezekiel,

“the soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him...” (Ezekiel 18:20). In other words the righteousness of a righteous man will only be credited to him by God and not to his son. The son must himself turn from his sins unto righteousness. A good father cannot accumulate merit for his son; and at the other end of the scale, a righteous son who has turned from his sin unto God will receive life even though his father may be wicked and evil.

The bible illustrates this principle through the lives of several kings of Judah and Israel. Of Hezekiah it is written, he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. (2 Chronicles 29:2). But of Manasseh, his son, it is written, “He did evil in the eyes of the Lord” (2 Chronicles 33:2). And Josiah his son again did what was right in the eyes of the Lord and walked in the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left (2 Chronicles 34:2). This illustration clearly shows us that in general, generations seem to alternately turn to do good and evil. Every individual can be emancipated or redeemed from his own past and his inheritance or his own wicked deeds. How just are the ways of God!! How different this is from the matter of ‘karma’(destiny) that rules the life of many gentiles.

Our children cannot receive the kingdom of God from us on the grounds of being the children of Christian parents. How good it would have been if every nominal

Christian who calls himself by virtue of being born into Christian families received this principle of God. Even in the days of the Apostle Paul there were Jews who thought that their natural descent from the patriarch Abraham entitled them to the promises and the blessings of God. But Paul says, “for they are not all Israel, which are of Israel” (Romans 9:6). And in the same strain one may say, they are not all of Christ who are of Christian parents. Children of the flesh are not automatically children of God. (see Romans 9:7). Our seed shall be Christian only if they are born of the spirit and the Word.

Notwithstanding this eternal principle of God, we need to always remember that as parents we have responsibility to help our children to understand the things of God. We need to help them to hear, obey and walk with God even as young people. There is a “deposit” a Christian parent can impart to his offspring that could pave the way to receiving that which God has kept for them. An understanding of the Scriptures, a fear of God, a love for his Word and His people; a trust and a dependence upon Christ - these are deposits that can be passed on from one generation to another by example. The older generation must set an example of walking by faith but the younger lot must hear God and learn to walk in His steps for themselves. Obedience, fear, turns, dependence, and faith upon God can best be imparted by parental example, but in the final analysis what matters is that the children imbibe Christian virtues through the working of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

It is truly remarkable that even in our time we can observe that one generation may walk in His footsteps but the next generation may be totally separated from Him, choosing to walk in their own understanding. Our natural inclination is to follow the adage “like father, like son” but the spiritual adoption that needs to take place according to the movement and election of the Sovereign God. We cannot enter the Kingdom of God on the strength of our father’s faith. Every soul must take a decision for himself. Yet, there is no gainsaying that those who have walked long with God can leave an example of a ‘deposit’ with those who are struggling to grow so that they may be encouraged to pursue divine things. The word says,

*“For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children :*

*“That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children.*

*“ That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments.”* **Psalms 78 : 5-7**

God would have us teach His commandments to our children that they may put their confidence in God. The children can learn to put their trust and hope in God from the example set by the older generation.

Parental influence has a distinct place in our being shaped to be the vessel that God wants us to be. Solomon was told by God to walk as his father David walked, “in integrity of heart and in uprightness” (I Kings 9:4). The Lord was with Uzziah because he walked according to the ways of his father Amaziah (II Chronicles 26:4). Maternal influence has a tremendous effect upon young souls and the good that can be done by prayerful mothers walking in righteousness and godliness is immeasurable. For the passage in 1 Timothy 1:5 we see that Paul acknowledges the good influence of Timothy’s grandmother Lois and mother Eunice upon Timothy. Truly blessed is the home where the mother and father bring up the children in fear of the Lord for in such a home the children shall surely rise up early and call upon the Lord.

The history of Israel and the history of the church, as well as what we see all around us, reveals that some children curse their fathers and bless not their mothers; some are pure in their own eyes and yet not cleansed of their filth; some are lofty, haughty and full of pride; and some devour the poor and needy in their selfishness (Proverbs 30:11-14). But God is zealous to bring forth a people who shall be holy and without sport or wrinkle. He is not going to give up His desire to have a generation that will be a glorious bride for His Son. He shall bring forth that which is upon His heart. Let us therefore bring our distorted vision into focus of God’s purposes and let us renew our minds and accept God’s plan by faith and hope.

## SEEING THINGS WITH GOD'S EYES

We often hear Christians proclaim that the church is beyond the point of repair. They say that the church has lost everything that had at one time been hers. The Acts of the apostles, the miracles that the world saw in the first century, the faith of that generation, the tremendous working of God, they are a thing of the past they say. Some think that the church 'had it all' in the beginning but now the church is backsliding into complacency and neglect. Once she was bright, they say, but now it is all cloudy; once she was beautiful but now she is steeped in confusion and sin. This is the way many Christians think and feel about the destiny of the church. But we need a renewed mind to see things in the perspective of God. A Christian into whom new life has been breathed will see things differently from the carnal mind. Oh how much we need a regenerated and a rejuvenated mind to appreciate God's plans and purposes.

A believer having a renewed mind will accept the presence of evil, unrighteousness, chaos and confusion all around but at the same time he will see the bright ray of hope in what God is going to bring forth in the coming days according to His word. He may say, "though I see darkness all around yet there shall be light where there was once darkness"; "though the first Adam failed miserably and brought the world into spiritual darkness, yet I also see the majesty of the last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ, who was fully obedient to the Father and who has delivered the world

from sin and shame”. This is not merely the virtue of positive thinking. It is a matter of implicitly trusting the sovereign, living God to bring about all that He has promised.

God has allowed many situations to occur in our lives and in the world which seem bleak, chaotic and topsy – turvy for God desires that we may place our hope, trust and faith in Him. There may be despair and a wariness of life but the Lord is calling us to have hope and faith in things that cannot be seen. Let hope be the anchor of our soul. Let us be clothed with a hope that reaches further and enters into the very presence of God within the veil (see Hebrews 6:19). May we see the unchangeableness of His purposes. This is what God desires to show to the heirs of the promise (Hebrew 6:17).

*“Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy”*

***Psalm 33:18***

Despite all that has happened in the church; despite the failure of the past; despite the disobedience, pride and unbelief of generations of Christians, God wants us to know that He has left a seed, a remnant, a progeny and a nucleus within the church. That seed is most precious to the Lord for through it He shall bring forth His purposes. Not all of us may be able to see the ‘seed’ but it is therefore sure and it will break forth in due season. A people shall come into fullness/maturity in the coming days and the purposes of

the Lord will be fulfilled upon the earth for he has left a remnant.

*“And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase”* **Jeremiah 23:3**

God has not given up on the church. He is determined to bring it to a place of maturity. Some may accuse us and say we minimize the failure of man; they say that the church cannot experience an ‘utopia’ because of the large number of denominations, the tremendous work of Satan and the universal spread of unrighteousness and unholiness which is increasing in leaps and bounds. It is true that one sees failure, collapse, defeat and darkness all around; but God shall yet bring forth something precious for which He sent His Son into this world. The seed has been sown by the Husbandman and there is still a seed upon this earth. There shall surely emerge a righteous sapling by the Spirit. It will multiply and bring fruit. Although the enemy has made many schemes and devices to defeat God’s purposes upon this earth, we know that the Lord shall eventually triumph and fulfill all that He has revealed to His people.

In these last days God shall expose the devices and designs of the evil one despite the failures and frustrations of the church. God shall eventually bring to pass that which He desires to birth. All that is wicked, vile and vicious will be brought down and the church will be brought out of her

slothfulness and complacency so that she may become the bride of the Lamb without spot and wrinkle for this is her clear and infallible destiny.

Some times people remark that it is necessary for God to tolerate evil alongside the good so that His power can be manifested. They believe the earth will always have evil men so that the love and truth of God can show forth. Does God need evil to lay bare the truth? Does God need darkness to show forth His light? Certainly not!! This is like saying that God needs sin to reveal righteousness! Even in Paul's time some people claimed that their sins served the purpose of magnifying God's righteousness and therefore, they said there was virtue in unrighteousness for how could you know what is right when there is no wrong. The apostle answers such arguments by countering that if God's truth seems more glorious because of someones lie or unrighteousness then there would be no condemnation, for the sinner would be able to argue and say, "let us do evil so that good may come" (Romans 3:5-10). Those who debate in this fashion do not understand God as they ought to. Sin, unrighteousness, wickedness are the product of man's opposition, disobedience and rebellion. These were not induced by God; He does not need sin to bring forth good. In creation God brought forth only good for it is written, "*And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good*" (Genesis 1:31). It is man's rebellious heart that separates Him from God and even his thinking becomes corrupt

depraved and malevolent. Truly our minds need to be renewed to accept God's declaration.

God is undeterred by the church's failure to obey God. In the teeth of her resistance and revolt, the Lord will yet bring forth a bride without spot and wrinkle, even a church, a bride for the Lord Jesus.

### THOU SAYEST I HAVE NEED FOR NOTHING

*“Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and need.....”*     **Revelation 3:17**

The church in this day and age is likened to the Laodicean church, a description of which is given in Revelation 3:14-18 by none other than the risen Lord, who is *‘the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God’* (verse 14). It is an account of a people who in their pride, declare that they are rich and wealthy and in need of nothing. Just like the bride in Ezekiel's chapter 16:23, the church in these times has begun to trust in her own beauty. This verdict in Revelation chapter 3 is not of any man but it is the prophetic appraisal of the risen Lord ! Let us therefore pay heed to His assessment and evaluation.

The failure of the church to come up to the expectation of the Lord has been primarily due to her pride.

She has taken her eyes off here bridegroom, the Lord Jesus and instead she gazes upon her own excellence and her own achievements. In essence her beauty is nothing but the beauty given by the Lord as a gift which ‘He had put upon her’. Yet she rises up in pride to think that her beauty is of her own making and that she has no need of anything. She has a false notion that her condition meets with God’s approval. She imagines she is alright and feeds her proud heart with thoughts and deeds that are contrary to God’s will. She thinks she is beautiful ‘due to the work of her own hands’. She fails to realize that she is beautiful because of His grace and love.

Each of us needs to know that pride in our lives will lead us to fall. “Pride goeth before destruction and an haughty spirit before a fall. Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud” (Proverbs 16:18,19). It is astonishing but commonplace that one can seldom see one’s own pride. We are quick to spot even a small trace of pride in another’s life but we are unable to see the magnitude of our own pride due to the deceitfulness of sin. Jesus tell us how easy it is to see the mote of pride in a brother’s eye but to totally miss seeing the beam in one’s own eye. (Matthew 7 :3), (Luke 6:41).

Pride can manifest itself in several forms. There is a pride that easily overtakes us if we fail to love in

subjection. It is only when Eve moved out of her place of subjection that she began to think she could be like God. She moved out of her abiding to a place of failure and disobedience. The same thing happened to some Israelites. They abandoned their calling to be followers and then challenged Moses and Aaron because of their pride. If we remain in subjection to the Lord we will be able to resist pride in our lives. If God has given you a gift or certain abilities, or some responsibilities in the house of God, or even a promotion in your career then we are to remain in subjection to Him who has put us in that place. We need to honour Him and be humble rather than to lord it over others. Let each one constantly remind himself that he has nothing to be proud of because it is the Lord who gives.

Another form of pride comes by eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It brings conceit and haughtiness and makes us vulnerable to fall. It generates a pride of self- knowledge and a confidence in one's own strength. We need to guard against this danger.

It is pride within us that causes us to be offended when we are corrected or rebuked: it is pride that encourages us to refuse the counsels of God: it is pride that causes us to reject God's word and move away From His perfect will in deliberate disobedience. And yet all the time we can be unaware of the place pride has in the throne of our hearts.

Let our prayer to God be to enable us to hate pride in every form. There are subtle varieties of the pride that can ruin even those who are waling in their commitments unto the Lord. If we are aware of the danger then we can overcome pride in our lives. It is not easy to be truly humble for even when we are poor in spirit we may have pride in one's own humility. We can even be proud of our attempts to be humble; of our desires to please the Lord and of our growth in His grace. May the Spirit of Him and to man's neighbours. We are called to deny self so that we may love the Lord instead of ourselves for God knows that many cannot be humble because of self love. This does not imply that we are to condemn ourselves but that we must learn to forget our self. Humility does not mean that a beautiful women must begin to believe that she is ugly or that a clear man must think he is a fool. That is not the point. If we have the talent and say we have no talent then we are also being dishonest and hypocritical. But God wants us to be brought to a state of min in which we shall be free from any bias in our own favour; when we can forget the self and give glory to God; when we can be truly glad at being able to use our God given abilities for His glory; when we can rejoice in the fact that our brother is better than ourselves. In this way out minds are to be focused on others instead of on our self.

*“Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better thanthemselves”*

**Philippians 2:3**

*“Do nothing from factional motives (through contentiousness, strife, selfishness, or for unworthy ends) or prompted by conceit and empty arrogance. Insead, in the spirit of humility) lowliness of mind) let each regard the others as better than and superior to himself (thinking more highly of one another than you do of yourselves). Let each of you esteem and look upon – be concerned for not (merely) his own interests, but also the interests of others. Let this same attitude and purpose and (humble) mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus : (Let Him be your example in humility).”*  
**Philippians 2:3-5 (Amplified)**

It is possible to avert pride if we, in lowliness of mind, look not to ourself but consider others. Let others come first and ourself last. What does it mean to esteem others better than ourselves? The apostle Paul did not mean that an apostle should subject himself to another brother in the local church. Esteeming another believer involves allowing the purposes of God to be fulfilled in his life. To be humble towards others is to give the first place to the Lord’s desires in his life. When the apostle Paul administered and corrected others he was not esteeming them to less than himself. He did it in all humility making way for God’s purposes to be carried out in the other’s life.

## WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSE TO HIS BLESSINGS?

*“Thou hast also taken thy fair jewel of my gold and of silver, which I had given thee, and madest thyself images of men, and didst commit whoredom with them.*

*“And tookest thy broidered garments, and coverdst them; and thou has set mine oil and mine incense before them.*

*“My meat also which I gave thee, fine flour, and oil, and honey, wherewith I fed thee, thou hast even set it before them for a sweet savour: and thus it was. Saith the Lord God”.* **Ezekiel 16:17-19**

In these words we can detect another cause of the failure of the church. The Lords says here that you have used the things I have given you to please yourself. He says, “You have used My fair jewel, My gold and My silver, which I had given to you, for your own pleasure”. This was the indictment of the Lord. But it was only an accusation “Thus it was”, saith the Lord. The condition of the church is exactly that pointed out by the Lord. He summons us to mend our ways.

The Lord has blessed each one of us in a great many ways. We often thank God for many blessing we have received – salvation – jobs – promotions – marriage – children – transfers – health – no accidents – no hospitalization - a sound mind – and thousand others. It

is good to be thankful but let us also see how we are using God's blessings. Are all the blessings of God spent for our own pleasure? Are we using the energy and strength He has given us, in living out our days merely to meet out physical, outward needs? We need to think about this carefully.

Usually people are far more concerned about themselves than about Him. They are much more conscious of what they want God to do for them than they are concerning what they might do unto Him. So they use God; they use His blessings and they even use the cross for their own ends. Beloved, the blessings are given so that these should bring us wholly unto God. There are many many believers who, even after years and years of reckoning and self examination, are still camping around their old selfcenteredness. They are constantly seeking for all that God has for themselves; their only desire is for their inheritance in Christ for themselves; their perpetual longing fo all the possessions of God is for themselves. Oh ! may God shatter and uncover every attempt to use God; may God pull down every attempt to use the blessings He gives for our selfish purposes. May the cross He gives us be used not for self interest but for dying on the cross. May God expose every secret concern for ourselves.

*“And He died for all, so that all those who live might live no longer for themselves but to and for*

*Him who died and was raised again for their sake”*  
**2 Corinthians 5:15**

The malady of this generation of Christians seems to be a wholehearted concern for the self. People are taken up more with their self-needs, their own health, their own comforts; their own family; and they are not one bit desirous of spending the things they have received from God upon God Himself. They want to use His gold and silver for their personal enjoyment. They spend the oil and incense of God and the food and nourishment of God upon themselves. This really amounts to disobedience and rebellion for the Lord given so that we may ‘give’ and give abundantly. Many have to learn how to invest what they have received from God by giving all to Him. This seems to be difficult for many, many Christians. The world teaches them to take, take; but the cross teaches us to give, give and give. They are no better than the common man (unbeliever) who merely receives from the Lord and knows not how to invest His blessings in Him by ploughing back all he has received into the Lord and His house or His work and ministries.

Where are you investing the gold and silver which He has bestowed upon you? Gold speaks of divine things; silver speaks of redemption; oil speaks of the anointing; incense of our worship; fine flour of our righteousness. Where are you investing the riches He has blessed you with? How are you investing your health and your energies,

the thoughts of your mind and the deeds of your hands?  
Are you ploughing these back to God?

In Ezekiel's time the people of God used things God had given for their own pleasure. The same is happening among God's people today. May God's people realize that apart from HIM there is no real beauty. We need to not only admit and confess them but we must live this out and regulate our lives accordingly.

Once a young lady was playing a most beautiful concerto on the piano. The brilliant melody played upon a lovely grand piano filled the hall with the richness of music. There were applaus after the concert was over. Was the applaud for the music or for the one who played it? It is often difficult to distinguish between the two, but it is the pianist who should receive our praises. Similarly it is the hand of God which works upon our lives to produce beautiful music that deserves our praise and it is to Him that we owe our beauty.

Many a time we rise up in pride and think that the things we have are ours due to our own effort. Often we leave our place of subjection and rise up in conceit and haughtiness to claim all that He has given us for ourselves.

Beloved, let us remind ourselves that the silver, the gold, the meat, the oil, the garments in our lives are His for He gave them to us for His pleasure and glory.

Let us walk out of our self centredness and learn to give back to God that which he has given us.

## FIRST JUDGEMENT, THEN RESTORATION

*“And I the Lord, will judge you as women who break wedlock and shed blood are judged, and I will bring upon you the blood of (your divine Husband’s) wrath and jealousy”.*

*“And I will also give you into the hand of those (your enemies) and they shall throw down your (brothel) vaulted place, and shall demolish your high places (of idolatory); they shall strip you of your clothes and shall take your splendid jewels, and leave you naked and bare.” **Ezekiel 16:38,39 Amplified***

Here we see the judgement of God upon the bride of the Lamb. She moved away from subjection and erred, thus bringing upon herself the wrath and fury and jealousy of God. This happened in the history of Israel and also in the history of the church. For when God’s people fall away in pride and disobedience they provoke God to judgement. God is just and His judgements are an inevitable part of His justice. The soul that sinneth must die. When Israel disobeyed God and provoked Him to anger by their idolatory God allowed the Babylonian army to destroy Jerusalem and take the Israelites captive. When the church moved in disobedience and unbelief, the Lord allowed the

powers of darkness to overtake them. But God is merciful and compassionate, for He also brought the Israelites out of captivity; He is also restoring the church from the darkness of the middle ages.

Let us mark this principle well. There is a certainty of judgement when God's people err and fall away. God sense His judgements that He may be glorified for they have a far-reaching effect in the lives of His people. And then He also brings for the a healing, a restoration, and the balm of Gilead unto His-people.

There may be some who disobeyed the Lord in one way or another. Let such ones bring their lives to the Lord for though His judgements will come, yet that is not the end of His dealings. It is but a step toward restoration in their lives.

*“Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee and everlasting covenant.*

*“And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shall know that I am the Lord...”*

***Ezekiel 16:60, 62***

Although the nation of Israel was sent into captivity the Lord restored His people in the days of Zerubbabel. This is true of the church as well. Though

the church has rebelled against God for many years, God has not given up on her. He brought her to a place of repentance and is restoring her.

Jesus said, *“I will build My church”*. He has no intention of abandoning His purposes even though the church is neglecting Him. The promise God has for His people is that He will establish His covenant. God always finishes His work in righteousness and in glory. He has laid a sure foundation. He has brought her to repentance and sorrow. He shall surely build her into a glorious church without spot and wrinkle. This is the love of God toward His church.

God remembers the covenant He has made with you when you turned to Him. He said ‘live’ unto you and you grew and prospered. Though you may have strayed away from God’s will several times, He still remembers His covenant and the day He turned to you and said, ‘you are mine’. Even when He brings you to places of judgement in your lives it is only so that you may also come to a place of repentance and returning. Once again He hold out His good right hand to restore you into His eternal purposes, for He says so definitely, *“I will establish my covenant”*.

May we remember God’s order! God’s day starts with the evening and ends with morning! There is a new

day for every night of darkness that has overwhelmed God's people! Yes, God's Bride fell from her beauty and her glory, but that is not the end. His judgements are vary far reaching and very awesome. But the morning, cometh, even a restoration!.

# A HELP MEET FOR THE LORD

## 5

**A**s we turn to the book of Genesis for this study let us pray that God will open your eyes to understand And receive all that He sets before us. Not having partaken of the tree of life in the garden of Eden, man has become spiritually blind as regards God's intentions and purposes for mankind. Unless and except the Holy Spirit reveals that which is of God we have no power or ability to fathom the great wisdom of God. Let us, therefore, humbly turn to the Lord Jesus Christ who is made unto us the wisdom of God so that we may receive of His grace. May the Spirit of God imprint upon our mind that which we need to know for many by his own wisdom knoweth not the things of God. It is only by the Spirit of truth that we shall be able to grasp and comprehend the mysteries and wonders of God.

In the creation account in the book of Genesis there lie some "goodly pearls" (of wisdom) that the Spirit of God would have us seek in this hour.

It is written, "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created he them". (Genesis 1:27). We see here that mankind was made the crowning glory of God's creative genius. God looked at everything He had made and said, "Behold it was very good." (Genesis 1:31). With this divine pronouncement it seems that the great work of God in creating the heavens and all the earth came to a glorious completion.

And yet in an intriguing and fascinating way there was something that was incomplete; something lay half-finished as it were.

As if to explain this hidden lacunae in the word of God chapter 2 of Genesis deals with the creation of man once again, but in greater detail, (Genesis 2: 7 to 25). As one reads these words with sensitiveness and delicacy of the spirit one gathers the distinct impression that after creating man God came across an incompatibility. We briefly summarise some relevant verses below to bring this out more clearly.

*...First the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground (vs 7).*

*...Then the Lord put man in the garden of Eden (vs 8).*

*...The Lord then gave man the charge and care of*

*the garden (vs 15).*

*...The Lord provided man with food but forbid him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (vs 16 and vs 17).*

*...The Lord finally said, "It is NOT GOOD that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him" (vs 18).*

This shows that as God was putting His finishing touches to the creative process he found something to be lacking and "not so very good". Having formed Adam from the dust of the earth to be His image and after His likeness, the Lord God found something amiss. Though Adam came perfect from the hand of God, Adam was still incomplete. This is implicit in God's statement that it is not good for man to be alone. Although God chose to make man to be a weak creature, made from the dust, that the excellency may be of God and that through such a fragile vessel He may exhibit the fullness of His nature and character, ye we see that God was not pleased that man should be alone. This talks of the great love of God for man. Our God is not only all powerful and all mighty but He is also loving, humble, gentle, longsuffering, patient and kind. We see His wisdom in making the man of dust, a little lower than angles, and yet highest in the creative order than man may radiate and manifest the fullness of God upon the earth and thus give all glory to Him.

When God decided to make a help meet (ie. mate)

for man we should not conclude that this was an after thought. Rather this decision was a definite part of His total creative work all of which is harmonious, brilliant and having a wholeness without and within. Genesis 1:27 clearly shows that "in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them". (The use of singular and plural pronouns here are very significant). There is no doubt that all that God created was perfect and utterly compatible, yet in the creation of Adam, the Lord had provided room for something to follow. We can get a clue of what was incomplete from Genesis 2:18 - 20.

*"And the Lord God said, It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." (This is the first mention in the Bible of what God spoke!!)*

*"And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them : and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.*

*"And Adam gave name to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but FOR ADAM THERE WAS NOT FOUND AN HELP MEET FOR HIM."*

**Genesis 2:18-20**

Why did God get Adam to name every beast of the field and fowl of the air after declaring His plan and purpose to make man a help mate? All the animals were brought to Adam but he found none of them suitable as a life

companion. None of the beings created by God met with God's requirement of a wife for Adam. The whole creation of God was incomplete because for Adam there was no help mate.

Adam experienced a solitude, even a loneliness in the garden of Eden. Though God walked with Adam in the garden yet Adam longed for a companion who would be compatible, would share in his delights and in his discoveries. He was happy in the garden and content of spirit but here was an absence of true amity and companionship with other living beings. Adam, in simple words, desired the company of another living soul created by God who could be his partner in every way. God's love for man is seen here in all its magnificence. Although God had created man for His own pleasure, he comprehended Adam's aloneness, and made a way to provide him a help meet who would be bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. Glory to God.

*"And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;*

*"And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman and brought her unto the man.*

*"And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man.*

**Genesis 2:21-23**

Although God made a multitude of heavenly and earthly beings He could not find a suitable partner for Adam amongst all the works of His hand. He could not lay His good right hand upon any living being and give it unto Adam as a help mate!! Why not? Because the help mate of Adam had, first and foremost to be in His own likeness. No other created being was made in the image and likeness of the triune God and, therefore, they were unsuitable as companions for Adam who had already been made according to God's own image. It is for this reason that God put Adam to sleep and formed woman from the rib of man.

Now let us see the corollary in Christ Jesus. May the Spirit of God enlighten us to see that Adam, in creation, was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. Just as Adam was alone in the garden of Eden, so also was the last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ along upon this earth. There is a sense in which we can say that during His earthly sojourn He was alone and longed for a companion, even a help meet, who would be bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. This is not to say that He whose name is Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace, was lacking in something. There was no deficiency in Him, yet as in the case of Adam there was something that needed to be brought to a completion, even a help mate in His own likeness. He who left His glory, humbled Himself and became obedient unto the death of the cross also experienced a kind of loneliness that was akin to the first Adam. He who

stooped down to take the form of man and embraced man's incapacities and infirmities, He also took upon Himself that aloneness which Adam had encountered. Yes, He was alone just as Adam was alone!.

In corresponding manner, God the Father could not turn to any created being to give His Son a help mate, even a bride. Though there were many beautiful angelic beings yet God could not see in them that which would satisfy His Father's heart. No doubt the angelic beings archangels, cherubims, seraphs, - had a radiant glory yet the Father's heart was not content, for He looked for one that would be in His Son's likeness and image. Nothing in all existance met His requirement and so just as Adam was made to sleep so also has the last Adam been made to sleep, metaphorically that from His riven side may come forth a glorious bride for the eternal Son. Glory, Hallelujah !! O the great wisdo, of our God!

May this revelation truly enthrall our inner man. Let us see it once again from the slightly different perspective.

The Lord God created man because there was a longing upon His heart for a people who would walk in His ways and who would bear His image and His likeness. After the fall of the first Adam, God sent another Man to fulfil His heart's desires. We know His name is Christ Jesus. On this earth He lives apart, alone, made a little lower than angels, revealing the fullness of the Godhead in and through His

life. While He was upon the earth he was tempted at all points yet without sin. Forsaken, deserted, alone, He had no spiritual companionship. Just as His heavenly Father was alone in the heavenly realm, so also was Jesus along during His earthly sojourn. We see here a reflection in the first Adam as well. Though the Lord was surrounded by many living beings yet He was alone without a suitable, compatible, help partner. Indeed He had to remain separated and alone upon this earth for He said, 'except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it brings forth much fruit' (John 12:24). He was what single seed that had to go into the ground and die, that there may be a great harvest in the fullness of time. The last Adam was put to sleep as a corn of wheat buried in the earth, even as the first Adam was put to sleep that the Lord God may bring forth an help-mate. And in comparable manner the Father has allowed a sleep for His Son so that He may bring forth a glorious help-mate, even a bride for the Lord Jesus Christ. Glory to God. God's longing and desire is that a bride may be brought forth from His side. O marvelous are the works of His hand !!

*"And he took one his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead therefore; And the rib which the Lord God has taken from man, made He a woman and brought her unto the man". (Genesis 2:21,22).* This is exactly what God is doing today. The Lord our God is forming another life out of the life of the last Adam, His own Son, that the new life may be an expression of His own image and likeness. The bride, even the church,

is being made fearfully and wonderfully. The psalmist puts it across thus,

*"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.*

*"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.*

*"Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them".*

**Psalm 139:14-16**

How great is the sum of God's wisdom ! The bride (ie. church) is being formed marvelously even in this hour. She is being formed mysteriously and curiously from the last Adam, our Lord Jesus Christ. The body of Christ, which is the church, is the very flesh of His flesh and the bones of His bone. And so she will bear His very image and likeness. Hallelujah!

The first quoted declaration of Adam in the Bible is made regarding Woman, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out man". And the last Adam shall also triumphantly proclaim regarding the church, "she is my bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" for she shall be taken out of Man, the fullness thereof who is the Lord Jesus Christ.

The church shall be called 'Woman' for she has been taken out of the side of Man. She was brought out of Him. The church the body of Christ is none other than the fruit of the Seed that fell into the ground.

## AND THEY SHALL BE ONE FLESH

*"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."*  
**Genesis 2:24**

The end purpose is that the church shall be one with the Lord Jesus Christ even as Eve was destined to one with Adam. The word "therefore" implies that this oneness is a result of being taken out of man; "therefore shall they be of one flesh". The purpose of God is that man and woman be one flesh. The apostle Paul quotes this while writing to the Ephesians in connection with the church and the family life.

*"So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife himself, loveth himself.*

*"For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord His church:*

*"For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones*

*"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh"*

*"This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church".*

*"Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband". **Ephesians 5 :28-33***

In order to fully understand what the apostle Paul puts across here we need to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit. It is not enough to have the truth; we need light of God to understand the truth. 'O send out Thy light and thy truth' (Psalm 43:3) should be the cry of our hearts.

The apostle Paul sees a vital principle in the fact that woman is brought out of man's body. He further develops this principle to show that having been brought out of man's body, the woman and man are again made one!! The apostle says that he who loves his wife loves himself because they are one and the same. We must understand this in our spirit. This is not merely theory, contemplative hypothesis or abstract academic thinking; it is a reality that Paul establishes. The understanding of these verses are of cardinal importance for church or body life. Jesus Christ loves the church because she was brought out from His and has been called to be one with Him. Christ and the church are one body and flesh. We are members of His body, of His flesh and His bones. We have not only been birthed or brought forth by Christ but we have been called to be one flesh in the spirit.

This is a great mystery, Paul admits and that is why we need to understand it by the Spirit. Man and woman as

also Christ and the church are two separate identities yet they are one and the same. When husband and wife become one through marriage they go by the same surname. Adam and Eve had separate names but together they were called ADAM.

*"Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created".* **Genesis 5:2**

The Spirit of God expresses this unification so beautifully here. Individually the woman was called Eve and the man was called Adam, but together they were called Adam. In the eternal kingdom. His bride, the glorious church, shall be with Him.

Let us not only rejoice that the church has been brought out of the side of the heavenly Adam ; let us rejoice all the more that the corporate Eve shall be joined to Him and they shall be one. And just as the first Adam and Eve after being joined were addressed as Adam so also will Christ and His church be called CHRIST which includes the head, our Lord Jesus, and His body which is the church.

This is the rejoicing that we read about in Revelation "Let us be glad and rejoice and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready" (Revelation 19:7). There is a rejoicing on account of Christ and the church being made one through a spiritual link or coupling. There is a fastening together, a

combining, a union and oneness that the church needs to experience.

*"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ".*

*"Now there are many members but one body"*  
***I Corinthians 12:2, 20***

Though the church has many members it is one body, even the body of Christ. The words "Christ" and "church" are interchangeable in the verses above; we can say with the assurance of God's Spirit that "as the body is one and hath many members - so also is Church", for Christ and the church are one and the same; He is the head, we are the members.

The church is a people who are in union with the Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, They are a people who left their old father, who is none other than the father of lies (John:44). They have been joined to Christ through a spiritual union. In union with Him we are to share His anointing, His life and His nature. As we live in union with Him we shall partake of His likeness in a new dimension and in greater measure. "For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call thee brethren" (Hebrews 2:11). We are to share in Christ's anointing. We are anointed to do the works He did. His anointing is our anointing. We are made one by the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives. It is a union and a fellowship that is unique in the world.

Only in union with Christ can we truly partake of His life and His nature. This is what we ought to realize in the depths of our beings. And we need a similar joining of our lives to our brethren in the body of Christ. We share with them all things in Christ. They are the bone of our bones and the flesh of our flesh in Christ Jesus. Can we be indifferent to our Lord and to one another in our life when we share such a great life?

Let us remind ourselves again that the church has not only been brought out of Christ but she has to be joined to Christ. Christ and His church are to be one. The church is the completion of Christ even as Eve was the completion of Adam. And even as they were made one in the flesh, so also is it so for Christ and His body. Glory to God !!

## THE FULNESS OF CHRIST

Once a clever man said, "If you believe in Jesus you shall be saved." That is what the Scriptures say in Acts 15:11. Then he added, "We are not saved no but we shall be saved if we believe". Such counsels come from the pit where the evil one lives. Such thoughts that proclaim we cannot know those who are saved and that only God knows those that are His are thoughts which are trapped in a garb of humility but in reality originate from a false understanding of the Word for it says, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God". (Romans 8:16).

In a similar manner many ridicule those who believe that His church will be made glorious here upon the earth. They poke fun at the church becoming one with Christ. This is because they attempt to understand these truths through their own intellect and knowledge. The apostle Paul says this unity and oneness between Christ and the Church, which is His body, is a great mystery and only few will understand it by the spirit (Ephesians 5:32). We need a spiritual accepting of these truths.

Another time someone said to me, "The true church will only be known when the Lord Jesus Christ comes down." Yes, perhaps they are happy to hold on to the verses which says we shall be like Him when He appears (I John 3:2) because they can live the way they want to live - unrighteously and in disobedience. These are thoughts that comes from a house which is indwelt by an unclean spirit that has found rest in the believer. Let us realize that an unclean spirit can find a place of rest in the life of a believer who has not allowed the Holy Spirit to deal and expose the carnal nature. A house made of our own thoughts and thoughts induced by an unclean spirit becomes a stronghold which needs to be brought under the dominionship of Christ. Satan relies on our own thoughts, attitudes and opinion to wage a warfare against the kingdom of God. People want to live according to their own ideas and try and take the shelter of Bible to justify themselves. This is a victory for Satan indeed. O how necessary it is for every believer to

yield to the Holy Spirit so that these strongholds may be revealed and pulled down through repentance. Paul explained that our success is based upon taking "every thought captive to the obedience of Christ" (II Corinthians 10:5). We must push such counsels that twist and nullify the Word of God to the remotest corner of our lives and say just as our Master did, "Get thee behind me Satan". The Lord knew the source of Peter's counsel. Some times such counsels and advice proceed from our own dear ones!! So many take a bit of Scripture here, add a bit of Scripture from there, mix them with their own ideas and come out with their own revelations!!

Beloved, we need to read and understand the Scriptures by the help of the Spirit of truth. A true Christian in whom the Holy Spirit is actively working will have a discernment concerning encroachments by the enemy.

In the book of Revelation we read that "his wife hath made herself ready" (Revelation 19:7). This refers to the church coming to a place of fullness and completion upon this earth. There are several other scriptures that refer to the corporate body of Christ coming to a place of fullness at the appropriate time. There is a sense in which Christ is incomplete without His body. The Scripture reveals this to those who have an ear to hear hear Him. Take Ephesians 4:13 for example and read it in context of what Paul says about the church, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of

Christ". There is a fullness of Christ that will be brought to completion even as this corporate body matures into a perfect man. May God truly open our eyes and ears to see these hidden truths.

When God looked upon Adam He saw in him an inconsistency in relation to His ultimate, eternal purposes. A finishing touch had to be put upon the canvas. Something was wanting which only the omniscient God knew, who knows the beginnings from the ends. The completion came about when Eve was brought forth and joined to Adam. We can say that Eve was the completion of Adam or the fullness of Adam or the glory or consummation of Adam. She took away His incompleteness and aloneness because she alone was made in his likeness and compatibility.

Beloved, it is no different as regards Christ and the Church. We need "The spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him (Ephesians 1:17). The apostle Paul whose understanding had been enlightened was able to write under the anointing of God, "God...gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all" (Ephesians 1:22 (b), 23). The word fullness as used by the Apostle Paul means "completion" And this is what Eve was to Adam. She was his complement, his completion. She was the one who took away Adams aloneness for she was very much like him and of his nature.

The church, you and I, are the completion of Jesus Christ, Glory to God. The church is His complement, His Fulness She (the church) is to take away the Last Adams aloneness, for she shall be very much like Him and of His nature. What a magnificent calling !! The fullness of Christ will fill all in all when the bride of the Lamb is ready to take her eternal place by His side as His wife. Beloved this is not a new doctrine; it is not an ideal of man. This is the plain Word of God in all its simplicity as inspired by the Spirit of God. The heavenly Father is looking for a fullness amongst a people. The Lord Jesus Christ is waiting in the heavens at the right hand of the Father for a people to be brought into maturity so that He may come into that fullness that filleth all in all. When the bride hath made herself ready she shall be joined to the Bridegroom and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ. And He (Christ and His body, the church) shall reign for ever and ever. Amen.

*"Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."*

***Philippians 3:15***

# CHURCH- THE GLORY OF JESUS

## 6

**W**e have been studying about God's great purpose for the church to become the very bride of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Scriptures declare that God has put all things under the feet of Christ and has made Him to be the supreme Head of the church which is His body as well as His fullness (Ephesians 1:22,23). We have seen that in a sense God almighty completed His work of creation only after He had put Adam to a deep sleep and brought forth a woman from his side. We have also rejoiced in the glorious truth that God's ultimate purpose was to join Adam and Eve that they may together be one flesh (Genesis 2:24). This union brought the creative magnificence of God to a majestic completion.

The Lord gave the apostle Paul a revelation to comprehend the great mystery which was that the relationship between Christ and the church is no different from that between Adam and Eve before the fall, for he writes so very lucidly –

*“Even so husbands should love their wives as (being in a sense) their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself.*

*“For no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and carefully protects it and cherishes it, as Christ does the church.*

*“Because we are the members (parts) of His body.*

*“For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall be joined to his wife and the two shall become one flesh **Genesis 2:24***

*“This mystery is very great, but I speak concerning (the relation of) Christ and the church.  
**Ephesians 5:28-32 (Amplified)***

What God did creatively in Adam and Eve is a facsimile of Christ and the church. Eve was birthed out of Adam’s side; she was created to be a glory unto Adam; she was made to be his completion. Eve had a separate personality; she was a different being in many ways though she was created in Adam’s likeness and image. Eve had the same heart, the same desires, the same hopes and longings; the same characteristics (body, soul and spirit), the same attributes and virtues as Adam had. And yet she was to be his help-mate and associate without any identity of her own.

She was detached and different from Adam and even so she was to be dependent upon him, in subjection to him and united to him. She was to be his help-mate as well as his splendour. O the great wisdom of God. *“How unsearchable are his judgements and His ways past finding out. For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Of who hath been His counselor?”* Who can question the wisdom and the knowledge of God?

Adam and Eve form a pattern and a mind a mould for us; they were the prototype, we are the substance and the body. What was true for Adam and Eve, is true for the church and Christ. The church, the bride of the Lamb, is a separate personality yet having His likeness and image. She has been brought forth from the Lord Jesus Christ. She has the same attributes, longings, potential and desires as the Lord and even so she is independent of Christ, her head. The church is to subject herself to first the Bridegroom and together they are to submit to the lordships of heavenly Father. This is the beautiful picture of the church in God’s word. That is why the apostle Paul says in Ephesians chapter 5 –

*“Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands,  
as unto the Lord.*

*“For the husband is even the head of the wife even  
as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the  
saviour Of the body.*

*“Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so  
let wives be to their own husbands in everything.*

*“Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved  
the church and gave himself for it”*

***Ephesians 5:22-25***

We all need a clear understanding of the placing of husbands and wives in Christ and their placing in the natural family. A lack of understanding on this vital matter leads to all kinds of trouble in families. When difficulties arise today, Christians take their problems to counselors and psychiatrists to seek psychological answers to their dilemma. But the reason for disorders in their married lives stem from an indistinct conception of our spiritual order as distinct from the domestic order.

Our spiritual ranking or order has its beginning in the creation account. Eve was created out of Adam and for Adam. She was not birthed to be his slave but to be an ‘help-meet’ for Adam even a life long partner who would totally merge in him to become one flesh. She was made to be the glory of the man and the very completion of Adam. We ought to realize that to begin with God “extended Himself” by creating Adam in His own image and likeness. And then God further extended Himself or manifested His love and grace by bringing forth another creation out of man. Therefore as the apostle Paul points out, *“the head of every man is Christ and the head of the woman is the man”* (I Corinthians 11:3).

We see the same equivalence in relation to Christ and the church, for the church was birthed for Christ and

from Him alone. She is the glory of Christ and His bride. God truly extended His good right hand to bring forth His only begotten Son, the last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ. And now God is preparing a bride for Him in the likeness and image of the Lord Jesus Christ who shall be His very help-meet or wife. Jesus the man is the image and glory of God the Father. The church, is the glory of the Man, Jesus Christ. Truly we need a spiritual insight to accept this fully into our lives. May the Holy Spirit help each one us to understand this and to live up to this principle in our lives.

Let us recapitulate Paul's writings on this matter in the book of I Corinthians chapter II and read it with a new awareness.

*“But I would have your know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.*

*“Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.*

*“But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head : for that is even all one as if she were shaven.*

*“For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.*

*“For a man indeed, ought not to cover his head, for as much as he is the image and the glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.*

*“For the man is not of the woman; but the woman  
of the man.”* **I Corinthians 11:3-8**

O how much we need the wisdom of God to understand these verses in the correct manner. Our lives will certainly be different if we appreciate the underlying principle and apply it to our situations.

Just as the man has not been created for the woman so also Jesus Christ is not for the church. Rather the church has been brought into existence for the Lord even the man, Jesus Christ. God’s desire is that the church be the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Just as Adam was no longer alone when Eve was created so also Christ is no longer alone now. Just as Adam found Even to be his kind, his likeness, his completion and his fullness, and yet she was different, so also Christ and the church.

Let us also know that God who is a God of live brought forth the woman after the man for another good reason. We have seen that in a sense Adam was incomplete till Eve was brought forth. This talks of there being a “difference’ between the first two created beings. If this difference were not there mankind would not have known what the true love of God is. Because of God’s great love for mankind He desired to have an outlet to reveal His nature of love upon the earth. God’s love is reflected in the union that existed between Adam and Eve, man and wife, Christ

and the church. The myriad dimension of His love is also seen in Eve as a mother. Had she not been brought forth, man would perhaps never have been able to experience the fullness of God's love. The qualities, which man is endowed with by God, namely, to love, to fellowship, to communicate and to share can now be expressed. God's love for man caused Him to sense that Adam was incomplete without Eve and in a sense even His Son would be incomplete without the church. O we are surely stepping into what were once mysterious, incomprehensible and veiled areas but may God give each of us grace to fathom that which are the hidden and impenetrable truths of God. He wanted us to provide an outlet for the satisfaction and delight of His own heart; He wanted a meaningful fellowship with a people in His own likeness. No wonder Paul says it is a mystery concerning Christ and the church.

## WE ARE OUTLETS NOT CHANNELS OF BLESSING

God in His wisdom chose or elected to bring about a difference between the man and the woman, though both would be partakers of His image and likeness. The difference was predestined and predetermined so that He may have an appropriate channel to manifest His love and ultimately His name be glorified and exalted. His conduit or channel was firstly Eve and then the church. Through them God made it possible to reveal His virtues concerning compassion, love,

longsuffering, patience and charity which are attributes we would not have known to the same extent and measure had there been no 'difference' between Adam and Eve.

In the family we see this predestined difference between man and woman as a God-ordained means to know of God's nature of love. In the turmoil that is taking place in families today in matters of relationship, we can know that there is one thing that will keep man and woman together and that is an understanding of God's love in our midst.

So the apostle Paul could write to husbands boldly, inspired by the Spirit of God, to love their wives and to the wives to submit themselves unto their own husbands that the love of the Father may be manifest in their midst. And he adds, "*submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God*" (Ephesians 5:21) that they may know that only when both obey God can His love truly be reflected in the family. If husbands and wives ignore this principle today they place themselves in a dubious position for they will never be able to build a true family. Nor can a family of God be formed outside of this principle of love for it is the basis also of the union of the bride and the Bridegroom.

There is a higher realm of life to which God is calling us in this hour. In this realm we see the church as a different personality. She is not identical to the Lord Jesus Christ but has her own individuality though she is to walk in union with Him. She is different from the Lord and yet in and

through the ‘difference’ she shall be a reflection of the Lord Jesus Christ. She has been made differently but she shall manifest the Lord.

Beloved, the Father wants to take us further into the depths of Jesus Christ. It is not enough to pray and ask God to make us “channels” of blessing to others. God wants us to manifest the life of His Son and not merely to be a channel of blessing to the people we meet. We are to be different from the kind of people we once looked upto and wanted to be. We are to become “outlets” of His life and His nature and character. We must begin to reflect His very life. The calling upon our lives is not to be the Lord Himself but to be His bride and to be brought into union with Him. We are to come to place of becoming “outlets” (not “channels”) to manifest His way and style and quality of life. Truly this calls for a great seriousness. O this is surely a high calling; none else can compare to it. We have been espoused to one husband, the Lord Jesus Christ and we are to be presented to Him as a chaste virgin having a life that would match His own life. He wants to endow us with His own life, His nature and His character so that we may be like Him. And being like Him, we as a church are also made dependent upon Him. He doesn’t want His bride to be a puppet nor a pip (channel) through which blessings can flow down to the earth. But she is to be another person and personality to walk in union with Christ. This calling is different. It demands a daily walk under the power of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

‘IT SEEMS GOOD TO THE HOLY GHOST,  
AND TO US”

*“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus  
bath made me free from the law of sin and death”.*

**Romans 8:2**

The church needs to operate by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. This is the law that has to work in the ‘body’ today. As members of His body we have to bring our lives into subjection to this law of the Spirit of life in Christ. It talks of a closer walk with the Lord, and a greater dependence upon Him in our day-to-day lives and of a deeper fellowship with the Lord through prayer. We are to move and live as His Spirit leads and guides us. We are to let our thoughts be governed by His presence within. We may have to abandon many legitimate activities in our lives which are not of the Holy Spirit. Such a life will place heavy demands upon us. We shall be called to give up things which we hold precious in our lives but which we have not yet surrendered to His lordship. We may even be engaged in many activities which seem acceptable because the Word of God says so, Yes, the Word of God may allow us to do some things but yet the law of the Spirit of life in Christ may not find it profitable for us to do them for this law seeks only to increase the life of Christ within us. As the apostle Paul says, *“Everything is permissible (allowable and lawful) for me; but not all things are helpful (good for me to do, expedient and profitable when considered with other things)”* (I Corinthians 6:12 (a) Amplified)

The Lord is calling His people to have a greater union, closeness and intimacy with the Bridegroom. The end time church is called to make herself ready for the Bridegroom. We must therefore lay aside the things of the self and give ourselves to walking in step with His Spirit. This end time church cannot be like the churches of today; she has to be different; she has to manifest His life; she has to walk after the man the Lord Jesus Christ and she must allow Him to control her conduct and her life style. This shall please the Holy Spirit and the church will be able to say, as Paul said,

*“For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary thing”.*  
**Acts 15:28**

Here the apostle Paul was referring to the joint decision taken by the early church to follow the leading of the Holy spirit in the matter pertaining to the circumcision of the Gentle believers. There was a oneness between the church at Jerusalem and the Holy Spirit regarding the sensitive subject of circumcision by the law. God had given the law but the time had come when it was to be laid aside for the inauguration and induction of a higher law that was of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Was it not enough that it seemed good in the sight of the Holy spirit leaving the apostles out of the picture? No, God wants His people to have His mind, to think as He thinks to speak as He speaks and to work as He, Himself works.

The Father wants the bride church to have the same

mind as the Bridegroom on all matters. This is the way Jesus walked. He said, *“I came down from heaven not to do mine own will but the will of him that sent me”* (John 6:38). God wants us to be walking in this light, at one with the Holy Spirit. We should also be able to proclaim, *“It seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us !!”*

In our natural lives we know that fathers and sons, husbands and wives and masters and servants may have the same mind on a few matters. Husbands and wives who think alike often begin to have likeness as they grow old together. But God is calling us to a deeper union in His Son. We are to be of one accord in the things of the Spirit.

The attainment of this calling may seem impossible to many; the way may appear unapproachable; the crest of the mountain may seem to be too distant and difficult but this is what God has for the end time church even the bride of the Lord Jesus. He shall have a bride of the nature of His Son, *“not by might nor by power but by the Holy Spirit”*. May God stir up our faith to bring us to a place where we do not draw back in discouragement and disappointment.

## THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE SAY ‘COME’

*“I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you These things in the churches. I am the root and the Offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.*

*“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let*

*him that hearth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come.. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely”.* **Revelation 22:16,17**

Is it not enough that the Spirit alone say, “Come”? No, in these verses we see that the Spirit and the bride are having the same mind for together they proclaim ‘come’. The end time church will be brought to a oneness with the Spirit of God. The response of the church to the Holy Spirit will be ‘Amen, come’. When the Spirit and bride come to this place of unanimity, beloved, the Lord’ Jesus Christ shall come and He shall no longer remain in the heavenlies. Glory to God on high!!

Let us meditate on this a while. Why has the Lord Jesus Christ not come back for so long? In the churches of this day there are loud callings of ‘Come Lord Jesus’ but the Lord has not come. They say ‘Maranatha’ with great gusto but the heavens are silent. Beloved, He will never come as long as the church has a mind of her own and moves in the strength of her carnal appetites. The false, backslidden church of today may continue to say, ‘Come, Lord Jesus’, “Come soon because unrighteousness has increased, persecutions have trebled, the very environment has become evil’ but the Lord will surely hold back because the church has not stopped compromising with the world and continues to partake of a system that is ridden with the worms of iniquity.

But the day is coming, beloved, when the true church will realize her calling of being a ‘bride’ and she will put on

her bridal garments. Let us arise to this calling. We may be limited in many ways ; there may be uncertainties, there may be difficulties, but let us not give in to the promptings and whispers of Satan who is ever waiting to deceive and beguile the church as he did to Eve. Let us give ourselves all the more to the moves of the Holy Spirit who wants to bring us into a oneness with Himself. Dearly beloved, to do you have a longing to draw close to God and to live this kind of life? Be sure in your heart that God longs for the same thing more than you. He has apprehended you. There is a “deep” in the heart of God that calleth ‘unto deep’ in the heart of His people.

*“The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the earth to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him”* **2 Chronicles 16:9**

God is seeking for a people who shall be bride for His Son. He is fashioning a people in the image and likeness of the Lamb of God so that in the days to come they may be joined together and be the completion of the last Adam. Bless your heart with this thought that God is moving towards His end purposes and He will bring them to pass. He is exceedingly jealous to perform a work upon His people.

*“For Zion’s sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness Therefore go forth as brightness, and the salvation Therefore as a lamp that burneth.*

*“And the Gentile shall seek thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new*

*name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name”.*

**Isaiah 62:1,2**

The Lord shall not rest till He brings forth a people who shall become the wife of the Lamb. He desires to give his own a new name and a new nature. The kingdoms of this world will acknowledge their beauty because it is the Lord who will cleanse, wash and adorn His people with His garment and ornaments.

*“Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.*

*“Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land anymore be termed Desolate : but thou shalt be called Hephsebah and thy land Beulah : for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married”.*

**Isaiah 62: 3,4**

In these encouraging verses we see that the desires of God ( to have a people who shall be as a bride for His son) will come to a place of consummation and fulfillment. God will join His people with His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ after He has brought them to a place of maturity, holiness and sonship. Praise the Lord!!

May the Holy Spirit imprint the desires of God upon our hearts so that we may ever call upon His name to fulfill these promises in our lives. His people will please Him and fulfil the desires of His heart. He shall take delight in these ones and shall no turn them away or forsake them. This is

the wonderful calling and destiny of the end time church. Glory to God!! He is bringing forth a bride church for His Son.

Many people are unable to believe this. They look at the present condition of the church and fail to identify themselves with what God desires to do. But God shall restore the church to a place of glory in and through His Son. Today it is a reality that the church by and large has profaned His name among the heathen. God has allowed them to be taken captive by the powers of darkness, but a day is coming when He will restore the church which is His body to greater glory than it has ever known before. Sometimes those who do not believe in the end time purposes of God ( to have a glorious church without spot and wrinkle) accuse us of having hopes that have no basis or foundation. They constantly indict and charge us for harbouring false hopes and for giving false messages to God's people. This also happened in the days of the prophet Jeremiah. He was accused of proclaiming a different message from the messages given by other prophets. But the Lord said to him. "\_\_\_\_\_ you are to influence them, not let them influence you! They will fight against you like a besieging army against a high city wall. But they will not conquer you for I am with you to protect and deliver you" (Jeremiah 15:19 (b), 20 (a) Living Bible). This message of God to have a glorious bride for His Son cannot be hidden. The Lord will protect it until it is spiritually fulfilled.

## THE ARMIES THAT FOLLOW HIM

*“And he saith unto me, write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And He saith unto me, these are the true saying of God.*

*“And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, see though do it not : I am thy fellow servant and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*

*“And I saw heaven opened and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make War.*

*“His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself.*

*“And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called the Word of God. “And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.*

*“And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.*

*“And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he tradeth the wine press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.*

*“And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.*

*“And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice saying to all fowls that fly in*

*the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God.*

*“That ye may eat the flesh of kings and flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.”*

**Revelation 19:9-18**

The book of end-times shows categorically that there shall be a people who will be united in the Lord. This shall occur after the marriage of the Lamb (Revelation 19:6-8). We see here a delightful picture of the Lord Jesus Christ upon a white horse followed by an army upon white horses, clothed in white garments of righteousness. They mirror a people who have been joined to Him and who share His name and His ministry and His authority. Such is the destiny of those who align themselves to His prophetic word in this day.

He that is upon the horse is Faithful and True ; His followers shall be carved out of the same Rock and shall reflect His faithfulness and purity. And out of His mouth came a sharp double-edged sword which is none other than the word of God. He and His army shall go out together to make war in righteousness. And they shall be clothed in fine linen having put on the whole armour of God. They shall smite the earth with a rod of iron (v-15). These are glimpses of the Lord and His bride-people; Christ the Head and His body; Christ and His many membered church, the new man upon this earth.

We note with joy that everything is not over once the bride has become the wife of the Lamb. That is in a way the beginning of God's plan and purpose. But over and beyond there is a war and much more to follow. We do not have all the revelations of that which has yet to occur. We speak yet in part – a little here, a little there, as Paul says, “We know in part and prophecy in part”. There are yet many gaps in our understanding of the revelations for the last days. The part we know is what He is pleased to reveal and which we are responsible to walk with Him. It is good to leave blanks spaces in our study charts for God to fill them in His time!! But this we know that the bride and the Bridegroom shall come together even as the Word of God says. Gone will be the days when the bride is saying and doing one things while the Bridegroom says and does another things. Oh No!! The heavenly Husband and the bride, which is His church, shall be in a total union. The Spirit and bride shall have one voice; they shall be of one accord. They shall have the same intents and purposes, the same plans, the same enemies and they shall jointly rule and reign and exercise judgement upon all things upon this earth.

Beloved, what we see in the churches today is only the gatherings of imperfect people not yet fully delivered from their selfish ways and Adamic nature; we see the churches moving in their own strength and understanding. But a day is dawning when the Holy Spirit and the bride will walk arm in arm. She shall follow after the Bridegroom and have His name, His authority and His power. They shall move

and wage a warfare together in judgement and righteousness.

The King of glory shall appear in Zion shortly. And His people shall be joined to Him and become one with Him. That which God is bringing forth shall be perfectly glorious. *“When the Lord shall build up Zion; he shall appear in glory”* (Psalms 102:16). All those people who are crying out to the Lord for the restoration of the glorious church, shall be a part of what God is doing.

Are you longing for the Lord Jesus Christ to come again? Then open your heart to what God is doing in this hour. Let us go on together. Flee from the bondage of the false church, the spirit of Babylon. Identify with those whom God is preparing to be made into a bride for His son. Blessed are they who await the great day of the marriage of the Lamb and give themselves to the preparation of God.

The apostle John gives the true purpose of the Gospel when he writes, *“These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that through believing ye might have life through His name”* John 20:31

Beloved, we are to have His life coursing through our veins. We are part of Him, bone of His bones, flesh of His flesh, members of His Body. We are to bear His image and add to His glory here upon this earth. The world, the heathen and the gentile shall see this end-time church, the bride-people and they will acknowledge that Jesus is the

Christ, the Son of the Living God. And the “earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” (Habakkuk 2:14).

We are His bride and his glory upon this earth. Let doubts and fears be cast out by the Spirit of God. He has decreed it according to His eternal word. God is exceedingly jealous for His bride to come into union with Him. His bride people in the earth are also exceedingly jealous for this to happen. The day is at hand that a fully adorned be shall say along with the Spirit ‘Come’!! Beloved there will be a responding to this cry in the heavenlies this time!!







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# WE SHALL REIGN UPON THE EARTH

## 1

**T**he Lord is doing a precious work in the earth in this hour. He is preparing His church to become a bride for His Son. She shall become His completeness and His fullness. If you will be a part of this 'bride' you will experience a purging and a cleansing as a preparation in your life. This 'true' bride must be made worthy of the Bridegroom Himself. She alone shall be His fullness. Let this sobering word grip each one of us in all seriousness. We need to take this word into our hearts, beloved people of God.

God desires to impart fresh life to His people. His purpose for us is that we manifest the life of a 'bride'. The teaching of the 'bride' and of the Church is not just 'doctrine' but it constitutes a life within us. And we need to know that

the Lord is not going to compromise on the quality and character of the bride. She is going to be made ready in these days. Jesus said, “*But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it*” (Matthew 7:14). Many in these days shall desire to be the ‘bride’ but only a few who give themselves to the preparations of the Holy Spirit shall be ready in that day. Beloved, doctrine will not help us to be ready for Him. We need to wholly give ourselves to the preparations of the Holy Spirit.

### “I KNOW WHERE THOU DWELLEST”

God is preparing His church to answer to the call of a bride for His Son. God is not fearful of the darkness all around, nor is He fearful of all the immorality, the unrighteousness and the corruption on the earth. The Almighty doesn’t get nervous seeing all the iniquities in high places. God allows it that we may prepare ourselves in this hour. He wants His people to be prepared in this hour. There are many who say that the church will suddenly be taken out of the earth. This has become a doctrine amongst many Christians. Beloved people, God is not going to take the church away suddenly from the earth. God will not risk taking away His church at this time; but first there needs to be a work of preparation in the church.

The thought that God will take His church away because of evil is not in line with God’s thoughts. In Chapter

two of the book of Revelations we read of the church at Pergamos that existed in the midst of great evil:

*“I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan’s seat is; and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.”*

**Revelations 2:13**

Note carefully that in this portion of the Scriptures, Satan is mentioned twice. It seems that Pergamos was the citadel and the headquarters of Satan. The Lord says to the saints in Pergamos, ‘I know where you are dwelling.’ God knows where His true churches are. God did not remove the church just because Satan had his headquarters at Pergamos. The devil had made a fortress in Pergamos; he had made Pergamos his capital. This can give us a good idea of all the evil things that must have been happening at Pergamos. Despite this, the Lord did not take away the church from that place. Instead, He gave the church a comforting word and said, “I know where you are dwelling.” The Lord knows where we are. He knows that we live in the midst of an unrighteous and perverse generation. Just because there is darkness all around, we cannot leave and run away. We are to walk in holiness in the midst of the pervading licentiousness, immorality, depravity and every form of degradation and corruption. The Lord does not remove His people from the midst of surrounding unbelief and iniquity. Let us understand this well. God is not going to take His

church to a place of ease and safety. **He desires His church to function in the midst of the evils of this time and to yet become more holy.**

*“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy let him be filthy still: and he that is holy let him be holy still.”*

**Revelation 22:11**

We need to know this with all our hearts. The Lord is not going to take His people out of every kind of persecution, suffering and difficulty. He wants us to remain in the place of our calling and diligently pursue our calling. He would like us to be faithful. He wants us to hold fast to this precious life in Christ Jesus.

Sometimes people say, “O brother, you have no idea of the difficulties that I am facing. Truly, I am working under very adverse circumstances. My office is worse than Sodom!” The Lord would like to whisper into our ears that He knows exactly where we are. The Lord knows every difficulty we face. There is a divine purpose for the sufferings of the godly which is not known to man due to his imperfect knowledge. But God knows the outcome of every situation we face even before it ends. Remember Job. Let us realize that there is no way of escape from such a place or situation in our life. The Lord wants His people to remain in the place of His will so that they may cry out to Him in distress. In His great love He desires to prepare us to become a ‘bride’

unto the Lord. God wants to prepare His people in these days.

The saints at Pergamos were faithful. They were given to the Lord. Although Satan moved his headquarters to Pergamos the Lord did not take them out of that place. God wants His church to stand in the midst of the surrounding atmosphere of evil and corruption. It is in such a hostile environment that the Lord would like His saints to be faithful to His calling and to His vision. It is comparatively easy to stand for Christ when our unbelieving neighbours and people at the place of our work are tolerant and do not interfere with what we are doing. It is only when the atmosphere becomes hostile and the people are aggressive and belligerent, that there is a testing of one's faith and commitment.

## WE SHALL NOT DEPART FROM THE EARTH

The Lord wants His people to declare the light He has given them. He wants us to tell others of the truth that He has put within us. When the light in one's house is extinguished one reaches for a candle to provide light. The candle does not proclaim that it is dark too for it to bring forth its light! Even so it is with the church. She must remain in the place of her calling upon the earth and bring forth the light she has been given. **The Lord is not going to take His 'bride' out of the earth to have a life of**

**ease, comfort and an absence of suffering.** Oh, may the Lord help us to understand this. He is not concerned about the blessings we desire; He is not mindful about the life of ease we seek in the flesh; but, He is deeply concerned about our spiritual lives and our growth in the things of God. We are not here to make our fortunes and then go to heaven when the time comes. God has saved us with a higher purpose; He has something upon His heart; He wants us to know Him and do His will upon the earth. We have, therefore, to live with great seriousness. This is a time of preparation upon the earth and not one of departing from the earth. This is a time to remain here, upon this earth where we can be joined with other members of the Body of Christ to fulfil the purposes of God. One thing that we can be sure of in these days is that as the 'bride' makes herself ready to meet the Bridegroom, many details of the word of God will be opened to the hungry ones in a new way.

Let us see this truth afresh. The church of God is to prepare herself to meet the Lord at His second coming and then to reign with Him. We need to understand very clearly that every word of Scripture will be fulfilled. Let no one say that we are declaring something that is the product of our imagination. We affirm categorically that the Lord Jesus Christ shall come and there shall be a catching up in the air to meet with the Lord as it is written in 1 Thessalonians Chapter 4. Many people have dubbed us as those who do not believe in the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. But they are mistaken and they have been deceived by the

accuser of the brethren who is also the father of lies. There is no doubt that we shall be caught up to meet with the Lord in the air. Even as we prepare for that momentous event let us look to the Holy Spirit to make all things clear to us. Let the Spirit minister to us as we look at the words in the Bible:

*“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.*

*“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.*

*“For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.*

*“For the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:*

*“Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”*

**1 Thessalonians 4: 13 - 17**

*“Behold I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,*

*“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed.”*

**I Corinthians 15: 51, 52**

Why is the Lord maturing the Church if she is meant to fly away any moment? What is the purpose? The saints who are hungry for the truth of His word must first settle this vital question. No other teaching in the church world has so rocked the church to sleep and to bondage than this teaching — the any moment return of Jesus. This had never been the sound teaching of the early apostles and the other true ministries of God till the year 1830 AD.

These statements may jar you and even shock your senses. Saints of God, it is my prayer that you may keep your life open to hear this truth. Before we go ahead, let me share a bit about the origins of this teaching. The Encyclopedia Britannica, Volume 12 (issue of 1966), pages 648 to 649, describe a person named Edward Irving and his movement called the Irvingite Movement, also known as the Catholic Apostolic Church. He was ex-communicated by the London Presbytery, and in 1833, he was condemned and deposed from the ministry of the Church of Scotland because of his controversial teaching concerning the sinfulness of Christ's humanity. It was in his own Catholic Apostolic Church that this false teaching was first heard. It all began when a young Scottish girl named Margaret Macdonald went into a trance and described a vision in which she said that she saw the saints departing from the earth at the return of the Lord, before the tribulation. Her revelation was recorded in a book written by R N Norton and printed in London in 1861. This book is now out of print and almost impossible to obtain. Prior to this incident the church, back to the days

of the apostles, had always taught that the church would go victoriously through the tribulation. There is no record of an ‘any moment’ return of the Lord before 1830. The revelation and utterances of Miss Macdonald were supported by the utterances of Mrs. J B Cardale on April 30, 1831 at a home prayer meeting.

The modern doctrine and phraseology of ‘imminent return’ arose from the supposed revelations of Miss Macdonald. Beloved, let us note carefully that this modern teaching was not from the Holy Scriptures. Edward Irving accepted the revelation and began preaching and teaching it. It was taught in prophetic meetings at Powerscourt House in Ireland, which was attended by the Plymouth Brethren organizer, John Darby. Irving’s views influenced Darby, CH Mackintosh, and CI Scofield. Later, this new theory was popularized through Scofield’s Bible and bible notes which were very famous in Christian circles. In the early part of this century, this teaching reached its peak in popularity through the writings of Clarence Larkin.

When the Lord poured out His Holy Spirit at the turn of the century, the Lord emphasized the fact of the nearness of the coming of Christ. But the Pentecostals got no new light at that time on the specific event of His coming. But they began to teach what the non-Pentecostals (namely Plymouth Brethren) had been teaching based on the so called revelations of Miss Macdonald. Please remember that the Plymouth Brethren denounced the outpouring of the Holy

Spirit and speaking in tongues in our day as being demon-inspired. Saints, reflect upon this—we are being taught about the coming of the Lord by men who claimed that the baptism of the Holy Spirit experience was of the devil.

## ONE TAKEN. . .THE OTHER LEFT

The clear teaching of the Scriptures were mutilated by those who strove to prove the new theory;

*“But as the days of Noah [were], so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*

*“For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark,*

*“And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.”*

*“Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.*

*“Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.” **Matthew 24: 37 - 41***

Many songs were written, and sermons were preached, to urge us to be ready to be ‘taken’ any moment. But the Bible teaches exactly the opposite. **It was the wicked that were ‘taken’ in Noah’s day, and the righteous were left to inherit the earth.** The above Scripture portion says, “so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be”. Will it be

different now? NO. It will be as it was in the days of Noah. That is what the Bible says. While Matthew says that “the flood came and took them all away”, Luke gives the same account , “and the flood came and destroyed them all”. So to be ‘taken’ means to be destroyed by the judgments that are coming on the earth. Do you still want to be taken?

I wish to say that some are slowly seeing the difference and are open to change. I wish to quote here from the Pentecostal Evangelical Issue of January 1, 1967, which is the ‘official voice of the Assemblies of God’, page 4, Springfield, Missouri. On page 9 of this magazine, in an article about the 24th Chapter of Matthew we read “Contrary to what is taught.....rapture is not evident here. Those ‘taken’ are the wicked, who are taken in judgment - just as the wicked of Noah’s time (mentioned in the preceding verse) were taken into judgment. **Those ‘left’ are the righteous who remain to enjoy the blessing of the Millennium which will follow Christ’s return to earth.** Yet these denominations today are unwilling to accept the pure word of God and come out of their tradition.

### “AT THE LAST TRUMP”

*“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

**I Corinthians 15: 52**

*“For the Lord Himself shall descend from the heaven*

*with a shout, with the voice of the archangel.”*

**1 Thessalonians 4:16**

When the Scripture speaks about the ‘last’ trumpet, it indicates that there are other trumpets as well. The ‘last’ trumpet cannot be sounded first! Then what about the other trumpets? Have you heard the other trumpets being blown? How can the last trumpet be blown at any moment if one has not yet heard the first trumpet? Beloved let us understand that the trumpets have to be blown in sequential order. Many do not want to hear the trumpet sounds that precede the ‘last’ trumpet; but they desire to hear the last trumpet at any moment! The ‘last’ trumpet is described as the ‘seventh’ trumpet in Revelation 10:7 and 11:15 -19. Jesus placed the sign of His second coming “...*immediately after the tribulation of these days.....shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven.....and he shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet....*” (Matthew 24:29-31).

**MEN OF GOD  
WHO CHANGED THEIR VIEW**

Many men of God who had kept their lives open to the Holy Spirit have changed their views concerning the rapture. I wish to quote Dr. Oswald J Smith of the People’s Church, Toronto, a well known Bible teacher of this century who has found wide acceptance amongst scholars and theologians. In his booklet, “Tribulation or rapture - which?” he writes as follows-

“I have always held the view that the Rapture precedes the Revelation by some seven years, and that the church, therefore, will not go through the Tribulation. Now after years of study and prayer, I’m absolutely convinced that there will be no rapture BEFORE the Tribulation, but that the Church will undoubtedly be called upon to face the Antichrist, and that Christ will come at the close and not the beginning of that period. I believed the other theory simply because I was taught it by WE Blackstone in his book “Jesus is Coming”, the Scofield Reference Bible and prophetic conferences and Bible schools; but when I began to search the Scriptures for myself I discovered that there is not a single verse in the Bible that upholds the pre-tribulation theory, but that the uniform teaching of the word of God is of a post-tribulation rapture, pre-millennial always, everywhere pre-millennial, but post tribulation.”

“One day, in the early twenties, I began preaching on prophecy. I had taken my people through Daniel without difficulty. Then came Mark 13, Luke 21, and Matt 24 and 25. But lo and behold, no sooner had I started on Matt 24 than I got into trouble. I had announced that I would deal with Matt 24 at the next service. Hundreds had gathered. I was in a maze, for I was perplexed. So I took a verse here and there through the Chapter and thus satisfied the people for that hour at least. But now the next meeting was coming. What was I to say? I need not point out that there is no pre-tribulation rapture in Matt 24. The Second Coming is unmistakably placed “immediately after the tribulation”

(Verse 29), and I was forced to the conclusion that if the Rapture was to be 'before' the Tribulation, the Lord Jesus Christ would certainly have given some hint of it at least. He was dealing with the end times of the age. It is unthinkable that He would have spoken so minutely of the Tribulation without stating that the Church would escape. Instead He purposely led his hearers to the belief that His followers would be in it. Hence, I was staggered, nor could I honestly defend my previous position. So when I again faced the people I said sufficient to let them know that I questioned my former stand and saw evidence of a post-tribulation Rapture. For as I read Matt 24 and 25, I saw that many things as prophesied by the Lord Jesus Christ, simply had to take place before Jesus could come, namely "all these things" (verse 33) especially the prediction regarding the preaching of the Gospel. See Mark 13:10 and note the significance of the word 'first'. Thus since God's future programme could not be set aside, **there could be no 'any moment' expectation of Christ's Return.** We are to watch, watch as prophecy after prophecy is fulfilled, ever looking forward to His Appearing."

"There came into my hands a copy of a book by Dr. Henry W Frost, the then Home Director of the China Inland Mission. It was entitled "Matt 24 and the Revelation", a volume of over 300 pages. About the same time I got hold of a book by James H McConkey, called "The Book of Revelation" and another - perhaps the best of all - by Edmond Shackleton (England), entitled "Will the Church

Escape the Great Tribulation.” Before I had read them through I was firmly convinced that there would be no Rapture before the Tribulation, and that I had done wrong in promising the Church an escape instead of preparing her for the terrible ordeal that must most surely be awaited. My “any moment” theory could not be sustained. All who held the pre-millennial Coming of Christ were, till about sixty years ago, (the book was written in 1890) of one mind on the subject.”

“Recently I got hold of that remarkable book “Tribulation to Glory” by H.A. Baker, in which he wrote “For eighteen centuries the fundamental principle of tribulation to glory was the universal belief of the truly born again members of Church.” And then he goes on to show that the new pre-tribulation rapture teaching was first proclaimed as a direct revelation by a woman in Edward Irving’s church, and then taken up by John Nelson Darby (and the Scofield Reference Bible) in direct contradiction to the teaching of the Church for eighteen hundred years. George Mueller opposed it; so did Benjamin Wills Newton; so did Dr. S P Tregelles and other Brethren, but all in vain.”

“I am sure that with the true child of God it is not a matter of preference but of truth. Does God’s word say so? Why then rebel? Is not His plan best? Besides, what difference does it make so long as we are ready? **“Scriptural preparedness” is the only important factor after all.**”

“I wonder if we have been lulling the Church with a false security? Can it be that we have been preaching an easy escape? Ought we to prepare the Church for the greatest of ordeals? Should not our teaching harden her for the fires of the Tribulation? What kind of soldiers are we training? I’m afraid that we have been guilty and that God will certainly hold us responsible for the type of Christian our preaching is producing. **We need men and women today of the martyr spirit....**”

“I have a list of nearly seventy Bible teachers who have proclaimed this view of the Return of Christ. Among them, in addition to those who have written the above books, there are such names as WJ Erdman, Charles R Erdman, Dr. Campbell Morgan, Dr. AB Simpson, Dr. JW Thirtle, Dr. Charles T Cook, Alexander Reese, George E. Ladd (Fuller Theological Seminary)..... To ignore the convictions of such spiritual leaders is impossible.”

“We BELIEVE that this was the teaching of our Lord and His Apostles. We believe it was held by the early Church and by the Middle Ages who had any light on the Second Advent. We believe, too, that it was the teaching of the Early Brethren and that no other view was generally accepted among them until the ‘any moment’ Secret Rapture, Pre-Tribulation, or Two-Stage Coming theory of a vision was taught by EDWARD IRWING, as a result of a vision received by a woman in his Church. This Any Moment teaching is a ‘novel’ doctrine.”

We have quoted the writing of this man of God so that you may search the word and also your own hearts. There will be a coming forth of the Lord from the heavens for sure. Who could ever stop that? This the Father hath planned in Eternity! **Those who are alive and remain shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air even as the Word of the Lord proclaims.** We have to wait upon the Lord for the Holy Spirit to unravel and make everything clear. One thing we know for sure is that as the ‘bride’ makes herself ready to meet the Bridegroom’ the details of these verses will be made clear.

**Today while many are caught up with the departure of the ‘church’ or the ‘saints’, we would like to be caught up with the coming of the Lord.** We do not want to declare the disappearing of the church from the earth, but rather, the appearing of the Lord of Glory.

Most people are naturally inclined to grab any straw that will help to defend them in their present position or teaching, while rejecting the truth that would be most clearly evident if they are willing to accept it. It’s hard to honestly and fairly consider and weigh every interpretation of the Scripture on its own merits. More than this we are by nature cowards! We are afraid to act on the truth we see, because of the physical, mental or spiritual pain honest acceptance and execution of the truth will involve. Let us be honest and accept the truth. This is the time of preparation upon the earth by being joined with one another as members of

the Body of Christ to fulfill the purposes of God here, in the earth. The Lord is zealous to bring forth a Bride in the end-times. It is time to prepare. He that hath an ear, let him hear.

# THE CALLING OF A BRIDE

## 2

*Why does the Lord Jesus Christ want a bride for Himself?*

*Why is He looking for a bride?*

**I**n the book of Ephesians we read that He gave Himself to her that He may have for Himself a glorious bride (Ephesians 5:25-27). The reason the Lord is wanting a bride for Himself is, however, not very clear in this passage. Why does the Lord really need a bride and what will be her role when she is together with the Bridegroom?

To understand the things of this “New Creation” we need to turn to the book of Genesis which is also known as the ‘book of beginnings’. When God made the heavens and the earth He set up many types and shadows so that man could understand His purposes. The Lord has given us a clue of what He had in mind for His church from the very

beginning. The first Adam was a figure or a shadow of Him who was to come.

*“Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.”* **Romans 5: 14**

The first Adam was only a shadow of the substance, namely the Lord Jesus Christ. The first Adam was a type, but Jesus is the reality. Adam was not the fullness of God’s desire and does not represent the full desire or intention of God. He did not represent the complete image and likeness of what God wanted. When the Almighty God created man upon the earth, His intention was to bring forth a man of a much higher order. Adam, however, fell from that place into sin. So when we see the redemptive work of God we should realize that **the purpose of God is not only to recover man from the fall but it goes beyond. God’s desire is to raise the race of Adam to a level far above sin, beyond the forgiveness of sin and reserving a place in heaven!**

Was God’s end purpose achieved when the race of Adam was saved from sin through the Lord Jesus Christ? No, not at all. **Saving mankind from sin was the first step in the whole process of redemption.** When God created Adam He intended something specific and tremendous through Adam but that intention of God has not been fulfilled because of Adam’s sin. Now God in His

redemptive work is lifting up the race of Adam from sin through the work of Jesus upon the cross. Oh praise God that Jesus came, died for us and rose up again from the dead. But this is not the end of God's plan and purpose. **God's redemptive plan begins when one takes the first step and is born again. But there is yet a further work of the Holy Spirit that needs to be done to bring about a further transformation.** God would like the redeemed man to be like the first Adam before he fell and moved on to the very fullness of the intentions of God. Therefore, it is not enough to be saved from sin. This does not mean that the work of Christ is of little value. It means that God desires His people to have the nature of the second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ who never had any sin in Him. The man who has been saved from sin needs to be available to God so that the full intentions of God can be realized. The scope of our redemption is much greater than we normally think. God's redemptive work has many more far-reaching implications than meets the eye.

The first chapter of Ephesians is really remarkable. It is a window to the true purposes of God. Therein we can see what God intended through Jesus Christ before the foundations of the world. There are many verses that increase our understanding of God's purposes, but here are a few verses that transport us into the very thoughts of God.

*"That in the dispensation of the fullness of times  
he might gather together in one all things in Christ,*

*both which are in heaven , and which are on earth; even in him:*

*“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,”*

*“And had put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is the body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all”.*

**Ephesians 1:10, 18, 22**

Beloved, may God, the Holy Spirit, open your eyes of understanding to see the great calling upon your life. It is not merely to be saved from sin. Our calling is not merely to go to heaven to be with the Lord. It is not only to have peace and joy in this strife-torn world. **God wants us to be the full expression of His purposes.** So, when we talk of restoration we do not limit its scope to the recovery of man to a place one is forgiven of his sins. True restoration covers a much larger area as it embraces the entire and full intentions of God for mankind. Let us not look at restoration as merely a backward going; in its true content it is not a restoration of something which has been lost but it is primarily a moving forward. We can be sure that the laws and foundational principles in the church will be restored back to the church; that is the first and foremost thing. But her restoration goes beyond to taking her rightful place beside the Bridegroom in the ages to come. **The church today has to march forward from a place of merely appreciating and gathering themselves to the truth of**

the word to a place of being the ultimate and full expression of God's purposes upon this earth.

## CHURCH - A HELP MEET FOR HIM

*“And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field: but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.”*

**Genesis 2:20**

When the Lord wanted Adam to have a companion He caused Adam to search the whole animal world and to name every animal and bird so that he could search and see if there was anything suitable to be his companion. Nothing that God had created till that time was suitable for Adam as a companion and help mate.

The Lord has given a beautiful picture of Christ and the church here. Just as nothing suitable was found in all the creation to provide a help mate for Adam so also in all creation there was nothing suitable as an help mate for Christ, the Son of God. And so God brought the Church into being as He also created Eve when nothing else was found as a life companion for Adam. O, glory hallelujah! Eve was made so that she may be a suitable help for Adam. **The spiritual Eve, which is the church, was also made for Christ as His help-mate.** The Lord needs a bride as a companion and a life partner. The bride that God has planned for His Son is not the kind that we see in the natural.

Nor will this 'bride' only be concerned with having an eternal life through Christ Jesus. God has a great purpose for the bride of Christ upon the earth.

Hear what the book of Revelation has to say about this 'bride'.

*"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*

*"And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.*

*"And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God."*

**Revelation 19:7-9**

There is a tremendous prospect for the church in the purposes of God. The church has a place of great honour and responsibility in the purposes of the Almighty. And let us also note carefully that immediately after the marriage of the Lamb we don't see Christ and His church living an easy life. The Lord needs a bride not to merely have companionship but to wage a war upon this earth!

*"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war."*

*"And the armies which were in heaven followed*

*him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.”* **Revelation 19:11, 14**

The church will be with the Lord in a battle. The Lord needs His church to perform a great work upon the earth. The church, the bride, shall be together with the Lord to establish His kingdom upon the earth and to make war with the unrighteous in the earth. We read in the above verses that an army of mighty men followed the Lord Jesus Christ. “And the armies which were in heaven followed him...”

We need to know that the marriage of the Lamb will not be like a natural marriage where the bride has a passive role to play. This marriage of the Lamb will be quite different. The bride, the glorious church, has a definite role to play. May the Lord open our eyes of understanding.

**The Lord needs a bride to go forth in the earth to judge the unrighteous and to make war against Satan.**  
Do you believe that the church shall judge the earth?

## THE SAINTS SHALL JUDGE THE EARTH

*“Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?”*

*“Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?”*

*“Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how*

*much more the things that pertain to this life.”*

**1 Corinthians 6: 1 - 3**

We need to know , even as the Lord reminded the Corinthian church, that **we are called to be a part of the bride to make war and to judge the earth.** Now if we have such a high calling why do we live at such a low level where we are involved in quarreling, back-biting, and many other deeds of unrighteousness? As we are called to judge the world, why do we not first judge ourselves and our own lives? So many of us have deep-seated, uncommitted desires. So many have complex problems, ego hassles, personality quirks and secret pursuits after the flesh. Yet, we do not judge our lives.

Beloved, we are called to judge our lives according to the living Word and not according to the lives of other believers or the opinions of man. The living Word is of God. It creates within us the desires of His heart. The living, creative word proceeds from the mouth of the Lord and it comes to pass simply because the Lord hath spoken it to obedient hearts. When we hear the word that comes from the throne through God’s servants who truly speak a living word, then that word will bring into being that which God declares through His word and we shall surely change. We are to judge our lives by the living word of God that is able to change our thought patterns, our motives, and the deep set desires of the natural man. Unless we first judge ourselves we can in no way be in a position to judge others.

*“If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.*

*“I speak to your shame. Is it so, there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?”*      **1 Corinthians 6: 4, 5**

It is a shame if we do not judge our lives with the word of God. The saints at Corinth were called to judge the world and even the angels but they failed to judge their lives. Beloved, is there anything in your heart towards another brother or even a neighbour? God is not going to minimize His purposes; **He is not going to reduce His standards so that the saints will qualify.** This is a serious word for all those who are hearing the voice of the Spirit in this hour. The unrighteous, the unholy and the uncircumcised shall not walk this way. Those who desire and thirst after this call of God shall definitely prevail and press into higher things in the Lord. Let it be our prayer to be a people who will judge the affairs of our daily lives till we are found to be acceptable in the sight of the Lord.

The apostle Paul said, *“For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.”* (1 Corinthians 4:4) He was not evading or escaping the responsibility of judging his own life. He depended upon the judgment of God. The judgments of God are very different from our own judgments. When the children of Israel sinned against God, they were immediately subjected to the divine judgments of God in one form or another. At

the same time the gentiles were living in sin and continued to live in sin but God never judged them. The reason for this is that God's judgments towards His people are always given in love and mercy. That is why we read, "*For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.*" (1 Corinthians 11:31). When we are judged by God we are chastened of the Lord so that we should not be condemned by the world. Surely God is looking upon His people with mercy so that we may judge our lives and qualify to judge the earth as His bride.

### "A VEIL UPON THEIR HEART"

The Word says that in the time of Moses there was a veil upon the hearts of the people. "*But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart.*" (2 Corinthians 3:15). The Amplified Bible says, "*down to this very day whenever Moses is read there is a veil upon their minds and hearts.*" It is true that there is a veil upon the hearts of people when they read the Word of God even today. Many are not able to see this simple truth. The life of Paul, the apostle, also shows us that having a knowledge of the Scriptures is not enough. **We need a revelation by the Holy Spirit to understand the truth of the Gospel.** Paul was a 'Hebrews of the Hebrews' and taught of Gamaliel, a famous teacher of the times. Yet, having all the knowledge of the Scriptures he indulged in persecuting the church. Does it not seem strange and contrary? He did not persecute the Christians because he had a personality problem, an unknown fear or a

superiority complex. No, he went after the Christians because he thought that that was the right thing according to the Word of God. Though he was very learned, he did not have any spiritual insight or revelation of the purposes of God from the Holy Spirit. When Paul read the Scriptures before he met the Lord on the road to Damascus there was a veil before his eyes and he could not discern the truth. It was only when the Lord opened his eyes that he was able to perceive the things of the Spirit.

Let us therefore earnestly pray to the Spirit of Truth to reveal the things of God to us this day. The word of God says in 2 Corinthians 3:16, *“Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.”* There are several people who have been hearing the word of God for many years but they have not received a revelation of the word by the Spirit. The word ‘it’ in this verse talks of the heart. When they shall turn to the Lord in their hearts then they shall understand. When the veil is taken away then the Spirit of God will do a work in their lives. That is what we read in verse seventeen.

*“Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”* **2 Corinthians 3:17**

When the heart turns to God and there is a strong desire and a longing for the things of God, then the eyes are opened and the veil is removed. This brings a freedom from bondage. The stripping away of the veil reveals something precious.

*“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord”*  
**2 Corinthians 3: 18**

When the veil from before the eyes is removed then we get an ‘open face’ and we can begin to see the truth in God’s word. If the heart of an individual has difficulties to understand the pure word of God but turns with a longing and a desire to God, there shall certainly be a removal of the veil over his eyes. He shall begin to see God’s purposes as in a glass moving from glory to glory, face to face, until the Lord shall appear in Zion! *Hallelujah.*

The Lord would like to have a ‘bride’ that has had the veil removed from before her eyes and her heart. The veil of prejudices, of unbelief, of hard-heartedness, of doubts and apprehensions must be removed before she can enter into His presence. **The calibre and quality of the Son’s bride needs to match God’s requirements for the heavenly bride.** The Lord would like His bride to be ready and prepared in this hour. Let this message prepare the bride. May His true ministries and His true servants who are hearing this word by the Spirit declare this to the people in the earth today. The Spirit of God is revealing the plans and purposes of God even to our generation. We need to give ourselves to the Lord and to the Holy Spirit these days that we may discern that which the Spirit has for us. Let our prayer be to be in a place of hearing these days. We know

that what God is revealing to us He is also revealing to all those who are hungering after the Lord. But we all need to be quite certain that we are in a place of hearing the Spirit of God and that we are not caught up in any activity that diverts us from this holy purpose.

## THE BRIDE MUST PREPARE HERSELF

If it were possible to put what the Holy Spirit is saying to the churches today in just one word it would be the word PREPARE ! This is surely an hour of preparation for His people. The Lord is preparing a bride for the Bridegroom upon the earth. God has saved each one of us so that we may, individually and corporately as a church, eventually qualify to be the 'wife' of the Lamb. He has not saved us so that we may have the freedom to live in the way we like; nor has He saved us only to reach out to others or to enable us to have victory over sin. The Lord's ways are very much higher than our ways! **He has saved us with a much higher purpose in mind.** God wants us to be an eternal part of His divine intentions. Our salvation does not lie in going to heaven when we die. It is not enough to be thankful to God for His word unto the churches. He would like us to be completely united to Christ. Let us therefore keep our heart and our minds open so that the Spirit of God can make inroads into our lives. The Lord has brought us to a new place in Him so that we may be fully established in His body. He has given us new life so

that we may experience His preparations as a bride in these days. He is continually cleansing and purging us so that the holy 'bride' may be adorned with all that the Father's heart desires for the bride of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The church has come to a place of intimacy with the Lord; she has to realize that she has a special relationship with the Lord which is to last for ever and ever. Beloved, we need to be reminded that He is going to come back again for a holy bride. So, if we are hearing what the Spirit is saying to the churches in these days, we would know that God, the Father, desires the church to prepare for the times ahead. The church has got to be a 'bride' that is worthy of the Bridegroom; she must be prepared to take her place beside the Bridegroom; she must be ready to be His complement, His counterpart and His completeness.

Chapter 19, verse 7 of the book of Revelation shows us that the 'bride hath made herself ready'. In these days this word will prepare the bride. The declaration of His word by his ministries and by the Spirit will prepare the heart of the bride. **The true quality of the bride is that she has a great love for the word of God.** She refuses to pay lip service to the word; she shall have a hunger and a longing to live the word in her life. Let us therefore appropriate this word into our lives. Is there a strong desire to make the word a part of your life? Is there a true love for the word? Is there a desire in you to gather together at every place that the word is heard and shared by the saints?

Many have twisted and misrepresented the true word of God. Many have used the word of God in unfair ways. There have been grave mistakes in the past. But the Spirit of God is calling the church to be cleansed by the word. He shall wash her by the word of God and rid her of every spot and wrinkle. Those who are part of the 'bride' will surely recognize this word and will present themselves as a pure and chaste bride for the Lord.

The Lord is now sounding a new word to His people to prepare His bride. His true ministries are hearing what the Spirit is saying, and they are declaring a 'living word' in the earth today. A word that will prepare His people.

*"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word."* **John 17: 20**

The Lord said that he prays for all those who believe in Him according to THEIR word. The word that God will give to his disciples and followers will become 'their' word. **God will grant a word to His ministries so that through their word the church will be brought to a place of cleansing even in this time.** Their word is not something that is a figment of their imaginations; it is the word that God gives for His church.

Caleb and Joshua brought a word to the Lord that they were well able to go forth into the land of Canaan. This was THEIR word. Yet, when they declared this word unto the people they were not able to believe them for they

thought it to be their opinion. The majority said that it was an impossible word. The people received a clear word from the Lord but they were not able to believe it. The Lord said, ‘They have not refused you but they have refused me’. So the word of Caleb and Joshua was not their opinion but it was a word that originated in the heart of God.

*“Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be seeing I know not a man?”*

*“And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”*

*“And behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.”*

*“For with God nothing shall be impossible.”*

*“And Mary said, Behold the hand maid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.”*

**Luke 1:34- 38**

Let us pray that we may be in a place of hearing His voice in these days. We know that what God is revealing to us He is also revealing to all those who are hungering after the Lord. But we all need to be quite certain that we are in a place of hearing the Spirit of God and that we are not caught up in any spurious activity that diverts us from this holy purpose.

The Spirit of God is calling us to be a 'bride' who shall be worthy of our illustrious Bridegroom; she must be prepared to take her place beside the Bridegroom; she must be ready to become His complement, His counterpart and His completeness. He is speaking this word. He is saying that the barren shall bring forth. The angel said that with Him nothing is impossible. This was uttered in relation to the bringing forth. It was not said in connection with the wealth of this world but it was said regarding the bringing forth of an holy thing. It is only the carnal mind that thinks the Lord will do the 'impossible' so that the individual may obtain the desire of his heart! Let us take this word into our hearts; that with God nothing is impossible. Another translation says, 'No word of God shall be void of power'. God's word shall never be without power.

In the fullness of time the barren shall bring forth. **There is a calling upon our lives to prepare.** God is looking for a 'bride' upon the earth. Let the veil be removed from our hearts and mind to perceive the purposes of God. Let us judge ourselves for our calling is to judge and to make war so that His kingdom may be established upon this earth. Beloved, let every trace of pride, ambition, desire and self be brought down in the light of God's word. Let us respond to His word. He hath spoken to His people and His word is powerful. It can bring forth and create. Let us be like Mary and give ourselves to the word of God. His word is very important for the Bride in these days!



# THE JOURNEY TO MEET THE BRIDEGROOM

## 3

**I**n these Scriptures we see very clearly how Abraham sent forth his servant to bring a bride for his son from out of his own people. He compelled the servant to make a covenant to bring a bride, not from the local place, but even from his native place and from amongst his own people. The bride for Abraham's son Isaac had to be of the same seed, matching him in every way; she had to be one who would become his full partner, even his fullness; the one who would radiate his glory and love; the one who, together with him, would give rise to a multitude of offspring.

*“And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age:  
and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things.”*

*“And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his  
house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray*

*thee, thy hand under my thigh:*

*“And I will make thee sware by the Lord, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell.”*

*“But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Issac.”*

*“And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest?”*

*“And Abraham said unto him, Beware that thou bring not my son thither again.*

*“The Lord God of heaven which took me from my father’s house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying Unto thy seed will I give this land: he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence.”*

**Genesis 24:1 - 7**

In a spiritual sense, the servant of Abraham represents the Holy Spirit who has been sent to prepare and bring forth a bride for Christ. The bride, of-course, is represented by Rebekah, who is none other than the true church. Here we see, from the example of Rebekah, what preparations the bride ought to make to meet the Lord. As we move on in Chapter 24 of the book of Genesis we see that Rebekah met all the conditions of the servant and she was eventually brought home by the servant. There are many

nuggets of truth in this chapter but we would like to highlight a few of them so that we may understand what the Lord is speaking to us through His word.

## PREPARATIONS FOR THE JOURNEY

*“And they did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him, and tarried all night; and they rose up in the morning, and he said, send me away unto my master.”*

*“And her brother and her mother said, Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least ten: after that she shall go.”*

*“And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the Lord hath prospered my way: send me away that I may go to my master.*

*And they said, We will call the damsel and enquire at her mouth.”*

*“And they called Rebekah and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go.”*

**Genesis 24:54 - 58**

**The true bride (the Body of Christ) in these days will experience an arising within as they hear the word of the Lord.** They like Rebekah, will say, “We would like to meet the Lord. We would like to be prepared by the Holy Spirit. We would like to move towards the Lord.” The counsel that came to Rebekah from her kith and kin was that she stay with them for ten days or more. She, however, had a heart to go and meet the bridegroom without

undue delay. That shall be the attitude of the true bride. She would say that she would go forthwith to meet the bridegroom rather than procrastinate.

**Beloved, in the hearts of the true bride there is a longing to undertake the journey.** There is a longing in the hearts of all those who form a part of the true bride to begin the preparations that would lead them to the bridegroom at the earliest. A delay of even a day would be unacceptable.

How many of us realize that Rebekah had never met Isaac or even seen him. She had never met him but she never doubted all that the servant said about the bridegroom, even this Isaac. In the heart of the true people of God the only reality will be the Lord Jesus Christ. As they hear about Him through the word and the ministry of the Holy Spirit **their love for Him will grow and their desire for Him will increase.** And with this perpetual desire in the inner recesses of her heart she will prepare herself for the travel ahead. The apostle Peter says,

*“Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, full of glory.”* **1 Peter 1:8**

We see that this verse rings true even of Rebekah, “whom having not seen she loved”. Rebekah had never seen Isaac. She knew about Isaac only from the things that the servant spoke. What she heard was enough to increase

her desire to meet the bridegroom. This must be true in our lives as well. We have not seen Him, yet we love Him. We do not see Him yet we believe and rejoice with joy unspeakable for the day is fast approaching when we shall see Him in all His glory.

The servant's only desire was to procure a worthy bride for his master, Abraham. The Holy Spirit has the same ministry today. He only wants the name of Jesus to be glorified.

*“But when the Comforter is come, whom I (Jesus) will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:”*

**John 15:26**

*“He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.*

*“All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore, said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.”*

**John 16: 14, 15**

**The true bride shall know all things about the bridegroom from the Holy Spirit alone.** Many will come as servants of the Lord posing as “labourers together with God” but they are not. It is a pity that in these days few are prepared to wait upon the Lord to hear from Him. The mysteries of God, the hidden secrets of God can never be acquired through man; even an intellectual search of the Scriptures will not produce true results. All must come by the revelation of the Spirit.

*“For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.”*

**Galatians 1:12**

We see that this is true even of Rebekah in her life. She loved Isaac although she had not seen him. All she knew about Isaac came from the mouth of the servant. There was a strong desire in her to meet with Isaac because of all that the servant, the Holy Spirit, had told her about him. As she heard the servant extolling his goodness she determined to go with this man all the way to meet with the bridegroom. She said unhesitatingly, “I will go with this man and I am willing to undertake a long journey to meet with the bridegroom.” So also shall it be in the heart of those who have been brought forth in the true knowledge of God. This preparation and journey should begin now in our lives. This is not something that we can postpone or delay. The true bride cannot afford to miss what the Lord has for her by procrastination. The hearts of those who want to take this journey shall yearn to meet with the Lord. **They shall be willing to give themselves to the complete preparations of the Lord.** They shall welcome the long journey that is necessary to meet with Him. They shall look forward to meet with the heavenly Bridegroom with a longing in their hearts.

## “WILT THOU GO WITH THIS MAN?”

Beloved, we cannot have a divided heart at this time. Either we will say that we will go with this Man now or we will be ones who will stay back to do our own thing and to live our own lives. Though the way is fraught with uncertainties, there needs to be an ‘unspeakable joy’ in the heart of Rebekah, even the bride of the Lord Jesus at this time. There is a decision that many have to make at this time in their lives. May God help such ones not to tarry but to rise up and go forth with this Man even in these days. There are many with a divided heart amongst God’s people. They are not single towards the Lord, their Bridegroom. God is jealous over you and me and he has espoused us to one husband. But that is not enough, beloved.

**The Servant is zealous with a godly jealousy to present the church as a chaste virgin unto the Lord.** At the same time the bride of Christ shall have a singleness of heart. Rebekah was willing to hear all about Isaac from the servant. She was willing to give her time and energy to know more about the bridegroom. And this brought forth a deep longing within her heart. It shall be so with the bride of Christ as well. **Her one desire will be to go with the Man.** In the heart of His true people there is not going to be a going after the natural and the temporal, but it will be as we read in 1 Peter: 1:8 *“Whom having not seen, ye love; in who, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory”*.

We need to appreciate that God had specially and divinely chosen Rebekah as the bride for Isaac. But at the same time she had qualified to become the bride, not by her deliberate efforts but by her ready response. Something in the deep, inner recesses of Rebekah said, “*This is the way of the Lord to meet the bridegroom.*” And she completely submitted to the servant and the way of his leading. Many want complete details before they take a step of faith. Many want a lot of details before they respond but it was not so with Rebekah. **She took steps in faith, believing in the things that God had ordained because there had been a preparation in her life.**

We should notice that the servant never asked Rebekah whether she would be willing to go to meet Isaac. He recognized her as the one to be the bride by her response for she gave him and the camels water to drink. Jesus also said that we will know them by their fruit. Beloved it is our response to the word and the call of the Spirit that distinguishes us as the true bride.

When the servant narrated the chain of events that led him to his choice of Rebekah, the kith and kin said, “*The thing proceedeth from the Lord.*” ( Genesis 24:50 ). There was a recognition of ‘the hand of the Lord’ in their midst. **The Holy Spirit also assures us in our spirit that we are walking in the ways of the Lord. This is how the true bride shall know that she is being lead by the heavenly Servant.**

Sometimes, people come with many questions from the book of Revelation. They ask, “Brother, what is that beast with the ten horns?” Others talk of the ships of Tarshish and ask what it means spiritually. They are sincere in their questions. But we need to ponder and ask ourselves how the answer to such questions will help us to have a victorious life every day. So many Christians are caught up with such theological debates and questions these days. They ask questions like, “What will happen during the seven years of tribulation?” They ask all sorts of questions that are hardly relevant to their walk in Christ. What matters to the Lord is what is upon our hearts.

**In the heart of the true bride there shall be a love for the Bridegroom even though she has not seen Him.** She shall be prepared to take a long journey through the most trying ways in order to meet with Him. Like Rebekah, she will be willing to go forth into a realm which is yet uncertain and even uncharted to many of us. She shall continue to look for His appearance. At the same time she shall purify herself so that she may be ready to meet Him.

Though there are many things that are uncertain, one thing we know, that with every step that the true child of God and true company of God’s people take, they shall come into a closer proximity to the bridegroom. They are getting closer to the heavenly bridegroom with every step of faith in the Lord Jesus. All along the way, this Servant, the Helper will tell us all things about the Bridegroom. He

will not talk about Himself but about the One who was crucified and rose again and is yet waiting for His bride. The Lord Jesus Christ said about the Holy Spirit “He shall not speak about Himself but He shall speak about Me to you.” As the Holy Spirit continues to explain and reveal the Lord Jesus our longing shall increase on this earth. He will focus our vision. There is a long travel to make but let us believe that the Servant will take us to Him. We need to say like Rebekah, “I will go with this man. I will go with this man now.”

There are many aspects of the coming of the Lord that will remain obscure in these days. There are many things that the Lord has yet to reveal to His people. But that shall not hinder the journey that is about to begin. This is a time of preparation: this is a time when we must prepare to set out by faith to meet the bridegroom. God will reveal the hidden mysteries of the Second Coming in the fullness of His time.

There are many things that God has not revealed to His people until now. It is very easy to go through a commentary, pick up something and give it to the people. It is quite another thing to spend time with the Lord to know His will and allow Him to reveal the hidden things. **The true bride doesn't need every detail.** What she hears from the servant is enough to prepare herself to take the long journey. All through the travel she will hear nothing but the

name of the bridegroom from the lips of the servant; her eyes will be fixed on no one else but the Lord Jesus, the heavenly bridegroom.

He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying.

## THE JOURNEY OF THE BRIDE

Rebekah had to take a long journey. Throughout her travel she was never alone. There was someone to continuously encourage her, even the servant of Abraham. And all through the travel the servant had only one thing to say and that was about the bridegroom. **The bride is never left alone in the long journey.** The Servant is always at hand to remind her of the calling upon her life and to encourage and edify her all along the difficult and narrow way.

Perhaps Rebekah was looking forward to meet the bridegroom at every bend of the road. There is a tremendous longing and anticipation in the heart of the true bride to meet with the bridegroom. Every step of the long and difficult camel journey brought Rebekah closer to her goal. There was a loving hope nurtured within her. She did not really mind the problems and the difficulties on the way because whatever happened brought her closer and closer to her destination.

The journey of the bride to meet the bridegroom is long and filled with many snares. It is easy to get lost in the wilderness for the roads are not well defined. **The constant help of the Servant is necessary.** Such a long journey requires much preparation. There will be many who will feel that this is not the time to undertake a journey. This is why so many Christians are becoming cold. Many who were espoused have been corrupted by the evil one. But the true bride will say, “I am willing to go; let me go to meet the bridegroom” The time is NOW even in our lives. This is something we cannot postpone, for the way is sensible and reasonable.

The servant of Abraham never told Rebekah when she would meet Isaac, the bridegroom. Nor do we know when we shall meet with the Lord at His second coming. Rebekah did not know when she would meet Isaac. It is enough that we leave and go forth on this journey to meet Him. Often one hears people speak about a definite day when the Lord will reveal Himself in all His glory. Such speculations only confuse the people of God. We are to go forth with incomplete knowledge of all that has yet to take place in the purposes of God. This calls for a trusting and a walk of faith. Rebekah did not undertake the journey after she had acquired all the information about the bridegroom. It was within her ‘being’ that she determined to meet with him. Although she had not seen the bridegroom she began to love him in her heart. Many people

want all the details in the book of Revelation before they would like to commit themselves and believe the word of God. There was a quality in Rebekah that we need to emulate as the true bride of the Lord. There was something admirable in her. She did not hesitate and ponder before deciding to embark upon this journey to meet the bridegroom. Having heard about the bridegroom from the servant, she longed to meet him. She refused to spend time finding out all about the bridegroom. She abandoned herself to the calling in her life.

*“For I am zealous for you with a godly eagerness and a divine jealousy for I have betrothed you to one Husband, to present you a chaste virgin to Christ.”*

*“But (now) I am fearful, lest that even as the serpent beguiled Eve by his cunning, so your minds may be corrupted and seduced from whole-hearted and sincere and pure devotion to Christ.”* **2 Corinthians 11: 2,3 (Amp)**

After having talked of “simplicity” in 2 Corinthians 11:3, Paul talks of another Jesus, another Gospel and another Spirit. Read the words ‘another Jesus’, a ‘different Gospel’ and a ‘different Spirit’ in verse 4. The apostle Paul is acutely aware how the serpent comes to destroy and ruin the things of the Spirit.

Here we see Paul’s concern for the Corinthian believers. He is jealous over them with a godly jealousy. He in fact says that his zeal over them is not his own but it is a

zeal birthed by God. He has a burden for the people. In the King James Version it is written, *“But I fear, lest by any means.....your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ”*. **The word ‘simplicity’ does not imply a simpleness; it talks of a singleness of heart.** Paul was concerned that the evil things may take the believers away from the singleness of their heart into something else. We should know that the serpent always seeks to corrupt that which God has placed within us. The serpent will try to change what God has said to us in the depths of our beings. The serpent will try to adjust and change what God has said. He will attempt to make it a little easier and more pleasing to our eyes. In Genesis we read, *“And he(serpent) said unto the woman(Eve), yea, hath God said.....?”* Satan always wants to place a doubt in our hearts. He wants to appeal to our carnal desires for something good and pleasing and easy. That is why Paul warns the Corinthian believers to watch out for the false Jesus, the bogus Gospel and the unholy Spirit. The enemy somehow enters into the life of even sincere believers to corrupt them in the name of common sense, reason, knowledge and human wisdom. The desire for wisdom and knowledge has corrupted the minds of several people. From the beginning of church history many have fallen into this temptation to search the times and seasons of His second coming. God has reserved the knowledge of the times and the seasons of his return to this earth. It is futile to spend energy in such pursuits. As the bride we need to preserve our energies for the travel through

the wilderness with the servant of Abraham. **The true bride of Christ has a singleness of heart.** She is content to go with this servant. She is pleased to travel with this servant who is the Holy Spirit of God. Even so it is with our lives in this hour. If our hearts are single towards the Lord, we would have a desire to go along with this servant. Though we lack much understanding we would have a heart to go forth in the company of this servant.

The apostle John says,

*“Beloved, now are we the sons of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall be like he is. And every man that has this hope in Him purifieth himself even, as He is pure.”*

**1 John 3: 2, 3**

There is a longing in the heart of Rebekah to go this way, to the place where she will meet with as a chaste bride. Therefore, there needs to be a singleness of heart and mind that we need to maintain even now. If the singleness is lost, it is called adultery in Bible terminology. We need to check our hearts to see whether it is single towards the Lord and whether we have a true desire to take a journey into the wilderness to meet with Him of whom we have heard so much. Let us take heed to what God is saying. If that desire is not there, if that longing for Him is missing in our lives, if our hearts are set upon the things of this world then we surely need to cry out to the Lord and seek His help.

Many people have moved out of this singleness of purpose in their lives. Their hearts are set upon the things of this world. Many love the enemy of their husband, the Lord Jesus. The enemy of the Lord is the world. The love of the world is to love the enemy of the bridegroom. *“You (are like) unfaithful wives having illicit love affairs with the world and breaking your marriage vow to God! Do you not know that being the world’s friend is being God’s enemy? So whoever chooses to be a friend of the world takes his stand as an enemy of God.”* I have seen that when we counsel some people they are unable to accept our counsel because they are not ‘warm’ towards the Lord any more. This happens because they are not single towards His purposes. They are unable to accept the truth about their spiritual lives. The sad thing is that they continue to refuse to accept the condition of their heart. It is only a matter of time for such ones to fall from the purposes of God. **We are here by divine appointment and we must make sure that we do not waste this precious time in worldly pursuits.** May God help us to be sensitive and whole hearted towards Him and His purposes.

# THE PROPHECY UPON THE BRIDE

## 4

**G**od's heart is set upon having a bride for His Son. From ages past the Lord has held this desire as precious upon His heart. The apostle Paul says that it is a mystery, *'which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.'* (Ephesians 3:5). Again he says, *'This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church'* (Ephesians 5:32). The mystery concerning the Body of Christ which is His bride is something that was unknown in the ages past. But God has opened the eyes of understanding of his holy apostles and this truth is now being proclaimed by faithful servants of God.

In the recent past, the Lord encouraged me personally

with a word saying, “Son, keep declaring my word; do not look to what you can see but believe having heard and have faith in me; declare my word and I will gather whom I will in due time.” The word that needs to be declared at the present time is the truth concerning the church which is the Body of Christ. Those who have truly heard His word by the Spirit are declaring this very word. That which is so precious to God in the heart at this time is nothing but the word concerning the bride, the glorious church. We are to sound the holy alarm upon Mount Zion. And there needs to be a gathering and a separating of His people as they hear this precious word. So let us flow in the direction that the Lord is leading us through His words. So let us bring our lives and concentrate on the preparation of the bride these days. God has got His eyes upon us these days and especially in this hour.

There shall be a company of people who will take steps to move nearer to God. **They will be prepared to move into the realm of the unknown.** They are moving in the ‘way of the wilderness’ now; some are still climbing upon the camel’s back; some want to take a shortcut, to jump across the camel’s back; and some are still adjusting the saddle upon the camel’s back! We are at different levels ‘in the Lord’ but are we willing to trust the Man, the Holy Spirit, and move across the wilderness?

*“And they blessed Rebekah and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of the thousands*

*of millions and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.”* **Genesis 24:60**

The promise to Rebekah was that she would be the mother of thousands and millions and that her seed shall possess the gate of those that hate them. This was a prophesy that her mother and brother had spoken over Rebekah. A similar prophesy rested upon Abraham.

*“That in the blessing I will bless thee, and in the multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of the enemies;*

*“And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.”*  
**Genesis 22: 17,18**

God had already spoken these words to Abraham. Not knowing this, the mother and brother of Rebekah had said the same thing. God’s word is true and will come to pass in a people.

The prophesy upon Rebekah was that she would be a mother to countless number of children. In reality we know that she bore two sons Esau and Jacob; Jacob brought forth twelve children and, thereafter, a nation was birthed. Thus the prophesy was fulfilled and she became the mother of millions of Israelites and spiritually the ancestor of millions of Christians.

The Lord told Abraham *“I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea .....”* (Genesis 23:17). God looked not at the immediate but to that distant day when His Son would become the true Seed. And in and through Him there would arise thousands of millions of believers. In giving the prophesy, the Lord was really looking at the Seed of the Righteous who shall be established upon the whole earth one day, in God’s perfect time.

*“What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.*

*“His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.”* **Psalm 25: 12, 13**

*“But the path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day”.*

**Proverbs 4:18**

We may find it difficult to believe these things but that is what the word of God says, Beloved. It is not a matter of a number, but there is a concern regarding the inheritance of the true people of God.

Jesus said, *“....I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”* (Matthew 18: 18). His word is true and it shall come to pass. There shall be a people who shall possess the gate of their enemies in these days.

There were certain things hidden in Rebekah, the bride. There was a mystery that was concealed in her. The seed denotes the Lord Jesus. It is a Messianic expression.

The Seed reflects the Lord as our Redeemer; the One through whom all the earth will be redeemed. It will be a redemption brought forth through out all the earth by the Lord Himself.

*“Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.*

*“Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you,, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.”*      **Acts 3: 25, 26**

There is a blessing through the seed (not seeds, but seed) of Abraham that shall reach the very ends of the earth. This blessing, as is explained in the next verse, has been given so that people turn from their iniquities unto the Lord. **The Seed talks to us about the Lord, Jesus Christ and His Body, the church.** We need to know this very clearly. **Many have a veil upon their face concerning the true bride today.** Let us be the ones to keep the eyes and ears of our heart open before the Lord.

*“How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision but in uncircumcision.*

*“And he received the sign of the circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed to them also:*

*“And the father of circumcision to them who are not*

*of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.*

*“For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith”.*

**Romans 4:10 - 13**

The promise to Abraham was that he would be the spiritual father of all believers in the world. Abraham was the father of the uncircumcised gentiles as well as the father of the Israelites who were circumcised, because faith has become the basis for being a part of the family of Abraham. The Jews were not able to see this truth. Even today the Jews are fighting for a strip of land while the promise to Abraham was not for a strip of land called Canaan but for the whole world. The Jews today fear the Arabs, the Muslims and even the Christians. They are afraid that they may come and occupy their land. They have limited the purposes of God according to their natural minds. The promise and the prophesy resting upon Rebekah and even the bride of Christ is that their seed shall multiply and occupy or possess the whole world. **The word of the Lord tells us that as Abraham’s seed we are also heirs of the whole world. We need to accept this fact because it is a prophesy which is resting upon the bride, which is the church.** The Lord has kept the whole world as the inheritance of the church. Our inheritance is not limited to Canaan or any other tract of land upon this earth. The whole world is the

inheritance in Christ, if we be the true children of the Seed. The true seed of Abraham (even Christ) has inherited all things - not only in the heavens but in the earth as well! The church which is the seed of Abraham along with Christ shall inherit and possess all things in the earth and in the heavens. This magnificent promise is ours if we believe it.

*“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sin, according to the riches of his grace;*

*“Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;*

*“Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:*

*“That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth; even in him:”*

***Ephesians 1:7 to 10***

These verses tell us that the seed of Abraham, even the Lord Jesus Christ, has inherited all things in heaven and in earth positionally. But the time is coming, beloved, when there is going to be a gathering in One, even through the church in this age.

*“In whom we also have also obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.”*

***Ephesians 1:11***

## THE INHERITANCE OF THE SEED OF ABRAHAM (CHRIST)

What is this inheritance? It is not the temple in Jerusalem; it is not a corner somewhere in heaven, it is not a strip of land in the Middle East. There is going to be a gathering of all things in One Man, even Christ and His church, of that which is in heaven and in the earth.

*“That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.*

*“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.*

***Ephesians 1:12, 13***

You have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise to receive the inheritance. **The day we believed we were sealed with an inheritance through the life of Jesus Christ.** *“In Him you also have heard the Word of Truth, the glad tidings (Gospel) of your salvation, and have believed in and adhered to and relied on Him, were stamped with the seal of the long-promised Holy Spirit. That (Spirit) is the guarantee of our inheritance (the firstfruits, the pledge and foretaste, the down payment on our heritage), in anticipation of its full redemption and our acquiring (complete) possession of it — to the praise of His glory.”* (Ephesians 1:13, 14)

The Holy Spirit baptism in our lives is the first down payment of the inheritance in Christ Jesus. Every time we

commune with God we engage in the mysteries of God. *“For one who speaks in an (unknown) tongue speaks not to men but to God, for no one understands or catches his meaning, because in the (Holy) Spirit he utters secret truths and hidden things (not obvious to the understanding).”* (1 Corinthians 14: 2) Every time we pray in the Spirit we are wrapped up with things which are yet hidden to the natural mind. The things in the heavenlies are made known to us only through the Spirit. Paul says that we speak mysteries which are yet to be understood by the natural mind.

When Rebekah was about to undertake the journey that would take her to Isaac, there was a blessing upon her to say that she would inherit all the earth. This blessing is ours in Christ. We need to set our gaze upon our inheritance which is in Christ Jesus and not upon some geographical spot upon this earth.

In the Amplified Bible we clearly read in Ephesians 1:14 , *“That Spirit is the guarantee of the inheritance”* The Holy Spirit baptism that the Lord has poured upon us is the guarantee, the down payment of the inheritance. There is a full inheritance that will be ours as we progress on in His purposes these days.

*“Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,*

*“Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers,*

*“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:*

*“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened ; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,*

*“And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,*

*“Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,*

*“Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:*

*“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,*

*“Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”*

**Ephesians 1:15 - 23**

May God help us to see this inheritance in Christ. There is an inheritance which includes all things in the heavens and in the earth. Let us realize the promises of God that rest upon the bride. May God help us to be aware of this so that we live in the consciousness of this high calling that is resting upon the bride.

Let us not be like the Corinthian believers who did not realize the call upon their lives. They did not walk worthy

of the call upon their lives. And they lost the inheritance in their lives. For this reason Paul says in Ephesians 4:1 “.....*walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called*”.

There is a prophecy over Rebekah, who is a picture of the true church, today. As we begin our journey to meet the Lord let us not hesitate to take the necessary steps to begin this long travel. God wants to encourage us that **there is an inheritance waiting for us at the other end**. May we have the strength to endure all the troubles - the rough way in the wilderness - for the joy that is set before us . Rebekah, the bride is so precious — she has many promises upon her. Beloved people, God wants to encourage us that for the joy that is set before us, we may endure all the afflictions we come across in the wilderness.

## THE SEED SHALL POSSESS THE GATE OF THE ENEMY

*“.....let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.”*  
**Genesis 24:60**

Before God’s people, the church, God’s Israel today, begins to wage war against the enemies they need a revelation about the enemies . The church needs to know that there are enemies she has to overcome; and she needs to know who these enemies are. We need a revelation about these since the promise to us is that the church will possess the gate of the enemy.

O beloved, may the Spirit help us to understand that all things in heaven and earth are going to be gathered in One which is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head and even the church which is His Body. Glory to God.

Let us all know for sure that the world is the enemy of the bride. Those of the world abuse and misuse the things of God. They despise the ways and the things of God. But the Lord would like to show us that there are other enemies as well. There are some 'nations living in this land of our lives. Our real enemies are the nations of our own hearts. These enemies will surely try to hinder our journey and progress to the heart of God. **Before the people of God possess the gate of the enemy they need to overcome the enemies within** . If we keep our lives open, the Spirit of God will reveal the nature and characteristics of the abominable nations that are dwelling within us.

*“And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good ?”* **1 Peter 3:13**

Who will harm us if we pursue the truth? When we pursue after the truth having cleansed our inward life who indeed can come against us? When we reach such a state, surely we shall move towards the gate of the enemy. But before that there needs to be an overcoming of the nations that dwell within us. When we begin to seek and follow after the Lord's mind then one who is rich will come to realize that he is actually a poor man. He will come to

understand that he cannot put his trust in riches. And he will become poor in the sight of the Lord. The rich in the midst of God's people will begin to feed the poor. The ones who are poor will begin to know that, contrary to the thinking of the world, they are in fact the ones who are rich in the sight of the Lord. The wise amongst us will discover that they have no wisdom. The ones who think that they are unwise will begin to say, "The wisdom of God is precious in my life." The ones who are mighty and strong will begin to realize that they are weak before the Lord.

Many of us are proud of our selves, our education, our abilities, our personality and good looks. When we realize, by the help of the Spirit, that this is nothing, we will begin to humble ourselves before God and God's ministries. May we have a revelation about ourselves.

There are some amongst us who are beginning to have a revelation about what is happening in our lives. They are the ones who are overcoming the enemy. **The church cannot move towards and possess the gates of her enemies until and unless each and everyone of us overcomes the enemies within.** Let us therefore see our lives in the light that the Lord is showing.

Let every pride be taken out of our lives; let there be a deliverance in the area of sin and unrighteousness in our lives. Because of pride we are deprived of many things in the Lord. The Lord wants us to move as a bride against

the enemy and possess all things. And not only that, this bride must learn to submit to the Lord in her life. She must become prisoners of His love and His grace. Submitting our lives to the Lord Jesus will bring each of us true joy. Today there are many people who do what they think is right in the name of the Lord. **But at the same time there is the true bride who is learning to submit to the Lord and remain the prisoners of His love and His grace.**

Somebody asked me what the theme of this camp was? I said, "There is no specific theme around which the messages are given but we have a permanent theme which is to go on to maturity." That person said, "It is true that growth and maturity cover almost every aspect of our lives." Some people don't like to hear about going on to maturity again and again. They are sick of hearing the verse which declares that we ought to become mature. In our midst, they feel bound; they feel that they are not free to do what they would like to do. However, today the bidding of the Holy Spirit is to remain in submission to Him and to be the prisoners of His love and His grace.

Some think that we gather together again and again and just waste our time. Many people are walking in their own strength and in their own understanding and consequently they are the ones who get caught up in iniquity. But in this very day, the Lord is imprisoning a people. He is imprisoning them so that He may shower upon them His mercy and His grace unto a purpose. They shall surely

overcome many things in their lives. They are overcoming the enemies within even as it was in the life of Joseph who was imprisoned because he refused to bow down to the enemies demands. He offended his master's wife but he did not taste iniquity. The dealings of God in his life was not for himself but for the furtherance of the name of the Lord in the earth. So let us not be frightened by what people tell us and let us not be taken away by the whisperings of the enemy, but let us remain submitted to him even as His prisoners until the grace of the Lord comes upon us.

Are you in a prison? Remember His grace is available to us. His grace is for us to overcome the enemies within. When all of us come to this place in our lives then the church shall certainly move to the gate of the enemy, as the word of God declares.

There are many enemies within us. Let us allow the Holy Spirit to identify these enemies and enable us to overcome them and be victorious. There is a purpose here again. **His purpose is that we may qualify to move to the gate of the enemy.** We need to know that these are not mere words but this is the truth of His word. For His word will bring forth a bride upon this earth.

His word will cleanse and wash and bring her to a place of maturity so that she will prevail on the enemy in the days to come. So let us know that many enemies are yet ruling within. Do we have personality problems? Have we

found any difficulty in getting along with others? Have we prejudices? Are we fooling ourselves? Are we proud of many things—proud of our jobs, of money, of education, of a good family or children? Is there disobedience in your life? Whatever it may be, God would like to bring us to a place of overcoming. Only the humble will be lifted by the Lord. Let us remain His prisoners in this hour.

How about the enemies from the outside? The Lord says, “Don’t worry about the outside enemies because vengeance belongs to me. I will cause you to smite them but you concentrate upon overcoming the enemies within.” The bride in this hour is learning a warfare to take on the enemy by overcoming him within. May God open our eyes. This is the hour of preparation—a time of learning—even a learning of how to take on the enemy. **It is by being cleansed and washed and then overcoming the enemies within that we shall taste of victory even in the outer realm of our lives.**

The Lord wants an army, a people, who will go round the walls of Jericho for seven days. That was a time of preparation. What were they overcoming? In those six days as they went round and round Jericho, they were preparing for the victory that was to come on the seventh day. While they went around the walls for six days, they remained quiet and overcame their eagerness to say, “Praise the Lord.” The Lord was teaching and giving them initial lessons in obedience. The Lord wanted them to go around

the city for seven days and not to speak a word till He would tell them to “shout”. Today even Spirit filled people cannot be quiet. Instead of speaking mysteries with Christ they keep shouting everywhere!

There is no place for the zeal of man in our lives. That’s a hard thing—— to be a prisoner of the Lord for six days (the #6 talks of the zeal of man) and to shout on the seventh day is the strategy of the living God for the bride. Many times we are overcome with the thought “how shall we handle the enemy out there?” The Lord says, “Don’t worry, be silent, keep walking. The seventh day is coming. You must shout only when I tell you to shout . Then, the walls of the enemy will surely fall, for “vengeance is mine, saith the Lord thy God.”

The Lord will deal with His enemies in His own way and in His own time. He will deal with the enemies outside in His own way for all His enemies shall be subdued and put under His feet. It is a truth and it shall come to pass and He knows how to do it.

## THE BATTLE IS THE LORDS

In Revelation 19:14 we see how the One on the white horse and the ones following Him move on in the further purposes of God. In verse 14 we see the armies following Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

In verse 15 of Revelation 19 we read, *“And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword,”*. The sharp sword is not in His hand but in His mouth. His battle is not with the natural sword. **The thing with the armies of God is that there is a sword which proceeds from every mouth.** The sword is nothing else but the word of God, the two edged sharp sword that will cut everything else in the world. Therefore, the armies of heaven are allowing the sword to work within, to destroy every enemy in this hour, cutting asunder, dividing the spirit and the soul. And they are being prepared until the time when they follow the Captain of their salvation, the king of kings in their lives, — there will be a word that will go out of their mouths that will smite the nations. Hallelujah!

During the six days the army went around Jericho, the word was working like a sword within and they were submitting themselves to the Lord. When the seventh day came they used that sword and when they began to speak the word and shout the name of the Lord, by their mouths, the whole wall of the enemy came crumbling down and the army of God became victors.

*“And He had on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.*

*“And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves unto the supper of the great God;*

*“That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them,, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.*

*“And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.*

*“And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.”*

**Revelation 19:16 -20**

As we read on we see how the church moves onto the very gate of the enemy. Not only the false prophet and all that is mentioned here shall be cast out, but I want to tell you even Satan shall be cast out. We are not going into details but the church will move to the gates of the enemy very soon. But now is the time that she is to overcome the enemy within.

Let us understand that the Lord is not merely engaged in a war in the heavenlies while His people are upon the earth struggling to fight their own enemies. **The Lord is training a new army of people who shall be joined with Him through His Son into One body and they shall follow their Captain into battle clothed with His**

**armour.** But for now it is sufficient to know that the Lord has allowed the enemies to live in the world for our good that we may learn to overcome even as He overcame.

This is the time and the hour for the two edged sword of God to cut asunder the hidden things in our lives. The desires, the hidden ambitions, the longings within us need to be exposed to the word and should be cleansed and washed at this time. **This is an hour of preparation for the people of God. Amen.**

# BEHOLD THE CAMELS ARE COMING!

## 5

**T**here is something remarkable in the book of Genesis that has great relevance to the Bride in this day. BEHOLD THE CAMELS ARE COMING!

*“And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man; and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way.*

*“And Isaac came from the way of the well Labairoi; for he dwelt in the south country.*

*“And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold the camels were coming.*

*“And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel. “ **Genesis 24: 61 - 64***

We can perhaps see many things in these verses as we glean through them but the Lord would like us to meditate on one verse in particular where it is written that ‘the camels were coming’. The Spirit of God would like to emphasize something to us from this verse. So let us read on with a seriousness upon our hearts. There are many hidden truths in these verses and, therefore, we need to first understand them and then receive them into our lives. Let us pray that as we read on the Lord will give us an understanding by the Holy Spirit. May our eyes be opened by the Lord to see the eternal truths that are given to us through the Bible so that our lives may change.

## THE LORD KNOWETH THE WAY

The Lord would like to say to His bride company in this hour that He, the Lord, knows the way. Christians who do not know God’s ways are often perplexed and confounded. When they are undergoing trials they do not find it easy and comfortable. They become confused when faced with problems because they do not know the ways of God in their lives. The Lord knows the way the righteous should take; He is able to lead us by the Spirit. “Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself.” (Exodus 19:4)

The Lord says that in bringing out His people from Egypt He carried them on ‘eagles wings’. That is the way God took His people out of bondage from the land of

afflictions. The Lord is able to provide us the means and the strength to take us into the way of holiness and full salvation. ‘Eagles’ wings’ refers to the miraculous way by which God is able to redeem us and bring us out of every bondage. The Pharaoh (dark forces and evil powers) did his very best to keep the people in bondage but the more the people were afflicted, the more they multiplied (Exodus 1: 7, 20). The apostle Paul tells us that though sin and unrighteousness may reign, God is able to deliver us into freedom by the grace that comes to us through the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. We may face many problems and situations; we may be confused and perplexed but the Lord knows the way that we should take in every situation. We need to depend upon the Spirit to lead us and show us the way. Many of us see situations according to our own desires; we see only that which we want to see.

*“But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.”*     **Job 23: 10**

The Israelites viewed the journey through the wilderness in ways that were absolutely contrary to the ways in which God sees. The journey from the Red Sea to Canaan was an easy one in the eyes of the Lord for He had borne the Israelites upon the eagles’ wings. That is the way God saw the travel from Egypt. The people saw the journey in a totally different way for they found it to be difficult and full of problematic situations. To start with they had to leave in haste from Egypt. They had to take their things in a hurry . Then, on the way they heard the chariots of Pharaoh

following them. They were caught in a trap between the Red Sea on the one hand and the armies of the Pharaoh on the other hand. Before them was the fast, swirling waters of the Red Sea and behind them were the sounds of countless chariots of the Egyptian army. The travel according to them was very rough indeed. But the Lord says that He carried them on eagles' wings. That is the Lord's expression but as far as the people of Israel were concerned it was a difficult travel. There were numerous trials on the way. They murmured; they complained; they wished they had stayed in Egypt, These trials showed their heart and the desires of their soulish natures. By the time they came to Mount Sinai they had faced many trials. It was a grievous journey for the people but the Lord saw the travel in a different light. Beloved, let this teach us that **the Lord takes us through difficult ways to bring us to Himself.**

God's way is to take us through a way of trial and problems so that we may know Him and His ways more and more. The Word tells us that when we are tried then we shall come forth as gold because He is with us on our journey to meet the Bridegroom, even the heavenly Isaac, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We have no other way to reach Him but by the way of trials, burdens and heartaches in our lives.

*“Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which*

*are exercised thereby.*

*“Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down ,  
and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for  
your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the  
way; but let it rather be healed.”*

**Hebrews 12:11 - 13**

In the trials we face in our life we are often very conscious of the burdens that we bear. During the time of trials we are obsessed with the problems and difficulties that confront us. While we are conscious and fully aware of the troubles in this journey, we are less conscious of the benefits that God gives us and promises during these trials. The Lord would like to speak to our hearts concerning such things. God’s word comes to us to prepare us for this journey or pilgrimage to meet the heavenly Bridegroom.

When we consider the trials that we face; we consider them according to the knowledge of God that we possess. We face difficulties according to all that we may have learnt from the Lord during previous encounters. **We can only respond to situations on the basis of our knowledge of the Lord and His ways.** In this rough and hard way of travel the only way is to go along with the Lord. Then we shall find it easy and less burdensome. Only His wisdom and knowledge can take us safely through the wilderness. When He carries and takes us then we shall surely find the going easy; we shall definitely reach our destination at the right time.

*“And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”*

**Isaiah 35: 10**

This way that the Lord takes us is the way of holiness. It is the way through the wilderness, but yet it is the highway of holiness. The Lord knows the way better than any other. God has chosen a path for His people for He knows what is upon the heart of man.

*“And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness.; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein”.*

*“No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there.”*

**Isaiah 35: 8, 9**

In our lives we have a certain knowledge of God. But there is a knowledge that is said to be a ‘different’ knowledge. *“I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.”* (Job 42:5). Job had heard of the ways of God by the hearing of his ear, which means by this natural senses. The knowledge we acquire by hearing the word of God is one thing but the experiential knowledge of God that is acquired over the years through the practice of the life of Christ is yet another thing. Job had a certain knowledge by hearing but then he went through all the

trials and came to have a ‘different’ knowledge of God in his life. Many a time we acquire an hearing knowledge but that knowledge will not be enough. The Lord would like to bring us to a place of knowing Him yet more intimately and experientially in our lives. We need to acknowledge the fact that God wants to take His people through a way that will enable them to know Him in a deeper and richer manner. **The way to the heart of the Heavenly Isaac is the way of the wilderness and the way of holiness in our lives.**

Beloved people of God, the Lord knoweth the way that we should take and He has a vehicle to take us there. The way is a way of trials and a way of many troubles.

### THE LORD PROVIDES THE MEANS TO GET TO ISAAC

In my younger days, I learned that the camel is called ‘The ship of the desert’. Riding on a camel is like travelling on a ship. One can experience a lot of jerks and bone-shaking whilst riding a camel. There is a tossing about when we travel upon a camel that is quite severe, specially for those who are unused to travelling by this mode of travel. But we need to know that the ‘camels of God’, are His provision, and are best suited for journeys through spiritual deserts and the wilderness. **The best vehicle for us to travel through the wilderness into Canaan is upon the camel;** and we need be assured that God’s vehicle will never fail in the wilderness. Seated upon the camel, God will certainly take

us through the wilderness and unto the place of our eventual destination, even our Heavenly Isaac.

Let us really appreciate that God has a vehicle for us. Let us begin this spiritual journey with the Servant sitting upon a camel, realizing that this is God's vehicle for us. This camel is the word of the Lord and it will reach us to our destination on time for it is from the Lord. This is a different type of travel that we may not be familiar with, but let us know that God has ordained this way for us.

**The word, which is the camel of God is the appointed way for all of us.** Let us not search and seek out another way in our lives. God is jealous over us. He is waiting with a longing for the camels to reach Canaan. There is no other way to the heart of God, to the fulfillment of God's purposes and to the consummation of God's will. Beloved the camels are coming! Let us really appreciate God's vehicle in our lives and let us begin this journey in our lives. This travel is a different travel but let us know that this camel is the word of the Lord and we will reach our destination on time.

In our journeys to meet with the Lord, we shall invariably come across a wilderness. For the purposes of our travel, the Lord has not provided us with helicopters or jet engines, but we do have a camel that will take us slowly and steadily through the desert to the place where our Isaac is. Many would like to hurry to meet the Lord. Impatient

men want to reach the destination as quickly as possible. They expect to meet with the bridegroom at the blinking of an eye! But the Lord would like to declare to his true bride that there is a journey to make and the vehicle is not a horse, that will take us quickly, but it shall be a camel, even the word of God, that will take time to reach it's destination. But this camel will take us nigh unto Him, through the scorching heat and the sand-storms in the wilderness till we are right in the heart of Isaac's sanctuary. Therefore, as the camels are coming let us be ready to mount them and undertake this journey. Many would like to take a different form of conveyance to meet the bridegroom but let us know that the Servant is visiting God's people riding upon a camel and He brings the camel for us to mount. May God find a people in this hour who will find God's vehicle to take us into the place where Isaac is. Beloved people of God, the Lord knoweth the way that we should take and He has sent us a vehicle to take us to our destination. It is a way of trials and the way of many troubles. **Let us be ready to mount the camels and undertake this journey in the face of every obstacle.** Behold, the camels are coming. The Servant shall bring many camels with Him. May God find a people in this hour who will look to God's vehicle to take them onwards unto Him.

When the Servant is with us; His eyes are upon us; He is zealous to take us to the Bridegroom. The Servant will be faithful to each of us. He will not delay us. He will not waste time. He is not One to test us and try us beyond

our capacities.

*“There bath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”* **1 Corinthians 10: 13**

The word of God tells us that He will not test us beyond that which we can bear. There are many dust storms in the desert ; the heat of the Sun will fall upon us. But we need to know that we are progressing toward our heavenly Bridegroom, even the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord knows the way and He will surely take us to that place in our lives. In this long journey the camel will surely stop at many places on the way. Similarly, in the Lord Jesus there will be times and seasons of rest. There will be refreshing from the Lord even in the midst of our arduous journey. The Lord will refresh God’s people. Let us be careful not to condemn ourselves by thinking that we are not going anywhere, and that we are not progressing in our spiritual lives. Let us not say, ‘I am no better than I was a year ago.’ Let us not feel that we are standing still and not going ahead in God’s purposes. The Servant will never leave us throughout the journey and He knows where to take us. At the same time let us be totally obedient to the Spirit, day by day.

God has provided us the best means to take this long journey through the wilderness in our lives. May we realize that this is God’s way and God’s mind and God’s

wisdom. Let us accept and acknowledge this in our lives. The Servant is in-charge of our travel. He knows the way to take in this journey. Hallelujah! He has come from the heart of God and He will take us to the heart of God in this travel.

The heavenly camels are girded with a harness that causes them to go the right way. God has given us the promise that He shall not allow us to be tempted beyond what we can endure. In this we can be encouraged everyday. This camel will not wander away from the purposes of God. And therefore we can be rest assured that we will reach our goal in God's time. **In the fullness of God's time the bride shall come riding on a camel, glory to God!** The camels know how to take the bride to the bridegroom. How zealous the Servant is; He brings the right kind of camels for us to alight. This vehicle has come from the Master and it will return to the Master. This settles many issues in my life!

There are many uncertainties all along the way, but God has sent the right vehicle for our use; God is going before us; so let us rest in His promises. **Let us not look at these camels as instruments to try us and bring us to a place of sorrow, suffering, and heaviness.** Let us not be weighed down by a burden. God is sending His word into our lives. The word that is coming from His heart that will even take us to his heart. The word will not return empty — but it will take us to Him. The word that has

come from God will not return to God empty but it will make a bride and take her to the heavenly bridegroom. **The Lord has sent His word and the word will prepare the bride. Hallelujah!**

I can assure you in the name of the Lord, that these camels will never go astray. They will not wander in the wilderness aimlessly, they will not take us into endless circles in this travel but they are bound for a far-off destination and they shall lead us to the right place. God has harnessed these camels for our journey in this time. These camels will keep us in this highway that leads to God. The highway is set by the Lord and we will walk in it even this day.

*“The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.”*

*“And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.”*

**Isaiah 35: 1, 8**

There is a tremendous blossoming — a joy that the Lord shall impart unto us. Though it is a wilderness of God but there is going to be a difference for the true people of God as they travel to meet with the Bridegroom.

## BEHOLD, THERE IS SOMEONE WAITING IN THE FIELDS

*“For she had said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant had said, It is my master: therefore she took a veil, and covered herself.”*

**Genesis 24: 65**

Imagine the bridegroom pacing up and down the ploughed field longingly awaiting the arrival of the camels. **There is a Lord Jesus, even a Heavenly Bridegroom who is really waiting for the bride and longing for the camels to arrive.** And as Isaac the bridegroom was walking in the fields waiting and watching the horizons for the first signs for the camels to arrive, so also is the heavenly Bridegroom!

The Heavenly Bridegroom has sent these camels and He knows these camels will not return void. How many of you believe that the Word He is sending forth in this hour will not return to him void? A bride will be prepared for the bridegroom. Let the word bring forth a bride and return with a bride to the bridegroom. Let us, therefore, embrace the camels that the Lord has sent in our lives.

This is no easy way. This is God’s way and He will say, “This is the way;”. No doubt He will carry us on eagles’ wings; but there will also be trials along the way. He knows the way that we should take.

The husbandman is waiting for the precious fruit of the earth to spring forth. The camels shall not return empty. The camels shall not frustrate God. They shall take us to the very purposes of God.

If we are apprehended of the ways of God in our lives then two things will come upon our heart. One is a helplessness and the second is an assurance from God that He will take us to that final place in Him. Surely there will be many questions in our hearts. We shall wonder where He is taking us. We shall ask, “What lies ahead of me? “ Maybe such questions will arise in our hearts but we need to know that there is One who has assured us that He will reach us to our destination in the Lord also. We cannot calculate and depend upon our strength and our ways any more. We shall come to a place where we become the prisoners of the Lord. His ways are perfect. Do you believe that there can be no better way than the way preordained by God for His people? Have you experienced this in the past? Have you known deep within you that there is no better way. His way is perfect and His way cannot be wrong in our lives. We may have experienced this in certain areas our our lives in the past but let us realize that the best way to take is the way God has set before us. It is only in that path that we will find a true rest for our souls. And it is the wisdom He gives us. He would take us and we will reach that place right on in his time. And we know the Servant, the Holy Spirit will take us into all the truth and we shall meet with the truth, even the Lord Jesus Christ. God’s wisdom is trustworthy in

all our lives. Amen. We can find our security in God.

The church was birthed after His own heart and He will find a place for her in the heart of God. God wants us to be apprehended of this truth. God has pre-ordained a path in our lives. Rebekah desired to meet Isaac; all that she did was to get upon the camel and do the bidding of the Servant. It is so with the church as well.

The Servant has been telling us that this is the hour to meet the Lord, but in reality many do not experience His fullness. Therefore, many say in their hearts, “I don’t think I will ever complete this travel.” But we need to know that we are surely progressing towards the goal, step by step. All along the journey we can assure ourselves that He is carrying us to the Father’s heart and to the fulfillment of His purposes.

It is a beautiful thing to see that at eventide Isaac is pacing the field, looking for the camels and waiting for the arrival of the camels with a bride.

The Lord is really awaiting for the fulfillment of His word in us these days. We have a God who is restless, in a sense. He will not rest until He restores Zion. The Lord has said, in His word, that He will not rest till Zion is restored.

*“For Zion’s sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth”.*

**Isaiah 62:1**

God is zealous for a holy bride. He is zealous over His bride even in these days. And He will surely cause us to progress in the journey towards the Bridegroom. The Lord shall not rest till His righteousness shall go forth out of Zion. The Lord shall not rest till the bride is brought to her Heavenly Isaac at Canaan.

*“And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.”*

*“The Lord hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thy enemies;”. **Isaiah 62: 7, 8***

So we need to know that our God is zealous over our lives: and He is restless to perform this work on our lives. There is a Lord Jesus, even a holy bridegroom who is really waiting and longing for the camels even in this time. He, the Holy Bridegroom has sent these camels and He knows these camels will not return void. Let us embrace the camels that the Lord has sent in our lives.

# THE CURIOUS GIRDLE OF RESTRAINT

## 6

**G**od has promised us to provide water in this wilderness journey so that we shall not perish. For the sons of God, the wilderness shall blossom forth and be places of fruitfulness. *“The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.” (Isaiah 35: 1).*

Though our carnal nature continues to work in us let us remember God’s great grace that is operating in our lives for He is carrying us on ‘eagles’ wings’. We may walk in thorny places in this wilderness but God carries us on ‘eagles’ wings’. There are many difficulties in this journey but the Lord says He is carrying us on ‘eagles’ wings’ into the new land of His end-purposes. So let us move on and pass on from the old land to the new land which God has

set before us. He is taking us out of the land of our nativity which is watered by our old life. And He is bringing us to a new land, a land with milk and honey, oil and new wine, a land where there is a fresh stream flowing from the presence of the Lord.

Rebekah was born in Mesopotamia, which means 'between the rivers'. God wants to take us out of the land of 'between the rivers'. He desires to bring us to a new land where the water flows from His very presence. God does not want us to stay 'between the rivers' of life and death. Many are caught up in the streams of their old life where they are ensnared by the things of their past life: but there is a stream that provides us living water and that is the stream which should water and cleanse our lives. The 'old life' flowed in the old land of our lives. God wants us to come out of that land so that we may live in the new land that He has given us. The new land is watered by the 'living water' of His word which is a river of life and not of death. As we move forward, let us remember that we are moving to a place where there are fresh fountains of water from His presence, the throne of the Lamb.

## THE RESTRAINING HAND OF THE LORD

The camels of God are 'girded' or held in restraint so that they will keep to the appointed way of God. Even so are the people of God. The apostle Paul says in Ephesians

1:14, *“Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate or righteousness;”* The girdle of truth is a part of our armour. It is our harness and discipline. **The truth of God’s word will bring a restraint.** The girdle of truth will discipline us in the coming days. It will help us to stick to the path that the Master has chosen for us. We are indeed living in a very important time in the calendar of God’s purposes. May be we are those who wandered off from the path that the Lord led us to in the past. It could be that the word of truth has apprehended our lives in a new way — if so, we shall be girded with the truth so that we do not wander from the appointed ways of the Lord. We must not wander into paths which are of little relevance to the ‘bride’, in these days. The ‘girdle of truth’ must become our harness lest we wander away into paths that do not please the Master. God’s word in our lives will keep us from suddenly bolting off in the direction of some alien path.

In the Old testament we see that the high priest used to gird himself with a garment called ‘the curious girdle of the ephod’. It must be so in our lives as well. We need to have the girdle of truth around us so that we do not leave the strait and narrow path God has kept for us. When we are under stress and strain, when we go through trials, we tend to drift into ways of little relevance to our calling in the Lord. The Lord would like to tell us, as His bride, that **we need to gird ourselves with the truth of God’s word.** Even in the midst of trials, toils, struggles, and difficulties

we must not deviate but stick to the path set before us. In the past when struggles and trials came we have seen people follow different roads that led them to places of spiritual death. They went off at a tangent into different paths. Sometimes the restraints of the Lord seem too hard to accept. And sometimes we long to be outside the restraints of the Lord. But as we continue to remain in the path set before us we learn that He is taking us the way of blessing and real closeness unto Himself. Then we are able to see that the way that seemed a bondage and a hard thing at one time becomes a place of refreshing in the Lord. **What seemed difficult and claustrophobic in the past brings a new joy and freedom in the Lord if we determine in our hearts to persist in staying within the boundaries of the Lord.**

Today, in the spiritual world we see a great sickness. The heart of man is often divided and fretful causing one to seek spiritual fulfilment in places and in areas that God has not taken us to. Man wanders here and there to seek spiritual satisfaction. People go from one place to another and discard the restraints of the Lord. They ignore the nudgings of the Holy Spirit and deliberately choose to go into prohibited areas to derive some satisfaction that is of the flesh. There is a highway that ensnares many believers. A spirit of curiosity causes them to inquire and indulge in activities that do not benefit them or the body of Christ. Let us not be attracted to 'new' things and lose that which the Lord has given us because we have strayed into the ways of the curious.

Many are looking for something new to take the place of God's present purposes upon the earth. The word of God says that the Lord is sending a famine upon the earth and many shall wander away into other paths. Why is the Lord sending this famine? The Lord is bringing about a famine in some lives because they do not want to accept what God is providing. It is like the Israelites in the wilderness who could not appreciate the heavenly manna the Lord had provided. They ate the heavenly manna every day and did not even have to bother about growing grain or foodstuffs in the desert. Yet, in their hearts they longed for the old life.

There are many people who would like to 'wander about' in the name of the Lord. They would like to say, "I believe in one thing — the universal church of Christ and the universal fatherhood of God". And there are some who are more intelligent and cunning. They say, "The true bride shall be known only when the Lord comes back to this earth." Some speak of great things that God will do in these days. But they all have one thing in common, they refuse to give themselves to the harness, which is the workings of God in their lives. Beloved, today **the true bride shall be known by the giving of herself to the harness and restraints of the Lord.** Many would like to wander and fulfill the desires of their heart, but the chosen ones need to remember that the restraints of the Holy Spirit must operate in our lives.

## THE EXAMPLES OF BALAAM AND LOT

In the Scriptures we read of the example of a man who never wanted to bear the restraints of the Lord. His own paths were well set and firmly established in his heart. Balaam was such a man. He was a prophet of God and God had set a path for him but he preferred to walk in his own ways.

*“And God came unto Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed.*

*“And Balaam rose up in the morning, and said unto the princes of Balak, Get you into your land: for the Lord refuseth to give me leave to go with you.”* **Numbers 22: 12, 13**

God made His will very clear to Balaam. So in the morning he met the ‘committee’ that had come from Balak to visit him. He clearly told them that the Lord had prohibited him to go and therefore he was not at liberty to leave. He said that the restraints of the Lord had prevented him from doing what he wanted to do.

*“And the princes of Moab rose up, and they went unto Balak, and said, Balaam refuseth to come with us.*

*“And Balak sent yet again princes, more, and more honourable than they.”* **Numbers 22: 14, 15**

Soon a higher committee was sent by Balak to invite Balaam. And what did they say?

*“For I will promote thee unto very great honour, and I will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me: come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people.”* **Numbers 22: 17**

Not only did Balak send more honourable men to Balaam but he promised to give him a bonus and to honour him. We know that Balaam succumbed to the pressure and he thus became the first hired servant in the Bible. God had asked him not to go. Balaam could have girded himself with God's truth but there was a greed in his heart. There are many such prophets in the Christian world today. These prophets know the truth of God on several matters. Yet when someone asks them to do a thing that is contrary to the word of God, they say, "I will pray about the matter". And when another tempting offer is made to them they will again say, "I will pray to God again". Such people are no different from Balaam, in reality.

Many times when we pray to the Lord we try to twist His arm. If we are honest with ourselves we will acknowledge that we have experienced this in our lives. We may have known the clear mind of God on certain matters but when pressures came we said, "We shall pray again and seek His mind." Finally we yield to the pressures of men in our lives. We may have known the mind of God under the conviction of the Holy Spirit; the word of God may have come to us under the power of the Holy Spirit or we may have made commitments to honour the word of the Lord. But when the pressures build up we give up and come to a place of saying, "I will seek the mind of the Lord, again." As a result of having such an attitude God may allow us to go in our own ways. Let us humbly acknowledge that this has happened in our lives before. Many a time we have not girded ourselves with the truth God had spoken to us .

Balaam began to seek God again and again. “And God came unto Balaam at night, and said unto him, If the men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them; but yet the word which I will say unto thee, that shalt thou do. And God’s anger was kindled wherever he went...”(Num 22:20, 22)

How can we interpret this verse? Balaam prayed again to the Lord. Then He said, ‘Go’. And when he went God was angry with him. We need to know that **when we are set in our minds to go in a particular way, God will allow us to go in our own way.** Under such circumstances God will permit us to follow the dictates of our heart.

Let us look at another example- that of Lot. These examples are a warning from God to each one of us.

*“And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.*

*“And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the Lord being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.”*

**Genesis 19:15, 16**

We see here that when Lot was unwilling to leave Sodom and Gomorrah. He lingered and dilly-dallied. He was reluctant to obey. But the angels brought him and his family out of the city: “And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be

consumed. And Lot said unto them, oh, not so, my Lord. Behold now thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast showed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape unto the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die. Behold now this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live.” (Gen 19: 17 - 20)

The Lord gave Lot a chance to escape to the mountains but he did not do so. He replied, “Not so, my Lord.” Lot began to pray like Balaam that he may be left to go his own way. He prayed, “God, give me your grace to go my own way .” On the one hand he said, “Lord you saved my life” and then in the same breath, he complains, “ You are going to kill me by sending me to that mountain.” The Israelites had the same heart that Lot had! The word says that they always erred in their hearts.

Finally , Lot said, “*This city is very close by*”. Lot was a man of the cities. He was used to city life. He was a city-dweller who had close ties with the people of the cities. He always preferred to be in the cities rather than to be in the wide, open, meadows and pastures. So on the one hand he was grateful to God for having saved him from the big city (of Sodom and Gomorrah), but on the other hand, he continued to insist and say, “I will go to that small city.” We need to know that when he went to that city of Zoar, the angels did not hold him back from going on in his own ways. They let him pursue his own path. Beloved, God will let you go your own way and pursue your own path if you happen to persist in doing your own thing.

Let us acknowledge that there are times when we want to leave the will of God and pursue our own ends. At such times only the Spirit of God can save us from our own selves. If we fail to hear the voice of God it is likely that we shall leave the will of God and run after our own desires. Let us be grateful to the Lord for the times when the Holy Spirit restrained us from rocking our boats and ruining our spiritual lives! In the life of Lot there was an intervention by God. In the beginning God had intervened in his life and prevented him from being destroyed together with the people of Sodom **but when the heart of Lot continued to err, the Lord left him to his own carnal desires and the cravings of his heart.** Let each one carefully note that the angels did not come to warn Lot of the danger of leaving God's will and going to Zoar! The same thing happened to Balaam. God said, "Go in your own way." Remember, God will let His people go their way of rebellion if they continually desire to go out of His restraints. If we have been apprehended with great longing and desire to do the will of God and to be prepared as a 'bride', we will work with Him, today, tomorrow and the next day. Remember, as we progress in the wilderness, hearing and obeying His voice, our pathway shall intersect with His eternal plan and purposes.

# THE CAMELS ARE FROM THE FATHER

## 7

**T**here is a bride in preparation who will take the same path as the Bridegroom, the Head of the church. Let us believe this with all our heart. Let us gird ourselves with the truth of the word of God. Let us maintain ourselves within the restraints and the boundaries specified by the Holy Spirit. Only in such a way can we touch the very heart of God. Then God will surely lead us. It is the way of the wilderness and in this way we shall find the restraints of the Lord as never before.

This is a new way for most of us. We may have never walked this way before. But in one thing we can take assurance — that the Father is leading us. Our comfort is that the camels have come from the Father and that the Servant is also with us. Our comfort and our joy is that He

shall never leave us nor forsake us. Hallelujah!

## JESUS, OUR ETERNAL PATTERN

We know that the restraints of the Holy Spirit were operating in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. He lived a life that was subject to the disciplines imposed by the Father. He cried out and said, “*Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.*” (*Hebrews 10: 7, 9*). Even in the garden of Gethsemane He cried out, “*Father ...not my will, but thine, be done*” (*Luke 22: 42*). **In the garden one is able to gauge that Jesus had a will of His own but yet He cried out to the Father and prayed that the Father’s will may predominate in His earthly life. Hallelujah.**

*“Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;...”*

**Hebrews 5: 8, 9**

O we see that even this Bridegroom, the pattern Son, the Firstborn among many brethren was obedient till the very last, unto perfection. The Father once told Him to go to the pool of Bethesda. He went there and saw several people waiting for the angel to stir the water so that the first one to get in would be healed. There were many sick and diseased people lying all around the healing waters but Jesus healed only one person. It is here that we see the harness and restraints of the Father upon the Lord. We know that

He had a compassionate nature, for let us not forget, that He was the Saviour who had a heart that agonized to reach out to every human soul. Yet, He saw the mind and the will of the Father to heal only one man.

It is very difficult to restrain oneself once we recognize that there is an anointing by the Father upon us. The evangelists of today would have gone to the pool and healed everyone. Have you experienced this in your life? Have you had a desire to touch every soul who walked in darkness? Have you experienced a tremendous anointing at some stage accompanied by a very strong desire to heal and comfort others. Did you simultaneously experience a pressure upon your spirit to abide in the will of God and do nothing other than what He has expressly said? It is always difficult to wear the harness. Jesus never lived the kind of life many of see all around us these days. **He obeyed the Father to the hilt. That is the way His life became pleasing to the Father.**

We may not know the answers to many questions but we can say with some assurance borne of the Spirit that we are journeying with Him and He knows where to take us. We are among those who look for a city whose builder and maker is the Lord. Knowing that He is faithful to bring us to the place of our inheritance, we embrace His word every day of our life.

Every passing day brings an awareness to us that we

are taking a step closer to that salvation which is ready to be revealed in these last days. If we hear His voice in every step that we take ‘today’ we shall not harden our hearts. It is in the ‘today’ that we need to walk in His will, girding ourselves with the truth of His word. When we take that step TODAY we know that we are getting closer to Him in our lives. Let us walk in His will today, then we shall also walk in His will tomorrow.

## EMBRACING THE WAYS OF GOD

*“Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with the truth.....”*  
**Ephesians 6:14**

Beloved people of God, over the years we have seen some people stray away from the strait and narrow path. **The main reason for their coldness or backsliding was that their heart was not totally towards the Lord.** They had not come to a place of embracing and girding the word of God. We would sit with them and counsel them and tell them the ways of the Lord, but when the time came to obey and do that which reflects God’s thoughts, they would turn aside and do what was upon their own heart. We could explain the word of God but in the face of their determination to turn away from the light of God’s word, little can be done. **It is the condition of their heart that causes them to wander into their own ways and liking.** Soon they become slaves to their own self life and then gradually they come under the workings and the

influence of the evil one. I have seen some people — it really brings sorrow to my heart when I see how they have deviated from the path that God had set before them. Let us be those who love the truth of His word and who gird ourselves with the truth of God’s word.

We have come across some young believers, whom we had to counsel because what they shared was not in line with God’s word. They took correction outwardly and continued to nod their heads, but in their hearts they never changed their views and opinions. So they eventually denied God’s word in their lives. **Over the years they became a prey to the subtleties and cunning ways of the evil one who is like a roaring lion waiting to ensnare every believer.** Today, they are curious about certain things but in other matters they enter into arguments and fruitless debates. We tell them that it is not important to major in the minors; we counsel them to hold on to what God has spoken; we plead with them to obey and follow the Lord in that which He has made clear to them; we take time with them separately — but the end of it all is that they go their own way because their hearts have not really been renewed.

Sometimes people leave this narrow way because they feel that the Lord has given them a great burden for souls. We certainly need a burden for all those who are perishing, **but what is of paramount importance is that we know the mind of God.** Once I asked a brother who said that he had a great burden for souls, “How many people

have you brought to the Lord in the last one year?” He had no answer. Many times we want to do certain things and we are involved in what others are doing but we fail to heed the call of God in our lives and we also fail to prove the mind of God in our actions. There can be no doubt that if someone has a burden from God to minister to lost souls, then the Lord will also give him opportunities to prove that God has called him to do so. That is the way we must learn to prove the calling that is upon our lives. Joshua and Caleb stood for their calling at Kadesh Barnea when they returned from Canaan with ten other spies. The ten admitted that Canaan was a land of milk and honey (Numbers 13:27) but when they came face to face with a problem, they spoke against the call of God which rested upon them to go into Canaan, the land of their inheritance. May God help us to understand what the Holy Spirit is saying to the people of God today.

In this hour and at this time when the majority are doing their own thing in the name of the Lord, it is just as in the days of the Judges ***“In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”(Judges 21:25).*** But God is now raising a remnant and a people for Himself. God has a ‘bride’ in preparation and the bride shall follow the perfect example of the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Many of God’s people have failed to gird His truth in their lives and they hope in their heart that someday they

will be found in the purposes of God. Let us not be deceived in our lives. If we fail to embrace this truth and do not gird ourselves about this word and live in the restraints of the Spirit, then, beloved, we will not be found as a part of God's work in this hour. **First we must be found in the will of God.** We need to ask ourselves, "*Am I harnessed to the will and the mind of God? Or am I one who appreciates God's will but continues to walk in my own will.*" Beloved, if we would really gird ourselves with the truth, the girdle of truth shall make us steadfast and faithful in our lives. It will cause us to be righteous in an unrighteous world. Whatever the situations may be we know that this girdle of truth will help us to be consistent with God. When we are putting on this girdle of truth, we will come to know what is true freedom in our lives.

**True freedom in the life of a believer is to be in the yoke of the Lord.** The Lord Jesus says in Matthew 11:28 "*I will give you rest*". He takes the yoke and places it upon a people who have come to him for comfort and rest. **Our rest is in the yoke.** Many people preach and say, "I will give you rest," and they do not mention the next verse which says, "*Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.*". Beloved our real rest is in learning to put on the yoke of the Lord in our lives. Many people have found this girdle of truth very difficult to wear because they have given themselves to a lot of activities which are initiated by their own heart.

There is a girdle that we need to put on in these days. When we come out of the restraints, we may experience great freedom. I know a brother who having left us, went to another place because he was corrected, and said, “What a release I have in my spirit.” He began to think (in the new place) how wonderful it was to be in a new place. But after a couple of months I heard that he had lost the joy that he had earlier. It is true that when one breaks away from the Lord and pleases the flesh or the soul life there is a feeling of release which is momentary. It does not last long but one begins to feel that the removal of the restraining hand was from the Lord and that it resulted in a joyful freedom. But one needs to see what has happened to that young man now, after several months have elapsed. Alas, now he is in a place where they do not teach the Baptism in the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit. Beloved people of God, when we break away from the restraints and the discipline of the Spirit we feel and rejoice in a that freedom for a season. We may feel that at last God has brought us to a good place and that we are no longer in captivity. Slowly, however, such ones come under a great bondage. Let us not break away from the restraints of God. **It is only in the constraints of the Lord that one can experience true rest and freedom.**

The camels of our journey will return to the Master. Freedom to go our own way is not allowed nor given. We need to know that we cannot go into the way and desires of

our own life. **True freedom is to be in the harness of the Lord.**

## FREEDOM OF THE SON

The Lord does not want a bondsman to inhabit the temple forever but He wants His sons to be in the temple forever. It is perhaps difficult to understand this. It is not a bondsman who will rule the earth. Those who are together with the Son will reign in the earth. It is going to be the overcomers. The Lord does not consider us to be as slaves or bondsmen; we need to know that we are His sons.

*“Jesus answered them, verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.*

*“And the servant abideth not in the house forever, but the son abideth ever.*

*“If the son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”*

**John 8:34-36**

Whose freedom do you want? Do you want the freedom to sin or do you want the freedom of the Son? Which freedom do you want? Many times we want the freedom to be the servant of sin. But the Scripture says the Son abideth forever and if the Son makes you free you shall be free indeed. Every true son goes through chastising in his life. We read that clearly in Hebrews 12: 6, “For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.” Every son He loves He puts His

restraints on him. But if the son says, “I don’t want any restraint”, then he is living in the freedom of the servant. In this hour let us be those who have the girdle of truth.

As believers, let us remember that we are journeying on camels to one Heavenly Bridegroom. Many people we meet will perhaps say, “Behold, and lo what have you got?” And let us not delay in replying, “Brother, this is the beast that God has provided me.” It is the blessed provision of God for you, remember that. These camels are sure to take us through the wilderness to the centre of God’s heart in this hour. The Servant is set upon one thing and that one thing is to obtain an appropriate bride for His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is what has been upon the heart of God for His Son through the ages past. It shall be brought forth even in these days. We have seen why the Lord desires a ‘bride’ — not that they may live happily and in comfort but that she may be a help meet unto the Last Adam. And we can see how Christ and the church shall bring in the kingdom of God upon this earth. The Lord Jesus and His army of believers shall go forth together to judge the earth.

The Lord wants to engrave this word very strongly upon the tablets of our heart. The word is that He is preparing the bride to undertake the journey to the bridegroom. **We are in preparation unto the Lord and we shall take the journey through the wilderness unto Canaan even to meet the Lord Jesus Christ, our heavenly bridegroom.** Did not our hearts burn within us when she

said she will go with this man; one about whom she had heard but never seen in her life. *“Whom having not seen, ye love ; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory”.* (1 Peter 1: 8). For the joy that is set in our hearts we shall be those who shall move towards the culmination of His purposes.

The true bride-people are making a journey into the purposes of God. There is a prophesy resting upon this bride. She shall inherit all that is upon the heavens and the earth. She shall possess the gates of her enemy.

*“And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man: and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way.*

*“And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahairoi, for he dwelt in the south country.*

*“And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming.”*

**Genesis 24: 61-63**

The camels are coming. The way to meet the heavenly Bridegroom in our lives is the way God has ordained. The journey is through the wilderness and there are no short cuts!

Many a time we would like to go in a different directions to reach the destination that God has destined for us. In these days many are unwilling to climb upon the camels. They would rather choose to travel by a faster vehicle so

that they reach their destination earlier. Many would like to be in the full purposes of God in the twinkling of an eye! They desire to take a short route but not the way that God has ordained for the bride.

The camels have come from the Master and they shall return to the Master. This time, however, they shall return to the Master bringing in the 'bride', all dressed up in her beautiful garments. The word of God has come from the Master and the word shall not return void. It shall come to the Master with a bride who is holy, unblameable and well prepared.

The camels that come from the Master will not stray away. They shall have an appropriate harness and bridle. They shall take the right path and they shall arrive at the right place. They will keep to the appointed paths and ways of the Lord. There is a restraint that comes upon the camel through the harness.

## YOU WILL KNOW HIM WHEN YOU SEE HIM

God's people need to be those who have their loins girt about with truth though the way may seem very long. We may ask, "How far Lord? How long will we have to travel to reach our destination? Lord, how long is this travel going to take?" For several years we have been hearing questions about the time of His coming.

The Servant of God shall say to us, “Keep watching, keep looking for Him as you are moving in the will of God; girt about with the truth of God’s word; keep watching, keep looking **and when you see Him you will recognize Him — and He will recognize you.**” Beloved, He is far more anxious to meet us than we are to meet Him. Why is He so anxious? It is because He has chosen us to be His people.

*“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:*

*“Having predestinated as unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,*

*“To the praise of his glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”*

***Ephesians 1: 4 -6***

He has been waiting all these long years for you and me. He has predestinated us from the ages past.

*“And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel.” **Genesis 24: 64***

The Servant did not point the bridegroom out to Rebekah. He did not say, “This is the man?” The Servant never told her so. All these years having not seen Him yet she loved Him. All through the travel the Servant was revealing Him to her. She was very deeply given to the revelation of her Bridegroom, which the Servant shared to

her all through the travels. And as she was anxiously progressing in her journey and approached a bend in the road, the Servant told her, “You will know Him when you see Him”. Glory to God.

In this hour and in this time, many things are happening. Some will say, “Lo Christ is here, Lo Christ is there”. Many are running to and fro. In the western hemisphere there is a revival going on which may be termed a ‘laughing revival’. There is yet another thing going on. Preachers call for the people to come forward and blow over them and they all fall to the ground! They think that this is of the Holy Spirit. Everybody is rushing to see what the Lord is doing in such places. People are looking for something fascinating, exciting and sensational to satisfy their soul. Many Christians are given to such activities. It is happening all over the Christian world. **Human soul power has become a deceptive counterfeit of the Holy Spirit power in Christendom today.** Much of Christianity is riddled with soul power masquerading as the power of the Holy Spirit. **To discern between soul and Spirit is the great need of the hour, if one is to escape deception.** He that hat an ear to hear, let him hear!

There are many who declare that Jesus is coming and He is surely coming at any moment. But how many are there who declare the ONE who is coming, the ONE who has been waiting? If you are longing for the Lord and long to give Him the utmost, please listen with an open heart. If

you look at the majority of Christian literature and reports today you will find that they are adventurous in nature and ‘tickle the ears’ of the people. The greatest deception of all is that they publish one or two articles by the accepted men of God, right in the middle of all their compromising messages. If these men of God were alive today, they would not have permitted the precious word they had received of God in the midst of trials and tribulations to be polluted by these men. The apostle Paul declares prophetically about these last days, *“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heed to themselves teachers, having itching ears;”* (2 Timothy 4: 3).

The Greek word for sound is ‘hugiano’. The English word ‘hygiene’ originates from it. Hence the verse above would read, “For the time will come when they will not endure hygienic teaching...” Some people tell me, “Brother, they do speak about the glorious church, though I do not accept all that they are doing out there.” Let me you an example. If you go to a restaurant you will surely seek an hygienic environment. Sometimes the food may be delicious but if that good food is unhygienic, what will be the result? It will adversely affect your health, for sure. Instead of building you up it will bring about deterioration and decay.

Prophetically speaking there is a famine in this hour and in this land. And during a famine what do the inhabitants eat? The Scriptures say that at such times they may even eat an asses head. O, beloved people of God, there are people

who are hungry and they seem to want to eat anything but the truth of God's word. But let us take heed—the bride is in preparation and the Servant says to her, “Watch out, look out, and when you see him you will know it is He you are looking for.” The true ministries will continuously declare the characteristics of the Bridegroom and so prepare the Bride that when she sees Him she'll immediately recognize Him. Are you in a place where you are having hygienic teaching? Are you under a valid ministry that declares the characteristics of the Bridegroom and preparing you?

### THE HOPE WE HAVE, PURIFIES US

It appears that Rebekah saw Isaac even before the Servant saw Him. She was looking for him. She was expecting to meet him. She was not surprised or caught unawares. At the time of His appearing those who look for Him shall behold Him. She was looking for Him. Beloved, He shall appear in His saints. Let us cherish this hope. The bride shall not be caught unawares.

*“But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day shall overtake you as a thief.*

*“Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.”*

**1 Thessalonians 5: 4,5**

That day shall not overtake us unawares. We shall be a people who will look for His appearing in our lives.

That day shall not come upon us like a thief because we are the children of the day and not children of the night.

*“Therefore let us not sleep, as do others: but let us watch and be sober.”*      **1 Thessalonians 5: 6**

*“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”*  
**Hebrews 9: 28**

It is the hope of His appearing that helps us to purify ourselves today. Let us have an awareness that He is coming soon. We are the children of a new ‘land of inheritance’. Let us sit on this vehicle of God, the camel, the word of God, and let us enter in and walk into the new land that God has prepared for us.

Each day we are progressing through this land of wilderness. And I tell you that these camels of God are bound to take us from this old life and bring us into the fullness of this new life in these days. In this wilderness though we may feel things to be grievous and rough and difficult we need to know that we are passing out of one land and entering into another land that God has set for us. The land of nativity is not our home. **We were born in a strange place — a foreign land but God wants to bring us into His home, unto the heavenly Bridegroom.** That is what we read about Rebekah. As she sat on the camel and began to move with the Servant in the wilderness she left her people, and the old place of her nativity, and moved

into an altogether new land which God had set before her.

**Beloved, God is very zealous that he has a Bride truly like Himself, worthy of Him, truly compatible.**

Let this awesome thought pierce our hearts with a sense of responsibility to be people who have heard from Him in these pages. It is this word which, as it goes forth from His appointed ministries, it will produce and prepare the Holy Bride for Christ, the Bridegroom. The Holy Spirit of God will be faithful to present the chaste virgin to Christ. AMEN!



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