

GOD'S PROPHECIES

FOR

PLAIN PEOPLE

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Chapter Three -

The Marriage Supper and the Wedding

"Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb."

The book of the Revelation of JESUS CHRIST has seven beatitudes:

1. **"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein: for the time is at hand"** (1:3). In connection with no other book of the Bible is there such a promise of special reward for its study.

2. **"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them"** (14:13). To die in the LORD is always blessed; but at the particular time and in the particular circumstances referred to here there will be peculiar blessings for those who, resisting the tide of world-wide idolatry, and refusing to receive upon their persons the mark of the Beast, or to worship His image, shall be beheaded for the testimony of JESUS. **"From henceforth"** are the emphatic words.

3. **"Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame"** (16:15). Like the preceding "Blessed," this one is for the end-time, after the church has been caught up to meet her LORD, and during the awful scenes of the Great Tribulation upon the Earth. The imagery is that of the sleeping sentinel, whose outer garment is taken away by his superior officer who finds him sleeping on duty. **"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth."**

4. **"Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb"** (19:9). This is to occupy us in our present study.

Happy and Holy - and Up!

5. **"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death"**

hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (20:6).

6. **"Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book" (22:7).** Again the "Blessed" is linked with the coming "quickly" - suddenly, without further warning - of the Son of Man, to judge the world in righteousness. Let his dear one in that end-time be careful to observe **"the sayings of the prophecy of this book."** And for us also, there is blessing for spending much time and care upon the understanding of this "unveiling" of the Son of GOD.

7. **"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (22:14).**

We are now to look into the fourth of these beatitudes. It is best to have the context before us. The nineteenth chapter opens with a scene of rejoicing on account of the destruction of "Babylon." This is ecclesiastical Babylon, or apostate Christendom, headed up in the papal system. It is **"the great whore, . . . that did corrupt the earth with her fornication."** She included the false professing church, calling itself Christian, but at heart opposed to CHRIST. She claimed to be the bride of CHRIST, but now His servants are filling Heaven with hallelujahs because she has come to her awful end.

In the sixth verse the scene changes. John writes:

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. 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 19:6-9).

The LAMB, of course, is our LORD JESUS CHRIST. But who is the bride? Undoubtedly, the church, although there is some difference of opinion about this, and some godly and enlightened teachers hold that the bride is Israel. That Israel is a wife is true. But she is not, nor can she be, the bride. In Isaiah 54 and Hosea 2 it is seen that Israel is the Old Testament wife of GOD, guilty of spiritual adultery and repudiated of her Husband, though yet to be wooed and won back to Him and His house. But the New Testament church is CHRIST's affianced bride, espoused unto Him as a chaste virgin (Ephesians 5:23-33; II Corinthians 11:2, 3). An adulterous wife, though forgiven and restored, can never be called a bride, and certainly not a virgin.

But the church is also CHRIST's body: **"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 1:22, 23),** which fact has been urged against her being His bride. She is both His bride and His body, as was Eve in her relation to Adam. Comparison of Genesis 2:21-24 with Ephesians 5:28-32 will make this clear.

"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. Therefore shall a wife leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

"So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the 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."

In the twenty-first chapter of The Revelation there is a picture of "**the bride, the Lamb's wife,**" which is seen to be identified with the "**great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of Heaven from God, having the glory of God,**" and into which none shall enter "**but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life**" (Compare Hebrews 12:23). This must not be confused with the Earthly "**City of the Great King**"; and which is to be the center for redeemed Israel in the kingdom age. The Heavenly Jerusalem is a city distinct from the Earthly capital; it is the church, the Lamb's wife and queen, sharing in His kingdom glory, located in the air, over the Earth, "as both the place and the means of the manifestation of God who dwells in it" (Scofield).

"A Tale of Two Cities!"

The Earthly and Heavenly cities are distinguished in Scripture with great clearness. The Jerusalem that "**now is,**" writes Paul to the Galatians, "**is in bondage with her children.**" But the Jerusalem that is above "**is free, which is the mother of us all**" (Galatians 4:25, 26). The Earthly city's Millennial glory is described in the final chapters of Ezekiel; its exact measurements are in the last paragraph of the last chapter. It is to be about nine miles square, with a magnificent temple a mile square (Ezekiel 48:20). But this will be small indeed, compared with the Heavenly city, "**twelve thousands furlongs**" - or fifteen hundred miles, long, and broad, and high! "**The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal**" (Revelation 21:16). The Heavenly city has no temple save "**the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb**" (Revelation 21:22).

"O mother dear Jerusalem,
When shall I come to thee?
When shall my sorrows have an end?
Thy joys when shall I see?

"O happy harbor of GOD's saints!
O sweet and pleasant soil!
In thee no sorrow can be found -
No grief, no care, nor toil.

"O my sweet home, Jerusalem,
Thy joys when shall I see -
The King that sitteth on thy throne

In his felicity.

"Right through thy streets, with silver sound,
The living waters flow,
And on the banks, on either side,
The trees of life do grow.

"Those trees for evermore bear fruit,
And evermore do spring;
There evermore the angels are,
And evermore do sing.

"Jerusalem, my happy home,
Would GOD I were in thee!
Would GOD my woes were at an end,
Thy joys that I might see!"

The marriage takes place in Heaven by which the LAMB and His bride are joined in an eternal union. It seems that there are to be two marriage feasts - one in Heaven, and one on the Earth, the latter when the Bridegroom returns with His bride to set up the Kingdom promised unto the fathers through the Prophets. This is the coming pictured in the Parable of the Ten Virgins, in Matthew 25:1-13.

The Bride and the Bridesmaids

The scene is Jewish. The ten virgins represent Jews of the end-time who profess loyalty to the coming King. The lamps are the Word of GOD, "**a lamp unto our feet.**" The oil is for the HOLY SPIRIT, without Whom the lamp cannot be "**a light unto our path.**"

This plural virgin type is employed elsewhere in Scripture, and it always points to the Jewish remnant of the end-time. See, for example, Revelation 14:1-5,

"And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from Heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God."

and compare Revelation 7:1-8.

"And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor

on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Rueben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand."

In Psalm 45:14 the Jewish remnant appears, in the presence of the bride, as "**the virgins her companions that follow her.**" I have already referred to the virgin type of the church in II Corinthians 11:2, 3, but it is a singular type and not plural. It is not in keeping with the manner of Scripture to employ plural types of the church. There is always insistence and emphasis upon the unity of the body.

This, then, is what lies just ahead for those who during this age have put their trust in the LORD JESUS CHRIST, thus becoming "**members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones,**" and also constituting His bride. For her, the spouse of CHRIST, the queen of the King, the city that hath foundations, whose Maker and Builder is GOD, is prepared. He Who said, "**I go to prepare a place for you,**" is faithful to His promise, and is longing for His bride. "**And,**" said He, "**if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.**" "**Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus!**" To be with Thee will be Heaven enough, and our eyes are already ravished as by faith we behold "**the glory which shall be revealed in us**".

"Blessed city, Heavenly Salem,
Vision dear of peace and love,
Who of living stones art builded
In the height of Heaven above,
And, with angel hosts encircled,
As a bride doth Earthward move.

"From celestial realms descending,
Bridal glory round thee shed,
Meet for Him whose love espoused thee,
To thy LORD shalt thou be led;
All the streets, and all thy bulwarks
Of pure gold are fashioned.

"Many a blow and biting sculpture
Polished well those stones elect,
In their places now compacted

By the Heavenly Architect,
Who therewith hath willed forever
That His palace should be decked.

"Laud and honor to the FATHER,
Laud and honor to the SON,
Laud and honor to the SPIRIT,
Ever Three, and ever One,
Consubstantial, co-eternal,
While unending ages run."

~ end of chapter 3 ~
