

The Voice of Truth # 529

The Marriage of the Lamb

Have your Bibles opened to the 19th chapter Revelation, beginning with the 7th verse. The 19th chapter of Revelation opens with all Heaven resounding with praise that great Babylon has fallen and the harlot of the earth has been judged. The heavy load of sin that has weighed upon the hearts of all the holy universe has been broken; the day and reign of the apostate man has reached its final end. Great will be the day when the Lord Jesus Christ shall triumph in final victory over the apostate church known as Mystic Babylon. That will be the day when the hopes and prayers of God's children, and all the prophecies and promises of God's Word, shall come to their final fulfillment. That will be the day when the invincible and eternal King, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, takes the sovereignty of this world completely into his own hands, never again to let it pass into other hands. All the prophecies and promises of the entire Bible point in their final fulfillment, to that glorious day when our blessed Lord shall come in his glory, and every enemy shall be put under his feet, and he shall reign. All heaven understands the final fulfilment of these promises, and as a result, they pour forth their praise, crying, Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Until the praise swells as the sound of mighty thunders, because God takes over the reins of the sovereignty of this earth through His Son. This praise has a twofold value, pointing back to the fall and destruction of Babylon, the apostate church, and all false religion; and then, praise God, it points ahead to the marriage of the Lamb.

Let me say again, with all the emphasis of my soul, that the true bride of the Lord Jesus Christ cannot be unveiled to the universe until the false bride, the false church, false religion, and all of Satan's great society and satanic religion and everything pertaining to this world and the world order, is forever and eternally put down and destroyed once and for all time. When this is accomplished under the judgments of God, the true bride is revealed in all her beauty and glory and majesty and loveliness as she comes forth to meet the bridegroom, the Lord Jesus

Christ, and to enter into that marriage relationship that all the Bible has pointed toward through all the ages. In our study of the book of Revelation, we come now to the marriage of the Lamb. With Bibles in hand, let's turn to Revelation 19:7 and read, will you?

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

Will you listen? Will you lay down everything now? Some of you are worrying me out there, you're not quiet. You're stirring about. Just get quiet before your radios. Will you do that, please? Listen to God's Word. Let me call your attention again to this most interesting fact. The Bible opens and closes with a marriage. It opens and closes with the Garden of Eden, a paradise lost and a paradise regained. Adam, in his holy, sinless state, was a type of Christ as the bridegroom; and Eve, who was taken from Adam's side, was a type of the bride, who was taken from the side of Christ. So, the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. As we said, this marriage of the Lamb cannot take place until God puts down all enemies beneath his feet. Nor can it take place until the bride has made herself ready.

Let's first notice, who is the bridegroom? Revelation 19:7 says, **For the marriage of the Lamb is come.** Yes, the bridegroom is the Lamb. He is no one but the blessed Lord and Savior, who gave himself, in his death on the cross, as a sacrifice for our sins, who was buried as our scapegoat, rose as our justifier, ascended to the right hand of the Father as our righteousness, our federal head, our surety, our mediator, and he who is alive forevermore. He is the Lamb of God, the Son of Man, the everlasting Son of the Father, who was made incarnate that He might deliver us from our sins. As the Lamb, He is the God-Man, having two natures, the

Son of God and the Son of Man, who is seated on the right hand of the Majesty on high. But I've wondered why the Scripture says, now get it, **for the marriage of the Lamb is come**. Why is he presented in his character as a Lamb? And why is his marriage spoken of as **the marriage of the Lamb**? Will you listen? Throughout the book of Revelation, he is spoken of as the Lamb of God, the slain Lamb, the resurrected Lamb of God, the Lamb bearing all the marks of crucifixion. I believe it is because there can be no marriage relationship between Christ and His bride as the Son of God alone or as the Son of Man alone. It is only in His character as the incarnate Son of God, Christ crucified, buried, risen, ever living, that He's eternally united with His redeemed, His bride. Therefore, the bridegroom is the Christ who died for our sins. He's the Christ who went to hell and suffered the equivalent of the sins of his people. He's the Christ who redeemed his bride with his own precious blood, purchased her with his own blood. He is the Christ who went to the cross as her substitute, died in her place, paid her sin debt, and in his resurrection released her from the bondage of the guilt and penalty and power of sin, cancelling the bond against her. So, it is only in his character as the Lamb that there can be the marriage relationship. Did you catch that? I wish I had time to repeat it.

The New Testament presents Christ Himself as the Bridegroom, Matthew 9:15. He also speaks of the Kingdom of Heaven in Matthew 22, where He likens it unto a certain king making a marriage for his son. In Matthew 25, He speaks of the judgment as a time when the bridegroom comes for His bride. In John 3:29, John the Baptist speaks of himself as the friend of the bridegroom; and Paul refers in 2 Corinthians 12 to those whom he begot in the gospel as being espoused to one husband that they might be presented to Christ as a chaste virgin. In Ephesians 5, he speaks of earthly marriage as significant of the mystery of Christ's relationship to his church. So, throughout the scriptures, our blessed Redeemer and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ speaks of himself in the character of a bridegroom or a husband to his people. In Isaiah 54, God's relationship to his people Israel is set forth in these words, **for thy maker is thy husband**. We can come to only one conclusion, that the Lamb, the glorified Lord Jesus Christ, is the bridegroom and husband to his people.

Notice the fact that the Bible does not say the marriage of the bride is come, but the marriage of the Lamb. We put the emphasis in earthly marriages on the bride, saying here comes the bride. But this is a perversion of the order of marriage. The marriage of the Lamb will not be so much the realization of the hopes of the bride, but it is the consummation of the plan of God for His Son, which He arranged and foreordained before the foundation of the world, according to Ephesians 1:4, **and 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.** The marriage of the Lamb is the consummation of the joy of Christ as the God-man. Listen, **looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that is set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is sat down at the right hand the throne of God.** Did you notice that expression, **'Who for the joy that was set before him'**? That joy is the redemption of his people, that his wife may be made ready, which will consummate the marriage of the Lamb. As we have looked at the bridegroom in the character of the Lamb of God who gave Himself for us. Let us see now, who is the bride? As Christ gave Himself for us, then salvation is receiving Christ. **As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.** Salvation is receiving a person. That person is Christ. As Christ gave Himself for us, we give ourselves to Him. We receive Him as the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. First, let us see who the bride is not. The bride is not the group of Old Testament saints, nor is the bride the Jewish nation, who throughout the Old Testament is presented as the betrothed of God. I have read and studied Psalms 45 closely, and I believe it presents very clearly the relationship of the bridegroom and the bride. Listen, **upon thy right hand did stand the queen in the gold of Ophir.** Also it describes her- **The king's daughter is all glorious within: Her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework.** Then, it says, **the virgins her companions that follow her, shall be brought unto thee. They shall enter into the king's palace.** Here we see the prophecy of the bride being brought unto the bridegroom, adorned in all his beauty and glory. With her are her companions, which are a special people who have been called out and redeemed as the guests that attend the wedding. You know, my friends, there are the virgins, the guests that attend the wedding, all made glorious, all redeemed by the Lord. But the bride occupies a special place and a special relationship to the Lamb, the Bridegroom. This truth also is brought out in Songs of Solomon 6:8,9. In

the first part of the chapter 6, the bridegroom speaks to the bride, **Thou art beautiful, O my love, thou art beautiful**, and he says there are **threescore queens and fourscore concubines and virgins without number. My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.** This scripture brings out the truth that there is a special class of the redeemed that Christ looks upon as his bride. But there are the virgins, companions, and others without number who attend the marriage.

We find the parable of the ten virgins, in Matthew 25, when the call goes forth that the bridegroom is coming, they meet him and welcome him and go in with him to the marriage. The question rises, where is the bride? These virgins in the parable are attendants upon the marriage. The parable is given to set forth the great truth that the bridegroom is on his way to join his bride. And they are to be ready for the bridegroom's coming, that they may go in with him to the marriage when the call sounds forth, **the bridegroom is coming.** This parable corresponds to Revelation 19:9, which says, **Write, blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.** John the Baptist said, **I am a friend of the bridegroom. I rejoice to hear his voice.** Yes, it is a blessed thing to be called to the marriage, and the marriage supper of the Lamb, whether it is to be an attendant or a guest or a companion of the Bride. As in earthly weddings, there is a great host of attendants upon the heavenly wedding who will partake of the marriage supper of the Lamb. So, we come to the conclusion that not all those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ and get to heaven by His grace actually constitute the Bride of Christ, regardless of how they are related to the bride. But everyone who is present will be brought into a near and close relationship to the bridegroom, and they will share the blessing and honor that are bestowed upon the bride, but the bride alone has the marriage relationship to the bridegroom, which belongs to her and her alone; and no other class of the redeemed can enter into that privilege. Let me hasten to say this, there will be no jealousy between the bride and her attendants. She will not be jealous of Christ's love for them. They will be rejoicing to the greatest degree in the bride's relationship to the bridegroom. Won't that be a gracious time?

As we look farther at the bride, let's read Revelation 21:2, where John said, **I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.** As the bride is prepared for her husband, so the city is prepared for the bride, which will be the bride's everlasting home. When the Lord Jesus comforted his disciples in the upper room the night of his betrayal, he told them, I go to prepare a place for you, and for nearly 2,000 years, he's been building this city and adorning it as a bride for her husband. All her companions and attendants will share with her the glory of that home, and their relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ will be most blessed. The bride of Christ will have a unique relationship with him that none other will have. In Acts 15:14, we are told, that the Lord will call out a people for his name. This is the bride of Christ, that group of blood-bought sinners called out by the grace of God, from the day of Pentecost to the first resurrection, as set forth in 1 Thessalonians, the fourth chapter. No particular cult or denomination can, on any consideration, be called the bride of Christ.

Now let's look at this scripture, **And his wife hath made herself ready.** Now listen, listen. Will you hold your seat? **To her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.** What does it mean for the wife to make herself ready? In the first place, the bride is blood-bought, blood-washed in the precious blood of Christ, made a new creature in Christ Jesus. There will not be one individual member of the Bride of Christ that has not been born again. Now, you're not a member of the Bride of Christ because you're a Baptist, or a Methodist, or Presbyterian, or Catholic, or Jew, or a member of any sect. Thousands of you people are thinking that because you're members of a certain church, you're going to heaven. My friends, salvation is not an experience or baptism, or church membership, or a set of doctrines. Salvation is not believing a promise. Salvation is not resting on the finished work of Christ, or even resting on Christ. Salvation is receiving a person, and that person is the Lamb of God who gave Himself as an offering for sin. For our sin. When a sinner has been awakened to the fact he's lost, undone, wicked, unclean, corrupt, totally depraved, and he sees he has no goodness or righteousness whatsoever, and turns to Christ crying for mercy, then and only then does that sinner see and know and feel that all of his sins were laid on Christ, and Christ became what he is, that he may become what Christ is. God imputes his righteousness to that

sinner in Christ. That's the first step the bride takes in making herself ready. She's clothed with the righteousness of God in Christ, which is Christ himself. And she becomes bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh.

Let's go a step further, in verse 8 the scripture says, **to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen clean white for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.** That word righteousness is in the plural, righteousnesses. This signifies not only the imputed righteousness of Christ, but includes her own sanctification in Christ, her own deeds of righteousness wrought out in her life by the indwelling Holy Spirit. Every born-again believer perseveres to the end. He isn't a Christian today and not a Christian tomorrow. It is a life journey. That individual walks with the Lord from the day of his birth into the family of God, until the day of his death, and he has the imputed righteousness of Christ, which is his standing before God. Christ is not only his righteousness, but Christ is his sanctification. And there is that steady day-by-day living, walking, witnessing for Christ, regardless of what comes or goes, or whether the path is rugged or smooth, or covered with thorns and rocks; whether uphill or downhill, over mountains and seas, in the home or in the throne; it'll be the same on Monday as well as on Sunday or any other day. That individual is continually walking with the Lord. Now you get that. That phrase, **The bride shall be arrayed in fine linen and clean and white,** is a great contrast to our present position in this life, where we see ourselves so unclean, so vile, but to think we'll be clothed in a spotless robe, known as the wedding garment, is a precious thought. You know the great joy in my heart is I'm going to be part of that bride. I was a spouse to Christ one day, and he's going to present me with the rest of his bride to himself as a chaste virgin.

Another thought has occurred to me about the wife making herself ready. I'm wondering if the clothing of the bride in these righteousnesses is all that is embraced in the wife's preparation for the wedding. I want you to listen to this. I know that in this life the wife is making herself ready by the justifying and sanctifying work of the Lord Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. But what remains for the bride to do after this life is over? What activities will the saints be engaged in from the time they leave this life and during the waiting yonder in the heavens for the wedding day? I also know that heaven is not a place of inactivity, and from

the reading of the scriptures, I believe there are far greater things for the saint to do in the paradise above in making herself ready for the marriage of the Lamb. During our earthly career we **'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 God'** according to 2 Corinthians. That is the growth in grace and the knowledge and the likeness of our Lord. Then get this, in Ephesians 4:13, **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 fulness of Christ.** That last phrase, **unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,** gives us a hint of the heavenly career of the bride as she makes herself ready. The bride of Christ, when she is presented to him, will be perfect and mature, according to measure or standard indicated by the words, **'stature of the fullness of Christ'**. In other words, the bride will be fully matured and completely furnished, get it now, hold it, with all spiritual capacities corresponding to the fullness of Christ. Now, no matter how long we live here in the flesh, when we go to be with Christ, how far short we fall of attaining the perfection and maturity that he calls **the full knowledge of the Son of God.** My personal conviction is that the time before the marriage of the Lamb will be spent, the time will be spent in coming to understand more and more of the incarnation of the Son of God, His sacrificial offering of Himself for us, the hope of His calling, the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe. How my heart rejoices to know that we'll continue to learn more of Christ until we attain to the full measure of the stature of Christ. That'll be a gracious day, a glorious hour, when the bride has made herself ready and she's arrayed so gloriously in the righteousness of Christ, the sanctification of Christ, and arriving at that full knowledge of Christ that fits her to become the bride of the Lamb. Oh, the grace, the marvelous grace of our God towards such fallen sinners, that He'll lift us up from what we are to make us in the fullness of what He is. You get that? That's rejoicing, isn't it?

My friend, have you ever sat and meditated on what we shall be when we shall see Him? It is almost unbelievable, the force of those words in 1 John 3:2. **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 see Him as He is.** When our blessed Lord became incarnate in human form, He

stood alone, the God-man. Like the first Adam, there was no suitable companion to have fellowship with, for He was both human and divine. The Lord, God the Father opened His side and took from His heart a bride, made in His likeness and in His image, bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh. Who can know the yearning of His heart after the love and companionship and fellowship of the one made in his likeness, as set forth in Ephesians 1:18, **that we may know what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints**, one who knows the awfulness of sin, one who has been delivered from the power of sin, one who can enter into the blessedness of his death, and the joy of his resurrection. The angels desire to peer into the mysteries of redemption, but they could never understand. Only a redeemed sinner can understand and talk about the mysteries of redemption and how our Lord must long to have his beloved one by his side, for whom he died.