

The Resurrection Body of Christ the Lord

(Part 5)

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“All Israel” shall see their Lord and Savior, first by faith (Rom. 11:26 [in response to the preaching of the two witnesses of Rev. 11]), and then (more than three years later), by physical sight at His second coming. Soon after that, they will behold Him serving them at the inaugural kingdom banquet.

Our Lord told the Jews: “Be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. Blessed *are* those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down *to eat*, and will come and serve them” (Luke 12:36, 37).

Amazingly, the Lord Jesus will do this when He possesses a glorified body, just as He did with His apostles in the upper room before He experienced resurrection glory (cf. John 13:4, 5). “The devout German scholar Bengel regarded Luke 12:37 as the greatest promise in all God's Word” (William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary* [Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995], p. 1421).

Just before the glorious second coming of Christ and the establishment of His long-awaited kingdom on the earth, “the marriage [supper] of the Lamb” will have taken place in heaven (Rev. 19:7; cf. 19:8, 9). This order of events will be patterned after Jewish weddings in Bible times, which occurred in two parts: a celebration in the home of the bride and then a celebration and consummation in the home of the bridegroom.

Heaven is the home of the bride of Christ, the true church: “Our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” (Phil. 3:20). But the earth will be the center of government for the bridegroom:

“Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
On earth as *it is* in heaven” (Matt. 6:10).

Three thousand years ago our Lord was told by His Father:

“Ask of Me, and I will give *You*
The nations *for* Your inheritance,
And the ends of the earth *for* Your possession” (Ps. 2:8).

At the great marriage supper in heaven, the bride (the church) will be seen in a new light. All “the hidden things of darkness” will have been brought to light, and our Lord will “reveal the counsels of the hearts” (1 Cor. 4:5) at the culmination of “the judgment seat of Christ” (2 Cor. 5:10; cf. Rom. 14:10; 1 Pet. 4:17-18). “Each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it” (1 Cor. 3:13).

A voice from heaven will exclaim: “Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready” (Rev. 19:7). How will she do this? “To her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints” (Rev. 19:8).

This represents a marvelous synergism of God's grace and the believer's obedience. As the apostle Paul explained it: “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure” (Phil. 2:12, 13).

Seeing Him in all His glory at the marriage supper is a powerful motivation for godly living now! Paul represented all true Christians as he was “looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself *His* own special people, zealous for good works” (Tit. 2:13, 14).

When the true church, the spiritual body of Christ, finally experiences “the marriage supper of the Lamb” (Rev. 19:9) just before His second coming to the earth, she will be a spectacular bride, clothed “in fine linen, clean and bright” (Rev. 19:8). Part of that bride was the church at Corinth, beset with carnality and various heresies. Paul wrote to them: “I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ” (2 Cor. 11:2).

Even John the Baptist, though not a part of the body of Christ (cf. Matt. 11:11), anticipated that ultimate marriage event: “He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom [i.e., John the Baptist], who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled” (John 3:29).

So John will be among the invited guests! “Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!” (Rev. 19:9). The bride will not be invited to her own wedding. It will be Old Testament believers, culminating in John, of whom the Lord Jesus spoke: “Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist... For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John” (Matt. 11:11, 13). Also invited will surely be those who will have died in faith during the great tribulation.

Infinitely more important, of course, than the appearance of the bride will be the appearance of the bridegroom Himself! Our glory will be a mere reflection of His glory. Right now we have the incomparable privilege of being “children of God” (1 John 3:1) through faith in His blood payment on the cross, confirmed by His bodily resurrection from the dead. However, “it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is” (1 John 3:2).

The most profound change we will experience when we see Him will be the permanent disappearance of our sin natures. Even now this expectation is transforming, for “everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure” (1 John 3:3). His

absolute holiness will be the basic moral attribute He will reveal to us at that supper. Therefore, we must “pursue...holiness, without which no one will see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14). Thankfully, we will not cry out in terror when we see Him, like Isaiah the prophet did:

“Woe *is* me, for I am undone!
Because I *am* a man of unclean lips,
And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;
For my eyes have seen the King,
The LORD of hosts” (Isa. 6:5).

The difference was that he still had his sin nature, and was therefore devastated when he heard the seraphim calling out to one another near God's throne: “Holy, holy, holy *is* the LORD of hosts” (Isa. 6:3).

At the marriage supper, the church will not only have been glorified by resurrection or rapture, but each Christian will also have been examined by Christ and either rewarded or deprived of a reward on the basis of post-conversion motives and conduct (cf. 1 Cor. 3:9-15).

Though no mere human will ever become divine, we will have glorified bodies and will thus be able to share in that heavenly supper with One who is a divine Person with a complete human nature, including a body: “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power” (Col. 2:9, 10).

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