**The Marriage of the Lamb Festivities**

**By Arlen Chitwood**

*Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come* [‘came’], *and His wife has made herself ready*.

*And to her it was granted to be arrayed* [‘array herself’] *in fine linen, clean and bright and white: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints*.

*Then he said to me,* “*Write:* ‘*Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb*!’” *And he said to me,* “*These are the true sayings of God.*”(Revelation 19:7-9)

Events in Revelation 19:7-9 are not to be confused with the marriage, which will have already occurred. These verses have to do with *the festivities that follow the marriage*.

The bride will have previously been revealed through events surrounding the judgment seat (Revelation 1-3), and the marriage will have previously occurred at the time Christ redeems the inheritance (Revelation 6-18). Then, immediately preceding Christ’s return to take control of the domain that He will have previously redeemed (Revelation 19:11ff), time is set aside for *the festivities surrounding the marriage of the Lamb* (Revelation 19:7-9).

These marriage festivities are dealt with several places in Scripture, more notably in Matthew 22:8-14; 25:1-13. There is *nothing* in these passages about the marriage itself. Rather, these passages deal *solely* with the festivities that follow the marriage. And the emphasis, as in the book of Revelation, is upon these festivities.

(The book of Revelation, as the parables in Matthew 22, 25, does not really deal with the marriage *per se*. *Nothing* is said in chapters six through eighteen [the time during which the marriage occurs] about Christ’s marriage to the bride who had previously been revealed at the judgment seat [Revelation 1-3]. Rather, the marriage occurring in these chapters, through Christ redeeming the inheritance, *is seen and dealt with elsewhere in Scripture.* Following exactly the same chronology of events that would later be set forth in the book of Revelation, the marriage *is seen and dealt with in biblical typology, in the book of Ruth.*

In order to understand how *the revealed bride* in the book of Revelation 1-3 becomes *the Lamb’s wife* [Revelation 19a], one has to go to the book of Ruth 3-4. The book of Revelation forms the capstone to all previous Scripture, beginning in Genesis. And an individual can’t begin reading Scripture in the book of Revelation and expect to arrive at any semblance of a correct understanding of this book, for he will have no foundation upon which he can build.

Rather, he is to begin where God began and understand foundational truths after the same fashion in which God revealed them. And when an individual with this type of knowledge of Scripture arrives at Revelation 6-18, he will understand that which is occurring through Christ’s redemption of the inheritance [Christ’s marriage to the previously revealed bride], though it is not even mentioned in this part of the book. And this understanding will be derived, not from the book of Revelation, but from previous Scripture.

The person who has an understanding of the foundational truths from the Old Testament — knowing what is happening as Christ redeems the inheritance in Revelation 6-18 — probably wouldn’t give a second thought to the fact that there is no mention of Christ’s marriage to His bride in these chapters. Why should he? The marriage, occurring at this time, will have already been dealt with in previous revelation, and *he would know this.*  He would be able to compare the types with the antitype, run all the checks and balances, and see exactly what is happening in this respect. For such an individual, it would be *superfluous material* to reread the matter in the book of Revelation.)

But because most Christians in the world today lack a background of this nature from Old Testament typology, man’s systems of biblical interpretation generally do not follow biblical guidelines at all when the marriage festivities in Matthew 22:8-14; 25:1-13; Revelation 19:7-9 are dealt with. And not understanding that which is being dealt with, individuals, more often than not, attempt to read eternal verities [eternal salvation, damnation] into events surrounding these marriage festivities; and any semblance of sound interpretation through comparing Scripture with Scripture is, as a result, thrown to the winds.

Within man’s system of biblical interpretation in this respect, the wedding garment is declared to be the righteousness of Christ (showing one’s eternal salvation), entrance into the festivities (through possessing a wedding garment) is declared to be synonymous with eternal salvation, and exclusion from the festivities (through lack of a wedding garment) is declared to be synonymous with eternal damnation.

But these are man’s thoughts and ideas, not those emanating from Scripture. Such teachings have *nothing* to do with that which is being dealt with in matters surrounding these festivities. *The saved alone* are in view; and from among the saved, *two different groups* are in view:

1) *those forming the wife of the Lamb*; and

2) *those not forming the wife of the Lamb*.

The former will be invited to participate in activities surrounding the marriage festivities. But this will not be the case with the latter at all. Rather they will be denied entrance into the place where these festivities will occur.

In Matthew 22:8-14, these two groups of individuals are dealt with in a parable having to do with the marriage festivities: There were “*the guests* [lit., ‘reclining ones’ (*the bride*)],” and there were the ones not allowed to enter into and participate in the activities attendant the bride (represented by the man appearing without a wedding garment, who was cast into *the darkened courtyard outside the banqueting hall*).

In Matthew 25:1-13, these same two groups of individuals are dealt with in another parable having to do with the marriage festivities, through presenting the activity of five wise and five foolish virgins: Those who had properly prepared themselves, the five wise virgins, were allowed to participate in the marriage festivities. But those who had not properly prepared themselves, the five foolish virgins, were denied entrance into the place where the festivities were occurring. They were left at a place outside the door leading into the festivities.

And the parable that follows — the parable of the talents — is given to explain and shed additional light upon the parable of the ten virgins. This parable begins with the Greek words *Hosper gar*, meaning “For just as.” These connecting words tell the reader that the parable about to follow is just like the parable that preceded. And this parable ends with the unfaithful servant cast into *the darkness outside* (Matthew 25:30).

Thus, in the explanatory parable of the talents, the place outside the door to the marriage festivities in the previous parable, the parable of the ten virgins, is seen to be exactly the same place outside the marriage festivities in Matthew 22:8-14 — *the darkness outside*,or *the darkened courtyard outside the banqueting hall*.

But in the final summation of the matter in Revelation 19:7-9, only things surrounding *the wife* are dealt with. Those not allowed to participate in these activities are not dealt with at this point in the book (as they are in Matthew 22, 25). Rather, the matter in the book of Revelation is set forth exactly as it is in the book of Ruth. In the type, from the book of Ruth, *only the wife* is dealt with at this point in the book. And the matter is *the same* in the antitype in the book of Revelation.

(For a full discussion of “The Outer Darkness,” refer to [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Judgment Seat of Christ, Appendix](http://bibleone.net/JSC_A.htm).)

**Christ’s Return**

Following the marriage festivities, the heavens will be opened, and Christ will come forth on a white horse as the “*King of kings, and Lord of lords*.” He will return to the earth “*with His mighty angels*” and complete the overthrow of Gentile world power under Satan, along with the overthrow of Satan and his angels.

Man’s Day will end, and the Lord’s Day will begin (Joel 3:9-17; 2 Thessalonians 1:7; Revelation 19:11ff). *Then* the way will be opened for Christ and His wife to ascend the throne — He as King, and she as consort queen.

There are numerous events connected with Christ’s return, both preceding and following the time when the heavens are opened in Revelation 19:11ff. This is the way in which the book of Revelation is introduced. It is a book about “*The Revelation* [Gk., *Apokalupsis,* ‘Revealing,’ ‘Unveiling,’ ‘Appearance’] *of Jesus Christ*…” It is a book about that day when He comes “*with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him*…” (Revelation 1:1-7).

The book of Revelation is a book dealing with *Christ’s return*, and Scripture deals with the overall subject surrounding Christ’s return in a manner quite different than man is usually inclined to view the matter. Man usually sees Christ’s return as a single event, occurring at a point in time (*e.g*., Zechariah 14:4; Revelation 1:7; 19:11ff). But Scripture deals with Christ’s return in a broader sense than this. *The whole of the book of Revelation is about Christ*’*s return*. Revelation 19:11ff simply records the apex of the matter.

And His return in this book begins with events occurring at least seven years prior to the time when the heavens are opened and He comes forth on a white horse. Events in this book begin with Christians being removed from the earth at the end of the dispensation, with events surrounding the judgment seat following (Revelation 1-4). The book then continues with Christ’s redemption of the inheritance (Revelation 5-18), God completing His dealings with Israel during Man’s Day (Revelation 6-18), and the marriage festivities being brought to pass (Revelation 19a). Only then is the apex reached, with the heavens being opened (Revelation 19b).

All these things are inseparably connected with Christ’s return. This is why, for example, in Luke 17:30-31, that an event occurring in the middle of the Tribulation (Luke 17:31; *cf.* Matthew 24:15-22) is directly associated with Christ’s return to the earth at the end of the Tribulation (Luke 17:30). This is also why resurrections and judgments occurring at “*His appearing and His kingdom*” (*cf.* 1 Corinthians 15:23; 2 Timothy 4:1) — though separated by time — are dealt with in these two singular senses, *i.e*., either *at his appearing*, or *in his kingdom*.

In the book of Revelation, in the antitype, exactly the same sequence of events is seen. A particular event will occur *before* Christ redeems the inheritance and takes the bride as His wife. *A prepared bride will appear on Christ*’*s threshing floor* (*at His judgment seat*). Only then will Christ redeem the inheritance and, in the process, take the bride as His wife (which will occur during Daniel’s Seventieth Week, the Tribulation).

Then, in the book of Revelation, all seven churches are seen in Christ’s presence at this time, showing all Christians in His presence during events surrounding the judgment seat, preceding the time in which He redeems the inheritance (preceding the Tribulation). And the types show exactly the same thing (ref. [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Search for the Bride, Ch. 12](http://bibleone.net/SB_12.htm).)

Understanding the reason why *all Christians must appear before Christ at this time* is simple. Aside from Christians having nothing to do with the Tribulation (which will be the last seven years of the previous dispensation, during which time God completes His dealings with Israel, not with Christians), events surrounding *the judgment seat* occur preceding the Tribulation (plainly shown from both the type in the book of Ruth and the antitype in the book of Revelation). And Scripture is quite clear that *all Christians must be present, at the judgment seat*: “…*we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ*” (Romans 14:10b).

(The fact that some Greek manuscripts and English translations have “judgment seat of God” in Romans 14:10 would have nothing to do with the identification of this judgment seat. The Father “*has committed all judgment to the Son*” [John 5:22], and it matters little whether the Son’s judgment seat is called the judgment seat of Christ or the judgment seat of God. It’s still the same judgment seat, with the same person doing the judging.)

Comparing type and antitype (Ruth 3-4; Revelation 1-19), the clear teaching is that *all Christians* will be removed from the earth and appear before Christ’s judgment seat *preceding the Tribulation*, *before the inheritance is redeemed and the marriage occurs*. And the whole of the matter is in connection with Christ’s return, with the apex reached when the heavens are opened in Revelation 19:11ff.

It is *a serious matter* when Christians ignore that which has been laid down in Moses and the Prophets (*cf.* Luke 24:25-27; John 5:45-47), following teachings that are contrary to established foundations. One simply cannot ignore the foundations that God has set forth in His Word and expect to survive theologically. *It is not possible*.

**The Messianic Era**

After Christ returns back to the earth and completes His overthrow of Gentile world power, along with Satan and His angels, numerous events will occur preceding the beginning of the millennium. And these events, as well, must be viewed in connection with Christ’s return.

Again, everything beginning with the removal of the Church in Revelation 1 to the end of the Messianic Kingdom in Revelation 20 must fall within two major categories seen in Scripture — “*His appearing and His kingdom*.” This is the way in which Scripture sets the matter forth, and this is the way in which man must view the matter as well.

In the type in Genesis 24-25, after the son married Rebekah inside his mother’s tent, Abraham again took a wife. Abraham married Keturah, who bore him six sons (Genesis 24:67-25:2). Keturah was *very fruitful* in the realm where Sarah had been barren.

In the antitype, after the Son marries His bride inside Israel’s tent, the Father will restore His wife, Israel. And restored Israel will be *very fruitful*, unlike Israel in the past, represented by a fig tree with leaves, but no fruit (Matthew 21:18-19).

The present restoration of a remnant to the land under a Zionistic movement is, of course, not the restoration spoken of in the type in Genesis 25:1-2 or in other parts of Scripture bearing on the subject (*e.g*.,Deuteronomy 30:1-3; Ezekiel 20:34-37; 36:24-28; 37:1ff; Matthew 24:30-31). The present restoration is a partial restoration, in unbelief, which has occurred during the present dispensation, prior to the nation’s repentance. The restoration spoken of in Scripture has to do with the entire nation returning, in belief, following the nation’s repentance, which will occur not only following the present dispensation but following the fulfillment of Daniel’s Seventy-Week prophecy.

Nor can the nation return while Christ is exercising the office of High Priest, in the heavenly sanctuary, throughout the present dispensation. It is clear from the typology surrounding the cities of refuge in Numbers 35 that Israel, as the slayer, has to await Christ’s completion of His present high priestly ministry before the Jewish people can return to the land of their possession.

(For a discussion of Numbers 35 in this respect, refer to [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Let Us Go On, Ch. 1](http://bibleone.net/LUGO_01.htm), “From Aaron to Melchizedek.”)

For individuals to fail to recognize the truth concerning the present return of a remnant to the land is to fail to recognize that Israel is the slayer typified inNumbers 35. And for Israel to attempt to return while Christ is presently exercising His high priestly ministry during the present dispensation is, according to the type, to invite *death and destruction* upon the nation.

And the latter is exactly what is about to occur, for the Jewish people have attempted to return *before the time*, *in an unbelieving and unrepentant state*. In the middle of the coming Tribulation, a Jewish nation (as it is known today) will cease to exist in the Middle East. The remnant comprising the nation will be uprooted at that time. A segment of the nation will escape to a place in the wilderness, specially prepared by God for them (Revelation 12:6, 14); but the remaining Jews will either be killed or sold as slaves throughout the Gentile world, with the Jewish people worldwide coming under the sentence of death (*cf.* Exodus 1:8ff; Daniel 3:19-20; Joel 3:6-8). And Jerusalem, throughout this time, will be “*trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*” (Luke 21:20-24; Revelation 11:2).

Nor will any attempts to effect Middle East peace be successful during Man’s Day. There is a problem that man fails to recognize, which has its roots going back 4,000 years in history. And, beyond that, only the One Who has brought about Israel’s present sickness, because of the nation’s disobedience, can effect healing (*cf.* Leviticus 26:14ff; Deuteronomy 28:15ff; Isaiah 1:1-26). *Others can try*, *but they will all fail. Only the One Who has torn can heal* (Hosea 5:13-6:2).

Peace will come *only at the end of Man*’*s day, when* “*the Sun of righteousness*” *arises* “*with healing in His wings*” (Malachi 4:2). These are the things seen in Abraham’s remarriage, which cannot occur *until after the Son takes the bride as His wife*, *inside Israel’s tent*.

(Note also in the type that Ishmael [the father of the Arabic nations surrounding Israel in the Middle East] died only after Abraham remarried [Genesis 25:1-2, 17]. In this respect, Middle East peace will be *out of the question until the coming Messianic Era, when the man described in Genesis 16:12 will pass from the scene.*)

And that is the way in which conditions will exist at the beginning of the millennium. The Father will have a restored wife; and the Son, who will be King over all the earth in that day, will have acquired a wife, allowing Him to rule and to reign in complete accord with the reason for man’s creation in the beginning and in complete accord with that which God established in the beginning relative to the man and the woman reigning together.

And Middle East peace, which man vainly attempts to effect today, will be brought to pass *in that day* — when the King, with His consort queen, rules the earth for 1,000 years.

[Bible One – Arlen Chitwood's The Marriage Festivities, Search for the Bride, Ch. 15](http://bibleone.net/SB_15.htm)