



The Revelation of Jesus Christ

"Bride Made"

19:7-10

Introduction

Love may be priceless but weddings can be expensive. On average, US couples spend \$20,398 for their wedding. The majority of couples spend between \$15,299 and \$25,498 while their wedding budget is typically 50% less than the amount spent. This does not include cost for a honeymoon or engagement ring.

According to the Bridal Association of America the average wedding gown costs \$1,505.

In the nineteenth chapter of the Revelation, the church is returning to the earth with Jesus after a wedding ceremony has taken place in Heaven. A major emphasis in verses seven through ten is on the "fine linen" garment the bride is wearing. It's your wedding garment and it will be beautiful.

Revelation 19:7 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."

The word “marriage” is the same one translated “marriage supper” in verse nine. We discussed this last time. In keeping with Jewish marriage customs, the groom comes suddenly and takes his bride home for a private ceremony. Then they celebrate with family and friends in a marriage supper.

The Second Coming of Jesus to earth is depicted as a marriage supper at which He shows-off His bride.

The angel remarked that “His wife has made herself ready.” This is explained using the analogy of clothing. It’s really very powerful.

The lost and hopeless spiritual condition of the human race is compared to clothing.

Listen to this description from the prophet Zechariah:

Zechariah 3:1 Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him.

Zechariah 3:2 And the Lord said to Satan, "The Lord rebuke you, Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?"

Zechariah 3:3 Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel.

Zechariah 3:4 Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, "Take away the filthy garments from him." And to him He said, "See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes."

Zechariah 3:5 And I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head, and they put the clothes on him. And the Angel of the Lord stood by.

If you were to look upon Joshua you would have seen him in his magnificent priestly garments. They were elaborate, exquisite garments. The high priest would look magnificent as he performed the tasks of the Temple.

But he didn't look that way to everyone! You're told in verse three that Joshua was clothed with "filthy garments." The word "filthy" means *smear'd with human excrement*.

Did he fall into sewage rushing to the Temple? Why would he enter the Temple in such stained and spoiled garments?

He didn't fall – **but Adam did!** You are being shown the same man, in the same garments, from two perspectives.

- From the natural and earthly perspective, his garments were fine.
- From the supernatural and heavenly perspective, his garments were filthy.

As high priest, Joshua represented and stood for all Jews. Their finest was filthy.

Joshua can also be seen as **your** representative! In a much beloved verse, Isaiah said "But we are all like an unclean *thing*, And all our righteousnesses *are* like filthy rags..." (64:6). The entire human race is filthy when seen from the supernatural and heavenly perspective.

When you are saved God does for you what He did for Joshua. He exchanges your garments for His own - a robe of righteousness.

Isaiah 61:10 says,

Isaiah 61:10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness...

OK, so why does the angel say, "His wife has made herself ready?" Look at verse eight of Revelation nineteen:

Revelation 19:8 And 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.

Maybe something that Isaiah additionally said will help. The whole of Isaiah 61:10 reads,

Isaiah 61:10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness. As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, **And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.**

You were “granted,” or given, a spiritual robe of righteousness when you received Jesus as your Savior. Afterwards you have the privilege of adorning your robe by your “righteous acts” as His “saint.” You don’t *earn* or *add to* your salvation; you simply earn rewards which will adorn your robe.

Hal Lindsey compares this to the Roman garments, the tunic and the toga.

- The tunic was an inner garment worn under the toga. The righteousness of Jesus that is given to you when you receive Christ is like a tunic.
- The righteous works that flow from your new nature comprise your toga.

This helps me put rewards into perspective. We believe that when the church is resurrected and rewarded we will individually come before Jesus at His reward seat. He will reward us based on our works and especially the motives for them. The apostle Paul described it thusly:

1 Corinthians 3:12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,

1 Corinthians 3:13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.

1 Corinthians 3:14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward.

1 Corinthians 3:15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

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The “gold, silver, [and] precious stones” Paul described sound a great deal like the “ornaments” and “jewels” Isaiah said a bride adorns herself with.

I desire rewards in order to be as beautiful as possible for Jesus!

Think of a wedding. It’s really wonderful when the bride emerges in her gown with her hair & face all in order, with just the right adornment. Though from a worldly standpoint we are not materialistic, every bride ought to want to look fantastic for her groom.

Rewards do matter. They represent my pure love for Jesus as His bride. I want everyone in Heaven and on the earth to see how much I owe to my Lord.

Revelation 19:9 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."

It’s clear that there are different groups of human beings involved and that God deals with them differently. The bride, whom we believe to be the saints of the church age, is not “those who are called to the marriage supper.” I mention this because certain teachers and theologies do not distinguish between Israel, Gentiles, and the church. We do because the Bible distinguishes between them.

As Jesus returns with the church as His bride there are Old Testament saints, Tribulation martyrs, and living saints on the earth who will attend the supper. The guests are not the bride but they are nonetheless “blessed.”

Everyone ever saved, from Adam to the last saint in the Millennium, will be saved by grace through faith. They will have been justified by faith in Jesus Christ.

But God deals differently with each of those groups. You must keep them separate in order to understand prophecy and the flow of Bible history.

Our literal approach to the Bible and to Bible prophecy is sometimes called 'dispensationalism.' It sees God working with man in different ways during different dispensations, or administrations. I sometimes illustrate this by asking, as I did on Good Friday, "When was the last time you brought a lamb to be sacrificed?" It shows that God is dealing differently at different times, but always consistent with His nature and with salvation by grace through faith.

Dispensationalists will define three key dispensations:

1. The Mosaic Law.
2. The present age of Grace.
3. The future Millennial Kingdom.

A greater breakdown of specific dispensations is possible, giving most traditional dispensationalists seven recognizable dispensations.

1. Innocence - Adam.
2. Conscience - After man sinned, up to the flood.
3. Government - After the flood, man allowed to eat meat, death penalty instituted.
4. Promise - Abraham up to Moses and the giving of the Law.
5. Law - Moses to the cross.
6. Grace - The cross to the Millennial Kingdom.
7. Millennial Kingdom - A 1000 year reign of Christ on earth centered in Jerusalem.

While not everyone needs to agree on this breakdown, the point from the dispensationalists view is that God is working with man in a progressive way. At each stage man has failed to be obedient to the responsibilities set forth by God. The method of salvation, justification by faith alone, never changes through the dispensations. The responsibilities God gives to man do change however.

The angel, in Revelation 19:9, exclaims, "These are the true sayings of God." Of course they are! The emphasis is to comfort believers as we wait for these things to begin to unfold.

Revelation 19:10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Cut John some slack. He knew better but was overwhelmed. The angel quickly corrected him.

At least he did react! Imagine our shock if he had a conservative response.

Angels consider themselves our "fellow servants." That's pretty amazing. Though from our perspective they are glorious, they consider themselves with proper humility.

"Of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus" is better translated, "I am [only] another servant with you and your brethren who have [accepted and hold] the testimony borne by Jesus" (AV).

It's interesting that an angel would refer to the Lord as "Jesus." He means to tell us that Jesus, in His humanity, is "the spirit of prophecy." His coming as a man is the sum, the substance, of Bible prophecy. As God come in human flesh He came, died, rose, and ascended into Heaven. He is coming again as the eternal God-man.

It's similar to Jesus' own description of His coming in to the world when He said,

Hebrews 10:5 ..."SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU DID NOT DESIRE, BUT A BODY YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME.

Hebrews 10:6 IN BURNT OFFERINGS AND SACRIFICES FOR SIN YOU HAD NO PLEASURE.

Hebrews 10:7 THEN I SAID, 'BEHOLD, I HAVE COME - IN THE VOLUME OF THE BOOK IT IS WRITTEN OF ME - TO DO YOUR WILL, O GOD.' "

J.I. Packer said of Jesus as God and man,

Here are two mysteries for the price of one - the plurality of persons within the unity of God, and the union of Godhead and manhood in the person of Jesus. Nothing in fiction is so fantastic as is this truth of the Incarnation.

We love to study prophecy. I'd like to think it is because we are looking at the wonder and the beauty and the mystery of Jesus, God in human flesh.