

Revelation 21:9-14 – Restoration: The Beautiful Bride

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Women love weddings! I dare say that one of the things women love to see the most at a wedding is the dress of the bride...how beautiful it is...does it have sleeves...what was the train like? But there are other things they often want to know and admire. And they look at the flower arrangements and the decorations...Where is the couple going for their honeymoon? Where are they going to live? What is the house like? And they talk about it...and get ideas...and wish about it. And for some reason they cry...mostly from joy...but fifty-four percent of the time those marriages fail!

Christ's Bride, her clothes and her new home, will be infinitely better than an earthly bride. How much better? 1 Corinthians 2:9..."Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." In other words, the Bride and her new home would be unbelievable. Today we will get a limited description of the Bride and her new home...

Our headings are: The **Location of the New Bride**, and the **Description of the New Bride**.

Our goals are: That you will **be left in awe seeing what the Lord has prepared for the Bride he redeemed with his own blood...so she would be motivated to serve him better.**

The Location of the New Bride

9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

1. The New Bride is quite different from the Old Bride – the Scarlet Harlot. The new Bride is called the Lamb's wife. She is called the Great City. She is called the New Jerusalem. All the meanness of judgment on Jerusalem is passed. There is one reason we know that the location of this Bride is not yet in heaven – heaven where God is – but on earth in the heavenly realm. (Ephesians 2:6-we sit in heavenly places.) Earlier, John was taken into the wilderness. Who did John see in the dry barren desert? He saw the Old Bride, the Scarlet Harlot, the old Jerusalem. But it wasn't a real desert but symbolized her spiritual dryness. Now the church is seen as spiritually sitting in heavenly places-on a mountain. So from these parallel pictures, you can conclude that the church described here is not yet in heaven.

Revelation 17: 3 So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

2. Now John saw the majestic new Bride on a high mountain which simply pictured... a place of safety and majesty...just like the Old Jerusalem was on a physical and spiritual mountain. And it is from the mountain that we will see the water of life flowing to the world. This means that this was not the end of the world and this is not the heaven where God is. Rather, this high spiritual mountain on earth was the fountain for evangelism – the water of life had to flow to the ends of the earth...and of course, no one comes to faith in heaven. There is no faith in heaven.

Isaiah 2: 2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD'S house Shall be established on the top of the mountains. 3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Micah 4:1 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD'S house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And peoples shall flow to it. 2 Many nations shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths."

3. There is specific proof that this is not referring to heaven. This Bride is coming down from heaven. The city coming down from heaven can't be heaven. That would be illogical. And of course the Bride is not some kind of strange alien invading earth. No, the fact that the Bride is pictured as heavenly shows Divine approbation-approval... a Divine source... and the Bride has a Divine authority. This is the exact language and hope of the Scriptures from Old Testament and New Testament individuals, though they did not immediately see it.

Hebrews 11:9 By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; 10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

4. Lesson: As the approved heavenly Bride, with his glory about you, and with the authority of God to act, you the church must remain clean and pure in order to do the work of the Lord.

Galatians 5: 1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be Entangled 缠住 again with a yoke of bondage.

The Description of the New Bride

11 having the glory of God.

1. When Israel turned away from God, Ezekiel the prophet spoke of God's glory (the shekinah) leaving the temple and settling on Mount Olives, the mountain east of Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 10: 18 Then the glory of the LORD departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim.

Ezekiel 11: 22 So the cherubim lifted up their wings, with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel was high above them. 23 And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain, which is on the east side of the city.

Now consider what Ezekiel later saw – things that would take place after the destruction of Babylon and the re-establishment of the Jews to Judah.

Ezekiel 43:1 Afterward he brought me to the gate, the gate that faces toward the east. 2 And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east. His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory. 3 It was like the appearance of the vision which I saw—like the vision which I saw when I came to destroy the city. The visions were like the vision which I saw by the River Chebar; and I fell on my face. 4 And the glory of the LORD came into the temple by way of the gate which faces toward the east. 5 The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple.

Ezekiel wasn't speaking of heaven, but of the glorious resurrection of the church. See the similar language here.

2. There is also a very interesting account from Jewish and non-Jewish sources. These records testify that the glory of God – the Shekinah Glory-departed on Pentecost Day in AD66...and for 3 ½ years it dwelt on the mountain east of Jerusalem...near where the Lord was crucified...with untraceable calls to repent from either man or God. But because the Jews refused to repent, the Glory of the Lord of the Lord departed in AD69...just before the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in AD70. Jewish history acknowledges that this was the time the Shekinah Glory departed from the temple. Josephus, a Jewish historian, himself summed up 概括 the conviction of many people who came to believe that God 'had turned away even from his sanctuary' (War, 11.539), that the Temple was 'no more the dwelling place of God' (War, V.19), because 'the Deity has fled from the holy places' (War, V.412).

3. Our text shows that the glory of God has returned to his new Bride and his new Bride is to reflect that light the world.

Philippians 2:5 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,

And concerning the new church, Daniel wrote:

Daniel 12:3 Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.

And as Christ lives with her there is an improvement in her light.

Revelation 12: 1 Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland 花环 of twelve stars.

11...Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.

4. How bright is the glory of God? Like costly stones... like shiny diamonds. So the question is: How bright is your conduct before the world? Do people know you love Christ and that he loves you? Does Christ's glory shine in your life? Do men see Christ's life in your conversation...or how you react when you return a damaged item to the store...or when someone scratches your car? How you react shows how much you are living an evangelistic life.

12 Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: 13 three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west.

5. Now let's consider the rest of the description of this Bride. You have already seen that she wore a crown with 12 stars. Now you see that she has high walls. What is the significance of high walls? High walls are for protection. And the Bride is surrounded by 12 angels (or elders). What's the significance of 12 angels? Angels and high walls are for full protection.

6. But you also see 12 gates...3 each on the east, north, south, and west. What is the significance for these gates? People from the east, north, south, and west are able to come and join the Bride of Christ. The waters of life will flow everywhere. The Bride is not limited to the Jewish nation. But these gates are probably an allusion 暗示 back to the Garden of Eden when God put angels to protect it so that Adam and Eve could not go back in. But now there are many gates that welcome strangers and protect the residents at the same time. This was prophesied in the Old and New Testaments.

Isaiah 49: 11 I will make each of My mountains a road, And My highways shall be elevated.

12 Surely these shall come from afar; Look! Those from the north and the west, And these from the land of Sinim."

Luke 13: 29 "They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God.

7. One more thing. Previously, the Bride's crown was described as a thing with beauty and much decorations. But now this same idea is extended from the walls of a crown to the walls of the city. This is intentional. The crown was symbolic of the walls of the cities. This was common knowledge of the day. This is not a tidbit of information. It is a substantive illustrative fact.

14 Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

8. Finally, the 12 foundations. They had the names of the 12 Apostles of Christ. What is the significance of this? **Apostles are the disciples who saw and were directly commissioned by the Christ** to preach and to establish the church. This is not new at all. Consider what Paul wrote:

Ephesians 2: 19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,

And of course as you read the context of Ephesians you will see that Paul always included believers from the Old and New Testaments...as we are all members of the same church, saved in the same way, and saved by the same Savior. The Apostles believed the same as Moses. Yes, there were different administrations of the covenant, but the covenant is one and the same.

9. Brethren, are you looking forward for this...

2Peter 3: 13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Conclusion:

Christ's Bride is heaven-approved and heaven appointed. She is glorious in name and in nature. She has the glory of God in and among her. She is being transformed into a most glorious Bride. As Christ's Bride, she must care for her children and have more in order to bring more glory to her Bridegroom. The Bridegroom will settle for nothing less.

Brothers and Sisters: Remember the Psalmist words: *Psalm 16: 11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore. Christ's presence gives you protection, joy, security, and eternity.* Yes, you have to rejoice. Don't let the cares and busy-ness of this world drown out the joy you must have. Christ's presence must also give you the zeal and strength to work. Work that the church might become purer and purer. And spread the good seed of the Word that the church might multiply.

Finally, those who are outside of the city can be assured of 2 things: Fire and brimstone. Yet, there are many gates in this great city. The offer is open. The price for your entrance is paid for. Jesus' blood was shed to the remission of the sins of the world. Come in today.