

## THE THREE MARRIAGES

I would like to go over a little something that might be new to a few of you, and it has to do with the three different spiritual unions or marriages revealed in the Scripture. This truth is not understood *at all* in the Church System; and as a matter of fact, I don't think it's understood very well outside the System either.

As you study the Scripture, you find that as He brings forth His plan, God follows certain patterns. One such pattern is the concept of a "remnant" within the overall people of God. The 7000 who didn't bow to Baal, Gideon's 300, the Shulamite in Song of Songs, David's mighty men, and the three disciples (Peter, James and John) are a few examples of this remnant pattern. Also, we find that Jesus Himself is a pattern. He is the *Pattern Son*. He is the firstborn of many brethren who will walk down the same lonely, bloody trail He blazed, and who will as a result, be transformed into the *express image* of His Person.

Another pattern in Scripture is the number *seven*: the seven pieces of furniture in the Tabernacle; the Seven sub-Feasts of Israel, which compromised the Three Main Feasts (Passover, Pentecost or First-Fruits, and Tabernacles); and also the seven days of creation, are some examples of this pattern. Because of what all these things represent, the number seven is recognized by most Bible scholars as the number of perfection.

Another pattern that is closely related to the number seven is the number three. The number three stands for *completeness* because many times God uses three circumstances, or three parts, or three periods of time, etc. to complete His plan. Some examples of God's pattern of three are: the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; the Three Main Feasts of Israel (comprised of seven sub-feasts); the Israelites being commanded to go up to Jerusalem three times each year; the three parts of the Tabernacle (Outer Court, Holy Place & Holy of Holies); the three parts of man (spirit, soul and body); and also, the thirty, sixty and hundred fold fruit in Jesus parable. Time wise, the Scripture speaks of the age of the law and the prophets, the age of grace through Jesus Christ, and the Kingdom age. These are a few examples of God's pattern of threes.

I believe this pattern can also be seen in the three different kinds of *spiritual unions* (or marriages) that are scheduled to take place in God's plan. The first spiritual union or marriage will be the joining of the *Head*, Jesus Christ, to *His body*, the sons of God. This is spoken of in Romans 8:19 as the manifestation of the sons of God, and also in Revelation 19:7 as the marriage of the Lamb. I touched on the marriage of the Lamb the other week, but let me recap just a bit right here.

*And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. 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.*

*Revelation 19:6-9*

It is said of the Lamb's wife that she *made herself* ready. She is arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, which John defines as the "righteousness of saints". He is not referring to the imputed righteousness of saints, but to the *actual* righteousness of saints. The white linen is the righteous deeds of Jesus done *through* us. It is His righteousness, which after having been imputed to us (clothing us), is then worked into our lives so that we in fact become righteous in deed and in action. The fine linen is the righteousness that we possess in experience. It is the righteousness that we can *demonstrate* and manifest in the earth. In other words, the wife will *wear her works*. She will be covered with the glory and authority that her righteous lifestyle begets.

*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. **And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.** His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and **he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.** And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God*

*Revelation 19:10-15*

Immediately after he hears the announcement that the marriage of the Lamb has come, heaven is opened and John sees the Lord on a white horse, ready to make war. But the Lord is not alone. John also sees the armies of heaven on white horses, following Him into battle. Please notice His description of these armies:

*And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, **clothed in fine linen, white and clean.** And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it **he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.** And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, **KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.***

*Revelation 19:15-16*

Is it just a coincidence that the "armies of heaven" are clothed exactly the same way the Lamb's "wife" is clothed? Or could it be these are the same people? I think they are the same company of people. First John sees this people as the wife of the Lamb—thus relaying the idea of union and marriage. Then he sees the *same people* as an army—thus relaying the idea that far from being an ordinary wedding, this marriage and the marriage supper is the beginning of a great war. When this battle is over and the nations have been subdued, then Jesus and His wife will establish His Millennial Kingdom on the earth for a thousand years. At the end of the thousand years, Satan is loosed and he goes out to deceive the nations of the earth, and to gather them to battle against the Lord, and against the earthly city of Jerusalem, and against the camp of the saints. God sends fire down out of heaven and destroys all these armies and then Satan is cast into the Lake of Fire forever. Then you see the Great White Throne judgement. After that final judgment has taken place, we see the following:

*And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

*Revelation 21:1-2*

This is the second spiritual union, or marriage—the joining of the Head, Jesus Christ and His body, to the bride of Christ. In order to understand this, we have to understand that the sons of God and the bride of Christ are two different groups of people. This is a concept that is rejected by the majority of today's Christians for various reasons—first and foremost of which is the “*grace plus nothing*” error. As I mentioned in a previous chat session, religious leaders just assume that not only the righteousness of Jesus is imputed to our accounts by grace, His *rewards* are also imputed to our accounts by grace. Therefore, if we are all destined to get the same rewards “by grace”, then it's *not possible* for some to get greater rewards than others. If we are all destined to end up in the same place in the kingdom by grace, then it's not possible for some to end up in a better place than others.

The idea that not only are there different places we can attain to in the kingdom, but that the place we attain to will be determined by *our own choices* here in this life, goes against everything that's being taught in today's churches because there's an ingrained prejudice against any teaching that would have God exalting any believer (or group of believers) over another believer (or group of believers). That's why the message of the “overcomer” has *always been* derided and/or castigated *inside* the Church System. Saying that some Christians will be overcomers and some will not; that some will receive greater rewards and a better place in the kingdom than others, has been viewed historically as a “cult” mentality.

**NOTE:** With the rise of the Apostolic and Prophetic Movements, from the early 70's forward, the concept of the “overcomer” has been brought into the Church System. But their ideas and teachings about “overcomers” are nothing but Satanic counterfeits. So Satan has managed to either *obscure* or completely *discredit* the genuine overcoming message.

Notice that when speaking of the New Jerusalem, which comes down from the New Heaven, John said it is: “...*prepared as a bride adorned for her husband*”. Prepared as a bride? That's a little odd, don't you think? This implies that she is not yet married, that she is about to get married to the Lamb. Can John be describing the same people that married the Lamb 1000 years prior, at the beginning of the Millennium?

Although the differences between these two groups of people are subtle, they are still discernable for those who have eyes to see. One difference can be seen in the term “adorn”; which Webster's Dictionary defines as: to deck or beautify; to add to the attractiveness of something. In other words, when describing the second group at the end of the Millennium, John said they must *be adorned* in order to be ready for the marriage. Someone else beautifies them with holiness. Someone else makes them ready. But the group at the beginning of the Millennium *made themselves ready* for the marriage that took place at that time. They were not adorned by someone else.

The wife at the beginning of the Millennium was arrayed in fine linen. The bride at the end of the Millennium is adorned (garnished) with precious stones (*Rev. 21:11-20*). The wife at the beginning of the Millennium has already been living in a *fully consummated* marriage relationship with Jesus for a thousand years. The bride at the end of the Millennium is seen coming down from heaven, prepared to enter into a *new* marriage.

If the New Jerusalem bride which comes down from heaven *after* the Millennium is the same group of saints as the army wife that married the Lamb *at the beginning* of the Millennium, then the Lamb and His wife are going to get married twice! To believe that the Lord is going to remarry the same group of people again, after they have already been living and ruling in *perfect union* together for a thousand years, is, in my opinion, absurd.

What then is the meaning of what John saw? Why would a “wife” who has been married for so long be described as a bride who has been “adorned” and “prepared” to get married? The answer is because these are *not* the same people. They are different groups of saints, which have been prepared to enter a different kind of spiritual union at two different times. The new Jerusalem wife represents Jerusalem; while the army wife represents Zion. Does this mean that there are two *separate* wives of the Lamb? Will Jesus have *plural* wives like the Mormons? No. What these visions are telling us is that the one people of God is divided into two portions—the sons and the bride; just as the one natural city of God was divided into two portions—Zion and Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is a people and Zion is a people. They are all the people of God, but they are not the same people. They are distinct in some ways. Just as Jerusalem was one city, yet *within* that one city was two distinct places, so it is with the Lamb’s wife. The Lamb’s wife is comprised of two different groups of believers who have different places in God with regards to union and rulership; but they all belong to God. They all belong to Christ. They will all will live forever with God in the New World. It’s just that *one portion* of the Lamb’s wife is united to Him at the *beginning* of the Millennium (based on the choices they have made while living on earth), while the *other portion* of the Lamb’s wife must wait till the end of the Millennium to be united to Him (based on the choices they have made while living on earth).

God has used different metaphors and different types and shadows in the Scripture to relay this same truth. In each case, the truth being revealed is that both Zion and Jerusalem (the sons and the bride) will enter into a spiritual union with King Jesus forever. However, the *type* of union each group will experience is going to be different—thus the different descriptions of the (one) “wife”. Also, the timing of those unions will be different—thus one is seen taking place at the beginning of the Millennium, while the other is seen taking place at the end of the Millennium.

*And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And **they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand,***

*which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which **were not defiled with women**; for they are virgins. These are they **which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth**. These were redeemed from among men, being the **firstfruits** unto God and to the Lamb. And **in their mouth was found no guile**: for **they are without fault** before the throne of God.*

*Revelation 14:1-5*

Again, the most important thing to understand here is that we are the ones who will choose which group we end up in by what kind of relationship we have cultivated with the Lord while alive *in the flesh*. The army wife (Zion) will pay the necessary price to come into *complete* union with the Lamb. This group is represented by the 144,000 in Revelation fourteen. Notice the characteristics of this group.

~ **They have the Father's name written in their foreheads.** What is the significance of having the Father's name written on them, as opposed to having the name of Jesus, or the name of the New Jerusalem written on their foreheads. Well, I think the significance is great, for it reveals that they have entered into *a relationship* with the Father. This speaks of spiritual growth and maturity.

Few people understand that different levels of relationship are possible between a person and the Triune God. All true believers know Jesus. Some also know the Holy Spirit. And some know all three: Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and the Father.

Most people don't sit around and *analyze* their relationship with the Triune God. However, if you look back on your life, you will probably be able to detect at least *one change* in that relationship—that's when you received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. When we come to God initially, **JESUS** becomes very real to us. We know that we know that we have entered into a very real relationship with a Person who is God—and His name is Jesus.

After our initial salvation experience, many discover there is a *second* experience to be had, called the baptism of the Holy Spirit. When you are baptized in the Spirit something *new* happens. Your life changes, sometimes gradually, sometimes overnight. At some point you realize that your relationship with God has *shifted gears*. You begin to see things in the Scripture that you never saw before. You may receive one or more spiritual gifts. You may receive a new boldness to witness. You become more aware of sin in your life and find that there is new strength available to gain victory in these areas. When you look back, you can point to a time in your Christian walk when the presence of the **HOLY SPIRIT** (or at least some manifestation of Him) became a new reality in your life.

The person who is baptized in the Spirit experiences *a change in their relationship* with God, but it is an *internal* change. No one knows what is happening except the person it is happening to. Before baptism we were only aware of Jesus. After baptism we become aware that a new Presence, Who is also a Person, who is also God, is moving in our lives. We in fact enter a new relationship with the Triune God. This new relationship is *not the same* as the one we *still have* with Jesus. It is different. The Holy Spirit was present in our lives from the day we were born again, but we did not experience any kind of *tangible* knowledge of Him. After Spirit baptism we do. He was there before baptism, but we did not know Him. After baptism we learn to recognize His leadings and checkings. There is nothing far out about it. It is real, it is holy, and it is right. There was a smooth transition into a new relationship with *another part* of the Trinity.

Well, there is a *third* experience, and it's called the "baptism of fire". John the Baptist said that when Messiah comes, He will baptize the people with the Holy Ghost *and* with fire (*Matt. 3:11*). What does it mean to be baptized with fire? It means to be "immersed" in the cleansing fire of the *Father's judgment*. God has to deliver us from every vestige of sin and iniquity. The baptism of fire is the only baptism that can accomplish this goal. It is the only baptism that can totally cleanse us.

We enter this third experience when the **FATHER** begins to reveal Himself to us and brings us under the rod of His *strict* obedience and discipline. Things begin to change *again* in our lives as we find God putting many restrictions on us that were never there before. Because these restrictions are *not* being placed on those who are not experiencing this relationship, many times they become points of contention between those who are under them and those who are not. Try as we may to explain what is going on, those who have not been brought under the rod of the Father will never understand why we are acting like we are. In fact, they feel threatened by our "legalistic" behavior. In the end it is usually better to part company with them in love for we are going down two different paths. This is why Paul could write what he did in Second Corinthians chapter six:

*Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

*II. Corinthians 6:16-18*

What sense does this passage make to the average Evangelical Christian? They have been taught that God "*received*" them when they repented of their sins. Telling them that they have to separate themselves from all unclean people and all unclean things *before* they can be "received" by God makes absolutely no sense to them at all. Only God knows what goes through their minds when they read this passage.

The only way you will ever be able to understand what Paul is saying here is if you understand that there are different levels of relationship with God. In order to come into a relationship with the Father, we have to be willing to be separated from *many things* that other believers are not required to be separated from.

It is interesting to note that in John 14:6, Jesus said: "...*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto **the Father**, but by me*". Jesus did not say (as is universally taught) that He was the way to "heaven" or to "paradise". He said he was the way to *the Father*. In John 14:23 Jesus said if a man loved Him and kept His word, then *the Father* would love him, and both Jesus and the Father would come and make their abode in him.

Jesus desires to introduce us to His Father. He laid His life down so we could experience a relationship with the Father, the same kind of relationship He had with the Father while on earth. It is a relationship which is just as real as the one we have with Jesus, yet it is different; and it doesn't happen automatically. It only happens as we show ourselves faithful to JESUS first. It only happens to those who are willing to pay the price that is required to become spiritually clean and stay that way. Then, at a certain point, the Father takes us under His wings and starts to *reveal Himself* to us in a way we have never known before. It is these kinds of people who get the Father's name written on their foreheads, and no others.

~ **They sang a new “song” that only those who were part of this group could learn.** Since anyone can learn a normal song, this cannot be a reference to “learning” a song in the normal sense. Learning this song has to do with *experiencing* something. Either the song itself is the experience, or else, only those who have this particular experience can sing this particular song. I believe the “song” is a *song of victory* that can only be learned by those who have overcome.

~ **They are not defiled with women; they are virgins.** That is, they are *spiritual* virgins because they have not defiled themselves with the various things that women represent here, the first and foremost of which is Babylon The Great, the Mother of Harlots. These 144,000 will not be defiled with any of the religious systems of men, all of which are part of the Great Whore. Nor will they be defiled by “the flesh”. Nor will they be defiled by demon spirits. They will have allowed God to separate them *completely* from everything and everyone who seeks to defile them, including those things which are inside of themselves. When you sit down and consider what it will cost us to become spiritual virgins, you will realize why there will only be 144,000 of these people. Very few will be able to pay that kind of a price!

~ **They follow the Lamb where ever He goes.** They follow Him down the same road He walked when He was here among us. They walk down the same bloody trail, the same lonely path, into the valley of self denial and ultimately, death. They follow Him places where nobody else would understand, where other Christians would never consider going.

~ **In their mouths is found no “guile”.** The term guile means *deceit*. There is no deceitfulness in their speech—no big black lies and no little white lies; no bending the truth; no telling half the truth; no exaggerating the truth; no hiding the truth. No hiding of anything. No hypocrisy. These people are completely honest and completely *transparent* with the Lord and with others.

~ **They are without fault before the throne.** Here John is *not* talking about our legal state of imputed faultlessness. If this was the case, this group would include *all* true believers, even the most carnal ones, because all true believers are without fault before God *legally* through imputed righteousness. This is a reference to *actual* faultlessness. It is talking about moral perfection.

Again, once we really grasp the reality of what it will *cost us* to walk on Mt. Zion with this company of people, we will see why it is such a small number, compared to all the millions and millions of people who have been saved down through the ages. This group of saints will form the *corporate* Son of God. They will be the Servant of the Lord in Isaiah; Head and body. They will be sons of the Father; the *male body* of the *male head*. They will become flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone; and the only reason this will be possible is because the Adamic nature will have been totally put to death in them. This kind of spiritual union requires that both marriage partners be absolutely compatible in holiness and character.

The bride will not pay the price to walk on Mt. Zion, so they will not be ready to participate in the *first* marriage. They may be good Christians; they may have a good ministry; they may learn many wonderful truths and do many mighty works by the Holy Spirit; but they won't allowed God to bring their life to an *absolute* end. They will hold on to some portion of it—some goal, some lust, some relationship, some desire, some possession, something of self—and that will disqualify them from the first marriage because only those who bear the *full image* of the Son can become flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone. In order to bear His full image, every bit of Adam must die. Not most of it, but *all* of it.

Those who end up in the bride won't allow the Spirit to radically humble them or thoroughly break them. Therefore, will not be acceptable vessels through whom God can humble and break *others*. They won't allow God to work in them the ability to administer His justice and judgment (rod of iron). Therefore, they will not qualify to sit in the throne with the Father and the Son. They will come forth at the second resurrection, and be united to (marry) the *corporeal* Son of God—head and body.

The distinction between the sons and the bride will be eternal, yet it will not be the kind of the fleshy division we are accustomed to in this realm. There will be distinction, but there will also be unity and harmony. Even so, it is better to be part of the sons than the bride, for the issue is closeness to the Lord. Just as there were those who followed Jesus at varying distances and experienced various degrees of closeness to Him when He ministered on earth, so will it be in the coming ages. If we relegate our relationship with the Lord to second, third, or tenth place in our lives today, we are going to reap *that same exact measure of closeness* to Him tomorrow. Everyone will reap exactly what they have sown!

In First Corinthians chapter fifteen, the resurrection chapter, after describing the order of resurrection, Paul says the following:

*Then cometh the end, when **he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God**, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, **till** he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he [the Father] hath put all things under his [the Son's] feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him [Jesus], it is manifest that he [the Father] is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him [Jesus], **then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him** [the Father] **that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.***

*I. Corinthians 15:24-28*

This is a difficult passage for some to understand because it clearly states that Jesus' reign will *end* in some way after the last enemy (death) has been defeated. Paul said that when this time comes, Jesus will "deliver up" His kingdom to God the Father. So when God put *all things* (except Himself) under the feet of Jesus after His resurrection, in some way, this was is not to be a permanent thing. When all things have been subdued to the Lord Jesus, then He will turn the authority He was given back over to the Father, so that "God may be all in all."

This is the third spiritual union, or marriage. And since we will *never* be separated from Jesus again, once the marriage at the first resurrection has been consummated, what you have here is a joining of Messiah (Head and body), which has also been joined to the bride, being united to the Father in some way that it has not been joined before. Pretty awesome, when you really stop and think about it.