



Go for God!

MYSTERIES OF THE BIBLE - Part III

“Mystery of the Bride of Christ”

A “mystery” in Scripture is a previously hidden truth now divinely revealed. Thus far, we discovered the *Mystery of the Rapture and the Mystery of the Church*. Now let’s discover “*The Mystery of the Bride of Christ*” in Ephesians 5:23-32.

> Let’s observe the Law of first mention regarding the Marriage Union & the Churches Union with Christ:

- The charter of marriage is found in Genesis Ch. 2 (One man, one woman united!)

- Jesus said in Matthew 19:4-5: *“He which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they two, shall be one flesh.”*

- In marriage husband and wife combine to form one perfect human being; the one is the complement of the other. So, Christ makes the church a necessary adjunct to Himself. He is the Archetype from whom, as the pattern, the church is formed (Rom 6:5). He is her Head, as the husband is of the wife (1 Cor 11:3; 15:45). Death severs bridegroom and bride but cannot separate Christ and His bride (Matt 19:6; John 10:28-29; 13:1).

- Paul writes in Romans 8:31-39 - *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: “For Your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

- In the *Old Testament*, the word marriage is used to describe God's spiritual relationship with his chosen people, Israel (Ps 45; Isa 54:6). When God's people fell into sin, especially idolatry, the sin was likened to adultery on the part of a wife (Jer 3:1-20).

- In the *New Testament*, the analogy is continued: *Christ is the Bridegroom* (John 3:29), and the church is *His bride* (Eph 5:25-33). The apostle Paul counsels husbands and wives to imitate the spiritual closeness and love which Christ has for His bride, the church (Eph 5:22-33).

- **Revelation 21:9** as *“the bride, the wife of the Lamb.”* The meaning is that as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so the Lord shall forever rejoice in His people and His people in Him. Let’s read Revelation Ch. 21.

> Listen to the Insights on a Traditional Jewish Wedding

> Let's go through our Wedding Checklist (Check each one if done.)

#1 – Have you said “yes” to the invitation! - Matthew 22:1-14

(Why the rejection of the one not found in proper attire? The imagery seems to represent those who identify with the kingdom externally, profess to be Christians, belong to the church in a visible sense—yet spurn the garment of righteousness Christ offers (cf. Is. 61:10) by seeking to establish a righteousness of their own (cf. Rom. 10:3; Phil. 3:8, 9). Ashamed to admit their own spiritual poverty (*see note on 5:3*), they refuse the better garment the King graciously offers—and thus they are guilty of a horrible sin against His goodness.¹)

#2 – Are you ready to go to the wedding? - Matthew 25:1-13

(Let's be “wise” and full of “oil” (the Holy Spirit); for midnight is very near according to God's prophecy clock.)

#3 – Are you looking forward to the wedding celebration! - Revelation 19:6-10

(The church is betrothed to Christ (Eph. 1:4; Heb. 13:20) and will be presented to Him at the Rapture (John 14:1–3; 1 Thess. 4:13–18). The final supper will signify the end of the ceremony.)

¹John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, (Dallas: Word Publishing) 1997.