

**The Bride Has Made Herself Ready****Jim Moore**

The cold winter wind bit at the back of my neck and made my eyes water.

Even though the sun was out, it was still a chilly January day up at Christian Renewal Center near Silver Creek Falls Oregon. I had come somewhat reluctantly for a 30 day private prayer retreat in the beautifully forested hillside country. Even so, the Lord had already softened my heart the very first day when I pulled into the parking lot and heard His voice tell me how glad He was that I was there. That always does it. His speaking to me. He would do that a few more times before the month was over.

One of those messages changed my understanding, along with the course of my life. I was walking along a dirt road, staff in hand, trying to talk with God as one man would talk to another. I was at a turning point and I was asking Jesus what I was supposed to do with the rest of my life. I was recounting all the things that I had done in ministry over the years, and that I really didn't understand what my "ultimate purpose" was now. I knew that I was learning to love the Lord with all my heart, soul, and body. That was the first commandment and He had already made this quite plain to me. What I didn't seem to be able to grasp was what I was supposed to do to fulfill the second commandment. Everyone has a job to do on planet earth, and I had done many jobs over the prior 30 years, but what now? What was I supposed to be doing? I needed to know.

I would like to say that the lighting flashed and the thunder crashed, but it did not. Instead, I heard the proverbial "still small voice" inside of me. It sounded like the voice of a tender, almost broken man, speaking to me.

*"Help me find the perfect Bride."*

It was enough. There is something about that voice that penetrates all the mistrust and confusion, and gets right to the heart of the matter. I understood that no matter what I did in life for other people, the ultimate goal was to get them on the path that I too was on...to be a better lover of God. Their first commandment was my second commandment. God desires a Bride. He has promised His Son a Bride that is worthy of Him. One that is without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing:

*"...Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water **by the word**, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, **not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing**, but that she should be holy and without blemish...'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh' **This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.**" (Eph 5:25b-27&31-32 emphasis added)*

## **The History of The Bride**

Jesus declares Himself to be a Bridegroom and His people a Bride. From the very beginning, the Bride has been on the heart of God. (*Rick Joyner, of Morningstar Ministries, had a stunning vision concerning the Bride of Christ being from eternity past, and wrote about the experience in a message called: "The Weightiest Matter." I highly recommend reading the account of that vision*). Now at the end of the age, Holy Spirit is again emphasizing this aspect of relationship to His people.

There is currently increasing revelation concerning Jesus as the Bridegroom God, and His church as a real Bride. As we draw closer to the final hours of this present age, and move towards the dawning of the reign of the Son of Man on planet earth, it will be increasingly important to understand and fully walk out, this divinely given paradigm of marital partnership and love. The reason for this is because in the end, love wins. Love for God, love for people.

Because this relationship is a partnership, both the Bride and the Groom have a job to do. The Grooms job is to prepare for the future of the Bride. The Brides job is to "*make herself ready*" (Rev. 19:7b) to be a life long partner with the Groom. In our case, this would be an eternal partnership of ruling along side of a King, with true love and agreement. We would do well to think about what a natural Bride does to prepare for her Groom, even a King who is a Groom, and transfer those principles over to the spirit and apply them to ourselves. The future belongs to those who plan for it.

## **REFERENCES TO THE BRIDE / BRIDEGROOM**

### **Psalm 19:1-5**

*"1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. 2 Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. 3 There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. 4 Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun, 5 which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, And rejoices like a strong man to run its race."*

The most foundational revelation of God, the heavens above, is declaring the existence of God day and night without end. Twenty-four-seven they have been "uttering" His testimony since the dawn of time. Part of His testimony is referred to by the mention of a Bridegroom. As the sun runs a daily race, so God is set on an unmovable course to run the race for a Bride. So from the very first witness of God and His plans and purpose, this Bride-Groom relationship is alluded too.

**Isaiah 62:1-7**

*“For Zion's sake I will not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burns. 2 The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, and all kings your glory. You shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD will name. 3 You shall also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. 4 You shall no longer be termed Forsaken, nor shall your land any more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah; for the LORD delights in you, and your land shall be married. 5 For as a young man marries a virgin, so shall your sons marry you; **and as the Bridegroom rejoices over the Bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.** 6 I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention of the LORD, do not keep silent, 7 and give Him no rest till He establishes and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.”*

The subject here is “The Wall” of intercession that God has established in the Spirit, both for Jerusalem, and for all the likeminded cities of the earth that would embrace His rule and Kingdom. Sandwiched between the phrases, “*I will not hold My peace*” and “*I have set watchmen on your walls*” is listed the motivation in God’s own heart for intercession: “*as the Bridegroom rejoices over the Bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.*”

God sets watchmen, and is Himself the chief among them, because of the goal of love. He prays because of love. Jesus, who is the Great Intercessor, takes place on His own wall of intercession, because love compels Him to. He is the Great Intercessor because He is the Great Lover. Consider this: That one cannot be done correctly without the other. The two are inseparable.

*“Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since **He always lives to make intercession for them.**” (Heb 7:23-25 emphasis added)*

**Luke 5:34-35**

*“And He said to them, ‘Can you make the **friends of the Bridegroom fast while the Bridegroom is with them?** 5 But the days will come when **the Bridegroom will be taken away from them;** then they will fast in those days.’”*

Jesus refers to Himself as the Bridegroom. In answer to His critics as to why the disciples did not fast and pray, He gave the answer that their desire was fulfilled while He was with Him. The greatest, yet often unperceived, desire of the human heart is to be close to the Master. Thus their heart desire was fulfilled.

However the time would come when He was taken from them, and their longing would ensue, and increase, until they learned how to walk with Him while He was not there in the flesh. We are spirit and flesh creatures, designed to live in both realms

simultaneously. Fasting is not an attempt at pleasing God or getting Him to move, but rather an act of love. It is the response of a love-sick heart that wants to draw near. Prayer with fasting aids in the subduing the flesh so the spirit might have more preeminence. The best motivation for prayer and fasting, for all things, is love.

### **John 3:29-34**

*“He who has **the Bride is the Bridegroom**; but the friend of **the Bridegroom**, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of **the Bridegroom's voice**. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled. 30 He must increase, but I must decrease. 31 He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all.” 32 And what He has seen and heard, that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony. 33 He who has received His testimony has certified that God is true. 34 For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure.”*

John the Baptist declared that Jesus was the Bridegroom, and His people were His bride. John received this revelation perhaps even before anyone had spoken it. He understood that the earthly relationship between a man and his wife had a higher purpose than romance and procreation. It heralded the great love relationship between God the His beloved people. We don't tend to see John as a lover, but he certainly had the revelation. He may have wore camel skin, lived in the desert, and ate locust and honey, but he knew love. He did what he did, and spoke what was given Him, from the backdrop of love.

### **Matthew 25:1-13**

*“Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out **to meet the Bridegroom**. 2 Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3 Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5 But while **the Bridegroom was delayed**, they all slumbered and slept. 6 And at midnight a cry was heard: **‘Behold, the Bridegroom is coming; go out to meet Him!’** 7 Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. 8 And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ 9 But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’ 10 And while they went to buy, **the Bridegroom came**, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. 11 Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ 12 But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ 13 Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which **the Son of Man is coming**.”*

**Commentary on Matthew 25:1-2*****“Then the kingdom of heaven”***

A kingdom is “king-dom” or the dominion of a king. Every kingdom must have a king or it is not a kingdom. The king must have dominion, or the right to say, the rule, the authority, over a people or an area of land, finances, etc. Whatever falls under the authority of the king would be classified as his “kingdom.” In this phrase, although there is not only a king present, but the kingdom is referred to as the “dominion” of heaven. Whatever heaven has rule or authority over. Upon who, or what, does heaven hold sway? Where does its atmosphere and principles, have control? Heaven is a place proper, but it is not just a place. Heaven is the realm of the spirit. The people who dwell in that realm, either as a place or in the spirit, are about to be illustrated in two very basic ways.

***“shall be likened”***

Jesus loved to use parables and illustrations. Stories and semblances to prove a point. Perhaps this was a real story, or simply one imagined in the mind of the teller to illustrate a truth, much like the beloved Christian author CS Lewis. Jesus is a poetic, song writing, story telling Bridegroom lover.

***“to ten virgins”***

Ten is considered prophetically to be a whole-istic number. The human body has 10 fingers and toes. When a child is born, the doctors and parents check to see if “all 10 fingers and toes” are present and accounted for. The number is meant to represent the whole of the body of Christ on the earth. Jesus while in heaven, has a physical body as His representation upon the earth. You and I are that body. Then the body of Christ are referred to as a Virgin. This again is meant to be a Bridal term. The great apostle Paul said:

*“For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have **betrothed** you to one **husband**, that I may present you as a **chaste virgin** to Christ.” (2 Cor. 11:2 emphasis added)*

Virginity is a universal picture of purity. We have virgin olive oil, virgin airlines etc. Virgin means “Untouched.” This is a marvelous thing, that God would see His people so perfectly clean and forgiven, that they are restored to a pre-fallen condition. Only God can do that. He did not call his people merely forgiven, but restored. Just-as-if-id never sinned. God sees His Bride as a virgin, no matter what their former background. So it is undeniable that these 10 are washed, pure, and clean. They are completely and fully saved. They are considered sinless before the sight of the only one that really matters to a Bride...her Bridegroom.

***“who took their lamps”***

It is always to interpret scripture with scripture whenever possible. Prophetic symbols are often to be found in more than one place in the scripture, sometimes with a clear and distinct meaning added to them. Such is the case with “The Lamp.”

*“Your word is a **lamp** to my feet and a **light** to my path. I have sworn and confirmed that I will keep Your righteous judgments. I am afflicted very much; Revive me, O LORD, according to Your word.” (Psalm 119:105-107)*

God left no room for misunderstanding as to what the Lamp represents. It is His word. The purpose of a lamp is to give light, or illumination. This is the same purpose of God’s words, spoken or written, to illuminate. To be able to see things the way they really are. If I am in a dark room, and someone tells me something that is in the room, I have no way to verify if that is the truth or not, unless I can see it. Once the light is turned on, I can see, not what I believe, or what I have been told, but what I can now see.

Truth is “seeing things the way they really are.” The purpose of Gods word is to give light, revelation, and illumination. As the days grow darker, we will need His word even more, both the word that has been written and the word which is spoken directly to our spirits.

The Holy Spirit recognizes both spoken and written words as having divine authority to be a Lamp. Even the enemy recognizes the authority of the word and attempts to utilize its power over men.

*“And we heard **this voice** which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. And so we have **the prophetic word** confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no **prophecy of Scripture** is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” (2 Peter 1:18-21 emphasis added)*

*“But he [Jesus] answered and said, ‘It is written...’” (Matthew 4:4)*

*“And [satan] says to him, ‘If You be the Son of God, cast Yourself down: for it is written...’” (Matthew 4:6)*

*“Jesus said unto him, ‘It is written again...’” (Matthew 4:7)*

*“Then says Jesus to him, ‘Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written...’” (Matthew 4:10)*

***“and went out to meet the Bridegroom”***

The primary purpose of the Bride is to be with the Bridegroom. To become one with Him. That is the primary goal of every single believer. One-ness with Jesus their King.

Union with Christ is the ultimate goal. John, perhaps the greatest lover of Jesus in the NT, said it this way:

*“Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, **we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.**” (1 John 3:2 emphasis added)*

We are on a journey to go and meet the King, who is a Groom. This journey is one that is both individual and corporate. This verse is mentioning the corporate beginning of the journey. Then there is a middle of the journey, when the global wake up call comes. Then at last the end comes, when His face is seen, and all who are ready will enter into the wedding of the Lamb.

***“Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish***

Some have thought this number to be a percentage of people who will be ready. I believe that it is simply meant to say that believers will fall into two basic categories. Those who are ready, and those who are not ready. It’s as simple as that. Jesus is concerned about Loving God and loving people. He has given 2 stories in Matthew chapter 25, to illustrate how *He sees* His people in light of the great and second commandment.

The passage in Matthew 25:1-13 speaks about *what we are in our hearts*.  
The passage in Matthew 25:31-46 speaks of *what we do with our bodies*.

In this passage (Matt 25:1-13), the distinction that Jesus makes is one of “wisdom” and “foolishness.” So the subject of the Brides making herself ready comes down to something within the intellect, or the soul realm. It is about a thought pattern that is either in line with the way Jesus thinks and the truth He has communicated, or it is out of alignment with that. When we acknowledge His truths stated, and then begin to conform our mind to His mind, and our thoughts to His thoughts, we then begin to act out what we believe. Our actions are a product of what we truly believe. If we trust the words of God, then we are transformed by a changed mind:

*“And do not be conformed to this world, but be **transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” (Romans 12:2 emphasis added)*

Agreeing with God is the foundation of true wisdom.

***“3 Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them”***

Someone once said: “The future belongs to those who prepare for it.” Usually when we think of the subject of preparation in today’s world, we think of preparing for natural disasters such as unpredictable weather patterns, earthquakes, hurricanes, etc. Then there are those who grapple with financial instability and the possibility of regional or even global economic collapse, and seek to prepare for them. Add to these ever present

uncertainties the rise of political and military conflicts globally, and you have a mixture of volatility that leaves many fearful of what lies ahead. Many then seek to prepare for the possibility of dark days ahead, some from fearful motives and some from a rational mindset. It is possible to prepare for the unseen from either heart motive.

But what of the predictable? Death is the most certain event of every human being and yet we often are hesitant to prepare spiritually for it. More so, after passing we are told that standing before the righteous Judge of all the earth is no less predictable:

*“And as it is **appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment**, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.” (Hebrews 9:27-28 emphasis added)*

Jesus also stated emphatically that we are to be preparing for His return and then our eternal life of Bride/Bridegroom partnership with Him. Very few do this. The most glorious future that lies just ahead of us (whether we come to Him or He comes to us), is that we shall be changed into the eternal and live eternally with Him in divine love and rule. This is not a hoax or a fantasy. It is real and it is your future, if you accept and prepare for it. The entrance fee has already been paid in another Man’s blood. All that is left is to accept and move towards that inevitable goal.

This is true wisdom. To hear what God says, believe what God says, and then act upon it.

There are 2 types of “Virgins” or purified ones. Wise and Unwise. We typically presume that we are among the wise. There are those who hear the eternal words of Jesus and believe, and those who do not.

*Jesus ~ “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness! Therefore whoever **hears these sayings of Mine, and does them**, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who **hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them**, will be like a **foolish man** who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.’ And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” (Matthew 7:21-29)*

Hearing and doing. Hearing and not doing. This is wisdom and foolishness by Jesus own personal definition. His words cannot be contradicted or eliminated or ignored into irrelevancy. Wisdom is to first hear, then believe, and then act. For one reason or another, some hear and believe, and some do not. No one knows exactly why, as there are so

many heart issues involved with each one of us. It is not ours to judge another mans servant:

*“Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.” (Romans 14:4)*

Some say the “No one really knows the future” but that is most certainly not true. No one knows every detail of the future, but it was God’s intent that we should know some things in advance. There are 318 verses just in the New Testament that refer to the end times, so apparently He wanted us to see both the good and the bad coming, so we could be ready for all these things. God wants our hearts to be *properly postured* for events coming, so we can be prepared in advance to *properly respond* to them, not in fear but in faith and love. Jesus said:

*“Behold, **I have told you before.**” (Matthew 24:25 emphasis added)*

*“And now **I have told you before** it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.” (John 14:29 emphasis added)*

The scriptures teach us that both good and evil are present with us always, and that both will increase as the end of this age approaches. Some look for things to get better and better as the Spirit of the Lord is poured out on the earth. This is absolutely true. Some look for evil to increase as we draw closer to the end. This is also true. We don’t get to pick and choose which truth we believe. In the end, truth, love, and Holy Spirit will win. The awareness of the Glory of the Lord will fill the earth. His plan will work.

*“And it shall come to pass **in the last days**, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh” (Act 2:17 emphasis added)*

*“This know also, that **in the last days** perilous times shall come...evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.” (2Ti 3:1,13emphasis added)*

*“Let **both [good and evil] grow together until the harvest**, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, ‘First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn....Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, ‘Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.’ He answered and said to them: ‘He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, **the harvest is the end of the age**, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age.” (Matthew 13:30,36-40)*

*“But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD.” (Numbers 14:21)*

*“For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.” (Habakkuk 2:14)*

We are accelerating towards the final crescendo of the ages. There is an appointed end to the plan of God to bring mankind to Himself. Part of that plan is to allow mankind to see the final end of good and evil. All of the righteousness and unrighteousness that has ever been sown in the earth, has been growing and will continue to grow until it reaches its full maturity. This is for a purpose. In the end, mankind will be able to see clearly the ultimate fruit of both good and evil, and therefore make a knowledgeable choice between the two. The middle ground will cease. This is the ultimate fulfillment of the phrase "They are without excuse":

*"Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God has showed it to them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that **they are without excuse**" (Romans 1:20 emphasis added)*

God will remove every possible excuse from mankind. In the end all will see the result of sin and light. God will make the end of righteousness and unrighteousness so clear that no one will be able to mistake the consequence of which path they choose. This too is the mercy of God. When men and women stand before God at the final judgment, they will not be able to accuse Him of "not doing enough."

*"For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: "That You [God] may be justified in Your words, and may **overcome when You are judged.**" (Romans 3:3-4 [note: "God" added])*

The unwise virgins thought the wait would not last long. That they had enough to make it. That perhaps the darkness would not last too long, or they would be inside after all, in the holy huddle with the rest of the bridal party. Perhaps they thought they simply did not need to be too concerned.

***"4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps."***

The wise Brides looked ahead. They did not assume that they had all they needed. Perhaps they thought things might get darker than they expected, or the wait would be longer than they expected. They did not want to take a chance on what they did not know. Whatever the case may be, they took the matter seriously and prepared themselves. *"The Bride has made herself ready."* These pure one's gave forethought to the future. This is always a good practice. To hear Jesus words about the future, to believe them in the heart, and then to prepare for their eventuality, is not an act of fear or cowardice, but of faith and wisdom.

All the virgins had lamps. They all had access to the words of God. They all were pure. They had all been washed by the soul cleansing blood of the Lamb. They all were waiting. They looked forward with expectancy to the return of Jesus the Bridegroom. There was one thing lacking. They did not adequately discern the days, or the season, in which they lived. They minimized the dark. The wise thought ahead, the unwise did not.

Preparation was the one thing that distinguished between “**those who were ready**” and those who were not.

The challenge was rightly discerned and not minimized by those wise ones. The need was predicted and mulled over. The thought process led to one conclusion concerning the need for the darkness. More light. More illumination. More revelation. The reason His words are “a light unto my feet and a light unto my path” (Psalm 119:105), is because they are not mere words on a page, but they are living and active. We don’t just need His words, we need them to be illuminated by the Holy Spirit:

*“For the **word of God is living and powerful**, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” (Hebrews 4:12 emphasis added)*

Lamps need to stay lit. Bibles need to stay living. The point of a lamp after all is not that it sits on a shelf, but that it gives light. A lamp is useless if it’s not touched by fire. It’s not about having a lamp. We have been given the lamp, the Word of God. God gave us that gift, but we have a part to play. God gives the lamp, we keep it lit. At the end of the age, darkness will increase to proportions unknown by the human race. What then will allow us to see things clearly, from God’s perspective and not the world’s? God sees everything through the grid of love...His kind of love. He desires intimacy and everything He does is to obtain that singular end. We need the light that comes through Love. Intimacy with God brings illumination:

*“Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. For behold, the **darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people**; but the LORD will arise over you, and **His glory will be seen upon you**. The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.” (Isaiah 60:1-3 emphasis added)*

The supply for the needs of the day is one simple thing.

Oil.

The whole story turns on oil. Oil is the defining feature. Forethought, wisdom, and preparation...it all led to this... having oil. The dark days the virgins were in required oil. Some had it and some did not. It wasn’t about judgment or holiness or mission. They had all that. They were pure and waiting for the Bridegroom, but it was dark and they would need light to find Him. The Bridegroom did not come to the house and get them, they had to go to Him. This required light.

At the time of the writing of this scripture, the custom was for the Hebrew groom to go and find bride and take her from the house. This case was not typical. The Virgin’s were called to “*go out and meet Him.*” There was a search involved. They had a part to play. Intimacies oil would prove to be the litmus test of readiness. Not of purity, but of simply being ready to meet the Master as a Bridegroom.

Oil is a type of the Holy Spirit's anointing in scriptures. There are various kinds of anointing that can come upon people. We anoint people with oil for the purpose of enacting a symbol of the "smearing," of the power and person of Holy Spirit upon them. This assists them in the receiving of healing, gifts, and spiritual impartation. It also helps to remind us that it is not we who are doing the healing or imparting, but the Lord Himself:

*"It shall come to pass in that day that his burden will be taken away from your shoulder, and his yoke from your neck, and the yoke will be destroyed because of the anointing oil." (Isaiah 10:27)*

*"Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven." (James 5:14-15)*

*"So they [the disciples of Jesus] went out and preached that people should repent. And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them." (Mark 6:12-13 comment added)*

Anointing's can be sought after and the received, or they can be given as an unsought gift from God at birth. They can even be passed on from one person to another according to the Lord's will, as in the case of Elijah and Elisha. People have been anointed to sing, to preach, to heal, to build, and to govern. Even warriors in the Old Testament were anointed to fight. The anointing is basically God's divine ability coming upon a person to accomplish some need or task.

The greatest need of all is Love.

There's an anointing for that. Jesus describes what was missing of the oil of intimacy when the foolish virgins came knocking at an already closed door. He simply said "*I do not know you.*" There is an oil of intimacy with Jesus the Bridegroom that is not only nice to have, fun, cool, etc., but will become necessary as the final days approach. Intimacy for a Bride is required.

The whole story revolves around the oil of intimacy. It's a story of preparation, heart readiness, because of love. We cannot be ready to meet a Bridegroom if we have not yet learned what it means to love with all the heart, soul, and flesh.

The very good news is that God wants this more than we do, or ever have. He is a passionate lover who is ravished by every single glance of our eye. His desire is for us. He has everything else already. You and I are the joy that was set before Him on the cross. Not just our obedience, but our love. The one who calls Himself a Bridegroom, is committed to persuading you to seek this oil. No matter what. He won't give up or relent until you say yes and pursue Him. He's been seeking you all your life as a passionate lover would. He waits for us to reciprocate that jealous love that He is consumed by:

*“You have ravished my heart, My sister, my spouse; You have ravished my heart With one look of your eyes, With one link of your necklace.” (SOS 4:9)*

*“For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.” (Deuteronomy 4:24)*

*“I am my Beloved's, and His desire is toward me.” (SOS 7:10)*

The importance of obtaining the oil of intimacy should not be underestimated.

How important is Love?

### ***“5 But while the Bridegroom was delayed”***

There are hints woven in the teachings of Jesus that His coming, or return to the earth to reign permanently, would be delayed. Every generation from the first one after Jesus ascended, felt they would be the generation to witness His feet touching the Mount of Olives. None have been right. But Jesus would not have it any other way. He told us to be like men who were waiting for their Lord to return at any moment. There will however, be one generation that will be right. They will be the “final” generation in which Jesus does return. They will not be surprised:

*“Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; and you yourselves be like men **who wait for their Master**, when He will return from the wedding, that when He comes and knocks they may open to Him immediately.” (Luke 12:35-36 emphasis added)*

*“But and if that servant say in his heart, **My Lord delays His coming**; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; the Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looks not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.” (Luke 12:45-46 emphasis added).*

*“But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that **one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack** concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But **the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night**; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” (2 Peter 3:8-10 emphasis added)*

*“For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. **Blessed is he that watches**, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.” (Revelation 16:14-15 emphasis added)*

The Lord is waiting long, so that others might be saved. There are yet other Lover's to be won by His great love. Nothing could be more important than that for waiting. We must remember that we are seeking a Person, not a thing, or an idea, or a theology. We are seeking a person who was alive, and still now is alive. Jesus is returning in person, because He is a person. You can't fall in love with an idea. Jesus is coming in person for a Bride who is also a person. He is God...but He is also flesh and blood. Jesus is a very real, living, breathing person. When we pray, we are not shouting to the sky, we are seeking the face of a person. This is the essence of intimacy. Two people, face to face, loving each other.

***“They all slumbered and slept”***

There will come a time prophetically speaking, when all the church will be lulled into a state of slumber (to be drowsy) and or outright spiritual sleep. The same way the body can get tired after a long period of time and fall asleep, becoming unaware of what's going on naturally around it, so it can be in the spirit. We grow weary and feel the need to rest, and then we fall asleep. In that state we become unaware of our environment. This can happen to anyone. When we fall asleep spiritually, we need to be awakened by God. God does not condemn us when this happens, but will send a spitual “alarm clock” to help us. The greatest alarm will be the one that announces within our spirit's His coming. Watching in prayer can keep us alert.

*“But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.” (1 Peter 4:7)*

*“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. **For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth.** Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.” (Luke 21:33-36 emphasis added)*

*“Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night.” (1 Thess 5:6-7)*

*“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore He says: **‘Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.’**” (Ephesians 5:11-14 emphasis added)*

Sleeping is not a crime. At one point or another we probably all spiritually fall asleep. The tragedy is when the Lord speaks, that we do not awaken, believe, and act upon His words.

***“6 And at midnight a cry was heard”***

There is a time coming, at just the right moment, when the Lord Himself will send His messenger(s) to sound an alarm to wake us all up. At the darkest point, at the dawning of a yet perceived new day, God will shock us all out of our slumber. At that point we will see things as they really are, from His vantage point, and in the light of eternity. God is *unswervingly committed*...for the sake of the people of the earth, to shake everything that can be shaken. He does this because of preparation. There is a kingdom coming that cannot be shaken because it is built on eternal things that cannot be shaken. They never pass away. Like His words.

*“See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, ‘YET ONCE MORE I SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO HEAVEN.’ Now this, ‘YET ONCE MORE,’ indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.” (Hebrews 12:25-29)*

How this cry will come we do not know. It may be one event or many. It may be in the form of messages or miracles. It may be war or famine or earthquakes as Jesus already said will come. From the raising up of believers who love like Jesus, to the rising up of an anti-christ, all things good and evil will serve to point the way to Him. Whatever the case may be, we will all be shaken awake, and the humble will begin the pursuer the face of the Lord afresh and anew. This will result in an earth-wide harvest.

***“Behold, the Bridegroom is coming; go out to meet Him!”***

The call will consist of two primary themes.

1. The Bridegroom is coming
2. He will be found out in the dark

We often speak of the Lord coming to rule. “The King is coming” and so it is true. But the king is a Bridegroom. Of all the titles He could have used for Himself at His coming, He used the one most connected to love. Because He’s coming to get married. The last mention of the Church in the bible is that of a Bride as well. The Spirit and the Bride say come. The church will increasingly see herself as a Bride in the end, and increasingly see the Lord as a Bridegroom. This is because we will need it. The darkness will necessitate more love. Much more love than we have ever known.

The second message is that we will find our Bridegroom in the fullest measure when we get outside of the confines of our four walls. We love the church. It is the gathering of the Lords people. He loves it. His ever increasing Presence among us is His testimony that

He approves. But He also needs us to come out and meet Him among the multitudes of broken wandering lost people for which He died, and awaits His inheritance. His inheritance *is* the Saints. People becoming “saints” are His exceeding great reward. That’s you and me. He leaves the 99 sheep for the lost 1.

*“What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?” (Luke 15:4)*

*“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of **His inheritance in the saints**” (Ephesians 1:18 emphasis added)*

As the tide turns, and the day dawns of the return of the Son of Man, The Lord will be increasingly found “in the dark.”

***“7 Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps”***

To trim the lamp is to turn up the Light. Suddenly, everyone understands that they need more light. As far as the church goes, this will be a universal alarm. All were asleep and all will be awakened. No matter how the sound is made, this will be the mercy of the Lord. Sometimes we don’t understand why God does, or allows, the things He does. Suffice it to say that all things God does are good. He cannot, is not capable of, doing anything bad.

The scripture declares that we are to consider (KJV, behold or steadfastly look upon), both the goodness and the severity of God. Not the good and the evil, for there is no evil in God’s dongs. He does however deal with each of us individually, corporately, nationally, and even globally, according to what He alone knows that we need. God is intent on brining about the greatest degree of love with the least amount of difficulty for each one of us. God is a good parent who uses different things in love to motivate, discipline, or course or correct, His beloved children just like any good parent will.

See how God spoke this principle over His beloved Israel:

*“For if God did not spare the natural branches [Israel], He may not spare you either. **Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God:** on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. And they [Israel] also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.” (Romans 11:21-23 comments and emphasis added)*

Goodness and severity in this passage do not speak of the character of God, but of the two basic ways He deals with mankind. On one end of the spectrum is to show His undeserved goodness to sinful man. On the other is to bring or allow us to feel the pain of consequence and therefore turn away from evil. If His blessing flowing down upon a person will humble and turn their heart, He will always choose that method. If a child is

stubborn and self destructive, heading for disaster, He will use increasingly strong and even severe methods, in order to bring about change. He will rescue the perishing even if He has to use harsh means to do it. Even though we don't like it, much like any child. That is the measure of the Love of God. Eternity is a very long time. The price is worth it.

*“Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the **goodness of God leads you to repentance?**” (Romans 2:4 emphasis added)*

*“For **godly sorrow produces repentance** leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.” (2 Corinthians 7:10 emphasis added)*

*“Now no **chastening seems to be joyful** for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the **peaceable fruit of righteousness** to those who have been trained by it.” (Hebrews 12:11 emphasis added)*

The time will come when everyone will see their need for more illumination from the Words of the Lord, the Lamp of God. We are going to need all the spirit of wisdom and revelation that we can muster as the days grow darker. The light will increase as the Lord said in Isaiah 60:1, but the illumination will come through the oil of intimacy, cultivated in the secret place with God. There are no shortcuts to obtaining this precious oil. As the virgins who were unwise soon found out.

*“8 And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’”*

*“9 But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’”*

*“10 And while they went to buy, the Bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.”*

*“11 Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’”*

*“12 But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’”*

*“13 Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.”*

#### **Revelation 19:6-14**

*“And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, ‘Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! 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.** 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. 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.' 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.'"*

### **Revelation 21:1-10**

*"Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. 2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as **a Bride adorned for her husband**. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. 4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.'*

*5 Then He who sat on the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new.' And He said to me, 'Write, for these words are true and faithful.' 6 And He said to me, 'It is done! **I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End**. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. 7 He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. 8 But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.'*

*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."*

### **Revelation 22:13-17**

*"13 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.' 14 Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. 15 But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie. 16 'I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.' 17 **And the Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!'** And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely."*

### **The Last Mention of The Church**

The last reference to the Church, the Body of Christ, Believers and disciples of the Lord Jesus, is a Bride. There is a reason for that. The final paradigm of relationship is that of a Bride. Someone once said: "Jesus died for a Bride" and that is true. Jesus is not coming for or those who are simply workers for Him, but for those who are in love with Him. Marriage speaks of union and partnership. Two become one.

Married couples are "partners for life." Jesus desires eternal partnership with His Beloved Ones. We are called to be eternally in love with Jesus, and yet, many are not in love with Him today. This is the first act of preparing for a wedding, to make sure you are in love with the one you are about to marry. Check your heart. Ask yourself if you really love Him. Then go after that goal as the supreme desire of your heart, the focus of your prayers, and the conduct of your daily actions.

Love wins, because love is the supreme goal of the heart of the Creator of all things. He who made the heavens and the earth, had in His mind the consummation of all things in love. Starting with Him, and then moving to people.

The Spirit and the Bride say, come.

Come Lord Jesus.