

THE MARRIAGE OF THE KING'S DAUGHTER

(Discourse below by W. M. Wisdom, convention report 1915, Page 119.)

Truly, dear friends, we are living in a sweetly solemn hour; in an hour of great stress and strain; in the hour of our final testing, in the hour just preceding our induction into the Marriage Feast as members of the Bride of the Son of the King of the Universe—if indeed we shall be “*counted worthy*” by the Great Judge. Surely it is a solemn hour. Are we ready? Behold the Bridegroom! We can now see the marriage splendor, within the open door.

“The marriage of the Lamb is come, and the Bride hath made herself ready.” What a glorious thought, yet how solemn! Ah! friends, are we as individuals here included? Is this true of us? “Ready!” How much this means! Should we not ask ourselves continuously, Am I ready? Have I done all? We are in a heart-searching time, a sweetly solemn hour. That door when once shut, will never open again. And as we shall now have exhibited before our mental vision the most beautiful, the most inspiring picture ever drawn, may our hearts be refreshed, our hopes renewed, our resolutions strengthened, our souls thrilled, our whole beings vitalized. As we thus together view some of the most striking and deeply impressive figures and scenes given in the Book of books may our hearts unitedly go out as never before in loving gratitude to Him who has sent us such a marvelous invitation, an invitation to become the Bride of the Son of the King of the Universe. Let us now look at the Psalmist’s poetical picture.

Poetic Picture

“The King’s Daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold; she shall be brought unto the King in raiment of fine needlework.” (Psalm 45:13, 14) This text poetically and pictorially draws our attention to one of those beautiful figures by which the close and dear relationship between Christ and His elect Church is Scripturally portrayed. Whether it be the figure of the Captain and His Soldiers, the Shepherd and His Sheep, the Master and His Servants, the Bridegroom and the Bride, each illustration of our Lord’s relationship to the Church teaches its own important lesson.

But, surely none of them is more important, more beautiful, or more touching than the one we are now considering; our Lord, the King’s Son, highly exalted to Jehovah’s right hand in the Throne, and the Church in glory His Queen, to be associated with Him in His Millennial Kingdom. The study of these various pictures of Heavenly things is intended to lift the minds of the New Creation, the King’s Daughter, from things earthly to things heavenly; things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man the things which God hath in reservation for them who love Him supremely, with all their heart, mind, soul, being.

The Heavenly Joys

These things are for the King's Son, His well beloved Son, and the class that will become the Bride, the Lamb's wife; yet none but the more than overcomer will share in this Joy, a joy unspeakable and full of glory. Such as would enter into this joy, this glorious inheritance, an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, must faithfully comply with all the conditions laid down in the Book of Instructions given to those who accept the offer or invitation to become the Bride of Christ; and even these must "incline their ears," as the Psalmist directs.

As Messiah is to be the Great King of the earth during His Mediatorial reign, it is the Father's good pleasure that He should have a Bride; and this Gospel Age is set apart, a mere parenthesis in the Divine Plan, for the finding and developing of this Bride class of many members. The Kingdom is the Great Prize which the Father is to bestow upon the Son, this to be shared by the Church, the Bride of Christ.

The Jewish Wedding Custom

Now, as you all know, the great Apostle Paul frequently uses natural things to picture or illustrate spiritual things, heavenly transactions to our minds; this indeed is more or less general throughout the Scriptures. We shall therefore follow this Divinely indicated method in our study of today, and take known things to picture the unknown, carrying our minds from what we know to what we do not know, the hidden or secret things, that which can be seen only by the Eye of Faith, for "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear [reverence] Him."

Let us therefore take for an illustration the ancient Jewish wedding Custom, regarding which reliable secular history gives us some detailed information. In considering this matter, however, from the Scriptural viewpoint and the application to be made and the lesson to be drawn therefrom, there are many points or features to be kept in mind; and these must not be confused.

In the first place, as we examine this matter we note that the choice of the bride devolved not upon the bridegroom, (and Jesus is nowhere shown as choosing His Bride) but upon his father, as noted in the case of Abraham choosing a bride for Isaac through his servant Eliezer; Abraham typifying God, the Heavenly Father; Isaac his son, God's dear Son; Eliezer his servant, the Holy Spirit. The whole arrangement, however, being of Abraham and in accordance with his wishes as expressed in his instructions to his servant; the later Jewish custom being based upon this procedure.

Does not this beautifully portray to our minds the manner and order of God's arrangements respecting the selecting of a Bride for His dear Son? Our Lord Himself

reminding us that, “No man cometh unto the Son except the Father draw Him,” invite him; and this He does through the Holy Spirit, His Servant, operating in connection with, not independent of, His Word, the Divine instructions. This Servant speaking or operating through the Apostle Paul, reminds us that we have been espoused to one Husband, that we are to be presented a chaste Virgin to Christ, and that we must have respect unto this espousal and maintain our virginity, **purity**, if we would finally be presented to the glorious Bridegroom, and be associated with Him in His Kingdom for the uplifting of mankind during His reign of a Thousand Years.

The act of espousal or betrothal under the established Jewish Custom was celebrated by a feast, at which the bridegroom placed a ring on the finger of the bride-elect; a ring being a symbol of faithfulness, being endless, and being placed on the finger indicated that the contract was a binding one, and could not be violated without grave consequences to the offending party; faithfulness must be maintained.

When the Heavenly Father “calls” or invites us to become the Bride of His dear Son, and when we answer the “call,” respond to the invitation, a contract, a marriage contract, is entered into, God sealing the same by the Holy Spirit, thus signifying His acceptance of us as the prospective Bride of His dear Son, binding us to keep “faithful unto death” our covenant. God changes not, and has no pleasure in fools, and therefore cautions us to be not “rash with our mouths” but after we have vowed a vow we must not defer to pay it; for it is better that we should not vow, than to vow and not pay; and this contract is unto death, and there is no drawing back.

“Be Thou Faithful Unto Death”

Between the betrothal and the marriage under the Jewish Custom an interval elapsed, usually about a year; this in order for the bride to embroider her robe, make herself ready, typifying how the espoused Bride of the Lamb must build the necessary character, develop the Fruits of the Spirit, to work them out on her wedding garment in accordance with the outlines stamped thereon. During this period the bride-elect continued to live at the house of her father, as does the espoused Bride of Christ, and all communication was carried on through a friend of the bridegroom—the Holy Spirit). The bride-elect was even now regarded as the wife of her future husband; hence *faithfulness* was demanded. Faithlessness resulted in the bride-elect being “put away,” representative of the Great Company, or being stoned to death, typifying the Second Death.

The essence of the whole arrangement, however, consisted in the final *removal* of the bride-elect from her father’s house—(typifying the Adamic house or earthly home, or temporary abiding place of the espoused Bride, the Church) to the home of the bridegroom’s father—(typifying the Heavenly Canaan of eternal rest and joy). “I go to prepare a place for you, my beloved espoused Bride, and when I have done this I am

going to return to your father's house for you and take you with me to the mansion which I have been engaged in preparing for you while you have been *making yourself ready*, embroidering your Robe, your Wedding Garment, with the rich fruits of the Spirit," saith the Heavenly Bridegroom.

The distinctive feature of the bride's attire was the Robe furnished, which covered her entire person; this Robe being White Linen, representative of *purity, righteousness*, and was embroidered with gold thread, symbolic of the Divine nature, being covered with exquisite perfume (all thy garments shall smell of myrrh, and aloes and cassia); and she was further decked out with Jewels, (as a Bride adorneth herself with Jewels: the New Jerusalem adorned as a Bride for her husband, which the Revelator pictures to our minds).

When the fixed hour arrived the bridegroom set forth from his father's house to receive his bride, going to her father's house or country, attended by his groomsmen; thus beautifully picturing our Lord's course and declaration, "If I go away I will come again [1874] and receive you unto myself, as my Bride, and take you to the place prepared for you, into the presence of my Father, thereafter to share with me my inheritance, my Heavenly Mansion."

Having reached the home of the bride-elect, who with her maidens, virgins, companions, (Great Company) anxiously awaited his arrival—(Revelment)—he conducted her thence to his father's house, to the place prepared for her. "In my Father's house are many mansions, but I am going away to prepare a *very special place for you*, a place that will be in every sense suitable for my Bride, the one who is to bear my name, share my glory and my inheritance, and be with me throughout all eternity, the ages and ages to come," these are the inspiring words given to the espoused. How wonderful!

At the home of the father, the King, as shown in the parable of the Ten Virgins, a feast was prepared—wedding supper—and the festivities were protracted for from seven to fourteen days—the full measure of time to complete the joy of the participants. The guests even were all provided with suitable robes, wedding garments, for the occasion, and it would have been a great discourtesy for any to attempt to enter or appear at the feast without such robe. The parable shows that any who make such attempt are to meet with grave consequences, to be "cast into outer darkness." Surely sore disappointment will come to all who miss or lose the very special privilege which has been placed before them, lost *forever*, because they did not "give heed" to the instructions or terms of their invitation. The bridegroom now for the first time enters into direct communication with the bride, no longer through his friend (the Holy Spirit), just as it will be at the *Great Wedding Feast*, when "the Marriage of the Lamb has come, the Bride having made herself ready," when the Bride and Bridegroom are made one, before the Great White Throne.

As none were permitted to enter even the ante-chamber without a wedding garment, without an acknowledgement of the merit of Christ's sacrifice, so none will be permitted to remain and participate in the wedding festivities, save those who maintain their standing of confidence in Christ. When the hour of inspection has arrived, any who are found to have taken off the "wedding garment" will be expelled from the privileges to be enjoyed and will go forth from the light and blessing afforded to the favored class "into outer darkness."

The Jewels Now Being Made Up

"They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him" (Mal. 3:17) Are we not now in this time of inspection of the guests in the ante-chamber, in the very hour indeed in which

"We see the Marriage splendor, within the open door;
We know that those who enter are blest forevermore:
We see our King, more lovely than all the sons of men;
We haste, because that door, once shut, will never open again?"

Surely so, and as "Wise Virgins," we are to "hasten" to make ourselves ready, realizing that the time is short wherein we are privileged to make such preparations as the King has instructed, *awed by the knowledge that the door once shut will never open again*; no, not throughout all eternity. The glorious privilege now before us, the privilege of becoming the Bride of the Son of the King of the Universe, the opportunity of being made partakers of the Divine Nature, will have passed forever; for when completed there will never be any addition to the Bride Class.

Yes, the Jewels are now being made up, their setting in the Crown is in process; and this honored and worthy class, for "worthy" are they who shall be permitted to enter within the open door, are passing to their heavenly reward to be blessed forevermore. How beautiful indeed this thought is expressed by the lines of the poet!

Inspired, as it were, by the glorious prospect, the marriage splendor, we should see to it that we have our lamps trimmed and burning, and our Robes white and clean, knowing that any failure in this respect would prohibit our entering into this wonderful Joy with the Lord, a Joy unspeakable and full of glory.

The King's Gracious Arrangement

Let us note for a moment the Scriptural proposition in regard to the requirements whereby any might enter into this great honor of becoming the Bride-elect of the Son of the King of the Universe.

First we call to mind the Scriptural statement that our own righteousness is but “as filthy rags,” surely not a very desirable or pleasing covering, and these in no sense would commend us to the King and make us presentable before the presence of His glory and acceptable as the prospective Bride of His dear Son.

Therefore He devised a way whereby He could be just and the justifier of them that believe with all their hearts in this arrangement. For these He has prepared or arranged for a covering of their imperfections, for God is of pure eyes and cannot behold or look upon iniquity or imperfection with any degree of allowance; therefore He has graciously “clothed” these with the “garment of salvation,” covered them with the Robe of Christ’s Righteousness, the merit of His Sacrifice being *imputed* to them; and by reason of our belief in this, full heart acceptance, reliance upon and sympathy with the Divine arrangements, we have righteousness *imputed* to us, thus making us acceptable.

Throughout the Scriptures “white linen” is used as a symbol of purity, even Jehovah, the Ancient of Days, is represented as thus *clothed*, His garments being “white as snow,” (Dan. 7:9); likewise the angels in Rev. 15:6 are pictured as being *clothed* in “pure and white linen;” again he should wear the garment or *covering* provided for the saints, according to Rev. 19:8; further he that overcometh shall be *clothed* in “white raiment.” Rev. 3:5.

The King’s Manner of Dealing with the Virgins

We note in this arrangement respecting the parable that the special condition upon which any would be admitted to the privileges of the Marriage Feast was that he should wear the garment or *covering* provided for this occasion. In the ante-room or inspection room, through which all must pass before being ushered into the Festive Room (King’s Chamber, as shown in the Great Pyramid) all had to undergo inspection to determine their fitness to share the favors and privileges beyond, participate in the joys of the occasion; and any found unfit, who had laid aside the robe presented to them on their entrance into this company, were rejected, cast forth. This points to the King’s, Jehovah’s, manner of dealing with the Virgin Class, the prospective Bride of His dear Son. These have nothing whatever to commend them to the favor of the King; the only way in which they can stand before Him at the present time is in the *imputed* merit of His dear Son, under the Robe of Christ’s Righteousness.

The prophet Isaiah in the 61st chapter sets a certain feature of this matter before our minds: in the 6th verse he points out that we are Priests of the Lord, Ministers of our God,

and as such are highly and specially favored, and because of this the Psalmist tells us we should “shout for joy”—the Joy set before us. While in the 10th verse he tells us how these Priests, these Ministers, are to be *clothed*, saying, “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath *clothed* me with the garment of salvation; He hath covered me with the Robe of Righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth herself with Jewels.”

This picture showing that all those in heart harmony with the Lord, who recognize fully their own deficiencies, appreciate that their standing before the Heavenly Throne, in the presence of the King of kings, is because they have been “clothed with the garment of salvation,” covered with the Robe of Christ’s Righteousness, and that from the Divine standpoint they are nevertheless beautifully adorned with Jewels. Behold, thou art fair, my beloved; thy cheeks are comely with rows of Jewels, thy neck with chains of gold, O thou fairest among women! (S. S. 1:16, 10, 8).

Surely we should rejoice in our present blessings of Peace and Rest in the Lord, while we are all but overwhelmed, lost in amazement, at the thought of the “Joy set before us”—the prospect of becoming the Bride of Christ, the King’s Daughter, Members of the Divine family. O Friends, should we not strive to keep our garments unspotted from the world the more so when we call before our minds this glorious picture! Surely we should give all diligence to this end—“Be thou faithful unto death.”

The Glory and Majesty of Christ’s Kingdom

This whole picture is beautifully elaborated by the Psalmist in the 45th Psalm. The inspired writer first describes the grandeur and majesty of the Heavenly Bridegroom; that in His earthly life He was fairer than the children of men; that Divine grace was poured from His lips; that because He loved Righteousness and had regard for Truth and Meekness, the Heavenly Father hath highly exalted Him above all others, given Him a name above every name.

The Queen and the Gold of Ophir

Let us now briefly examine some of the features of this picture, which is of course future, for at present the Church is not the Queen, not the Bride of the King’s Son, not in glorious garments. She is yet merely the “espoused virgin.” At present she is in her “vile body,” but she shall soon have a glorious body—in the First Resurrection—be in fact the Bride all glorious within and without. She shall then come forth *clothed* with the Divine Nature, as shown by her standing in the “Gold of Ophir.” “Be thou faithful unto death.”

“Hearken, O Daughter, Consider!”

Jehovah's Daughter, the one He has chosen to be the Bride of His dear Son. Was ever a proposal of marriage couched in a more delicate, beautiful phrase? "Hearken, O Daughter!" Yes, *consider*, remember that I have set my favor upon you, my affection, my love! "It is my *good pleasure* to give you the Kingdom," to make you joint heir with my dear Son, by choosing you to be His Bride. If you appreciate this invitation, this high calling, then "incline thine ear," and "forget thy father's house," (Adam's house) all human relationships, hopes, aims, ambitions, joys, pleasures, that is, make these secondary; if you will do so, then the King will greatly desire thy *beauty of character* and receive you unto Himself, that where He is there you may be also, be with Him throughout eternity, sharing His glory and honor and name.

Opposing Voices

In the present time many voices are calling to the espoused ones: Home, pleasure, wealth, art, music, popularity, all these lend their influence towards worldliness and the cultivation of earthly hopes, aims, projects. Our great Adversary works upon us with subtlety to draw us away from the prize, cooperating with the earthly influences. But as the espoused one *listens* she hears the voice of the Bridegroom saying, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. If ye love me keep my commandments."

So the great King of the Universe says, "Hearken, O Daughter, *consider*, and incline thine ear!" The world says, "Look, *consider*, and be attracted by the things of the present time!" The Lord says, "Hearken! Consider that the things of the present life at the very most are transitory, and you have an opportunity to sacrifice these now and gain the chiefest of all blessings, the Crown of life, the Divine Nature, to become the Bride of My dear Son." But the foolish ones *do not "hearken,"* because they are more or less absorbed with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches, and thus do not fully please the Lord, and as a consequence they miss the prize. O what disappointment will come to them when they at last realize they have come short of the glory of God, just because they *did not "hearken!"*

But the "wise virgins," those who will constitute the Bride in glory, do *hearken*, do *consider*, and are guided by the counsel from on high, and press with vigor down upon the mark, along the narrow way of sacrifice that leadeth to Kingdom glory, honor and immortality.

"Forget Thy Father's House"

The "father's house" that is to be forgotten is the world, Adam's natural house. This does not signify that the earthly relationship of the betrothed is specially vile or degenerate, but merely that the new relationship and duty are towards the heavenly Bridegroom, the

heavenly calling, the heavenly prospects, and that proper consideration of these should lift our hearts, our affections, our activities from all earthly things, however good and enable us to set them on things above.

We are not to neglect, however, our duties, our obligations, to our earthly friends and relatives, but we are to *love these less*, hold all such interests in subservience to the higher, the spiritual; the Bridegroom *first* is the thought, and we must cleave unto Him.

“He Is Thy Lord”

The Psalmist proceeds, “So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty, for He is thy Lord, and worship thou Him.” Ah! there is the thought. If we rightly *admire* the King, if we rightly appreciate the wonderful privilege granted us of being now His espoused Bride, under His loving protection and provision, and that by and by if faithful and maintain our virginity we shall be His Bride, we shall indeed truly “hearken,” for “He is thy Lord.”

If we have the proper appreciation of these prospects, surely all earthly interests and attractions will fade, “fade, fade each earthly joy,” because of their comparative insignificance; because, as the great Apostle Paul states the matter, they are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. And these are the conditions upon which the King will *desire* us as members of His glorious Bride, and on no others will He accept us.

Had we been called upon from the ranks of even the angels of the highest order, to be the joint-heir of the King of Glory, the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife, the honor conferred would have been so great as to merit individual love and devotion. Surely then we who have been redeemed by His precious blood from our fallen condition, then invited to share His glory and honor, should be so enthused, so filled with appreciation of the honor proffered, that we would willingly, gladly, voluntarily lay aside every earthly weight and interest and strive with patience and loving devotion to attain to the prize of our heavenly calling, the Pearl of Great Price.

“Raiment of Fine Needlework”

She shall be arrayed in glorious clothing, “in raiment of fine needlework.” These statements are figurative expressions indicative of the beautiful character wrought out in all who become actual members of the Body of Christ. Let us look again at the Queen and her glorious apparel.

Notice first the pure linen, clean and white, representative of Righteousness, *now her own*, no longer *imputed* or reckoned; note that this fine linen is beautifully embroidered, in indicative of the fruits of the Spirit having been worked out in the character of the

possessor; such indeed are all glorious within and without—God’s Word and Spirit have wrought this change in those who hearkened, considered.

The Robe loaned, pure and white, has stamped upon it the gracious designs which our Lord would have us inculcate, and which He assures us will be to our advantage to work out carefully and faithfully, in a manner pleasing to Him, if we would enter into the glory beyond. True heart appreciation of our high calling and sincere love for the Bridegroom are the incentives to earnest endeavor in the attainment of our hopes. This Heavenly Joy must not be lost sight of at any time.

The *imputed* Robe of Righteousness was hers to wear up to the time of her change from earthly to spirit nature in the First Resurrection. On the Spirit plane she becomes *actually righteous*, without spot, without blemish, a suitable companion, heavenly Queen for the King of Glory. Her faithfulness in working out the fruits of the Spirit stamped on the pure “white linen” is that which will assure her of final acceptance as the Bride of Christ. To do this requires painstaking care and consummate skill; any mark of slovenliness or indifference would result in the work being rejected as unsuitable. Beware of carelessness!

Patient Continuance in Well Doing—the Price

Such as have a proper appreciation of the heavenly inheritance, have strong incentives urging them to spend every hour, every moment possible in working out the glorious embroidery design stamped upon their Robes. Every stitch must be taken carefully, painstakingly; every feature of the outline must be faithfully followed, carefully studied; while this work is going on the Robe itself must be kept clean, spotless. Such as truly love the glorious Bridegroom, such as are truly betrothed to Him, will make this matter the chief concern of their lives.

St. Paul tells us that the painstaking care in this embroidery work of adding stitch to stitch is in its development that which is preparing us for the final change, saying, “Tribulation worketh patience,” etc.; while the Apostle Peter tells us to “add to our faith virtue,” etc.

When we think of the imperfections of our very best endeavors along the lines of the embroidery work, this development of the fruits of the holy Spirit, we ask ourselves, Whose garments would be fit to wear in the presence of our Bridegroom and of the heavenly Father? The answer is, None of them. It is in full harmony with this fact that we see how the Lord has provided something different. He allows us to *practice* upon our Robes of *imputed* Righteousness, but the new Robes which He will give us will be absolutely perfect as well as all glorious; there will not be a flaw in the embroidery work or otherwise.

Because the glorious dress of perfect Righteousness will be given to those only who have earnestly desired and as diligently striven to get it, however short of it were their best endeavors, perfect *endeavors*, not perfect works, will be required. With this thought in mind, dear Friends, let us continue weekly, daily, hourly to work upon our Robes painstakingly, to seek to cultivate those ideals of Truth and Grace and Love, which our hearts approve, and which we see exemplified so perfectly in our heavenly Father and glorified Lord. Let us, dear Friends, hearken to the message from the Bridegroom and prove loyal to Him, regardless of whether it brings us the smile of approval or the frown of the world. Let us hearken to Him that speaketh from heaven, rather than the words of fellowmen, however well-meaning they may be. The time is at hand. Are we ready to be offered? Hearken, consider! The joys of eternity are in the balance.