

The Bride of Christ Revealed

Throughout the Scriptures, God paints a beautiful picture in our imaginations of the relationship between Christ and His Bride. By giving ourselves to His paintbrush, we picture in our minds the bride He is preparing for His only begotten Son, who will appear in the glory and splendor of her Lord as she awaits His Coming.

Revelation 19:7 *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.*

The picture the Father reveals to us is one in which the bride of Christ plays a significant role in all that God desires to do before the coming of the great day of the Lord. With His brush, the Father paints a remarkable picture. She is the centerpiece of His prophetic purposes for the end of the age. She is the star of the end-time scenario. Because we are the members who make up the bride of Christ, we need to know what the Lord's purposes are and what our roles are in relation to all that God desires to do before Christ's second coming. We are the bride of Christ.

In Matthew's gospel, after Jesus finished sharing with His disciples about the signs of the end of the age, He gave them parables to illustrate how we are to prepare for all that is about to come upon us. The first parable is the "Parable of the Ten Virgins."¹ This parable illustrates the importance of being ready for all that God is about to do before the second coming of Christ. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Matthew uses the term "Virgins" to define the bride of Christ's relationship to her espoused husband, the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul writes that she will be presented as a chaste virgin to Christ in one of his letters.² Next, Matthew uses the term "Oil" to illustrate the anointing of the Holy Spirit,³ which is necessary to carry out the purposes of God. The Lamps represent God's word as it unfolds in our lives to help guide us. As it says in Psalms, *"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."*⁴

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The parable of "The Ten Virgins" illustrates how the oil and the lamp work together to make us ready to meet our bridegroom. The lamp without the oil would be useless in the same way the oil without the lamp would be. As the oil represents the Holy Spirit's anointing in our lives and the lamp represents the word of God, we see the importance of how God's word and the Spirit partner together to make us ready. It's our responsibility to make sure this happens. As we continually read and study God's word, we must ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten our understanding as we go forth in the power of His anointing to accomplish the tasks the Father gave us.

In chapter twelve of the Book of Revelation, we find another beautiful picture of the bride of Christ. Here, we see a picture of the bride after she comes into the fullness of Christ's stature, which is a significant part of the prophetic purposes that must be fulfilled before Jesus returns. In this passage, she is portrayed or clothed in her wedding garments: the sun, the moon, and the stars representing the fullness of the Godhead bodily.⁵ She's fully clothed in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose name represents the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Dressed in her wedding garments, she has now been made ready for the great marriage.⁶

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

During the period of the trumpet judgments in the book of Revelation, she leads the world into the most incredible spiritual harvest of souls known to humanity, a period in which the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!"⁷ Then, with the fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy of the dry bones unfolding, she arises in the fullness of the stature of Christ and fulfills the prophecy of Jesus when He said; we will do greater works than He did.⁸ Finally, with the great Day

¹ Matthew 25:1-10

² 2 Corinthians 11:2

³ 1 John 2:20, 27, the word anointing means to smear with oil.

⁴ Psalm 119:105

⁵ Romans 1:20

⁶ Revelation 19:7

⁷ Revelation 22:17

⁸ Ephesians 4:13

of Atonement fulfilled, she is ready to be swept away on the wings of a great eagle to partake in the fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles for the final three and one-half years of the great tribulation during the rule of the Antichrist.⁹ The wilderness is a special place of protection where God will nourish the bride of Christ from the presence of Satan during the final plagues of God's wrath, as the bowl of judgments mentioned in Revelation 16 pours out by the seven angels. It is where she is kept or escapes from the hour of trial, which shall come upon the whole earth.¹⁰

Revelation 3:10 *Because you have kept My command to persevere, I will also keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world to test those who dwell on the earth.*

In the same way, God protected the nation of Israel during the ten plagues of judgment and brought them into the wilderness, so He does again in this great exodus. Isaiah illustrates this perfectly when he speaks of the seven women who take hold of one man to remove their reproach. The number seven speaks of perfection. She comes into her fullness as the Branch of the Lord is now beautiful and glorious. God ushers her into the fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles, where He creates above every dwelling place a cloud of smoke by day and flaming fire by night. This place is a shelter from the storm or tribulation.¹¹ The Scriptures also refer to Her place of escape as her bridal chambers. God hides her here until the indignation or the tribulation is over.¹²

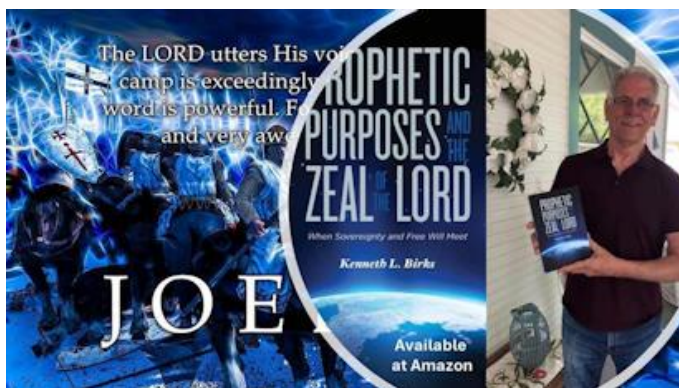
As we draw closer and closer to the end time environment mentioned in Scripture, we must gather ourselves together as His bride and prepare for the great harvest of souls that is to take place during this period.

Zephaniah 2:1-3 *Gather yourselves together, O undesirable nation, ² before the decree is issued, or the day passes like chaff, before the Lord's fierce anger comes upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger comes upon you! ³ Seek the Lord, all you meek of the earth, who have upheld justice. Seek righteousness; seek humility. It may be that you will be hidden in the day of the Lord's anger.*

Now is the time to receive the extra supply of oil that separates the wise virgins from the foolish virgins left behind to face the Antichrist's wrath. Many foolish virgins or Christians will fall away during this time, known as "*The Great Falling Away*." The Antichrist martyrs them because they do not submit to his control by taking the mark.¹³ When the Bride of Christ is rescued and taken to her place of safety, the restraining power of the Holy Spirit leaves. The Antichrist is then free and without restraint to blaspheme God and set up his throne.¹⁴

I know this is a very sobering thought, but we must allow the truth of God's word to set us free to pursue the anointing needed to fill our lamps. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom that helps to qualify us as wise virgins. We will need that extra supply of oil to shine brightly for all to see as we go forth as Christ's bride, warning and gathering in a harvest of souls during the period leading up to the great tribulation.

May God bless you richly as you meditate on all that God is about to do. May you have ears to hear what the Holy Spirit is saying in this critical hour of the Church's destiny.¹⁵



For a complete and thorough study on this subject, please see my book, "Prophetic Purposes and the Zeal of the Lord." – booksbyken.com

⁹ Isaiah 4:1-3

¹⁰ Revelation 3:10, Isaiah 26:17, 20-21, Zephaniah 2:1-3

¹¹ Isaiah 4:1-6,

¹² Isaiah 26:17-18, 20-21

¹³ 2 Thessalonians 2:3-7, Revelation 13:7-8; 20:4

¹⁴ 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7

¹⁵ For a more exhaustive study on this subject, please check out my book, "Prophetic Purposes and the Zeal of the Lord."