

The Would-Be Bride – Part 2

by Bill and Karen Bishop

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The would-be bride of Y'shua's day was to understand the conditions of the marital contract, and abide by them in order to be received by him as his spotless bride when he returned. Likewise, as the Would-Be Bride for Y'shua, Believers should seek to be spotless as well. He seeks a Bride who will follow the commandments of His Father as the conditions of the Bridal contract, enabling her to be His spotless Bride when He returns for her.

As Believers, we are sprinkled with the blood of Y'shua upon belief – our justification:

1 Peter 1:2

(2) Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through ... sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ ... .

This sprinkling process cleanses our garments in righteousness. Some teach that that is the entirety of the matter, but it is not. This verse has more to say.

1 Peter 1:2

(2) Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through **SANCTIFICATION OF the SPIRIT, UNTO OBEDIENCE** and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

THIS is the picture of the ELECT pictured in this verse. The sprinkling of Y'shua's blood for our justification is an event that occurs when we come to belief in Him, but the entirety of this verse shows us that our **SANCTIFICATION** is not an event; it is a process! The Holy Spirit is given to us to guide us through this process - writing the Father's Law on our hearts as our Bridal contract and providing us with the power to walk in it. It is through this sanctification process OF the SPIRIT, UNTO OBEDIENCE that we are to KEEP our garments cleansed and presentable as Bride.

Note that this sanctification is OF the Spirit UNTO obedience. How well we fare during the sanctification process is an individual matter. Do we allow the Spirit to convict and empower us, or do we quench the Spirit within us?

In Genesis we are told of Abraham's servant being dispatched to find a bride for Isaac.

Genesis 24:1-4

(1) And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age: and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things.

(2) And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh:

(3) And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell:

(4) But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.

Typologically, Abraham can be seen here as the Father, Isaac as the Son, and the servant who is dispatched to find a Bride for the Son as being the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is seeking a Bride for the Son. As Would-Be Brides, we are given all the help we need. We must simply submit to the Holy Spirit within us. However, when we do not, we are quenching Yah's Spirit of grace and flying solo, and danger lies ahead. A part of yielding to the Holy Spirit is to strive to keep the Father's Law that the Holy Spirit wrote upon our hearts:

2 Corinthians 3:3

(3) Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.

The removal of Y'shua's Bride from this earth in the rapture is to remove His beloved from harm so she can be with Him while all hell breaks loose down here, but who is the Bride? In virtually all teachings regarding the rapture, the entire body of Christ is viewed as being His Bride, but is this valid theology when viewed under the Biblical microscope? Rather than the Bride BEING the body, we perceive that she is TAKEN FROM the body, even as Eve was TAKEN FROM the body of Adam to be His Bride.

Revelation 3:10

(10) BECAUSE thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

The word "patience" in this verse is reflected back to Luke 8:15, and is associated with bearing good fruit.

Luke 8:15

(15) But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

This simply does not apply to all of Christendom today. What if some in the body of Messiah are not found to be appropriate Bride material when He returns for His Bride? There are many Believers (His betrothed) today who will be eagerly awaiting His return. However, if they have failed to guard their conduct, might they be seen as ones who have strayed from their Bridal contract?

The Holy Spirit is the light that reveals the condition of the soul, allowing Y'shua to recognize His own. It is in that sense that the Spirit provides the Bride to for the Son. If the spotted condition of a Would-Be Bride keeps Y'shua from recognizing her as Bridal material, that Would-Be Bride may be left behind when He departs with the faithful remnant – the true Bridal material. As Y'shua inferred in the Parable of the Virgins in Mathew 25, they would then be left behind after the door closes, and have to endure the Tribulation.

Y'shua's words in the Book of Luke warn us to be attentive to our calling:

Luke 21:36

(36) Watch ye therefore, and pray always, **that ye may be accounted WORTHY TO ESCAPE** all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Are those who are shut out when the Bridegroom comes not saved? The question is saved from what? They would not be saved from some of the Tribulation wrath to come, but spiritual salvation unto restoration with the Father is another matter entirely. Again, our two-volume book set titled Two Trees, Two Kingdoms, Two Kings covers what we cannot cover adequately here. Those who are shut out are not cast into hellfire, they are merely left behind to endure the time ahead while the truly committed Bride exits the perils ahead to depart with her Bridegroom.

We were told that we were not APPOINTED to wrath, but the remainder of the verse is seldom accentuated.

1 Thessalonians 5:9

(9) For God hath not appointed us to wrath, **but to OBTAIN salvation** by our Lord Jesus Christ,

This verse actually seems to indicate that we **ARE appointed** to OBTAIN salvation from wrath, but if we fail to do so, the consequence would be the wrath that we should have escaped. We are equipped to obtain salvation from wrath, but it is up to us. The previous verse tells us that we do this by being sober, and by using our spiritual armor! This is overcoming! The Book of Revelation repeatedly refers to overcoming. Those who do so will walk with Y'shua in white (Revelation 3:4-5), and those who do not may have their candlestick removed from its place (Revelation 2:5). If we fall prey to the wiles of the enemy, we will not keep our garments spotless for our Bridegroom!

The Tribulation saints are mentioned often in the Book of Revelation. They are thought to be those saved during the Tribulation. However, realistically, this company may include many of the body of Christ who are rejected as Bride material when Y'shua comes for Her. We believe they too will ultimately be caught up to stand before Him later, but not as Bride.

Y'shua said:

Matthew 24:44

(44) Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

Why would he warn us to be ready if we were already ready by virtue of Belief in Him?

Whereas some say the body of Messiah must be treated as a single unit, we see that the body is already separated by physical death. We are not talking here about a "partial" rapture (where some are taken up but others are never taken up); rather we are speaking of a "split" rapture (a rapture scenario with more than one segment). The idea that the "rapture" scenarios spoken of in the Word may involve more than one instance is a very real potential, as inferred repeatedly in the Biblical text. In fact, the rapture wording in chapter 4 of 1 Thessalonians speaks of those who are "alive AND REMAIN".

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17

(15) For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive AND REMAIN unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

(16) For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

(17) Then we which are alive AND REMAIN shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

The Greek word for "remain" is Strong's G4035 (perileipomai) – *having been left over, left all around, remaining, to survive.*

These who were left all around will also be taken up per verse 17, but it would be later in the Tribulation.

Just as Matthew 25 states, there will be those who had believed they would be Bride, but were shut out when He returned to retrieve His beloved.

Matthew 25:11-12

(11) Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

(12) But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

He did not know them as Bride because He could not identify pure white Bridal garments by the light of the Holy Spirit. The end of the parable of the virgins is a warning that comes immediately after Y'shua's words of rejection. It should be jarringly apparent that we need to heed this advice today!

Matthew 25:13

(13) Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

None of this writing is designed to negate the power of forgiveness. That is an absolute necessity in the life of the Believer. We are to confess our shortcomings during the process of sanctification and truly seek to repent – to turn back from our sinful state into alignment with Yah's Divine Will. That is how, even in our imperfection, we keep our garments spotless.

As we become increasingly aware of impending judgment on our country and the world at large, we implore that we all as the body of Messiah would be continually about the process of introspection. Then we might want to dust off the cover on our wedding contracts, get out the lye soap, and

prepare to meet our Bridegroom. Our time of waiting AND our time for preparation may be drawing to a close, and the last thing we want is to be shut out when He comes.

We want to be ready to exit with our Beloved through the door He opens for us and be able to say:

Song of Solomon 6:3

(3) I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine: ... .