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## The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife ['bride'] hath made herself ready.

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God (Rev. 19:7-9).

When Scripture deals with "the marriage" of Christ and His bride in passages such as Matt. 22:1-14 or Rev. 19:7-9, the reference is not to the actual marriage per se but to *the festivities attendant the marriage*. The marriage itself is part and parcel with the redemption of the inheritance, which occurs through that brought to pass by the breaking of the seals on the seven-sealed scroll in Revelation chapter five (Rev. 6:1-19:21).

This is the manner in which the redemption of the inheritance and the corresponding marriage of Christ to His bride are set forth in Biblical typology, and the antitype *must* follow the type. The redemption of the inheritance and the marriage of Christ to His bride have forever been linked in this inseparable manner in Scripture.

The wedding occurring in connection with the redemption

of the inheritance is seen in the typology of the Book of Ruth, through Boaz redeeming the inheritance before witnesses at the gate of the city of Bethlehem (Ruth 4:1ff). *Legal transactions* of this nature were enacted at the gates of cities in that day. And, through the process of redeeming the inheritance at the gate of the city, Ruth, at the same time, became Boaz's wife.

When Boaz left the gate of the city, two things had been accomplished *through one legal transaction*:

- 1) *Boaz had redeemed the inheritance.*
- 2) *Boaz had taken Ruth as his wife.*

Both the redemption of the inheritance and the marriage of Boaz and Ruth *occurred together, through a single legal transaction, which had been completed at this point in time.*

And matters pertaining to the redemption of the inheritance and the marriage of Christ to His bride must be seen *occurring together, at the same time, in exactly the same manner in the Book of Revelation.* When the One Whom Boaz typifies redeems the inheritance (through the judgments brought to pass by Christ breaking the seals of the seven-sealed scroll), the bride, *exactly* as in the type, will, at the same time, become His wife.

Thus, once all the judgments connected with the breaking of the seals of the seven-sealed scroll have come to pass, two things will have been accomplished *through one legal transaction*:

- 1) *Christ will have redeemed the inheritance.*
- 2) *Christ will have taken the bride as His wife.*

Both the redemption of the inheritance and the marriage of Christ to His bride *occur together, through a single legal transaction, which will have been completed at this point in time.*

(Christ taking the bride as His wife at the time of the redemption of the inheritance, as seen in the Book of Ruth, is not mentioned per se in the Book of Revelation. Rather, through reference to the marriage festivities, this is simply an understood occurrence, with Old Testament typology showing how and when the marriage itself would occur.

For additional information on the type-antitype structure of the Book of Ruth and the Book of Revelation in the preceding respect, refer to Chapters VIII, IX in this book. Also see Chapter IX, "Redemption of the Inheritance," in the author's book, RUTH.)

The bride for whom the Spirit had searched throughout the prior dispensation (*cf.* Gen. 24) will have been revealed at the judgment seat (Rev. 1-4) and will be *Christ's wife* following the redemption of the inheritance (Rev. 5-19). And *the marriage festivities* are seen occurring in heaven very near the conclusion of the judgments having to do with the redemption of the inheritance (Rev. 19:7-9), immediately before Christ returns to the earth to complete these judgments (Rev. 19:11ff).

(Note that the Books of Ruth and Revelation parallel one another in more ways than just the redemption of the inheritance and marriage [Ruth 4a; Rev. 5-19]. The same sequence of other parallel events both precedes and follows the redemption of the inheritance and the marriage in both books.)

In the Book of Ruth, the matter of a family relationship is seen first [saved in the typological teaching of that occurring through Ruth and Orpah becoming family members (ch. 1a)]. Following this is a preparation for meeting Boaz and an appearance before Boaz on his threshing floor before the inheritance is redeemed and the marriage correspondingly occurs [chs. 1b-3]. And, after the inheritance has been redeemed and the marriage has occurred [ch. 4a], through a genealogy extending to Boaz and Ruth's great grandson, David, there is a reference to *regality* [ch. 4b].

In the Book of Revelation, a family relationship is seen first [ch. 1a (individuals saved in the antitype of that seen through Ruth and Orpah becoming family members)]. Following this, a present preparation for meeting Christ and a future appearance before Christ at His judgment seat are seen together in the same Scriptures [chs. 1b-4, with chs. 2, 3 presenting this dual picture of both a present preparation and a future meeting with Christ at His judgment seat (*ref.* Chapter VI in this book)].

The redemption of the inheritance and the corresponding marriage [a legal transaction] of Christ to His bride then follow [chs. 5-19]. And after the inheritance has been redeemed and the marriage has occurred, exactly as in Ruth, matters move to the thought of *regality*. The greater

Son of David will then reign as “King of kings, and Lord of lords” with His co-heirs, His consort queen [His wife], *from His Own throne in the heavens* and in the midst of the Jewish people [God’s restored wife] *from David’s throne on earth* [chs. 19b, 20a].

As it was on Boaz’s threshing floor prior to the redemption of the inheritance and marriage, so will it be at Christ’s judgment seat. It was here in the type that the bride was revealed, and it will be here in the antitype that the bride will be revealed. And in each instance this allowed for the inheritance to be redeemed and the corresponding marriage to occur.

The rapture, seen in Revelation [1:10, 11; 4:1, 2], for obvious reasons, is not seen in Ruth. But comparing the two books, the timing of the rapture, as seen in Revelation — following certain events and preceding certain other events — is in complete keeping with the timing of these same events in connection with Ruth’s appearance before Boaz on his threshing floor.

Placing the two books together brings the complete picture more into focus. Understanding this overall chronology of events from both books will help one to properly align and see God’s revealed timing for certain events in a number of instances, particularly as it pertains to the subject at hand — the timing of the marriage of Christ to His bride.

As evident from the type, which would govern the antitype, this marriage can occur only *one place* in the overall sequence of events — not during the present dispensation, not at the time of the rapture, and not at the judgment seat. Rather, this marriage can occur *only through the judgments connected with the seven-sealed scroll which are brought to pass during and immediately following the Tribulation*. It can occur *only during that time when the inheritance is being redeemed, with the wedding festivities occurring immediately prior to the completion of these judgments.*)

### “Alleluia”

The first six verses in Revelation chapter nineteen describe a scene of *unparalleled rejoicing in heaven*. At this point in time, Israel will have been brought to the place of repentance. And work surrounding the redemption of the inheritance will almost be finished, a work which will not only allow the bride to become the Lamb’s wife but also allow Israel to be restored as the wife of Jehovah.

“Alleluia,” an Anglicized Greek word (*Allelouia*) which was transliterated from a Hebrew word (*Hallujah*), meaning “Praise Jehovah,” appears four times in Rev. 19:1-6 (vv. 1, 3, 4, 6); and these verses comprise the only place that this word appears in the New Testament. The Hebrew word *Hallujah* is a compound word, formed from the word for “praise” (*Halal*), with an abbreviated form of “Jehovah” as a suffix (*Jah*). This compound word appears twenty-three times in the Psalms and is the first and last word in each of the last five Psalms — praise Psalms, closing the Book of Psalms.

This is the word used twice, in a loud voice, by “much people in heaven” *as they deal centrally with Israel’s judgment, repentance, and impending restoration* (vv. 1-3); this is the word used by “the four and twenty elders and the four beasts [four living creatures],” first introduced back in chapter four, *as they fall down before God’s throne, worshipping God* (v. 4); and this is the word used by “a great multitude,” whose voice was like that of “many waters” and “mighty thunderings” *as they reflect on God’s sovereign rule over all things* (v. 6).

This is the scene in heaven at the end of the Tribulation *because of that which had occurred and that which was about to occur*. And this scene leads into the marriage festivities of the Lamb (19:7-9), followed by Christ’s return to complete the redemption of the inheritance as He deals with Israel and the nations (19:11-21; *cf.* Joel 3:1-17; Zech. 14:1-9), followed by Christ’s millennial reign (20:1ff).

### **“His Wife Hath Made Herself Ready”**

All Christians will one day go forth to meet Christ at His judgment seat, typified in the Book of Ruth by Ruth going forth to meet Boaz on his threshing floor. The threshing floor was the place where that of value (the grain) was separated from that of no value (the chaff), which is exactly what will occur at Christ’s judgment seat. The Christians’ works will be tried “in fire,” and a separation will occur. Works comparable to “gold, silver, precious stones” will *endure* the fire; but works comparable to “wood, hay, stubble” will be *burned* by the fire (I Cor. 3:11-15).

A future judgment of this nature is what John the Baptist called attention to in Matt. 3:7-12 when dealing with Israel’s religious

leaders, calling for the nation's repentance and referring to fruit bearing. Using the symbolism of the threshing floor, John concluded that which he proclaimed to these religious leaders by saying,

“Whose fan is in his hand [Christ's hand], and he will throughly purge his floor [His threshing floor], and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire” (v. 12).

The whole of the matter — *preparation, events on the threshing floor, and that which follows* — is seen outlined in a typical manner in the Book of Ruth. Ruth, in the final analysis, is seen preparing herself in a *threefold manner* for meeting Boaz on his threshing floor at the end of the harvest. *Ruth washed herself, anointed herself, and clothed herself with proper garments* before going forth to meet Boaz.

“Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor [the threshing floor]...” (Ruth 3:3a).

And meeting Boaz in this manner, on his threshing floor, was with a view to two things: *the redemption of an inheritance, and Ruth becoming Boaz's wife* (vv. 9ff).

This meeting also occurred at “midnight” (v. 8), typically foreshadowing a *time of judgment*, in complete keeping with both the first mention of “midnight” in Scripture (used in connection with *judgment* [Ex. 11:4]) and with that which John the Baptist told Israel's religious leaders in Matt. 3:12.

Ruth's preparation in the type is the same preparation which Christian's must make in the antitype. Ruth prepared herself, after a certain fashion, to meet Boaz on his threshing floor, at midnight, *with a view to a redeemed inheritance and becoming his wife*; and Christians must likewise prepare themselves, after the same fashion, to meet Christ on His threshing floor, at midnight, *with a view to a redeemed inheritance and becoming His wife*.

#### 1) “Wash Thyself”

“Washing” has to do with a *cleansing from present defilement*. Within the scope of the ministry of priests in the Old Testament,

a complete washing of the body occurred at the time one entered into the priesthood, never to be repeated (Ex. 29:4; 40:12-15). Subsequent washings of parts of the body then occurred at the brazen laver in the courtyard of the tabernacle as the priests ministered between the brazen altar and the Holy Place (Ex. 30:19-21). Their hands and feet became soiled as they carried out their ministry, and the brazen laver had upper and lower basins for washing these soiled parts of the body.

Washings in the Old Testament were thus looked upon in two senses — a washing of *the complete body* (a one-time initial cleansing), followed by washings of *parts of the body* (numerous subsequent cleansings). It was these two types of cleansings which Jesus referred to when speaking to Peter in John 13:8, 10:

“If I wash [Gk., *nipto*, referring to a part of the body (the Septuagint uses this same word in Ex. 30:19, 21)] thee not, thou hast no part with me [note: ‘with me,’ not ‘in me’]...

He that is washed [Gk., *louo*, referring to the entire body (the Septuagint uses this word in Ex. 29:4; 40:12)] needeth not save to wash [*nipto*] his feet...” (vv. 8b, 10a).

Peter had been washed once (described by the word *louo* [his complete body]); now he needed continued washings (described by the word *nipto* [parts of the body]). And, apart from these continued washings, he could have no part “with” Christ (contextually, the *kingdom* and *positions with Christ therein* were in view).

Bringing the typological teachings of the Old Testament and Christ’s statement to Peter over into the lives of Christians today, the matter would be the same.

Christians, part of a New Testament priesthood (I Peter 2:5), received a complete washing (*louo*, the entire body) at the time they entered into the priesthood, at the time they were saved. Now, as priests ministering for their Lord, because of defilement through contact with the world, they need continued partial washings (*nipto*, parts of the body). And, apart from these continued washings, Christians can have no part *with Christ* in His future kingdom.

*All cleansing is accomplished on the basis of Christ's past and present work in relation to His shed blood.*

Christ died at Calvary, shedding His blood, to effect our redemption. Those appropriating the blood have been washed (*louo*) and have entered into the priesthood (corresponding in the parallel type to the death of the paschal lambs and the application of the blood in Ex. 12:1ff).

And Christ's blood is today on the mercy seat of the heavenly tabernacle, with Christ ministering, on the basis of His shed blood, on our behalf, in the Holy of Holies, to effect a continued cleansing (*nipto*) for the "kings and priests" (Rev. 1:6; 5:10) which He is about to bring forth.

Thus, the Lord has set apart *a cleansed (louo)* people through whom He is accomplishing His plans and purposes. And He has provided a means whereby He can keep those whom He has set apart *clean (nipto)*.

Cleansing through the work of Christ as High Priest though is not something which occurs automatically. Ruth had to act herself. She had to prepare herself for the impending meeting with Boaz, on his threshing floor. And Christians must likewise prepare themselves for an impending meeting with Christ, on His threshing floor.

In Ruth's case, she washed herself. Today, Christ does the washing, but Christians, as Ruth, must act. It is only as we "confess our sins," judging ourselves (I Cor. 11:31, 32), that Christ effects cleansing on our behalf.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9).

## 2) "Anoint Thee"

"Oil" was used in the Old Testament Scriptures to anoint prophets, priests, and kings; and there was a connection between the use of oil after this fashion and the Holy Spirit coming upon an individual to empower him for duties in the office to which he was being consecrated.

For example, Saul was anointed the first king over Israel (I

Sam. 10:1, 6); and, following Saul's refusal to do that which God had commanded concerning Amalek, David was anointed king in Saul's stead (I Sam. 16:13). And, as clearly shown, "oil" is used in both of these passages to symbolize *God's Spirit*. The Spirit came upon both Saul and David following their anointing, and the Spirit empowered both for the tasks which they were to perform.

The parable of the ten virgins in Matt. 25:1-13 deals centrally with this same overall issue, with "oil" used symbolically in the parable in exactly the same manner as it is used in the Old Testament. All of the virgins possessed oil, but only the five wise virgins possessed an extra supply of oil. And when they were called to an accounting — at "midnight" — only the five wise virgins were allowed to enter into the marriage festivities with the Bridegroom (vv. 6ff).

As the parable would relate to Christians, all Christians possess the Holy Spirit. He *indwells* every Christian. But not every Christian has *the extra supply of Oil*. Not every Christian is *filled* with the Holy Spirit. And when Christians are called to an accounting — at "midnight" — only those *filled with the Spirit* will be allowed to enter into the marriage festivities with the Bridegroom.

This same thing is seen in the symbolism of the second part of Ruth's preparation for meeting Boaz on his threshing floor at midnight. Ruth could not have been properly prepared for meeting Boaz apart from anointing herself; the ten virgins, in like fashion, could not have been properly prepared for meeting the Bridegroom at midnight apart from each possessing an extra supply of oil; and Christians today cannot be properly prepared for meeting their Lord at midnight apart from being filled with the Spirit.

And this will all become evident when the third and last part of Ruth's preparation is viewed, for *an inseparable connection* exists between all three parts.

### 3) "Put Thy Raiment Upon Thee"

Not only was Ruth to be clean and to be anointed with oil but she was also to be properly arrayed. *Ruth was going forth to meet the bridegroom*. Naomi's words, "put thy raiment upon thee," in

the light of that which was involved (events expected to culminate in Ruth's marriage to Boaz), can only refer to *special apparel* for the occasion. Ruth's apparel, in which she was to clothe herself, would reflect the occasion at hand.

This facet of Ruth's preparation, pointing to present preparation which Christians are to make, is seen in the parable of the marriage feast in Matt. 22:1-14. In this parable, an improperly clothed man appeared at the festivities surrounding the marriage of "a certain" king's son. This man appeared *without a wedding garment*, and he was not only denied entrance into the festivities but he was cast into the darkness outside.

(A reference to the darkness outside [*the outer darkness*] also appears in the parable of the talents [Matt. 25:30]. And this parable deals with exactly the same thing as the previous parable [the ten virgins (vv. 1-13)], though from a different perspective.)

The "certain king" and "his son" in Matt. 22:2 can refer to none other than *God the Father* and *His Son*, with the festivities surrounding the "marriage of the Lamb" in Revelation chapter nineteen in view. In Rev. 19:7, 8, the bride is said to *have made herself ready by having arrayed herself in "fine linen"* ("array herself" rather than "be arrayed" is the correct rendering in v. 8); and this "fine linen" in which the bride will array herself is specifically said to be "the righteousness [*lit.*, 'the righteous acts'] of the saints."

Christians preparing themselves, as Ruth prepared herself, must *array themselves* in the proper apparel for their future meeting with Christ — a meeting which *begins* on His threshing floor (at His judgment seat) and *carries over* into the festivities which follow. Righteous acts, forming the wedding garment, emanate out of faithfulness to one's calling. Works emanate out of faithfulness; and works, in turn, bring faith to its proper goal, while the wedding garment is being formed (*cf.* Heb. 11:17-19, 31; James 2:14-26; I Peter 1:9).

And it is evident that a Christian not filled with the Spirit — typified by the second part of Ruth's preparation, anointing herself — is in no position to perform righteous acts (works) which make up the wedding garment.

Scripture clearly reveals that Christians will appear in Christ's presence in that coming day in *one of two ways*. Some will possess wedding garments, and others will not. The words "clothed" and "naked" are used in Scripture to distinguish between the appearance of individuals in these two different manners (Rev. 3:17, 18; cf. Rom. 8:35); and Christians within both groups will be dealt with in accordance with Matt. 22:10-13.

Those Christians *properly clothed* (*possessing wedding garments*) will be dealt with after one fashion, and those *improperly clothed* (*lacking wedding garments, naked*) will be dealt with after an entirely different fashion.

Those in *the former group* will be allowed to enter into the marriage festivities, with a view to their subsequently becoming the Lamb's wife and occupying positions as co-heirs with Christ in His kingdom, forming His consort queen.

Those in *the latter group* though will be denied entrance into the marriage festivities and will consequently not be among those subsequently forming the wife of the Lamb, His consort queen, and all that appertains therein. Accordingly, they will have no part with Christ in His reign over the earth.

