



The Eyes Of The Bride

Revelation 19:7-9 KJV Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. [8] 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. [9] 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.

Jude 17-24 KJV But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; [18] How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. [19] These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. [20] But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, [21] Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. [22] And of some have compassion, making a difference: [23] And others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. [24] Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

Song of Solomon 7:4 KJV Thy neck *is* as a tower of ivory; thine eyes *like* the fishpools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bathrabbim: thy nose *is* as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus.

I. INTRODUCTION—THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

-Throughout the Bible, there are numerous references that give the indication to us that the Church is the Bride of Christ.

A. A Chaste Virgin and The Church

2 Corinthians 11:2 KJV For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ.

- A chaste virgin is one who is not defiled by fornication and uncleanness.
- A chaste virgin is one who is espoused to a husband and greatly loved by him.
- A chaste virgin is one who is longing for the wedding day to arrive.
- A chaste virgin is one who prizes all expressions of love from the espoused.
- A chaste virgin is one who remembers all the tokens of love that the espoused gives to her.
- A chaste virgin is one who delights to hear from her espoused.

-If those symbols are present in the chaste virgin, then the Church is even much more intent on the moment when she will see the Lord.

- The Church is intent on being kept pure from idolatry.
- The Church is intent on making sure that there is not an inordinate love of the world.
- The Church is concerned with only pure worship directed toward Jesus Christ.
- The Church is much loved by the Lord Jesus Christ as Scripture says he rejoices over his people.
- The Church longs for the return of the Bridegroom.
- The Church highly prizes the favor the Lord places on His Church.

- The Church secures her own wedding garment and makes sure it is clean and spotless.

B. The Bridegroom

-What we sometimes forget is the Lord has great concern over His Church, who is the Bride, and He is the Bridegroom. There are some responsibilities that He bears toward His Church.

- The Bridegroom rejoices over his bride and is delighted by her (Isa. 62:5).
 - The Bridegroom removes the bride from the debts and dangers by virtue of the wedding contract.
 - The Bridegroom being a prince or one of nobility raises the bride to great honor by his position.
 - The Bridegroom supplies the wants and needs of the bride, it is his part and concern to provide all the needful things for her.
 - The Bridegroom sympathizes with his spouse and helps her bear her burdens. He is greatly troubled when she is afflicted and he cannot endure any attack on her, misuse of her by others, and any wrongs that would be brought to her.
 - The Bridegroom has a requirement of obedience because he is over the woman.
 - The Bridegroom reproves his bride for the faults he sees in her because of the great love he has for her.
 - The Bridegroom will hide and forgive the many failings the he sees in his spouse and will not lay open her weakness, nor expose her to reproach, as Joseph did for Mary.
- Our state is nothing if we are not part of the Church, the holy bride to be presented to the Lord. Yet to be in that number, there are some honest questions that we have to ask ourselves.

- What is my state without the Lord?
- If I don't have the Lord, then what in the world do I have?
- Is it not foolishness to prefer bondage to sin and the devil over a marriage to Jesus Christ?
- How could anyone turn down the offer of free salvation that will ultimately save them from an eternal punishment of Hell?
- Is it not great folly to value the lusts of the flesh and the pleasures of the world over the Lord?
- Is it not a great slight to the One who died on the Cross to snub His effort to save us?

-There is much care that we must take in consideration of the salvation of our soul!

II. OUR TEXTS—REVELATION 19; JUDE 17-24; AND SONG OF SOLOMON 7:4

-The various texts that we read help us to see the state of the Bride—this is especially true with Revelation 19 and Song of Solomon 7. The text in Jude helps us to understand the responsibility of the Bride.

- Build up yourself in the faith.
- Praying in the Holy Ghost.
- Keep yourself in the love of God.
- Look for His Mercy, it is a key to eternal life.
- Some will be saved with compassion and others with fear.

-All of these responsibilities come from Scripture to help us to see the way we are to go in our trek toward the Celestial City.

-As for the Song of Solomon, there is much controversy that surrounds the book and yet it was added to the Bible under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. To remove all of the controversy that surrounds it, it would suffice us to simply say that it is a story of Solomon pursuing the Shulamite shepherdess.

-If it is looked at as a picture of the Lord pursuing His bride then it opens up a wellspring of understanding to us. While there are some graphic words and analogies in it, there are some that can be used to gather great spiritual fruit from.

-Herein lays my hope, that the description of the eyes of the bride can add something to us. Thirty-three times in the Song, we find the word “beloved” in reference to the bride and her soon to be groom. Some twenty-eight times it is the Shulamite girl calling Solomon her beloved.

A. The Eyes

-Then Solomon begins to describe her in Song of Solomon 7:4. He notes that her eyes are like the fishpools of Heshbon.

-The most important organ for finding out about the world around us is the eye. It is used to gain knowledge, appreciate beauty, and recognize the bad and ugly.

-The Bible connects the eye with our emotions:

- Lamentations 3:51—Eye affects the heart
- Deuteronomy 7:16—Can pity
- Job 16:20—Pours out tears (compassion)
- Psalm 31:9—Consumed with grief
- Psalm 88:9—Eye mourns
- Genesis 3:6—Pleasant to the eyes
- Song of Solomon 4:9—Ravished the heart with her eyes
- Song of Solomon 6:5—Your eyes have overcome me

-The Bible also connects the eye with revelation:

- Psalm 119:18—Open my eyes to behold your law
- Ephesians 1:17-18—Eyes of my understanding
- Psalm 32:8—Guide me with your eye
- Genesis 21:19—God opened her eyes [Hagar]
- Numbers 10:31—Be to us instead of eyes
- 2 Kings 6:17—God opened the servants eyes
- 1 Corinthians 13:12—Now we see through dark glass

-There are expressions we use sometimes about the eyes. We might say:

- That caught my eye: Attracted attention.
- Feasted my eyes upon: Looked at with pleasure and admiration.
- Gave him the eye: Looked at to warn or with admiration.
- Have an eye for that: Have the ability to notice with discernment and appreciation.
- In the public eye: Well known, or brought to public attention
- Keep an eye on: Look after, watch carefully
- Keep your eyes open: Be on the lookout; be watchful.

- Lay eyes on: Look at.
- Make eyes at: Flirt, look at lovingly.
- My eye! Exclamation of contradiction or astonishment.
- That opened his eyes: Make him aware of the facts, real reasons.
- See eye to eye: Hold precisely the same view.
- See with half an eye: See or understand (something) easily because it is so evident.
- Shut his eyes to: Unwilling to see or think about.

-Obviously Solomon was saying that he was struck by the eyes of this young woman he wanted to marry.

B. The Fishpools of Heshbon

-But he goes beyond just saying that her eyes were stunning to him. He made the analogy to say that they were like the fishpools of Heshbon.

-Heshbon was actually a Levitical city that was located in the tribe of Rueben. It was just east of the northern head of the Dead Sea. It was a dry, desolate region and many a traveler was surprised when he ran across the deep pools in Heshbon.

-There were actually two of them that stood at the gate of the city and when they were looked down into, you would see the deep blue of the water and if there were clouds overhead, they too would be seen in this crystal clear pool.

-This is what Solomon saw when he looked into her eyes, something wondrously desirable. That is what the church is to be to the world—a life giving pool of delight that will refresh and renew them in the midst of the wilderness.

- It is the stronghold of God in a hostile world.
- It is a colony of heaven in an alien world.
- A deep pool of living water in a barren wilderness.
- It reflects the beauty of the heavens above.

-The name Heshbon actually means “stronghold” and the root word means “understanding.” The eyes of the Bride were a stronghold of understanding and revelation.

C. Located In The Tribe of Reuben

-But there is more that would arrest our understanding about Heshbon and that is her geographical location in the tribe of Rueben.

-Reuben was the firstborn of Leah and the words she cried on his arrival. She said, “The Lord has seen my affliction!” It was a painful place for Leah to be trapped in. She had a husband who did not love her and yet she had to go on and persist in the trappings of a flawed marriage.

-Imagine the pain involved in her life. Despite the fact that she gave Jacob a host of sons, he still did not love her.

-Solomon tells us that the eyes of the bride are shaped by her suffering! It is through the deep afflictions of life that there was a beautiful clarity to her eyes. More than we will ever realize down here, suffering is going to be the jewel that crowns our lives.

-We Pentecostals have our own set of routines and traditions that more than often we are not even aware of their existence. We love the church and we love the excitement of the Spirit moving and while they have their place, it is crucial to develop a life that deeply honors God.

-If it were up to me, I would have picked a location from another one of the tribes that wasn’t associated with suffering and affliction.

· **Judah**—It means praise. How we love to get the choir cranked up and moving! Great songs we can sing that moves

our hearts and our emotions. . . but that was not what shaped the eyes of the bride.

· **Levi**—That is associated with the carrying of the Word. How we love good Pentecostal preaching that stirs the soul and builds our faith. One time I wrote a series of blogs about the top ten sermons that had affected my life and great preaching has influenced me more than what I really understand. . . but that was not what shaped the eyes of the Bride.

· **Gad**—His name is associated with being able to comeback from great calamity (Genesis 49). How many people are in our churches across the world that have come from terrible setbacks because of the grace of God. Our faith is built to hear those stories. . . but that is not what shaped the eyes of the Bride.

· **Asher**—His name is associated with healing, blessing, and happiness. How many miracles can you remember that has taken place in your lifetime? The miraculous power of God is something that we love to operate in. . . But the miraculous power of God is not what shaped the eyes of the Bride.

-Her outlook on life was associated with suffering and affliction. Suffering is one of the key elements by which the Lord uses to instruct, change, transform, and shape us into the great purpose of fulfilling His will.

- It is Abraham having to offer Isaac as a sacrifice.
- It is Jacob at a midnight wrestling match.
- It is Joseph being a man of integrity despite being able to see beyond the darkness.
- It is the children of Israel straining under Egyptian burdens and floggings.
- It is David being reproached by his enemies.
- It is Josiah rending his clothes and pleading for revival before he experienced it.
- It is Job worshiping after the horrific losses of family and property in a single day.
- It is Nehemiah weeping at the condition of the broken down walls of Jerusalem.
- It is Paul suffering for the name of the Lord but it advanced the Kingdom.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 KJV For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day. [17] For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; [18] While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

1 Thessalonians 3:3 KJV That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

John 16:33 KJV These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

D. A Foreshadowing of Something Greater

-The suffering associated with Reuben foreshadowed the ministry of Jesus Christ. The suffering and humiliation of Jesus led to a great victory but there a passage of time was required first. Jesus only gained pre-eminence after his afflictions.

-Every man will have his Gethsemane. The Lord suffered in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Luke 22:44 KJV And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

- It was here, in deep, earnest prayer that only begotten Son of God was afflicted with such anguish that He sweats great drops of blood.
- It was here that He gained the victory before God.
- It was here that He finally was willing to die.

· But there was no escape the coming ordeal . . . He had to endure the suffering.

-Gethsemane is derived from the Hebrew word 'gath' meaning 'press' and 'shemen', which means 'oil'. This was the place where they squeezed out the blood of olives to make oil. This is where the image of the pressed olive and the pressed grape merges.

-The blood of Jesus squeezed through His pores as the weight of the sins of the world pressed down on Him. As He was becoming sin the Spirit of God was leaving, until He was totally abandoned on the cross.

III. CONCLUSION—WHAT IS YOUR AFFLICTION?

*—“The Lord has seen my afflictions,” said Leah in the throes of her birth pain for Reuben*But I need to let you in on something:

2 Timothy 2:12 KJV If we suffer, we shall also reign with him:

1 Peter 4:13 KJV But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

Luke 6:22-23 KJV Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you *from their company*, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. [23] **Rejoice** ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward *is* great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.