

Sunday December 16th 2007
Laying the Foundations
The Picture of Marriage
Conclusion – Will You Go?

1). We have seen then in the course of our study that scripture begins with a foundational picture of marriage in Adam and Eve and ends with the fulfillment of that picture in Christ and His Bride and that the marriage relationship is inseparable from God's plans and purposes for the ages – for His Son and His created being, Man, to rule together over the earth.

a). We have seen that the Bride taken from the body reveals that only a part of the Body of Christ will be the Bride.

b). We saw in the Bride taken from the family, that the Holy Spirit is searching amongst the family of God, Christians, during this dispensation, to see who will make the decision to go with Him, to be the Bride.

c). And in the Bride taken from the Gentiles we saw a division between the one who would follow Naomi, Ruth and the one who wouldn't, Orpah, and how, as we followed Ruth's progress we saw an overview of all that it is necessary to know about the faithful Christian's experience to make sure they are a part of the Bride - *2Pe 1:10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;*

d). The process of the journey, the work and the preparation are given to us in foundation in Ruth. The detail of this process is the subject of the Epistles – from Romans to Jude – all finding their conclusion in the Book of Revelation.

e). Being part of the Bride of Christ would then be the same as being adopted as a firstborn son and the same as being a joint heir – they are all parts of the same picture – Christ and human beings, specifically the descendants of Abraham, ruling together in fulfillment of God's purpose.

f). All have to do exclusively with the Millennial Kingdom, the 7th Day and the inheritance that is offered to us – the Kingdom of the Heavens – essentially the rule over the earth from the heavenly realm.

g). Being part of the Bride, a firstborn son, a joint heir is inseparable from the salvation of the soul, the salvation to be revealed in the last time and the determination with regards to this salvation will be made when we appear at the JSOC immediately following the rapture/resurrection.

h). *1Pe 1:3 ¶ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living*

hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.....9 receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls.

(Teach this)

i). 1Co 3:11 ¶ *For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

(Teach this)

j). 2Co 5:10 *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

2). Our eternal salvation is pictured for us, in foundational form, in Day 1 of the restoration of the ruined creation in Genesis Chapter 1- 2Co 4:6 *For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

a). Everything that follows in days 2-6 of the Genesis account of the restoration of the ruined creation is a picture, again in foundational form, of the process leading to the salvation of our soul.

b). And the thing is this – this salvation may or may not be realized.

c). Whether it is or it isn't realized has no impact at all on our eternal security, but has an enormous impact on what will happen to us during the Millennial Kingdom.

d). And as we have seen with our picture of marriage – Christ and His Bride ruling from the heavens over the earth has been God's stated purpose from eternity past. It is His reason for creating Man and His reason for redeeming Man. It is therefore something very serious and not to be taken lightly. To reject God's purpose is to reject God, and Christians can do that and do. Scripture has many examples given to us as warnings.

3). Mt 25:1 ¶ *"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 "Now five of*

them were wise, and five were foolish. 3 "Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 "but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5 "But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. 6 "And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' 7 "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. 8 "And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' 9 "But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' 10 "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. 11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' 12 "But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' 13 "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

a). Now it is obvious for us to see that what is taking place here in relation to the ten virgins is directly connected to the Kingdom of the Heavens. And given both the context and the content of the parable those in view, described as virgins, can only be Christians. All ten have lamps, and all ten have oil in their lamps. Their going out to meet the Bridegroom has echoes of Ruth, and rightly so.

b). The only distinction that is made between the two groups is that the wise have an extra supply of oil and the foolish do not.

c). The fact that those without the extra oil are foolish denotes that they too could have had the extra supply of oil, but because of their foolishness they chose not to.

d). And just as we saw in Ruth anointing herself the extra supply of oil not only shows proper preparedness by those who possess it, but also shows empowerment for service – Mt 25:10 *"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.*

e). Here in this parable is another picture of the Judgment Seat of Christ and we can clearly see the division that takes place based on preparedness, on faithful obedience, or lack of it. This would be equivalent of the works that receive a reward and the works that are burnt up in 1 Corinthians 3.

f). Because of having the extra supply of oil and therefore being properly prepared the wise virgins will experience that recorded in – Re 5:9 *And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed them to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, 10 And*

have made them kings and priests to our God; And they shall reign on [literally – ‘over’] the earth."

4). Let's pause for a moment here and make sure we understand about the oil that all ten virgins have in their lamps.

a). Within the OT oil is used as a symbol for the Holy Spirit and so the oil the virgins possess, that all Christians possess, must be a reference to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that all believers receive at the time of their new birth.

b). This indwelling comes as a result of what scripture describes as an immersion or baptism in the Spirit

i/ Ac 1:5 *"for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."*

ii/ 1Co 12:13 *For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free--and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.*

iii/ 1Co 3:16 ¶ *Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*

iv/ 1Co 6:19 *Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God,*

c). This being so we will realize that the extra supply of oil is describing an extra supply of the Holy Spirit, so to speak, over and above that which we presently and permanently possess.

5). In fact, this is exactly what we find in scripture as we are commanded to be continually filled with the Spirit, something that is to happen and can only take place after the Holy Spirit has indwelt us at our new birth.

a). Eph 5:17 *Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be [continually] filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, 20 giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 21 ¶ submitting to one another in the fear of God.*

6). So how are we continually filled with the Spirit? How do we get the extra supply of oil so that we won't be foolish? As always scripture itself provides the answer - 2Ti 3:15 *and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is God breathed, and is profitable*

for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

- a). What makes us wise for salvation through faith?
- b). What salvation are we talking about?
- c). Literally, what are the scriptures?
- d). Heb 4:12 *For the word of God is living and powerful,*

7). So as we see what scripture says about the word of God and how the word of God and the Spirit of God are one and the same we can conclude that being filled with the Spirit comes through receiving the breath/Spirit of God, which is alive, through the Word of God. And this is exactly what a companion scripture to our scripture in Ephesians 5 teaches.

a). Col 3:16 *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. 17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*

b). Being filled with the Spirit in Ephesians 5 and letting the word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom in Colossians 3 are one and the same thing.

c). And it is interesting to note that it is the word of Christ – not the word of God in some general sense that is to dwell in us in all wisdom.

d). It is the word of Christ, that word which teaches about the One who has been anointed to be Prophet, Priest and King, and all that is involved in those three ministries that constitutes the filling of the Spirit.

8). All Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, but not all Christians are continually filled with the Spirit - 3 *"Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 "but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps*

a). The foolish would be the carnal Christian, the Orpah Christian. The Christian saved unto eternity but wholeheartedly enmeshed in the affairs, systems, values and mindsets of this world. Those who because of their actions will find themselves cut off from a position of rulership with Christ in His coming Kingdom - 10 *"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. 11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' 12 "But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'*

i/ Ga 5:19 *Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

b). The wise would be the spirit led Christian, the Ruth Christian. The Christian who is saved unto eternity and then receives the word of Christ and is obedient to the commands of Christ, whose focus is on the promise and the hope that is set before them, who reject the things of this world. Those who have chosen to follow the Holy Spirit, those whose works remain who receive a reward - Ro 8:14 *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.*

c). Jas 1:21 *Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

d). So we see that being filled with the Spirit is not a Charismatic experience, but rather a correct engagement with the Word of God. We must receive on a continual basis the life of God, which is the Spirit of God, through the written word which is the breath of God. In this way our eternally saved spirit is fed and we grow from immaturity to maturity – from the milk to the meat, to the strong meat of the Word, and we will then have the extra supply of oil, being properly prepared to meet the Bridegroom.

e). Without that extra supply there can only be exclusion.

9). This same picture is presented from a different perspective in Mt 22:1 ¶ *And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: 2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, 3 "and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. 4 "Again, he sent out other servants, saying, "Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding." 5 "But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. 6 "And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. 7 "But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. 8 "Then he said to his servants, "The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. 9 "Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding." 10 "So those*

servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. 11 "But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. 12 "So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless.

13 "Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' 14 "For many are called, but few are chosen."

a). And here in a condensed form we see God's dealing with Israel, v1-6 - the setting aside of Israel after their rejection of Christ and His message, v7 (Prophetically speaking of the events of 70AD) – and then from v8 onwards His dealing with the Church from the start of this dispensation to the JSOC.

b). So let's notice some things concerning Christians from v8 onwards.

c). We see in v10 that the King's servants went into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good – this would be us, Christians – those saved by grace through faith. And they/we are both bad and good.

d). We then see all these gathered together bad and good Christians, in one place in connection with wedding festivities – again we are at the JSOC and a division is about to take place.

e). One man, who is representative of an unspecified number, does not have a wedding garment – remember - Re 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." 8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.* And remember Ruth putting on her best garment.

f). And this man is challenged by the King - *"So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless.* Notice that He calls him friend – and the man is speechless. Now in the original language the way this is presented shows that the man was speechless because he knew he should have had a wedding garment but had not bothered to get one – therefore there was nothing he could say. Isn't this again a picture of the foolish virgins? Having no wedding garment, not being properly prepared, not being continually filled with the Spirit are all different ways of presenting the same thing.

g). And the outcome for the man who does not have the wedding garment is that he is bound hand and foot and cast into the outer darkness

where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, just as the foolish virgins are shut out of the wedding festivities.

h). And this pictures, for us, exclusion from being part of the Bride of Christ and therefore exclusion from a position with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom resulting in the one excluded spending 1000 years in a place described as ‘outer darkness’.

i). And then the parable concludes with a simple statement that sums up all that the Lord has been talking about - *"For many are called, but few are chosen."* – literally – ‘many are called, but few are called out of the called’ - Heb 11:35 *Women received their dead raised to life again. And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a **better resurrection.***

10). We have seen that God has spoken to us about this subject through the Prophets and has now, in these last days, spoken of the same things through His Son - Heb 1:1 ¶ *God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; 3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 ¶ having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. 5 For to which of the angels did He ever say: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You"? And again: "I will be to Him a Father, And He shall be to Me a Son"?*

a). And because God has spoken to us by His Son we find the first of five warnings in the Book of Hebrews we are to take serious note of. – Heb 2:1 ¶ *Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, 4 God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?*

b). The writer uses Israel at Mount Sinai as our example showing that they heard the word of God concerning the earthly portion of the kingdom and they were punished for their transgressions in relation to what they had heard.

c). He then asks that if this was the case for Israel how would we escape a similar end if we were to neglect ‘so great a salvation’ – the reward of the inheritance, the salvation of our soul, being part of the Bride of Christ – and this would happen if we were to drift away from this truth – all that we have seen in Genesis 1+2, Genesis 21-25 and the Book of Ruth as well as our NT scriptures

d). And here is our warning - *Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we **drift away*** – earnest heed – we need to be serious and sober minded about that which God has said about the coming Kingdom of Christ and our participation in it as His Bride.

11). The second warning concerns being diligent to enter His rest – His rest of course is the Day of rest – the seventh day – the age to come – the Millennial Kingdom, which we can only enter as His Bride.

a). Again our example is Israel - Heb 3:16 *For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses? 17 Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? 19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.*

b). Why could Israel not enter His rest? – ‘because of unbelief’ – not unbelief in who God is, but unbelief in what God had said about the land and their inheritance.

c). We are warned in verses preceding this scripture – Heb 3:12 *Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;*

d). Then comes the substance of our second warning at the beginning of Chapter 4 - Heb 4:1 ¶ *Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.....11 Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.*

e). How would we come short of His rest? ‘Fall according to the same example of disobedience? – by not believing what He has said about the journey we are to make, the work we are to do, the preparations we are to make – thereby not believing what he has said about His rest, the seventh day, the Millennial Kingdom, our inheritance in the land of our calling and ruling with Christ as His Bride – just as Israel did not believe Him in respect of the land of their calling and their inheritance. Thereby being disobedient to the word He spoke concerning it.

12). The third warning speaks of moving on to spiritual maturity, if God permits - Heb 6:1 ¶ *Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 2 of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. 3 And this we will do if God permits.*

(Teach this)

a). Again, moving on to maturity must include being continually filled with the Spirit, appropriating Christ's blood as our High Priest and allowing the water of the word to wash us – resulting in our being properly prepared.

b). And this process of maturity must of necessity take us beyond the stony places and the thorns and thistles of the Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13

13). Then the fourth warning deals with willful sinning - Heb 10:26 *For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people." 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

a). Now please note this is not willfully sinning in a general sense, but rather willfully sinning against the knowledge of the truth – knowing what God has said about the age to come, our inheritance and the marriage relationship between Christ and His Bride and then deliberately sinning against this truth by refusing to believe Him and acting accordingly.

14). The fifth and final warning has to do with the rights of the firstborn Heb 12:15 *looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; 16 lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. 17 For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.*

a). We will remember that the rights of the firstborn are to be particularly prized, and are part of our same picture of being a Bride and a joint heir - yet Esau, for the temporary gratification of his flesh, gave up his birthright as a firstborn – and once having given it up there was no way to regain it.

b). He sought it with tears but there was no repentance on the part of his father – his father would not change his mind and reinstate him.

c). In respect of ourselves then we should know that we are not looking at just one instant of giving in to the flesh, we have already seen Christ's High Priestly Ministry in respect of this, but rather a lifestyle of following the flesh rather than the Spirit. Being foolish instead of wise.

15). As we close let me encourage you with these words

a). Heb 10:37 *"For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him." 39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.*

b). And let me ask you – 'Will you go?'