

Mystery

(a work currently in progress)

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Study 1

My purpose in these daily e-mail lessons was to leave a testimony of the truth of the Word to the present and future generation of the redeemed; some of the most “precious” things from the living Word.

Mysteries of the Word which are of far greater value than the wealth of the world. The current subject “mystery” is the most mysterious and yet most wonderful of them all. This series is born from a question, which is one of the great mysteries of the Bible. “Who is the man child?” Rev. 12:5

He is a part of the revelation which the Lord has given to His church. His place in the prophetic utterance of the Book of Revelation is of prime importance. He is a key to the final plan and objective of the Lord.

“This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church.” Eph. 5:32

There are many mysteries in life. There are many mysteries to be found in the Word of the Lord. As a matter of fact, we are always looking for a more comprehensive, a fuller understanding of the Word of the Lord.

The Word is the communication of the Lord with mankind; particularly those who love Him and want to know Him better.

Jesus spoke in parables due to the lack of spiritual insight among the people. He has also made it necessary to fit together the truths of the Word like the pieces of a jig saw puzzle.

“Whom shall He teach knowledge? And whom shall He make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts. It is precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little.” Isaiah 28:10-12

It is a monumental undertaking to write concerning such a mysterious topic. One which is so openly revealed by fact and figure, type and shadow throughout the Word of the Lord, yet remains hidden from so many in the church.

Let us first of all put to rest a myth which has been accepted for too long, that is, that the woman is Mary and the man child Jesus.

Sorry, but it does not fit into the plan of the Lord. In the first place, the Book of Revelation is just that, a revelation, an insight into the future.

It is a prophetic book, not a history book.

Consider what the book says about itself. A Revelation, “which must shortly come to pass” Rev. 1:1

“The time is at hand.” Rev. 1:3

Write the things which thou has seen, and the things which are and the things which shall be hereafter.” Rev. 1:19

“Things which must be hereafter.” Rev. 4:1

“The things which must shortly be done.” Rev. 22:5 “For the time is at hand.” Rev. 22:10

The references made to the “time at hand” are to those things which were to be fulfilled in the seven churches in Asia.

Otherwise the whole of the book projects the completion of its revelations out into the future.

The events which transpire at the birth of the man child cannot be compared to any experience that Mary or Jesus had after His birth.

Other than there being the birth of a male child, there is absolutely no connection which may be made to Mary and Jesus.

Study 2

The first man was Adam.
First the natural, then the spiritual.

The natural has its spiritual counterpart. A divine principal which is carried out throughout the Word of the Lord.

The natural has its beginning and ending.

The spiritual likewise has its beginning but never ends.

The spiritual is eternal.

The first man made of the dust of the earth, in whom the Lord breathed the breath of life, and he became a living soul. Gen. 2:7

The Lord formed, shaped, molded man by the work of His loving hands. It was a “hands on” personal project.

The first Adam possessed natural life.

The last Adam (Christ) was made a quickening spirit., dispensing eternal life to all who will call on Him. 1 Cor. 15:45

The man Christ Jesus. 1 Tim. 2:5

While the Deity of the Lord Jesus is plainly seen in the Word of

the Lord, His manhood, His human nature is just as openly displayed. As a man, He is the only one commissioned to mediate between God and man.

There are none other who could possibly feel the compassion for the sinner as the man Christ Jesus. No other could possibly have the power and authority to approach a just and merciful God for our forgiveness. He is greatly moved by the “feeling of our infirmities” inasmuch as He was tempted in every point such as we are. Yet He was without sin. Heb. 4:15

He is compassion personified. The perfect man. The man of perfection. He represents both aspects of life. Mortal and immortal. He stripped aside His high and holy status in the presence of His Father with whom He was of equal standing. Taking upon Himself the form of a man, the nature of a servant.

Furthermore, He committed Himself to the most degrading death of that day. The death of a habitual criminal. A shameful and ignominious death. No greater sacrifice could be made under any circumstances.

We must see Jesus, not only in His Godly nature, but as a man. He completely fulfilled every requirement to be both God and man. “And the LORD God said, it is not good that the man should be alone.” Gen. 2:18

I will create a helper for him. A companion, a wife who was to share His life with him. Male and female created He them. Gen.1:27 As with the type, so with the antitype. Some types are fulfilled in just a measure. This one is to be complete. The blessing of the Lord upon them was that they be fruitful and multiply, filling the earth with their kind, that is their descendents.

Study 3

This type of the last Adam and His bride, and the blessing of the Lord pronounced upon them, is a key to what will take place in the end of the age.

The life of the last Adam follows the pattern that is established in the creation and life of the first Adam and his Eve. Only the sin question is reversed, instead of sinning and losing our place in Eden, the Bride and her Christ will occupy Eden, having become victorious over sin.

Her wilderness, while it is located in a desert place, will not be like the surrounding territory, a dry wilderness.

In the midst of a world filled with chaos, she will be in the wilderness but in a place prepared by the Lord. (Rev. 12:6,14), which is comparable to Eden of old. Isa. 51:3

The Bride is a living entity comprised of those living in the last days who have reached the standard measure of Christ. A people of perfection.

New Testament Christians who are totally committed, and filled with His presence. Eph. 4:13

Christ will not marry a bride inferior to Himself.

About Isaiah 51:3 Who is this Zion/Sion? It is the city of the Lord

occupied by the redeemed, a city of great gladness and everlasting joy, of singing and rejoicing. Isa. 51:11

It is proclaimed to be the city of the living God, the CHURCH, made up of those who have been born of the Spirit. Their names are recorded in heaven, in the Lamb's book of life. ONLY the righteous, the just, who have reached the perfection found in the Lord can enter into that place. Heb. 12:22-23

All these proclaim Jesus as the one mediator and His blood as the only means of salvation. Heb. 12:24

In Sion is to be found that stone, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is a stone of salvation and a sure foundation to all who will accept Him as Lord and savior.

That same stone is a stumbling stone to those who reject Him as their Messiah. Therefore they will not be in Sion. Rom. 9:33

Isaiah said that "the Lord would comfort her." Isa. 51:3

The Lord Jesus promised that He would send another (one like the one who was departing) comforter, sent in the name of the Lord Jesus. Sent from the Father and stated to be the Holy Spirit. John 14:16

He has come teaching, revealing the things of the Lord Jesus to the church, John 14:26

He makes Jesus real. He does not speak or boast of Himself but will exalt the Lord Jesus. He is the Spirit of truth. John 15:26

As the Lord delivered Israel from Egypt on eagles wings (a type of the Holy Spirit) so He will take the church into His wilderness by eagle wing power. Rev. 12:14

Study 4

The three main feasts of Israel are of importance in determining, at least the time of the year when the marriage of Christ and His church will take place. These feasts are spiritual experiences which take place in the life of the church and also in the life of each individual member of the true church. The Passover is a living factor of the Christian experience. Christ is our Passover. Our experience of redemption and liberty from sin. 1 Cor. 5:7

His death occurred simultaneously with the slaying of the Passover lamb. The blood of the lamb is our victory. Rev. 12:11

It is not circumstantial that there was a gathering in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. Their purpose was two fold. It was a day of worship and they were being obedient to the command of the Lord Jesus. They were to wait in Jerusalem for the visitation of the Holy Spirit. Acts 1:4

As a fulfillment of that day of festivities, they were filled with the Spirit of the Lord. What was but religious days and ceremonies became life changing, spiritual experiences in the church. On the day of Pentecost the anointing of the Lord became a living reality in their lives. Acts 2:1-4

The Day of Atonement was a great day in Israel. It is a fast which as yet does not have a counter part in the church. Fasting was mandatory for the day. It was to be celebrated on the tenth day of the seventh month. Lev. 16:29

Ten being the number of Law and order. Seven is the number of perfection and is significant of the Day of Atonement as the day of the perfection of the church. Eph. 5:25-27

Following the pattern established by the introduction of these feasts in the church it will fulfilled in the church during the months of August-September. In what year, the Lord only knows. However, according to the conditions of the earth and humanity today we are quickly approaching that day. Incidentally, this is a must prior to the second coming of the Lord Jesus.

This was that very special day when the High Priest was commanded to enter into the Most Holy Place. Here he would stand in the awesome presence of the living God. Lev. 16:2-4

His clothing was fine linen, which is symbolic of the righteousness of the Lord manifest in the saints. It is also significant of the holiness of the wedding gown to be worn by the Bride of Christ. Rev. 19:7-8

This was that glorious day when Israel stood before the Lord perfectly cleansed from their sin. It was a day of great importance to them. Its implementation in the church in the end of the age is of the utmost importance.

Study 5

Jubilee

Every fiftieth year was to be a year of Jubilee. They were to count out seven times seven years or weeks of years with the next year being the fiftieth which would be the year of Jubilee.

They were to be alerted to this special month by a Sabbath, a day of rest, on the first day of the month. It was a memorial of the blowing of the trumpets, a signal and reminder that this was that very special month. Lev. 23:24

This first day was celebrated as the New Year's day of the civil year. A time of new beginnings. The seventh month and its feasts depict a last day revival.

Every seventh year was to be a sabbatical year. Nothing was to be sown nor crops reaped in that seventh year. It was a year of rest for the land. Lev. 25:4

This would seem to be a difficult action for a farmer to take, until we consider the blessing of the Lord which He had pronounced upon it. They were promised a spectacular crop, triple the usual yield. In the sixth year the land would yield a crop which would last them into the ninth year. Lev. 25:22

Inasmuch as fifty speaks to us of Pentecost and the anointing of the Spirit. This feast has significance for the church of today. The Lord will once again visit His people with the blessings of Pentecost.

Accompanying this move of the Spirit is a last day harvest, not merely a double portion but actually a triple portion. A full and complete measure of the glory and power of the Lord bringing the church of the last days to a maturity and a completeness which will make Her to be like Him in every sense of the word.

The church, as His body, is destined to be filled with all of His fullness. Eph. 1:23

A church possessing love equal to His, filled with all the power and glory of the Lord. Eph. 3:19

The harvest supplied for a portion of three years. From the time of the wedding until the birth of the man child in Revelation twelve, there must be a period of time.

This seems to portray that period, during which the church will harvest the earth and the man child is brought forth. The Lord Jesus will only marry a sanctified, glorious church. Eph. 5:26-27

There is a Divine principle found throughout the Word of the Lord showing us that the Lord always visits with mercy and love before a season of punishment and judgment.

While the book of Revelation speaks of the judgments which will take place in the end of the age it also shows us the precious victories which take place among His people.

Study 6

Seventh Month Feasts

The feasts of the seventh month, the month of Tishri, as yet does not have its counterpart, its implementation, in the church. The Lord commanded that Aaron, the priesthood, not enter the Most Holy Place without having washed, clothed themselves with the appropriate garments and made sacrifice. Lev. 16:2-5

Aaron's sons had been slain by the Lord because they had offered incense and **strange fire**, that which was of their own choosing and not from the fire on the altar which the Lord had kindled. Lev. 10:1-2

The Lord hates an imitation, and will take appropriate action. We have an example of the seriousness of toying with the Holy Spirit, in Ananias and Sapphira. They could have given any amount, or portion of that which they had received, but instead chose to lie to the Holy Ghost. Consequently they died on the scene. Acts 5:1-10

This is an example of the cleansing of the Sanctuary. The Lord will sanctify His church and cleanse her from all that is contrary to His standard of holiness. Eph. 5:27

The Day of Atonement required a priest who was anointed.

In the anointed ministry of the church of the last days, the anointing of the Spirit will be a priority. Without that precious anointing oil, the oil of the Apothecary, which is the Holy Spirit,

the church cannot function. Ex. 30:25-30

The last day church will know an anointing greater than that of the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem. The glory of the latter house shall be greater than the former. Hag. 2:9

The man who ministered has to be clothed with garments of holiness. A thorough, complete, atonement was to be made, for the high priest and his family, for the holy sanctuary, the tabernacle, the altar and the people. Lev. 16:33

The Atonement (the blood) was also applied to the mercy seat. Lev. 16:14

That which is foreshadowed in the Day of Atonement will become a living reality in the day when the Lord separates His true church from that which comes short of His high standards.

His true people will bear His image; as Christ was in the image and likeness of God the Father, so the church will be like Christ.

She will bear not only His likeness, but His anointing and power as well. She will be changed from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord - not in theory, but in all actuality.

His Bride is sanctified, purified and fully glorified with the fullness of His glory. 2 Cor. 3:18

Study 7

Day of Atonement

The Day of Atonement was also the introduction of the year of Jubilee. The trumpet was to be sounded throughout the land. It introduced a year of restoration, of liberty and freedom.

To keep the requirements of this time of jubilation would require a spirit and attitude of all participants of a God like nature. There are three major requirements which would be difficult for men to make. All property was to be returned to the original owner. Lev. 25:13

What would be the feelings of an individual who had accumulated the land of his neighbors? To follow this commandment they would have to be a person totally dedicated to the Lord.

The poor, who had surrendered themselves to be a servant, were to be released. Lev. 25:10

There is no record in the scriptures of this act of fulfillment and restitution having been done. It would appear that they considered the price to be too dear. Contrariwise, there is evidence that Israel went into captivity in Babylon for seventy years in order for the land to receive its Sabbaths. 2 Chron. 36:21

What a price to pay for disobeying the Word of the Lord. Had they been obedient, they would have prospered in every way and would not have gone into captivity. To obey is better than sacrifice and to

hearken better than the fat of rams. 1 Sam. 15:22

To follow the pattern established by the Lord assures one of blessing and success. Incidentally, the Lord exhibited patience toward them waiting for three hundred and fifty years to pass before He judged Israel.

Fifty times seventy is three hundred and fifty years.

In exchange for doing the statutes and keeping the judgments of the Lord, they were assured of food and safety. Their crops would not fail nor could any enemy over come them. Simple obedience to the Word of the Lord has great reward. Lev. 25:18-19

As in the weekly Sabbath, the sixth day they did not work. So in the yearly Sabbath the sixth year they were to make it a Sabbath. In the order of the year of jubilee they were to commemorate a double Sabbath, the 49th and the 50th years were to be years of rest.

This is a type of the double portion which foreshadows revival in the last days. The 48th year the crops were to be so huge that there would be sufficient to last until the 51st year.

Just prior to the gathering of the Bride and the marriage of Christ and His church, the world will know a spiritual revival such as has never been known.

Study 8

Bond Servants

Associated with the practices of the Sabbatical year there was a privilege extended which could be taken by those who had become servants. They could return to their home and be free, or they could become a love servant. He could chose to leave or stay. If he stayed, the cause was love.

- Love for his master.
- Love for his family. Ex. 21:1-5
- Love for his masters family. Deut. 15:17

Having chosen servitude rather than freedom the servant would then receive a life long mark and sign of his consecration and love.

Do you suppose the saying, “pinned to the wall.” came from this practice? This servant and his commitment is a type of Christ and also of the church becoming a love slave unto the Lord.

Bringing him before the judges (literally, before the Lord) would make this decision a legal and binding contract.

The door post makes us think of the doors of blood in Egypt at the institution of Passover. Jesus is the door.

The awl, a carpenters tool, how fitting. The hearing ear (created by the Lord. Prov. 20:12) pinned and pierced. Always bearing about in the body the markings of the master.

In relationship to the subject there is a Messianic prophecy which relates to the ear and its capability of hearing. Jesus heard perfectly the Words of the Father and was in full according with them saying that the Lord GOD had opened, carved or plowed His ear. He did not resist, nor cringe from the will of the Father. Isa. 50:5

Because Jesus heard with an awakened ear, He was able to be in daily and constant contact with His Father. John 12:50

Because Jesus possessed a consecrated, listening ear, He was also granted the tongue of the learned. Isa. 50:4

Words of wisdom, words of life, poured forth from His lips. The Jews marveled at the learning which He displayed, knowing that He was unschooled. John 7:15

The last day church will have a leadership whose ears have been pinned to the door. They serve because of their love for the Lord Jesus - and for that purpose alone.

They have ears to hear what the Spirit is saying to the body of Christ; their communication with the church will be in the wisdom and knowledge of the Lord, and not that of man.

There is a hue and cry, almost a wailing, today, from the body of believers for an anointed ministry.

Learning, education is good - but it should never be substituted for an ear which is able to hear the voice of the Lord, and communicate His will to His people.

Study 9

Wedding Parable

His wife has made herself ready. Rev. 19:7c

Being ready, prepared for the most glorious marriage of time and eternity, is vital.

The attitudes displayed in the parable of the kingdom of heaven and the marriage prepared by the king for his son, illustrate for us attitudes found in the church of today. Mt. 22:2

A parable is a story told to demonstrate a fact.

This is a kingdom parable, and it is apparent that the people involved are citizens belonging to that kingdom. It is also obvious that the Lord Jesus is referring to Himself as the Bridegroom.

At the time of the wedding, the King sent forth His servants (an anointed ministry) calling those who had already been invited, for they had been 'bidden.' They were well aware of the impending wedding. To further alert them, the servants made personal contact with them as representatives of the King. Mt. 22:3

Their response was complete rejection and refusal to attend the wedding. They were neither concerned nor interested in the actions of the ruling family. They were not interested.

Rather a dangerous attitude when dealing with a king. A second

call is then issued with a considerably urgent call for the animals had been slain and the dinner was prepared. Everything is ready, all is prepared.

This is a story of Israel rejecting the prophets whom the Lord had sent to them. Most unfortunately, the same is repeated in the modern day church. They verbally ridiculed the wedding and its participants.

At the same time, they went their own ways, doing their own thing, self centered, while seeking the riches of this world. Others, mistreated the servants even to a point of death. Mt. 22:3-4

Such uncouth and evil actions against a king can only produce a strong retribution. Because of their actions they were visited by an army controlled by the king.

The sentence of death was pronounced upon them in response to their having killed the kings servants. Their city was destroyed by fire.

This does not sound unlike the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 AD. Even though we live in a different time and a different age, the attitudes of mankind, even in the church have not changed.

Many disregard the voice of the Spirit and the Word by continuing to go their own way. Too often the Lord is treated as a fire escape to whom we turn in times of dire need. He is made to be simply a help in times of great need.

Study 10

Go!

The command of the gospel, GO. Mt 22:8

Go into the highways, the streets, the country side with the invitation to come to the marriage. Go into all the world.

The invitation is for the “whosoever will”.

A motley crew was gathered by the servants. Noticeably, there seems to be no refusal among them. The good and the bad, without discrimination were gathered together and the wedding was furnished with guests. Mt. 22:10

One found, who did not meet the requirements of a guest. He was not wearing a wedding garment. We should take notice here that **these are guests and not the wedding party**. Nevertheless, it was imperative that all guests be properly clothed.

It is my understanding that the wedding garment of a guest was something furnished by the master of ceremonies. In this case the king. He surely would have been extended the privilege of a wedding garment when entering the kings palace.

For whatever reason, he was not properly clothed. Could have been that he thought his four button suit was good enough for any occasion. Mt. 22:11

When the king came to see the wedding guests he took note of this man and his improper clothing. The king was not antagonistic for he called him 'friend.'

In the same breath he inquired as how he had gained entrance without the wedding garment. The poor man had no answer.

If such a high standard of proper clothing was necessary for the guests, how about the bride? She must have put on Christ and be fully clothed with His glory.

This man is then bound, hand and foot and cast into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Mt. 22:13

The wedding of Christ and the church will take place prior to the tribulation period. This area of darkness is that time known as the great tribulation period.

This man, because of his spiritual dearth will partake of the darkness of that era. It is worthwhile to note that Jesus said that the 'children of the kingdom' would be cast into the same outer darkness.

When He made this statement He was addressing the centurion, but aiming at the people of Israel who had rejected Him. Mt. 8:11

Again He warned them, and in so doing gave us a glimpse into the future. For they would see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob plus all the prophets in the kingdom of the Lord. But, they, themselves not included in that vast multitude of believers who will inherit the kingdom of God. Luke 13:28

Study 11

The Wise and Foolish

A parable illustrating the coming marriage of the Lamb.

It is given that the church might understand the working and will of the Lord for His church in the last days. They are virgins such as Paul mentioned in 2 Cor. 11:2

Members of the body of Christ who are waiting for the day of the marriage of Christ and His church. They are all in the same class, virgins, unmarried. Their number is not limited to ten, which in this case is a number of leadership and government. They are divided into two identical groups, yet there is a great difference between them. Mt. 25:1

In their similarities, they are all virgins. They have all heard the call and responded to the bridegroom and the marriage which is about to take place. They will be well aware of the times and the seasons.

Inasmuch as they are all named virgins, we know that they have responded to the preparations of holiness which are so vital for this marriage. They all had lamps prepared to lighten their way as they went forth to greet the bridegroom. Mt. 25:1

There, the similarity, which had been so evident, ceases.

They are subsequently divided into two groups and named as being

wise or foolish. Mt. 25:5-6

Neither education nor intelligence defined into which group the individual was to be placed.

It was a good supply of oil. A preparation that would assure them of a continual burning of their lamps, regardless of how long it took the bridegroom to arrive.

Oil is a type of the anointing of the Spirit. The wise are a people who maintain, very carefully, the presence of the Spirit in their lives. A fresh experience in the Lord is of great necessity in order to be included among the wise.

Among the foolish are to be found those who have a knowledge of future events and anticipate the coming of the bridegroom. They have known and enjoyed the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

They are now contented with the experiences of the past and feel no need of an 'update'. In the vital hour of the greatest need for a reserve of oil they had run dry.

If the actual fulfillment numerically follows the parable, that would divide the virgins (members of the church) right down the middle.

In other words fifty percent would be classified as being in the unwise class, and needful of a new and fresh anointing of the Spirit of the Lord.

It is time for some self inspection and a renewing of the presence of the Lord within our Spiritual nature.

Study 12

Oil dependency

We live in a world which has become totally dependent on oil.

How strange that dependency on oil for both natural life and spiritual life would coincide at one and the same time. It is mind boggling to think of all the consequences which would happen, were the world supply of oil suddenly cut off.

It is a far greater tragedy for the church - or any individual - to lose the anointing of the Holy Spirit in their life. The wise made certain that they had an abundant supply of oil. More than sufficient to last them through any emergency which might arise. Mt. 25:4

All ten were knowledgeable of the approaching wedding and were filled with great expectation **but not all were prepared.**

In the letters to the seven churches, the Lord Jesus indicated certain characteristics which were peculiar to each individual church.

All of these are evident in today's church membership. No single church or church organization today is by any means identical with any of these seven churches. However, in each organization, each church, moreover in each individual, may be found a smattering, a mixture of the nature and character found in the original seven.

An example, and a message to the church of today, may be found in the letter to the church at Sardis. They were a church with a

good reputation as a living church, but one which they did not deserve, for they were spiritually dead. A pathetic condition for any church. Rev. 3:1

All hope was not lost, for there were spiritual elements which had not yet died and would spring back into life, providing they strengthened their faith and spiritual life. Rev. 3:1

The key word to this church fits the last day church. **Remember your roots, your beginnings. Be steadfast and repent.**

It is necessary to hear very well this message. Generally we call on the sinner to repent. He is calling for the church to repent. Be vigilant, be strong, strengthen the spirituality yet remaining, of yesteryear, of the forefathers.

Watch, be alert, be awake, recognize the time. The wedding is soon to take place. Preparation for that day is vital to participating in the grand and glorious event.

The opportunity to repent is now. Rev. 3:3

The time to prepare is now. The class of the five foolish virgins will find that indeed the bridegroom will come as a thief in the night, to them. Because they were not aware of the hour, they went off to purchase oil for their lamps.

Study 13

Bridegroom tarried

While the bridegroom tarried. Mt. 25:5a

The timing of the bridegroom is in His hands. He does not deliberately delay His appearing, nor will He come to the wedding before His time.

The Lord is punctual and fulfills all of His schedule on time. He will not prolong His marriage beyond the set time. Heb. 10:37

The vision of His Word is right on time, for He has an appointed time for each and every prophetic utterance pertaining to the last days.

Angelic messengers, Prophets, and Apostles, spoke of the truth that the Lord has predetermined time and all of its events, particularly so, in the end of the age.

Habakkuk spoke of an appointed time which should be accomplished in the end. This too, though it seemed to tarry or be delayed, would come to pass in His time. Hab. 2:3

The Word of the Lord by way of Gabriel (an archangel, the Holy Spirit in angelic manifestation) declared that the visions given to Daniel would be accomplished at the appointed time, in the end of the age. Dan. 8:19

Such terminology is not unusual in the revelation that came to

Daniel. Dan. 10:1, 14, 11:27, 11:25.

Time and the dwelling place of mankind He has also established.
Acts 17:26

Not until the cry of His approaching was there an evident difference between the five wise and the five foolish. They all slumbered and slept. A state of affairs which would be expected of the foolish.

It is rather astonishing to find the wise also nodding and dropping off to sleep. However, the division at this stage has not yet been made. Also, the condition which will determine the difference between the two is oil or a lack thereof.

At midnight, a dark and foreboding hour of the night; in Bible times, an hour when most were sleeping soundly. This hour can portray instances of good or of evil. Take for instance the institution of the first Passover in Egypt. The Lord scheduled it to take place at the midnight hour. Ex. 11:4

To those who were the obedient, the wise who followed the instructions of the Lord, it was an hour of deliverance, that is, to the children of Israel. To the Egyptians it became an hour of death and great sorrow. The most prized, the firstborn from man and beast, died at the visitation of the death angel. Ex. 11:5

What was a great blessing to Israel was a terrific judgment to the ungodly, unbelieving Egyptians. Faith in the promises of the Lord determine the eternal status of each and every individual.

Study 14

Midnight Hour

The midnight hour represents the end of the age. Where a last day revival was at one time exceedingly unpopular as a prophetic word, it is now being proclaimed by almost all in ministry.

It's end result will be our current subject. The ultimate work of the Lord, a Bride for His Son.

Thus far in the parable, we have ten virgins acting in unison. No difference is yet evidenced among them. They all awaken together. They all trim their lamps, enabling them to shine brighter and without smoking. Mt. 25:7

The trimming of the wick is necessary for the continued burning of the lamp. The church of today is comprised of a mixture of ideas and doctrines.

From a natural standpoint it looks impossible to achieve the purity of life and doctrine essential for the blending together that is necessary for the composition of the bride.

Nevertheless, the Bride of Christ will prepare herself for that glorious wedding day. Rev. 19:7

This is the moment of division. The chaff will be separated from the wheat.

The chaff is vital to the kernel of grain until harvest time. Then it is

separated and cast aside. “What is the chaff to the wheat.” Jer. 23:28

To the church at Laodicea, the trimming of the wick was an act of love; a love that many would reject because of its nature. Let it be known, that if the Lord sees fit to work in our lives in such a manner it is an assurance of His love for us.

His act of love is a rebuke, an admonishment, from the Lord - which most assuredly will bring conviction. To be reproved is not at all pleasant. It is not always received graciously. His act of love will contain chastening, punishment of some sort.

Discipline, training, teaching, all with the purpose of a change in the actions of the person being corrected. The range of correction will depend on the personality of the person being corrected.

It can be mild or stern and seemingly almost excessive. Some will respond quicker than others. Stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. 1 Sam. 15:23

Let us not forget, when we are being punished by the Lord, it is for our betterment and is evidence of His love for us. Rev. 3:19

It is the call of the Spirit and the Word to repentance. It is His goodness, His mercy, that brings pressure to bear on us until we come in repentance. Rom. 2:4

Chastening is a very important segment of the Christian experience. It is a sign of assurance that the person being corrected is still fully accepted as a son. Heb. 12:5-7

Study 15

Ephesian Church

The church at Ephesus was not without need of correction. Even though the book of Ephesians portrays the church as that of which the bride will be chosen, there is still a serious shortcoming recorded against them.

They had forsaken their first love. Rev. 2:4

This was a serious offence before the Lord. He called them to remembrance from where they had fallen, or had failed to maintain that all necessary first love.

They too are called upon to repent or pay the consequences which was a removal of the candlestick or source of light from their midst. Rev. 2:5

A deep and strong love for the Lord is an imperative for inclusion in the Bride of Christ.

The Lord Jesus, Who is the very essence, nature and character of love, can only accept those who are totally in love with Him. A people whose love is full and mature.

True agape love, identical with the love which characterizes Him.
1 John 4:16

The condition which separated the two groups, A reserve of oil. Oil is that which typifies the anointing of the Holy Spirit. More so

than any other time in the history of the church, the precious, fresh oil of the Lord must be upon the lives of the church.

Those whose lamps were extinguished for lack of oil are termed as the foolish virgins. Mt. 25:8

Consider Strong's definition of the word foolish. It is self explanatory and very enlightening. "moros, dull or stupid, i.e. heedless, blockhead, absurd."

They then had the audacity to ask the wise to give them of their supply, which of course was refused.

The virgins themselves determine which group they would be included in by the measure of oil which they had with them.

The extreme difference between them is like darkness compared to light. Eccl. 2:13

When we consider the percentages of this division, it is a most awesome moment of time. Fifty percent are wise and the other fifty percent are the foolish.

That is one half of the church which will be separated and culled out of, and separated from the group who will be married to the Lamb of God.

There is no middle ground to be found here. It is a clear cut case of either-or, be filled with the Spirit and be blest. No oil and dead lamps will lead to separation from all that is good and holy. Go, seek for yourself from those merchants who sell oil.

There is a dire warning to be found here to keep our spiritual experience and anointing up to date. Maintain a fresh, and up to date life filled with the Spirit of the Most High.

Study 16

Oil

The reluctance of the wise to share their oil resulted in complete refusal lest they themselves would have insufficient oil. The unwise were commanded to go seek for themselves.

Our standing before the Lord is an individual matter. Likewise the depth of our spiritual experience. Too often we compare ourselves by with others and feel that we are sufficiently spiritual, even more spiritual than they are. Such comparison is most unwise and extremely dangerous. 2 Cor. 10:12

The odds of finding oil at midnight were not great for them. Most any merchant being awakened at that time of night would charge them an exorbitant price. “Buy for yourselves” was the admonition of the wise. Mt. 25:9

Their quest for the oil which was so vital, and that which they should have possessed all the time, caused them to miss the arrival of the Bridegroom. The very event for which they had been waiting, and was so important to them, was missed.

Just imagine the heartache, the depression, the sorrow, of not being there for the moment of His appearance. Those who were ready went in with Him, into the marriage. How important and vital it is to be prepared for this most wonderful event. It is the climax of great joy and extreme happiness of the ages.

One of every two Christians who are living in that day will miss

the marriage of the Lamb, because they did not have a sufficient reserve of oil, {the Spirit}. Mt. 25:10

“And the door was shut”. What a final and unwelcome sound that statement has to it. The scriptures are so wonderful and expressive of the workings of the Lord.

Jesus compared the end of the age to the days of Noah. In His statement, He also referred to marriage, certainly not without purpose. Luke 17:26-27

In Noah’s day it was the Lord who shut the door when the full complement of man and beast had entered. Gen. 7:16

The five wise, filled to full capacity, with the Holy Spirit had already found rest in the Spirit.

They experienced the prophecy of Isaiah of that rest granted by the presence of the Spirit. Isa. 28:11-12

The wise, behind the closed door, will find themselves in the rest of the Lord. While the time of God’s judgment just prior and during the great tribulation rages around them, they will be in perfect and complete peace. They will have entered into perfect union with the Lord Jesus.

This is a rest well worth striving for. The wise will consider these things and being wise will take appropriate action.

Study 17

Oil - continued

Afterward, later, how much later we are not told but what is very apparent is that it was too late! The dilatory, the procrastinator, the indifferent, the lukewarm, will find themselves outside the banqueting hall. Mt. 25:11

If we have a problem with the two different categories we find here, we might take a look at the people who receive the seed, the Word, into good ground. They are divided into three groups, thirty, sixty and one hundredfold. Their spiritual lives would be of an entirely different appearance and measure. Only the one hundredfold could be counted among the wise virgins. Mt. 13:23

Solomon, in his proverbs made a great gulf of existence between the wise and the foolish. The wise inherit the glory of the Lord. When we look at the woman of Revelation twelve we have to agree. She is wondrously clothed. In the mean time, the foolish are just that, foolish and are put to shame. Prov. 3:35

What a different story it would be had the foolish but prepared for this wonderful moment.

“Lord, Lord, open to us”.

One can imagine that every type of plea will be made here. Some with tears, others demanding, some pleading, others begging all very seriously seeking entrance into the marriage, but it is too late. This introduces us to a very serious issue.

In spite of the fact that they are capable of calling on the name of the Lord, not all who appear - or sound to be - spiritual will be accepted into the kingdom of heaven.

The kingdom is made up of those who DO the will of the Father. It is an astonishing thing when we consider the works of those whom He excludes.

They have acted in His name and have prophesied, cast out devils, and done many wonderful works, but they are rejected because they also committed works of iniquity. Mt. 7:21-23

There is yet another lesson to be learned here. The Lord always answers our prayers but not always the way we want. We have to know that He can answer in the negative as well as the positive.

Too often we feel that He can only respond according to our will. Whatever answer He gives us, it is always for the best and for our own good. Knowing His will (as revealed in the Word) and praying accordingly will bring far better results than miscellaneous prayers.

Seeking those things which are from above, from the Lord, will bring good results. To seek something because of a desire of the flesh is to ask amiss and will result in correction from the Lord. James 4:3

Study 18

I knew you not

The response of the Bridegroom from within the house and behind the closed door is of extreme importance.

“I know you not.” Mt. 25:12

It is not a case of knowing or not knowing **who** or **what** they were. The meaning of His words are of far deeper intent. There are times when that which is not committed to the spoken word will speak much louder and reveal the mystery.

The occasion is a wedding. They have entered within the bridal chambers and are not about to take kindly to interruptions. Jesus used the allegory to illustrate the truth.

We are no longer dealing with the parable but with the illustrated truth. We begin with the attitude and vision of Paul. He looked upon the church of the Lord Jesus as a chaste virgin. His full intent was that she be worthy of being the Bride of Christ. 2 Cor. 11:2

(A qualification that the church of his day did not achieve).

It is a standard of spirituality and holiness belonging to the last day church, and will be fully accomplished prior to the marriage. There is a time established for this joyous occasion and the Bride will have fully prepared herself for the wedding. Rev. 19:7

Her wedding gown will be the crowning dress of the ages, the only

one of its kind. She is clothed with the purest and finest of linen. The Greek word for white used here is lampros, meaning, radiant, bright, clear, goodly, gorgeous, white. It is derived from (Gr) lampas, a light, a lamp or a torch. Rev. 19:8

The woman of Revelation twelve is most gorgeously arrayed with the luminous light bodies of creation. She is shining brilliantly with the glory of the Sun, the Lord, the Father, for He is a Sun. Ps. 84:11

Her foundation, the moon; the light which shines in the darkness, the night. It is the sign of the resurrection of Christ. Every month it goes through the process of entering darkness (death), and then coming to full light (resurrection). Before the great and terrible day of the Lord will come it, will be turned into blood. A sign and witness to the world of the blood of redemption. Joel 2:31

She is crowned. She is by all rights a Queen. Twelve stars adorn her head. They are Apostolic authority, shining forth, glistening in their office and service before the Lord. They are an integral part of all that she is to be throughout eternity. Rev. 12:1

How is the hearing of our ears today? Jesus said that the righteous should shine as the SUN in the kingdom of the Father. Mt. 13:43

Study 19

I knew you not - continued

There has never been the solution to a mystery more openly displayed than this one of the relationship of Christ with His church. While calling it a great mystery, he plainly referred to its secret by stating that it was the impending marriage of Christ with His church. Eph. 5:32

The full comprehension of this marriage is of extreme importance to the prospective bride. How can she be a bride if she is not aware of the proposal of marriage and all that is involved?

This is a kingdom mystery and Jesus said that knowledge of kingdom mysteries is imparted to those belonging to the kingdom. Mark 4:11

What is stated to be a mystery should be a revelation to the Lord's people. Rom. 16:25

The wisdom of the Lord is hidden from the eyes of the unsaved but made known and imparted to those who seek and find the wisdom of the Lord. Prior to creation the intent of the Lord was to find a people whom He could glorify with Himself. His eternal purposes cannot be thwarted nor defeated. 1 Cor. 2:7

He will have a glorious bride. Eph. 5:32

Too many Christians are living below their privilege in being a partaker of those things prepared for them.

Many have not seen, nor heard - nor has it even come into their thoughts - all the wonderful spiritual blessings which have been prepared for them. 1Cor. 2:9

This scripture is frequently quoted to cover our ignorance of the mighty workings of the Lord in His church. The very next verse bursts wide open the desire of the Lord to make all of His mysteries, the deep spiritual awareness of His will, completely revealed to His very own. 1 Cor. 2:10

The secrets of the ages pertaining to the purposes of the Lord have been hidden and were a complete mystery. Now, that which is His perfect will, is made manifest to His saints.

No longer is it a matter of being of a certain race, but now all nations of every continent and island are called to enter into His mysteries.

None need be excluded from the very innermost secrets and manifestation of the Lord. It is now Christ in you, dwelling within the spirit nature of man, changing his attitudes and his manner of life, creating within the essence of that mighty and glorious love which emanates from the Lord. Col. 1:26-27

The grand finale of all His efforts will be the bringing forth of a Bride who will love as He loves. The body of Christ, His Bride, which will reach all the purity and perfection which is to be found in Him.

He will have a people bearing His exact being and nature of perfection. Col. 1:28

Study 20

I knew you not - continued

The statement of the Bridegroom, “I know you not” is the language of that which constitutes marriage. Marriage is not a ceremony, it is an act. Eve was taken out of Adam and in marriage the two were to become one flesh. Gen. 2:24

Jesus verified the validity of the marital act by declaring that the two would be one. Mt. 19:5

The Apostle Paul was to repeat these words in Eph. 5:31 and with them revealed the great mystery. He was speaking of Christ and His church. Remember the words of the angel to Mary, “For with God nothing shall be impossible.” Luke 1:37

Mary experienced a meeting with the Lord, in the person of the Holy Spirit. She was to be enveloped, captivated in, and by, the presence of the Spirit of the Lord. Anyone who has ever had the Spirit of the Lord come upon them will strongly verify the glory and joy of such an occasion.

The word “overshadowed” is self explanatory. Strong gives us this explanation, “to cast a shade upon, i.e. (by analogy) to envelope in a blaze of brilliancy, figuratively to invest with preternatural influence.” What a glorious and most sacred moment as the seed, the Word that was becoming flesh, was implanted within her body.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, responded to the annunciation of the angel with the words, “I know not a man”. How could it possibly

happen? Luke 1:34

The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream informing him of the virginity of Mary. He accepted it as the will of the Lord. Not only was he a just man but he was a man of faith. Though Joseph lived with her as her husband for the term of her pregnancy “he knew her not.” Mt. 1:25

Thus we see from the language of the Word of the Lord that when the Bridegroom said, “I know you not” it conveyed a deeper thought than just a rejection of recognition. They would not be allowed to enter into the consummation of the marriage.

The term is found to be used in the Old Testament with the same meaning. Judah, in failing to keep his promise and in a moment of indiscretion impregnated his daughter-in-law. Tamar, was certainly not without complicity in the matter. Gen. 38:11-26

“And he knew her no more.” The Scriptures have a discreet way of handling delicate matters, while at the same time, not hiding the misdeeds of humanity.

The virgin birth of the Lord Jesus is one of the very vital and fundamental teachings of the Word of the Lord. It needs to be fully embraced and declared to all men, everywhere.

Study 21

144,000

We find a special group of individuals singled out for particular attention. They are noted as being one hundred and forty four thousand. Rev. 14:1

They are a part of the Bride of Christ and have a close affinity with Him. They are sealed with a very special seal, the most wonderful in all of the Word. They have His name, the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (NIV) and His Father's name written on their foreheads.

In order for this to take place they had to be a triumphant, victorious group. Jesus called them overcomers. They will have the name of God written upon them. Thus we see that our God does have a name which identifies Him and separates Him from any and every thing which might be called god.

Furthermore, they will bear the name of the New Jerusalem, so they are an integral part of that eternal, and only holy city.

Then, He who had been the Logos until His birth when He was given the name of the Lord Jesus Christ will place His name upon them. Rev. 3:12

Their purity and holiness is that of a virgin. The Greek word parthenos is used in relationship to them. The word carries the meaning of a maiden daughter living apart in and under the protection of her father's house. The best scriptural connotation is

the fact that Mary was a virgin. Parthenos is the word that was used in relationship to Mary. Mt 1:23

There is no difference in the word between Mathew and Revelation. Mary was a virgin, the one hundred and forty four thousand are female virgins. Parthenos is not the Greek word used in reference to a male virgin. It is used in relationship to a female virgin.

They have a message, a new song given them, which is exclusively theirs.

No one else could sing their song. The fulfillment of their place in the kingdom of God and in the body of Christ is absolutely unique.

Paul speaks of those who have been freed, who have died to the law, in order to be married to another.

The redeemed are the various members of the body of Christ. Each member has its own function even as our natural bodies cooperate and work together. They are to bear fruit. Rom. 7:4

As members of the body of Christ, each member will contribute to the whole body. Not all members have the same office by any means; there are differences - but accomplish perfect coordination. 1 Cor. 12:27-30

The one hundred forty four thousand are a most vital organ in the glorified body of Christ, which is His Church, His Bride.

Study 22

144,000 - continued

The body of Christ, the church, His Bride will have to come to perfect unity and harmony in order to be what He has called her to be, that is perfect. While it is a group of many members, it has to function as one, in perfect coordination and simultaneously.

As long as its members are divided into segments it cannot be the body of Christ. The adherents to the body cannot operate as one as long as there is anything creating disagreement among them. The Bride must be one with Christ in every aspect. 1 Cor. 1:12

This shows us the impossibility of the church of today becoming one, and even being considered as the Bride of Christ. The Bride will be gathered from among them, and will come together in perfect agreement.

There is no racial preference to be found in the true body of Christ. They are gathered from the Jew and Gentile, rich and poor, bond and free. Their status in life is not of material value.

Their Spiritual life and attitude is that which counts.

They are blessed to have been included among the Spirit filled. Membership in the body of Christ is by baptism in the Spirit, into perfect accord and belief.

The Lord has established His standards and human elements will never alter them. The flow of the Spirit in this body of many

members is necessary to cause them to adhere and to continue to flow in the Spirit. 1 Cor. 12:13

There will be none in the body of Christ who have not been filled with the Spirit and continue to be motivated by the Spirit; only the Holy Spirit can cause the many members to coordinate and to move as one.

Paul emphasized the fact of the individuality of the various members of the human body, each one having a specific duty and purpose, and in a healthy body not conflicting one with the other in their precise role.

In the true body of Christ there can be no conflict of interest nor dissatisfaction with the place allotted them.

The work of each part of the body is of equal value with all contributing to the whole.

There may be no displeasure with the place designated to one in the body of Christ. All parts, however seemingly unlovely are of equal importance.

The Lord is the creator of the body, and is building it according to His own plans and objectives.

The one hundred forty four thousand are an extremely important organ in the body of Christ. Without them, the ultimate, the apex of the plan of salvation, could not be accomplished.

Their importance to the body cannot be over-emphasized. 1 Cor. 15:15-21

Study 23

Spiritual body

The Lord will build the Spiritual body of Christ. It is a spiritual entity, showing forth the reality of that which is mystical in the sight of the Lord.. We must always remember, that with the Lord, spiritual is that which is real, eternal and everlasting.

All things pertaining to this world, which we call real, are but transitory. They are here today and gone tomorrow.

The unifying of the body of Christ is the result of the workings of the Spirit and the Word in the lives of those who are new creatures in Christ. Its is the good pleasure of the Lord to establish each and every one of them in the body, at His own pleasure. 1 Cor. 12:18

Without diversity of operation and responsibility in the body, there would be no body.

Most certainly, all would want to be incorporated into the most glamorous parts. Such is not to be the case. Regardless of the particular part or organ, whether considered by some to be beautiful or ugly, all will share and share alike in the glory of the Lord that is manifest in the bride.

There will be many members, but still one body. 1 Cor. 12:20

Actually, those parts which are considered to be of less importance are to receive the greater attention. Because of their responsibilities and contributions to the body, the whole of the body will heap

more abundant honor upon them. The assembly and structure of the body is an act of God. He alone has the ability to combine such a diversified group into a perfectly synchronized team.

This body, His body, will have the ability to exercise spiritually every role assigned to the natural body.

Out of Adam, the Lord created an Eve, from Christ the Lord will create His Bride. For, it is the Lord who will blend and adhere the church into a perfect unit. 1 Cor. 12:24

Just imagine, a church without a dissenting voice.

That is a miracle. Jesus prayed for His disciples, surely that would include His prospective Bride, that they might be one, with the same unity that exists between the Father and the Son. An affinity which is perfect and absolute.

How could any prayer that He prayed ever go unanswered? Not only did he pray that they might be as He and the Father, but He prayed that He and the Father might dwell within His people, binding them into the same Divine unity.

Where the author and finisher of unity is dwelling there can be nothing less than full and complete unity. John 17:21-22

The body of Christ will demonstrate perfect unity and harmony as they are motivated by the Holy Spirit. The example. Acts 2:46

Study 24

More on the 144,000

Twelve tribes, and twelve thousand sealed from each of the twelve tribes. Rev. 14:4-8

Who are they? Most will immediately guess that they are Jews.

Because their natural birth was into one of the twelve tribes does that make them a candidate for this very special group? Who is a Jew?

We think of Paul's statement that a Jew, in the sight of the Lord, is not reckoned after the order of natural birth, and that circumcision is not of spiritual value. Rom. 2:28

“He is a Jew, which is one inwardly.” Circumcision is a work of separation, and cleansing wrought in the heart, and not in the flesh. It is a spiritual work accomplished within the spirit of mankind.

It is not a religious ritual of any spiritual value - when it is consummated in the flesh. Rom. 2:29

When Paul wrote to the Galatians, he evaluated circumcision to be of no spiritual value. That which counts with the Lord is a new creature. All this is a fair and illuminating assessment of the requirement of the Lord for a spiritual people.

We are reminded that the Lord does not respect person or nationality. Christ died for all. Rom. 2:9

Therefore all who are born of the Spirit are in Christ Jesus. The blessings of the Lord are distributed **equally**, to the Jew first and then also to the Gentile. Rom. 2:10

The same is true with the rebuke and judgment of the Lord. All receive equal punishment and reward. The Lord reckons no difference between Jew and Gentile.

The kingdom of God in earth has been **taken from** a natural people and has been **transferred to** a spiritual people. A people who demonstrate and produce the fruits of righteousness.

From this nation, no nationality on earth is excluded. Jew and Gentile are made one by the blood of Christ. As He has made all nations of one blood, so, He has made a great **new nation** by the blood of Christ. Addressing the Jews, **Jesus said that the kingdom would be taken from them and given to the new nation, the spiritual people and nation.** Mt. 21:43

He also spoke of the soon desolation that was to come upon them because **they had not received the truth** which had come to them. Their house was to be desolate. A people shorn of the power and presence of the Lord, a matter which is rectified by the individual, not the nation.

All who receive Christ as Savior, and meet the Divine requirements, are candidates to be a part of the one hundred forty four thousand. They are spiritual Israelites.

Study 25

144,000 - continued

The chosen, the elect, Israel, the twelve tribes - are they those who are of the Law? Or of grace?

The scriptures very definitely give us **two groups**, dividing them into a **natural nation**, a people who are what they are because of their decadency... the other, a **people of faith**. Those born of, and filled with, the Spirit. Obviously the Spiritual nation. They are termed to be a foolish nation because they are a mixture of all the nations of the world. Rom. 10:19

They have been found and accepted into the family of the Lord even though they had not followed the Lord in the way of the Law, and had not previously sought after Him. Rom. 10:20

But concerning Israel, Paul called them a stubborn and disobedient people. Rom. 10:21

A further description is found in Isaiah 65:1-7

If one would want to adhere to the letter of the Law and insist that these all are members of the twelve tribes, that would not be difficult.

Israel of today is composed of a multitude of nations. From the fair skinned Nordic nations, to the dark skinned people of Ethiopia.

I doubt that the Lord would find it difficult to find twelve thousand

descendents from each of the twelve tribes who now are in Christ and follow Him.

To be a member of the one hundred forty four thousand they must be the chosen of the Lord. Chosen in Christ Jesus, not according to religion or the Law. Eph. 1:4

A choice which the Lord, with His foreknowledge, made before the foundation of the world. This is matter which was settled from eternity.

It is obviously very important to the Lord. As used by Paul and Peter, “chosen” is not a term which may be applied to the natural people, but is definitely directed to those who are of the Spirit.

They are the generation of the chosen. 1 Peter 2:9

The chosen, the elect, are identified as being a people who are sanctified by the working of the Spirit in their lives; they therefore are a spiritual people.

The Lord approved them because of His foreknowledge. They were not picked out while others were rejected.

Because He is God, He knows the end from the beginning.

The spiritual people are a people of complete obedience to His Word and will. They are in complete surrender and submission to all of His instruction and purposes. They are a people who have believed in the blood of the Lord Jesus as the only source of cleansing and forgiveness from sin. **They believe the Word of the Lord with all of their hearts. 1 Peter 1:2**

Study 26

Composition of the Bride

The Bride of Christ is to be a special people. She is the handiwork of the Lord Himself. As he formed Eve, and made her to be a mate for Adam, so, in the end of the age, He will once again form a people whom He will create for His Son.

We are His workmanship. Created, formed, shaped, in the likeness and model of the Lord Jesus. Abiding, dwelling in Him. Gaining strength and sustenance from the Word.

A company, a body, of people who are prone to good works. Works of righteousness and holiness, as they follow the pattern established for them by the Lord Jesus.

They fit perfectly into the eternal plan of the Lord. Living a life unto which He has called them and walking in His paths. Eph. 2:10

As far as the world and the religious order of the age is concerned, the people upon whom the Lord will bestow His great favor are a nondescript, rag-tag people who have no pedigree.

They do not have the history and background of Israel. **They are from every tribe and nation.** The Lord said through Moses that they are not a people, or a known and admired nation. They are even called a foolish nation.

These words were spoken to a nation (Israel) which had greatly displeased the Lord, **not once but repeatedly.**

Now He is calling, and turning to, those who were outcasts. Deut. 32:21, Rom. 10:19

This people who were once far from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenant of promise, completely without the Lord, have now been turned around.

They are now included, they are the people of the commonwealth, and heirs of the promises of the Lord. They are the people of the Lord.

Where once acceptance and inclusion was by race, it is now by grace.

No longer can one nation say that we are the people of the Lord.

Now it is the people of every tongue tribe and nation who have been born of the Spirit. A people who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lord Jesus. Eph. 2:12-13

The fence, the division, has been eliminated.

There is no difference.

There is no such thing in the body of Christ as a Messianic Jew, or a convert from any other nation or religion.

If we are in Christ, we are all Christians, period...

The Lord Jesus has made of Jew and Gentile one new creature. A new man. Showing partiality to no one. Eph. 2:14-15

Any differentiation is man made and not the working of the Spirit of the Lord. All are reconciled into one body by the death of the Lord Jesus on the cross. Gal. 2:16

Study 27

Composition - continued

The new people of the Lord.

Previously they were not a nation or a people.

That has been changed, they are now the people of God.

Where they were without mercy, they have now received mercy from the Lord. His great love has been made manifest in their lives. 1 Peter 2:10

As the chosen of the Lord, they are the favored favorite of Him who loves them with His great everlasting love. Because of Spiritual birth, they are the offspring of God. 1 Peter 2:9

Remember, no one, Jew or Gentile, who will meet the criterion necessary to be identified with this people, will be refused citizenship.

They are the royal priesthood.

In their dedication and consecration to the Lord, these will have fulfilled the heart's desire of the Lord in having a very special people.

They are the spiritual house, the priesthood of true holiness. A building, a temple constructed of lively stones, thus the whole structure is built of stones living in the day of its erection. Their

presentation of spiritual offerings is exactly according to the perfect will of the Lord. 1 Peter 2:5

A dual position, combined in one. They are themselves kingly, and will be ministering to the King of kings. It is the good pleasure of the Lord to designate this people to be both kings and priests ministering before Him. Rev. 1:6

The dual ministry follows the example given by the prophet of the builder of the temple being both king and priest. Zec. 6:13

What great gratification it will give Him to have a people who are exactly like Him, in every aspect.

The children of Israel were called to become a kingdom of priests and an holy nation. Thus we see the purpose of the Lord, not only a people but a certain type of people, a nation of holiness. Ex. 19:6

There is a beauty to holiness that is not to be found elsewhere. This is an important item when related to the Bride. She is the one who has been beautified by His holiness. A cosmetic, unequaled in this world.

We are to worship Him in the beauty of holiness. 1 Chr. 16:29

The man without the wedding garment was cast out. Mt. 22:11-13

The new creature is one in whom is demonstrated the cleansing effect of redemption by the blood of Christ. He is now made to be holy and righteous. Eph. 4:24

Holiness is that which is becoming to the redeemed. We are called to be unblameable in holiness. 1 These. 3:13

Holiness is not of our own making. We are invited to become

partakers of His holiness.

It is something that is imparted unto us of the Lord and not our own works. Heb. 12:10

Study 28

Calling

A peculiar people. A word coined well before the vernacular of today which could connote them to be an odd, strange group of people. It is true, they are different - but different only by an act of God which is available to everyone who will believe.

They are that church which has been purchased by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 2:38

The word is used by Paul and reads “purchased possession” in Eph. 1:14; generally a purchase is made of something which we anticipate will bring pleasure to us. How much more, the purchase, by the Lord Jesus of His church. She is the joy and delight of His heart and life.

The purchaser takes possession. Those purchased by the blood of redemption, the blood of Christ Jesus, are completely His, both physically and spiritually, body and spirit.

Sounds possessive, and it is. However, it is a joy to be possessed of the Lord. To be able to live His life is the greatest thing in this life. 1 Cor. 6:20

One evidence of these purchased people is that of being filled with the fruits of righteousness. Phil. 1:11

A response in the redeemed that is as natural as the rising of the sun. That new creature is a changed individual. His ultimate

purpose in the giving of Himself was that He might gain a people who are living a life of purity. A nation which is willing to surrender their hearts and live to Him, dedicated to the working of His will in their lives. Titus 2:14

They are a called people who have responded to the voice of the Lord. They leave the darkness and sin of this world to walk in the glorious and wonderful light of the Word of the Lord. 1 Peter 2:9

The church of perfection, the Bride of Christ in the last days is the high calling of God, in Christ Jesus. Phil. 3:14

As we have already noted, the calling is not to one race of people but to all who inhabit the earth. Rom. 9:24

It is a beautiful calling, for we find that we are called unto the fellowship of the Lord Jesus. A fellowship which takes us into the inner circle and the secret chambers of the Most High. 1 Cor. 1:9

The calling of the Lord is unto holiness. Not a holiness according to our standards, but His.

He provides everything necessary for that holiness to become a part of the life of those who join to Him. 1 Thess. 2:12 2 Tim. 1:9

The glory of the Lord and the virtue found in the Lord Jesus are made available to those who are the called of the Lord. 2 Peter 1:3

In summing it all up, the full complement of all that He is, is freely bestowed upon all those who react to the glorious call of the Lord.

Study 29

Winnowing

The great mystery is the association, more factually, the marriage of Christ and His church, an event which is scheduled for the end of the age. The Bride, the body of Christ, is constituted of those who are living at that time, and have met all the divine requirements for a Bride of such high stature. She is the mystical body of Christ, which is scattered all over the face of the earth. She is unified in Christ.

Her many members form one body. They are joined together into a unit, and will work with and contribute strength and ability to function one to another. While united into one, they do not all have the same duty. Rom. 12:4-5

Her ability to function as a unit is by the power of the Spirit. There is only one body. It is not an organization, but an organism. A living, vital, Spirit-led group of people, within the organized church of today, which will heed the call of the Spirit and will follow His instructions.

It hurts to say this because I detest a split, a swarm or a separation among the brethren, whether it be in a local church or an organization. However there is a moment of choice coming soon, where each and every member of the church must decide just whom and what they will follow. The call of the Word is to 'come out,' separate yourselves from the unclean and the impure and the Lord will receive you. 2 Cor. 6:17

Religious idols are spoiling true worship in today's church. There is a move to mix the church with old testament practices by bringing in articles and practices portraying those found in the tabernacle and temple. All those things were but shadows of the real which was to come.

Now, by the Spirit, we visit the true temple and tabernacle, and worship in the Spirit the living Lord, not an idol, or a building or some other object. It is no longer a building which we visit in order to worship before Him, but now, we are the temple, He dwells with His Bride and is in her. He will walk in her and they shall be the people of the most high. 2 Cor. 6:16

What is the chaff to the wheat? Saith the LORD. Jer. 23:28c

The chaff is vital to the wheat until winnowing time. Then there is a great separation made.

The kernel of grain is gathered into the granary and a value is placed on it.

The chaff is burned and destroyed. It has lost its value.

There is a sifting time very near and there will be drastic changes made in the lives of those who serve the Lord. There will be no chaff to be found in the Bride.

Study 30

The Undeclared

The undeclared. Rev. 14:4

They are female, not male. The Lord gave Moses a statute whereby the name of a deceased man would be continued by his brother taking the deceased wife as his wife. The first born was then to receive the name of the deceased, that his posterity and name might be continued. Deut. 25:5-6

To refuse was to be taken to the gates of the city where the elders sat judging situations arising because of a violation of the statutes of the Lord. If he then continued to refuse, she was to loose a shoe from his feet and spit in his face. Most definitely a degrading and embarrassing act. He then became known as the man who had his shoe loosed. Deut. 25:7-10

However, this law did not apply to the high priest. Because he had been crowned with the holy anointing oil (a type of the baptism of the Spirit) he was restricted to choosing a virgin to be his wife.

A widow, even his brothers wife, was defiled, only to him, by having been married to his brother. Also included were women who were divorced, profane (unholy or polluted by the standards of the law) or an harlot. Lev. 21:13-14

Jesus is our High Priest. Heb. 3:1

Thus we can comprehend the meaning when John wrote that the

one hundred forty four thousand are not defiled after the manner of women. That which hindered the marriage of the High Priest to a woman was her lack of being a virgin.

With this in view, supposing we gave a slight variation to the word 'with' and changed it to, 'after the manner of women.' In other words, because they had been involved with a man and were no longer virgins they were excluded from being a member of the one hundred forty four thousand.

This special group are members of the body of Christ. It is imperative that there be absolutely no defilement, of any sort, even what might be considered just a small or minor defect.

The very fact that they are singled out as they are in the vision given to John speaks of their importance. Their experiences in the Lord will be felt by the entire body of Christ, His pure and holy Bride.

Their very close and consistent relationship with the Lord Jesus is another strong evidence of their importance to the plan of the Lord for the ages to come.

To man, the standards of the Lord are unachievable, but with the Lord, all things are possible. The only High Priest who is holy, harmless, undefiled and without sin, the perfect sacrifice is able to accomplish His perfect will in our lives.

And He will do it. Note. Heb. 7:26

Study 31

Virgins

“For they are virgins.” Rev. 14:4

A statement of fact which is simple, plain and to the point. They are just that, virgins. The puzzle as to the who, why and what, ends when we accept the word just as it has been written.

Bible scholars in general agree that the Greek word parthenos, virgin, is used here, and that it means a true virgin. One who has never experienced sex of any kind. I have done considerable research and find that Bible scholars (?) evaluate the word parthenos to be either masculine, feminine or neutral, as used in our scripture.

There seems to be some disagreement and confusion over the word, virgin. Using the Word to interpret the Word, Mary, the mother of Jesus was a virgin (parthenos). Luke 1:27

That is itself should illuminate us as to the status of these who are also virgins in Rev. 14:4

Pure and simple, a virgin is just that a virgin and nothing else.

The New Testament does not use parthenos in reference to a male as a virgin. In Hebrew a betula is a virgin. As was Rebekah. Gen. 24:16

An almah is a young unmarried female, a virgin. Isa. 7:14

In Greek a parthenos, is a virgin, living under the protection of her family, until betrothed or married. In English the word is virgin. Mt. 1:23

There is a word for a male who is in similar circumstances. One who is chaste and was without having had intercourse, they are called eunuchs. If these in Rev. 14:4 were meant to be male then surely the word eunuch would have been used.

In Hebrew the word cariyc is translated eunuch. Isa. 56:3

In Greek, the word is eunouchos, or a eunuch. Acts 8:27

In English the word is eunuch.

If this group were men, then why were they not called eunuchs? If our languages were so poor as to not differentiate between male and female then we could possibly squeeze in the thought of these being men.

However, when we have words with positive meanings and showing definite differences between the two, how can we do an injustice to the Word by making parthenos to be eunouchos?

If the body of Christ is a complete body, and every organ found in the human body is duplicated in the body of Christ, then there must be a segment of that body which requires that the nature of those involved be exactly what the Scriptures say they are, virgins.

The body of Christ will not be an abstract organism but will be constructed, molded and created according to His will and purpose.

Study 32

New things

The Lord delights in new things. Especially that which pertains to the body of Christ. There is no question but what we are on the verge of a new thing, a new, a fresh move of the Spirit of the Lord such as the world has never seen or experienced before. The new thing is the creation of the Lord and involves a woman surrounding a man. Jer. 31:22

There is most certainly a reference here to the birth of the Christ child. But then, Jeremiah said it would be a new thing something fresh and wondrous. The woman in Revelation twelve is seen about to give birth and when she delivers it is a man child, or a male who is brought forth. Thus far in the history of mankind only the woman has been able to give birth and the Lord is not about to change that.

With the Lord, new things begin with a new creature. A new, a different, a spiritual person is the one who emerges from a face to face meeting with the Lord. The man who is in Christ has the possibility of becoming new in every facet of his personality.

The past life, the life once lived, is gone, it is deserted, and evaluated as unworthy, unbecoming of one who would follow Christ Jesus. Religious orders and practices are totally unfruitful. That which counts with the Lord is what He makes us to be, and that is a new man, a new creature, a new being.

The foundation of the eternity before us is in the new thing which

the Lord will accomplish. He will have all things to be new for He is the Lord of the new heavens and the new earth, which He will populate with a people like unto Himself. Rev. 21:5

The pleasure, His delight and the joy of the Lord is found in His creation. All of His creation He has brought forth for His eternal purposes. In particular that which will become His Bride. Rev. 4:11

It was not a good thing that Adam was alone. He needed a companion, one like himself, yet different. Gen. 2:18

Therefore the Lord opened his side, shed blood, and of his rib made a wife for him. She was formed into a woman by the hands of the potter. His nail scarred hands are shaping the church into His Bride. She came out of his side, even as the Bride is redeemed by blood and water, that which flowed from the wounded side of the Lord Jesus. John 19:34

They both bore the image and the likeness of the Lord. His promise to them was that they were to have dominion over the earth and to be fruitful and multiply. Gen. 1:28

They were to fill the face of the earth with their descendents.

Study 33

A Bride, in His image

The procedures of the Lord are to be found in the prophetic utterances of His Word. While they are hidden and secret, it is His desire to reveal them. “It is the glory of God to conceal a thing but the honor of kings is to search out a matter.” Prov. 25:2

The thing, be it a word, or a subject found in the Word of the Lord, is often covered and hidden from the eyes of those who do not know the Lord.

But to those who are made of Him, to be kings and priests, all matters pertaining to the Lord are to be made known. It is to their benefit and glory that they discover the hidden and secrets of the Word.

Especially those which pertain to the end of the age and the mighty work which He will accomplish in His people.

The unseen, the invisible God. Not known after the human senses, for He is not to be seen, or felt. Rom. 1:20

Nevertheless He is made quite visible by the creation which surrounds each and every person on the face of the earth. Moreover He has given to His people the Comforter, the Holy Spirit whose responsibility is to take the things of Christ and show them unto us.

He is the Divine teacher making known the plans and works of the Lord Jesus. John 14:26

Be it a mystery, a secret, or hidden matter, the Lord will not leave His very own in darkness concerning the plan which He has for His church in the end of the age. She is to be a Bride and is to be married to Christ. Paul called it a great mystery. Eph. 5:32

Unfortunately, there are those who look upon this as some abstract, impersonal matter without much substance. With rather a ho-hum attitude, as if it were not the climax of His mighty working in His church.

The marriage of the Lamb to His counterpart, a Bride, bearing His glorious likeness and purity. Conformed jointly (if you please) to the image, the similarity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Two beings, sharing and sharing alike the same spiritual status and fully equal in all things.

It may seem difficult to the natural mind, but those who are in possession of a spiritual mind will recognize that the Lord is calling today for a people of deep and full consecration. Rom. 8:29

The carnal mind, whether ignorant or intelligent, can never comprehend or receive the things manifest by the Spirit pertaining to the Word of the Lord.

Reputation, intelligence, learning, do not supersede the revelation of the Spirit given to the body of Christ when He illuminates the truths of the Word to our hearts. 1 Cor. 2:14

The Spirit and the Bride are sending out their invitation. God grant us ears to hear. Rev. 22:17

Study 34

The New

All things new. That literally means all things. Rev. 21:5

The former (current) earth and universe has become old and grossly contaminated by sin and iniquity. Spoiled and worn out by the works and efforts of human kind. Amazingly, this is something that even the unbelievers are talking about today.

We have many movements arising now, whose purpose is to save the earth for future generations. Change the actions of mankind and make new laws concerning the physical pollution of the earth, its destiny is set.

Catastrophic events are reserved for the end of the age in relationship to the heavens and the earth. The ultimate being that the heavens and the earth which are now will flee from the presence of the throne of the Lord. Rev. 20:11

After the thousand year Millennial reign of Christ, and the subsequent battle of Gog and Magog the old will flee for ever. Never again will they be involved in anything. They are sucked into a black hole, an eternity of separation from all that is God like. Rev. 20:11

The new will be everlasting, eternal. It will never be contaminated by sin. Its newness will never grow old. Ageing of all things, including people, will not be found there. The new is spiritual and not natural. It is holy and not carnal, therefore cannot corrupt.

The following scriptures pertain to the new heavens and new earth. They are the creation of the Lord. Not a renovation or a restoration, not even a recreation of the old. In the new, the old will never be remembered. Isa. 65:17

We can all be thankful for that.

The throne of the Lord. The heart, the center, the core of that which is new will be the new Jerusalem. The true and only holy city. She is arrayed in all the splendor and glory of the Lord, for she is seen as a Bride, prepared for her husband. The beauty of the Lord is upon her. Rev. 21:2

The cities of this world are planned and built by man, and will all be destroyed, including so-called “holy cities”. This true eternal city, the new Jerusalem is the handiwork of the Lord and is perfect in every detail. The Lord will find great joy in the ultimate work of His hands. She is the delight of His heart.

Its inhabitants are a joy, and thrill to His being. It is the city of joy and happiness there will never again be heard the sound of weeping or crying.

The former things have all passed away. Isa. 65:17-19

Study 35

The New Jerusalem

The new heavens and the new earth are the dwelling place of eternal unspoiled righteousness. The righteous, Lord, and the people of His righteousness, will make their abode there. Never again will the righteous work of the Lord be spoiled by sin or unrighteousness. 2 Peter 3:13

All that it is and ever will be is reserved for those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. Rev. 21:27

The Lord will establish, on that new earth, that great and marvelous city called the New Jerusalem, the Bride of Christ, the dwelling place of the Most High. No corruption of any kind will ever be found in her.

The call of the Spirit is going forth in our day. It is time to put on the robes of righteousness. Garments of beauty and holiness. The uncircumcised and the unclean are forever rejected from that which the Lord will prepare. Isa. 52:1

A New Jerusalem. This time a spiritual city, an eternal city. The city of true holiness. The actual dwelling place of the Lord, His throne. All the majesty and glory of the Lord to be made manifest in her. She is gorgeous beyond description. While temporal, worldly elements with which we are familiar are used to describe her, in all actuality, the spiritual counter part is excessively far more beautiful. The natural things are of the earth earthy, but that which adorns her is uncontaminated, pure and holy. She is filled to

capacity with the fullness of the glory of the Lord. She is a city of brilliant light. Glowing, scintillating with the light of the Lord. Rev. 21:11

The glory of the Lord is in and upon her, while the Lamb is her light. Rev. 21:23

The glory with which she is filled is of such magnitude that she will never need the sun or moon to furnish light for her. She is that sun clothed woman. Rev . 12:1

She possesses the complete glory of the sun, the moon and the stars. 1Cor. 15:41

The Lord God is not only light, but His glory and being is like the sun. Ps. 84:11

He shines with greater glory than a sun. The Lord Jesus is the Sun of righteousness. Mal. 4:2

His glory is the glory of the Father. John 17:1

The glory of the Father was made manifest in His Son, the Lord Jesus on the mount of transfiguration. His face became as the sun, His clothing became as exceeding white as snow and was shining, glittering, scintillating, glowing as the light of the sun. Mt. 17:2, Mark 9:2

Peter, James, and John saw the Lord Jesus in His eternal glory. That is the same glory that will encompass and inundate the New Jerusalem. Mt. 13:43

Study 36

A New Race

The first Adam and his wife Eve were blessed of the Lord that they might be fruitful and multiply, thus filling the earth with descendents of like nature. Gen. 1:28

In a newly created earth, the Lord set about to inhabit it with a new race of people. A people who were created in the image and likeness of the Almighty.

Physically, man is made in the appearance of the Lord. Man has the same triune make up, for he is body, soul and spirit. Three identifiable components, yet one human being. Gen. 1:26

The seed of eight who survived the flood were the beginning of a new race. All others were eradicated from off the face of the earth because of the excessive sin which had become common place to them. It was a new beginning, an opportunity to live a life that would please the Lord.

The same command was given to them as that which the Lord gave to Adam and Eve. Be fruitful and multiply. Gen. 9:1

In Abraham, Isaac and Jacob we find one of those beautiful types of the Godhead. The Father, Abraham. The Son, Isaac and the Spirit, Jacob or Israel, who became the prolific one.

The man, from whom issued the twelve tribes of Israel. He was the fruitful one. So typical of the fruitfulness of the Holy Spirit, not

only in the fruit of the Spirit but in the multiplication of the Godly as well.

In changing his name from Jacob, heel catcher or supplanter, to Israel, (he will rule as God), the Lord also changed His nature. Gen. 35:10

Briefly, in defense of Jacob, remember he made a deal with his brother Esau, and Esau SOLD him the birthright.

The same command was given to Israel as had been given to Adam and to Noah. Only this time more detail is given.

Israel was destined to become a great nation under the leadership and blessing of the Lord. Moreover, the scope of his descendents would not be limited to one nation only, but a multiplication of nations were to be found in his descendents.

Kings as well were to be found in those who counted Israel as a forefather. History bears witness of the authenticity of the prophecy of the Lord to the man named Israel. The greatest, the most outstanding King, is none other than the King of kings the Lord Jesus Christ. Gen. 35:11

Hence, we get a glimpse into the plan and purpose of the Lord in relationship to this earth. Multiplication, increase, the enlargement of His family, is what He had in mind.

Study 37

Numberless

The promise of the Lord to Abram, as to the number of his progeny is astonishing. Certainly, to some unbelievable. Nevertheless, it is the promise of the Lord that his descendents would be as numberless as the stars of the heavens. Abram may not have been able to see the vast number of stars which are made visible today, thanks to powerful telescopes, but the Lord knew their number. Not only their number but He also knows their names. Ps. 147:4

The promise is from the Lord, and He knew exactly what He was saying to Abram, though Abram may not have known the vastness of the promise. His promise to Abram opens up tremendous possibilities for the new heavens and the new earth and their being populated by a new race of people.

The universe in which we live is made up of some one hundred billion galaxies. Each galaxy contains billions of stars, or suns. Even this is not an established number for the farther out into space man is able to see, the more he finds yet other galaxies. We do not yet know the extent of the universe nor the full number of the stars of the heavens. The Lord knows their exact number and in the evening hours brings them out one by one (makes them to be visible) and He also knows their names, because He has named them. Isa. 40:26

If the total number of human beings from the first man Adam down to the very last were all included and granted entrance into the new heavens and earth, their number would be but a small

fraction of the existing stars. We know that will not happen. Only the yet smaller fraction of the redeemed will enter heaven. Where will the Lord find such a tremendous volume of persons? He promised it and He will keep His promise.

The prophetic utterance of Jeremiah declared the impossibility of numbering the stars of the heaven. Adding that the seed of David would fit into this numberless category, and the Levites which minister before the Lord would likewise be as numberless. The reference to David elevated his prophecy into a Messianic prophecy. Jer. 33:22

The Lord Jesus is proclaimed to be the “root of David”, therefore has the authority to open the seven seals. Rev. 5:5

As the “root of David” He is also the bright and morning star. Rev. 22:15

His presence upon the throne makes it to be an eternal throne, an eternal kingdom, populated with a vast number who bear His star like brilliance. They will all shine as the stars for they will be filled with the glory of the Lord. Dan. 12:3

Study 38

Motherhood

To give more emphasis to the posterity of Abram the Lord included the sand of the sea shore. Gen. 22:17

Immediately, it becomes apparent that we are once again dealing with a vast number. How long would it take just to count a handful of sand? In using such uncountable items, which exist in such a great volume, it is very obvious that the Lord is making promises that are for a future life. That which seems and is impossible with man is possible with the Lord. Mark 10:27

The third element used to describe the number of the descendents of Abram is the dust of the earth. Gen. 13:16

This time the Lord has used a fine all prevailing element to convey to us the extremely great number involved. Here, for the third time the greatness of the number is that which is high lighted.

Thus we are given three great possibilities of the Lord having plans for the new heavens and the new earth, which indicate the building of a spiritual race of people.

Heavenly Jerusalem, is stated as being a mother, moreover the mother of us all. She lives in liberty, free from the works of the flesh and the bondages of the past life. Gal. 4:26

Motherhood is the destiny of that glorious city of the Lord. Most unfortunately, the interest and eyes of too many are focused today

on that which is natural. The interest of the Lord is on that which is spiritual. As a prospective bridegroom His attention is centered on His bride and not on a city of this world. More so, due to the fact that the earthly city lives in bondage. Gal. 4:25

The Lord is not bound by the natural way of accomplishing a matter. He has made promises and then waited until the promise was a natural impossibility and then moved in a miraculous manner to accomplish His goal.

Paul wrote of Sarah who was to bear a son in her golden years, at the age of ninety. Gen. 17:17

In preparation for the miracle, the Lord changed both the name of Abram and Sarai. Taking the H from His own name, JHVH, He inserted it into their names and in this manner refreshed their ability to bear children. The birth of Isaac was not only natural, but it was after a supernatural work was wrought in them by the Lord.

The Lord is not bound by natural laws. Sarah up to the time of this mighty and most unusual change had been childless. She had suffered anguish and sorrow over her barrenness, but now the Lord was about to change all that. Gen. 17:15

Study 39

Wedding

Cause for exceedingly great rejoicing; the all important event long waited for has arrived.

The marriage of the Lamb has come. Rev. 19:7c

The moment of the completion of the mystery of the ages has come. Weddings, as a rule, are times of celebration and great joy. This one will very definitely be a time of great rejoicing, for it is the wedding of the ages. This glorious occurrence is an eternal happening which will never be dissolved.

It is THE wedding of all weddings. None like it have ever taken place nor will there ever be another. It is foreshadowed through out the scriptures, in prophecy, type and shadow.

From the beginnings of His dealings with mankind, the intention of the Lord has been to have a people who would be totally consecrated to Him.

We find, in the Old Testament, many times when individuals and even the nation of Israel displeased Him in their worship and service to Him.

Humanity has not changed much since those days. The same problems still exist, while at the same time, the blessing of the Lord is also made manifest in those who fully follow the Lord. Thus the life and words of Hosea mirror a modern day spiritual

condition.

Hosea (salvation) was commanded to go take a wife of whoredom. It would not have been necessary for her to have physically been a harlot. In other words, she was one who was following the manner of worship exercised by unfaithful Israel, they had left off worshipping the true God. The Lord was sending an illustrated message to Israel through the family of Hosea.

He chose a woman named Gomer, a very interesting name, meaning:- “Completion or ripeness, of consummate wickedness, daughter of double layers of grape cake.” Hos. 1:3

Her name certainly speaks of the end of the age. The completion of the plan of the Lord. The world coming to a ripeness of wickedness that will bring harvest, while at the same time the Bride of Christ will come to the fullness of all that she is intended to be.

The grape is the source of wine, typical of the joy of the Spirit. While a double cake would signify the double portion, or the complete fullness of the Spirit manifest in the church in a great last day revival. The Lord was about to display through Hosea, his wife, and Children, His very own feelings.

The situation could not have been a pleasant one for Hosea, for he was a man who served the Lord in truth. Therefore he had been called to be the prophet of the Lord. The Lord placed great confidence in him and knew that he would be obedient.

Study 40

Hosea's family

As with all true marriages, the purpose of marriage is the propagation of a family, tribe, nation, or even the human race.

Their first child was a son who was to be named Jezreel, (meaning, God scatters.) It was to be a warning to Israel that they had gone too far in their false worship and the Lord was about to judge them. Their kingdom was about to be extinguished by the Lord. Hos. 2:4

The prophets of Israel constantly cried out against the nation because of their backslidings.

Adding to the family only brought further condemnation against Israel. The second child was a girl whom the Lord named Loruhamah, (meaning, not pitied, not favored, not loved).

Israel, because of their wickedness, had fallen out of favor with the Lord. The Lord proclaimed that He would no longer show the mercy and the deep concern for Israel as He had in the past.

Not only that, but He said He would utterly take them away, or remove them out of the land. Hos. 1:6

These births, with the subsequent prophetic messages, covered a period of years. The next birth did not take place until the second child had been weaned. It gives evidence of the patience and restraint of the Lord in not immediately visiting with judgment and punishment. Hos. 1:8

The third son, a boy, was named Lo-ammi, (not my people.) This is the key to a proper understanding of what the Lord will do in relationship to His church. How many times in the Old Testament do we find Israel being rejected by the Lord because of their heathenish worship and their forsaking the Lord. Note Hos. 4:6

Study 41

“My People”

A message addressed to Ammi, or my people. Hosea 2:1

While this prophetic message was originally spoken to Israel of old, the same may be applied to the church of today. Those who are supposed to be HIS people. The Lord also changed the name of Ammi to Lo-ammi which has the meaning of not my people. Hosea 1:9

True cause with great effect. The Lord gave Moses a song commemorating the works of the Lord in the midst of His people. Deut. 32:1-52

It also contained the impending judgment and punishment. The scope of it's message reaches far beyond just those who came up out of Egypt.

In response to the emotions which their ways had stirred up in the Lord, He warned them that He would cause the same feelings to arise in their hearts. He would move them to jealousy with those who are not a people or a nation like them. He even called them a foolish nation. A nation of Gentiles, foreigners gathered from all the peoples of the world. Deut. 32:21

Peter outlined the true people of the Lord, the chosen race, by his description of them. I Peter 2:9

The Lord has exceedingly high standards, but He will find a people

in the end of the age who will measure up to His requirements for the Bride. They will be gathered from the nations of the world and embrace all nations and tongues.

Where they had not had recognition or status, because of their religious or natural background, they will be called the “people of God.” 1 Peter 2:10

Paul, in his letter to the Romans, made it very plain that the Lord, today, does not recognize any difference among the peoples of the earth. Now, the gospel and all its blessings and benefits are for the “whosoever will”. Rom. 10:9-11

Furthermore, he strongly stated that there is absolutely no difference between Jew and Greek. Christ died for all. His response is the same toward Gentile as it is toward the Jew. Rom. 10:12

It is needful that we remember that the Lord is no respecter of persons. Acts 10:34

The new man, renewed in spiritual knowledge and understanding, is that which counts with the Lord. None of the racial divisions, established by men, exist with the Lord. The people of God are recognized by the fact of their having been born again.

They are now a spiritual people, serving the Lord with their whole hearts. They are recognized as those who belong to the household of faith. Gal. 6:10

Study 42

Sons of God

The prophecy of Isaiah, pertaining to Israel, is verified by Paul. Their number to be as the sand of the sea, but those who are saved are called a remnant, a few. Justification is not a gift of natural birth but rather, new birth, a spiritual birth. Rom. 9:27

Israel, seeking to be justified by the Law of righteousness, could not measure up to its high demands. Rom. 9:29

The Gentiles, not seeking righteousness after the righteousness of the Law, found the true righteousness, which is not by works but by faith.

Therefore, all who come by the way of faith are justified before the Lord, regardless of natural birth. Rom. 9:30

The prophetic utterance given by Hosea stated that the time would come where there would be those who were to be called the “sons of the living God.” Hos. 1:10

The promise of that prophecy was made available by the Lord Jesus. Those who received Him, who had faith in Him were given the privilege of becoming “sons of God.” John 1:12

This is not something that has been scheduled for heaven and eternity, but John said; “now are we the sons of God.” 1 John 3:2

To receive such a glorious blessing and standing with the Lord is

the manifestation of His love for us.

He is searching for a people who bear His likeness and have the same majestic character. 1 John 3:1

We are assured that this blessed status is something that is made known in this life, for it is evidenced in the midst of a world that is filled with all manner of wickedness. Those who are His sons will be filled with the eternal glory of the Lord and reflect the glory of the Lord. Phil. 2:15

The Spirit filled life, the Spirit led life is likewise an evidence of those who have become the sons of God. Rom. 8:14

This is not an imaginary group, or a sect which have gone astray. This is the promise of the Lord. He has given us enough evidence for us to rest assured that this is His will and purpose in the lives of all who will truly follow hard after Him.

The ultimate manifestation of the sons of God is to be that glorious moment when the dead in Christ shall rise with a new body, the body of resurrection. Rom. 8:19, 23

The final act of adoption into the great family of the Lord. That blessed moment of time, when we lay aside these mortal bodies and are clothed with the body of eternal life.

A new body which will never again feel the hurts and pains of this life. A body made like unto the body of the Lord Jesus.

Study 43

Scatter and Sow

The oldest son of Hosea was Jezereel. His name has a dual connotation and yet they are identical. First, God scatters. Secondly, God sows. The first predicting a judgment which would come upon the nations of Israel and Judah and they would be scattered. The second, a promise that the Lord would sow good seed (the Word) and bring the nations together under His leadership. Under one head (the Lord Jesus) they are to be united in one. Hosea 1:11

This is not to be a secular kingdom; if it is under the guidance of the Lord Jesus it has to be spiritual.

The citizenship of His kingdom is composed of three general segments of humanity, all of them having been born of the Spirit. Without the new birth a person cannot even comprehend the existence of the kingdom of God. John 3:3

A sign has been established as a point around which they will rally, that is the Lord Jesus. The 'nations', the Hebrew word 'gowy' indicates Gentile, heathen, foreign nations.

Thus, the door is opened to the whole world to participate in His kingdom. The outcasts of Israel and the dispersed of Judah are also invited to participate in the eternal kingdom of the Lord. Isa. 11:12

The twelve tribes were divided into the two nations at that time. If this is a physical, secular gathering it must include all twelve

tribes. Where are the ten which at first were called Israel, then Samaria?

There is but one person who could be that 'one head.' He is the shepherd king, the Lord Jesus. David was a type of the Christ of God and was to be that one and only shepherd of the flock of the Lord. Eze. 34:23

The Father will establish HIS king upon HIS holy hill. Jesus will reign in the Zion of the Lord. Ps. 2:6

The Lord has promised that the time would come when He would establish a branch of righteousness, a person, a king whose name is the righteous Branch. Jer. 23:5

He whose name is the BRANCH is the builder of the temple of the Lord. He will be the glory of that temple and will reign in a dual office, as the only true great high priest, and as the King of kings, the Lord Jesus Christ. Zech. 6:12-13

It is Jesus who is the head of the church, the true temple of the Lord. All will be subject unto Him. Eph 1:22

The whole of His body, the church, will have been redeemed by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and He is the head of that body. Eph. 5:23

The church of the Lord, which He loved to such a great degree, that He purchased her with His own blood. Acts. 20:28

Study 44

Reconciliation

A very strong and passionate appeal to “Ammi”, my people, and to “Ruhamah”, beloved of tenderly pitied.

These words are an appeal and an attempt for reconciliation. We see in these names the love and mercy of the Lord ever reaching out to those who have gone astray.

The Lord in order to visit with compassion and mercy must first execute correction for according to the Law their mother is not His wife.

Because of Israel’s sinful actions, the Lord is not her husband. He is not married to her. Hos. 2:2

Due to the worship of false deities Israel was given a ‘certificate of divorce’ for all their religious wickedness. Jer. 3:8

For all that had happened to Israel, Judah did not learn and followed in the same manner of sin. Isaiah proclaimed the same prophetic message.

Those to whom the Lord had looked upon as His wife, He had sent away, or separated Himself from them; not because He was seeking revenge, but because of their sin and iniquity.

Their own actions were the cause of the presence of the Lord leaving them. Isa. 50:1

The Lord Jesus also referred to this action as having been caused by the hardness of their hearts. Mk. 10:4-5

The first covenant has been removed, liquidated, that the second might be established. Jesus is doing the will of His Father, fulfilled all the demands of the first covenant.

While the righteousness of that covenant is still the righteousness of the Lord, there is now a true righteousness, A righteousness of the Spirit revealed in mankind, through Jesus Christ. Heb. 10:9-10

Now the way of righteousness is not by the works of men but by the working of the Spirit in the lives of those who will come to the Lord Jesus. The true people of God will have the righteousness of the Lord indelibly stamped on their hearts and saved in their minds.

It is no longer to be a struggle to do the will of the Lord, but to be a life of His nature living in us. Heb. 8:10

For those who will be the people of God , the Lord has prepared a new and living way.

A manner of living in this world that is not of the world but is of that life eternal which is found in Christ. Heb. 10:20

Those whom He will call His people are granted entrance into the Most Holy place, through the veil, that is the Lord Jesus. Without Him there is no entrance granted. Jesus said; I am the door.

There is no other way, but through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Study 45

Two covenants

The high priest of the new covenant not only has immediate access to the throne of God, but occupies, shares, that throne with His Father.

His place and ministry are established eternally. His is an effective ministry, whereby those who appeal to Him find forgiveness and eternal life. Heb. 8:1

He ministers in the true tabernacle and not in that which is but a shadow of the true; a structure erected by the Lord which will abide forever. Heb. 8:2

The old Mosaic covenant replaced by a new and far better covenant, the old found to be faulty and needing a replacement. Heb. 8:8

The old was cancelled, because it was weak, feeble and ineffective. It did not, nor could it, produce the desired changes and life style demanded by the Law.

It was therefore unprofitable, useless and unhelpful to those who followed it. Heb. 7:18

It brought nothing - nor anyone - to perfection or maturity. However the introduction of the 'better covenant' rectified all this, and produced a fellowship between the Lord and those who embraced the new covenant. Heb. 7:19

The Lord allowed the first covenant to become old or obsolete. It was no longer of any use. The Lord annulled the same, causing it to become worn out and no longer of any account. It was time for it to be disposed of and for it to pass into oblivion. Heb. 8:13

For all this, what the Law could not do in introducing the righteousness of the Lord into the lives of it's adherents, faith in Christ, the new covenant does. The individual, who accepts Christ, is enabled to meet the righteousness of the Law, through faith in Christ Jesus. Rom. 3:31

The Lord did not leave mankind without a way whereby they could know Him. That way is Christ Jesus. He is the end, the conclusion, the fulfillment, of the struggle to embrace the letter of the Law.

For all (the whoseever will, Jew and Gentile, Rom. 3:29) who will come to Him by faith, may find the righteousness of the Law lived in them through Christ. Rom. 10:4

These who are the people of God are made evident by their spiritual life. They walk in the Spirit, who then enables them to live a life of righteousness that is pleasing to the Lord. Rom. 8:4

The Spirit led life is that which makes us to be the people of the Lord.

Study 46

heirs

All who are in Christ, are made to be one in Christ Jesus. The divisions that people put upon others are then eliminated. Even the racial division of Jew and Gentile no longer exist in Christ. Christ is all, and in all. Col. 3:11

The Gentiles are destined to be fellow heirs, of one and the same body, and are to share equally in becoming partakers of the promises made in the gospel by the Lord Jesus. Eph. 3:6

In the body of Christ the Jewish practice of circumcision has no more merit than the uncircumcision of the Gentile. That which incorporates a person into the body of Christ is the spiritual birth which results in a new creature. Gal. 6:15

These are the people who were not a people, but are now the people of God. Hos. 1:10

A conglomerate of nations and languages; Peter speaks of them as a people who are the recipients of the mercy and grace of the Lord Jesus. 1 Peter 2:10

The emphasis should be on the truth that **THEY** are the people whom the Lord has chosen and called to be the body, the bride of Christ in these last days.

When the Lord promised Abram that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars, the sand, and the dust, did He limit that

promise to the natural seed? Or will it be fulfilled in the spiritual seed? Is it limited to this earth or will it be accomplished in the new heavens and the new earth?

The Lord purposely created mankind, male and female, after His image and likeness. Now, He has had a Son and is preparing a Bride for His Son. The Father is the king of the kingdom of heaven who prepared a wedding for His Son. The illustration is found in Mat. 22:1-13

Many, the whole world, is invited, but only a few are chosen. That does not mean a small number but not a large percentage will consecrate themselves to be the Bride. Mat. 22:14

Like the first Adam, the last Adam, the Lord Jesus, will have a Bride. Is she just a center piece, something to show off as the Queen of eternity? or is there a practical purpose in her existence?

The first Adam was a living soul. Formed and created for this natural world. The last Adam, Christ, was made a quickening, or a life giving, spirit. 1 Cor. 15:45

The first is the type, the symbol, the shadow.

The Last is that which is real, it is true substance.

It is eternal, everlasting, endless, and is that which will grace the new earth. First the natural, then the spiritual. 1 Cor. 15:46

The natural is like a prophecy: nothing but uttered words, until accomplished and fulfilled.

In a mystery, Christ and His church, the Lord has set before us His great and glorious plan of the ages.

Study 47

First and Last Adam

There is no limit set by the Lord as to the extent of His mighty works in the future. His ability and power to create will be beautifully manifest in the new heavens and the new earth.

As we have noted, His words to the first Adam and Eve were ‘be fruitful and multiply’, thus indicating the Lord’s desire for a constant increase of the population of the earth.

They were also to have dominion over all other living creatures of the earth. Gen. 1:28

Likewise the last Adam and His Bride will be fruitful and multiply. The evidence is the woman of Revelation who is with child. Rev. 12:2

The great mystery. I speak concerning Christ and His church. Eph. 5:32

So vital and important is this Bride to the Lord Jesus that ‘*He gave Himself for it*’. Eph. 5:25

He will thoroughly cleanse and sanctify her, with the Word, that constant washing which is so necessary for any and all who would partake in the wedding of the ages. Eph. 5:26

His Bride will be spotlessly clean; no blemish, no fault, no weakness, no contamination, nothing whatsoever that even hints of

sin or unrighteousness. Eph. 5:27

He knows what He wants for a Bride and will find a people in these last days who will fill the criterion. She will be glorious when she marries Him, for her crown is like the stars, her clothing sun like and her foundation the moon. Rev. 12:1

Now, Isaiah said; *'hear ye the Word of the Lord'*. A message which is directed to those who highly evaluate and reverence the Word of the Lord.

In contrast, they are discounted by their brethren, and cast out because of His name. It is an act of religious persecution for their statement was, *'let the Lord be glorified'*.

However He will appear to the joy of the persecuted and the shame of the tormenter. Isa. 66:5

A time when the voice of the Lord will be heard from the temple and the city. The birth of the man child is the beginning of the great tribulation. It is a time when the Lord will respond to all the wicked actions perpetrated against Him and His people. Isa. 66:6

The measure of punishment will be determined by the actions of the individual being judged. As there are differences in the glory bestowed upon the resurrected righteous, (1 Cor. 15:45), there will also be variations in the punishments meted out to the ungodly.

Even the very lightest (if there is such a thing) would be horrible for the judgment will be equal to the evil works of the individual. Isa. 59:18

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