

The Voice of the Bridegroom and Bride

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A prophecy in Revelation 18:23 states that the voice of the bridegroom and bride will eventually cease. This same verse also says that the light of a lamp will be extinguished. By combining these phrases with other scriptures, a composite appears that depicts a time of utter darkness and complete inactivity. This future scenario will be the result of a world that has operated under Satan's self-serving and rebellious ideology.

In God's word, when someone is walking in the light they are living in accordance with His law and commandments.

*For **the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light.*** (Prov. 6:23a; cf. Ps. 119:105; 119:172; emphasis added; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted).

In contrast, Satan's power to corrupt everything that is righteous is compared to darkness.

*...I (Christ) now send you (Paul), ¹⁸to open their eyes in order to turn them from **darkness** to light, and from **the power of Satan** to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified (set apart) by faith (trust) in me* (Ac. 26:17b-18; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

As we will see shortly, "the light of a lamp" as well as "the voice of the bridegroom and bride" are phrases associated with those who trust and obey God's every word (Mt. 4:4).

You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a

lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven (Mt. 5:14-16).

Jesus Christ identified himself with the bridegroom when responding to a question posed by the disciples of John.

*Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" ¹⁵And Jesus said to them, "**Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them?** But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them (referring to Christ's death on a stake), *then they will fast* (Mt. 9:14-15; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).*

It follows that, if Christ compared himself to a bridegroom, he must have a bride waiting to marry him. This is confirmed through figurative language that Paul used when addressing church members in Corinth.

*For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For **I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ*** (2Cor. 11:2; emphasis added).

In many ancient civilizations, when a woman is betrothed she is regarded as married. In a similar manner, when a sinner repents and is baptized they are considered married to Jesus Christ, even though they have to wait for the marriage ceremony that will occur after the first resurrection.

*Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me (John) and talked with me, saying, "Come, **I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife.**" ¹⁰And he carried me away in*

the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the city, the holy city, Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God (Rev. 21:9-10; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

*Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him (Almighty God, the Father) glory, for **the marriage of the Lamb** (Christ) **has come, and his wife** (every repentant sinner) **has made herself ready.** ⁸And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the linen is (represents) the righteous acts of the saints (Rev. 19:7-8; cf. Ps. 132:9; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).*

But if the Spirit of Him (Almighty God) who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of His Spirit which dwells in you (Rom. 8:11; Ed. note in parenthesis).

It may appear contradictory in Revelation 18:21-22 that the light of a lamp as well as the bridegroom and bride are pictured within Satan's kingdom, which is compared metaphorically to the ancient Babylonian empire. However, a number of scriptures confirm that God's faithful human servants must continue to live within this corrupt system, while striving to obey God's word.

*I (Christ) have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world (cf. Gal. 1:4). ¹⁵**I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.** ¹⁶They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world (Jn. 17:14-16; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).*

We know that whoever is born of God does not sin (1Jn. 3:4); but he who has been born of

God keeps (guards) himself, and the wicked one does not touch him. ¹⁹We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one (1Jn. 5:18-19; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Not only does the bride of Christ have to live within Satan's corrupt system, Jesus Christ himself lived and died in it, even though he stated that he did not share any of its values.

*Jesus answered, **"My kingdom is not of this world.** If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now **my kingdom is not from here** (Jn. 18:36; emphasis added).*

Therefore, the bridegroom experienced firsthand what is described in Revelation 18:23b as living among the "*merchants, the great men of the earth who are part of Satan's deceptions affecting all nations*".

Metaphoric terms, and phrases, like "merchants and great men" are used to describe rebellious spirit-beings who have been manipulating people's lives since the beginning of man's history.

*Javan, Tubal, and Meshech were your traders. **They bartered human lives** and vessels of bronze for your merchandise (Eze. 27:13; emphasis added).*

These same "merchants and great men" are the "masters" who have exercised dominion over mankind by misrepresenting God's truth.

***O Lord our God masters besides You have had dominion over us...** (Isa. 26:13a; emphasis added).*

Satan, and the system he built, is guilty of trading in the spiritual well-being of others. Specifically, Satan's value system focuses on

material pursuits rather than seeking or examining God's word, with the goal of trusting and obeying what He says.

*You (Satan) defiled your sanctuaries by the multitude of your iniquities; by **the iniquity of your trading**... (Eze. 28:18a; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).*

Following Christ's return to establish the government of Almighty God on this earth, no "trader" from Satan's system will be allowed to practice their various forms of deception.

*Yes, on every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the Lord of hosts. Everyone who sacrifices shall come and take them and cook in them. **In that day there shall no longer be a** (# 3669; **trader**; trafficker; merchant; cf. Job 41:6) **in the house of the Lord of hosts** (Zech. 14:21; cf. Hos. 12:7; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).*

By better understanding God's use of figurative and metaphoric language, it is clear from certain prophecies that the bridegroom (Christ) and bride (faithful and obedient servants of God) have always been active on the earth (Jer. 31:32). However, when it comes to a period of judgment for evil conduct, Jesus Christ and God's faithful servants cease to be heard.

*Then **I will cause to cease** from the cities of Judah and from the streets of Jerusalem the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, **the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride**. For the land shall be desolate (Jer. 7:34; cf. 16:9; 25:10; emphasis added).*

*"Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord God, "That I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. ¹²**They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; they shall run to and fro,***

***seeking the word of the Lord, but shall not find it**" (Amos 8:11-12; emphasis added).*

Also, there have always been people like the apostle Paul who are "helpers" of those who are learning God's truth, and therefore these "helpers" are involved with the process of "marrying and giving in marriage" (2Cor. 1:24; Phil. 1:25; 2:17; cf. Ac. 12:14-26; 1Cor. 4:15-17; 2Cor. 2:1-3; 1Thes. 4:11).

*For as in the days before flood, they were eating and drinking, **marrying and giving in marriage**, until the day that Noah entered the ark (Mt. 24:38; cf. 2Cor. 11:2; emphasis added).*

Whenever God has completed a period judgment for persistent sinful conduct, the voice of the bridegroom and bride will be heard again.

*Thus says the Lord: '**Again there shall be heard in this place** – of which you say, "It is desolate, without man and without beast" – in the cities of Judah, in the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate, without man and without beast, ¹¹the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, **the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride**, the voice of those who will say: "Praise the Lord of hosts, for the Lord is good, for His mercy endures forever" – and of those who will bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord. For I will cause the captives of the land to return as at the first' (Jer. 33:10-11; emphasis added).*

The voice of joy and gladness mentioned in conjunction with the bridegroom and bride indicates the joy associated with sinners repenting and being added to the bride of Christ.

*Likewise, I say to you, **there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents** (Lk. 15:10; emphasis added).*

It also confirms the joy of those who are able to hear the voice of Almighty God's delegated teacher, Jesus Christ (Jn. 13:13).

He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but **the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice.** Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled (Jn. 3:29).

Because the voice of the bridegroom and bride will be heard right up to the time when Satan is bound for a thousand years, this planet will not be completely destroyed (Rev. 20:1-3).

And unless those days were shortened no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake (those comprising the bride of Christ) those days will be shortened (Mt. 24:22; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Those who repent of their sins will become part of Christ's bride because they have been delivered from Satan's darkness and entered God's light,

*Giving thanks to **the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints of light.**¹³ **He has delivered us from the power of darkness and translated (transferred) us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,**¹⁴ *in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sin (Col. 1:12-14; cf. Eph. 5:8-11; 1Pet. 2:9; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).**

Hopefully, the voice of the bridegroom will be heard by more and more people as this world is quickly entering a period of great darkness (Mt. 6:23).

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