

## **Revelation 21:22-27 – Restoration: Glory of the Bride**

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Around this time every year you see people trying hard to put up the best lights in the neighborhood. I like to drive around and watch nicely lit houses. I like different colors. I like blinking lights. Lights cheer me up, especially during this time of short daylight. In our text the Lord Jesus used a similar analogy 类似 to describe his beautiful Bride. His Bride is bright and glorious – blessed – reflecting his light. This brings the Bride great joy and even to those who are around. The light does not originate from the Bride but it comes from Jesus. And this is what I will declare to you today.

Our headings are: The **Illuminated 照亮 Bride, Attractive Bride, and the Enriched Bride**.

Our goals are: That **seeing what you have received from Christ Jesus, you will reflect his glory and so become appealing to the unsaved.**

### **Illuminated Bride**

22 But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 23 The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.

1. You have already seen that believers in Jesus are all part of this grand city...the city that came down from heaven. Earlier (in Revelation 3 & 11) **believers were described as pillars in the temple**.

Revelation 3: 2 "He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.

But now in Chapter 21, the temple is illustratively expanded to the whole city. **Believers are the city**. (See Rev. 7:15)

2. There is **no curtains of separation** for the new Bride, like in the old temple and tabernacle, where the sinful Bride was stopped from coming to Jesus. She kept out of the Holy of Holies where only 1 priest went 1 time per year. Christians today are in a constantly close relationship with Christ –you are in Christ and Christ in you. You have a permanent sacrifice to maintain that intimate relationship.

1Corinthians 3:16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

When Jesus died, that veil in the temple was torn in two. Now Jesus is “tabernacling” among you.

John 1: 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

3. With no curtain of separation, this holy city, the new Bride of Christ, is **illuminated by Christ**. But this would not have been strange to John’s readers. This was the promise of God to his people long before Jesus through his prophet Isaiah. On multiple occasions Isaiah prophesied to an expectant church that she would indeed reflect the light of her Savior, who would be the light of the world. He used the analogy of the sun rising.

Isaiah 60:1 Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you.

2 For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the LORD will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you. 3 The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising. 19 "The sun shall no longer be your light by day, Nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; But the LORD will be to you an everlasting light, And your God your glory. 20 Your sun shall no longer go down, Nor shall your moon withdraw itself; For the LORD will be your everlasting light, And the days of your mourning shall be ended. 21 Also your people shall all be righteous; They shall inherit the land forever, The branch of My planting, The work of My hands, That I may be glorified.

Malachi described Jesus as the Sun of Righteousness. Malachi 4:2.

Revelation 12: 1 Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland 花环 of twelve stars.

4. **The implication** of this is that Christ’s new Bride must continue to reflect that light the world.

Philippians 2:5 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,

Jesus himself taught his disciples to shine.

Matthew 5:14 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 "Nor

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. 16 "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Note the words at the end of Matthew 5:14 – you are that **city on the hill (the new Bride is on a hill)**. How wonderful it is to use Scripture to interpret Scripture. But you must always remember that that light did not come from within the Bride but it is a reflection of the true Light of the world. And how does shining light bring glory to Christ? Light shows sins...and directs the sinners to the Lord.

John 8:12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

And concerning the new shining church, Daniel wrote:

Daniel 12:3 Those who **are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament**, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.

While you will shine in heaven, you can see that this was describing what is happening now!

## **Attractive Bride**

24 And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. 25 Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there).

1. The light of the Bride, a light which comes from Christ, caused her to be attractive to the world...in a similar but deeper way that you might be attracted to lights around this time.

Isaiah 60: 5 Then you shall see and become radiant, And your heart shall swell with joy; Because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, The wealth of the Gentiles shall come to you.

6 The multitude of camels shall cover your land, The dromedaries 单峰骆驼 of Midian and Ephah; All those from Sheba shall come; They shall bring gold and incense, And they shall proclaim the praises of the LORD.

And she has to shine that light. No one has a light and hides it under a basket. He would shine it so others can see.

2. So what is the result of seeing the beauty? Way back before Jesus, Isaiah explained what the results would be.

Isaiah 60:9 Surely the coastlands shall wait for Me; And the ships of Tarshish will come first, To bring your sons from afar, Their silver and their gold with them, To the name of the LORD your God, And to the Holy One of Israel, Because He has glorified you. **[11]** Therefore your gates shall be open continually; They shall not be shut day or night, That men may bring to you the wealth of the Gentiles, And their kings in procession.

Isaiah and John in Revelation both taught that the shining church on earth will cause many to be drawn to Christ. The lighthouse on a hill causes men to see it when they are lost at sea. This again reminds you that while the church will one day be in heaven with the Lord forever, John was still speaking of a time when the church will be on earth. There is no evangelism or faith in heaven. But there are many opportunities on earth to shine your light for Christ.

4. Naturally the question then comes: How well are you shining your light to the world? Is it bright or is it hidden? This is not some kind of nice suggestion by the Lord. He expects nothing less from the one who is part of that heavenly Bride.

Your light may be your gentle way of speaking to a disgruntled 不满的 employee, or it could be giving a Bible to one who is seeking truth...it could be the way you love your unbelieving spouse...or siblings..., or it could be the way you talk someone who drove into your new car and damaged your bumper. Let Christ's glory shine in you.

5. One final note from these verses. Since nations still exist in John's description here (and people are coming to faith in Jesus Christ) then it is not the end of the earth. In heaven there is only one nation...the people of God. So those who want to limit these verses as speaking of heaven are ignoring the context.

Isaiah 2: 2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD'S house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. 3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares 犁, And their spears into pruning hooks 修枝刀; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.

## **The Enriched Bride**

26 And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. 27 But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

1. As you have already seen in Isaiah 60, the Bride is enriched by all those who come to her. This is another reason you realize that this is describing earth, not heaven. There is no increase in reward while in heaven. You will get your reward when you get there. But the Bride will be increasingly rewarded on earth. And the church will get purer, and purer... Those who believe (and have their names written in heaven) will make the church purer and better. Pretentious persons would be put out of Christ's church.

2. So how is the Bride enriched with glory and honor? The Bride is enriched with children...many, many children. You see this when you tie John's teaching with Isaiah's. And Christ adopts them all. What a difference from the Old Bride that treated foreigners with contempt 轻蔑 and created a dividing wall. (Eph. 3) Now the kingdom is opened to all. Isaiah 49: 21 Then you will say in your heart, 'Who has begotten these for me, Since I have lost my children and am desolate, A captive, and wandering to and fro? And who has brought these up? There I was, left alone; But these, where were they?' 22 Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I will lift My hand in an oath to the nations, And set up My standard for the peoples; They shall bring your sons in their arms, And your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders; 23 Kings shall be your foster fathers 养父, And their queens your nursing mothers; They shall bow down to you with their faces to the earth, And lick up the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I am the LORD, For they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me."

3. But look at another unique thing here. These Gentiles were not just coming in small numbers, but in great numbers. And this fits in with Jesus' command to go and make disciples – not just in nations – but make disciples of all nations. This of course meant that even the leaders would become subject to Christ. Note that in Isaiah 49 that kings and queens would become servants in Christ's new Bride.

4. Chilton concluded: ...as the Light of the Gospel shines through the Church to the world, the world is converted, the nations are disciplined, and the wealth of the sinners becomes inherited by the just. This is a basic promise of Scripture from beginning to end; it is the pattern of history, the direction in which the world is moving.

## **Conclusion:**

The Bride of Christ was illuminated with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. She knows how to be saved and graciously accepts that salvation of Jesus Christ. As the new Bride of Christ, she is enriched. She is entitled to serve the Bridegroom. And she reproduces. He has many children born to her. This is because of the Bridegroom is working through her, and she is working for the glory of the Bridegroom.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Praise the Lord that you are part of the glorious Bride of Christ. You have the message of hope that the world desperately needs. Shine you light then...shine the light of the Gospel in the world by your word and by your life. Let the nations, but beginning in your home, know that you belong to Jesus Christ and that your sins are forgiven...and that they too can have their sins forgiven. But the key for the average Christian is YOUR LIFE... Don't let the world see you obsessing 被困扰的 about the things of this world as if you have no hope for anything afterwards. The one who is obsessed with earthly things shows that he doesn't know what is in his future, or he doesn't believe in the glories of the real heaven. But you know better. So live better. You have seen the Light and you have experience his work. And the closer you are to Christ the more you will be able to reflect his light.

Finally, your sins will be exposed now or later by the Light of Christ. If they are exposed now and you make it right with God, you can have your sins removed and be restored to a right relationship with God. If you don't, you will have to pay for your sins yourself. I hope you will make the good choice and make your life right with God today.