

# **“I Go Prepare a Place for you”**

## **John 14:1-3 and its exciting tie-in to Pentecost**

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All scriptures used are NKJV unless otherwise noted.

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**Summary:** Yeshua said, “I go prepare a place for you”. This message explains the astonishing connection of John 14 with Pentecost. Are we going to heaven to get married or not? What does Pentecost have to do with weddings involving the Living God? Learn how the weddings of Jesus’ day picture what God is doing so his Son has a wonderful home for his Bride when he marries her. Where will the Wedding Supper take place? Where is that exciting home and *huppah* bridal chamber for the Bride? Are the ten virgins of Matthew 25 the same as the Bride? And what does all this have to do with Pentecost? It’s time to find out!

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[NOTE: These notes are just approximate to what is said on the audio. I strongly recommend you *listen to the audio even as you follow along with these notes*. There will be things said on the audio not in the notes - - and maybe vice versa. I had to speak rapidly and move very quickly, so it will be helpful to have the printed scriptures in this transcript. Enjoy the message! Philip Shields]

Good day, brothers and sisters of Father’s House, members of the body of Jesus Christ – or as I call him, Yeshua. And warm greetings to any who are a part of the Bride of the son of God.

Today, the feast of Pentecost is about so much. It’s such an exciting holyday and feast day of God. I’m going to cover some things normally not covered on Pentecost. If you wish a full explanation of the small spring-early summer harvest and what it means, then please check out my sermons on Pentecost from previous years.

On this day the Eternal God spoke His Torah, the law, with a great trumpet of God and with His own voice. It was also on this day when that same God sent His Spirit to the assembled 120 in Jerusalem.

I also believe John 14:1-3 has a lot of connection to this day. John 14:1-4. It’s the greatest love story ever told. What I’m going to cover is not unique to me, but has been covered and investigated by numerous students of the Bible, but it’s worth reviewing. Plus we usually learn more and more about these verses as the years pass. I hope you will today, too, learn more.

### **John 14:1-4**

"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many mansions [or habitations; dwelling places]; if it were not so, I would have told you. ***I go to prepare a place for you.*** 3 ***And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*** 4 And where I go you know, and the way you know."

This is described as our place. A “place for *you*.” When God prepares a place, it’s going to be indescribably well done and beautiful. I’ve been on carefully prepared Awards trips around the world, even into a one-off special dinner given in the castle in Prague, but those will be nothing compared to what Father and his Son are preparing for us.

I’m covering this because I believe it has everything to do with Pentecost. What God is preparing for us goes beyond our wildest expectations. Yes, there’s the meaning of the small spring harvest depicting those being called first. Then there’s the large Fall harvest of fruits, vegetables and grapes depicting the harvest of the rest of humanity in the Millennium and beyond. I’ll ask you to check my website in previous years to hear those messages.

***Though THAT meaning of Pentecost -- also called the Feast of Firstfruits, the Feast of Weeks (Sabbaths) – is a VERY valid topic of the day, let’s not forget the other meanings. Since the meaning of the first small harvest is covered heavily, I’m going to spend my time on the lesser discussed meanings today – but MEANINGS THAT SHOULD get us REALLY revved up and excited! I just don’t understand why holyday sermons are so often so dry, repetitive and boring frankly. It SHOULDN’T be that way at all!***

***I hope by the time I’m done with this you’ll see Jerusalem above in new light.***

### **Pentecost – a TIME of WEDDINGS and Marriages in Bible times**

**Pentecost, or right around Pentecost, was also when Yahweh married Israel.** I say “right around Pentecost” because it can’t absolutely be proven it all took place on Pentecost, but the timing fits. Jewish tradition says the same, though I don’t always go by what Jewish tradition says.

**Pentecost season also was the time when Boaz and Ruth married** – also a picture of God marrying the church. It is interesting to note, that Ruth was a Moabitess who had accepted the God of Israel, picturing the time when spiritual Israel would be composed of members of all nations, very much including the Gentiles. I’m hoping to have time to have a full sermon on the book of Ruth/Pentecost. Be watching for it.

Pentecost in Acts 2 was also when God sent his *arrabon* – Greek for earnest, guarantee, money down deposit. In Greece, the modern Greek for “engagement ring” is *arrabona*. So on this day God got engaged to, or betrothed to, the new covenant believers. I think it just makes sense to believe Father also on this day will conduct an awesome wedding for His Son and complete the deposit. Remember it was on or around Pentecost when God married Israel at Sinai. I believe that it will be on this day when we won’t just be betrothed, but when we will be married.

***Before this sermon is over, I hope you’ll see heavenly Jerusalem in new light.*** Notice Yeshua says he is going away to a place he is preparing for us and then would bring us there. Where did he go? It’s going to be the Bride’s place. He calls it “a place for you”. Yeshua then says, “Hey, I want you there with me, wherever I am.”

### **Niagara Falls and awards trips**

All we have right now are some “sneak peaks”. Story about how my dad made us keep our eyes closed as he walked us to the lip of the **Niagara Falls**, where the water was cascading right over

the edge. He wanted to see how surprised we were. God lets us see just faint glimmers of what he has for us so far. What He is planning is going to be way beyond our wildest dreams. Remember the verse about “eye has not seen... the things God has prepared for those who love Him”? This day, I believe, is so much more than just about harvests. It is an exciting, exciting day. The holyday sermons should be exciting sermons! What God is preparing will be staggering to us. You won’t want to miss it.

So where did He go to prepare a place? Right after his resurrection, he told Mary Magdalene in John 20 that he was going to his father and her father! He was going back to heaven as the literal fulfillment of the wavesheaf offering.

John 14:2 also speaks of “mansions”. The Greek refers to abodes, dwelling places – as virtually any other translations show. It’s the same word used in John 14:23- where God comes to *abide* in us, to make us His abode. It refers to a home, a place you live. Our home, our city. It’s not so much about “offices” or position and rank, as some led us to believe, but about what’s going to be our home town, our city, our home!

### **Taking ownership of the things of God being offered to God’s children**

We won’t appreciate this passage as much as we should until we first cover this vital point: when you’re included in something big, take ownership of it. It’s yours too. Jesus basically called the place he was going to prepare, “your place” – a “place for you”. It’s our place. It’s ours. I want that to sink in.

*Whenever you take ownership of something, it means a whole lot more to you.* A house you are buying reflects “the pride of ownership” in the way you take care of it. Ditto for a car you own vs. a rental car. You love and care for your own kids vs. others’ kids. Your own family vs. others’ families. Weeding someone else’s garden vs. planting and caring for your own garden.

Yeshua wants us to understand he is preparing a place for us. Father understands this and he clearly wants us to realize the kingdom, the city, etc. is His – but He has bestowed these upon us too. They are also ours.

Let me illustrate this with a **story**. I had asked my son to help me with some yard work and I wanted a small circle cut around the cherry trees I had planted earlier in the year, so we could maybe put some flowers around the base, or keep the weeds away from it. He had dug out a far bigger circle than I envisioned, but actually I liked it. I mentioned to him that it was bigger than I had first envisioned, so Jon immediately said, “I could put the grass all back and make it the size you want”. I asked, “Why would that be necessary?” Jon: “Because it’s your house.” So I said to my son, “Jon, this is your house too. I own it, but you live here with me, so it’s also yours. I’d like you to feel like you can consider it yours and make these kinds of decisions as well. I enjoy seeing what you come up with.”

He seemed happy with that. I want him to take ownership too.

Sure, this is His kingdom, His Body, His church. But if we’re going to take “the Kingdom of God” seriously, or the “Church of God” seriously, or “the Bride of Christ” seriously, or the Body of Christ seriously, or even “the Kingdom of Heaven” seriously – understand deeply – you’re in

each of those if you have God’s spirit! (repeat) We are immersed into each of these by His Holy Spirit (**1 Cor. 12:13**). God is also *our* father, *our* God. David called Yahweh his God, “my God” over and over.

It’s the kingdom *of God*, but it’s also the kingdom of His Son. Did you realize that? Of course, the Son is also God (**John 1:1-3**), but let’s understand this clearly:

A very clear one is **Eph. 5:5**, “....has any inheritance in *the kingdom of Christ* and God.”

**In Luke 22:29**—Yeshua says “*I bestow on you a kingdom, just as my Father has bestowed one upon me*”.

Yes, Jesus has a kingdom: It is called the *Son’s* kingdom in several places, certainly in **Matthew 16:28**, **Matt. 13:41**, etc.

*It’s very clear: the kingdom of God is also the Messiah’s kingdom* – and is also bestowed on us who have His spirit, and who are part of His body, or are His brothers and sisters. **Remember we are co-heirs with Christ of all things (Romans 8:17; Gal. 3:29)**. All of this is possible *only* if we are “in him”. Isn’t that amazing? That means it’s yours and mine too. Believe and accept it.

*So if the kingdom is also Yeshua’s kingdom, and he’s made us joint-heirs, and we’re sons of the kingdom now – what does that tell you?*

*BTW: Remember I go back and forth using the Greek-English name Jesus and the Hebrew name Yeshua. I also interchange the Greek word Christ (the anointed) with the Hebrew-English Messiah (the anointed). Plus I frequently use the identified personal name of God – Yahweh.*

So the Messiah also says we are joint-heirs with Him. If I’m a joint heir of something bestowed on me, that means it is also mine. In **Ephesians 2:6-7**, Paul even says we have already been raised and seated with Him in spirit on His throne. We should not ignore these verses! Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom, but “you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit” (**Romans 8:9**), and our bodies are but a HOUSE, housing what is the real me and the real you – the spirit in man and the spirit of God that is the real you!

**2 Corinthians 5:1-5**

“For we know that if our earthly house, this tent [our body], is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands [the resurrection spirit body], eternal in the heavens. 2 *For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven*, 3 if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. 4 For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. 5 *Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.*”  
[Greek for guarantee: *arrabon*. Modern Greek “*arrabona*” = engagement ring.]

**“The real you” and the “real me” is spiritual!** *You are not in the flesh, but in the spirit* (Rom. 8:9) – even though we are still housed in a fleshly body. That is how we as flesh-and- blood mortals can be “one spirit with Christ” who is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam (**1 Cor. 6:17**). Remember Adam and Eve were to be one flesh. We are joined to Master by that one Spirit, making us one spirit with Him. We are a part of Him, hence we are part of the “body of Christ”.

My thumb, if it could speak, would consider the body it is a part of, as “our” or “my” body, if it were speaking. The Body of Christ, since we are members of it, is also our body. We are a part of it (**Romans 12:4-5**). Take a sense of belonging into this. Take some sense of ownership. It will mean more; will be more motivating and exciting for you.

When organizing a recent first-ever college reunion with a dedicated team, I emphasized to our team that it wasn’t “the” reunion, but I wanted us to refer to it constantly as “*your reunion*”. We wanted everyone in the class to feel a part of the planning and to consider it their own. ***Yahweh also wants us to consider His gifts and the things He gives us, and what He has made us a part of, as our own now too. Again, ownership makes it more real, more exciting to us.***

So what does all that mean? It means it’s not just “*the* kingdom” but is also *my* kingdom and *your* kingdom. We are ambassadors for Christ and of His kingdom. That means we have to be already citizens of that kingdom! By the way, unborn babies are not citizens of anything yet. Paul says we are now already citizens with the saints and *already* members of the household of God (**Ephesians 2:19**). **Paul speaks in the present tense about our relationship with God’s kingdom, which is now also our kingdom.**

I know we don’t *feel* like we’re in the kingdom yet – but that is what Paul speaks of in **2 Cor. 5:3**. But what we feel and what is reality may be worlds apart! I know that goes against what some of us have been taught, but what do we do? Cut out the verses that seem to clearly state otherwise? And perhaps we should start believing and even feeling our kingdom more.

***Anyway, therefore we should call the church of God, our church. I am my Beloved’s and my Beloved is mine (Song of Songs 2:16; 6:3). I am God’s – and He is mine, and so I refer to God as “my God”, as did the prophets of old numerous times. The Psalms are full of David calling Yahweh “my God”. Look it up in a concordance. Also look up “our Father”. We’re even told to pray “Our Father in heaven...” If you grasp this concept, you’re ahead of most.***

In the “Old testament”, the word “the” is not in the original Hebrew where you read “the LORD”. In Hebrew it is simply “Yahweh”, without “the”. So I even often just say “Abba”, or “Father” rather than “the Father”.

**My theology can be summed up by who I am part of - and who is my father, who is my God.** That is what Elijah made Israel face up to: who will you worship? A pagan non-existent god called Baal, or the Eternal Yahweh!? So my theology can be summed up in four words: “Our Father in heaven...” To me, that says it all when we understand what our Father is doing. God tells us he wants to be our God. He is not just “the” Father, but is our Father. So that’s also why David talks over and over about “my God” in the Psalms. I am His, and He is mine. In fact, it will be a GLORIOUS time when it can be said of all Israel, “I will take you as my people, *and I will be your God*” (**Ex. 6:7**). Yahweh told Abraham that he looked forward to the time when “I will be their God” (**Genesis 17:8**).

The Church is also “my church” and yours. We push back on that because it sounds presumptuous. But we’re part of the body of Christ, part of the church of God, so it is also *our* body, *our* group, *our* family. Make it yours. *It’s certainly not just the human leader’s church, though many of them act like the flock is theirs instead of being lesser shepherds under the Chief*

*Shepherd.* The church, the group of called out ones, is his flock, and someday He will literally gather into one all the children of God scattered abroad (**John 11:49-52**) into one fold, one flock (**John 10:16**). That’s been my message and focus for a long time now.

So this place being prepared for you and me is ours. Can’t we say that “a place for you” is the same as “your place”?

***The point of all this: take ownership. It’s partly yours. You’re in it. Believe it. Act like it.***

**OK, let’s step back and start with the wedding proposal and then go all the way to the wedding itself. I’m talking about this on Pentecost, again, because Pentecost was when God married Israel. Pentecost was when Boaz, a type of Christ, married Ruth, a type of the Church. Pentecost I feel is the very likely time of the wedding supper... and then we come back to earth with our new Husband in time for the Fall feasts and then land on the Mt. of Olives. More and more ministers are speaking on this and willing to say this is what they believe.**

### **The Wedding PROPOSAL**

In many cases, the negotiations for who married whom was made between two fathers: the father of the Groom and the father of the Bride. The bride and groom often had little say in it. That is still the case in much of the eastern world today. We see this in many examples in the Bible. Even when Abraham’s servant went to find a bride for Isaac, he discussed it with Bethuel, Rebecca’s father, more than with Rebekah, though she had a say at the end. But Isaac didn’t pick Rebekah; Isaac’s father’s servant did.

*Spiritually, our Husband Yeshua did not pick you so much as his Father did. It is the heavenly father who picks those who are being called to be the Bride for Messiah (**John 6:44-45, 65**).*

#### **John 6:45,65**

44 “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

65 And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father."

Do you ever feel you’re a nobody? Or that nobody of consequence knows you? We need to get over the notion, because you were picked by no one less than God in the Highest. Yes, you! Then we are brought to the Son, who reveals our new Father (**Luke 10:21**) to us. But the highest Being in the entire universe picked you. Individually and personally. Once we are called, we have to respond and accept the call, just as Rebekah did. Many are called, few chosen, but we do have to respond and be responsive.

#### **Bought and redeemed**

The Bride was actually purchased with a “betrothal” price, or purchase price called a “*mohar*” in Hebrew. The father of the bride determined the price to be paid. Some of you aren’t going to like this, but before we were God’s children, we were someone else’s children! See **John 8:44-47**. The Serpent has his own seed (**Genesis 3:15**). Cain was “of the wicked one” (**1 John 3:12**). You catch my drift? That is also why Satan could offer the kingdoms to the Messiah in Matt.4.

#### **John 8:44, 47**

44 “*You are of your father the devil* and the desires of your father you want to do.....”

47 He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, *because you are not of God.*"

So we were owned by the god of this age (**2 Cor. 4:4**) and had to be redeemed (bought and paid for) with the blood of the Lamb, the Son of God. That was the purchase price. We were not redeemed, or purchased, with corruptible things but with the blood of the Messiah (**1 Pet. 1:17-19**). This made us his. **1 Cor. 6:20** says “for you are bought with a price”, and therefore we are to glorify God in our body and spirit, which now belong to God.

### **Who is the Bride of Christ?**

Who is the Bride? We’ve covered many times – those being called out of the world. They are not to be found in any single denomination or organization, for God will not be boxed in. **The Bride is the church, the body of Christ** – as is clearly shown in **Col. 1:15-18; Ephesians 1:22-23**. We are like a virgin espoused to Messiah -- **Ephesians 5:23-24, 2 Cor. 11:2**.

Once the bridegroom paid the *mohar*, the marriage agreement or covenant was established, but **first the bride had to agree to marry the bridegroom. Can we say she had to accept the wedding invitation and calling, just like we have to? Absolutely.** A good example was Rebekah having to first agree to go back with Abraham’s servant (**Gen. 24:57**). We are called, but we have to respond to the call to be the bride of Christ and to come to the wedding supper.

The betrothal was more than our “engagements” of today. To break up the betrothal, the man had to issue a divorce, as we read of Joseph and Mary. When Joseph thought Mary had been unfaithful, he was thinking of divorce (**Matthew 1:19**) though they were not yet married. It would have taken divorce to recover the betrothal price he had paid and to be truly single again.

### **The Cup**

To confirm the betrothal agreement, the future bride and groom would **drink of the groom’s cup** of wine, symbolic of her willingness to go through life with him, regardless of what was in “his cup”. The cup depicted whatever lay ahead. Remember when Yeshua cried out in Gethsemane that if possible, let this cup pass from me? Drinking the cup meant accepting whatever was going to be their lives together, she was accepting it “for better or for worse.”

This is what (**Matthew 26:27-29**) Yeshua said to his disciples at the last supper! He was making a new agreement, really a marriage proposal in a sense, with the first members of His church.

#### **Matthew 26:27-28**

27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. 28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

He was basically proposing to them, and offering them a marriage covenant! And when we drink of the Passover cup, we are not just accepting his blood over us, but also agreeing to accept what God has in store of us until His return.

**The Groom then would go back to his father’s home with a promise to return and take the bride back to his home once it was all ready. That’s what we read earlier – in John 14:1-3.**

**I firmly believe that yes, we are going to heaven to get married and the wedding will be performed in heaven.** I don't know how you can read chapters **Rev. 14, 15, 19** without clearly seeing that. We'll come back to this later in the sermon. That is our city, our home, though we will reign on earth for a thousand years.

I believe Heaven *is* the reward of the saved, though heaven is coming to a new earth and we will literally someday live “in heaven on earth” when it's all said and done. We will be going to heaven after the resurrection to get married and then return to earth to work, but our HOME will be heavenly Jerusalem with Abba our Father.

***Our JOB will be on earth. Our home will be in heavenly Jerusalem. Heaven is our home, our city, our country. And that's what scripture says over and over.***

Though I've also preached for years and years that we're going to heaven to get married, I first heard the clearest explanation of “ownership” in a sermon from Jeff Niccum given some years back. What Jeff made very clear in that sermon was the concept that *heavenly Jerusalem is our city*. It's the Bride's city, and that's why it is even called “the bride” in **Rev. 21-22**.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. Back to the time after the betrothal.

### **PREPARING For the Wedding**

#### **Day and Hour Unknown**

Unlike our modern western weddings where the wedding date, time, location and all details are known and disclosed months before, back then it was different.

The groom – even Yeshua! -- did not know the exact date of His return to get the bride for the wedding (**Matthew 24:36**). That was up to the *Father*, who determined when the groom had sufficiently prepared the place for the bride. Sometimes in poorer families, it was simply an addition to the father's house. Other times, there was a separate dwelling place.

So the Bride would know when it was getting close, but did not know the day nor the hour (**Matthew 24:36; 25:13**). But neither would an alert bride be caught off guard. **Turn to 1 Thess. 5:1-5** where the coming is also likened to a pregnancy. In a pregnancy, we have a due date. The expectant mother gets her bags ready so she can react quickly. She knows the time is getting close, but not the day or hour. But neither should it be a total surprise when it happens.

#### **1 Thessalonians 5:1-5**

But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, *as labor pains upon a pregnant woman*. And they shall not escape. 4 ***But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.*** 5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.

When the Groom returned, he came to bring the Bride home with him. This usually happened at night. The Bride in the meantime was preparing her things, her trousseau and preparing to be a bride ready for her wedding. She also gathered her attendants, which in Bible days strangely enough, was usually ten girls. Be turning to Matthew 25.



**Who are the 10 Virgins?**

**In Matthew 25:1-13** it speaks of ten *virgins*. *It does not speak of 10 brides*. I’ve heard Matt 25 used to describe the church. Is this correct? I’m just saying, it doesn’t say “the bride”, it says the “virgins” – the *attendants* of the bride.

**The arguments for saying these 10 were the Bride:**

- The Bride of Christ is also depicted as a virgin (**2 Cor. 11:2**).
- The redeemed 144,000 first fruits in **Rev.14:1-4** are described as virgins who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. Is that one virgin – or 144,000 though?
- The fact all ten virgins sleep parallels the many warnings to the church not to sleep.
- If these 10 are not the Bride (actually only 5 made it inside), then who are they?

**The arguments for saying these ten virgins are *not* the Bride:**

- It nowhere calls these ten “the Bride”. It was common practice for brides to have 10 attendants, usually younger girls, who assisted and accompanied the Bride. Could these 10 also be attendants, just like Rebekah had maids who accompanied her back to Isaac?
- Christ is coming to marry one virgin, one body – not ten.
- **Psalm 45:13-15** speaks of the virgins with Bride in the palace.  
13 The royal daughter is all glorious within the palace; [yes, we are royal priesthood]  
Her clothing is woven with gold.  
14 She shall be brought to the King in robes of many colors;  
*The virgins, her companions who follow her*, shall be brought to You.  
15 With gladness and rejoicing they shall be brought;  
They shall enter the King's palace.

I just bring this up for your consideration. *Scripture speaks of a wedding supper in which we find the King, the Groom, the Bride as well as wedding guests/attendants. Who are the wedding guests and attendants? Who are the ten virgins?* Are they also in the first resurrection?

Is it possible that some in the first resurrection are the Bride and some are the attendants? I don’t know. I really don’t. But I bring it up just in case it works out that way. Maybe some of our understanding of the resurrection, and who will be in it, may need some fine tuning. We have assumed in the past that *only* those comprising the Bride will be in the first resurrection. I may have said that myself in the past. I’m not so sure of that anymore in light of the scriptures I’m bringing out here; scriptures I’ve puzzled over for years. This is not salvational doctrine, but just something to whet your appetite that there may be more to this picture than we’ve considered in the past.

I think it is possible the first resurrection will include those who are the Bride of Christ, and also include those who are attendants to the bride, and who are guests at the wedding – unless the attendants and guests are angels. Just be willing to pivot on things prophetic.

By the way, let’s re-read another verse we just read right over! Notice Luke 12:35-38 and the timing shown here. Pause the audio for a minute so you can take in what the verses say.

**Luke 12:35-38**

"Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; 36 and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, **when he will return from the wedding**, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. 37 Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them."

I thought Christ was taking us to the Wedding and we should be ready to go to the wedding. But here it says he is returning *from* the wedding and we should be ready for him when he comes back FROM the wedding. Had you noticed that before? What could that mean? Is it possible the wedding is already prepared, Messiah is there at the wedding, and then comes back to bring the Bride to the wedding ready to start? Is that what it is saying? I'm just pointing out that the wording here, when examined closely, is mysterious.

Anyway, back to Matthew 25 and the 10 virgins. In weddings of those days, a regular wedding PARTY, A GROUP of people left with the groom to go to the Bride's home. And she returned with the groom again, in a group. It wasn't just the bride and groom. It was a lot of people. The Groom had servants and helpers and friends. Same thing when the Christ returns: there will be millions of angels.

**Matthew 25:1-5**

"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3 Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5 But while the bridegroom was delayed, they **all** slumbered and slept."

*Note that though 5 of the 10 are called "wise", they ALL slept.* Did the BRIDE sleep too? It says "virgins" here – not the Bride.

***Is Matthew 25 talking about the Bride of Christ? It COULD be, as the Bride is certainly depicted as a virgin several places (2 Cor. 11:1-2). In Rev. 14-15, the Bride is depicted as virgins. But then again, don't forget Ps. 45 I read earlier, where it speaks of "attendants".***

*Also in Matthew 22:9-10, it speaks of "guests" at the wedding supper put on by the King for His Son. The Bride is not a guest.* It's surely not speaking of the Bride. Who are the guests? Who are the attendants? We'll have to wait and see.

***Could it be this is not talking about the Bride herself, as we've always been taught? Who are the virgins?*** Can we say with certainty that the ten virgins represent the church, the Bride? \* The word "bride" is not mentioned here, as it is in Rev. 19, for example.

Consider this: Christ is marrying ONE body, not ten! ONE virgin, the church, not ten churches. At least that's what I'm thinking at this point. ***I think this was shown by Adam being given ONE woman, not many women.*** It was Adam and Eve, not Adam and Eve, Mary, and Abigail! Having said that, I also still realize many individuals can be seen as "one body" Biblically. I'm just saying – accept other possible scenarios so you're not caught too much by surprise. So Matthew 25 can be about the Bride, or it can be about the Bride's attendants.

In Matthew 25:3- the foolish “took no oil” it says, but in verse 8, the five foolish said their lamps were going out (or KJV “gone out”). So they had some oil but not enough to go the distance! *The words for “going out” is the same word for “quench”, as in 1 Thessalonians 5:19, “quench not the Spirit”.* So they were doing things that were quenching the Holy Spirit. That’s worth a study too, isn’t it?

Also note that Jesus Himself in His own parable states in verse 5, *“But while the bridegroom was delayed...”* What do you make of that?

**Matthew 25:1-10**

"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to **ten virgins** who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3 Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5 But **while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.**

6 **"And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'** 7 Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. 8 And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are **going out.**' 9 But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but **go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.**' 10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.

Notice the five wise are not being selfish by not sharing their oil. We **cannot give a relationship to the Father to another.** *That is something we each of us must do.* Scripture says that in this end time, not even Noah, Daniel or Job would be able to save anyone (**Ezekiel 14:14-16, 20;** look at Jeremiah 15:1). Only being “in him” will save you at the end. We have to go to the source of “the oil” ourselves. Someone can’t do it for us. See also **Rev. 3:17-18** to Laodiceans.

**Isaiah 55:1**

Ho! **Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters;**

And you who have no money, **Come, buy and eat.**

Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

**The Shout**

When the Groom came, to give some advance notice, there would be a shout, “Behold the Bridegroom comes!” – just as Matthew 25:6 says. We already read earlier in 1 Thess 4:16-17 how the Lord comes with a SHOUT, and with the voice of the archangel.

**1 Thess 4:16-18**

For the Lord Himself will **descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God.** And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Then they all go together to a different place for the wedding: the home of the groom! The Bride and her attendants would then noisily go back to the suitor’s home, with **lots of light.** Yeshua is also coming back with lots and lots of light. His coming shall be as lightning flashing across the sky, **lighting up the whole night (Matthew 24:47).** When he DOES come, it will be very, very

clear he has come! We won't have to wonder or be confused by some future false Islamic Jesus or some other impostor appears in Damascus or the desert claiming to be the Jesus of the Bible. .

**WHERE DO THEY GO NEXT? Where Will the Wedding Take Place?**

**Matthew 22:1-14.** Let's read verse 2:

2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a **certain king** who arranged a **marriage** for his **son**,"

The Groom is clearly the Son. So we know who the Son is. Who is the King? Obviously Father, God in the highest! Who will perform the wedding? I have to believe it will be Father HIMSELF, perhaps before the Sea of Glass! See also Matthew 9:15, where Jesus clearly likens himself to the Bridegroom. Where did Jesus go after his resurrection? To the Father in heaven. Where is he now? In heaven. Where is the Father of Jesus Christ? In heaven.

**Matthew 22:11** – “*When the King came in to see the guests....*”

*So the wedding is taking place where Father himself reveals Himself to the guests. Father is in heaven and does not come down to earth until the end of the thousand years – Rev. 21:1-4. No man has ever seen God the Father, ever (John 1:18; 1 John 4:12) except His Son Yeshua (Jesus Christ). No man can see God the Father in his glorified state until mankind is first changed to spirit and is like God.*

**1 John 3:1-2, in context of God the Father.**

Behold what manner of love **the Father** has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but *we know that when He (the FATHER!) is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him (THE FATHER!) as He is*

So God the Highest, God the Father, reveals Himself to the Bride at the wedding. But who got us there? By what means are we able to be in the Father's presence? Only by going back there with the Son of God. HE is the Way, the Life. There is no other way into the Father's presence, even literally.

Now notice where God lives. We even pray —“our Father, who art *in heaven*...” Matt. 6:9.

**Hebrews 12:22-24**

22 But you have come to *Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem*, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 *to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven*, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.”

*Now remember also Jesus said, “I go to prepare a place for YOU.” What is OUR city?*

Remember what I said about ownership earlier? Heavenly Jerusalem is not just the city of God; it is *our* city, bestowed upon us who are registered in heaven.

Hebrews 13:14 says, “Here we have no continuing city, but seek the one to come.”

OUR city is the one above. Abraham knew that, all the fathers of faith knew that:

**Hebrews 11:9-10**

9 “By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; 10 *for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*”

**Hebrews 11:16**

“But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called *their God, for He has prepared a city for them.*”

(Sounds like “I go prepare a place for you.” – John 14:1-3)

There’s more. Far more, to show that we are going to heaven to get married and that the entire heavenly Jerusalem is the Bride’s city! There will be lots of other cities, but the Bride will live in heavenly Jerusalem.

Note the Redeemed even have the name of the city emblazoned on their forehead somehow. Perhaps even on a crown or some other means? Or perhaps it is literally emblazoned on their foreheads.

**Revelation 3:12**

“He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. 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.”

This is also why Paul says we are already ambassadors of that city and **citizens** of that city! Because that’s “our country”, “our city”! (**Philippians 3:20**).

*That’s why Rev. 21:2, 9-10 calls the city of heavenly Jerusalem itself “the Bride”.* The **city** is so intimately associated with the Church (the Bride of Christ), that the city itself is called the Bride. Perhaps that’s working much the same way as when the media refers to Washington DC as the leadership of the USA. We can read statements like “Washington DC says...”

There’s so much to verify this. When Abraham – who was a type of God the Father – sent his servant to collect a bride for Isaac (a type of Christ), the servant went to family. We have to be part of the family of God too. He found Rebekah by the living pools of water, much like Acts 2 and the Holy Spirit. The servant brought Rebekah back to Isaac (like the angels will gather us from the four winds and take us to Messiah)... who then did what? It is LOADED with meaning.

**SARAH’S TENT**

**Genesis 24:61-67**

61 Then *Rebekah and her maids* arose, and they rode on the camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed. [Notice the maids/attendants also went to Isaac.]

62 Now Isaac came from the way of Beer Lahai Roi, for he dwelt in the South. 63 And Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening; and he lifted his eyes and looked, and there, the camels were coming. 64 Then Rebekah lifted her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she dismounted from her camel; 65 for she had said to the servant, “Who is this man walking in the field to meet us?”

The servant said, "It is my master." So she took a veil and covered herself.

66 And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done.

67 *Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent; and he took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her.* So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

If this pictures the wedding of the church and Messiah, what does Sarah and her tent represent?

**Galatians 4:23-27**

But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman [Sarah] through promise, 24 which things are symbolic. **For these are the two covenants:** the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is **Hagar** — 25 for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children — 26 **but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.** [in context, referring to **Sarah**, who was the “freewoman”]

Jerusalem above is the mother of us all. We are considered born in heavenly Jerusalem.

**Psalms 87:4-6**

"I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to those who know Me;

Behold, O Philistia and Tyre, with Ethiopia:

"This one was born there."

**5 And of Zion it will be said,**

**"This one and that one were born in her;**

**And the Most High Himself shall establish her."**

6 Yahweh (the LORD) will record,

When He **registers** the peoples: [note **Heb. 12:23**- firstborn registered **in heaven**]

**"This one was born there."**

That is how you are a natural-born citizen of any country – by being born there.

Upon arriving at the groom's father's house, the Bride and Groom would go into the *Huppah* (Hebrew spelling *chuppah*), the bridal chamber, where they would consummate their marriage and festivities would last for 7 days.

But the BRIDE REMAINED HIDDEN in the *huppah*, the wedding chamber, during that time.

I gave a sermon before – way back in 2004 I believe in the 3-part sermon series “The Mystery of Christ and the Church”. **In Part 3, given in MARCH 2004,** I chronicled carefully how you can see that the temple in heaven is open, then closed, then opened again. During the time it is closed is the time I believe the wedding is going on inside. It's fully detailed in the last half of that sermon. Please check it out.

In a nutshell it's this:

- The resurrection is at the last trump. There are 7 trumpets, so presumably the 7<sup>th</sup> is the last trump, but there are people who argue this point. I say it's the 7<sup>th</sup>/last. **Rev. 11:15** speaks of the last trump and hence the resurrection takes place.
- **Rev. 11:19 – the heavenly temple is opened** and then shut during the 7 last plagues.
- Rev. 12-13 are inset chapters.

- **Rev. 14:3** shows the saints in heaven on the sea of Glass before the throne. This is after the resurrection, after the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet of Rev. 11:15. The rest of chapter 14 shows angels coming and going. The context is clearly set in heaven. Read it for yourself.
- **Revelation 15:1-6** – read it yourself – again the context is in HEAVEN. The victorious saints are said to be standing on the sea of glass (15:2) and sing. **Rev. 15:5 – the temple is opened.** Then the 7 angels of the 7 last plagues come out (v.6). It speaks of the four living creatures – that’s obviously in heaven as well.
- **Revelation 15:8** – no one else was allowed to come in to the temple until the 7 last plagues were done. It appears the 144,000 are in the temple. Doing what? Could it be we’re having our 1-1 with Abba. Perhaps we’re receiving our new names. Or perhaps we’re receiving our reward and comments from the Most High prior to the wedding? Scripture doesn’t say what’s going on, but we know those things will happen at some point. The grandeur, the majesty, the emotion, the joy will be beyond description.
- By the time we come to **Revelation 19**, the wedding and wedding supper, in heaven, is ready to take place. Read the wording in Rev. 19 about the Wedding. *The context is entirely in heaven, staring us in the face.* That’s where it’s happening! **Rev. 19:1, 11, 14.**

*Some of us have been preaching for many years now that just as God married Israel on Pentecost, He is marrying the church also on Pentecost. I don’t know the day He is coming back to resurrect us and take us home to Abba (God our Father), but it seems likely the wedding itself will begin on Pentecost and last for some time while the 7 last plagues of Rev. 16 are being poured out.*

Romans 7:1-8 is all about how after Jesus died, He was free to marry a Bride, this time the spiritual church, rather than the physical nation of Israel. So I believe that Pentecost is also about the wedding of the Bride of Christ to the Son of God – and that it takes place in our city, the city of God, the city of the saints – heavenly Jerusalem.

So yes, we go back to heaven to get married. Jesus told Thomas in **John 14:5-6** that he should rejoice in that he was going to the father, and no one could come to the Father except by Jesus. The main meaning is that Yeshua is the door (John 10:1-5), the only means to get to Father. True. **But even literally, when He comes to get his Bride, he will want to take us straight home to Abba, His Father and our Father!**

Some object to saying the wedding takes place on Pentecost on the notion that there’s supposed to be a loud trumpet blast and that seems to fit better into the Feast of Trumpets, they say. But don’t forget there was also a very loud piercing trumpet blast on Pentecost at Mt Sinai at the giving of the 10 commandments (Ex. 19:19; 20:14). For that matter, trumpets are blown on every holyday.

*I’ll also say this: even if the actual wedding does not end up taking place on Pentecost, I do feel it is clear the wedding takes place, whenever it does, in heaven.*

Then after the wedding supper – maybe three earth months later, the Bride (saints/ the church, plus the angels) return to earth to land on the Mt of Olives, probably on the Feast of Trumpets.

This time we come back to do battle with the massive armies of the world assembled around and near Jerusalem all the way to the Galilee – who do battle with the new King of kings and his Bride. (Revelation 19:11-21)

### **The Reunion of Reunions**

This will be a reunion of all the children of God, now changed to spirit, now like God and seeing Him as He is, when he reveals Himself to us. The joy of meeting other saints will be ecstatic. **I will speculate a bit here: it seems to me that somehow we will recognize and know one another.** I think we will miraculously know and “recognize” who is who; at least of those who came before us. I say this because in the vision on the Transfiguration Mountain, Peter recognized Moses and Elijah somehow in the vision talking to the Messiah (Matthew 17:1-4).

There can be **no finer venue for the wedding** than the heavenly Jerusalem, which will be your city. For a very fine depiction of its wonders, listen to Jeff Niccum’s sermon “The Big Picture” on this website.

When we organized our first-ever college reunion, the smiles and laughter and sheer joy was beyond description. That won’t hold a candle to what we’re talking about here! Not even begin to! We can’t imagine a city 1500 miles high and 1500 miles across! Our highest mountains are only 7 or 7.5 miles high. Can we imagine a city – a spirit city – where the spirit streets are spirit gold, with gates made of solid pearl, with powerful angelic beings coming and going.... Can we imagine it? That’s your city! Don’t give this up for any bowl of lentil soup!

Why we’re talking about this today is that I believe this happens on Pentecost – the same day that God married Israel, the same season at least when Boaz and Ruth got married, and when the engagement ring (Greek arrabon – guarantee; very close to arrabona – engagement ring) of the Holy Spirit was given to the Fiancée on Pentecost day.

#### **Revelation 19:5-7**

“Then a voice **came from the throne**, saying, “Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!”

6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, “Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!

7 *“Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.”*

When it is all over, verse 11 says **heaven is once again opened**... and we come back down to earth with our Husband, whom we’ve just married. Let’s read it.

#### **Rev. 19:11-14**

11 *Now I saw **heaven opened***, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

12 His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. 13 He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. 14 *And the **armies in heaven***, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. [WHO are the armies who



accompany him? Jude says it's His angels and saints. That's us: His bride, the church, coming out of heaven.]

Besides what we've said, there's so much more about this exciting day:

- The raising of the two leavened loaves to God.
- The giving of the Torah in the Old covenant and the giving of the Spirit in the new covenant.
- Jewish tradition says everyone heard God speak in his own language (remember there was a mixed multitude with Israel). On this same day, the same thing happened in Act 2 with the giving of God's spirit.
- By the way, in the old covenant 3,000 died soon after the Torah was given (the golden calf incident) and in the new covenant, 3,000 were given new life in baptism. In Mt. Sinai,

**But BEYOND all that, there's SO MUCH more that is also very exciting about this day:**

- I believe on this day, the Day of Pentecost, the DOWN PAYMENT, the earnest or guarantee of the Holy Spirit will be paid in full as we are changed to spirit. Incorruptible. Unable to lie or sin. Unable to die or ever get sick or get old. Immortal. The thing people have sought will be ours as God's gift.
- On this Day, or leading up to it, I teach we will be picked up by powerful angels and taken to be with the Messiah – who then takes us all back with him to heavenly Jerusalem. You're about to go on the ride of a lifetime – or perhaps just be there in the blink of an eye. Better than any “E-TICKET” at Disneyland in the “old days”.
- On this day, Pentecost, more and more of us believe we will be marrying the Son of God.
- On this day, we will be in Heaven—our city. Not to stay, but for a time to come back to earth to rule on the earth. But our home with Abba will always be Heaven. Then the time will come when there will be a new heaven and a new earth – a spirit universe, an earth that may bear little resemblance to the size of this physical, decaying planet. And at that time, there will be literally heaven on earth, as the new heavenly Jerusalem descends from the Father to the new earth and THIS will be our city on the new earth.

God speed that day. Be excited about the holydays – because they're all about our King and what He is doing to bestow a kingdom on His saints and how he'll bring lasting peace and joy to the whole world. Until next time, this has been your brother in Christ, Philip Shields.

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