

# Last Chance Bride (3)

## The Bride's Sojourn in heaven

Now that we have established that the Firstfruit Resurrection is at the 6<sup>th</sup> Seal, let's look at exactly what and where the Bible tells us the next events take place! One chapter reveals the answer. Revelation 14:1-5.

And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood **on the mount Sion**, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song **before the throne**, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were **redeemed from the earth**. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which **follow the Lamb** whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from [among Not there in the Greek but **'the'**, is] men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

Here we learn that 144,000 is the number from all nations of the resurrected Saints from both Old and New Testaments including those who were too old or infirm to lately serve in Jerusalem. Considering that they will become both kings and priests who will reign on the earth (Rev. 5:10), there is no reason to doubt that this is a literal number. Revelation 15:2 provides extra detail: **'And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, [cf. Rev 14:9] and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.'**

Do not confuse this 144,000 with the latter group in the first parenthesis of Revelation 7, which we will deal with later.

This is Mount Sion in Heaven, not Mount Zion in Jerusalem, (Hebrews 12:22) and as they sing before the Father's throne there on the Sea of Glass, (Rev. 4:5-6) it is now mixed with fire to represent God's wrath and judgment during the 3½ years until the 7 angels are given the 7 last plagues, Revelation 15:6. There can be no doubt this is indeed Heaven, just as is described in Revelation chapter 4.

How did they get there from their angelic gathering in the clouds, after their resurrection? Note that Jesus Christ is then pictured on His throne in the clouds at the resurrection in Revelation 6:16, **'And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and**

hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:’

The account nowhere indicates that Christ sets foot on the earth at the resurrection, and when the resurrection is complete, Jesus Christ carries His Bride to Heaven on the mobile sea of glass which we can read about in Ezekiel chapter 1, and also on Mount Sinai, in Exodus 24:10.

What do they do in Heaven? Well, from Revelation 12:14-17, a seemingly challenging scripture, we can gain some information, when we put it together with other verses.

‘And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, **where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time**, from the face of the serpent. 15And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. 16And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. 17And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, **which keep the commandments of God**, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.’

On the face of it, this scripture presents some problems. First, what is this ‘wilderness’? Well, the word is the Greek word ‘eremos’, meaning ‘desert’. The ‘deserts’ in the Bible lands are not sand dunes, but rocky wastelands with infrequent rainfall, but with wells, oases and water enough, like Engedi where King David hid from Saul, or Petra in Jordan.

Here the “woman” is God’s faithful Church, pursued by the Beast’s army because of her broadcast of hope from Jerusalem to invaded “Israel”, the US and UK etc., during the first 5 Seals. We need to put the scriptures together, to understand that not all in the True Church will make the 144,000!

We have seen that the 144,000 are taken to safety to Heaven in the First Resurrection. However, just as occurred when Israel fled from Egypt long ago, another group - mainly those Jews who had believed the broadcast, fled Jerusalem with them, and because of their faith, God will protect, provide and “nourish” that group and others who had gone there in faith from around the world, for the 3½ years, even though that group has not actually been carrying out God’s work and had maybe not fully repented. What happens to that group you can read about in our article on Petra – “Christ Goes to Petra”, Page 1, article 7, and in the article ‘The Division of The Saints,’ under ‘More’ then ‘End Time’ on the home page. Into that group too, fall those women and children Jesus mentioned in Matthew 24:19.

The word ‘nourish’ means more than just the provision of food. The Greek word ‘trepho’ can mean “fed”, but figuratively, it means to be personally fully developed, ie. spiritually, so both groups will be educationally prepared for their *appropriate*

service in the Kingdom of God during the years of the Great Tribulation, one group in Heaven, one around Petra in Jordan. [See Article]

As for the Bride, after their marriage to Jesus Christ in Heaven at Pentecost, She has the most to learn, but then, as spirit beings, and members of the family of God, our talents and abilities will, like our bodies, have undergone a vast change, for we are told **we will be like Christ**,

1 John 3:2, 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, **we shall be like him**; for we shall see him as he is.' Revelation 1:13-15, 'and among the lampstands was One like the Son of Man, dressed in a long robe, with a golden sash around His chest. The hair of His head was white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes were like a blazing fire. His feet were like polished bronze refined in a furnace, and His voice was like the roar of many waters.' Of course, this is in His glorified form. Christ did not appear like that to His disciples, after His resurrection, when that would not have been appropriate.

I imagine it will take a while just to familiarise ourselves with our new abilities, and learn to control them and adjust to being married to Christ. We, who married "till death do us part," will not find that easy, but we and our previous wife or husband will become ONE with Christ and His Father, an even richer experience!

We can only speculate on how we will learn to practise the different roles for which we have qualified, Revelation 22:12, 'And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man **according as his work shall be**.' Our roles will be explained and we will be suitably equipped with all the powers we will need to be capable of fulfilling them, in any situation.

3½ years is a long time, and the prayers of some of those on earth who truly repent will need urgent answering, considering the horrendous circumstances which will prevail on earth. Will we be involved, as we are then members of the family of God? We don't know, but even teachers and doctors must learn by practising for their roles, and even riding a white war-horse will take *practice* for most of us. Revelation 19:14, 'And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.' Our families, having discovered *our* resurrection, will maybe find it easier to repent!

All of these things God has already planned, but thinking about them helps to motivate and inspire us to qualify to serve in the group that **is prepared** to obey God's End Time command in Jeremiah 31:6-7, though we know not when that cry will come. 'For there shall be a day, that the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the LORD our God. **For thus saith the LORD**; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O LORD, save thy people, the remnant of Israel.' (CF. Revelation 12:17)

Once the Tribulation begins, it will be too late to travel internationally when the world falls into war at the Second Seal! Revelation 14:8, *‘And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.’* Could non-military personnel travel abroad during the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war? The time to go is Revelation 18:4, 14:7-8, *before* invasion.

What we have seen so far, that the Saints, then **the Bride of Christ, are in Heaven for 3½ years** is confirmed in scripture by the consecutive use of the series of “ands” in Revelation 19, verses 3-14, which follow God’s judgment of the great whore in verse 2. There is no room there for a stay in Heaven of 1,000 years as some believe, nor is there in Zechariah 14:5, where the Bride returns from Heaven with Christ, nor in Revelation 20:4 where they reign on earth with Christ for 1,000 years. 3½ years was long enough for Christ to teach the Disciples to become Apostles, and it will be quite long enough for Him to teach us, with all our new abilities, all we need for our future reigning roles.

Jesus Christ does not forget those that left Jerusalem, but who do not take part in the resurrection, and are then taken to Jordan and the wilderness of Petra! As we read in the article on Petra, the first thing He does after Armageddon, is rescue them from their captors, and bring them in triumph to Jerusalem, there to be reunited and amazed at the glory which their brethren have attained! .....

To be continued.

.....