The Lamb's Wife

"Come hither, I will shew thee the bride."
—Revelation 21:9

THE WORD 'BRIDE' IN THE Hebrew is *kallah*, which is from a primitive root meaning 'to complete,' also 'a son's wife.' The Greek word used in the New Testament is *numphe*, and means 'a betrothed girl,' 'a son's wife.' We read in Genesis 2:18 that Eve was made to be a "help meet" for Adam; in other words, to complete Adam; for while he remained alone, he was not from God's standpoint complete. Different illustrations are used in the Scriptures to convey the thought of the unity of Christ and the church. The term bride particularly applies to the marriage day, but no one picture can adequately reveal all the glories that will come to the church. During the Gospel Age, the church is the body of Christ, called unto his eternal glory, after that they have "suffered a while" (I Pet. 5:10), and have been made perfect to do God's will.

Paul, in II Corinthians 11:2, says, "I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." God does not want the affections of the church turned to the world. The term 'chaste' suggests that we should not set our affections on

any one else, or allow them to stray to the world; for James 4:4 says, "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." Paul feared that as the serpent beguiled Eve through subtlety, so we might be allured from our Lord. (II Cor. 11:3) Satan's attack on Eve was, "Hath God said, Ye shall not eat? . . . . God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods." (Gen. 3:1-5) Similarly, Satan seeks to beguile the church by suggesting doubts regarding the fulfillment of the Divine Word. Let us see that we are not corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

A BRIDE FOR ISAAC

The account of Abraham's servant seeking a bride for Isaac is found in Genesis, chapter twenty-four. Abraham admonished him not to seek a bride from the people of the land, but to go to Abraham's own people. This illustrates the selection of the bride of Christ. Rebekah made the journey to the bridegroom she had not seen; so also it is written of the church in relationship to her Lord. "Whom, not having seen, you love; . . . but believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and glorious." (I Pet. 1:8, *Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott*) In Revelation 19:7, we read, "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." Upon the robe provided by her Lord, the needlework of the approved character must be worked out. She proves herself faithful, and to her is "granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."—vs. 8

Revelation 3:4 says of those in Sardis who had not defiled their garments, "They shall walk with

me in white: for they are worthy." All the overcomers will be worthy because of their faithfulness, and on the marriage day, in glory and beauty arrayed, will be manifested as the bride of Christ. The panorama of Revelation can only be seen by those in the Spirit during the Lord's day. (Rev. 1:10) We read in Revelation 21:10, "He carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city"—for the bride had become the holy city. As stated in verse two, John saw the "new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

The illustration of the bride specifically refers, as we have seen, to the marriage day. Thereafter, the bride class has become the new heavenly government for the blessing of humanity. The term bride alone could not adequately show the splendor of the church glorified. This is better portrayed under the heading of a city having the glory of God, and of which the Lamb is the light thereof, where God dwells. This will be the capital—the center of world government—and the nations being saved will walk in the light of it, for there shall be no night there. It will be for the salvation of humanity. Should we not thank our Heavenly Father for having invited us to be of the bride class and, as the espoused, watch carefully every step that would draw us away from our Lord, remembering that the Adversary is very subtle and would lead us away from the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus. ■

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

QUESTION: What is the lesson intended for us in this text of Scripture? "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?"—Jeremiah 12:5

ANSWER: Jeremiah proclaimed God's message fearlessly, even though it was unpopular. We cannot avoid noting the remarkable similarity of Jeremiah's position to that of the LORD's people today, who are enlightened with the Truth of the kingdom. As he saw in his day, we now see efforts being made to save this civilization through human efforts. We know that these efforts, no matter how well intentioned, will fail. We cannot disguise or withhold the prophetic fact that the time of trouble in which we live will increase in intensity until the present order of things is destroyed. At the same time, Jeremiah-like, we present a reason for real optimism; that the kingdom will soon come when God's will is done in earth as it is in heaven. Jeremiah heard the words of the LORD saying, "He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully," and so do we.—Jer. 23:28

Jeremiah had been discouraged and ready to quit, as is told us in the texts preceding the one quoted in our question. The way of the wicked had prospered and brought forth fruit, while his prophecies seemed to wait for fulfillment. Then God answered him in the words of our text, 'If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how

canst thou contend with horses?' His answer to Jeremiah is an answer to those of his people today who would quit through discouragement. It is a challenge to the sincerity and completeness of our consecration to God. It is as if he said, "Why do you complain about your providence? What you have endured so far for the Truth's sake is as nothing to what you may be called upon to endure in order to prove your complete submission to the Father's will, as you enter further into the time of trouble."

Such comfort is only for the strong in the LORD; but what comfort it is! Of the Apostle Paul, our Mas-ter said, "I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." (Acts 9:16) The one who is a Christian in name only has avoided this requi-site of discipleship through inactivity. Those conse-crated to God find the echo of these words deep down in their own lives, stirring and challenging them to