

## VI.2. Lambs to Rams: The Church, the Bride & Holy City New Jerusalem

Mat 6:10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in Heaven.

It would be through this kingdom on earth that God's purpose would be fulfilled for His creation. To many, Matthew 6:9-13 is understood as being "the Lord's prayer" when in fact it **was** what Jesus taught His **disciples** to pray concerning the ushering in of the coming of the kingdom of God on earth (*Act 2*). It was a model prayer which was in answer to their question on how to pray (*Lk 11:1*). There are still those who actually believe and teach that since the Jews allegedly thwarted the coming of the kingdom by having Jesus crucified, God, as an interim replacement, set up the church until the Jews accepted Jesus as their prophesied Messiah. But man cannot thwart what God has foretold would happen. (*Dan 7:14*)

Num 23:19 God *is* not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do *it*? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?

So what is the kingdom?

How do we correlate the church with the kingdom and claim both as being of the same entity? In Acts 2:47 we find "the Lord added to the church those who were being saved". If God adds someone to the church, what is He removing them from? The Father "delivered us (*past tense*) **from** the domain of darkness and **transferred** us (*past tense*) **into the kingdom** of His beloved Son" (*Col 1:13*). (*Emp. added*) Therefore the kingdom is not some future entity that we are to look for but is synonymous with the church which appeared on Pentecost in Acts 2.

Where and when did the church originate?

Jesus, in Mat 16:18 said “I **will build** My church”. (*Emp. added*) Jesus hadn’t constructed the church for habitation yet **at that time**, even though He chose who would be in it, according to obedience to His word, “**before** the foundation of the world” (*Eph 1:4*). (*Emp. added*) It was prophesied that the church would originate in Jerusalem (*Isa 2:3*) which was fulfilled in Acts 1:7-8.

### The church of both Testaments (*Acts 7:38*)

As we have studied concerning the ecclesia, i.e., the church, in the following verses we will see the progression from the Old to the New Testament people of God, spiritual Israel.

Rev 6:9 And when He had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar (*of burnt sacrifice- denoting which Testament these souls were under; here contextually the Mosaic*) the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: (*These would have included the prophets that were martyred- Lk 11:47.*)  
 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth (*those responsible for their persecution and martyrdom; in their case from the Jews- 2 Cor 11:26; 1 The 2:14*)? 11 And white robes (*received posthumously, as did the penitent thief on the cross next to Jesus, since Christ hadn’t died and resurrected during their lifetime in this context*) were given (*post Pentecost- 33 AD*) unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season (*between Pentecost of 33 AD and 70 AD*), until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were (*showing they had been martyred for speaking as led by God’s word*), should be fulfilled (*which was finalized when the temple was destroyed in 70 AD, thus ending the sacrificial system*).

Persecution of the Messianic people by the Jews continued up to the end of that system.

Rev 12:1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman (*the remnant of O.T. spiritual Israel through whom the Christ was born*) clothed with the sun (*the greater light- Gospel*), and the moon under her feet (*lesser light- Mosaic Law*), and upon her head a crown (*Gk.4735- stephanos [of victory]*) of twelve stars: (*O.T. patriarchs/ spiritual Israel that were victorious in bringing Christ into the world*).

Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a Man Child, Who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron (2:27): and her Child was caught up unto God, and to His throne. (*Christ's ascension- Acts 1:9-11, i.e., He returned to Heaven once He completed His task- "it is finished"- Jn 19:30*)

### The bride of Christ

The original intent of marriage, according to Eph 5:25-32, was to show the relationship between Christ and His church.

Rev 19:7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. 8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. (*i.e., overcoming the accuser "by the blood of the Lamb"- 12:11 and obedience to the righteous ordinance of baptism- Act 2:38*)9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

Those who are bidden to the marriage and those who respond to the invitation are called via the Gospel (2 Thes 2:14), the good news of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Once we have obeyed the ordinance of baptism in emulating Jesus (Rom 6:3-7) we've been "qualified" by the Father to "share in the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col 1:12).

“The marriage union of Christ and the church is not a single act or thing. Every union of a believer with Christ in baptism is marriage to Christ, and is representative of the whole relation. This marriage occurs every time one is baptized into Christ, and therefore always in process and is continuous.”- Foy E. Wallace, Jr. (*See Rev 7:9.*)

### New Heaven and New Earth

Any time we see in scripture the phrase “new heaven and new earth” we’re talking about a new phase of existence for God’s people (*as in 2 Pet 3 or in Isa 65 as it pertained to Israel’s deliverance from Babylonian captivity.*). Here, it refers to the glorified church. On earth she is the ‘church militant’; in Paradise she is the ‘church victorious’; in Heaven she will be the ‘church glorified’.

Rev 21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth (*spiritual*): for the first heaven and the first earth (*physical*) were passed away; and there was no more sea. (*In this context separation between God and man. The physical sea will be destroyed along with the physical earth in 20:11.*) 2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem (*the glorified church*), coming down from God out of Heaven (*her origin*), prepared as a bride adorned for her Husband.

### A Prepared Place for a Prepared People

Joh 14:2 In My Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare (*Gk.2090*) a place (*Gk.5117- a spot [the glorified church]*) for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also. (*Emp. added*)

As in Act 20:28, where Paul referenced “the church of God, which He hath purchased with His Own blood”, Paul was labeling Jesus as being Deity since it was Christ, Who through the “body prepared” for Him (*Heb 10:5*), Who shed His blood.

Like Israel's wandering for forty years in the desert (*Ex 16:35*), God will take care of His people (*here the church as offspring of the Mosaic age; spiritual Israel*) during her years of persecution (*which would not be long*). Here it pertains to the souls under the altar (*6:9*) and the changing of the Testaments between the cross and the fall of Jerusalem (*AD 70*), which ended the sacrificial system and fulfilled the Law (*Mat 5:18*): *Act 8:1-4 (Jas 1:1; Anytime "twelve tribes" is used in this context it refers to "spiritual Israel" and is addressing members of the church, "the Israel of God" Gal 6:16.)/Heb 11:13; 8:13.*

Place (*Gk.5117- spot*) is the same Greek word used in *Jn 14:2-3*. The kingdom (*Mat 6:10*) on earth, i.e. the church, is the special spot set aside for God's elect people to be nourished and grow in until victorious through death (*Rom 6:22*); the 'church militant' (*2 Cor 10:4; 2 Tim 2:3*) reside on earth and co-reign with the conquerors (*church victorious*) in Paradise.

### The Description of Her Adornment

We have seen above what she is arrayed in (*Rev 19:8*). Next is a view of how God sees His Son's bride as the glorified church.

*Rev 21:9 And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee **the bride, the Lamb's wife**. 10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and **shewed me** that great city, the **Holy Jerusalem**, descending out of Heaven from God, (*thus the bride, church and city are one in the same*), (*Emp. added*)*

Using precious metals and stones that man can identify with as rare and costly, this is a figurative description that pales in spiritual reality to how God views the church. A person doesn't stop being a faithful Christian at physical death when the soul is separated from the body. Again, according to Jesus, faithful Christians never die, they only pass into life (*Jn 5:24*).

## Conclusion

How many arks was Noah told to build? One. And only those who obeyed God and entered the ark were spared from the destruction that befell all the disobedient. So, how many churches did Jesus say He was going to build?

Mat 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock (*Peter's confession that Jesus is the Christ*-v. 16) I will build **My** (*singular*) church; and the gates of hell (*Hades*) shall not prevail against it. (*Gk.86- Hades- and according to Lk 16:26 it has "a great chasm [being] fixed" and will not allow anyone to leave that realm of the dead, but since Jesus has "the keys of Death and Hades" [Rev 1:18] He was able to return from the dead and prepare His church for habitation once He ascended back to Heaven*). (*Emp. added*)

## VI.2. Questions

1. What has a Christian been transferred out of? a) the domain of darkness; b) Hades; c) the kingdom of God's dear Son.
2. Where were the souls located in Revelation 6:9? a) Jerusalem; b) in torments; c) under the altar of burnt sacrifice.
3. How does this show which testament they were under? a) it doesn't; b) the altar was part of the Mosaic Law; c) martyrs were slain under the altar of burnt sacrifice.
4. What do "sun" and "moon" represent in Revelation 12? a) sun represents knowledge and moon represents ignorance; b) sun represents day and moon represents night; c) sun represents the Gospel and moon represents the Mosaic Law.
5. Any time "new heaven and new earth" is used, what does this represent? a) the Mosaic being replaced by the Gospel; b) the heavens and earth under renovation; c) a new phase of existence for God's people.
6. When was Jerusalem destroyed along with the sacrificial system? a) 66 AD; b) 70 AD; c) 33 AD.
7. What does "holy city New Jerusalem" represent? a) the old city of Jerusalem being renovated; b) the glorified church; c) the victorious church.
8. Why was Jesus able to leave the Hadean realm? a) He has the keys; b) He closed the gulf; c) there was no room for Him.

