

## THE HOPE OF GLORY

What is our hope? As believers, what is it that we are hoping in and hoping for? For a Christian, hope forms a large part of their experience. Along with faith and love it is one of the three things which endure (I Cor 13:13). But what is it? What does it consist of? These are the things which we will be discussing in this chapter. Paul prays that: “The eyes of [y]our understanding being enlightened” we would “know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints” (Eph 1:18). This is truly what we need. All of us need further supernatural revelation concerning the wonderful things of God. We need our spiritual “eyes” opened to see. We need to look deeply into His marvelous plan. Then with this vision burning in us, give ourselves completely to Him so that His purposes can be accomplished in us.

However, before we can really know what our hope is, it may be necessary for us to disabuse ourselves of some things which can substitute for what is genuine. We must free our minds from any myths, partial truths or outright lies which give us a human concept but no spiritual revelation. Any “understanding” which is not true, will block our ability to receive what is. Any concept which does not flow from the throne of God but from the minds of men will certainly hinder us from seeing His truth. When we think we already know something, our minds become full and satisfied, making it very hard for us to receive anything more. This blind, closed position is especially lamentable if what we think is light turns out to be only darkness. Therefore, it is imperative to spend time here in this writing not only declaring what is true, but also examining some very common false ideas which take the place of divine revelation in the minds of some believers. May God have mercy upon us to reveal His own truth as we look into these things together.

As we have stated many times in this book, our God has graciously offered to anyone who wishes the opportunity to receive His own eternal life. Once we possess this Life, we are then able to grow up spiritually into all that He is, becoming mature sons. Then, being so changed, we are prepared to enter into a holy marriage union with our Creator. Therefore, the true gospel message is a message about our destiny. It is about who and what we can become. It is about a radical life change from something earthly to something glorious. Yet somehow, subtly, this wonderful good news has been altered. The message we hear so often today is no longer about our destiny but a destination. The focus of our attention has been shifted from what we can “become” to “going someplace and getting something or some things.” Instead of preaching and thinking about what we will be when we die, many are focused upon “where we will

go" or "what we will get."

For many Christians these days, their hope is in a place called "heaven." That is to say that they are looking forward to a destination, an address where they will live forever. This place is perhaps in their minds, a kind of celestial "Disney World" which offers many kinds of entertainments and a variety of physical, earthly sorts of pleasures. Not only, they think, will they have plenty of ease and enjoyment, but they will also have a huge mansion and an unlimited supply of gold to spend on what they want. Naturally, Jesus will be there in case we need Him for anything. Some imagine they will spend their time playing golf. For others, perhaps surfing or sailing fills their hopes. Many think that his or her favorite pastime will be available to ensure that they are happy and not bored. To sum up what many believe, "heaven" must be like a kind of "pleasure land" similar to a Muslim "paradise."

The problem with all this is that these things are not the truth. This is only an imaginary idea, constructed from a few misunderstood Bible verses. It is an earthly, human concept about eternity which is not the message of Jesus Christ. Since it is not true, it has no spiritual power. It has no authority to impact our lives in any real way. It has no influence to bind the hearts of men to what they hope for. Therefore, it cannot serve as an anchor of the soul "within the veil" (Heb 6:19), which will see them through times of temptation and trial. This "glory land" message is merely a soulish, worldly system of thought which is impotent to impact the lives of the human race. The preaching of it cannot save souls and the "believing in it" will not change our lives or attitudes. The reason for this has already been stated: it simply is not true. Only God's truth has real power.

Think about it. Such material comforts along with physical riches and pleasures can be obtained by people on this earth today. Many in the world today are consumed with exactly these things. They want to "go somewhere" new, different and exciting. They want to take a vacation to some exotic location or other. The pursuit of "things" is also rampant. New and larger televisions, boats, cars, clothes and an infinite variety of things are what many people of this world strive for and live for. You see, destinations, things and pleasures are the pursuits of this world, not of the kingdom of God. If these are the goal, why not seek them here and now? If these things are God's plan for us, then why should we not by all means and using all effort, seek to lay hold of these things today, in this lifetime? That way we can have some of them now and even more later. But the objectives of the spiritual life are different. They have nothing to do with where we might go or what we might get, but everything to do with "who" we might become. True spiritual goals are not the same as those of the world.

I remember speaking to a large group of believers in a poorer country some years ago. Trying to clarify for them the true hope of glory—the genuine spiritual riches which we should be pursuing today—I said something like this: "If having a large house, three cars in the garage and plenty of money to spend is heaven, then the United States is heaven." How shocked I was to see the entire audience nodding their heads in agreement. For them, according to the gospel which they had received and were believing, the U.S. was, if not heaven, the closest thing to it. Dear brothers and sisters, this is not the true gospel message. It is only a poor human idea of what eternity will be like.

Possibly, stating that our rewards will not be physical or sensual may startle some of you readers. It may be that you have been already "believing in" these kinds of things for many years. I have no wish to offend you. So please, I urge you, do not shut your mind off, but let us open to God together, examine His word without

prejudice or preconception and let us see what the eternal plan of God really is.

### OUR TRUE "MANSION"

To begin it seems necessary to speak about the heavenly mansions which many believers are hoping to receive. Simply put, there are none. That's right, there will be no mansions, as we think of them, in "heaven." Now I know as well as you do the verse where Jesus says: "In my father's house are many mansions" (Jn 14:2). But this is a very poor translation. The word translated "mansions" here should be "dwelling places" or habitations. Paul the apostle explains for us what this "habitation" really is. It is our new glorified body which we will receive. II Corinthians 5:1-4 reads: "For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. 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 (ZOE) life." You see, our new "house" or habitation will be our new body. It has nothing to do with a building or physical house. It is not a mansion. The "place" which Jesus is preparing for us is our celestial body in which we will dwell for eternity. This glorified body which we will receive is the only "mansion" we will get. Please notice that in verse one this "house" is "in the heavens" but in verse two we see that when we receive it, it is no longer in heaven but "from heaven."

Eternity will not have separate "housing" for everyone. The modern Christian concept of the New Jerusalem being divided up into subdivisions or apartments is erroneous. I have even heard believers making calculations based upon the measurements of the city to find out how much "space" each one will have. The new Jerusalem is not a cube which might be divided up into many living compartments. Even though the height, width and breadth are equal, it is still not a cube. Instead, it is a mountain. Heb 12:22 reads: "For you have come unto Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem . . ."

In eternity, living on the new earth, there will be no need for an earthly kind of house. We will not need to sleep, since there will never be any night or tiredness (Rev 21:25). Therefore bedrooms will not be necessary. We will not need to cook food, so kitchens will not be needed. We will not need to use the bathroom, consequently this place too will be unnecessary. There will be no need for privacy since everything will be open and exposed to everyone. The entire new Jerusalem is "clear as crystal" (Rev 21:11). There is nothing hidden there. There are no interior walls, barriers, or dark corners in which to hide. There will be no place to "get away" and do something you do not want others seeing. There will be no desire to "have some privacy" from the others and from God Himself. There will be no divisions, nothing hidden or dark, no special groups or secrets. If this does not appeal to you, perhaps you still have within your heart areas of thought and desire which have not been brought into the light of God. Perhaps you are in need of a further cleansing work of the Holy Spirit to bring all that you are into this light. In this way, and only in this way, will you be prepared to live in God's presence for eternity.

When our Lord comes, all resistance, all darkness, all hesitation on our part to be intimate with Him will be completely exposed. Any fear, any rebellion within our souls or lack of love for Him and Him alone will become totally obvious to ourselves and everyone else. Today we see Him only through "a glass darkly" (I Cor 13:12). On that

day we will meet Him face to face. In the blazing, pure light of His countenance, everything will be seen for exactly what it is. When He appears, any way in which we have deceived ourselves, hoping that we are right with God even though we don't feel right, will be seen for what it is. Any excuses we invented for not seeking Him with all our heart and not doing His will shall be revealed. All the secrets of our heart will be made manifest.

## **JESUS IS COMING FOR HIS BRIDE**

Jesus is coming for His bride. He is coming for the one He is going to marry. This speaks to us of great intimacy. Song of Solomon 1:4 says: "The king has brought me into His chambers." But what "chamber" is this? Is it His office? Could it be His throne room? No, it is the bed chamber. This figure of speech speaks to us of unparalleled intimacy. It is using human language to describe our future spiritual union with Christ. There will be no secrets there. There will be nothing hidden or covered. Do you remember in chapter one where we spoke about the first wedding, the marriage of Adam and Eve? There in this prophetic chapter about the future "marriage," the word of God says that "they were both naked, and were not ashamed" (Gen 2:25). What does this mean to us? It refers to just the subject at hand. It speaks of being completely without "covering," that is that everything is totally open, exposed and in the light. Yet in this state of "nakedness" they were not ashamed. This is because they had nothing to hide. Yet, when they entered into sin, this great comfortableness with openness and transparency vanished. Because of their sin, they suddenly then felt an urge to be covered and to hide.

What about you? Will you be comfortable with such intimacy with God when He comes? Will you be happy to learn that He knows everything about you—all your actions, attitudes and words? Are you living today in this real kind of transparency and intimacy with Him? Have you confessed all? Have you brought everything into His light for Him to examine and judge? Are you daily living in this kind of spiritual "nakedness" with Him? If not, then you will be ashamed at His coming (I Jn 2:28). You will be embarrassed and want to hide. You will be exceedingly afraid to meet Him, knowing that all will be exposed. Many Christians insist that they are waiting anxiously for the day when Jesus comes. They shout, they sing and they pray for His appearing. But when the sky opens and He begins to appear, many of these same people will begin to look for a place to hide themselves. They will suddenly realize their true inward condition. Their sin, which they have been hiding from themselves and others, will quickly become obvious. Any "playing at church" or pretending to be in a better spiritual state than they really are will stand out starkly in the light of His countenance. Isaiah 33:14 reads: "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness has seized the hypocrites." These will be the ones who will be seeking a place to hide themselves.

There will be no piles of gold or silver waiting in the New Jerusalem for us to spend. There will be no need for money. There will be no stores in which to spend and no products to buy. There will be no one trying to use the needs of the other to enrich themselves. There will be no one who has necessity or anyone who is striving to have more than another. In fact we will have no needs whatsoever. God Himself will be all we want or care to have. There, no one will need or want entertainment, pastimes or sensual pleasure. Any such diversion would simply be a distraction from the wonderful presence of God.

I am not saying that there will be no pleasure of any kind. In fact, I am quite sure

that being with Jesus will be the most pleasurable experience anyone could ever imagine. Surely, in His presence is “fullness of joy,” and “at His right hand are pleasures forevermore” (Ps 16:11). It is just that these pleasures will be different. They will be spiritual, not earthly. The things and enjoyments of this earth, to which we so desperately cling, will be nothing to us and even today are nothing in comparison to what God has to give. It is our privilege today to have a “foretaste” or a little sample of these spiritual realities. Here and now we can abandon our appetite for earthly, sensual pleasure and learn how to enjoy God Himself. This enjoyment is not something different from what we will know in the future, but just a very limited sample of the real thing.

### **OUR EXCEEDING GREAT REWARD**

It is certainly true that Jesus taught us to lay up “treasures” in heaven (Mt 6:20). And also, that “our hope is laid up for us in heaven” (Col 1:5). But there is another fact which we must be careful to remember. Jesus clearly states that when He comes, He is bringing this “reward” with Him to the earth. He says, “behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me” (Rev 22:12). Our “reward” may be in heaven now, but it will not stay there. It will be brought to the earth at the coming of Jesus Christ. And what is this reward? Since it will not be silver or gold or other kinds of earthly riches, what could it be? Significantly, God spoke to Abraham, “I am your shield and your exceeding great reward” (Gen 15:1). You see, God Himself is our reward. He and He alone will be the one whom we enjoy. Our reward is not a destination such as heaven (or even a new earth). It is not riches like silver or gold. It is a Person. It is the opportunity to enter openly and fully into His presence and enjoy all that He is. Further, as we saw in chapter 7 about the judgment seat of Christ, our ability to enjoy this reward—which could be thought of as the “size” of this reward—will be governed by our spiritual maturity.

Do you feel disappointed by this? Does this seem like you are being cheated out of what you have been wanting? Have you been hoping for lots of other entertainments and pleasures? Have you set your heart on a “mansion” in the sky? Then this is a sign that you do not yet really know God as you should. You have not yet had your spiritual eyes opened to see. You are still bound by an earthly, human understanding of eternity. But let me state this with all boldness: God is everything! He is all we will ever want or need. He is the creator of all the “things” which we value so much. He is so much greater than our small little earthly “pleasures” as to make them look ridiculous and paltry in comparison. He is all in all. In His astounding, intense, glorious presence we will think of nothing else and if we do, it will only be to be ashamed of it. Truly God Himself will be our “exceeding great” reward.

No doubt, when we are with Jesus, there will be many things for us to do. Yet it is not these things which will provide our enjoyment. It is not activities or places which will be our reward or our satisfaction. We will not be looking to them as a source of entertainment or diversion. Instead, being fully satisfied in our God, we will also find joy in serving Him and assisting Him in doing His will in the universe. These activities will not be the source of our happiness but the result of our delight which we have in our Lord. Our attention and our desires will be fully focused upon Him rather than on anything which we might do, anywhere we might go or on anything which He could give us. Our relationship with Him, our intimate enjoyment of His person, will command our complete affection. Nothing else will ever compare with or intrude upon

the delight of this indescribable intimacy.

### MY SISTER, MY SPOUSE

Perhaps you will remember from the first chapter how we spoke about Adam, together with God, seeking a suitable companion. First they looked among the animals. They examined each one, to see if it could satisfy the requirements. None of them was suitable, because none of them were the same as Adam. Then, after God made Eve, Adam awoke and saw her. He exclaimed, "Now this is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh" (Gen 2:23). In the same way, our Lord Jesus is seeking a bride. But she too must be the same as He is. She also must correspond to Him in every way. She must be "bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh" spiritually speaking. She must be of His own life and nature. In order to accomplish this purpose, God made His own life available to man. When we receive this life, we then enter into the family of God. We become a new kind of eternal creature, a child of the Most High. When Jesus Christ came to earth, He was "the only begotten" Son of God (Jn 3:16). That is to say that He was the only "child" God had produced. Later however, this changed. The Father has now begotten many more children. Today Jesus Christ is no longer called the "only begotten" but "the firstborn among many brethren" (Rm 8:29).

Many young Christians and even unbelievers ask, "Who did the first sons of Adam and Eve marry?" Undoubtedly the answer must be that they married one of their own sisters. No other choices were available. There were no other people with whom to mate. Since in those days people lived for hundreds of years, there was ample time for Adam and Eve to have many, many offspring. Interestingly, Jesus too will marry His "sister" spiritually speaking. He calls His bride in Song of Solomon (4:9,10,12) "my sister, my spouse." She has the same Father. She is from the same family, the family of God. She shares the same eternal life as He. He must marry His sister, since there are no other choices. There are no other eternal beings available to generate children from which He could choose.

Not only must Christ's bride have the same "variety" of life, but she must also possess the same nature. She too must be holy. She too must be pure and without sin. The scriptures teach us that Jesus will present His bride unto Himself "a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she should be holy and blameless before Him in love" (Eph 5:27). The forgiveness of God opens the way for us to receive the life of God. And the life of God is the agency through which we can be transformed into the nature of God. We can, indeed we must, "become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world through lust" (II Pet 1:4). This holy nature is also a requirement for marriage. Inwardly we must be like Christ. If we are not like Him, how can we join in this intimate union with Him? The Bible says, "He that has this hope within himself, purifies himself, even as He is pure" (I Jn 3:3).

In order for there to be a marriage of the Lamb and His bride, she must have the same life and the same nature. But there is still another requirement, she must have the same kind of body. This too has been taken care of by our Lord. Some day when He comes for us, we will enter into glory. This means that our bodies will be glorified to be like His. Please pay careful attention to this fact. Biblically speaking, "glory" is not a place. It is a state of being. It is not a place to which we will go but a condition into which we will be translated. Christians are not looking forward to being in "glory land" or "heaven" but to being glorified. This is our hope. Our hope is not in where we will

go but in what we will be. It is not a hope of going “somewhere” but of becoming something glorious. Colossians 3:4 reads: “When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”

If we wish to know what this body will be like, we need only to look at the first part of the book of Revelation. There we read about how Jesus looks “in glory”—in His glorified state. “His head and His hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters . . . His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength” (Rev 1:14-16). This awesome, burning, bright, figure is our Lord in glory. It is Jesus in His glorified body. This spectacle was so intense that our brother John “fell at His feet as dead” when he saw Him (Rev 1:17). This, brothers and sisters is real glory! This too is our hope, that we will be glorified to be like Him. I John 3:2 reads: “when He is revealed, we will be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” Our body will be changed “in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye” (I Cor 15:52) to be exactly as He is. The scripture teaches us that: “Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars for ever and ever” (Dan 12:3).

Interestingly, this new body is “under construction” right now. He is “preparing” this place for us. Possibly this is related to our spiritual growth. It is probable that the more we mature spiritually, the more glorious our spiritual body becomes. Then when Jesus appears, our new, glorified body will appear in exact harmony with what we are inwardly.

## THE HOPE OF GLORY

This, dear friends, is our hope. It is the hope of glory. It is not the hope of a destination but of our destiny. It is not a hope of where we might go or what we might get, but of becoming all that Christ is. How we need a revelation of this truth! How we need to “behold His glory” (Jn 1:14) as the early disciples did. Without a revelation of Jesus’ glory, we have no hope. If we only think about physical rewards such as places or things, we are destitute of any real revelation which will change our lives. But once we see the glory of God, once we see what it means to be glorified, once we glimpse the glory of the age to come, then we will certainly cast aside every “weight and the sin which so easily ensnares us” (Heb 12:1). When we have seen “glory” nothing else matters any more. When we see what is really being offered to us, all else pales in comparison.

Biblical hope is “the hope of glory.” We “rejoice in the hope of the glory of God” (Rm 5:2). This hope is a result of revelation. When God reveals His glory to us, then and only then, do we know what we have to look forward to. It is then that we realize what “the hope of our calling” is (Eph 1:18). It is then that we have spiritual understanding. This revelation of God’s glory which is to be our inheritance indeed serves as an “anchor” for our souls. It is a revelation which captivates our minds and hearts so that nothing else could ever seem better. Any cost which might have to be paid to reach this goal is more than worth it. Paul says that he “counts the sufferings of this present time to be nothing compared to the glory which will be revealed in us” (Rm 8:18).

In the last chapter we spoke about who Jesus Christ really is. He is the incarnated Son. He is the image of the invisible God. He is the instrument through which the Father reveals Himself to the universe—the “brightness of His glory and the express image of His person” (Heb 1:3). But here in the word of God we read about an even

more unbelievable, glorious hope. The Bible says that we can be changed into this same image. II Corinthians 3:18 reads: "But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord, are being changed into that same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." How incredible! How unimaginably wonderful! We, small, insignificant human beings, can be transformed into the "same image"—the image of the invisible God. We can not only behold His glory today, but through this beholding we can be changed into what we see. From one degree of glory to another degree of glory we can be transformed into what He is. This is really hope. This is something to fix our hope firmly upon. This something worth more than anything in the universe. This is something which is worth going through anything necessary to get. It is worth giving up anything, denying ourselves anything, worth even giving up our own lives to obtain. What a contrast this is to poor, shabby human ideas about what "glory land" will be like or desires for earthly pleasures.

In John 17:21,22 we have a record of Jesus praying to the Father. He is not praying for Himself but for us. This prayer is most incredible. He states that "the glory which You gave Me I have given them." And for what purpose is He giving us His own glory? It is so that we "may be one, as You Father are in Me and I in You; that they also may be one in Us." For many years I believed that Jesus was praying for unity among Christians. Today I have a much different view. Now I see that He is praying for us to participate in the union which He has with His Father. His heart's desire is that we would become "one" with Him just as He is one with His Father. He is asking for a spiritual, glorious union to occur between Himself and those who love and follow Him. This joining, this intimacy is so incredible, so great that it is hard to imagine it could be true. He is opening the way for us to share in the union and communion which He has with the Father. The Father in Him and He in us, that this holy, incredible unity between the Father, the Son and the bride could be made perfect.

### **ALL THAT HE IS**

God is infinite. He is eternal. His creativity is unlimited. His power is boundless. His beauty is unsurpassed and His glory astoundingly brilliant. Our King is totally kind, generous, loving, just and good. He is the one who has made everything that exists and will yet make everything over again in a new way (Rev 21:5). There is no other being in the universe who compares in power and glory with even the smallest fraction of all that He is. The word of God teaches us all these things. Yet, in the Bible we also can discover what is called "good news." It is a fact so good that it is almost unbelievable, yet it is true. That is that God is not keeping all this to Himself. He has a desire deep in His heart to share all this with men. He has invited those who have a willingness to submit themselves completely to Him, to come and participate in all that He is. God's plan is that we, mere human beings, could enter into and partake of all of the Divine glory, nature and authority. We can even "sit with [Him] on His throne" (Rev 3:21). This is not saying that we can just "sit on His lap" a little. This means to participate in the rulership of the universe together with God.

Just as a bride, after she is married, can share everything with her husband, so we too are invited to participate in all that God has and is. A wife shares her husband's home. She has access to his financial resources. She participates in his social status. In a proper marriage, because she is submitted to him, she has access not only to all that he has but also to all that he is. So too, we have been called to be the bride of Christ. God is graciously opening the way for us to become partakers with Him of His glory and

kingdom.

Oh how we need a spiritual vision! How we need our “eyes” opened to see what our future can be! We need to see the goal. We desperately need to understand what it is that we are laboring to enter into. Paul, praying for the Christians of his day, asks that: “the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints” (Eph1:17,18). What riches! What glory can be our inheritance! If we only could see just a small part of this spiritual reality, we would forsake all else and run unhindered after Him.

Brothers and sisters, we can be Christ’s bride! We can be changed to be like Him so that we can enter into a marriage union with Him. From one degree of glory to another degree of glory, we have the unparalleled possibility of entering into and taking possession of this good land. We can become “bone of His bone” and “flesh of His flesh”—spirit of His Spirit, life of His Life, nature of His divine nature. We can and shall become just like He is. “But we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone that has this hope in himself, purifies himself, even as He is pure” (I Jn 3:2,3).

How about you? Are you having a foretaste of this experience today? Is Jesus your focus and delight or are you seeking satisfaction from earthly pleasures and experiences? Is your entire heart, soul, mind and strength devoted to living in loving intimacy with Jesus? Perhaps it would be good for all of us to pause a moment here and contemplate these things. As we have been seeing, our relationship with our God is the most important factor in our lives. Our love relationship with Him is what will bring us into all the spiritual maturity which we need to obtain all the spiritual “rewards” which are to come. Compared to this, everything else is just an empty shadow.

Today is the day to repent if we are not living completely for Him. Today is the time to hear His voice and return to our first love. After Jesus comes, there will be no other opportunity. There will be no second chance. God is calling to us. He is extending His mercy and grace today to any and all who will respond. No one is too weak. No one is unable. His power is available to anyone and everyone who is willing to hear His voice and give themselves completely to Him. Today is the day of salvation. The invitation has been given. “The Spirit and the bride say ‘Come!’ And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’ And let him who thirsts come. And whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely” (Rev 22:17). This is God’s wonderful offer. If we neglect it, we are the most foolish of all people.

In the New Jerusalem, there is no need of any light. The invisible God is there illuminating everything with His glory. This light is being held and exhibited by the “lamp” which is the Lamb of God (Rev 21:23 American Standard Version). The holy city then functions as a great exhibition of God’s character and His works, through which this light is radiating. All the transformed believers, signified by the many precious stones which make up the “wall” of the city, will have become a sort of display to the universe. The many faceted character of God will be seen through the individual personality of each one. The wonderful works of God which He has done in the lives of all “just men made perfect” (Heb 12:23) will be available for anyone to see. The unfathomable love, mercy and grace of God will be exhibited. The Bible teaches us that “the woman is the glory of man,” that is to say of her husband (I Cor 11:7). Therefore, this glorious “woman,” the bride of Christ, will serve as an ample, heavenly expression of all that Jesus Christ is and has been to those who are a part of her. Indeed, “He shall

come to be glorified in His saints, and marveled at in all those who believe" (II Thess 1:10).

One day there will be a glorious, heavenly wedding. Will you be there? Will you be ready to take part in it? The wise in heart will prepare themselves. They will pay any price necessary to obtain it. They will be there when the "voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunders" announces "for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready" (Rev 19:6,7).