

## DRESSED IN WHITE

### INTRODUCTION

Who knows that if we ask God for something, believing that we will receive it, that God is faithful and answers our prayers. I have been doing just that with regard to what it says in Joel 2:28 "Then, after doing all those things, I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams, and your young men will see visions." I am at the stage of life when I am neither an old man (although my children may think different), nor am I a young man. My desire is that God will speak to me using both dreams and visions, so I have been praying for this to happen.

On Wednesday night this week it happened. I had a vivid dream, sadly, I can't remember what it was about, but I do remember the song that was being played or sung in the dream. It was "We will ride".

In my quiet time on Thursday morning, I asked the Lord to show me what He was wanting to tell me through the dream, as I continued with my quiet time, even the content of our Bible study on Song of Songs became relevant. I believe that in order to be obedient, I have to share with you what God spoke to me about.

(Sing - We will ride)

### MESSAGE

#### THE WEDDING DAY

Our bible study for Thursday morning was from SoS 3:6-11

It speaks of Solomon sweeping into Jerusalem, wearing his wedding clothes and crown. In true Jewish tradition at the time, his appearance was sudden, unexpected and full of pomp.

**Song of Songs 3:6–11** (NLT) Who is this sweeping in from the wilderness like a cloud of smoke? Who is it, fragrant with myrrh and frankincense and every kind of spice? 7 Look, it is Solomon's carriage, surrounded by sixty heroic men, the best of Israel's soldiers. 8 They are all skilled swordsmen, experienced warriors. Each wears a sword on his thigh, ready to defend the king against an attack in the night. 9 King Solomon's carriage is built of wood imported from Lebanon. 10 Its posts are silver, its canopy gold; its cushions are purple. It was decorated with love by the young women of Jerusalem.

#### Young Woman

11 Come out to see King Solomon, young women of Jerusalem. **He wears the crown his mother gave him on his wedding day**, his most joyous day.

In my mind, I picture this as Solomon coming to collect his bride on their wedding day. They have been engaged and now, in accordance with Jewish custom, he has arrived on the scene to collect his bride.

- According to tradition, the time of his arrival was a surprise.
- The bride and her bridal party were always to be ready - this is the background of Jesus parable of the 10 virgins in **Matthew 25:1-13** which ends with these words: "So you, too, must keep watch! For you do not know the day or hour of my return."
- This was followed by the high point of the joyful celebration, the marriage supper.

This very much parallels our expectation as the bride of Christ that Jesus will return when unexpected, with the shout of the Archangel and the sounding of the trumpet and He will come and collect us, His bride in the Rapture.

Our study then diverted us from Song of Songs to:

**Revelation 19:7**(NLT) Let us be glad and rejoice, and let us give honour to Him. For the time has come for the wedding feast of the Lamb, and his Bride has prepared herself.

***This is the first point that I want to make today:***

- ***Christian Heritage, Jesus is reminding us that He is coming soon, He is coming when we don't expect it and we, His bride need to be anticipating His return and we need to be ready!***
- ***As we study Song of Solomon, I believe God is giving us a unique opportunity to renew our love for Jesus. He is bringing us into a fresh, deep and wonderful relationship with Jesus.***
- ***The question is this: How are we responding to this teaching? Is it touching our hearts? Is it blessing us? Is it changing us and drawing us back into a love relationship with Him?***
- ***If Jesus were to appear suddenly today, would we be ready?***

## **PURE WHITE LINEN**

Even in modern day weddings, one of the most anticipated parts of the ceremony is the appearance of the bride. What will she look like? How beautiful is the dress? How long is its trail, What colour is it? As she walks in, there is almost always a stir in the chapel and the ladies sigh in awe and wonder, and the men silently shed a hidden tear.

The bride of Christ is going to wear the most beautiful wedding dress. As we continue reading in Revelation, we start to see what the Bride will look like.

**Revelation 19:8-9**(NLT) She has been given the finest of pure white linen to wear." For the fine linen represents the good deeds of God's holy people. 9 And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to

the wedding feast of the Lamb.” And he added, “These are true words that come from God.”

- The Bride of Christ will wear the finest, purest white linen – she will be flawless!
- **But look at the whiteness – where does it come from?**
  - For the fine linen represents the good deeds of God’s holy people.
  - **Amplified Bible** - for the fine linen signifies the righteous acts of the saints [the ethical conduct, personal integrity, moral courage, and godly character of believers].

Does that come as a surprise? We may not get to heaven by good deeds, but what we wear there will be determined by our good deeds!

- **Ephesians 2:8-9** (NKJV) For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.
- **2 Corinthians 5:21** (NKJV) For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

But once we are saved, we are called to live a life of righteous deeds and these righteous deeds are what have the spiritual impact of preparing us our wedding garments for the great wedding in heaven.

- Our integrity, ethical conduct and moral courage determines what we will wear.
- Our righteous acts AND OUR GOOD WORKS determine what we will wear.
- Our being doers of the Word and not only hearers, determines what we will wear.

**What we do on earth in the name of the Lord will be tested and determine what we will wear.**

**1 Corinthians 3:11-15** For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone’s work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

- Our foundation is salvation through Christ Jesus.
- ...but we build on that foundation with good works!

***So my second question to you today is this? Are you doing works of righteousness. Will they pass the test. The measure of success with which we walk will determine the whiteness of our garments in heaven and they will determine the rewards we receive in heaven.***

## **I WILL RIDE**

Now we get to my dream and the song "I will ride" and this is how I know that God was speaking to me.

As we continue reading in Revelation 19, we see what happens when the marriage celebration is completed:

**Revelation 19:11-14** (NLT) 11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who was riding it is called Faithful and True (trustworthy, loyal, incorruptible, steady), and in righteousness He judges and wages war [on the rebellious nations]. 12 His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many royal crowns; and He has a name inscribed [on Him] which no one knows or understands except Himself. 13 He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies of heaven, dressed in fine linen, [dazzling] white and clean, followed Him on white horses.

The next time we see the Bride of Christ, they are still dressed in that dazzling white linen, but this time, they have been drafted into the armies of heaven. Their Commander is called Faithful and true – it's their Groom, Jesus Christ and He is about to strike the enemy with utter defeat.

- This is a time of great joy and great sorrow.
- You've either been drafted in or you have been left behind at the rapture and you form part of the rebellious nations that are about to be judged.
- The words of the song "We will ride" echo with challenge for us today:

*He has fire in His eyes, And a sword in His hand, And He's riding a white horse  
Across this land.*

*He has fire in His eyes, And a sword in His hand, He's riding a white horse All  
across this land.*

*And He's calling out to you and me, Will you ride with me?*

*That fire in His eyes Is His love for His bride, And He's longing that she will be  
with Him, Right by His side.*

*That fire in His eyes Is His burning desire, That His bride be with Him Right by  
His side.*

*And He's calling out to us right now, Will you ride with Me?*

***My final challenge to us today is this... have we said yes Lord?***

***Have we truly said yes? Are we standing us beside Jesus right now  
and fighting the good fight?***

***Or are we like the 5 unwise virgins and saying, yes Lord, but not now,  
I'm too busy, I will get there but not yet, I'm not ready!***

Unless we say yes Lord, we will not wear those robes of white! Unless we say yes, we won't enjoy that great Marriage supper of the Lamb. Unless we say yes, we will not ride with our Beloved when He comes back to judge this earth, no, we will be those who He comes back to judge!

## CONCLUSION

In closure, let me share this Parable from Matthew 22:

**Matthew 22:1-14** (NLT) Jesus also told them other parables. He said, 2 "The Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a king who prepared a great wedding feast for his son.<sup>3</sup> When the banquet was ready, he sent his servants to notify those who were invited. But they all refused to come! 4 "So he sent other servants to tell them, 'The feast has been prepared. The bulls and fattened cattle have been killed, and everything is ready. Come to the banquet!' 5 But the guests he had invited ignored them and went their own way, one to his farm, another to his business. 6 Others seized his messengers and insulted them and killed them. 7 "The king was furious, and he sent out his army to destroy the murderers and burn their town. 8 And he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast is ready, and the guests I invited aren't worthy of the honour. 9 Now go out to the street corners and invite everyone you see.' 10 So the servants brought in everyone they could find, good and bad alike, and the banquet hall was filled with guests.

11 "But when the king came in to meet the guests, he noticed a man who wasn't wearing the proper clothes for a wedding. 12 'Friend,' he asked, 'how is it that you are here without wedding clothes?' But the man had no reply. 13 Then the king said to his aides, 'Bind his hands and feet and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

The Lord has challenged us today:

- Are we ready for Him to come unexpectedly or are we blissfully ignorant of His imminent return? Are we saying – "not now Lord, I'm too busy" or, "I'm not ready"?
- Have we prepared the correct wedding clothes – the righteous deeds of the saints or will we be like the wedding guest found wearing the wrong clothes? We too easily forget that there will be a weeping and gnashing of teeth'
- Have we said "yes Lord, I will ride with You?" Are we currently living as doers of God's word? Or are we watching as others "ride with the Lord?"

How will we respond?