

GRACE GAZETTE

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Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

THE BRIDE

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. -----Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

Revelation 21:2,9

When Abraham's son, Isaac, became of an age to marry, it was Abraham's concern that his son should be married to a suitable spouse. He did not want his son and heir to marry just any old girl that came along so he sent his servant into a far country to retrieve a bride from his own family. The servant was directed by GOD's hand to the exact maiden in the entire land of Abraham's nativity that was the ordained spouse for Isaac. She was loaded down with many gifts from the hand of this servant (I believe his name was Eliezer, which literally means "help or court of GOD", (see Gen. 15:2; Ex.18:4) and was by the testimony of Eliezer (concerning who Isaac was) made willing to go with this servant to a land where she had never been to become the wife of a man she had never seen. There is little doubt however that she had been made acquainted with him, by Eliezer, on their long journey to meet him face to face. Though she had never seen him, yet when Eliezer told her who he was and she saw him, she immediately dismounted the camel she rode upon and put a veil upon her face in humility. (see Rev. 1:17)

A verse that has intrigued me for a long time is, "*And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming.*" (Gen 24:63) Whenever I read this passage a great peace comes over my soul as I meditate upon the fact that the bridegroom went out to meet the camel train to receive this bride who was brought from a far country. The scripture seems to indicate that he loved her as soon as he set his eyes upon her.

This account of the gathering of a bride for Isaac, no doubt, has in it many types and foreshadows of the gathering of the bride of CHRIST unto the marriage supper. The elect church is spoken of, in the scripture as HIS bride. The servant sent to a far country is the HOLY SPIRIT laden with gifts and speaking to the children of GOD concerning the glories which surround the SON. The camels which carried her on her journey are ideally suited for travel across the barren wasteland through which she was carried. A camel has an innate sense of direction and is able to deliver its cargo to the desired destination with no help from the rider and so is typical of the grace of GOD by and through which the sons of GOD are brought to enjoy the benefits purchased by their REDEEMER. Remember that the expense and preparation of the camel train was completely in the hands of Abraham and no cost or effort was expended by Rebekah as she was brought on this journey to see her bridegroom.

John tells of seeing the bride of CHRIST as a city, Jerusalem, coming down from heaven and adorned with many splendors and precious in HIS sight. This is obviously an illustration in

highly figurative language of the final state of HIS bride but it is interesting to note that all of that in which she shall yet be seen, has already begun. HE said to HIS disciples, *"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. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know."* (John 14:3-4)

HIS bride is already acquainted with the glory that shall be hers because she has already seen HIM who is her glory and covering. *"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."* (1Cor 13:12) We shall see more clearly in the days to come but we see HIM now as our LORD and KING and desire no other for our HUSBAND. The true sons of GOD are brought in time to behold HIS glory (see II Cor.4:6) and are quite satisfied with both HIS work and HIS doctrine. The only glory which the bride desires or is clothed with is that which is HIS. (see Rev.21:11)

That city "the new Jerusalem" is called "new" lest there should be any confusion as to the nature of that city to which the LORD has a lasting regard. Some propose that earthly real estate is precious in the sight of GOD, and well-meaning men of their persuasion have waged wars and shed blood to preserve the boundaries, buildings, and title deeds of an earthly city. However, that Jerusalem with which the LORD is pleased and wherein HE delights to dwell as an omnipotent KING cannot be located on any earthly map nor can those who only see a city which is built with hands ever dwell in its glorious confines. *"We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle."* (Heb 13:10)

That city is enclosed by a wall not built with mortal hands. (see Rev.21:12) It is for the bride's protection lest she should stray and be destroyed. *"Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."* (1Pet 1:5) That same wall is for her defence from those who seek to destroy her. *"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD."* (Isa 54:17) She is indeed a city walled around. (see Ps.125:2)

That city has a gate on every side. (see Rev. 21:13) Those gates are kept by HIM who is the *"DOOR of the sheep"* (see John 10:7); by HIM (i.e.; HIS authority and power) alone do the sheep go in and under HIS watchful eye do they feed. HE is their provision both night and day and is a faithful SHEPHERD. The doors on each side indicate that it is from the four corners of the earth that the LORD is pleased to call HIS people and give them an entrance into HIS glorious kingdom rather than having a respect to earthly heritage or endeavor. (see Rev.5:9)

This is a city which hath foundations, whose BUILDER and MAKER is GOD. (see Rev.21:14; Heb.11:10) *"Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."* (Eph 2:20-22) The foundation is the most important part of any building. HE is both the foundation and the one who builds the edifice which rests upon it, HIS bride the holy temple of GOD.

This city has but one object and place of worship. (see Rev.21:22) JESUS CHRIST is the brightness of the FATHER's glory and the express image of HIS person. It is to HIM and HIM alone that all glory is due both in creation and redemption. The bride gladly embraces HIM and worships at HIS footstool for he who has seen the SON has seen the FATHER.

That city has but one source of LIGHT and there is no darkness there. (see Rev.21:23,24) The bride is illuminated by the bridegroom and loves to have it so. *"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."* (John 8:12)