

The Spiritual Adornment of the Church

Genesis chapter 24 & Exodus 3:20-24

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The account of Abraham sending his servant to get a bride for his son in Genesis chapter twenty-four is more than just an old love story. God the Father was declaring ahead of time that He was going to send the Holy Spirit to call the church out of the world to be the bride of Christ.¹ The servant told Rebekah how great Abraham was, like the Holy Spirit reveals the greatness of God to us. She learned that everything Abraham had was reserved for Isaac his son. She was invited to share it all as Isaac's bride in much the same way that the church will share in the eternal glories of God as the bride of Christ.

When it was agreed that Rebekah was to be Isaac's bride, the servant presented her with "**Articles of silver, articles of gold, and garments**"² that were becoming to the daughter of such a man as Abraham. As Christians, we have been *redeemed*,³ made "*Partakers of the divine nature*,"⁴ and clothed with *garments of salvation*.⁵ These things "*Qualify us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light*."⁶ We have been granted "*Everything pertaining to life and godliness*."⁷ With such spiritual blessings we have no excuse for not living in a way that is becoming to the children of God.

God provided the very same things for the sons of Israel as they started off on their desert journey from the bondage of Egypt to the blessings of the Promised Land.

*Now the sons of Israel...requested from the Egyptians **articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing**. And the Lord had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have their requests.*⁸

The Christian life is like a journey through a moral desert. This evil world cannot satisfy the spiritual needs of Christians. Now that we have been freed from the bondage of sin,⁹ we are expected to abandon the things of the world to walk in the heavenly blessings¹⁰ God has provided for His children. It was in forsaking Egypt--a Scriptural type of the world--that the Lord's people obtained the very things that Abraham's servant gave to Rebekah.

This all suggests that although the Holy Spirit provides us with the beautiful things that should characterize us as children of God, we need to relinquish our natural worldly attitudes and ways of life to adorn ourselves with them. Worldly rags are not compatible with heavenly garments. We "*Clothe ourselves with Christ*,"¹¹ learning to "*Know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings*."¹² The Holy Spirit helps us convert our circumstances and trials in this world into opportunities to exhibit a Christ-like character to the world that rejected Him. We can actually rejoice in those trials that we manage to turn into victorious occasions for the glory of God.¹³

Our spiritual blessings are available to us through the Holy Spirit the moment we accept Christ. But Rebekah still had to choose between setting out immediately with the servant on the desert journey home to Isaac, or remaining for a few more days in her former circumstances away from Abraham and his son.¹⁴ We also have to choose between clinging to the world or actively living for Christ. Rebekah responded, "***I will go***," rather than delaying the journey. Are we also ready to forsake the things of this world and resolutely follow the Spirit's guidance through the desert of life in search of a meaningful relationship with Christ?

Every true Christian has been won to Christ by the Holy Spirit. The faithful eagerly await the presentation of the church to Him "As a bride adorned for her husband:¹⁵"

Let us rejoice and be glad and give glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready. And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.¹⁶

The church is constantly piecing together a garment composed of the righteous acts of the saints. Every trial, every difficulty, all the reproaches of Christ, are Spirit prompted opportunities to add our individual contributions to the common wedding garment. Are we handling them in ways that will endow that presentation with the beauty that becomes the bride of Christ? Will He be glorified on that day by our behavior now?

The Lord lamented over Israel:

Can a virgin forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? Yet My people have forgotten Me.¹⁷

Let us glorify Him by living so as to contribute to the church's presentation as a holy and blameless "Pure virgin to Christ,¹⁸ having "No spot or wrinkle or any such thing¹⁹" until He comes!

(All quotations from the New American Standard Bible)

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1. Ephesians 5:22-32
 2. Genesis 24:53
 3. Titus 2:14
 4. II Peter 1:4
 5. Isaiah 61:10
 6. Colossians 1:12
 7. II Peter 1:3
 8. Exodus 12:36,36
 9. Romans 6:18
 10. Ephesians 1:3
 11. Galatians 3:27-29
 12. Philipians 3:7-10
 13. James 1:2-4 & I Peter 3:12-14
 - 14 . Genesis 24:54-58
 - 15 . Revelation 21:2
 - 16 . Revelation 19:7,8
 - 17 . Jeremiah 2:32
 - 18 . II Corinthians 1:2
 - 19 . Ephesians 5:27