

Evil and the Bridegroom

Session One



Their Destiny

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1

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This study is about the greatest love story of all time – the saga of how the God who is love wins the heart of His bride and how our faith struggles are at the center of this cosmic romance.

2

This study is also about evil.
More specifically, why God allows evil in the world.

And ultimately, it is about how these two things, evil and love, intersect.

3

Let's start with evil.

(My story)

4

Now let's talk about love.

5

God is love

- Love is not just what God does. Love is what God is.
- What is love?
- Love is a relationship between others.
- Within the one God, is a relationship of love between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

6

Since God is love, it was very likely that the one God, who is love, would choose to create an other being with whom to share a love relationship and lavish His love upon.

7

This relationship would be an expression of the infinite love that is the nature of this God who is love, and thus it would be an ultimate love relationship.

8

The Bible talks about the concept of a companion for God by symbolically using the terms of the marriage relationship.

(See the Bridegroom Scriptures handout)

9

The Qualities of the Relationship

- This relationship would be an ultimate love relationship, and so it must be satisfying for both the Bride and the Groom.
- Therefore, the Bride must love the Groom in return.
- To love the Groom, the Bride must be able to comprehend and appreciate the qualities of the Groom.

10

The Qualities of the Groom

- Righteousness
- Justice
- Mercy
- Loving the unlovely
- Forgiveness
- Trustworthiness

11

The Qualities of the Bride

- The Bride would have to know good and evil to fully appreciate the qualities of the Groom.
- But she could not be evil, or they would not be compatible.
- God would have to create a being who knew evil, but was totally free of it!

Impossible!

12

How could God make an other being,
as a bride for Christ, who would
know evil, but be totally free of it?

(See the God's Plan Scriptures handout)

13

Who is the Bride of Christ?

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her . . . "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. (Eph. 5:25-32 NKJV)

She is the Church.

14

The Bride is the Church

- She is all believers in Jesus Christ
- She includes believers across time, locations and variations.
- She is a body with many members.

15

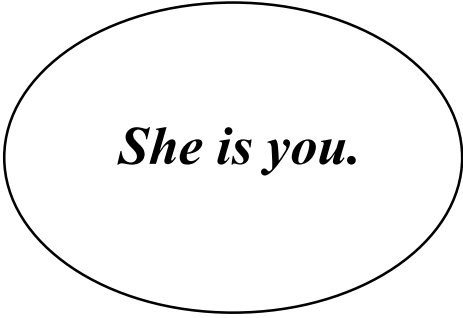
. . ."Come here,
I will show you the bride,
the wife of the Lamb. "

(Revelation 21:9 NASB)

16

Look around you.
She is in this room.
You are in the presence
of greatness.

17



She is you.

18

Evil and the Bridegroom - Session 1

Scripture Handouts

Bridegroom Scriptures

. . . "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." (Revelation 21:9 NKJV)

"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." (Revelation 19:7 NKJV)

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her . . . that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. . . . "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. (Ephesians 5:25-32 NKJV)

. . . For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ. (2Corinthians 11:2 NKJV)

Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!' " And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God." (Revelation 19:9 NKJV)

God's Plan Scriptures

How could God make a being, other than Himself, who would know evil, but be totally free of it?

God - His Eternal Purpose

. . . [T]he God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless in love before him . . . according to his good pleasure . . . as a plan for the right time . . . (Ephesians 1:3-4, 9-10 CSB)

Adam - Made In the Image of God

Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness . . ." (Genesis 1:26 NIV)

Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed *it was* very good. . . . (Genesis 1:31 NKJV)

And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. (Genesis 2:7 KJV)

And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, . . ."of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." (Genesis 2:16-17 NKJV)

. . . and he ate. (Genesis 3:6 NKJV)

Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil . . ." (Genesis 3:22 NASB)

. . . Adam . . . became the father of *a son* in his own likeness, according to his image . . . (Genesis 5:3 NASB)

Therefore . . . through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned-- (Romans 5:12 NASB)

[F]or all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, (Romans 3:23 NKJV)

Noah - Hope

Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth . . . and the earth was filled with violence. . . . Then God said to Noah, . . . "I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life, . . . But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall enter the ark . . . (Genesis 6:5-18 NASB)

Then the flood came upon the earth. . . . Thus He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the land, . . . and only Noah was left, together with those that were with him in the ark. (Genesis 7:17-23 NASB)

The LORD . . . said in his heart: "Never again will I curse the ground because of humans, even though every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done. (Genesis 8:21 NIV)

I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. (Genesis 9:13 NIV)

Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth. . . . Whoever sheds human blood, by humans shall their blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made mankind." (Genesis 9:1-6 NIV)

Abraham - Faith

The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing . . . and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." (Gen 12:1-3 NIV)

"Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." (Romans 4:3 NIV)

So then those who *are* of faith are blessed with believing Abraham. (Galatians 3:9 NKJV)

Moses - The Law and Atonement

The Law

Now Moses was tending the flock There . . . the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. . . . Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham . . . So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt." - And . . . the LORD brought the Israelites out of Egypt - they came to the Desert of Sinai. - The LORD descended to the top of Mount Sinai and called Moses to the top of the mountain. - he gave him the two tablets of the covenant law - And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant--the Ten Commandments. (Exodus 3:1-10; 12:51; 19:1; 19:20; 31:18; 34:28 NIV)

. . . by the law *is* the knowledge of sin. ("Romans 3:20 NKJV)

Atonement

Then the LORD called to Moses and spoke to him from the tent of meeting, saying, "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When any man of you brings an offering to the LORD, you shall bring your offering of animals from the herd . . . that he may be accepted before the LORD. . . .He shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, that it may be accepted for him to make atonement on his behalf. He shall slay the young bull before the LORD; and . . . the priests shall offer up the blood and sprinkle the blood around on the altar that is at the doorway of the tent of meeting.'" (Leviticus 1:5 NASB)

'For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.' (Leviticus 17:11 NASB)

And according to the Law, *one may* almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. (Hebrews 9:22 NASB)

Jesus Christ - The Image of God

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father . . . (John 1:14 NASB)

He is the image of the invisible God . . . (Colossians 1:15 NKJV)

For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross . . . in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach-- (Colossians 1:19-22 NASB)

[W]ho Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree . . . (1Peter 2:24 NKJV)

. . . [God] raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, . . .

and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body . . . (Ephesians 1:20-23 NIV)

. . . He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. (Romans 8:11 NKJV)

For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. . . . So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit. . . . Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly. (1 Corinthians 15:22, 45, 49 NASB)

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16 NKJV)

Believers in Jesus Christ - Our Destiny

. . . [A]ll things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son (Romans 8:28-29 NKJV)

Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. (Romans 8:1-2 NASB)

But God . . . because of His great love with which He loved us . . . made us alive together with Christ . . . and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 2:7 NKJV)

. . . heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ . . . (Romans 8:17 NKJV)

Now to Him who is able . . . to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *be* glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. (Jude 1:24-25 NASB)

Do we now have a being who is other than God and knows evil, but is totally free of it?