

8/4-10#1: The Bride—the Goal of the Lord's Recovery:

I. The Bible is a romance, in the most pure and the most holy sense, of a universal couple—God in Christ as the Bridegroom and God's redeemed people as the bride: Matt. 25:6 At midnight there was a cry, Behold, the bridegroom! Go forth to meet him! **A** Throughout

the centuries God has had a romance with man; He created man with the purpose of having a counterpart. **B** God is a lover, and He created man in the image of Himself as a lover; this means that He created us so that we would love Him. **C** The entire Bible is a divine romance, and Song of Songs is an abridged form of this romance: **1** The Bible is a romantic book, and our relationship with the Lord should become more and more romantic. **2** If there is no romance between us and the Lord Jesus, then we are religious Christians, not romantic Christians. **3** As a whole, romance is a word of the divine courtship; in the Bible we see that God is seeking our love. 2 Cor. 11:2 For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. **4** Song of Songs is more than a romance; it is a fantastic romance. **D** Whatever we love, our whole heart, even our entire being, is set on and occupied and possessed by: **1** “To love God means to set our entire being—spirit, soul, and body, with the heart, soul, mind, and strength—absolutely on Him, that is, to let our entire being be occupied by Him and lost in Him”. **2** To love the Lord Jesus is to appreciate Him, to direct our being to Him, to open to Him, to enjoy Him, to give Him the first place, to be one with Him, to live Him, and to become Him. **II.**

Revelation 19:7-9 unveils Christ as the Bridegroom: **A** The marriage of the Lamb is the issue of the completion of God's New Testament economy, which is to obtain for Christ a bride, the church, through His judicial redemption and by the organic salvation in His divine life. Rev. 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. **B** The bride of Christ in Revelation 19 is composed of all the overcomers. **C** All the overcomers will be the New Jerusalem as the bride of Christ for one thousand years in its initial and fresh stage. **D** Eventually, all the believers will join the overcomers to consummate and complete the New Jerusalem in full as the wife of Christ in the new heaven and new earth for eternity. Rev. 21:9 ...Come here; I will show you the bride, the

wife of the Lamb. 10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. **III. The bride is the goal of the Lord's recovery:** Rev.19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. **A** “The marriage of the Lamb has come” (Rev.19:7b): **1** In the beginning of his Gospel, John speaks of the Lamb and the Bridegroom, and in Revelation he says that the marriage of the Lamb has come. John3:29 He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices with joy because of the bridegroom's voice. This joy of mine therefore is made full. **2** After the rapture of the majority of the saints and the judgment at the judgment seat of Christ for the giving of the reward, the events that immediately follow should include the marriage of the Lamb: **a** If we are rewarded at the judgment seat of Christ, we will participate in the wedding feast. **b** If we are not rewarded but are disapproved of by the Lord, we will not perish but will suffer a loss like that described in 1 Corinthians 3:15. **B** “His wife has made herself ready” (Rev.19:7b): **1** His wife refers to the church, the bride of Christ. **2** According to Revelation 19:8-9, the wife, the bride of Christ, consists only of the overcoming believers during the millennium, whereas the bride, the wife, in 21:2 is composed of all the saved saints after the millennium for eternity. 19:9 And he said to me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God. **3** The readiness of the bride depends on the maturity in life of the Overcomers. Heb.6:1 Therefore leaving the word of the beginning of Christ, let us be brought on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith in God, **4** We need to adorn and consummate the New Jerusalem as the bride of Christ with God the Father as the gold, God the Son as the pearl, and God the Spirit as the precious stones. **5** The overcomers are not separate individuals but a corporate bride. **6** The overcomers not only are mature in life but also are built together as one bride. **C** “And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousneses of the saints.” (Rev.19:8): **1** Clean refers to the nature, and bright refers to the

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expression. **2** The Greek word translated “righteousnesses” may also be rendered “righteous acts.” **3** The righteousnesses do not refer to the righteousness that we received for our salvation. **4** The righteousness we received for our salvation is objective and enables us to meet the requirement of the righteous God, whereas in Revelation 19:8 the righteousnesses of the overcoming saints are subjective and enable them to meet the requirement of the overcoming Christ. Phil.3:9 And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith, **5** Thus, the fine linen indicates our overcoming life, our overcoming living; it is the Christ whom we live out of our being. **D** “Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb...These are the true words of God”(Rev.19:9): **1** The marriage dinner of the Lamb is the wedding feast, the kingdom of one thousand years, which is one day in the eyes of God, as a reward to the overcoming believers. Matt.22:2 The kingdom of the heavens has become like a king who prepared a wedding feast for his son. **14** For many are called but few are chosen. **2** To be called to the marriage dinner of Christ, which will usher the overcoming believers into the enjoyment of the millennium, is to be blessed. **3** The marriage dinner of the Lamb in Revelation 19:9 is the wedding feast in Matthew 22:2; it will be a reward to the overcoming believers: **a** To be called is to receive salvation whereas to be chosen is to receive a reward. **b** Only the overcomers will be called to the marriage dinner as a reward to them; not all the saved ones will participate in it. **c** The overcoming believers, who will be called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb, will also be the bride of the Lamb. **Testimony** When I attended the Full-Time Training in Taiwan in 1986, Brother Lee, Brother Andrew Yu, and the co-workers repeatedly said, ***"The Lord's recovery is for the Lord's return. When the Body of Christ is built up and the Bride is prepared, the Lord can return as the Bridegroom."*** From that time (at age 26) until now (age 65), this vision of the recovery has always directed and empowered me. This vision has continually spoken the following to me: **1** *I should love the Lord:* I.D.2 “To love the Lord Jesus is to appreciate Him, to direct our being to Him, to open to Him, to enjoy Him, to give Him the first place, to be one with Him, to live Him,

and to become Him.” Whenever I loved things such as work, family, service, or personal feelings more than the Lord, He would say to me, *“I am your Bridegroom.”* Every time I was enlightened by this vision, I depended on the Lord’s grace and mercy and prayed like this: ***"Lord, I love You. I take You as my beloved Bridegroom. Forgive my sins. Let Your love burn away all my other loves. Keep me in this romance with You."*** **2** The preparation of the Bride is extremely important because it determines the timing of the Lord’s return: ***"Lord Jesus, unless the Bride is prepared, You cannot return. This determines the time of Your return. This is the goal of the Lord's recovery and the goal of my life. No matter what difficulties arise, I must, at all costs, accomplish this. Please keep me aspiring to be an overcomer who lives the life of the Body and builds up the Body."*** **3** Preaching of the gospel of the kingdom: Alongside the preparation of the Bride, it was repeatedly emphasized that based on Matt. 24:14, *“This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come,”* all the local churches must spread the gospel of the kingdom to the whole earth for the Lord’s return. **4** Since I cannot accomplish this vision by relying on myself, I must pray: ***"Oh Lord Jesus, I cannot continue loving You with the first love, with the best love, by relying on myself. Even in loving You, I must depend on You. Apart from You, I can do nothing."*** **2024 Spring ITERO#3** The Three Substances of the Power in the Lord’s Recovery—Prayer, the Spirit, and the Word: When you pray, do not be occupied with your work or with other things. Do not even be occupied with gospel preaching...Leave yourself open to the Lord. Let Him come in for at least ten minutes to speak to you, to enlighten you, to point out to you all your shortcomings, sinfulness, evil, and impure thoughts. Ask Him to bring your entire being into the light for a full and utter exposure of your real condition. This kind of prayer would make you prevailing. You do not need to pretend that you are powerful. As a purified and chastised person, when you open up your mouth, every word will be a word of power. ...Such a person of prayer will be full of the Spirit within and without. Do not think of taking a way other than prayer, the Spirit, and the Word. (“Elders’ Training, Book 7)