

#12 - STORY OF THINGS TO COME

REV 1:19, LUKE 22:20, JOHN 14:2-3

This story hinges on two imminent, world-changing events: the Rapture, when all true believers in Yeshua (Jesus) will be caught up to be with Him forever, and the subsequent Marriage Feast of the Lamb, a monumental celebration in heaven.

Leading up to these events, the members of the Church Jesus is building are instructed to live holy lives as a witness of Yeshua's life in each believer and to make disciples. This story ultimately serves as a challenging call to readiness, asking those who follow Jesus to watch what is happening in the world and participate in His work to make His name known everywhere. The Church is challenged to be ready for what could happen "very soon."

The Rapture

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

- **What it is:** The event that concludes the Church Age, where all true, living believers in Jesus, along with the resurrected dead in Christ, will be instantaneously "caught up" in the sky to meet Him.
- When it happens: No one knows the exact time, but the Bible teaches it is an imminent event that will occur suddenly.
- Significance: It marks the end of the Church's time on Earth and initiates the believers' eternal life with Christ where He is.

Marriage Feast of the Lamb

Revelation 19:7-9

- **What it is:** A monumental celebration in heaven marking the union of Jesus (the Lamb) and the Church (His Bride).
- When it happens: Shortly after the Rapture, once the Church has been taken home to be with Him.

- **Significance:** It is the culmination of Jesus's two-millennia-long work of preparing a place for His followers and symbolizes eternal fellowship with Him.

MAIN TALKING POINTS

- **The Setting:** While exiled on Patmos by Emperor Domitian, the Apostle John meditated on the fate of his fellow disciples who had already died and gone to be with Jesus in heaven.
- **The Vision:** John reflected on the amazing day he had just experienced, where Jesus had revealed the events of the last days to him.
- **The Mandate to Write:** The entire vision serves as the outline for the Book of Revelation:

Quote: "Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things." (NASB)

- **The Final Meal:** At the end of three and a half years of training, Jesus shared His final earthly meal with His friends—His Last Passover before His death, burial, and resurrection.
- **The Bread of Life:** The breaking of the bread is explained by connecting it with Jesus's birthplace, Bethlehem, which literally translates to the House of Bread.
- **The Cup and the Covenant:** The giving of the cup established a new relationship between God and humanity:

Quote: "And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, 'This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.'" (NASB)

- **The Connection:** John connects Jesus's offer of the covenant cup during the Last Passover with the future celestial celebration, the Marriage Feast of the Lamb.

- **First-Century Wedding System:** [Summarize the 1st Century wedding system in the Galilee: Explain the covenant phase marked by a cup, the groom leaving to prepare a home extension, and the bride waiting expectantly.]
- **The Groom's Promise:** Jesus's promise to His disciples directly echoes the ancient wedding process:

Quote: "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also." (NASB)

- **The Bride Awaits:** The Church is the Bride of Messiah. She is currently in the waiting period, living out her mandate to make disciples and waiting for Jesus (the Groom) to return and claim Her in the Rapture.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

The Church: The Bride Awaiting Her Groom

The narrative surrounding the Rapture and the Marriage Feast of the Lamb is centered on the relationship between Jesus Christ (the Groom) and the Church (His Bride), drawing a powerful parallel to the first human covenant:

- **The Faithful Groom (The Second Adam):** Jesus, often referred to as the Second Adam, succeeds where the first Adam failed. The first Adam failed to protect his bride, Eve. By contrast, Jesus is the faithful protector and head of the Church, ensuring His Bride's safety and future.
- **The Waiting Period (Purification):** Until the time of the Rapture, the Church is living in a period of purification. Like a bride preparing for her wedding day, the Church should be diligently purifying Herself in holiness for the day Jesus comes to claim Her.

The Mandate: Discipleship as Preparation

The practical mandate for every follower of Jesus during this waiting period is directly tied to the wedding preparation:

- **Preparing the Bride:** As a believer, you are an essential member of the Bride of Messiah. Your primary role is to help prepare the entire Church for His appearing, acting as a co-laborer in the purification process.
- **The Essence of Disciple Making:** This task of preparing the whole Church is what disciple making is all about. It is the process of leading others to Christ and teaching them to live holy lives (to obey all that He commanded) so that the entire Bride is ready and spotless when the Groom returns.

The Promise: Readiness and Reunion

All these elements connect back to the historical events and future promises:

- The Last Passover established the New Covenant (the ring/promise).
- Jesus's departure to "prepare a place" (John 14:2-3) mirrored the ancient Galilean groom's commitment to build a chamber for his bride.
- The story of "Things To Come" culminates with the Rapture (the Groom's return to claim the purified Bride) and the Marriage Feast of the Lamb (the eternal celebration), challenging all believers to ensure they and their disciples are ready.