

## The Overcomers: The Bride's Invite

Notes By Tracy Hogan

March 25, 2017

One of my jobs as a teacher, is to not only teach the Word of God accurately, but in that teaching to provoke and challenge you! To get you to come out of your comfort zones. If I haven't done that, then I have not done my job!

**Matthew 10:7** The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

### READ Revelation 19-21

We need to understand there is a wedding to attend. That all are invited, but not all will attend. To attend it requires special garments and obtaining those garments are not automatic. Most in the Church are not only unaware of the Lord's Feast of all feasts – the Wedding Supper of the Lamb, but most are not preparing for it. Therefore, if there is not a serious realignment with our priorities, our focus, as a believer, to be Kingdom minded, and not focused on the temporal, we will miss the very purpose for why God created us. We might make it to heaven, but will miss fulfilling our high and lofty destiny that is to be the Bride of Messiah. It is those that have made themselves ready and have overcome, who will qualify to be His Bride and will rule and reign with Him for all of eternity (Matthew 22, 25, Revelation 19:7-9, 3:21, 20:4).

**All in the BOC are not the Bride.** Most in the Church believe they are automatically the Bride, because they believe in Yeshua. **But that's not what Scripture teaches us.** The Bride is the highest call. It is a call to die to self, to leave the low life and Babylon behind, to be perfected in love, until Christ is completely formed within us (Galatians 4:19).

We are in the last days, and the Lord is looking for a people to make a habitation with – vessels who have made themselves ready. Those who will receive the end result of their faith, the salvation of their soul (1 Peter 1:9).

**Why?** It's about nations being restored to righteousness – that is the reward of His suffering. And He will do this with His Bride, co-laboring with Him to bring in the great harvest during the great tribulation, and then restoring righteousness on this earth, during the 1,000 year Millennium Reign (Ps 2:8, Revelation 2:26-27, 11:15, 14:15-16, 20:4-7).

**Important to understand the Church is going through the tribulation – there is no scripture for pre-trib!** Yeshua tells us we are going through it in Matthew 24:21-22. That if those days had not been shortened no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect – those days have been shortened. **After the tribulation**, then the Son of Man will appear in the sky (2<sup>nd</sup> coming). He will send out His angels with a loud trumpet call and gather His elect (Matthew 24:29-31).

This is when the shout of the Bridegroom goes out at midnight, and His Bride will be “caught up,” those who have made themselves ready, and the Marriage Supper will take place (Matthew 25:6). This is the first resurrection that Revelation 20:5-6 exhorts us to be a part of – but clearly shows us it is not everyone who is in the Body of Messiah!

**Daniel 9-12** Give's further insight to this time with the anti-Christ arising. How long it will be, and it will be known as the “great tribulation.” How the anti-Christ will seduce many with flatteries and will come without warning. That the *abomination that makes desolate the sanctuary* will take place and the burnt offerings will stop (3rd Temple). From that time he will rule the nations for 3 ½ years, and during this time, many of God's people will fall away, and will be deceived. That it will be a time of trouble on the earth that no nation had ever seen like it, prior (Dan. 9:27, 10:1, 11:21, 23, 28, 31-35, 12:1).

Yeshua spoke of these things in Matthew 24:10, 24 – they have not been fulfilled yet, but are about to soon.

**Daniel 11:32** We see hope! In the midst of tribulation there will be a company of people who know their God, and stand strong and do great exploits!

**Daniel 12:10** Tells us that many during this time will purify themselves and make themselves ready, refined with fire.

**Revelation 13, 14 and 20** The mark of the beast. Shows believers will be here – this will be the final test for us.

**Revelation 13:10, 14:12, 20:4** Herein is the call for the patience and the faith of the saints to keep God's commandments.

**These are the Overcomers, the Bride who has made herself ready.** Those who know their God intimately, who have died to self. Who have overcome by the blood of the Lamb, the word of their testimony, and who will not love their life unto death. Who have become a living sacrifice (Galatians 2:20, Revelation 12:11, Romans 12:1-3).

**Isaiah 5:13** My people go into captivity without even knowing it, because they have no knowledge of Me.

**What is knowledge:** Familiarity gained by personal experience. An encounter with Yeshua = revelation / transformation.

**Jeremiah 2:3-5** Call to be holiness to the Lord, but went after emptiness, falseness, futility and become fruitless and worthless. This is the Church at large today (1 Peter 1:15-16).

**Jeremiah 17:9** Our hearts are deceitfully wicked above all things.

**2 Chronicles 16:9** The eyes of the Lord are searching the earth to show Himself strong in those who are blameless...

**Bride/Bridegroom/Bridal Chamber:** 41 references in Bible. His terminology. Not gender base, but speaks of spiritual maturity.

**Hebrew = Kallah** (3618) means **a bride as perfect**, taken from root Kalah (3634), **means to complete, make perfect**

### **READ Matthew 22:2-14 – Bridal Invite/Wedding Banquet**

**Verse 2:** Kingdom of heaven compared to a King (Father) who gave a wedding feast for His son (Yeshua).

**Verse 3:** Sent His servants to summons those who had been invited, but they refused to come.

He's sending servants to the BOC today, those invited, but they're refusing. *Shows condition of the heart – hard, rebellious.*

**Verse 4:** The Lord sends more servants emphasizing everything's ready COME! *The Father is so merciful, He wants all to come and not miss the banquet. Today His messengers are sharing, in detail, what is required to attend, most are refusing.*

**Verse 5:** They ignored and made light of the invite, treated it with contempt. *Today, the BOC is not concerned, paying no attention, we are asleep, lukewarm, and in serious deception. We are going our own way doing what seems good and right in our own minds. We are full of sin, mixture, and compromise of His Word.*

**Prov. 21:2** Every man's way is right in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the hearts.

**Matthew 22:29** You are wrong because you know neither the Scriptures of God's power (correcting Pharisee's disciples).

**Verse 6:** Shows us those sharing the message, inviting those to come, are treated shamefully, some put to death.

**Verse 7:** When the king heard about it, he was furious. **His jealous love for His Bride, those faithful to prepare her.**

**Verse 8:** We see the wedding feast is ready. Most of the Body who have been invited qualified to not be worthy to attend. By declining the invite they are telling the King, He is not worth knowing, therefore the King says they are not worthy.

**These are hard words – but may we heed the warning and not miss our time of visitation.**

**Verse 9:** So the Lord say go to the highways and bi-ways, and invite as many as you can find.

We need to understand this invite is to His Church first – this is not about unsaved people. Serious warning for us here, because they did not accept it, He is say's go invite anyone you encounter, and who will listen.

**Verse 10:** His servants shared the bridal invite with as many as they could find, good and bad and the wedding hall was filled. **Depicts the Church today, wheat and tares gathered in one place.**

**Verse 11:** King came to see "the guests." He **looked intently** at a man who did not have on "wedding garments." King will scrutinize our works, our will or His? Requires our response – man had to "put on" his garments and he did not.

**Verse 12:** King asks how did you get in here without wedding garments? **The man was speechless – no excuses.**

**John 10:1** Yeshua says there is only 1 way to enter the sheepfold (robber/thief). **John 14:6** I am the way, the truth and the life. **Likewise, only one-way to become the Bride – through the cross, dying to self.** In that process she will learn to recognize her Bridegroom's voice, and how to dress herself in her "wedding garments." These garments signify our purity, righteousness, just and consecrated lifestyles - deeds and conduct, right standing with God.

**Verse 13:** He has the man thrown out into outer darkness. *The Lord alone defines what is required to be His Bride.*

**Verse 14:** Many are called, few are chosen. **All invited, but few will accept the invite. All in the Body are not the Bride.**

**Why would anyone want to kill someone for inviting them to a wedding?** It's a hard message. It means giving up everything; all sin, compromise, ambition, worldly desires to qualify to attend. It's the message of the crucified life – deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow the Lamb. It's an invite to die to self, fleshly desires, wants or what we think we need.

**Why did the King go to such lengths to invite His people? Many times He reached out to those called.**

Wants His people to know this is no ordinary invite, and it's going to cost you everything if you want to attend to be able to know Him intimately. He is not trying to hide this from us, nor will He force us to come, and we can either say yes or no.

**Make no mistake our King's standards are high and holy, not everyone will qualify. Most will disqualify themselves.**

**Revelation 19:7-8** ...His Bride has made herself ready. This is clear the Marriage Supper of the Lamb is for His Bride who has made herself ready on this earth, today. She has a very active role to play, everyday, every choice she makes.

**Why should we pay careful attention to this invite, and heed its serious warning?** It's His answer for the dark days that are rapidly getting darker. The Lord will have a company of people who are the Overcomers, who have been prepared in the fiery furnace of afflictions, who will know their God intimately, and who will do great exploits for Him (Daniel 11:32).

**2 Chron 16:9** For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in behalf of those whose heart is **loyal (blameless, perfect, wholehearted)** to Him. **Only accept a Bride whose heart is 100% undivided.**

**GLASS OF WATER EXAMPLE:** It's the highest level of purity and intimacy with the Bridegroom. **No compromise**

**Ephesians 5:27** He might present her to Himself a glorious church, **not having spot or wrinkle**, or any such thing, but **she should be holy and without blemish.**

**2 Peter 3:14** Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, **be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless.** Note: Says, **"to be found"** speaks of before we leave this earth.

**Revelation 3:18-19** Exhorts us to purchase from Him gold "refined and tested by fire" and that we would be clothed in white garments. That we would be "wealthy" according to heaven's economy and not by this world's economy. He is the perfect Father and He only disciplines those whom He loves – by showing us our sin.

**Our sin separates us from intimate fellowship with Him.** The goal of His discipline is to bring us back into obedience. **Our obedience is always meant to restore us back to intimacy with Him.** He requires our explicit obedience, because He created us to be in union with Him, but that's not automatic. Just like a marriage, He will not tolerate us having any other lovers but Him. He is jealous over us! It's about relationship.

**Revelation 3:20** I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. Speaks of restored, intimate relationship with Him. **It is not a call to be saved!**

Most will not respond for the reasons we saw in Matthew 22. Too busy with our own agendas, building our own kingdoms, we do not consider Him worth knowing, most have no desire to go onto perfection that Paul speaks of in **Hebrews 6:1-2.**

**Only those who have "clothed" themselves in the "right" garments will be allowed into the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. All other believers, provided they don't lose their salvation, will only be the "guests."**

**To purchase "gold" speaks of our hearts being bared naked before the Lord.** Search my heart O'God and show me anything wicked within me. Then when He does we need to be quick to repent and obey! We must earnestly pursue to turn from our wicked ways, lifestyle choices that were never His way for us. And in that process of being purified, we die to self, we are perfected in His love and start to become like Him word, thought, deed. We become Kingdom minded.

In the natural, impurities in gold are removed by intense heat. It melts, causing the impure to be separated from the pure. When the process is complete, the end result is "pure gold." Speaks of our hearts and the process in how He purifies us with Refiner's fire, through the trials, testings' and afflictions in our lives. **Why we don't want to waste them but embrace!**

**Isaiah 48:10** I have refined you, but not as silver is refined, but I have tried you and chosen you in the furnace of affliction.

How we respond to that suffering, will determine how much we allow the Master's refiner's fire to purify us. He will be faithful to bring our "custom designed" test, trials, and afflictions that we need to receive the end result of our faith, the salvation of our soul – to be the Bride. That is why He died, why He gives us faith! We decide by our choices (**1 Pet 1:9**).

**In that process, of dying, know it will cost us everything, if we agree to His ways: Luke 14:26-33** (ox, land, wife)

**Verse 26)** If do not hate... No other love above Him, no idols in our hearts.

**Verse 27)** If do not take up your cross... die to self, our fleshly desires, our pride, ambition, deception.

**Verse 33)** If do not forsake all... not only material possessions but our worthless ideas, false belief systems.

**If you do not, you cannot be My disciple/Bride.** This is true foundation of discipleship, very few disciples in the Church.

**Revelation 3:21, we see another key that qualifies us:** To him **who overcomes** I will grant to sit with Me on My throne...

**Only the "Overcomers" will be His Bride: What did they overcome?** Their way of doing things, the sin in their lives to become like Yeshua in word, thought and deed, and passing the tests and afflictions that He sent to purify and perfect them. Their purpose is to expose the "tares" of our hearts that need uprooted, so we can be conformed to Christ's image. That should be every believer's number one priority. He learned obedience through what He suffered (1 John 2:6, Hebrews 5:8).

**Revelation chapters 2 and 3:** These messages are to believers. They represent the state of the Church today.

The message is the same – repent/obey, endure to the end. **To him who overcomes, the Lord will give...** Two churches were different: Smyrna (persecuted church) and Philadelphia (representing the Bride, end-times).

## CLOSING:

**Matthew 24:13** He who endures to the end will be saved. Not at the beginning, but when we finish our race, if we do

Matthew 22 is about the wedding invite that has gone out to His church. It's about our Father having a wedding banquet for His Son. Most have excuses and are refusing to come, most do not consider Him worth knowing.

**Exodus 28:4, 40** Aaron, the priests, had to have on the "right garments" before they could enter the Holy of holies and minister to the Lord (For glory – honor – beauty).

**Matthew 22:12** See a man was not allowed into the wedding feast because he did not have on the right garment.

**Matthew 25** 10 virgins: 5 wise, foolish. Foolish were not prepared for the Bridegroom. **Intimacy/relationship/preparation.**

**Exodus 29:46** Brought the Israelites out of Egypt that I *might* dwell among them. It was not automatic, but was always the plan of God, to have a people to not only dwell among, but to make His abode within them (John 14:23).

Martha and Mary: Martha busy her own agenda, Mary sat at His feet. What did the Lord say about Mary? RELATIONSHIP!

**Matthew 25: 32-34, 41** Time of the separating of the sheep from the goats in the Church.

His eyes are searching for hearts surrendered to Him. **He defines what surrender looks like - not us. He will not tolerate any compromise or mixture.** It is a process for the Bride to make herself ready, requires patient endurance – a proving of the heart, faithfulness to the King, unto death if required.

He will only have a Bride who is passionately in love with Him – no other lovers! He will vomit out those who are lukewarm. Nothing else will satisfy her but to know Him intimately – to be one with Him. He is the only desire of her heart, and she will pay any price to know Him, and to obey Him (Revelations 3:16, Luke 14:26, Psalm 73:25, John 14:15, 17:21).

**It will be in the choices we make, every day, every situation.** Are we willing to let the low life/love of this world go? Are we willing to let go of our pride, rebellion, addictions, lying, anger, bitterness, wounds? We say yes, but do we really mean it?

Time is running out and most of the Church are asleep, and are refusing the invite. We don't want to be like the five foolish virgins who were not prepared and hear those earth shattering words, *"Depart from Me, I know you not."*

We are coming into some really dark times that we have not see before this age. Yeshua makes this clear in Matthew 24, forewarns us of great tribulation, and if the days had not been numbered no one would survive, and that during this difficult time, even the very elect can be deceived. The call on my life is to help prepare the Bride of Messiah – to sound the alarm for the Church to wake-up, repent, return to holiness, purity – to the fear of the Lord. To help prepare the Bride for what's coming, by helping her learn how to dress herself in her "wedding garments" that she would be ready for her wedding day, by helping her understand the eternal purposes of God, and what He had planned for us and what He requires and expects every believer to become – pure, holy, conformed to His image. To be a people on this earth, who would be known solely by His name (conformed to His character), displaying His excellencies in them and through them, now.

The Lord tells us that if our houses are built on sand, they will be swept away. It's life and death that our foundations are built on Truth/rock. Why it's so important we know why He died for us – to be perfected in love, that we would qualify to be His Bride. It will only be His Bride who will be protected in the dark days that lie ahead – most will perish, forewarns us that it will be just like the days of Noah – the flood came and all but eight were swept away (Revelation 3:10, Matthew 24).

**1 John 4:17** Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the Day of Judgment; **that** as He is, so are we in this world. *The word "because" is not the right translation from the Greek, should be "that" makes difference.*

#1 question the Lord will ask on that Day: did we become love with the one life He gave us? Most will have regret.

1. God looks at the heart – our motives why we do something. God is love – everything He does is out of this motive.
2. #1 priority, call that is on all our lives is to be perfected in love – conformed to His likeness by dying to self.
3. Important we know the specific call that is on our lives – most do not. Comes back to relationship and developing a hearing relationship. The higher the level of consecration in one's life, the clearer they will hear the voice of the Lord. A lot of good intentions in the Church that are all worthless to Him (Jeremiah 2:5, Matthew 7:21-22).
4. How much we are conformed to His death/love, to His likeness in word, thought and deed will determine how well, and how much we will fulfill the specific call that is on our lives.
5. Paul's #1 desire was to know Him. To know the power of His resurrection, to share His sufferings, to be conformed, transformed to His death. Speaks of dying to self – living the life of the Lamb, selfless. Paul said, I die daily. Only when a grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, will it bear much fruit (Philippians 3:10, 1 Cor. 15:31, John 12:24).

6. Paul's #2 desire was to present to Messiah a chaste virgin – the Bride (2 Corinthians 11:2, Acts 20:24). For the Lamb to receive the reward of His suffering – the reward was His Bride from all nations (Psalm 2:8).
7. This should be our focus – Kingdom minded – eternal, and not on the temporal. This should be the foundation of our walk, about Him being satisfied to have His Bride by His side as He deserves, not about us being satisfied. But I can share a secret, if we make it all about Him being satisfied, I promise we will be more than satisfied!

**Cheap grace messages have infiltrated and defiled the Church - rampant.** Paul was concerned we would be beguiled, seduced, turn away from pure devotion to the Lord when another “jesus” is preached (2 Corinthians 11:3-4). **Doesn't this sound like today with all the hyper-grace, friendly seeker, prosperity messages that we hear – all watered down, lukewarm messages to satisfy our flesh, at the cost of destroying our souls? Rev. 3:3 blot out.**

**Sin was not tolerated in the early church: Ananias/Saphira (Acts 5).** We as His Church at large have failed Him today.

It's absolutely possible to be like Him in word, thought and deed – don't let anyone deceive you and tell you it is not. This is what the Word of God teaches. **This is the true Gospel that has been lost in the Church that needs recovered.** This was the Gospel that Yeshua, Paul and the Apostles preached ceaselessly, the crucified life (Matthew 16:24, 1 John 2:6).

**He declares the end from the beginning and is restoring all things (Isaiah 46:10, Acts 3:21).** He is restoring a company of people, a bridal company, the Overcomers, back to the Garden of Eden to that place of pure, holy intimacy that Adam and Eve walked in before the fall. This is His plan for the dark days. His Bride will be protected and used mightily (Rev. 3:10).

**This intimacy can only be developed, nurtured, matured and maintained with a lifestyle of prayer. Without a lifestyle of prayer, we will always judge the Word of God with our mind.** Prayer draws us into intimacy with Him. It causes us to have an encounter with Him/Truth. When we have a personal encounter with Truth – we change, that's what transforms us, and causes our spirit man to grow and mature.

When we come into deeper intimacy with our Bridegroom King, we begin to know the Father's perfect love, and that love cast out all fear. **Fear of intimacy is prevalent in the Body.** We are broken people who keep breaking people, instead of bringing healing to others, as we should. **We think we are in relationship with each other, but truth is far from it!**

Genesis to Revelation is about a wedding taking place, and the restoration of God's family. It's about the Father having a Bride for His Son that will be worthy of Him, to be the Lamb's wife – meaning equally yoked to Him in word, thought and deed. One who will be perfected in love, found to be without spot of wrinkle (Matthew 5:48, Ephesians 5:26-27, Rev 21:9).

**If we don't know the goal, what HS endeavors to work in us:** That we're all expected to be perfected in love and what that means, we'll wonder aimlessly missing the high call that is on our lives to be the Bride, never living the abundant life.

At the same time, we need to realize, God will never understand our disobedience. We all have access to the same HS/grace to obey. On that Day when we have to render an account for how we lived our lives, there will be no excuses.

It requires our response everyday. It has to be intentional, if we want to possess our full inheritance (**Philippians 3:14-16**).

**That response on our part is a call to die to self.** Deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow the Lamb. **This call is on every believer's life – to live the crucified life.** He bought us, we are not our own (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

It's a call to let go of all our pride, selfishness, greed, lying, jealousies, gossiping, bitterness - all the works of the flesh that are in our lives (Galatians 5:19-21). It's a call to let go of all our own ambitions, love of titles/reputation, our dreams and desires – a total surrender of our will for His will. It all comes back to relationship, living a holy, consecrated life unto the Lord, having a disciplined prayer and Word life that is a lifestyle – not a random few hours a week.

It's a call to embrace our trials and afflictions, to count them all joy and to overcome them His way, according to His Word, and let Him do the purifying work in us He longs to do, because He saw our end and said it was very good, and He alone knows what we need to endure through to become all that He created us to be – the Bride!

**This is the call, die to self, which will prepare us for the dark days, if we respond His way, letting go of our ways!**

**It is worth any price we may have to pay, and I can promise you, if you say yes, you will have no regrets! AMEN!!!**