

The Glory of the Bride, the Lamb's Wife

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Perhaps no one subject is more replete with blessedness than the glory of the Bride, the Lamb's Wife. Whether we look at the grace that first brought us into it, or whether we look at the unfoldings of this love in the glory of the marriage; however we look at it, it is just marvellous! We are left in astonishing wonder. It is just, dear friends, as we become familiar with it, just as attention is directed to the sources, the springs of the joys of the bride, that we shall not only see the amazing joy that belongs to her, but we shall see ourselves cut off from the world. And this is why it is peculiarly blessed to my own soul, to trace this love where it rises, and to follow it to all the glory that it leads to. It fills me with wonder! The source of Jewish glory was *in time*. The Lord made himself known from time to time to the prophets. When He came to Moses, He spake thus: "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." As *this* God, he came to send them out of Egypt. He divided the nations among them, and gave them Canaan (as He had promised) for their possession. Still, His love to them was altogether *in time*. They could not go back further than Abraham. The covenant with him was the highest bond of Jewish blessing, and was still in connection with earth. Eph. 1 shows us that the foundation of *our* joy and blessing is much deeper. It takes me up into the bosom of the Father; it shows me that in Jesus we have the spring of all the Church's blessing; it shows me that the Church is infinitely beyond anything connected with *time*. We read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Now when I trace up, dear friends, the line of blessing belonging to the Church, I find that it has its rise, not in Abraham, but in God Himself. These are things especially blessed to my soul, to know that it is altogether divine, altogether heavenly. In the book of Genesis, we shall find everything there moulded with the eye of God resting on the glory of the Church in Jesus, — the mind of God overruling everything in Creation, which was to be gradually tenfolding the riches of Redemption. First, we see Adam out of his sleep, representing a state of weakness and humiliation, getting a helpmeet for him. Here, my beloved friends, we have the blessed action of God. Who dictated to Him the form of creation? It was His own mind, and it was to represent the glory of Christ and the Church. But when we get to Gen. 2, we find enough to make us silent with amazement. There we see God showing forth to us the beauty and glory of His own grace. In Heb. 2 we read, "he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." All this riches of grace came out from the Father. We are told that Abraham sent for a wife for his son Isaac; this God did when He gave the Church to Jesus. When the time for the marriage is come, and for which we are waiting, how wonderful will be our portion, beloved! The most glorious thing of all will be the *person of Jesus*. Is it not so, that the thing the wife values above all else that she has, is the person of her lord? She shares with him in all that he has, — his possessions, his house are hers; but she does not rest her affections on these. She knows that she has them, but she is *the wife*; and it is that which gives joy to her heart. This love is beautifully unfolded to us in Solomon's Song; there are the daughters of Jerusalem, but there is one above these. It is *her* beauty that he wonders at. I think I see Adam set forth as the *strong* one, while she is the *beautiful* one. Now the glory of the Bride is, that she has the person of the Lord. The joy of the Church, as the Bride,

is, that she will be *like Him*, and see Him as He is. There will be no loveliness in Jesus then that she will not have too. His name will be written on her forehead. She will be no longer in disguise. All the moral glory, and moral beauty of her beloved, will be hers. We shall then be altogether like Him, and be able to know all the glory of Jesus. Where do we now read the Father, but in the face of Jesus? God hath now given us the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ. But it is when we *see Him*, that we shall be like Him; not as he was once, His visage marred more than any man's, and his form more than the sons of men. There will be nothing then to hinder the going forth of all the fulness of the Father's love. We see Jesus not making much of His own love, but showing out the Father's. I do judge, dear friends, that we ought to know our proper portion, and that is, the person of Jesus. I agree with what has been said about Messiah's kingdom. I believe that if we can realize the glory of the Bride in connection with present humiliation, we shall find that it will separate us from everything here. Our glory comes down out of God, and has altogether to do with the person of Jesus, and this cuts us off from every thing earthly; this will just lift us up altogether, and give us power over all circumstances. It is only as we realize the power of the glory, that we shall be able to remedy the things that are wrong; and it is by realising the power of our union with Christ, that we shall separate from the world, and this will unite us to one another. If we look at our beloved friends as forming part of the glory of Jesus, I am sure that we could not suffer any thing to come in to separate us from each other.