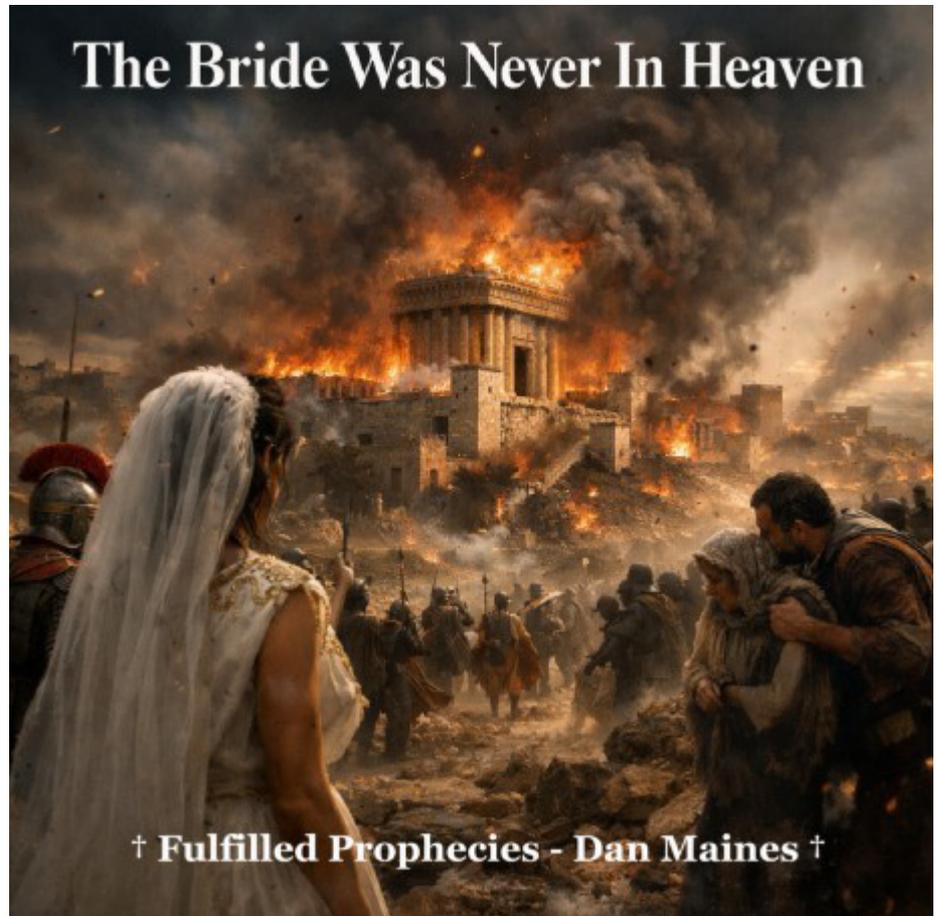


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The Bride Was Never In Heaven



By Dan Maines

The Bride Was Never In Heaven

Introduction

† Most Christians have been taught that the church goes to heaven to marry Christ.

† That assumption sounds spiritual, but it isn't what the text says.

† If we let Scripture interpret Scripture, we will see something shocking.

† The bride does not go up to heaven.

† The bride comes down out of heaven.

Isaiah 62:4-5

It will no longer be said to you, "Forsaken,"
Nor to your land will it any longer be said, "Desolate";
But you will be called, "My delight is in her,"
And your land, "Married";
For the LORD delights in you,
And to Him your land will be married.
For as a young man marries a virgin,
So your sons will marry you;
And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,
So your God will rejoice over you.

† The bride language in Scripture begins with covenant Jerusalem, not a future heavenly relocation (Isaiah 62:4-5).

† God called the land married, showing covenant union, not geography change (Isaiah 62:4-5).

† The bride is identified as covenant people, not individuals flying to heaven (Isaiah 62:4-5).

Ezekiel 16:8

Then I passed by you and saw you, and behold, you were at the time for love; so I spread My garment over you and covered your nakedness. I also swore to you and entered into a covenant with you so that you became Mine, declares the Lord GOD.

† God described entering into covenant with Jerusalem as marriage (Ezekiel 16:8).

† Covenant faithfulness and unfaithfulness are described as marital faithfulness and adultery (Ezekiel 16:8).

† Revelation's harlot imagery comes directly from this covenant marriage language (Ezekiel 16:8).

Matthew 22:7

But the king was enraged, and he sent his armies and

destroyed those murderers and set their city on fire.

† Jesus connected the wedding feast directly to the destruction of their city (Matthew 22:7).

† The wedding and the judgment are inseparable in the parable (Matthew 22:7).

† The marriage context is covenant transition through judgment, not departure to heaven (Matthew 22:7).

Revelation 1:1

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John.

† The events of Revelation were declared to take place soon (Revelation 1:1).

† The marriage of the Lamb cannot be pushed thousands of years into the future (Revelation 1:1).

† The timing indicator anchors the wedding and the judgment in the first century (Revelation 1:1).

Revelation 17:18

The woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth.

† Revelation identifies a woman as a city (Revelation 17:18).

† This woman is called a harlot and judged for covenant unfaithfulness (Revelation 17:18).

† The contrast in Revelation is between two cities, not earth and heaven (Revelation 17:18).

Revelation 19:7-8

Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, because the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.

It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and

clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

† The marriage of the Lamb is announced immediately after the fall of the harlot (Revelation 19:7-8).

† The timing shows covenant replacement, not heavenly evacuation (Revelation 19:7-8).

† The righteous bride stands in contrast to the judged harlot city (Revelation 19:7-8).

Revelation 21:9-10

Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."

And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.

† The angel explicitly identifies the bride as the holy city, Jerusalem (Revelation 21:9-10).

† The bride is not described as individuals in heaven but as a covenant city (Revelation 21:9-10).

† The identity of the bride is settled by the text itself (Revelation 21:9-10).

Revelation 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.

† This is the shocking moment, the bride comes down out of heaven (Revelation 21:2).

† The text never says the bride went up, it says she comes down (Revelation 21:2).

† The direction destroys the rapture assumption because the movement is downward (Revelation 21:2).

Hebrews 12:22-23

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect.

† First century believers were told they had already come to the heavenly Jerusalem (Hebrews 12:22-23).

† The heavenly city was a present covenant reality, not a distant future relocation (Hebrews 12:22-23).

† This confirms that the New Jerusalem was revealed in their generation (Hebrews 12:22-23).

Historical References

† Josephus recorded that Jerusalem was burned by the Roman armies in AD 70, matching the wedding judgment imagery of Matthew 22:7.

† Eusebius documented that the church fled Jerusalem before its destruction, showing Jesus' warnings were fulfilled historically.

† Irenaeus affirmed that Jerusalem's fall fulfilled the Lord's prophecy to that generation.

How It Applies To Us Today

† We're not waiting for a future wedding in heaven, we're living in the reality of the New Covenant city.

† We don't look for escape, we walk in covenant union with Christ now.

† The bride has already been revealed, and we belong to that kingdom that cannot be shaken.

† Understanding this frees us from fear based futurism and anchors us in fulfilled promise.

† We are not spiritual refugees waiting for evacuation, we're covenant citizens of a present kingdom.

† Our identity is not future tense, it's established in the finished work of Christ.

† The destruction of the harlot means the Old Covenant system is gone forever, we are not under it and never will be.

† We don't measure hope by headlines or geopolitical events, we measure it by fulfilled promise.

† The bride being revealed means access to God is open, there is no temple barrier, no priestly gatekeeping, no waiting period.

† Because the marriage has come, we live in union, not anticipation.

† The New Jerusalem coming down means God's dwelling is with His people now, not someday.

† When fear based prophecy teaching tries to pull us back into panic, we stand in the security of fulfillment.

† The bride was revealed through judgment, which means covenant faithfulness always triumphs over religious corruption.

† We don't live looking for escape, we live proclaiming that the King has already vindicated His people.

Q & A Appendix

Q If the bride is a city, how can believers be part of it?

A Hebrews 12:22-23 says believers have come to the heavenly Jerusalem. The city represents covenant identity and access to God, not bricks and stone.

Q Doesn't Revelation 21 say there is no more death?

A Revelation 21:4 reflects Isaiah 25:8 and covenant victory over redemptive death. 1 Corinthians 15:54-57 shows death swallowed up in victory through Christ. The context is covenant death under the Law, not biological mortality.

Q If the bride comes down, what does that mean practically?

A Revelation 21:3 says the tabernacle of God is among men. That echoes John 1:14 and Hebrews 12:22-23. The point is covenant presence, not geographic relocation.

Q Why use cosmic and dramatic language if this was about Jerusalem?

A Isaiah 13:10 described Babylon's fall with darkened sun and stars. Prophetic judgment language consistently uses cosmic imagery for covenant collapse.

Q If the harlot is judged and the bride revealed, what changed historically?

A Hebrews 8:13 says the Old Covenant was becoming obsolete and ready to disappear. When Jerusalem fell in AD 70, the temple system ended permanently and the New Covenant stood alone.

Q If this was fulfilled in the first century, what are we waiting for now?

A Hebrews 12:28 says we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken. We're not waiting for covenant completion, we're living in its reality.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Isaiah 62:4-5; Ezekiel 16:8; Matthew 22:7; Revelation 1:1; Revelation 17:18; Revelation 19:7-8; Revelation 21:2; Revelation 21:9-10; Hebrews 12:22-23

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History; Irenaeus, Against Heresies

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