

**Future Wedding
Matthew 9:14—15**

Fasting (verse 14)

Jesus and His Disciples were feasting and having a good time and in so doing the disciples of John questioned why they were fasting while the disciples of Jesus were feasting. This event raises a couple of questions. Why are the disciples of John complaining about how Christ's disciples are acting? Why was fasting so important?

We first meet the disciples of John when he is baptizing in the wilderness. His message was to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins because the Kingdom is at hand (Matthew 3:2; Mark 1:4). One disciple of John was Andrew the brother of Simon Peter (John 1:40). Andrew is an example of how John's disciples were to eventually leave John and become a disciple of Christ. John understood this when he said that Christ must increase while he must decrease (John 3:30; 4:1). As John fades from the scene, Christ will become prominent in the proclamation of the Kingdom Gospel. John was just a forerunner of Christ. His function was complete after drawing people's attention to their Messiah.

In Matthew we have some disciples who are still following John but not really understanding fully the ministry of Christ. They should have left John to follow Jesus just as Andrew had done. By this time John had been cast into prison and Jesus began publicly preaching that the Kingdom was at hand. John's disciples were observing a time of fasting, as were the Pharisees, however, they were probably more sincere about their fasting than the Pharisees were. It's interesting to see how the Pharisees questioned Jesus about eating with publicans and sinners in verse 11 followed by the disciples of John questioning Jesus in verse 14. Jesus Christ was still revealing Himself as their Messiah and this new revelation was a hard thing to accept. Even John, as he sat in prison, had doubts that Jesus was truly the Messiah (Matthew 11:2—5). Jesus was willing to again show John that He is the Messiah as proved by His miraculous signs.

Matthew 11:2—5 ² Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, ³ And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? ⁴ Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: ⁵ The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

The wedding party (verse 15)

The reason the disciples of Jesus were feasting was because for them this particular time was a time of rejoicing because a wedding was about to take place. A wedding is a joyous occasion that was marked by the arrival of the bridegroom, Jesus Christ. The children (or sons or attendants) of the bridechamber (the righteous remnant or Little Flock) are being prepared for the wedding. This will be the marriage supper of the Lamb found in Revelation 19:7—9. Israel is the bride and will be the bride forever. Israel was betrothed from the beginning but became unfaithful. According to Paul Sadler: "In days of old, when a man and woman came together before a rabbi, they were betrothed to one another. Similar to our present day engagement, the betrothal was a binding agreement wherein the parties were actually classified *husband* and *wife*. Upon completion of the ceremony, the couple returned to their respective homes for one year. This period was to give the husband an opportunity to *prepare* a home for his bride-to-be. It was also to ensure that the woman had been *faithful*, and was not with child."

Hosea 2:19—20 ¹⁹ And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. ²⁰ I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord.

Isaiah 54:5—8 ⁵ For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called. ⁶ For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken

and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God. ⁷ For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. ⁸ In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

Those who are found faithful through the Tribulation will be united with Christ as the bride in the Kingdom at the Second Coming. The Body of Christ is part of the Mystery and therefore is not revealed until Paul comes on the scene. The unsearchable riches of Ephesians 3:8 are untraceable, not deep or unfathomable as other translations state. The Mystery truths given to us by Paul are therefore untraceable in the prophetic writings of the Old Testament. This means that the Church, the Body of Christ cannot be found in the Old Testament and therefore cannot be the bride. Only those who replace Israel with the Church can make such a claim.

Paul does compare the Body of Christ with a bride but is not called a bride. Paul used the bride as a simile (we are AS a bride—see 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:22, 23, 25, 29) while the bride is a metaphor for Israel (Israel IS the bride). Those who confuse the difference between a simile and a metaphor generally will confuse the identification of the bride.

The last sentence of verse 15 is interesting because it indicates there will be a time when the Bridegroom will be taken away from them and then they will fast. Many say this is in reference to the cross but it seems to be pointing to a longer period of time when the remnant will be fasting and praying, seeking the face of God. I believe it pertains to the Tribulation since the wedding feast will take place right after that and the time of rejoicing will overtake the darkness of the Tribulation. This is illustrated in the parable of the 10 virgins in Matthew 25. These virgins were waiting for the bridegroom. The bridegroom had tarried and the virgins slumbered. At midnight there was a shout announcing the coming of the bridegroom. Five of the virgins were ready to meet the bridegroom because they had oil. Five had no oil and had to leave to buy some. Those who had oil were believers (the Little Flock) ready to enter the Kingdom and be wedded to the Bridegroom. They had endured to the end.

It was in Matthew 16 that Jesus told His Disciples that He would die on a cross. This was a turning point in Christ's ministry, one that was rejected by the Disciples. It was hard to go from the excitement of being part of a thrilling ministry to having your leader killed by the leadership of Israel. The Light seemingly was going to be dimmed or extinguished. The time of fasting and seeking the face of God was soon to come. John speaks of a time of darkness coming. As evidence of this coming time of darkness, the Disciples found themselves unable to perform miracles as they did in the past (Matthew 17:19—21).

Matthew 16:21 From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

John 9:4—5 ⁴ I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

Israel needs to go through the Tribulation to purify her (Zechariah 13:9; Isaiah 48:10). Those who are left at the end of the Tribulation will be the Righteous Remnant, the bride who will be wedded to the Lamb. (note: the bride of Christ is not a biblical term.) These are the ones who will cry out to the Lord in the day of trouble (Psalm 50:15 — note: this is not a day of trouble). Daniel was reading Jeremiah 29:10—14 and discovered that the end of the 70-year Babylonian captivity was scheduled to come to an end so he set his face toward God, seeking Him by prayer, supplications, fasting, sackcloth and ashes (Daniel 9:2—20) the future bride of the Lamb will cry out to God to save her from the horrible Satanic oppression she is experiencing in the Tribulation (Hosea 5:15). This is the time of fasting that Jesus speaks of in Matthew 9:15.

For previous notes and additional mid-Acts materials please visit www.MidActsTruths.com