**Bride of Christ**

There are four point of views concerning "Who is the Bride of Christ?":

1. Israel
2. The Body of Christ
3. New Jerusalem, the city
4. The term the "bride" is a figure of speech that is used to describe a relationship

The following is from a teaching by Richard Jordan expressing the #4 viewpoint:

(Matthew 9:14-15 KJV)  Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?*{15}*And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.

John's disciples watch Jesus and His disciples and wonder why they are not fasting. Jesus tells them when people have the bridegroom in their presence the do not mourn, they rejoice. However, there will come a time when the bridegroom is taken away then they will mourn and fast.

Here we see that the bridegroom is identified as the Lord Jesus Christ and the disciples as the children of the bridechamber. However, we see no identification of the bride.

People say Israel is the bride, but this passage does not identify Israel as the bride. In this passage, we see a bridegroom and children of the bridechamber but no bride.

Notice what Jesus says to his disciples in Luke 12:36,

And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately."

Have you ever been to a wedding where the bride was not there? Well, if the disciples are the bride then it appears that they are not even at the wedding!

In Matthew 22, Jesus tells a parable of a king who prepares a marriage for his son and everyone is there but the bride.

There is not but one verse in the Bible that ever identifies the bride and it does not call her the "***bride of Christ***." The term "the bride of Christ" is not sound New Testament terminology.  It comes from the Roman Catholic Church and is used to identify the congregation of the Roman Catholic Church.

There is not one verse in the Bible that calls anyone the "*bride****of Christ***."

Revelation 21:9 is as close as one can get to the terminology "the bride of Christ":

(Revelation 21:9-10 KJV)  And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.*{10}*And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

We need to understand the expression "*the bride of Christ*" does not appear in the Bible; however, the term "the bride, the Lamb's wife" does. According to Revelation 21:10, the bride, the Lamb's wife, is identified as New Jerusalem, the city. To understand what this means we need to go back to Isaiah 62.

(Isaiah 62:1-5 KJV)  For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp *that*burneth.*{2}*And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name.*{3}*Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.*{4}*Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.*{5}*For *as*a young man marrieth a virgin, *so*shall thy sons marry thee: and *as*the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, *so*shall thy God rejoice over thee.

Here we see Palestine is called "Beulah" (verse 4). Do you know what Beulah means? It means marriage. This passage is describing God placing Israel back in her land and God marries them to that land. God will fix it so they will never again be separated from that land.

When we read  passages back in Isaiah and Hosea, we will see it is as though God marries that nation Israel back to that land.  Israel will be joined to that land and they will never again be separated from it.

Marriage in the Bible is a description of a lasting, loving relationship, a bond of love. Marriage is a metaphor, a figure of speech, that describes a union and is used in regard to the nation Israel and especially the Lord Jesus Christ in that relationship in regard to New Jerusalem.

Israel was through the Mosaic Covenant, **as** a wife that commits adultery (Ezekiel 16). God divorced them because they were unfaithful. In Hosea, we read that He restores them: Israel calls Jehovah, my husband. This is referring to the restored relationship, the covenant relationship. It is describing that union Jehovah will have with have with nation Israel in the kingdom through the New Covenant.

The reason there is so much discussion on the "bride of Christ" is because people are trying to apply that terminology to the Body of Christ. "The Bride" is Jewish terminology, Jewish principle and it describes the relationship Jehovah will have with Israel in the kingdom.

In Matthew 9, the disciples, the ones who will sit on the 12 thrones are not called the bride. One would think they would be but they are not; they are called "*the children of the bridechamber."* The reason for this is because the terms bride of Jehovah, the wife of Jehovah are figures of speech describing a union, a oneness, a lasting relationship that one has.

Being the bride is not a status like being a member of the Body of Christ.

Marriage is a description of a relationship. We, for instance, are described as members of the Body of Christ. We are also described as "the temple of the living God." How many of us are a building? Not one of us, we understand that terminology to be a figure of speech that describes the relationship we have. This is the same issue with marriage terminology, including that of "the bride".