

Weddings(*Letter from Connie*)

Dearest Brothers James and John,

It has been on my heart to write you for so long. I sometimes feel torn in my responsibilities — my work and writing and communicating with my family there. In whatever I do I want it to be done with my whole heart. My original intention for writing was to communicate what the Lord had been speaking to me about in my heart, but since then these things have been tested and He's shown me even more things — as usually happens when you start a letter and don't finish it for months. Now, my heart is full in wanting to write you about the last two weddings.

The Lord did so much in me during Bruce and Susan's wedding. Things weren't as organized as I felt they should be and therefore I became anxious. The Lord used this so much to expose my distrust and anxiousness to see that the wedding was the Lord's or we wouldn't have it. I am so thankful for His mercy and discipline that came to me during this time. A couple of weeks before the wedding we got together (the Lake House and the Maples) and had a wedding meeting to see what the Lord had to show us concerning the Bride and the Age to Come. We saw that each wedding gives us a grasp of the type of the wedding to come. The Bride will be young and without spot or wrinkle, fit for the Bridegroom; no trace of Babylon or unfaithfulness in her. (Revelation 19 — made herself ready; clothed in righteous acts...) We must keep our garments spotless. As the Bride, we long for that day with eager expectation. Blessed are those invited to the marriage supper — these are the first fruits. These are those who fully participated in the Body here. If we don't we may enter as through fire and will be purified in that day — unable to enter into the celebration for the union of the bride and groom (which is the millennial reign). The celebration of joy which occurs after the Groom comes to get His Bride and up until they leave is a type of the age where we will rule and reign by His side — the Bride who has allowed herself to be prepared — she does nothing apart from His initiative; she has fully taken on His mind; a true representation of the Groom; she is His, the Bride who has adorned herself for her husband. We are striving to be a part of that first resurrection. We are His. We will receive our discipline now or later. It would be better to receive it now. How shameful it would be if a bride on her wedding day couldn't stay by the side of her groom during the time of the celebration but was not fit and had to go away until she was purified and only entered to be with him after everything was over and he was about to leave. We want to be ready and prepared to take on His mind, losing our identity in Him.

The Bride — as the New Jerusalem coming down from Heaven; the wife of the Lamb. She will represent Him to the universe. Bride is adorned in sparkling white linen. After she arrives she mingles with us and dances with us because although she is a type she is also a part of us. She is not the object of the wedding, but the Bridegroom is. We're being conformed, prepared, perfected. Before the foundations of the earth were laid He saw us in His Son. Our inheritance — we must hold onto it and possess it. Our Father wants to see none fall away. We are under grace. Yahshua will be sitting on the Throne of David during the 1000 years. It will be like the garden of Eden then with no boring moments. We will be uninhibited loving one another. We live now, to a degree, what we will be living then. We'll have all the emotions we can think of then but we want to make it by faith now not on feelings. This was real revelation to me — especially about reigning with Him by His side during the millennium — I never really understood this before. Ruling and reigning meant nothing to me — just as streets of gold or crowns or mansions meant nothing to me. But when I saw that only a Bride who is prepared, who has the mind of her Bridegroom and does nothing apart from His initiative (no lawless deeds) can stand with Yahshua (our Groom, the Lamb of God). It created the desire (just stirred something up in me) to want to be a part of the pure, spotless, undefiled Bride that will reign with Him. We must eagerly watch for Him. I know I grow slack and dull, but the Lord really quickened my vision through these weddings: we're forgiven people! How I want every trace of unbelief to be stripped from me.

I wanted to relate a little of the order of things — especially in Bruce & Susan's wedding. We really saw that we needed to enter into the wedding on that day full of faith so that it would give glory to our Father. We needed to see ourselves as already having overcome, having our sins confessed. And especially entering in with anticipation and enthusiasm. We invited many guests to both weddings, but especially to Kim & Gam's

wedding — we brought close to 100 Vietnamese people from Boston. We see that the Lord is doing something great among His people so that the Bride may be made complete — throughout the nations.

Susan was such a beautiful bride. A custom we have here is that the bride and groom are separated for a time. A week is good — not seeing one another at all. However, Bruce & Susan were separated 11 days, but it was too long. Because of the language barrier, Kim & Gam were not separated. But we see that it is a good thing. I'm sure you saw this in Annette & Al's wedding, James. Anyway, the Bride was dressed in white linen with some embroidery (white) on the gown. Psalm 45 speaks of her embroidered gown. Different women made adornments for her — crocheted sachets, ribbons, things for her wrist — all draping down her gown or her wrist. Each Bride has a head-covering which just suits her. Susan had one which reached the middle of her back, rounded off at the bottom with gold thread mixed in white embroidery (Pat Dufford made it — she is so wonderful). She had a crown of flowers at the top — well, the flowers neatly framed her radiant face. There was so much peace that morning.

That morning we had a breakfast for her — her attendants and mother and sister were there. Then all left but her attendants who dressed her. She made no fuss, but stood and allowed us to dress and adorn her. She stood on the way to the Grandview Pavilion in the van so that she wouldn't wrinkle the linen. Not till she sits with the groom does she sit down in the wedding gown (unless on a stool with the dress over it — Gam was ready an hour early and we weren't prepared for her so she sat down without wrinkling the linen). Anyway, when we brought her there the Mill House was finishing up a skit about those who refused to come to the king's banquet. We waited (her attendants were the single women from our household) then a blast of trumpet and we came through the curtain just a little behind her. Henceforth everything was spontaneous — the wedding was the Lord's, a type of what is to come. We had some special things planned but only the Father knew what was to happen. Then people started saying such glorious and wondrous things concerning the Bride. We got in a circle at this point and did *Therefore ... Then shall the virgins*. Then we brought her to the stage where Val K. sang a song she wrote from Psalm 45. Then! Fanfare and the Groom came in, attendants before and behind him and he was carried in on their shoulders (Al J. and Leonard). He was brought straight to her and he took her hands and stood there as the body sang *Shouts of Joy*. As the song continued her maidens led them to the canopy where they stood as we sang several worship songs (*Lion of Judah, I Am Eternally Grateful, ...*). At Kim's wedding there were more celebrative ones. The Bride then gave her offering to him (they had forgotten the garland so they brought it in at this point and placed it around his neck) — her dance was a really pretty couples dance. Susan and I were partners. Then the groom spoke about the might and strength displayed in the dance he was about to do — which he led as a line dance — it was *Joshua*. There was more celebrating afterwards. Then Elbert went to Dicky and said, "Let's sing a song to the King — let's go to the city of God!" And Dicky passed the word to different scattered members of the household as someone led the couple into the center of the floor. Then! with much enthusiasm and vigor we did *Zemer Bagilboa* — we had partners in the second part too — Elbert and Marsha danced. There was much laughter and whistling — and at the end we ran into the center and yelled "Hey" and all covered them with our arms over them. It was so wonderful. A memorable moment for the Maples. Then there were other offerings, children songs, etc. Then the banquet — from now on the groom will begin the banquet by breaking the bread on the table (the Bride's table). There were several braided ones but one big one in front of the Bride and Groom. It was so wonderful. After the Banquet there were songs and Susan's father spoke with tears of gratitude. Their wedding dance — *Ma Averech* (has no special meaning). Bride's dance was from Song of Solomon (*My Beloved*). Then their vows which truly expressed the heart of the Lord. We made a tunnel for them and they were gone quickly with their attendants (a couple) barely ahead of them to help them change at a nearby house. The Bride's head-covering is sown to her hair so that she won't have to be concerned with it falling off. After they left an outbreak of dancing! *Kalu Regliem, Shibilim, Harmonika* and others! Praise the Lord.

This is pretty detailed...I wish you could see the pictures. They were both so radiant. There are some women here who would like to make Rebecca some adornments and we could send some gold thread also. If we know

the fastest way and when the wedding will be. We are so excited and full of rejoicing here over Willie and Rebecca's wedding. Things just flowed in Bruce and Susan's wedding because all anxiousness was cast out! There was order but the Lord put everything in its proper place. At Kim and Gam's wedding several of us wrote a dance (Larry Masse, Jarvis, and I) to a new song called *Break Forth* I'd like to send you a recording of. It speaks of the New Age. It's wonderful! Everyone is learning the dance now. I'd like to send the dance to you somehow.

Well, I have a lot to do but it was on my heart to write you about this. I love you both so much. John, you have always been a good friend. I really love you. Whenever I see the Vietnamese people I wish you could come to visit. They are so wonderful. One stayed with us over a week after the wedding and really sees a lot. I think he truly sees the kingdom. His name is Sun. Susan Barnett wants to write you really bad. I will encourage her. James, my faithful friend. I really love you. I hope to see you again someday. The Lord has spoken so much to my heart lately. My anxiousness and strongness are going to go. I truly desire to give life to people. Just as you have given it to me by your gentle spirit. Angela and I speak of you often. I hope this letter is coherent and communicates the spirit of what the Lord has been showing me and all of us. May the Lord bless you all in the Little Flock with every spiritual blessing. Give a big hug to Rebecca and Willie for me and my love to Arthur, Judy, Kirsten and *everyone* there. May His peace fill you up to the fullest.

Your sister and friend,
Connie