

MARRIAGE IN SCRIPTURE: FUNDAMENTALS

1 John 4: 7 Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 He who does not love does not know God; for God is love. 9 In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No man has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. 13...God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

Genesis 1: 1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters. 3 And God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day....

...26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

...31 And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, a sixth day.

Genesis 2: ...7 the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

8 And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. 9 And out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil....

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." 19 So out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man ...20 The man gave names to all...; but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him.

21 So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; 22 and the rib which the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. 23 Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." 24 Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

Genesis 3: 1 Now the serpent ...said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat of any tree of the garden?'" 4 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die. 5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened,

and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6 So ...she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons. 8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

9 But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" 10 And he said, "I heard the sound of thee in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself."

11 He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" 12 The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." 13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent beguiled me, and I ate."

14 The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this.... I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

16 To the woman he said, "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."

COVENANTAL MARRIAGE VOW

Genesis 17:1-2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 15, 16: When Abram was ninety-nine years old the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "...Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations.... I will make you exceedingly fruitful....And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you....And I will be their God....As for Sarai your wife,...I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

Exodus 6: 2 And God said to Moses, "I am the LORD. 3 I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty ...4 I also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they dwelt as sojourners. 5 Moreover I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold in bondage and I have remembered my covenant. 6 Say therefore to the people of Israel, 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment, 7 and I will take you for my people, and I will be your God...

Leviticus 26:9, 12-13: "I will have regard for you and make you fruitful and multiply you, and will confirm my covenant with you....And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and you shall be my people." .

See also, e.g. Eze. 37:26-27, Bar. 2:35, Hos. 2:16-23.

KEY EXAMPLES OF IMAGERY IN OLD TESTAMENT

Song of Solomon 1:1-4: O that you would kiss me with the kisses of your mouth! For your love is better than wine, your anointing oils are fragrant, your name is oil poured out; therefore the maidens love you. Draw me after you, let us

make haste. The king has brought me into his chambers.

Song of Solomon 4:1, 3, 5: Behold, you are beautiful, my love, behold, you are beautiful! Your eyes are doves behind your veil... Your lips are like a scarlet thread, and your mouth is lovely. Your cheeks are like halves of a pomegranate behind your veil... Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle, that feed among the lilies.

Hosea, Chapters 1 and 2. 1:2 ...The LORD said to Hosea, "Go, take to yourself a wife of harlotry and have children of harlotry, for the land commits great harlotry by forsaking the LORD." 1:3 So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son. ... 1:9 And the LORD said, "Call his name Not my people, for you are not my people and I am not your God." 2:4 "Protest against your mother, protest! for she is not my wife, and I am not her husband" ... 2:10 Yet the number of the people of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which can be neither measured nor numbered; ... 2:16 "And in that day, says the LORD, 'you will call me, "My husband," ... 2:18 And I will make for you a covenant on that day ... 2:19 And I will betroth you to me for ever ... 2:23 and I will say to Not my people, "You are my people"; and he shall say "Thou art my God"".

THE PROMISE OF THE MESSIAH: SUFFERING, SPOUSE, NEW COVENANT

Isaiah 53: 3 He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. 8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? 9 And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

Is. 54:4a, 5, 6, 8: Fear not... For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called. For the LORD has called you like a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit,... but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you, says the LORD, your Redeemer.

Jer. 31:31-33: Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

JESUS' USE OF THE IMAGERY OF MARRIAGE

Matthew 22:1 And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, 2 "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a marriage feast for his son, 3 and sent his

servants to call those who were invited to the marriage feast; but they would not come... 8 Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. 9 Go therefore to the thoroughfares, and invite to the marriage feast as many as you find.' 10 And those servants went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good; so the wedding hall was filled with guests. 11 "But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment; 12 and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. 13 Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.' 14 For many are called, but few are chosen."

John 15:13 Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

See also Matthew 9:14, Matthew 25:1, Luke 12:35-36, John 3:27, 28-29.

PAUL'S USE OF THE IMAGERY OF MARRIAGE

Ephesians 5:21 Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. 22 Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. 24 As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands. 25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. 28 Even so husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, as Christ does the church, 30 because we are members of his body. 31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This mystery is a profound one, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church; 33 however, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

[See Matthew 20:28: The Son of man came not to be served but to serve.]

JOHN'S USE OF THE IMAGERY OF MARRIAGE

Revelation 19:7-9 Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude... "Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready... Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb."

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; 3 and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them;

Revelation 22: 17 The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And let him who hears say, "Come." And let him who is thirsty come, let him who desires take the water of life without price. ... 20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! 21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen.