

“Recognize the Great Themes of Scripture”

How to Read the Bible

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Friday, August 5, 2022

- I. Many themes that flow throughout the Scriptural narrative.
Such themes come under the rubric of allegories, similes and metaphors. For example:
 - a. Jesus as the Lamb of God {J. Sidlow Baxter’s *The Master Theme of the Bible*}
 - b. Spiritual Warfare (David vs. Goliath, Full Armor of God, War in Heaven)
 - c. *Today*, our study is on the theme of the Church as the Bride of Christ.
- II. Two Old Testament Pre-figurations
 - a. In the Book of Ruth, Boaz is a type of Jesus Christ, Who is *our* kinsman redeemer
 - b. Hosea 2: 16 – 20 *
- III. Most specific reference in New Testament = Ephesians 5: 31 - 32 *
- IV. Galilean Wedding Customs in Jesus’ day [per the documentary *Before the Wrath*]
 - a. Fathers of bride and groom would negotiate a bride price
 - b. Unique to Galilee – bride had the right to decline her suitor
 - i. Groom would pour a glass of wine and offer it to his intended bride
 - ii. Only if she drinks from the glass, does she accept his proposal
 - c. Once proposal is accepted, the groom goes to prepare a place for his bride
 - i. The place will be on the father’s homestead = *insula*
 - ii. An insula of the era was unearthed by archaeologists in Chorazin
 - iii. John 14: 2 – 3 *
 - d. The groom’s father determines when the home is ready to receive the bride
 - i. At the betrothal, the bride asks the groom; “when are you coming back?”
 - ii. Groom responds “Only my father knows” {Matthew 24:36 *}.
 - iii. As groom prepares a place for his bride, she prepares her wedding dress
 - e. When all is ready, son is sent to his bride’s home to bring her into his own home
 - i. Always at night {Matthew 25: 1-13 *} (bride sleeps in her wedding dress!)
 - ii. Bridegroom blows the shofar (ram’s horn) to announce his coming
 - iii. Groomsmen shout in celebration, as the day of consummation has arrived

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- iv. Wedding party carries the bride on a litter (flying the bride away)
 - v. Only those prepared for the event get to join the parade (see item i. above)
 - vi. Compare this with 1 Thessalonians 4: 16 - 17 *
- V. Biblical view of the Glorious day of Consummation = Revelation 19: 7 - 8 *
- VI. What are you going to do with what we just learned?
- a. Get ready! (Matthew 25: 13)
 - b. “Heaven is *not* the default destination for every human being who ever lived. Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people.” {C.H. Spurgeon}
 - c. “*He became as we are so that we might become as He is*” [Iraenaus of Lyon]
 - d. Read 1 John 3: 1 - 3 * (allowing for a change of metaphor).
- VII. Closing - Sing *The Church's One Foundation* [take note of stanza #1, lines 3 &4]