

Bride of Christ

by Jacob Prasch

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being prepared for the return of Christ and warns against false teachers and false prophets who will lead people astray.

Duration: 1:10:40

Scripture: Matthew 25:1

Topics: "Bride"

Description

In the video, the speaker emphasizes the importance of a faithful remnant in both Israel and the church. They believe that God wants to give the nation one more chance to repent before Jesus comes. The speaker encourages the church to seek the Lord and be a platform for launching a new thing of God's spirit. They also address the issue of manipulative fundraising and false doctrine, stating that the solution is not to eliminate leaders or doctrine, but to have good leaders and true doctrine. The sermon concludes with a reading from Matthew 25, highlighting the need to be prepared and ready for the coming of the bridegroom.

Transcript

Good morning, welcome with me to the gospel of Saint Matthew, chapter 25, please. Matthew, chapter 25. If you don't have a Bible, please share a Bible with the person next to you.

Matthew 25. Verse 1. Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were foolish and five were prudent.

For when the foolish took the lamps, they took no oil with them. But the prudent took oil in their flasks along with their lamps. Now, while the bridegroom was delaying, they all became drowsy and began to sleep.

But at midnight there was a shout, behold, the bridegroom come out to meet him. Then all of those virgins rose and shined their lamps. And the foolish said to the bridegroom, give us some of your oil.

Give us oil for our lamps, for our lamps are going out. But the prudent answered saying, no, there will not be enough for us and for you as well. Go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.

And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast. And the door was closed. And later, the other virgins also came

saying, Lord, Lord, open for us.

But he answered and said, Truly, I say to you, I do not know you. See on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour. Heavenly Father, we come before you in the name of your son, our Messiah, Jesus.

We ask you, Lord God, for the power and presence of your Holy Spirit to open our eyes, our minds, and above all, our hearts for the glory and meaning of your word. Above all, Father, we ask that in your grace and in your strength, we would be not only hearers of your word, but doers also in Jesus' name, for Jesus' sake. The parable of the wise and the foolish virgins.

Five prudent, five imprudent, five ready for the bridegroom to come, five who were not. This draws on a number of Old Testament passages, but we have to understand something about a Jewish wedding in the time of Jesus in the second temple period. A wedding had three stages, all of them crucial, all of them significant.

Without all three, a wedding was not a wedding. That is to say, a marriage was not a marriage. The first was betrothal, betrothal.

Engagement was more than an engagement in our sense. You couldn't break it off. It was legally binding.

When Joseph intended to quietly divorce Mary, he needed, again, a certificate of divorce to do it. The engagement was more than an engagement in our Western sense. It was legally binding.

At the betrothal, the bridegroom would go away for at least a year. His bride would not see him for this intermittent period to which she was already committed to him, and he would go away to his father's house and build an annex onto his father's house, additional rooms or a wing onto his father's house to prepare a place for the bride. When he went away, she knew he was going to prepare a place for her.

That was the betrothal. Then you had the actual nuptial itself. We read in the Song of Solomon, his banner over me is love, and at a Jewish wedding to this day, we get married under something called a chuppah, a banner.

I was married under a chuppah in Israel. That was the nuptial service. Finally, there was the confirmation of the marriage.

All three were absolutely crucial for a wedding to be a wedding, for a marriage to be a marriage, even though there was an intermittent time period. And it's against this background that Jesus is speaking. But let's look very briefly at Psalm 45, verse 14.

To the king and embroidered work, the Virgin, her companions who follow her will be brought to thee. They will be led forth with gladness and rejoicing. They will enter the king's palace.

All of this, of course, is a typology of the Messiah coming for his bride. We have to understand a number of things about the bride. The same as the wicked women in Scripture, teach something about the great harlot of Revelation.

All of the wicked women in the Bible teach something about her in Revelation 17 and 18. Particularly Jezebel, Queen of Leah, the Lyra, the wicked woman in Proverbs 5 and so on. They all teach something about the wicked woman.

The good women of the Bible all teach something about the true bride. Sarah, Rachel, Leah, Rivka, Rebecca, Queen Esther at her wedding, as we studied yesterday, Ruth. All of them teach something about the bride in different aspects.

One bride. It goes back, of course, to Genesis 3 where God makes man in his image and in his likeness. He gives certain aspects of the divine nature to males and certain to females, that between the two they would reproduce his image and likeness on the earth.

He makes man an ajodevi in his image. So the same as a plural God, a triune God, comes together in an act of creative love, the Hebrew word achdut, oneness, so too in marital procreation we are replaying what God does in the creation. One reflects the other.

But then we see that Israel was to be Yahweh's bride. That's why the Old Testament equates idolatry with adultery. Idolatry, as it were, equals spiritual adultery.

When Israel went into sin, worshiping other gods, the Old Testament calls it by the Hebrew terms nuf, harlotry or whoredom. O daughter of Zion, you've played the harlot. That is to say, idolatry equals spiritual adultery.

Something becomes more important than her lover. It's very interesting that the Hebrew word for husband, master, owner, is baal, baal. Yahweh was to be Israel's baal.

But Satan comes and tries to counterfeit baal. And you have the Canaanite pagan deity Baal HaShamayim, the master of heaven. What happens was, in the story of Elijah, for instance, in 1 Kings, was this.

The Hebrews of the north, in Israel, on Mount Carmel, began worshiping the true God in an unbiblical way. They began worshiping the right Baal in the wrong way. Instead of on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, they did it on Mount Carmel in Galilee.

We'll be looking at this Monday night. When you begin to worship the right God in an unbiblical way, an alien spirit gets an encounter with him. They didn't just begin worshiping the false Baal.

They thought they were worshiping the true one. This is spiritual seduction. We'll look at this when we study the golden calf, Lord willing, tomorrow night.

But then this becomes extended into the Messiah's relationship with his bride. Adam is a type of Jesus, isn't he? Jesus is called the second Adam and Eve his bride. I'll put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed.

Now, some people are telling us the church will be triumphant. I read a book by a chap in Australia called Kevin Connor, and he said, you know, the church is going to be triumphant because of what it says in Genesis three, the woman will be triumphant. But in fact, it says the seed of the woman, Jesus the Messiah, will crush the serpent's head.

It says in Romans, the Lord of glory will conquer him. We have a big error today. The error is called Kingdom Now Theology, triumphalism, dominionism.

It is no more biblical on one extreme than a bunker mentality is on the other. The idea that we're going to conquer the whole world for Christ and set up his kingdom before he comes is absolutely false. It is as

wrong on one extreme as a bunker mentality is on the other.

And when you understand the presuppositions of the people who teach it, you understand people like Rick Godwin and what they're saying and what they're coming from. You see, this thing we just read here in Matthew 25 is part of something called the Olivet Discourse. Matthew 24 and 25.

You have it in Mark 13. You have it in various sections of Luke, but here the most comprehensive presentation of the Olivet Discourse. What Jesus said about the last days is Matthew 24 and 25.

He talks of the last days. These people caught up in triumphalism today are telling us that Matthew 24 and 25 are not about the last days. These things have no future meaning.

They already happened in the year 70 AD. In other words, the very passages of Scripture that the Lord Jesus gave us, so we would not be unprepared, so we would not be deceived, so we would not be foolish virgins. These people like Mr. Godwin and these other people who come to Lima are telling us are not even about the last days.

The very things Jesus gave so you and your family would not be deceived and unprepared, they're teaching them not about the last days. Now this is very, very dangerous. What these people are saying is Jesus comes to the church somehow before he comes for it, but the return of Christ is realized in the church.

Now Jesus directly warns against what these people are teaching. If they say he's in the inner rooms, don't go there. If they say he's in the wilderness, don't go there.

The Son of Man will go the way you saw him come. You understand we are living in an age of deception and spiritual seduction. In the Olivet Discourse, when the apostles ask him, what's the sign of the end? How are we going to be ready? How are we going to be prepared? How are we not going to be deceived? The first thing he warns about are false teachers, false prophets, and false messiahs, that is people with a false anointing.

The only thing a false Christ means is somebody with a false anointing. That's all it means. He warns about the things we're hearing and being taught today.

Those who heed his word will be wise virgins. Those who don't will be foolish. As anyone can read for themselves in Matthew 25, verse 32, all the nations will be gathered before him to separate one from another, as one separates sheep from goats.

Then he'll give out the rewards. That didn't happen in 70 A.D., did it? We're going to have a three-minute Bible study on how to understand prophecy from a Jewish perspective. Western Protestant hermeneutics, the way we interpret the Bible with our Western minds, is Hellenistic.

It comes from Greek civilization. It came to us from the humanism of the 16th century. That's where the Reformers imitated it.

I'm not saying it's completely wrong. I'm simply saying it's not adequate. Western way of looking at the Bible says an eschatological prophecy, or a prophecy about the return of Christ or the last days or anything like this, is that we have a prediction and a fulfillment.

Something's predicted in Scripture, and then it's fulfilled. That's what our Western minds have been taught to think. However, the minds that wrote the Bible thought of prophecy totally different.

To the Jewish worldview that wrote the Bible, prophecy is a pattern, a pattern. Multiple fulfillments. But each fulfillment is a type or a shadow of the ultimate one.

Let me explain. Let's look at the book of Daniel, chapter 7. It's about someone called Antiochus Epiphanes, who's a major type or symbol of the Antichrist. The Antichrist will replay what Antiochus did.

He slaughters a pig in the temple. He sets up a false image in the temple. And it says this in Daniel, chapter 7, verse 21.

I kept looking, and that one was waging war with the saints and overpowering them, until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the highest one. And at that time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom. When will the saints take possession of the kingdom? When the Ancient of Days comes, when Jesus returns.

The kingdom now, preachers are saying, no, the kingdom is not when he returns, the kingdom is now. You understand? Instead of thy kingdom come, they're saying thy kingdom has come, and it is us. We're going to throw back the powers of darkness and set up the kingdom on earth.

They get into all kinds of errors known as Reconstructionism, trying to turn the church into a political institution and all this kind of stuff. But Jesus said his kingdom was not this world. Now Daniel goes on to make this prediction.

He talks about something called in Aramaic, the abomination of desolation, in Daniel, chapter 9, verse 27. That literally happened about 150 years before Jesus was born. This guy named Antiochus comes and sets up an image in the temple.

Jesus knew it because the Jews celebrated the liberation of the temple with something called Hanukkah, which begins in a few weeks. And in John, chapter 10, Jesus celebrated Hanukkah. Your Bible probably calls it the Feast of Dedication.

So this already happened. But in the Arm of the Discourse, in Matthew 24, Jesus takes something that already happened and says it's going to happen again. Matthew, chapter 24, Jesus says this.

When you see the abomination of desolation, in verse 15, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, Jesus took something that already happened and said it's going to happen again. Now, the Western way of looking at the Bible will tell you there's four ways to interpret a prophecy. If you went to a theological cemetery, like I go to seminary, they'll tell you the first way is called Preterism.

You take something that already happened and write about it in the future tense and try to turn a past event into a prediction. The liberals love it. Liberal theologians can't believe there's a God anyway, and if there is, he can't know the future.

And even if he did, he wouldn't be able to tell Isaiah. So therefore, when Isaiah says that a king named Cyrus would send the Jews back to Israel after the Babylonian captivity, 200 years before Cyrus was born, that proves Isaiah didn't write Isaiah. Understand, they can't accept the supernatural, so they love Preterism.

They say that they just took things that already happened and then wrote them. They call it Inter-Vaticina, Ex-Vaticina Interpolation. That's what they're calling it.

The second is something called Historicism. It says that these events were already fulfilled in the early church and have no future meaning. The third thing they say is, the third way is polemicism.

These predictions of the last days are only really given to encourage the church at times of persecution. But the fourth way they say you can interpret it is Futurism, like Barry Smith and Hal Lindsey. It's going to happen in the future.

The Western mind says one of those four is true. It's Preterism. It already happened, and they wrote it afterwards.

It's Historicism. It really was a prophecy, but it's already fulfilled in the early church. It's polemicism.

It's just poetry to encourage the church when the church is being persecuted. Or it's going to happen in the future. To the Jewish mind, however, all four are true.

You understand? Jesus took something that already happened. He took Daniel's prediction that already happened with the Maccabees and Antiochus Epiphanes and Hanukkah, and he says it's going to happen again. So Jesus uses Preterism.

But then, in 70 AD, the temple is destroyed, as Jesus predicts. And when the temple is destroyed, if you were to read Josephus, the Romans set up pagan ensigns on the temple mount and worshiped them, symbolizing political dominion over the church, over the house of God. It was an abomination of desolation in the early church.

In the second century, the Emperor Hadrian built a city called Arolina Capitolina and put a temple of Jupiter on the temple mount. In the fourth century, Constantine's nephew, Julian the Apostate, tried to rebuild the temple, and all these mysterious fires happened. Today, if you come to Israel, you'll see on the temple mount the Mosque of Omar, the Dome of the Rock, the Gold Dome.

On the outside of it, it says, God has no son, a quotation from the Quran. Now, we're told in John's epistle that which denies the father and son relationship is Antichrist. So, there is an Antichrist on the temple mount.

Historicism is true, but ultimately, it still has to happen. Yes, polemicism is true. John wrote the book of Revelation when he was exiled on Patmos, when the church was being persecuted to encourage the church.

It did happen. It happened in the early church, but it's going to happen again. Jesus didn't come and separate the sheep from goats in 70 A.D. He didn't come and bring in God's judgment and give out the rewards in 70 A.D. These prophecies were partially fulfilled in the early church.

These people who are telling you that this stuff has no future meaning like Rick Godwin are very dangerous. If you believe that kind of doctrine, you're going to be a foolish virgin. Jesus gave us Matthew 24 and Matthew 25, so you and I will not be deceived.

These things are going to happen. The emergence of Antichrist will take place, and we're already seeing more and more signs of it. But let's look at these versions.

The wise and the foolish. The wise ones had oil for their lamps. Extra oil.

Different liquids typify or symbolize the Holy Spirit in different aspects of his ministry. As you may have heard me say already, Isaiah chapter 44, verse 3. Let's look at one of the liquids. I'll pour out my spirit on your offspring.

The Holy Spirit outpoured is typified by rain. It forms something we call in Hebrew mine hyena living water. In John chapter 7, Jesus says, I'll give you living water.

But in verse 39, it says this. He spoke of the Holy Spirit. Rain being outpoured is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit in worship is called new wine. If you want to know how the charismatic movement is going to end up, look at Isaiah 24, verse 7. Remember, after 30 years of charismatic renewal, it is not for either revival to the church or repentance to society. I believe it began as the work of God's spirit, but it was quickly compromised with experiential theology.

People basing doctrines on their own inventions instead of the word of God, and the whole thing was compromised with ecumenism in Rome and the rest of it, and it has no prospect of bringing revival. After 30 years, the charismatic renewal has not delivered what it promised. Is there less crime now than there was 30 years ago? No, there's more.

Is there less divorce now than there was 30 years ago? No, there's more. Is there less racism now in the world than there was 30 years ago? No, there's more. Less homosexuality now than 30 years ago? No, there's more.

Society is far worse off now than it was before the charismatic renewal. You find these dominionists, we're triumphant, we're taking victory, kingdom now. Are they even living in the real world? What's happened is what the Bible said, it would get worse and worse, not better and better.

So that doesn't mean it can't be a revival before Jesus comes, but it certainly does mean that if revival does come, it'll be on the basis of scripture, not their nonsense. How can this movement have revived the society when it hasn't even been able to revive the church? I live in England. We had an Anglican bishop say that you don't have to believe in the resurrection or the virgin birth to be a Christian, and two-thirds of the other bishops defended him.

We had another Anglican bishop named Derrick Rawcliffe, gave an interview to a major newspaper in England, and he said, I know some gay men are bitches, but most of us make better priests than other men because we're more sensitive. These things wouldn't have happened before the renewal, yet you'll find people in charismatic Anglican churches in England rolling on the floor laughing like hyenas, saying God's doing a great thing while their church and their society is going to the wall. The blindness of faith is like the mask of the red death.

Here's what happens. The new wine mourns, in verse 7, the vine decays, the merry-hearted sigh, the deity of the tambourine ceases, the noise of the reveler stops, and the deity of the heart comes to an end. So much for it.

What we see here, the new wine, is the Holy Spirit in worship, and it will mourn. What we have today in the body of Christ, in the charismatic movement, and so much of Pentecostalism, and I am a Pentecostal by

the way, I believe in the gift of the Spirit. What you see today is not the worship of the Lord, what you see is the worship of worship.

And the faith that's being taught is not faith in Jesus, it is faith in faith. So the third liquid is the oil. In this sense, the oil is for the lamp, the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet. Without the illumination of the Holy Spirit in your Bible teaching, you will not be able to see in the dark. Now understand why it says he comes in the night, the bridegroom comes in the night.

The night is the most frequent metaphor in Scripture for the great tribulation. Hatekufat ha-Torat Yaakov in Hebrew, the time of Jacob's trouble. Watchman, watchman, how far is the night? Is he coming in the second watch of the night or the third? He's coming like a thief in the night.

Jesus says, work while you have the light, for night will come when no man can work. You don't need much light when it's not dark out, but things are getting darker. At a time when Christians should be learning and understanding the word of God the most, they are going the further and furthest away from it in favor of experience and doctrines of their own invention.

Let me explain. Laodicea is the final church. Laodicea in Greek means people's opinions.

Man-made doctrines are replacing the truths of Scripture. Laodicea is a lukewarm, materialistic church that, because it is well-off financially and materially, is deceived into thinking it is well-off spiritually. It is Western mainstream evangelical Christianity.

Laodicea was to buy soaps to anoint its eyes that it may see. Laodicea's first problem is that it doesn't know it's Laodicea. That's its first problem.

It's the church of people's opinions. So you wind up with a gospel based on Western consumerism. We're not persecuted, so therefore you don't have to suffer.

Most Christians throughout most of history have suffered. Our freedom to be Christians and our standard of living is a historical anomaly. As I always point out, the only reason you have the standard of living and the degree of freedom you've had in Western democracies like this one is because of the influences of biblical Christianity on our foundations of culture, government, and economy.

Now that we're turning away from Christianity towards New Age religion and God knows what else, our freedom and affluence are disintegrating. That's what's underlying the decline of Western civilization more than anything else. Laodicea.

So they rewrite the gospel in light of their freedom. You don't have to suffer. Name it and claim it.

Just give us your Visa card. Phone in give us your Visa card. You can have this.

You wind up with a Western consumerist Christianity and they invent their own doctrines to accommodate it. People's opinions. Laodicea will have no oil in its lamp.

In the last days, faithfulness and understanding become very closely associated. You understand? In the last days before Jesus comes, someone's understanding of God's word will in some way be a reflection of, or a barometer of, their faithfulness to the Lord. Look at the book of Daniel.

Daniel saw things of the last days and he was told, seal these things up for it pertains to the last days. There's no new revelation, but there will be an understanding and unveiling of what's already in the Bible, what's already revealed. That's what apocalypse means.

Apocalypse is unveiling. The mysteries of the last days that you read about in books like Ezekiel, Revelation, and Daniel are sealed up to the last days. They were told to seal them up in the last days.

The Holy Spirit will illuminate those mysteries to the faithful. He'll unveil those things. But if you don't have oil in your lamp, you're not going to see in the dark.

Look what it says in Daniel chapter 12, after he's told to seal these things up. Verse 10, none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand. Daniel 11, those who have insight among the people will give understanding to the many.

Revelation, by far that you may see, where he who has wisdom counts the number of the beast. If people, if Christians, if our brethren in Christ can't see through obvious con men like Kenneth Hagan and Kenneth Copeland, what are they going to do when real deception comes? If they can't see through a meathead like Rodney Howard Brown, what are they going to do when this shows up? These people in these rainbow tide churches, the first thing you discover, ask anybody who knows them. It doesn't bother me that they're uneducated, man.

That doesn't bother me. What bothers me is they are on court in the word of God. In first Timothy chapter one, if people are on court in the word of God, they have no right whatsoever to be in Christian leadership.

These people are there by the hand of man, not the hands of God. They do not meet God's standards for being in the ministry. They don't know his word.

That's why they'll never debate a guy like Dave Hunt or Hank Hanegraaff or me. They'll never debate us because they know they'll be shown up for what they are. Empty barrels making a lot of noise.

I don't say that in arrogance. We have nothing that which we've received, but they haven't received anything. They're too filled with themselves to make room for anything God wants to give them.

If you don't have oil in your lamp, you will not see. But not only that, they needed flesh. You see, you can have the oil in your lamp, but that only burns for a certain amount of time.

When things get darker and darker, you're going to have to burn more and more oil, but they will have the oil. At a time when people should be into the word of God the most, they're going the furthest away from it. And not only that, their leaders are leading them away from it.

Look what the lies they're teaching. In America, Rick Godwin is promoted on the TVN by Paul Crouch. His wife dresses like a gaudy old hag.

She looks like an old prostitute who's too old for the games, and she comes out. When unfaithful people see this gaudiness, it discredits the gospel. You understand? When unfaithful people see this whorish-looking old woman saying this to me, it discredits the gospel.

If I was unfaithful and I thought that was Christianity, I wouldn't want to become a Christian either. And he says, we don't need doctrine. Doctrine brings division.

Well, let's look at what the word of God says. Let's look at Philippians chapter 1, verse 9. This I pray, that your love may abound still more and more and real knowledge and all discernment. We don't want doctrine.

We want love. Doctrine will bring division. The Bible says if you don't have real knowledge, you won't have real love.

If you have real love, it will be loved with true knowledge and true discernment. Where is the discernment? Where is the knowledge of God's word? It's not there. You know why? Because it's not real love.

The only love these hyper-faith preachers have is the love of money. Oil in your lamp. If you don't have it, you're going to be deceived.

If you don't have it, when Jesus comes, you will not be ready. It does not only mean individuals, but remember, brides are types of churches. You're going to have two kinds of churches before Jesus comes.

The prudent and the foolish. The ones who have the oil and the ones who are going to wish they got it when they get it was good. A time comes when it's too late to obtain it.

The time to get it is now. But when they should be getting it now, they're doing everything and anything except getting it now. They're inventing their own stuff.

With this background, let's understand what Jesus was doing. The Jews have a liturgy for the synagogue called the Siddur. But there's a special Siddur for holidays called a Makhzor.

And a Makhzor dictates certain passages of the Tanakh, the Old Testament, will be read for certain Jewish holidays. The Olivet Discourse, Matthew 24 and 25, just prior to Jesus' crucifixion, was the Jewish feast of Passover, Pesach. What was being read, and to this day, what is read in the Jewish synagogue at Pesach, at Passover? Hashir Hashirim, the song of songs, the song of Solomon.

What the Lord Jesus does in Matthew 25, is he takes what was being read in the synagogues at this particular time, and interprets it for the church. He takes what the Jews were hearing read in the synagogues at this very time, and says this is what it means. Let's look at what Jesus was talking about with the wise and the foolish virgins.

Turn with me please, to Hashir Hashirim, the song of Solomon. Let's look first of all at chapter four. We have here, poetic allegory of some kind, more metaphor actually, not allegory, of Solomon's romance with Shulamit.

Solomon typifies the Messiah, and Shulamit his bride. Look at chapter four, verse six. Now we understand from the gender and number in the Hebrew text, what's singular, what's plural, what's masculine, what's feminine, what the bride is singing to the bridegroom, what the bridegroom is singing to the bride, and what the witnesses to the relationship who correspond to the sevahot, the host of heaven, what they're singing to what they witness.

And here, the bride is being sung to by the bridegroom. Until the cooler day, when the shadows flee away, I will go my way to the mountain of Myrrh, to the hill of frankincense. Myrrh was anointing for burial.

Myrrh was anointing for burial. It's what bodies were anointed with. The persecuted church in Revelation, Smyrna, comes from the same word, the modern city of Izmir, the Christians there were terribly

persecuted.

Myrrh, anointing for burial. John 19, what did they anoint Jesus' corpse with when Nicodemus comes with Joseph, with Allos, Myrrh. He goes to the mountain of Myrrh, Mount Calvary, to die for his bride, to the hill of frankincense, to offer a sacrifice as the high priest.

You understand? Husbands, love your wives as Christ does the church in Ephesians. How did Christ love the church? How did he love his bride? He gave his life for her. A wife's submission to her husband is not based on the fact she has bigger muscles.

Her submission to her husband is that God requires him to lay his life down for her good. You know? The whole idea of the bride. Body life of the church begins with family life.

Marriage is the closest form of fellowship God has ordained. It goes back again, even sexual unity, to the creation, when we procreate. A plural God coming together, the Hebrew word bevek, kringtu, is oneness.

You're going back and replaying something of divine nature. It's the closest form of unity. I and the father are one, the husband and wife one, the same Hebrew concept of akthuth.

You understand? A pregnant woman, one person inside of another. Is it one body or is it two? Well, it's both. These things teach about the triune Godhead in different ways.

You understand? A husband, his wife, and the conceived child. All these things are images which reflect things about God's own triune nature. Trinity.

When a Christian couple have sexual relations, it is a picture of Jesus going inside of his bride, causing his bride to be fruitful. You understand? When a husband and wife who are Christians make love, it's a picture, it's a reflection of Christ going inside of the church, causing the church to be fruitful. All this stuff fits right.

Know ye not your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit? That's one of the reasons sexual sin is so serious. The husband representing Christ, he's joining the body of Jesus to a harlot. If he commits adultery, a Christian wife, her body is a temple of the Spirit.

We're told in Hebrews that the high priest, the Aaronic high priest, is a symbol of Jesus, aren't we? Hence it's the high priest entering the temple. You even think of the female anatomy. It's supposed to be a mystery.

What's on back of the hymen membrane? The same as it was supposed to be a mystery, what's on back of the curtain in the Holy of Holies? Understand? Only the high priest was supposed to know what it was like in there. Only the husband is supposed to know what it's like. It's all this kind of picture.

You understand sexual sin for what it is when you understand how important it is. We have a lot of good books on Christian marriage counseling. There are also a lot of bad ones.

But even the good ones have one flaw by and large. They don't begin with the biblical theology of marriage. I wish they would give more emphasis on understanding the doctrine of marriage.

Then you'd understand the psychology of it and the sociology of it and the sexuality of it a lot more. You'd understand these things a lot more if you began with the biblical teaching on marriage. But we have to

understand the nature of the marriage relationship and the family to understand the nature of the bride's relationship with her bridegroom, Jesus.

We studied the book of Ruth yesterday, another teaching on the bride. And we talked about how the book of Ruth is read in the Jewish synagogue on the birthday of the church. What Jews call Chag Shavuot, the Feast of Weeks, and what Christians call Pentecost.

A rich, powerful Jewish man who takes a Gentile bride and exalts her, as Jesus does, doesn't he? And we're told at the end of the book of Ruth, May Ruth, may this woman become like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built the house of Israel. You have Rachel and Leah. Why? Quite simple.

Jacob comes and he desires Rachel. But he doesn't get Rachel at first. He has to take Leah.

After he loves Leah, then he gets Rachel. In the beginning, Leah has all the babies. She is the most fruitful.

Her womb is the most fruitful. But after a while, then Rachel conceives. Jesus comes and desires a bride from Israel.

He doesn't get the bride he comes for and desires. He has to take a bride he didn't desire. But after he loves her, then he gets the bride he wanted at first, Romans 11.

And all Israel, that is the one who survived the tribulation and the one who accepts him as the Messiah, will be saved. In the beginning, the Gentile church has all the babies, so to speak. But at the end, Israel becomes a fruitful vine.

See, all this stuff fits. The book of Esther, the same. All these wedding stories teach things about the bride of Christ and the coming wedding.

So we take the Lord's supper. We proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. We proclaim his death.

We look back until he comes. We look forward. The Lord's supper is an appetizer, a foretaste of the marriage supper of the Lamb and the song of Solomon and the revelation 19.

We take the Lord's supper. Yes, we're remembering what he did, but we're looking forward to what he's going to do. It's an appetizer of the marriage supper of the Lamb, the song of Solomon, revelation.

And so it is then, the song of Solomon is being read in the synagogues and Jesus begins to explain what it means for his disciples. Not just for Peter, James and John, but for you and for me. Let's look further.

Remember, all the good women in the Bible teach something about the bride. After 700 women, Solomon must have known something about them. And he described the perfect one in his final psalm 31.

Let's look at it. Proverbs 31. 10.

An excellent wife who can find her worth is far above jewels. The heart of her husband trusts her. Jesus wants a church he can trust and he will have no lack of gain.

She does him good and not evil all the days of her life. She looks for woolen flats to make the garments of salvation and works with her hands in delight. This is Midrash, it's the Jewish way of looking at scripture.

She's like merchant ships. She brings food from afar. She rides as well as night and gives food to her household.

What is all food? It's the word of God, isn't it? She considers a field a mission field, etc. She girds herself with strength and makes her arm strong. She senses her gain is good.

Look at verse 18. What does it say? Her lamp does not go out at night. Sounds familiar.

A faithful church, the lamp will not go out when spiritual darkness comes. He's coming for a spotless bride. But let's go back now to understand what he's talking about in the Song of Solomon.

The Song of Solomon should be thought more of the way you think of Handel's Messiah or the Resurrection of Handel than you would think of it as something to read. It's not even actually poetry. We call it in poetry a shia, but the Hebrew word for poem and song is the same.

It's like a duet with then an orchestral back up to a regular background orchestration to it with the witnesses to the relationship singing the third vocal portion of the presentation. So it's a bride and a groom singing back and then with the witnesses to the romance are singing the refrain. Now the Song of Solomon is constructed around two dreams.

One dream is in chapter three and the other dream is in chapter five. The bride's best dream is chapter three. Her worst nightmare is chapter five.

The bride's best dream is in chapter three. Her worst nightmare is chapter five. When Jesus comes, it is either going to be our best dream or our worst nightmare.

I was at a Messianic fellowship the other night and we studied how the first coming of Jesus teaches about his second. How the first Christmas teaches about the coming Christmas. And we looked at not only did Herod mourn when Jesus came, but all Jerusalem mourned with him.

God's people really didn't want Jesus to come. That's going to be true when he comes back. Those who are called by his name aren't going to want him to come.

Only the faithful remnant. Let's look in chapter three. Let's look at it.

Please share a scripture, a Bible if you don't have one. As I always say, the reason the church, the first and foremost reason the church is in the mess it's in today is because people are not reading their Bibles. They're listening to tapes without checking out what the preachers are saying for themselves.

We need to be like the Bereans and examine everything. Don't take my words for anything. You can trust me to the exact extent that I trust Jesus.

You can follow me to the exact extent I follow Jesus. You can agree with what I say to the exact extent it agrees with his words, not a bit more. On my bed, night after night, I saw him whom I so loved.

I saw him but did not find him. I must arise now and go about the city in the streets and in the squares. I must speak to him whom I so loved.

I saw him but I didn't find him. Remember the betrothal happens and she's waiting for him to come back. Now he's gone to prepare a place for her.

Where is he? When is he coming? When is he coming? She knew about the time he would come, but she couldn't know the exact day or hour. Do you understand? We know about the time Jesus will come, but we're never going to know the exact time. The Son of Man comes at an hour you do not expect.

The watchman who makes the rounds in the city found me and I said, have you seen him whom I so love? A watchman could also be a figure of prophecy, but they're true and false prophecies. Justly have I left them when I found him whom I so loved. I held on to him and would not let him go until I brought him to the house of my mother, into the room of her who conceived me.

That is confirmation of the relationship and so on. All this happens. She desperately wants her lover to come.

She wants to get married. She wants to be one with this guy. She wants to be one heart.

She wants to be one flesh. She wants to be with this guy forever. That's everything is focused on it.

Find a young woman who's in love. She's engaged. She's going to get married.

Everything. She might be at work. She might be in university.

She might be out shopping, but she's always thinking I'm getting married soon and all of her thoughts are focused on the coming wedding and honeymoon, etc. So here's her best dream. She wants this bridegroom to come and she's all ready.

Let's look at her worst nightmare. The Song of Solomon uses metaphor. It describes sexual contact and sexual activity through poetic metaphor.

I've come into my garden and all this kind of stuff. My sister, my bride, I've gathered my myrrh along with my balsam. I've eaten my honeycomb and my honey.

This is his bachelor's party, I suppose. I've drunk my wine and my milk. Eat friends, drink and invite deeply old lovers.

She's getting ready to come for the bride now. Verse two. Here's her next dream.

I was asleep, but my heart was awake. A voice! Behold, my beloved was knocking. Open to me, my sister, my darling, my dove, my perfect one.

She does a monogamous verse. My perfect one. For my head is drenched with dew, my rocks with the damp of the night.

He comes in the night, but then the gender changes and what does she say? I've taken off my dress. How can I put it on again? The wedding's on. I've washed my feet.

How can I make them dirty again? Harry, it's three o'clock in the morning. What an hour to get married. I'm exhausted.

I was waiting for you at nine o'clock. I was all dressed up and you weren't here. I put on my match back there, my fancy lingerie from Paris.

I have my wedding dress. Everything was set up. Where were you? Come back tomorrow.

I'm not getting out of bed now. Isaiah 29. A time comes when the bed of the flesh is too short to stretch out on.

My feelings were out for him. I arose to open to my beloved. Look at verse five.

And my hand drips with myrrh. Now she is anointed for burial. Yes, there will be a persecution of the church even before Jesus comes.

But not my view of what's going to happen to those who are left. Let's watch. Open to my beloved on the hands of the boat.

But my beloved had turned in God. Isn't that Matthew 25? That's exactly what was being read in the synagogue when Jesus explains the wise and foolish version. My beloved turned away.

He's gone. My heart went out to him as he spoke. I searched for him, but I couldn't find him.

Pretty difficult to see in the night. I called him, but he didn't answer me. The watchman who makes the rounds in the city found me.

They struck me and wounded me. You see that? Persecution. Do you see that? The guardsman of the wall took away my soul from me.

I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that you find my beloved as to what you will tell him, for I am sick. But the refrain is constant. Do not awaken my love until she pleases.

Over and over. Do not awaken my love until she pleases. We're not waiting for Jesus to come back.

He's waiting for us to be ready. What does it say in Luke? When the crops permit, the Lord of the harvest sends the harvesters. We're not waiting for the harvesters.

The harvesters are waiting for the crop. We're not waiting for Jesus to come back. He's waiting for us to repent and get ready.

Put on our wedding garment. That's what he's waiting for. Now it's true he's forbearing because he wants more people to be saved.

That's true. He's waiting for us. Do not awaken my love until she pleases.

No man wants a bride who doesn't want him unless he's out of his mind. Who wants a woman like that? Think about it. She's come and gone.

That's her worst nightmare. When Jesus comes, it'll be our best dream. It'll be our worst nightmare.

It'll be chapter three or it'll be chapter five. We'll find out who's the wise virgin and we're going to find out who are the foolish. Think about a bride to be in love.

Her husband has gone away for a year in the merchant navy or something like that. She doesn't know the exact day he's coming back but she knows approximately the time that she's trying to count the days. Every day she's at the mailbox.

Is there an aragram? Is there a letter? Is there anything from him? Is there any contact? Is there any post from my beloved? This guy I love so much I want to spend forever with. Is there any letters from him? Suppose you had a bride to be who says, oh electric bill. Oh there's a water bill.

Oh my voter registration. Oh for my fiancé. But she really loves him.

She's going to read every letter he writes. She's going to ponder every sentence. Every word.

What does he mean by this? What's he trying to tell me? You see the bridegroom is sending letters to his bride every day. He's telling her how much he loves her and desires to be with her every day. He's telling her how he's preparing a place for her every day.

He's telling her how he's getting ready to come and get her every day. He's telling her the things she needs to do to prepare for her wedding every day. But she doesn't even want to open his letters.

She doesn't even want to read them now. We want Leo to see her. We want people's opinions.

We want man's doctrines. We want experience. We want everything and anything except what we need the most.

That's reality friends. That's Leo to see. That's mainstream western protestant evangelical Christianity.

That is suburban middle class protestant Christianity. Evangelical version of it. So as a faithful remnant in Leo to see her and as a faithful remnant today.

But one characteristic of the faithful remnant is that she's a bride who reads her mail. She wants to oil in her lamp. She wants to know what her beloved is saying to her.

When is he coming? When are we going to get married? When's the wedding? When's the honeymoon? We're going to have children. We're going to live together. Everything's focused on that.

It's supposed to be. But it isn't. It's the wise and the foolish.

It's those who have the oil and those who don't. You see all these people who are caught up in these crazy churches with the hype and manipulation and sucking money out of people and false doctrine and Kingdom Now and ecumenism and the rest of it. A time is going to come when they're going to find out they were wrong.

But it'll be too late. Don't try to get the oil, but it'll be too late. The time to get it is now.

The time to open the post is now. The time to acquire the oil is now. The time to have the wedding garments ready are now.

Notice all the virgins slept. Work while you have a light. Night will come when no man can work.

An age will come when the Holy Spirit will be taken from this world. But those who really want to get married will be all prepared. Everything will be packed up and ready to go.

Think of somebody who has to get up in the early morning and catch a flight. Have to catch a flight somewhere. And they're tired and have to go to sleep and get a few hours sleep before they go to the airport and they go to the taxi to pick them up at 5.30 to catch a flight at 6.30. But very quickly they've got

their toothbrush and razor already, right? And their suitcases are already packed.

And the clothes they're going to put on are just hanging next to the bed. And bang, as soon as the alarm goes off, that's it, you're off. If you really want to get to where you're going.

That's the way it is. That's the way it was in the Song of Solomon. That's the way it was in Matthew 25.

And that's the way the Lord Jesus said it's going to be when he comes. It's going to be our best dream. It's going to be our worst nightmare.

We're going to have oil in our lamps or else our lamps are going to go out at night. My prayer for you people, for your families and for your fellowships will be that you will be wise virgins. God bless you and thank you.

Now just a moment, please. Don't clap. This is an adjunct.

It is not no church. It is good church. I know a lot of you people have come out of the heights of faith heresy.

You've come out of the heart of Christianity. I know some of you people have been spiritually and psychologically abused by false shepherds. And because you've been hurt and ripped off and conned and abused, you're very skeptical about trusting anybody again.

That is understandable. But the solution to bad shepherds is not no shepherds, it's good shepherds who have the God's own heart, who lay the life down for the sheep. This particular fellowship has a call from God.

A people without a vision perish. In Ramah, they don't have a vision. They have a hallucination.

You people can have a vision. Every revival that has ever happened in the history of the Western world had certain characteristics. Westley's revivals in Britain were a good example.

They were educated middle class people who became the servants of the working classes and the disenfranchised. Most of you people are like myself, educated middle to upper middle class background people from professional and business classes. Most of you have had the experience of false doctrine, false teaching, being conned, seeing the hype and manipulation, etc.

The mainstream charismatic and Pentecostal church in this country has gone nowhere and it's going there even faster. There are three things I can promise you in light of Toronto and ecumenism and all this nonsense. The first thing I can promise you is that God would not allow this kind of deception and seduction to happen to his son's body without raising up credible and audible voices against it.

Not a voice, but voices. Those voices may not be listened to, but they will be heard. Remember God told Jeremiah and Ezekiel, tell them anyway, even though they don't listen.

The second thing I can promise you is this. There will always be the 7,000 who have not bowed the knee to bow and make no mistake, these people in Toronto are worshipping a golden calf. Come tomorrow night and we'll show you the videos and we'll explain it to you exactly what they're doing.

There will always be a faithful remnant. There was a faithful remnant of Israel, and there's a faithful remnant of the church. The third thing I can promise you is if that faithful remnant really seeks God, he'll do a new thing to replace these other things with something that's genuinely of his spirit, based on his word.

I believe, in fact, I'm convinced that God, that God wants to give this nation one more chance to repent before Jesus comes. God wants to do that. Whether or not it'll happen is something else, but God wants to do it.

This church can be a platform for launching the new thing, if you people will really lay your lives down and seek the Lord. The solution to this manipulative fundraising of these lies and name it and claim it, is not stop giving. The solution is give biblically.

I'm not talking even about prizing, I'm talking about the principle. The solution to bad leaders is not no leaders, it's good leaders. The solution to false doctrine is not no doctrine, but true doctrine.

Understand, you people are mostly educated, middle class, professional, and business people. Where much is given, much will be required. Someday we're going to stand before Jesus and give a count.

Now it says in the epistle of James, chapter 3, verse 1, let few of you be teachers, for teachers will be judged more strictly than the rest. I know that when I stand before the Lord Jesus, he's going to hold me more accountable than he does most of you, because if it's true I have the gift of teaching, I'm more accountable. I have to accept that.

You have to accept that your affluence, your experience, your social position, are things that you are stewards of, that God has given to you for his purpose, to establish the covenant, it says in Deuteronomy 8. Your church should begin to create a place of refuge for the people who are being damaged and disillusioned by what's going on and all this nonsense. You should create a place of refuge for those people. In time, your church should begin planting other churches throughout South Africa that'll create places of refuge.

Because these people have discredited the gospel with their money-grubbing, slimeball perversion of the truth. Unsafe people don't want to get saved, they think it's a con job. And frankly, I don't blame them.

It takes people who will preach a true, pure gospel, only motivated by a love for Jesus and a burden for the lost, they can preach a true one. Those guys are finished. This cheap, great, put-your-hands-up stuff, forget about it.

God wants to do something new. One of the worst aspects of what the prosperity preachers are doing is this. It says in Proverbs that he who exploits the poor is a reproach to his maker.

They are taking uneducated people and conning them. It is bad enough when you steal from the haves. It is bad enough when you take from the haves.

It is worse when you take from the have-nots. And it is worse still when you pervert and corrupt and twist the Word of God to do it. You understand? You can have a vision.

This fellowship can amount to something that goes beyond this little room in this school, whatever it is. God is willing. The calling is there.

God has a vision for you. The question is, what do you want to do about it? God bless you.

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