



# 2025 Allusions, Images, Symbols: How to Study Bible Prophecy Lesson 3 Images From Marriage

by Tim Jennings

## SABBATH

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Read the second paragraph,

- Modern conceptions of love and marriage have skewed our ability to appreciate what God is trying to teach us through the marital covenant. Though human sinfulness has greatly perverted marriage (and just about everything else), marriage can still be a powerful way of revealing truth, even prophetic truth. More than just to make us happy, marriage should be a school in which we learn deep lessons about ourselves and our relationship to God. *Adult SS Guide 2<sup>nd</sup> Q 2025, Allusions, Images, Symbols: How to Study Bible Prophecy*, p. 22.

Multiple points in this paragraph worthy of exploration.

Let's start with a description of our understanding of God's original design and intent for marriage?

- Between one male and one female
- Established upon mutual love and trust, thus healthy marriages require trustworthiness, which requires truthfulness, honesty, love, maturity, willingness to learn
- Relationship built upon God's design laws of not only truth and love, but also liberty, respecting the individuality and autonomy of the spouse
- Healthy relationships require healthy people. God's original design was in perfection with perfect health in all aspects of human experience.
- A joining of hearts and minds in mutual love, partnership, commitment, devotion, loyalty, trust, and friendship—an intertwining and entangling of soul and spirit with uniting in love to share their love physically in producing beings in their own image.
- A relationship in which both parties celebrate the other and find joy, reward, pleasure in doing objective good for the other, helping the other, building up the other, sharing experiences with the other, promoting the welfare, development, growth, and advancement of the other.
- Coequals in authority, neither ruling over the other.
- While equal in authority, God purposely designed husband and wife different, but complementary, attributes and qualities which when united in love and trust result in the two becoming more and achieving more than either one could alone. Together their entire being expands, in ability, experience, and development.
  - Together they can procreate
  - Together they can grow in love, compassion, empathy, and know the joy of the impact love has on another and they can experience the joy of being loved by another.

- Together they can share differing perspectives, insights, questions, ideas, and grow in areas of personal development that neither would have on their own
- Together, joining their strengths, they can accomplish more than either could by themselves
- Together they can challenge each other's ideas with new insights, creativity, and inspiration motivating development of mind

Other aspects of God's original design?

How has sin skewed our understanding of marriage and God's purpose for marriage?

- Sin broke the circle of love and trust causing fear and selfishness to become the primary motivation, the primary animating power, in Adam and Eve. Their spirits became corrupted, contaminated, defiled, unclean with fear and selfishness and this resulted in their running and hiding from God and seeking to save themselves, covering over their nakedness with leaves.
  - In the context of marriage, the fear and selfishness caused Adam to blame Eve and Eve to blame God. Instead of motivation to love God and others, they naturally now are motivated to protect self, even if it hurts the other.
  - Thus, in fear and selfishness, the stronger partner will, without God's grace changing the heart, dominate the weaker partner and the weaker partner will submit to the stronger as a means of finding protection and security in an unsafe and threatening world. And marriages became damaged. And God announced this after they became infected with fear and selfishness.
- Fear and insecurity cause codependency relationships rather than love relationships, relationships based on what one feels like they need to make themselves feel whole, a relationship built on taking rather than giving, driven by fear of loss, abandonment, rejection, rather than love.
- Marriages built on falsehoods, in which people pretend to be something they are not because their fear causes them to doubt anyone could love them if they really knew them so people try to hide the things about themselves they dislike the most, but this leads to conflict, control, manipulation and lack of trust ultimately destroying love in a marriage.
- Polygamy
- Marriages in which betrayal occurs, where partners are untrustworthy in character and are not willing to take ownership and mature
- Marriages in which abuse occurs
- Marriages as a legal contract rather than uniting two people in love and trust
- Cohabitation without marriage
- Marriages between people of the same sex
- Women treated like property in many cultures throughout history
- Backlash against the mistreatment of women in which healthy masculinity is called toxic and men are feminized and emasculated
- All attacks on human sexuality, pornography, prostitution, fertility cult worship, virtual relationships, and of course the lie that precious souls who are struggling with issues of identity and body dysmorphia are somehow in the wrong biological body. In other words, promoting

the lie that gender is just a choice of one's internal feelings, rather than recognizing the truth that anyone confused about their gender is a precious soul to be loved, not attacked, but their confusion is evidence of a mental health problem not a physiological problem of their sex.

- By their own definition the trans community claim that something is wrong with them that needs fixing. I agree they have a problem that needs healing, but it is not their biological sex, it is their sense of self. Dressing up a man to look like a woman does not create a woman.
- We would never allow a blind person to tell us what a rainbow looks like, or a deaf person to tell us what a violin sounds like, why are we allowing these confused people to tell us anything about normal human sexuality? We should not for if we do it will cause damage to the minds of all who submit their thinking to the distortions of God's design for humanity.
- And the science shows that when so-called gender affirming care is given to these people it worsens mental health, increased depression and anxiety and suicidality all worsen. As I have said regarding all mental health problems, if the diagnosis is wrong then the treatment will be wrong, and things will get worse. And that is what the evidence demonstrates and it is completely predictable. If you want reference for this I have included the link to a recent study of over 100,000 people documenting these findings. <https://academic.oup.com/jsm/advance-article-abstract/doi/10.1093/jsxmed/qdaf026/8042063>
- Other damages to marriage?

And do these corruptions to marriage, that have resulted from the corruption of the hearts with fear and selfishness, cause any misunderstandings about God and our relationship with Him?

Wasn't it true that before Adam and Eve sinned, that Adam was physically stronger than Eve? Yes, and did his greater physical strength in anyway, before sin, change the balance of authority between them or undermine Eve's ability to trust? Or, before sin, were they still co-equals true partners neither to rule over the other? Why wasn't Adam's physical strength a problem for their relationship? Why wasn't Eve intimidated by his greater physical strength? Because the quality of the relationship is not built on physical strength, it is built on love and trust and Adam was trustworthy and loved her perfectly—before sin.

Is there a lesson in this for our relationship with God?

While it is true God is supreme, omnipotent, infinite in power and knowledge and we will never become God, does that mean God wants to rule over us in a authoritarian way, does God want us to be intimidated by His power, to relate to Him out of fear of what He will do to us if we mess up? How can we not relate to God in this way if He is all powerful? What prevents us from being fearful and terrified of such a powerful being? Isn't it the truth about His character of love as manifested in the life of Jesus? Hasn't God proven that He would rather let us kill Him than to use His power to stop us? Isn't He safe with all the power? And hasn't He showed us that the reason He would rather do this is because He is love and love only exists in freedom?

Does God want us to be joined in relationship with Him in a way, let me say this carefully—We are never to become God, we are never to presume we are God and will never have the full powers of God, but does God want to be joined in relationship with us in a way that we are treated and function as equals, as real friends, as God originally designed Adam and Eve to function?

Does the Bible give any evidence of this?

- Husbands, love your wives, just as **Christ loved the church** and gave himself up for her **to make her holy, cleansing her** by the washing with water through the word, and **to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.** In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as **Christ does the church**—for we are members of his body. “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” **This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.** Ephesians 5:25–32 NIV84, emphasis mine.

Does Jesus treat the church as part of Himself, love the church more than self, and seek to elevate, exalt, uplift His followers? And to where does Jesus seek to uplift His followers?

- To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne. Revelation 3:21 NIV84.
- Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. Revelation 4:4 NIV84

Do we believe that the saved will be treated as equals, united in love with Christ, or do we view heaven as a place of subordination, living under law and imperial authority, living in fear of rule-breaking and legal punishment? Or perhaps lemmings, mindless drones, who don't think but do what the sovereign says?

Does Christ really want us to relate to Him like godly spouses are to relate to each other?

If so, what does this mean in regard to what salvation is? If Christ's goal is to have humans relate to Him like Adam and Eve were to relate to each other in Eden, then what is required to achieve this?

Is the obstacle to this unity God's anger and wrath, and therefore is salvation getting God to have a kinder more friendly attitude toward us? Or is the obstacle to this unity a legal on in the court system of heaven and so to achieve this godly unity requires a heavenly marriage license, to get a legal pardon entered into your record in heaven? Or does restoration of this unity require winning rebellious humans back to trust and healing the damage in our hearts and minds?

How does God do this? What means, mechanism, processes are used by God?

Can a man win a woman who he wants to be his wife to genuine love and trust by imposing laws and threatening to punish her if she breaks his rules?

Can God win people to love and trust by imposing laws the threatening to inflict punishments for breaking his laws?

How does a man win a woman to be a loving and trustworthy spouse?

Doesn't he have to spend time with the woman who herself must freely choose to spend time with him?

And what is the only action a Christlike man can take if a woman refuses to respond to his invitations, requests to spend time, expressions of love and instead rejects him completely? And what happens to all humans who reject God's love, refuse to spend time with Him, and harden themselves against Him—what does God do?

## SUNDAY

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The title of the lesson is One Flesh, what does this mean?

- A man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, **and they will become one flesh**. Genesis 2:24 NIV84, emphasis mine

What does this mean? How did they become one flesh? Were they Siamese / Cojoined twins? Were they the same individual? Or were they two individuals that somehow are united? How are they one? Is this only talking about physical sex or something much more?

What did Jesus say is life eternal? That we come to know Him and His Father (John 17:3), because when we come into a genuine experiential knowledge of God we discover He loves us and is trustworthy and this brings us to the point of decision, do we choose to trust Him as eleven of the apostles did, or do we choose to reject and despise Him as Judas did? And when we choose to trust Him, we open the heart and He enters bringing His Spirit which transforms us.

And then Jesus prayed to His Father,

- “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that **all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you**. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, **that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me**. May they be brought to **complete unity** to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. John 17:20-23 NIV84, emphasis mine.

What does this mean? How do all of us become one and have Jesus and the Father in us? What kind of oneness is this?

And when the husband and wife have formed a love relationship, they become one flesh, are united in heart and mind, and there is a uniting of flesh—what happens as God designed in this unity? They bring about new life.

And this physical joining of husband and wife that brings forth new life is a different type of joining, of connecting, of bonding, of uniting than we have in any other relationship. If done as God designed, after the hearts and minds are united in love and trust—then there is a deep bonding that occurs that goes beyond just the bonds of other human love, a unity of spirit, of mind, heart, purpose, and a sharing of their physical selves to produce beings in their image, which further unites them in common purpose of parenting their offspring, which as God designed, results in growth in their character and deeper bonds of love, appreciation, and trust of each other.

What about when we are united with God and become one with Him, what happens? We are reborn, a new life comes forth that bears the image of God, because God has planted His seed, the seeds of truth and love, in us!

- He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to **destroy the devil's work**. No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because **God's seed remains in him**; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. 1 John 3:8-9 NIV84

What has Satan been working to do? Humans were created in the image of God. We are designed to be like Him in character, method, principle, spirit, to have the spirit of love and trust be the animating energy that motivates us to action such that we develop fruits/character of the Spirit and look like our heavenly Father.

Satan has been working to corrupt the image of God in humans and place his likeness in humanity so that we bear the image of Satan. He does this by the lies we believe about God that breaks the circle of love and trust and corrupts our spirits with fear and selfishness. And as we are animated, motivated, live and move from the energy and power of fear and selfishness we form beliefs, values, methods and character that are like Satan's. But, when we are won back to trust and open ourselves in trust, in faith to God, like a woman who opens herself in love and trust to a trustworthy husband, God enters our heart via His Spirit and plants His seed, His new life, the spirit of love and trust and we are reborn with a new motivation, a new spirit, and we begin to produce the fruits of that new life and develop a character like Christ's and thus we are children of God.

- Because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. Romans 8:14 NIV84

We receive through trust in God a new life, a new animating energy, that we choose to respond to and act upon and we are transformed to be restored to true image bearers of God.

So, what does it mean to have God's seed in us?

- “The **time is coming**,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a **new covenant** with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though **I was a husband to them**,” declares the Lord. “**This is the covenant** I will make with the house of Israel **after that time**,” declares the Lord. “**I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts**. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘**Know the LORD**,’ because they will all **know me**, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the Lord. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.” Jeremiah 31:31–34 NIV84, emphasis mine.

Notice the significance of this passage—these are the saved, which know God, which, as Jesus said, is life eternal, and what do they have? The law of God written upon their hearts and mind, which is God's seed, God's living law of love is placed within bringing a new life that begins to grow within the believer.

And this is describe in another way,

- Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? 1 Corinthians 3:16

God's Spirit is the seed or life of God that is implanted in us and brings us a new life, the life of Christ and we become children of God who bear His image. But this is also described as being a temple where God lives.

Can you think of some aspect of the theatrical sanctuary service which enacts this aspect of the plan of salvation, the aspect of God's Spirit bringing people into wedded unity with Jesus?

What happens at a wedding—the two become one, and is there a part of the sanctuary service where oneness happens? The day of At-one-ment is the time in history when Jesus is married to His bride, which means it is the time in history when the people of God collectively are matured, are healed, are settled by the Spirit of truth and love into eternal loyalty and trustworthiness to Jesus. They are settled both intellectually and spiritually so that nothing can move them from their loyalty to Jesus. This is the time in which we are living today!

Our memory text for this week is,

- Then the angel said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!’ ” And he added, “These are the true words of God.” Revelation 19:9 NIV84.

What is the difference between the wedding and the wedding supper? The wedding supper is the celebration that occurs after the wedding, it is the celebration that occurs after the second coming. The

wedding is the union, the joining, the bonding, the settling into heart loyalty to Jesus that we become one with Him before He comes. The supper is the celebration that occurs after He comes.

If you would like a comprehensive review of all of this with biblical references, please read our magazine [The Wedding of Christ to His Bride](#) which is available online at our website, you can download a pdf, read it online, or request free copies to be shipped to any US postal address, but it is also available in Australia and South Africa.

So if being married to Jesus means accepting into our hearts the truth and love of Jesus through His Spirit such that we are reborn and mature to a committed bride that has the fruits of a Christlike character, bear His image, and are united with Him being so settled into the truth both intellectually and spiritually that we cannot be moved, then what then would constitute adultery? And what is prostitution?

Revelation states,

- “Come, I will show you the punishment of the great prostitute, who sits on many waters. With her the kings of the earth committed adultery and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries.” Revelation 17:1-2 NIV84

Adultery is betrayal, taking into oneself someone other than one’s spouse. And in this case, it is taking into one’s heart the seeds or principles or laws, methods and practices of someone other than Christ, such that these people live lives that don’t give birth to the fruits of the Spirit and Christlikeness of character, but instead give birth to a beastly character that bear the image of Satan.

And what is prostitution? Selling oneself for money. Thus, the adulterous woman described in Revelation is not merely betraying her declared spouse, she is selling herself for profit. This is not referring to the godless who deny a belief in God, but those who claim Jesus as their Savior, those who claim Jesus as their husband but who instead implant into their heart the methods, practices, principles, and laws of Satan and do so for profit, whether personal profit or institutional profit, whether the profit of money, or power, or position, or domination and control over others.

And while the righteous woman is also described as a temple, living stones built together in a house for the Lord, the wicked, who internalize Satan’s seed of fear, selfishness, imposed laws and coercion of others become his temple and bear his image,

- I know the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Revelation 2:9 NIV84

What does it mean to be a synagogue of Satan? To have internalized his seed and bear his image and then you are his child, as Jesus said to the Jews in John 8, that Satan was their father.

Read second paragraph,



- On an occasion when Jesus was speaking to the Pharisees, He quoted the Genesis account of Adam and Eve’s marriage, to which the Pharisees quickly raised the question, “ ‘Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?’ ” (Matt. 19:7, NKJV). *Adult SS Guide 2<sup>nd</sup> Q 2025, Allusions, Images, Symbols: How to Study Bible Prophecy, p. 23.*

From whom did the divorce instructions come? Moses was the one through whom the people received these instructions, but did these instructions originate with Moses or was he giving the instructions that God told him to give? These instructions came from God, but God says in Malachi 2:16 that He hates divorce, yet He gave them instructions on how to divorce, why?

Jesus answered, because of the hardness of their hearts—what does this mean?

A good analogy is doctors amputating limbs. Doctors hate to amputate limbs, but doctors still do it in certain circumstances and have specific guidelines and rules about when and how to do it. Why if doctors hate doing it do they not only do it but have specific guidelines and rules on how to do it?

Limbs get amputated when gangrene occurs, because if the dead limb isn’t removed it spreads and infects the rest of the body leading to death. Gangrene occurs when blood flow is obstructed. Doctors would rather restore blood flow and save the limb, but if that is not possible then better to lose the limb and save the life.

Divorce happens when hearts harden and love no longer flows between the spouses and it is better to end a toxic, abusive, destructive marriage to save the individuals who still have tender hearts that are slowly being destroyed, then to keep the connection that is destroying them. But it would be better to restore love into the hearts and heal the marriage.

Read the bottom pink section,

- Here are three principles for marriage. First, forgive your spouse, however undeserving, just as Christ forgives us, however undeserving. Second, accept your spouse, faults and all, just as Christ accepts us, faults and all. Third, just as Christ put us before Himself, put your spouse before yourself. How could all three of these gospel-based principles help us not only to understand how God relates to us but also to help any marriage? *Adult SS Guide 2<sup>nd</sup> Q 2025, Allusions, Images, Symbols: How to Study Bible Prophecy, p. 23.*

What do you think of these three principles?

Hmmm...I believe these principles are listed with good intention and desire to be a blessing, yet if implemented as listed will almost certainly harm rather than heal.

Let me tell you about Kate. She came to see me distraught, fearful, anxious. Her husband had just cheated on her for the sixth time. Each of the first five times when she found out she threw him out and he ran to her pastor, fell down and cried, told the pastor he had committed a terrible sin, that he

had asked Jesus to forgive him, but his wife had thrown him out. Each time the pastor took him and they went to Kate and the pastor said to Kate,

“The Lord has forgiven you for your sins, and we are told that we are forgiven as we forgive those who have sinned against us. Can’t you forgive your husband?” And he said, “Jesus accepts us as with all our faults, can’t you accept your husband despite his faults? And Jesus puts us before Himself, can’t you put your husband first?”

And so each of the first five times she took him back, and each time he cheated again. And this time she is in my office distressed and anxious because she is expecting a visit from the pastor.

Is this advice to forgive, accept, and put the husband first as stated in the lesson and applied in the scenario above godly and helpful or is it harmful? Why? What is the problem, what is missing?

Truth, objective reality! Forgiving someone doesn’t change them, it doesn’t make them trustworthy and for a marriage to work, to be successful, it must have trust. Kate’s husband is not trustworthy. Yes, she needs to forgive him in her heart so that she can heal, so she won’t be embittered. But, she needs to throw him out and divorce him because he is unfit to fulfill the role of husband and to stay with him is destructive to all parties, to herself, but also to her husband. And this brings us to the second point.

She should not accept her husband with all his fault, she should love him enough to stand up to him and say that his infidelity is searing his conscience, warping his character, hardening his heart and she loves him too much to accept this as part of his character and she will not give approval by staying with him. And in doing this she is putting his eternal welfare before herself.

Thus Kate forgave him and divorced him.

These types of principles applied without the truth, without understanding design law, reality, how sin injures and harms the sinner can lead good-hearted people into positions in which they are not only exploited, but they actually collude with the pathology and promote the sin and the destruction of the one they love.

## **TUESDAY**

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Read third paragraph,

- God’s choice for words makes it seem obvious that he is not only trying to show us what we’ve done wrong but also sharing how it makes Him feel. Those who have been betrayed by a spouse can begin to grasp the feelings of devastation that our infidelity to Christ might stir in the courts of heaven. Perhaps the most amazing part of Hosea’s story is the lengths to which the prophet went to redeem his wayward wife. *Adult SS Guide 2<sup>nd</sup> Q 2025*, Allusions, Images, Symbols: How to Study Bible Prophecy, p. 25.

Most Bible scholars agree that Hosea was a real person, these events are historical, and that God directed Hosea to do this as a lived-out object lesson for us. What are the lessons we learn from the life of Hosea and his wife?

- Hosea would be enacting or taking the role of God and Gomer, his wife, would be taking the part of fallen human beings.

What lessons do we learn from this?

Is the lesson about showing us what we have *done* wrong or about what *is* wrong? And what the solution is to the problem?

What came first in the life of Hosea and Gomer, their marriage, or her prostitution?

Which comes first in every human life, our being united in marriage with Jesus or our sinfulness, our fear, selfishness, and having other priorities and loyalties more important than Jesus?

Is the problem for Hosea that he married a loyal, mature, faithful, healthy in heart, mind, and spirit wife, or he married a seriously damaged, broken, insecure wife who felt so ugly and dirty about herself she couldn't believe anyone would really love her?

Do we really think that before Hosea marries Gomer that she would have thought what she was doing was good, righteous, holy, mature, that her prostitution caused her to be ennobled? Or did she know it was not good, not healthy, not elevating, not restorative but destructive?

So was Hosea, in marrying Gomer, intended to show Gomer what she was doing wrong? No, she already knew this. Then is the object lesson primarily about showing humans what we are doing wrong? No, it is about what *is* wrong, for every one of us already knows that we *do* wrong, but we don't all know what *is* wrong. Why do we do wrong? Because of what is wrong, and what is wrong is the condition of our hearts and minds.

We are born in sin conceived in iniquity Psalm 51:5. Did you or anyone you know ever choose to **become** a sinner? No, we are all born with this terminal sin condition of fear and selfishness. Why? Because Adam and Eve chose to implant the seeds of lies, fear, distrust, selfishness into their beings at the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil—they chose to know the evil, rather than choosing to implant the seeds of God, of love, trust, loyalty, devotion, and truth into their hearts and thus know good. Had they done that they would have been united in the bonds of marriage to God as sinless beings, but they chose instead betrayal and became infected with fear and selfishness and all of us are born with this infection of our spirits.

Consider and HIV infected man and woman get together and have a baby born HIV infected, what did the baby do wrong? Nothing! The baby has no guilt for its condition, but the baby still has a terminal condition that without remedy will manifest various symptoms ultimately resulting in death. That is

the condition of every one of us, we are born with a condition that without remedy will have various symptoms and ultimately result in death.

This is the story of Hosea, he marries a prostitute, a person who has imbedded into practice, into heart, into method and motive, into character, fear, selfishness, betrayal, disloyalty, and inability to love and trust. And such attributes bear fruit. Her disloyalty to Hosea is the fruit, the natural result, the outgrowth of the seeds she has planted into her heart throughout her life before she married Hosea. Thus the problem isn't what she is doing, what she is doing is the fruit of the problem, the fruit of who she is.

She needs to be converted, changed, transformed, and the relationship with Hosea is the means whereby she can experience the truth, not of what wrong she has done in the past, but the truth of who she is—a child of God who is loved and who in God's plan, vision, ideal deserves a better life. But that better life is only possible through her being transformed within.

She needs is to have her spirit of fear and selfishness replaced with a spirit of love and trust and love and trust cannot be restored into a person through law, through legal declaration, through a marriage license, through another person having love in their heart, through power, might, control, it can only be restored by truth presented in love that is then experienced, chosen, and accepted by the person.

Hosea acts the role of God, who is love and truth and God acts to take a broken and damaged wife for the purpose of pouring His healing truth and love into the lives of all who accept Him as Savior and spouse, and despite our brokenness, the truth and love of God for us manifested over time, and especially after our biggest betrayals—like David's sin with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah, or Peter's public denial of Christ with cursing—is when we are fully exposed and no longer able to pretend to ourselves that we are not this sick in heart and it is then that we see Jesus, His love, His patience, His kindness, His concern for us that we are finally won to love and trust, die to self and are reborn with a new heart and right spirit and genuine healing begins and we come into true unity with Jesus.

And with this reality-based, design-law, understanding of the problem in mind, we can now understand and comprehend the second part of the paragraph, that is understanding the impact our infidelity has on Christ in the heavenly courts.

The lesson suggests we consider those who have suffered betrayal here on Earth by their spouse and what they would have felt or experienced in order to grasp the feelings of those in heaven.

But this is flawed logic, because most humans who have been betrayed, because of our weakness, insecurities, struggles with fear and selfishness almost always have a reflexive reaction of personal hurt, anger, outrage, with concerns about how the betrayal hurts them, how self has been wronged.

But Jesus is not concerned with self. Jesus can certainly feel the pain of loss when those He loves rejects Him, but heaven's primary pain is not "How could you betray me?" It is not concern with self; it is concern with what sin does to us. Jesus' primary concern when anyone rejects or betrays Him is how can you do this to yourself, "don't you realize that your rejection of me, your betrayal, your going

after other gods sears your conscience, hardens your heart, warps your character, and destroys your soul—O, don't you realize how much I love you and because you are hurting yourself so badly, my heart grieves for you." As Jesus prayed at His crucifixion, "Father forgive them they don't know what they are doing...They think they are killing me, they are really destroying their own souls."

This is the reality of what sin does and why God hates it. And the book of Hosea documents this, the prophet wrote,

- My people are obsessed with turning away from me; they call to Baal, but he will never exalt them! How can I give you up, O Ephraim? How can I surrender you, O Israel? Hosea 11:7-8 NET.

God's heart is for us and Hosea documents the length God has gone to reach us, but He cannot cause us to love and trust Him, we must choose to.

Read the last paragraph,

- When we see the final cry to humanity, calling God's people to come out of Babylon, it is noteworthy that He is calling *His own people*, and not strangers. He knows them intimately. He loves them. And as the world pitches toward its worst hour, he is still offering the redemption price that He has paid in order to purchase us back with His own blood. The cross of Christ, more than anything else, should show us just how earnestly the Lord wants to save His wayward people. *Adult SS Guide 2<sup>nd</sup> Q 2025, Allusions, Images, Symbols: How to Study Bible Prophecy, p. 25.*

The paragraph is talking about the people God knows intimately, not the people God knows everything about. God knows everything about everyone, but this is referencing those whom God knows intimately. Life eternal is that we might know God and Jesus Christ, John 17:3. This is the reuniting of heart and mind with God. This is the marriage of the bride to Christ, the two becoming one, having God's life, spirit planted in our inmost being and being reborn to produce the fruit of the Spirit. Then we are known intimately by God for we also now know and trust Him.

And these people who are united in love and trust with Jesus are in Babylon and are called out at the end of time. What is this Babylon that they are called to leave?

Babylon is not only a real historic civilization, but symbolizes religious imperialism, those religions who, like Nebuchadnezzar after the fiery furnace, accepts the reality of the God of the Bible, but instead of true conversion of heart and practicing the design law principles of God, promote the God of the Bible with imposed law lies—as Nebuchadnezzar did.

Babylon represents Christian, Jewish, and Islamic systems that proclaim a belief in Yahweh, but teach Yahweh runs His universe like Babylon runs its nation, imposed law and inflicted punishments.

The people of God have lived in religious systems like this, just as the captives of Israel were 70 years in Babylon. Many of those captives stayed in Babylon, but a remnant came out. This serves as an object lesson for the righteous at the end of time. God calls all those who have intimacy with Him to leave Babylon, to sever their hearts loyalties to systems that would use the power of the state or their own systems and organizations to coerce the consciences of people, who say bow down to this idol or be thrown in the fiery furnace.

And what of the price Jesus paid to save humanity from sin, to whom was that price paid?

The lesson rightly identifies the metaphor for the price is the blood of Jesus, it is not the red corpuscles, but what the blood represents.

And to whom did Jesus say His flesh and blood is given for salvation, where did Jesus apply it?

- Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me.” John 6:63-57 NIV84.

The blood and flesh are applied, given to, sinners, we receive the ransom price—why?

Because the ransom is the price that sets captives free and we are held captive by the lies about God that we believe and by our own carnal fallen fear ridden sinful nature. Thus, the price to set us free is the truth, symbolized by the flesh and bread, and once we are won by the truth to trust, then we open the heart and receive a new life, a sinless life, the life of Jesus, which is symbolized by the blood and wine. As Paul wrote, it is no longer I that live but Christ lives in me, Galatians 2:20.

Thus the price was paid to you and me!

## **MONDAY**

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Who is the beautiful bride of Christ?

How does the bride become beautiful?

Read the fourth paragraph,

- This is a recurrent theme in the Bible: God’s bride is beautiful, not because of anything she has done but because God has showered His favor on her and made her that way. In a similar way, believers appear beautiful in the estimate of heaven, not because of anything we have done to earn it but because of the favor of God, the salvation that He has showered on us. We are

beautiful because we are covered in His righteousness, the “righteousness of God” Himself (2 Cor. 5:21). *Adult SS Guide 2<sup>nd</sup> Q 2025, Allusions, Images, Symbols: How to Study Bible Prophecy*, p. 24.

No doubt that our beauty of character is only because of God and His intervention through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

But what does it mean to be covered in His righteousness? Is this a covering over the defects, a shroud, a blanket, an erasure of records in heaven, a legal adjustment, a declaration of righteousness for those who are in reality unrighteous, or is it healing, transformation, cleansing, purification of people so that they become righteous, so that we are like Jesus in heart, mind, and character?

The lesson referenced 2 Corinthians 5:21 in conjunction with being covered in the righteousness of Christ, so let’s read it:

- God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might **become** the righteousness of God. 2 Corinthians 5:21 NIV84, emphasis mine.

Does it say that we become covered in the righteousness of God—is that what it says? NO! God’s plan is to make us righteous, not cover us with Christ righteousness while we remain unrighteous.

So, how do we become the righteousness of God? Through faith, which means trust, and how do we come to trust God? Through truth, through examining the truth and choosing to say yes to the truth and open the heart to God and receive the indwelling Holy Spirit who comes with a new life, a new animating energy, a new spirit, the Spirit of Christ and we choose to align and act upon the power of love and truth in trust in our thoughts, our beliefs, our understanding, values, morals, practices and choice and we are transformed and changed.

## WEDNESDAY

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The lesson focuses on Isaac and Rebekah and how the descendants of Abraham in Canaan struggled over and over again with bringing in Canaan pagan worship into their lives.

Read the third paragraph,

- Indeed, the story of so much of anxiety Israel, and even of the Christian church through the centuries, has been one in which God’s people—who should have been witnessing to the world—get caught up instead in the world and in its false teachings and religious beliefs. Perhaps the greatest example of this sad reality has been the introduction of Sunday, the pagan day of the sun, in place of the biblical seventh-day Sabbath, a reality that will play a prominent role in the last days. *Adult SS Guide 2<sup>nd</sup> Q 2025, Allusions, Images, Symbols: How to Study Bible Prophecy*, p. 26.

Bible scholars from every denomination, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant all agree that the Sabbath of the Bible is Saturday, Friday sunset to Saturday sunset, just as the Jews today continue to observe. Which day is the Bible Sabbath is not in question.

It is also not a question of dispute as to whether Sunday was a pagan day of worship. That is historical fact.

It is also not a question of dispute for serious Bible scholars that Sunday didn't become a day Christians observed until decades after the death of Christ, and that not because of God's direction, but as a way of separating themselves from the Jews who were persistently rebelling against Rome in Palestine. And it wasn't until centuries later that Constantine as a political move officially became a Christian and passed a law honoring Sunday.

These are all historical facts, but none of these facts reveal the true value of the Sabbath and the true devastation of the change of the day of worship.

Many SDAs think, as the lesson suggests, that the greatest example of introducing pagan concepts into Christianity is the changing of the day of worship, but in fact, the change in day is the fruit of the greatest pagan infection into Christianity, the evidence of the change, the corruption, the real problem that all others stem from, and that is changing the idea that God's laws are design laws to the lie that God's laws function like Rome's, imposed laws require inflicted punishment and are subject to change. The change of the Sabbath to Sunday is evidence that Christians don't view God's laws as design laws.

After all, why didn't the papacy pass a law that all those stone workers who took the Eucharist each morning would have gravity reduced for them by 50% for the rest of the day? How much easier would it have been to build all those cathedrals if they would have done this? Why didn't they pass such a law? Or why didn't churches in California when the fires raged recently pass laws that their members are not required to breath when the smoke gets too thick?

Because everyone knows that humans cannot change such laws, and these are God's laws. Then, what does it mean if a group of humans believe that they can change the Sabbath to Sunday? It means that they do not see God's law as design law, but as imposed rules.

And while the SDA church has correctly realized and taught that the Bible Sabbath is the seventh day of the week and God did not change it to Sunday, they have failed to recognize that the change in the day is not the real change to God's law that infects Christianity, it is the lie that God's law functions like human law, imposed rules that if you break require God as the enforcer to use power to inflict punishment. And thus, many SDAs teach that God is the source of pain, suffering, and death that He inflicts for law-breaking if we don't get a legal payment to Him to pay our sin debt.

This type of theology is pagan.



The message that is to lighten the world and which calls people out of Babylon is the message to reject the lie that God is like Caesar, to worship Him as Creator and that requires we reject the imposed law lie and realize His laws are design laws.

So what makes Sabbath holy?

Last year I spoke with a pastor who took the position that the Sabbath is holy because God declared it to be holy. It was made holy by God's executive action as Sovereign of the Universe at the end of creation week to set it apart by His declared word.

If this is so, then what type of law is God's law? The same as human. What makes anything in a human system restricted, separate, set apart? A human edict enforced through threat of punishment.

But if God were to govern like this, why do we have a sin problem? If God were to merely declare it to be so, obey or you get punished, then why didn't He just punish Lucifer for crossing the line and be done with it? Because it isn't about power, imposed law, and law enforcement. It is about love and trust. And love and trust cannot be achieved through imposed law and law enforcement.

In fact, Satan began his war by making such assertions about God, that God makes up rules and uses power to punish rule-breakers, which when this lie is believed it undermines trust and incites fear, selfishness, and rebellion.

So the Sabbath is a great test case—are all of God's laws truly design laws, protocols built into reality, or are some of His laws arbitrary, simply made-up rules imposed by God by His declaring it to be so?

The pastor who took the position that God's declaration makes it holy referenced creation week and God's setting apart the seventh day:

By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done. Genesis 2:2, 3 NIV84.

The pastor's interpretation of this passage is that God's actions are the actions of a ruler imposing a difference by His word or authority.

But consider the following evidence in the very narrative of creation, when God made another declaration:

The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." Genesis 2:18 NIV84.

Was it good for man to be alone *until* the Lord said this? Was it only when the Lord said it was not good that it became not good? Or did the Lord say it because there was something missing and He had not quite completed His creative work yet—and it was, in reality, not good to leave it uncompleted?

Did God's declaration make it so, or was it already so, and thus God, who always speaks truth, declared it to be so?

The issue I am disentangling is this: Which comes first—reality, the way things are, or God's verbal description, or declaration, of the way things are? In regard to the Sabbath, was it holy the moment God created it? Was there something about its creation, something built into it or associated with it by creation, that objectively set it apart from all other days—and God's verbal statement about it announced the reality of what was already true, or was it that God's verbal description made it so?

Those who operate upon the human-law model automatically think that God's verbal statements are the legal edicts that make it so. Whereas those who see God's law as design law understand His statements are announcements of truth, of the way things actually are.

At the Second Coming, when Jesus separates the “sheep” from the “goats,” does His action, His judgment, His proclamation, make some into sheep and some into goats, or is He separating them based on reality, on who they have chosen to become? (Matthew 25:31–33).

So is the Sabbath holy because God said so, declared it holy, or did God declare it holy because it was holy?

The Bible says God blessed and sanctified the Sabbath day—what does that mean? Does it mean that God blessed it by legal declaration, making an imposed law that requires external enforcement through inflicted punishments? If that is what God did, then that would not have been a blessing but a curse, for that is the way Satan's kingdom works; that would have sustained Satan's charges against the government of God rather than refute them. No, God did not make a legal rule, an imposed law.

God blessed and sanctified the Sabbath by action, conduct, and creation—by reality. The Sabbath was made, created, built into time by the God who controls space and time, whose laws are the basis of the operations of all reality. And the Sabbath was made in the context of a war against God's rulership. The Sabbath was set apart from the other six days *not* when God used power but when He *stopped* using power, when He *rested*, when He *refused* to enforce law by the use of power and, instead, left all His creatures free to think and decide for themselves!

The Sabbath was created at the end of the creation week of this planet and is invested, made, created, and built by God with the revelation of truth, love, and freedom—when God refused to use external power to punish Lucifer, to force Satan to comply, when God refused to operate in the way of a creature. Thus, the Sabbath is holy, made and created as a sign, evidence, revelation, and demonstration of God's character of love and design-law methods. It exists because God exists and because God is love—and love exists only in freedom. Thus, for the same reasons God found it necessary to declare the true position of Jesus, God also declared the reality of the sacredness, holiness, and blessedness of the Sabbath day, for in six days God created but on the seventh day *He rested!* The Sabbath day is special, distinct, set apart *but* not by God's declaration; it is so by God's action in its creation—for it reveals the glory and holiness of God. The Sabbath is not holy because God declares it holy; no, He declares it holy because it is holy!