

Ir-ot-34
I Will Betroth Thee Unto Me in Righteousness
(Hosea)
By Lenet Hadley Read

(We learn much about similitudes through Hosea: about similitudes in general, and through Hosea's personal similitude reflecting Christ as a Bridegroom to a faithless people. Those who have been attempting to read the Old Testament for its witnesses of the Savior will now be especially rewarded. The writings of Hosea give strong confirmation of the truthfulness of this precious method of reading the Old Testament).

I. Through Hosea the Lord confirms that He teaches through similitudes. First by clear statements, and by Hosea's life, which is a clearly identified similitude of the Savior.

A. "I have also spoken by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions, *and used similitudes, by the ministry of the prophets*" (Hosea 12:10) (Emphasis added).

B. Our modern prophets also verify the Lord's usage of similitudes.

"...many [ancient prophets] lived in special situations or did particular things that singled them out as types and patterns and shadows of that which was to be in the life of [Christ]" (Elder Bruce R. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah*, p. 448).

C. A similitude is a living parable.

1. The Lord put men through situations that were living parables. I.e., Moses led Israel out of bondage to a promised land, as a witness of Jesus' salvation from the bondage of sin into Eternal Life. [Especially by saving Israel through the sacrifice of the blood of the Passover lamb]. This and all of Exodus contained living parables of what Jesus would do to help us overcome the bondage of Sin and Death and inherit Heaven.

D. Remember when Jesus came into mortality, He continued teaching through parables. Some of them were oral, as in the parable of the Good Samaritan. But *some were living parables*. For example, when He cleansed lepers, who were considered "unclean," besides showing compassion, *He was also performing a living parable showing He had the power to cleanse the spiritually unclean*. Similarly, when He healed the blind, deaf, lame, raised the dead, *these were living parables teaching He had power to heal the spiritually blind, spiritually deaf, spiritually faltering, and, finally, to literally resurrect the dead*.

II. Hosea's living parable affirmed that Jehovah is like a Covenanted Bridegroom. And Israel is like His Covenanted Bride.

A. When one considers the immense gap between the Lord and man, it should create awe that He would speak of His relationship to us in terms of something so endearing and personal as an intimate marital relationship.

B. But this is a consistent portrayal. To review other examples of Christ as Bridegroom, refer to my previous Lesson 4 on Adam and Eve [See Section I:C&D]; and Lesson 20 on Ruth and Boaz [See all of Section II].

III. When the Lord covenanted with Israel at Mount Sinai, Israel was set apart as His people, and the covenant they made with Him was considered as holy as a marriage betrothal. Betrothals were considered as sacred as the final wedding vow.

- A. Through Hosea's living parable, the Lord shows Israel's worship of other gods has made them as a faithless harlot.
- B. For those who are appalled at the thought of a prophet deliberately marrying a harlot, Hosea's wife was not likely a literal harlot. If we read the scriptures carefully, we find that she came out of a people [Israel as a whole] who had begun to worship false idols, rather than the Lord.

IV. We should feel awe that the Lord is revealing, through Hosea, that in spite of all the faithlessness of His people, eventually He would cleanse them and forgive them. He would "betroth thee unto me in righteousness."

A. Note that He is really speaking of Israel as a whole and in the far distant future. That is: He would eventually come to offer Himself in atonement for their sins, and in those and in the last days He would re-gather a more humbled people who would accept His atonement, and His mercies, and prove themselves faithful.

B. Nevertheless, His message is still valid for any individual who strays from his covenants, but returns in repentance and in humility. Through proper authority and ordinances, they can be received again into His powerful covenantal relationship.

V. So dominant is the symbolism of the Lord as Bridegroom, not only in Hosea, but throughout the *Bible*, it can be shown to be a great chiasm overlapping the entire Bible!

- A. The Bible begins with the story of Adam and Eve as Bridegroom and Bride, (for Adam is a type of Christ as Bridegroom). Throughout the Bible, the imagery of the Lord as Bridegroom is reinforced. Then, in John's "Revelation," Christ's Return is powerfully imaged as a Bridegroom returning to receive His Bride (the faithful Saints). This is shown in Revelation Chapters 21 and 22 in particular.
- B. And when Christ actually appeared in the flesh, He deliberately set many of His words and actions in the form of the fulfillment of Bridegroom imagery, such as in the Parable of the Ten Virgins.
- C. A study of the Bible and its "Christ as Bridegroom" imagery shows that it has a great turning point --- occurring upon the Cross --- thus establishing the very center of the X that is considered part of a great chiasm.
- D. I am including a simple outline of this chiasm below, though I have worked out a more detailed one.*

(Note: The first half of the chiasm is given mostly in Genesis. The second half of the chiasm, repeating Bridegroom imagery fulfilled by Christ, is found mostly in John's "Revelation," which places the bulk of Christ's fulfillment at His Return. Therefore, one of the reasons it is difficult to see the chiastic form in clarity is because much of it still lies in the future!

We see below how the same elements, given on the left in *Genesis*, are paralleled on the right in *Revelation*. Remember, Adam served as a figure for Christ in some ways, particularly as Bridegroom (Romans 5:14). The turning point, or X, or reversal of destiny, occurs because of Christ's Atonement. Read down the left side, then up the right side, then compare sides.

<i>Genesis</i>	<i>Revelation</i>
A. A Bounteous Paradise (Eden) (Genesis 2:8-17)	A' A Far Greater Paradise (Revelation 21-22)
B. Tree of life; Fountain of waters (Gen. 2:9-10)	B' More Fruits from Tree; Greater Fountains (Rev. 22:1-2)
C. Bridegroom reigns (Gen. 2:15)	C' Bridegroom reigns (Rev. 19:11-16)
D. Bride comes from B'groom's side as One (Gen. 2:21-24)	D' Bridegroom brings Bride to side, as One (Rev. 19:7; 21:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)
E. Bride takes Bridegroom's name (Gen. 2:23)	E' Bride to take Bridegroom's name (Rev. 22:4)
F. Bride eats forbidden fruit (Gen. 3:1-6)	F' Bride drinks cup of consummation (Mark 14:25; Rev. 19:9)
G. Bride to be cast out of God's presence (Gen. 3:6,23)	G' Bride to re-enter God's presence (Rev. 21:2-3)
H. Bridegroom takes on Bride's guilt (Gen 3:6, 17)	H' Bridegroom to bear Bride's stains (Rev. 19:13, 15)
I. B'groom (Jehovah) provides covering garments (Gen 3:21)	I' Bridegroom gives glorious garments (Rev. 19:8)
J. Bridegroom and Bride cast out (Gen. 3:23-4)	J' Serpent to be cast out (Rev. 20:2-3)
K. Bridegroom covenants Home & Seed (Gen. 13:14-16)	K' Bridegroom prepares Home (John 14:2; Rev. 3:21)
L. Israel receives covenants (Gen. 15)	L' Israel will again receive covenants (Romans 11:26-36)
M. Bride (Israel) is unfaithful (Ezekiel 16:8, 38)	M' Bride (Gentiles) will be unfaithful (Romans 11:21-25)
Q. Bridegroom promises covenant with Gentiles (Shown in Book of Ruth)	Q' Bridegroom covenants with Gentiles (Acts 10:34, 47)

X = The Cross and The Atonement

**Christ comes, as Bridegroom, and fulfills Bridegroom symbolism.
Bridegroom re- offers Covenant to Israel; Bridegroom purchases Bride with
sacrificial blood of His at-one-ment. The Fate of the Bride is reversed.**

Hosea revealed the Lord would eventually redeem His faithless Bride. The atonement/Cross, would be the turning point. The Atonement fulfilled many elements of the Bridegroom/Bride relationship. However, because most of Israel in Jesus' time rejected Christ's covenant, and it went to the Gentiles, **it would be in the Latter-days that Israel, as Hosea foretold, would be brought back into this choice, covenanted relationship with their Bridegroom, to eventually reign as His side in His Eternal Promised Land.**

*Note: I have tried to work out a *detailed version* of how this X form can be seen and how its elements pervade the Bible. It is likely flawed because most of it has not been fulfilled. I look forward to when Jesus comes and manifests its true particulars. In the meantime, my best efforts are on www.lenethread.com, "[Christ's Wondrous Works.](#)" [Click on "Proof the Bible Is True from Beginning to End"](#)].