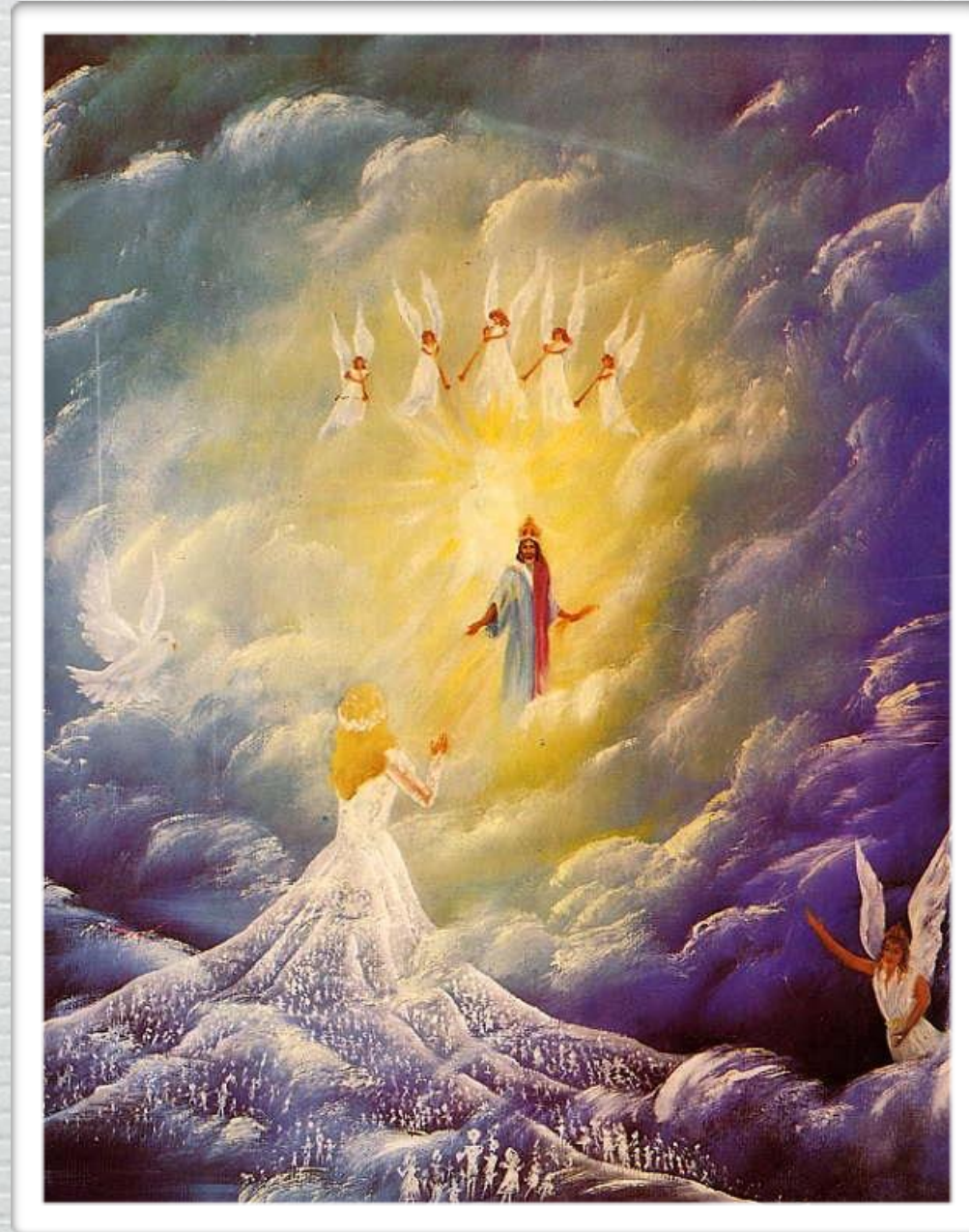




“He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice.”

— John 3:29

A Ready Bride

The Choice

- Gen. 24:2-4 – “So Abraham said to the oldest servant of his house, who ruled over all that he had, “Please, put your hand under my thigh, 3 and I will make you swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell; 4 but you shall go to my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son Isaac.”
- Eph. 1:4 – “just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.”



The Proposal

- When did the Lord Christ propose to the Church?
- Is there a perfect bride?
 - SS 1:5 – “I am dark but lovely...”
 - SS: 1:15 – “Behold, you are fair, my love! Behold, you are fair! You have dove's eyes.”

•SS 6:9-10

“My dove, my perfect one,

Is the only one,

The only one of her mother,

The favorite of the one who bore her.

The daughters saw her And called her blessed,

The queens and the concubines,

And they praised her.

Who is she who looks forth as the morning,

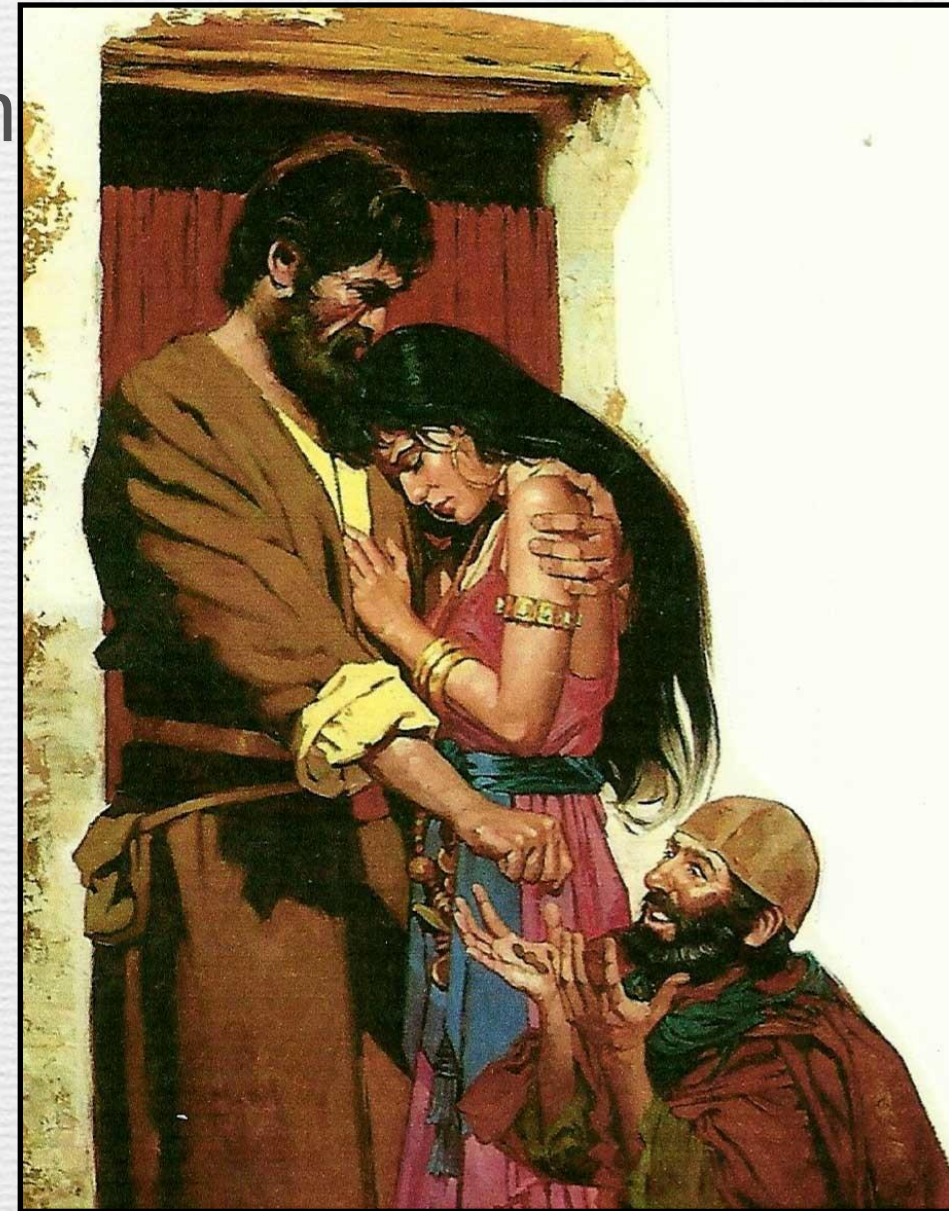
Fair as the moon,

Clear as the sun,

Awesome as an army with banners.”

The Prophet Hosea

- Hos. 1:2 – “When the Lord began to speak by Hosea, the Lord said to Hosea: ‘Go, take yourself a wife of harlotry And children of harlotry, For the land has committed great harlotry by departing from the Lord.’”
- Hos. 2:14 – “Therefore, behold, I will allure her, Will bring her into the wilderness, And speak comfort to her.”
- Hos. 2:16,19 – “And it shall be, in that day,” Says the Lord, “That you will call Me ‘My Husband,’ And no longer call Me ‘My Master’... I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me.”



Betrothal/Engagement

- What was the dowry God paid for our hand?
- 1 Cor. 6:20 – “For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”
- Eph. 1:13-14 – “In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were **sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.**”

Betrothal/Engagement

- What is the purpose of an engagement/betrothal?
 - Public declaration of intent to marry
 - Promise of commitment
- What is the mark of our commitment to the Lord Christ?



Anticipation

- The Groom
 - Jn. 14:2-3 – “I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”
- The Bride
 - Phil. 1:21-24 – “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you.”

Planning

- How will I look that day?
 - Wedding gown, makeup, etc.
- Rev. 3:18 – “I counsel you to **buy from Me gold refined in the fire**, that you may be rich; and **white garments**, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed...”

Living Happily Ever After

- “Sustain them in green pastures, beside still waters in the Paradise of Joy, the place out of which grief, sorrow, and groaning have fled away in the light of your saints.”
(Liturgy of St. Basil)
- Matt. 25:10 – “And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.”

