

ANCIENT HEBREW WEDDING

JEREMIAH 6:16

HERE IS WHAT ADONAI SAYS: “STAND AT THE CROSSROADS AND LOOK: **ASK ABOUT THE ANCIENT PATHS, WHICH ONE IS THE GOOD WAY? TAKE IT, AND YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS**”

The order of the original or ancient Hebrew wedding was a shadow or a type of the relationship that Jesus (the bridegroom) and His disciples [all true believers] (the bride of Christ) are to have. To better understand our relationship with Jesus, we need to understand what He fulfilled.

God related His covenant (or His promise) with His people in a marriage language when He instructs about the construction and purpose of the Ark of the Covenant.

Exodus 25:22

“there I will meet (**yaad or yada which means to fix upon, to engage as in marriage**) with you. I will speak (dabar means to speak the Word) with you from above the ark-cover, from between the cherubims [k’ruvim] which are on the ark of the testimony, about all the orders (‘tsavah means order with power) I am giving you for the people of Israel.

The Ark of the Covenant is constructed of a base which is the testimony of God- His covenant –El Shaddai and on top of this base or covenant is His mercy seat. On the mercy seat is where the blood of the Lamb without spot or blemish was placed for the atonement and the redemptions of the sins of Israel. It was here He said I will meet you (yaad or yada – engage as in marriage). Jesus is the Lamb of God whose blood was shed for the atonement and redemption of the sins of the world. Within that atonement He will meet (yaad or yada) with us there.

Jeremiah 31:31-33

“Here the days are coming, says Adonai, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers on the day I took them out of Egypt; because they , for their part violated my covenant (committed adultery against me), **even though I, for my part was a husband to them**, says Adonai. For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says Adonai: I will put my Torah (instructions) within them and write it on their hearts; I will be their God, and they will be my people.”

So let’s study the ancient Hebrew wedding process

Three stages of the ancient Hebrew wedding:

STAGE 1

The Shiddukhin which are the arrangements preliminary to betrothal.

Step one – the father makes the arrangements

Step two –Ketubah which is the marriage contract

Step three – Mohar which is the bridal payment

Step four – Mikveh which is purification or baptism

STAGE 2

Kiddushim or Eyrusin which is the betrothal [also means sanctification]

The couple appears together under the huppah (open canopy; a symbol of being under the heavenly host and /or covering)and publicly express their intent to be engaged and enter a betrothal agreement.

This is a ceremony and legal commitment that starts the waiting period to prepare for the wedding.

STAGE 3

Nissuin which is the marriage

Nissuin or the coming for the bride and carrying away

The huppah is set up again for the wedding ceremony

Seven blessings and sharing the cup of wine

Provisions the betrothal ratified and witnessed (ketubah)

The Echad which is the consummation of the union

Seven days of celebration/marriage supper

Completion of the covenant of marriage and life commences together forever

Stage one – The Shiddukhin

Understand that in Hebrew, the language and revelation, everything begins with the Father

The bridegroom's father chooses the bride, in most cases it is not the groom. The father may send a friend or servant to come to terms with parents of the prospective bride and makes all the arrangements. The bride may not know the age or even what he looks like. All she knows is she will spend her whole life with him and he will take care of all her needs if she says yes.

This representative can be seen as a portrait of Holy Spirit. It is he who nudges our hearts and calls us to enter into this union with our bridegroom Jesus. As in Genesis 24:11-17 with Rebekah, we will be about our daily duties and he will come and meet us.

John 6:43-44 "Jesus answered them, stop grumbling to each other! No one comes to me unless the Father – the one who sent me – draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day."

1Peter 1:8 "without having seen him, you love him. Without seeing him now, but trusting in him, you continue to be full of joy that is glorious beyond words."

Ketubah means "written". The ketubah was and still is today the "marriage contract". The ketubah includes the provisions and conditions of the proposed marriage: the groom promises to support his wife to be. The bride stipulates the contents of her dowry – the financial status. The bride must sign or there is no marriage. Genesis 24:5 states the wife must agree even though the marriage is arranged; the wife still has to agree and be willing.

Our ketubah is written in the new covenant: what is required of us...what it will cost us and what we will receive in the marriage.

The bridegroom agrees to provide for all of the wives needs. Over and over Jesus declares His love for us. He promises to provide all of our needs and necessities. We should never be fearful for lack of anything. The bridegroom was under contract or covenant to provide for his wife with severe punishment for not fulfilling his end of the agreement. The wife never feared of having a lack of necessities because she was protected by the contract or covenant.

Look at just one part of our contract or covenant with our bridegroom: Matthew 6:28-30 " and why be anxious about clothing? Think about the fields of the wild irises, and how they grow. They neither work nor spin thread, yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed as beautifully as one of these. If this is how God clothes grass in the field – which is here today and gone tomorrow, thrown in

an oven – won't he much more clothe you? What little trust you have." And of course there are many, many more promises of his provisions.

The Mohar or bridal payment. The payment is brought in full at the time the Father's servant or friend comes calling. Jesus' price is paid in full as the bridegroom comes calling to our hearts.

1Corinthians 6:20 "for you were bought with a price. So use your bodies to glorify Christ."

1Peter 1:19 "on the contrary it was the costly bloody sacrificial death of the Messiah, as the Lamb without defect or spot."

The Mikveh or ritual Immersion (baptism)

To prepare for the betrothal the bride and the groom separately take a ritual immersion. The ritual immersion -Mikveh- was prior to actually entering into the formal betrothal period, and was symbolic of purification to enter into a new life together.

Jesus the Messiah is the bridegroom and before he entered into a betrothal with his future bride (all those who believe in Him) he did a Mikveh!!!!!!!!!!!!

Matthew 3:13-16 "then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be immersed by John. But John tried to stop him. "you are coming to me? I ought to be immersed by you!" however, Jesus answered him, "let it be this way now, because we should do everything righteousness requires."

There it is.....the question so many ask.....why did Jesus get baptized?

Stage two – Kiddushim – the public betrothal under the huppah

In Hebrew the word for the Jewish bride “Kallah” means complete or some say it means “enclosed one” God said it is not good for man to be alone so he put the man to sleep and took a rib or a curve from his side and created for him a helper to complete him. Genesis 2

What makes a Kallah – to realize that without her husband she is weak and incomplete but through her husband she is strong.

Jeremiah 31:22 “come back virgin Israel, come back to these cities of yours. How long will you hesitate, you unruly daughter? For Adonai has created something new on earth: a women with the strengths of a man.”

Because Israel (the bride) sinned against God she was taken captive and scattered to other nations. But God loves her so much and is calling her back to repentance. When she stays in his covenant or agreement she is complete or strong but when she rebels against him she is weak. But here God is saying there is coming a bridegroom to do something new for the bride.....in his righteousness she will be as strong as a man.

The betrothal was legally binding. It was a covenant or contract and held at a very high standard with high consequences for breaking the covenant or contract. .

When Joseph discovered that his betrothed, Mary was pregnant he had the grounds to have her stoned to death and he certainly had the right to get a legal divorce (put her away). But the angel appeared to him and then it was settled. He had no reason to put her away.

As part of the betrothal ceremony under the huppah a cup of wine is lifted up and drank to seal the betrothal. Matthew 26:27-29 also he took a cup of wine, made a blessing and gave it to them saying, **all of you** drink from it. For this is the blood, which ratifies the new covenant (betrothal contract) my blood shed on behalf of many, so that they may have their sins forgiven. I tell you, I will not drink this fruit of the vine again until the day I drink new wine with you in my Father’s Kingdom. (the marriage supper)

In every step of this process the bride had to be in agreement. Our relationship with Jesus is the same way. We have free will and we can choose to say I don’t want this betrothal. To enter into this covenant we must confess with our mouth and live a life according to the covenant or contract he prepared for us. The Hebrew word for “I do” is daat. When the servant Holy Spirit comes calling you can either say I do or I don’t.

The Matan is the giving of the bridal gift to the bride as a promise he will be coming back to receive her.

At this point the bridegroom departs and goes back to the Father to prepare a place for his bride to live with him forever.

John 14:1-3 "don't let yourselves be disturbed. Trust in God and trust in me. In my Father's house are many places to live. If there weren't I wouldn't have told you; because I am going there to prepare a place for you. Since I am going and preparing a place for you, I will return and take you with me; so that where I am you may be also."

One of the unique features of the Hebrew wedding is the timing of it. The Father of the groom decides when the time is right. He decides when everything is set right and gives the final approval. The bride knows the approximate time when it will happen but it is to be a surprise to everyone.

When everything is prepared for the marriage to begin the Father will send the Son to receive his bride.

Mark 13:32 "however when that day and hour will come, no one knows – not the angels in heaven, not even the son, just the Father"

Since the timing of the arrival of the bridegroom was a surprise, the bride and the bridal party was always to be ready. It was customary for one of the grooms party to go ahead of the bridegroom, leading the way to the brides house and shouting "behold the bridegroom comes. This would be followed by the sounding of the shofar horn. At the sounding of the shofar the entire wedding processional would go to the bride's house.

The preparation of the bride for the wedding

The betrothal process is also called sanctification. Look at the parable of the ten virgins:

Matthew 25:1-6

"The Kingdom of Heaven at that time will be like ten bridesmaids who took their lamps and went out to meet the groom. 2 Five of them were **foolish** and five were **sensible (wise)**. 3 The foolish ones took lamps with them but no oil, 4 whereas the others took flasks of oil with their lamps. 5 Now the bridegroom was late, so they all went to sleep. 6 It was the middle of the night when the cry rang out, 'The bridegroom is here! Go out to meet him!'

Psalms 19:7 'The Torah (instruction) of Adonai is perfect, restoring the inner person. The instruction of Adonai is sure, making **wise** the thoughtless.'

Matthew 7: 24-26 "So, everyone who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a **sensible** man who built his house on bedrock. 25 The rain fell, the rivers flooded, the winds blew and beat against that house, but it didn't collapse, because its foundation was on rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a **foolish** man who built his house on

sand. 27 The rain fell, the rivers flooded, the wind blew and beat against that house, and it collapsed — and its collapse was horrendous!”

So what is the oil to keep the lamps lit?

Leviticus 24:2 “Order the people of Isra’el to bring you **pure oil from crushed olives (King James says pure olive beaten)** for the light, to keep lamps burning always.

Proverb 6:23 “For **the mitzvah (commandments) is a lamp, Torah (instructions) is light**, and reproofs that discipline are the way to life.

Pure oil olive beaten – the desire to obey God’s commandments and for his Torah (instructions). At all times we have our vessel of oil olive beaten ready to keep the light continuously lit.

Matthew 25 continued 7-13

7The girls all woke up and prepared their lamps for lighting. 8 The foolish ones said to the sensible ones, ‘Give us some of your oil, because our lamps are going out.’ 9 ‘No,’ they replied, ‘there may not be enough for both you and us. Go to the oil dealers and buy some for yourselves.’ **No shortcuts to obedience** 10 But as they were going off to buy, the bridegroom came. Those who were ready went with him to the wedding feast, and the door was shut. 11 Later, the other bridesmaids came. ‘Sir! Sir!’ they cried, ‘Let us in!’ 12 But he answered, ‘Indeed! I tell you, I don’t know you!’ 13 So stay alert, because you know neither the day nor the hour.

Stage three – Nissuin – the Marriage

Arrival of the groom to the ready bride

Nissuin comes from the Hebrew verb nasa which means to carry. This is a graphic description – as the bride waits to be carried off to her new home.

The groomsman shouts and the shofar sounds and the bridegroom comes.

It will be the same when our bridegroom comes to carry us away to our new home.

1Thessalonians 4:16-18

16 “For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a rousing cry, with a call from one of the ruling angels, and with God’s shofar; those who died united with the Messiah will be the first to rise; 17 then we who are left still alive will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and thus we will always be with the Lord. 18 So encourage each other with these words.”

1Corinthians 15:51-52

51 “Look, I will tell you a secret — not all of us will die! But we will all be changed! 52 It will take but a moment, the blink of an eye, at the final shofar. For the shofar will sound, and the dead will be raised to live forever, and we too will be changed.”

The Feast of the Trumpets is also known as the wedding day of Christ and comes before the Day of Judgment.

The Badeken is the veiling of the bride. The groom veils the bride to signify it is not about appearance or physical appeal, but rather about a soul and character relationship

The Huppah is set up again for the ceremony and the Birkot Nissuin – seven blessings is performed. This is done with the Kallah circling the Huppah seven times as a sealing, to include the sharing in the cup of wine that Jesus indicated we would share in heaven.

The Echad is the consummating the union. The two shall become one flesh.

Part of the fulfilling of the ceremony and was confirmed by the Yihud which means knowing. This was a departing before two witnesses to the bridal chamber to consummate the wedding.

The Lord will only consummate the marriage of those who have been sanctified (abided to the betrothal contract or new covenant).

Many think they are in the betrothal and are eagerly waiting for the Lord to come take them to the bridal chambers but:

Matthew 7:21-22

21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord!' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, only those who do what my Father in heaven wants. 22 On that Day, many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord! Didn't we prophesy in your name? Didn't we expel demons in your name? Didn't we perform many miracles in your name?' 23 Then I will tell them to their faces, '**I never knew you (consummated the marriage)**! Get away from me, you workers of lawlessness!'

The groom receives a staff as authority to shepherd and lead.

Psalm 23:4 "Even if I pass through death-dark ravines, I will fear no disaster; for you are with me; your rod and staff reassure me"

The Seudat Mitzyah is the wedding feast or celebration meal with the children of the bridal chambers.

The process is from the beginning to the end very detailed and very precise.

Revelations 19:6-9

6 Then I heard what sounded like the roar of a huge crowd, like the sound of rushing waters, like loud peals of thunder, saying, "Halleluyah! Adonai, God of heaven's armies, has begun his reign! 7 "Let us rejoice and be glad! Let us give him the glory! For the time has come for the wedding of the Lamb, and his Bride has prepared herself — 8 fine linen, bright and clean has been given her to wear." ("Fine linen" means the righteous deeds of God's people.) 9 The angel said to me, "Write: 'How blessed are those who have been invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb!'" Then he added, "These are God's very words."

Revelations 21:2-5

2 Also I saw the holy city, New Yerushalayim, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 I heard a loud voice from the throne say, "See! God's Sh'khinah is with mankind, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and he himself, God-with-them, will be their God.[b] 4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will no longer be any death; and there will no longer be any mourning, crying or pain; because the old order has passed away." 5 Then the One sitting on the throne said, "Look! I am making everything new!" Also he said, "Write, 'These words are true and trustworthy!'"

Revelation 22:3-5

No longer will there be any curses. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will worship him; 4 they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5 Night will no longer exist, so they will need neither the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because Adonai, God, will shine upon them. And they will reign as kings forever and ever.

Are you the bride of Jesus?

Have you betrothed yourself to him?

Are you living a life of preparation to be married to the Lamb of God?

Today if you hear his voice say DAAT (I do)!!!