

Jesus Our Bridegroom and the Ancient Jewish Wedding – Audio Transcript

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[00:00:00] Hi, everyone, and welcome to the Jewish roots of the Faith. Today, I am going to be talking on one of my favorite topics, the ancient Jewish wedding and how it's a picture of us and our relationship with Yeshua or Jesus. Yeshua is his name in the Hebrew. Jesus is what we know him in the English, but how it's a picture of us and our relationship with him and our relationship to him as the bride of Christ. As I said, this is one of my favorite topics. So I'm going to try to condense this as much as possible to get it to fit in a fairly short timeframe. But if if people really show an interest in this, I might do a longer version, get more in-depth on all the different parts in the future. So if it is something that you want to see a more in-depth message on, just comment and let me know.

[00:00:51] I am a Jewish believer, so this topic is really interesting to me. The Jewish wedding actually takes place in two different stages. There is the Erusin stage or what's also called the Kiddushin stage.

[00:01:07] Erusin is basically betrothal. Kiddushin means sanctification. So the bride is set apart basically and betrothed. And then there is the Nissuin stage, which is the wedding and the consummation of the marriage. It's not all that different from the fact that we also typically have two stages. We have our proposal and then our engagement stage. And then we have the wedding and the marriage stage and also the consummation stage.

[00:01:37] The big difference here is that in Judaism, even today in more Orthodox Judaism, but back in the ancient Jewish wedding, the betrothal stage was actually legally binding. So basically, when a when a proposal or a betrothal took place, there were several different ways that it could happen. It could be an arranged marriage. The parents arranged the marriage while the bride and groom were still children. Or it could be that the groom saw the bride out somewhere.

[00:02:14] We've seen examples in the Bible where someone is walking in and they go to a well and they see this woman and they decide they want to marry here.

[00:02:22] It could be that he saw her in the marketplace somewhere and was taken with her and decided that he wanted to take her as a wife or in some cases, as in the case with Abraham, the father sometimes sent a servant out to find a bride for his son. So a betrothal could have happened in any one of those ways. Typically, the groom will go to the bride's home with his father and there the arrangements would be made for a marriage to take place, no matter which way the the man came to know the woman. That agreement would be reached. And if the father of the bride approves and everything is agreeable, they will decide that the marriage will take place. The bride will be brought in and the groom will be offer her a cup of wine. If she agrees to the betrothal, she will drink from the cup and that will be the signal that it is agreeable to her. This is kind of like the proposal stage of our if we were to put it in modern terms, this is the proposal. Once she drinks from the cup, she receives gifts from the groom. And this is kind of akin to our engagement ring. So a cup is offered. That's the proposal. Gifts are given. That's kind of like our engagement ring. And then a dowry is paid. This is known as the Mahar. The Mahar is paid to the bride's father. I know in some European cultures the dowry works the opposite way where the bride's parents actually pay the dowry. In Judaism, it's the bride's

family that receives the dowry and this is the purchase price. Now, I'm not going to tell you that women weren't viewed as property back in ancient times. They were sort of. But that's not what this is about in many homes in ancient Israel. The woman, the daughter, was a contributing member of the household. She, if the father had sheep or cattle, she often tended to them. We see, again, multiple examples throughout scripture where the woman was that a well and she was gathering water to feed or to water the sheep and so on. So she often cared for the animals around the home. She did work around the house. She cooked, she cleaned. She often cared for her younger siblings. So she was a very important member of the household. When a woman got married, she would not go often live in her own home. She would actually go and live in a room and I use the term room loosely because it really depended on the wealth of the family. That room could have almost been like, oh, a home size room. Or I could, you know, could be a smaller area. So it's a very broad term. But she would go and live in a room in her father in law's home. So the dowry was basically to compensate her family for the loss of that contributing family member who was now going to become a contributing family member of her new home, which was her father in law's home. So it was compensation because to pay, she may have been the only child. And the family may now need to hire a servant to do the work that she was doing in the home. So it was compensation for that. And it wasn't all bad because a portion of that, if her father was actually a decent person, a portion of that dowry would actually be given to her to help her, to prepare for her marriage and to help her to set up her new home. Even though it was a room in her father in law's house for a time, she would eventually be the woman of the home. She would eventually have her home. And even in this room, she would want to set things up the way she likes it. It's still her home. So that money went to help her to do that. Once all this is done, a Ketubah or what is known as a marriage contract is then signed and this contract, it outlines what he is going to do for her. It outlines what she promises to do for him. And it is a legally binding contract. So once she agrees to marry him, the dowry is paid and the Ketubah is signed. From that moment on, and this is where it differs from our engagement from that moment on, they are legally bound to each other. You know, if we get engaged to someone and then we figure out during the course of our engagement that this is not the right person for us. A woman can simply walk away or a man can simply walk away. They they call off the engagement and they're done. That was not the case here. They were legally bound. The only way that they could break that betrothal is through a divorce. And even then, it was only under certain circumstances. So the only way to get out of this betrothal is either by divorce or if one of them were to die. Once the Ketubah is signed, they are now covenanted in marriage to each other. But now they're going to separate. So what the man says to her is, I'm going to prepare a place for you. And when I prepare a place for you, I will come back and I will receive you unto myself.

[00:07:53] These words may sound very familiar to you. Jesus was very familiar with the ancient Jewish wedding, his first miracle was at a wedding. Weddings were extremely important to God. He used marriage and weddings as a picture for us in many different times in scripture. So Jesus was very familiar with this tradition when he used these same words.

[00:08:12] And I'll go into that in a minute. So what would happen is the groom would go off to build a room and his father's house. As I mentioned, and she would prepare herself during this time for her marriage. She would learn how to be a wife. She would learn

[00:08:30] how to, she would learn the arts of perfuming, how to make herself beautiful for her husband. She would learn cosmetics. She would be preparing her wedding garments.

This was a time of preparation for her. And this was a time of preparation for him as he builds this room.

[00:08:47] Now, typically, this period of time was roughly around 12 months, but they didn't know exactly, you know, when we get engaged in our culture. We set a date for the wedding and we know when we're getting married. That was not the case here. They did not have a date set. They did not know when they would see each other again because they were separated during this time. You know, when we get engaged and we have a wedding plan, you know, the couples still dates and they still see each other and they talk on the phone. And there was no phone back then. They weren't talking and they did not see each other for this time period. They were separate. So while they're separated, he was building this room and only his father would know when it was time. His father didn't have a preset time in mind where he knew. But he wasn't telling the son. It didn't work that way. During the course of the year, the father would go in and he would inspect the room. He would make recommendations to his son. You should probably do this or you need to fix this, and he would do periodic inspections to make sure that the room was progressing. When the father would deem that the room was fabulous and ready for the bride. He would tell his son, go and fetch your bride. So the son would never know when it was time to go and get his bride until the father told him and the bride would not know until when the time came. The groom would gather his groomsmen. They would go down the street shouting and blowing shofars or trumpets, and they would be making a ton of noise. It was a really joyful occasion. And the noise was to let her know that he was coming. It was, too. It was to kind of give her a heads up. Hey, I'm coming for you. Get ready. And she would gather her stuff.

[00:10:40] And, you know, if you picture the old movies when the couple would elope and she would come down a ladder from upstairs and they would go off and it was kind of like that.

[00:10:48] And he would go and snatch her away and they would go off and they would have the wedding. It was a it was a small ceremony with family and friends. And then they would go off after the wedding to the bridal chamber and there they would be sequestered away for a time. It was usually seven days. Some cultures more modern, it might be three, but they would go off and they would go into the bridal chamber for seven days. I'm just going to use seven days because that was typically the way they did it in ancient Israel for seven days. And during that time, they would consummate their marriage and they would get to know each other because in most cases they really didn't know each other before. If it was an arranged marriage, they may have never met. If they grew up in the same area and they knew each other from childhood, they may have some knowledge of each other, but they probably didn't know each other very well. And if he had just seen her in the market, they didn't know each other at all. So this was a time where they got familiar with each other and they consummated their marriage once that time period was up. They would come out. And then there would be this huge feast. So where the wedding was kind of simple and very few people, the marriage feast, everybody was invited. So the whole town, everybody who knew them would come out for this feast. So how does this tie end to our relationship with Jesus?

[00:12:15] Well, we have the acceptance portion of the betrothal. We accept Christ into our lives. So the brother, the groom gave the bride a cup, and if she accepted the proposal, she drank from the cup. And Jesus did that at the Last Supper. This is my blood. This is my body. We accept Christ. So we accept the betrothal. Gifts are given to the bride. When

we accept Jesus, we receive gifts of the Holy Spirit. So gifts are given to us the same way a gift was given to the bride.

[00:12:55] And then the Ketubah, the marriage contract, the covenant. Once we accept Christ, we are in a covenant relationship with him. The Bible is our Ketubah. It's our marriage contract. It outlines what God will do for us. And it outlines what we are expected to do. It's. It outlines our salvation. It outlines his plan for us. It outlines what he expects of us. He expects us to love one another. He expects us to be in relationship. So the Bible is our Ketubah, it's our covenant contract with God.

[00:13:33] And then Jesus says, once we're betrothed. Jesus says, oh.

[00:13:38] And I should also mention the purchase price was paid. I'm sorry. I forgot that. So we accept Jesus. He has paid the price for us.

[00:13:48] Then.

[00:13:49] We receive gifts and then we have our contract. And then in John 14, verse one, he says, let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God. Believe also in me. In my father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you 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.

[00:14:19] He's using those same words from the Jewish wedding. I go to prepare a place for you. So he's telling us he's going to prepare a place for us. He ascends into heaven and he is gone. We're separated. Jesus has been separated from us physically since his ascension into heaven. And while he is in heaven, he is preparing a place for us in his father's house.

[00:14:46] And he does not know. He tells us he does not know when he is returning. Only his father in heaven knows. And when the time comes where the father says to the son, Go and fetch your bride.

[00:15:00] 1 Thessalonians, Chapter four, 16 says, for the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

[00:15:22] With a shout with the trumpets. This was like the. The groom and his groomsmen coming down the street shouting with with the shofars, with the trumpets, telling his bride that he is coming. And then he fetches her and takes her away for seven days.

[00:15:41] Now, there's a seven year period of tribulation, so you can draw your own conclusions on it. Everybody has. There are there are different schools of thought on. On the second coming in the rapture and the tribulation, I'm not going to get into that. But you can draw your own conclusions. There is a seven day period where she is sequestered away with him.

[00:16:02] So there is a wedding. There's a sequestering away.

[00:16:06] And then afterwards, there is a marriage supper of the lamb, where there is a large number of guests after that seven day period. So I'll let you draw your own conclusions from that.

[00:16:17] I'm not going to get into different doctrine on the second coming, but the ancient Jewish wedding is such an amazing picture of our relationship with Jesus and us beat the church being the bride.

[00:16:35] We are his betrothed.

[00:16:38] And God is so amazing that he gives us these wonderful pictures. He uses these things that we can relate to and understand his plan for us. We are the bride of Christ. So I hope you enjoyed this short message.

[00:16:57] It's it's just a very overarching view of the Jewish wedding and how it is a picture of our relationship as the bride of Christ with our bridegroom. If you would like to see a more in-depth message on this, please let me know, because I'd be happy to do one. It'll be a lot longer, obviously, but I'd be happy to do one and maybe even break it up into a couple of parts. So please feel free to comment if you want to be notified when there is another post.

[00:17:23] Please subscribe. Over on the right hand side, there is a blog subscription box that is not a mailing list. So you're not going to get inundated with emails. That's just the blog. So you only get e-mails when there's a new post up. So I hope you enjoy this and I will talk to you soon.