

The Jewish Wedding Ceremony And The Church

Like many other Jewish customs, the Jewish wedding has evolved much since Bible times. For this study we will use Genesis 24 as a starting point.

- **The Servant is Sent**

In Genesis 24, Abraham did according to the custom of His day and sent his servant to find a bride for his son. As the servant went to Rebekah, he did not tell of himself; he bragged on the son. Likewise, Jesus said of the Holy Spirit in John 16:14-15, "**He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.**" When the Holy Spirit meets that prospective bride, He brags on the Son. We must beware of any movement that makes more of the Servant than the Son.

- **The Price Is Paid**

In the Jewish homes, it was an honor to have a son; he carried on the family heritage. However, a daughter was expensive to raise. When she was of age she married, changed her identity, and carried on a different family name. Therefore, it was customary to offer a price for the bride. Such was the case in Genesis 29 where Jacob worked for Rachel. He was paying her 'bride price.' Likewise, Jesus paid a price for His bride on the cross of Calvary. That is what Paul was referring to 1 Corinthians 6:20 when he said, "**For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.**" If you went out and paid \$30,000 for a new automobile and they refused to hand over the engine, you would feel ripped off. Are we not doing the same when we have been paid for and we refuse to surrender our whole lives?

- **The Damsel Is Drawn**

Abraham's servant brought Rebecca back to meet Isaac. You could say that he "drew" her back. John 6:44 says, "**No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.**"

John 12:32 says, "**And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.**"

- **The Cup Is Carried**

One method of proposal was to pour a cup of wine and slide it over to the girl. If she like the son, she would drink of it. If she wanted to wait for another offer, she would push it away. This is the offer Jesus made in Matthew 26:27-28 which says "**And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying,**

Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Praise God, the cup has been poured, and we can drink freely! Have you drank of this cup or have you slid it away?

- **The Vow Is Vocalized**

If the young lady drank from the cup, the son would stand and deliver a speech to let her know that he would begin working on a place for the honeymoon. In John 13, Jesus pushed the cup to His disciples. In John 14, He delivered this speech, "**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 unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.**"

- **The Wedding Is Waited For**

The bride and bridegroom were now betrothed, or engaged. However, the wedding did not take place immediately. The bride did not move in this night. She had to carry on with her daily life while she waited for the bridegroom to come for her. In like manner, we are engaged but must wait for Jesus to come back for us. We still have to wash the dishes and do the laundry, but we can now do it with a new joy because we are in love. The bride also looked different now because she wore a veil on her face. This was a way of letting everyone know that she was spoken for. She was called "sanctified," or "set apart." 2 Timothy 2:21 says, "**If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.**" Everyone who saw the bride now knew that she belonged to someone else. The child of God should also be sanctified. If someone saw you walking down the road, could they tell that you were "sanctified?" I am not talking about a "holier than thou attitude" of self righteousness. I am talking about wearing modest clothing that lets the world know that you are a saint of God. By the way, those bathing suits, halter tops, sleeveless shirts and dresses, shorts, and tight clothing are not modest! I could go on but I think you get the idea.

- **The Redeemer Is Returning**

The bride never knew when the bridegroom would return. She eagerly anticipated it each day. One day he mounted up his horses and his merry men. They rode to where the bride lived and waited a short distance from her home. He shouted and made a great commotion for her to come to him. I think it will sound something like, "**Come up hither**" (Revelation 4:1).

- **The Ceremony Is Celebrated**

The bride and bridegroom stood beneath the man's prayer shawl. For more on the symbolism of this, please read [The Jewish Prayer Shawl](#). The fringes on the prayer shawl represent authority and are called wings. Therefore, she is now under his authority, and he has taken the bride "under his wings" to provide for her. The wedding is conducted, and they enter into a honeymoon chamber for a long period. For the first time, the bridegroom gets to see his bride without all of the fancy clothing and jewelry. He sees her for what she really is. This will be the Judgment Seat of Christ mentioned in 1 Corinthians 3:11-15 and 2 Corinthians 5:10. At this time we saints will be revealed for what we really are. All of our works will be tried as to what sort they are. This is not the Great White Throne Judgment for sinners. That one comes later.

- **The Supper Is Served**

When the newlyweds come out of their room a wedding feast is served and all of the people rejoice. Revelation 19:9 mentions this event by saying, "**And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.**" The couple will now be together for the rest of their lives. **Halleluiah!**