



Day One: The Bridal Selection

It's amazing to feel chosen, wanted and loved by Jesus! The magnitude of what Jesus has done as your bridegroom, however, is so incredible that once again, it's difficult to plumb the width, height and depth of it.

So we are going to begin by looking at process of a Jewish wedding. Why? Because with Jesus, His DNA is reflected everywhere, and we can draw many parallels about how he feels about us and even where we are in the timeframe of the wedding process, for it is entirely prophetic. So hang onto your seat because you are going to be amazed by what you see this week!

The first stage that occurs in a Jewish wedding happens well before the wedding itself. This stage is called 'Bridal Selection'.

As the name implies, this is the timeframe in which the bride is chosen. The father of the groom chooses a bride for his son. Wow, this is amazing! Just stop and think about it. While our cultural practices are different from this, what would you be doing or thinking if you actually were the one who would choose whom your son married?

Would you care who your son married? Would you want the very, very best for him – a suitable match who would be a perfect 'fit' for him – or would you really not think too much about it? Do you think you would go about it flippantly with a 'good enough is close enough' kind of attitude, or would you treat this as a decision of the utmost of importance? Would you spend just a little time searching, or do you think that you would put great energy, care and strategy into finding and choosing the most perfect bride that your son could possibly have?

And most of all, would you pick someone you felt was 'beneath' him, or would you choose someone who you felt was a perfect 'fit' for him?

Of course we would all want the very, very best possible match for our child – and God is no different! He has chosen each of us as the bride for His son, seeing us as Jesus' perfect companion, His perfect 'fit'. Not beneath Him, and not 'close enough' but perfect for Him.



Ephesians 1:3 – 6 (AMP) ...[in His love] He chose us [actually picked us out for Himself as His own] in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy (consecrated and set apart for Him) and blameless in His sight, even above reproach, before Him in love...

God has chosen YOU as the perfect bride for His Son, Jesus.



Let that last statement sink in for a moment. What are you feeling in response to this?



Day Two: My Equal, My Bride

At this point, you may be reeling. “How can you say that?!?! I’m not perfect. How can I be Jesus’ perfect counterpart when He is perfect?” And if we were to look at ourselves through the eyes of our flesh, we would be right. But let’s instead look at what the Scriptures say, specifically Song of Songs 4:9, remembering that Song of Songs is an allegory of Jesus Christ and His bride, not just the romantic account of an ordinary man and woman.

Song of Songs 4:9 (TPT) *For you reach into My heart. With one flash of your eyes I am undone by your love, My beloved one, My equal, My bride. You leave Me breathless – I am overcome by merely a glance from your worshipping eyes and you have stolen My heart. I’m held hostage by your love and by the graces of righteousness upon you!*

Amazing! He actually calls her ‘My equal, My bride.’ And it defies our imaginations to even think about being seen as ‘equal’ in Jesus’ eyes. However, the key is in the last sentence. And it’s very simple.

Righteousness.

That’s how He sees us now that we are in Christ Jesus. He calls us righteous in Him, and it’s not because we’re perfect, it’s not because our performance is wonderful... it’s simply a gift to us by grace as we choose Jesus.

Romans 3:24 (NLT) *Yet God freely and graciously declares that we are righteous. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.*

Philippians 3:9 (NLT) *...I become righteous through faith in Christ...*

Romans 3:26 (AMP) *...He Himself is righteous and...He justifies and accepts as righteous him who has [true] faith in Jesus.*

Amazing but true! When God – Father of the Groom – sees us, He doesn’t regard us after the flesh, but after the Spirit of Christ who is within us.

2 Corinthians 5:16 (NKJV) *Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh...*



And He doesn't go against His own Word. Which is why we can be assured that when He says not to be unequally yoked with others, He will not then turn around and yoke His own Son unequally.

2 Corinthians 6:14 (NKJV) *Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?*

It's obvious that when Jesus looks at us, He sees light, not darkness. He sees righteousness, not sinfulness. It's time that we see that in ourselves and become comfortable with the thought of being the bride of Jesus Christ.

Soak Time

When you see yourself, do you see light or darkness? Righteousness or sinfulness?

Do you live like a chosen daughter?



Day Three: The Bride Price

So the process of the 'Bridal Selection' continues.

The Father of the Groom has searched diligently for the perfect 'fit' for his son and has made His choice. From this point, the father of the groom then approaches the father of the bride with a legal arrangement.

You may assume that the bride has no say in all of this, but in actuality she does get a choice. She must be agreeable to the arrangement and she has the right to reject it. She is offered the cup of wine at the betrothal ceremony and if she takes it, this signifies her agreement to the marriage.

Is any of this sounding familiar yet? The father of the bride (you) is again God. You get to choose whether or not to accept the cup... commonly known to us as the communion cup. When you accept the cup, it signifies your agreement to your union with Christ.

From this point in the Jewish wedding process, the father gives gifts suitable for the bride of His son and the groom pays a bride price.

God has given gifts suitable for the bride of His son, and Jesus has most certainly paid a bride price. God has given us gifts of grace, peace, joy, salvation, Holy Spirit, victory and more. Those gifts have cost Him much – imagine what He went through watching Jesus be scorned and rejected by the world, and then seeing His agony on the cross. Our gifts certainly didn't come cheaply.

John 3:16 (NLT) *For this is how God loved the world; He gave his one and only Son...*

The groom also pays the bride price. He (the groom) sees her, wants her, and pays the price for her. Jesus has done the same for you. He's seen you, wanted you and paid the price for you. And it was costly.

Jesus has paid for us with His life in blood. And note this – the Jewish groom pays the bride price but doesn't know whether or not she will accept the cup until the betrothal ceremony.



Jesus also paid for us well before we were agreeable! He paid the price, just to be able to offer the cup. He paid the price even though He knew we might reject Him. Many have.

He paid in blood, He paid in pain, He paid in rejection, He paid in scorn and He paid in FULL!

1 John 3:16 (NLT) *We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us...*

The price paid not only tells us how much Jesus loves us, it also tells us how much we are worth.

"You are worth His very life. He paid the costliest price for you. Jesus is the measure of your worth. He set your worth as the price of His own life when He paid for you by dying. And remember, the price paid determines the value."
Jeremy Pearsons

"I am worth what God paid for me!" Jim Richards
(How to Stop the Pain)

Soak Time

Do you feel as though you are worth what God paid for you? Who is the best judge of value? You or God?



Day Four: Accepting the Cup

So we've seen that the father of the groom gives gifts to the bride, and the groom pays the bride price. After this, comes the 'Bethrothal Ceremony'... where the groom finds out the answer to his question – will she accept the cup that is offered to her?

They come together in a formal ceremony to drink from the same cup and sign a legally binding document (kettubah) signifying their marriage in all but the physical consummation upon his return for her. This arrangement cannot be dissolved but by divorce. It is legally binding.

Of course, once again there is prophetic correlation between the Jewish wedding and our betrothal ceremony – the communion table.

The covenant for us was sealed when Jesus instituted the last supper, and in this we see a beautiful reflection of the betrothal ceremony of a Jewish wedding. The communion table is actually our betrothal ceremony with Jesus.

When we receive the love of Jesus (signified as He washed the feet of His disciples first, demonstrating their forgiven state before God) and partake in communion with Him (signified by his blood and body), we enter into betrothal with the king. This is a spiritual union that is reinforced each time we partake in communion until he comes again.

Matthew 26:27 – 29 (NLT) *And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them and said, "Each of you drink from it, for this is my blood, which confirms the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out as a sacrifice to forgive the sins of many. Mark my words – I will not drink wine again until the day I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom.*

Once the Jewish bride has accepted the cup offered to her, the Jewish groom doesn't drink wine until they share the cup again at their wedding feast. In the same way, Jesus shared the cup with His disciples during the last supper. He then said that He won't drink wine again until the day He drinks it with them – at their wedding feast in heaven.

Matthew 22:2 (NKJV) *The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son...*



- **See:** Isaiah 62:2 – 5; Song of Songs 3:11; Psalm 45:13 – 15; Matthew 25:10.

So the next time you receive the communion cup and bread, remember that it is YOUR betrothal ceremony! And accept the cup...



Stop right now and take communion. Just you and Jesus. Honour the significance of what you are doing when you accept His cup. Record how you feel, and what He speaks to your heart.



Day Five: The Betrothal Period to the Wedding Feast

The next stage in the Jewish wedding is the 'Betrothal Period', at which time the groom leaves to prepare a suitable place (home or chamber) for he and the bride to live in together. This begins at the end of the 'Betrothal Ceremony' and is the timeframe between then and when the groom returns. But what the bride does not know, is when that will be! All she knows is that while he is getting a place ready for them, she is to make herself ready for his return.

Of course, this sounds distinctly like something Jesus said to His disciples:

John 14:2 (NKJV) ...I go to prepare a place for you.

And indeed He has. He has gone to prepare a place for you and He to dwell together. And the chamber He has prepared is the chamber of your heart. You are the temple of the Holy Spirit which He has prepared and made ready.

While the groom is away, the gifts given by the father of the groom are intended to sustain the bride.

For us, Father God has left us with the gifts of His grace and gifts of the Holy Spirit to sustain us while we wait. These gifts and the waiting are spoken of clearly in the parable of the ten virgins, starting from Matthew 25:1 and continuing to verse 13 (stop and read this now if you'd like).

Matthew 25:1, 5 - 7 (AMP) Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom...While the bridegroom lingered and was slow in coming, they all began nodding their heads, and they fell asleep. But at midnight there was a shout, Behold, the bridegroom! Go out to meet him! Then all those virgins got up and put their own lamps in order.

Matthew 25:10 (AMP) ...the bridegroom came, and those who were prepared went in with him to the marriage feast; and the door was shut.

Matthew 25:13 (AMP) ...you know neither the day nor the hour when the Son of Man will come.

Of course we know that five of these virgins were considered wise because they were ready when the bridegroom came and had sufficient oil (indicative of the oil of the Holy Spirit in our lives) in their lamps. Five were considered



foolish because they weren't prepared and ran out of oil – they were off getting more when the bridegroom came and they missed his return and the marriage feast... they probably thought they had time to prepare but as in the Jewish wedding, the bride would never know when the bridegroom would return. He would often return in the middle of the night, and she would remain in a state of readiness. Whenever he did return it would be to great fanfare, trumpet blowing, and there would be a procession through they streets as they all went into the feast for the wedding, which was a big party of celebration.

In the same way, we've been told to stay alert and ready, just as a the wise virgins were, for our bridegroom to arrive. Jesus too, will return with the blowing of a trumpet and great fanfare. Jesus will come for us and we are told that no one knows the time of his return. But when he comes back to take us into the marriage feast in heaven, will we be ready?

Keep the oil burning in your lamps, girls. It's going to be incredible!

Soak Time

Are you ready and waiting, drawing on the gifts of God's grace the the Holy Spirit to keep you strong until your bridegroom returns and takes you to your wedding?
