

The Ancient Jewish Wedding

A Picture of the Messiah

Many passages in the New Testament make more sense and become clearer when understanding the cultural and historical aspects of a Jewish wedding. To us (in the West) these concepts will probably seem strange. Nevertheless, this is a beneficial study. The purpose of this teaching is to list, in order, the parts of an ancient Jewish wedding and show the relevant New Testament passages where Christ the Messiah (and we, his bride) fulfill these stages.

	Steps	Ancient Custom	Hebrew Words	Bible References
1 st coming	1. Bride _____ Selection/Arrangement	Chosen and approved by the father of the bride. It was common for marriages to be arranged by fathers for their children. This may mean they have not seen each other. Many times a most trusted servant (agent) or friend of the groom would do the search as a representative.	<i>Erusin</i> (engagement) <i>Shiddukhin</i> (match)	John 15:16; 6:44 1 Peter 1:8 <i>(Father, Son, Holy Spirit)</i>
	2. Bridal _____ Price/Dowry	Brides were purchased. Required payment was made by father of the groom to the father of the bride. This was to compensate for all the years of rearing her. The shows how serious the groom is, reflects value of the bride. Consider Abraham (Genesis 24) sending Eliezer (15:2) with 10 camels to find a wife for Isaac (24:4). Jacob and Rachael/Leah (Genesis 29ff)	<i>Tenaim</i> (conditions) <i>Mohar</i> (price – livestock, money, work...)	1 Peter 1:18-19, Ephesians 1:13-14, 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 7:23; Matthew 20:28; 1 Timothy 2:6
	3. The _____ Betrothal/Engagement	Engagement commitment covenant of groom's promise of provision. Once signed and witnessed by two, the couple were considered legally married except for consummation. Typically 1-2 years. Breaking this engagement could only be done by a divorce.	<i>Ketubah</i> (document, contract, bridegroom's promise)	Jeremiah 31:31-34; Matthew 6:28-30; Matthew 6:33; Philippians 4:19; Matthew 1:19
	4. Bride's _____ Consent	The bride still has a choice and a free will in the matter and must accept the offer. She is not forced into this arrangement. The bridegroom is also a gentleman.	<i>Hatan</i> (bridegroom)	Genesis 24:57-58
	5. First _____ Cup	First Cup of the covenant. Cup of proposal/acceptance - drinking from this cup indicates agreement. The second cup would be shared later at the marriage ceremony.	<i>Kiddush</i> (sanctification)	Luke 22:20 Matthew 26:27-29
	6. Bridal _____ Gifts	The bridegroom gives things of value to his bride. Among these may have been a coin. These gifts were symbolic of love and commitment and a memorial.	<i>Kallah</i> (bride, complete) <i>Mattan</i> (gift) <i>Shiluhim</i> (parting gift)	John 14:16-17; 1 Corinthians 12-14; Romans 12:6-8; Ephesians 4:7-12; 1 Timothy 4:14
	7. Ritual _____ Immersion	This baptism in water is a physical and spiritual preparation of the wedding ceremony. There is a separation of the old life to a new life.	<i>Mikvah</i> (pool of living water)	Mark 16:16; 2 Corinthians 5:17 Romans 6:3-6; Titus 3:5
	8. Bridegroom _____ Departure	During the betrothal, the groom now goes to his father's house to prepare a place, the wedding chamber and a Home. The place is to be beautiful and to the groom's father's conditions. If asked when the wedding would be, he would say "I don't know, only my father knows."		John 14:1-3 Luke 5:33-34 Matthew 24:26
	9. Bride's _____ Consecration	Now the Jewish bride is set apart for her bridegroom to remain faithful during this lengthy time until his sudden return. She would need to always be ready with her belongings, lamps, etc... It is said by the sages that on your wedding day the groom and bride stand before God spotless.	<i>Kiddushin</i> (holy)	2 Peter 3:3-4 2 Corinthians 11:2 Ephesians 5:25-27
2 nd coming	10. Bridegroom's _____ Return	Once the chambers were complete to the satisfaction of the Father, he would then give approval for the son to go get his bride. Arrival was unexpected. Many times the bridegroom and friends would come swiftly as a thief near midnight to steal away his bride with a shout and the sound of the SHOFAR breaking the long wait. Various traditions have crowns for the ceremony.	<i>Midrash</i> (teaching) <i>Nissuin</i> (abduction, nuptials) <i>Krenzel</i> (crown)	Matthew 24:27; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18; 5:2; Matthew 25:1-13 ; 1 Peter 5:4; James 1:12; 2 Timothy 4:8; Revelation 14:14
	11. Second _____ Cup	The home taking (<i>Nissuin</i>) to the bridal chamber. This ceremony of the Bridegroom and the Bride alone together lasted for 7 days. Everybody else waits until the bridegroom's friend is told by the groom of the consummation. Then the guests celebrate for 7 days.	<i>Chuppah</i> (canopy, covering, room) <i>Tallit</i> (prayer shawl)	Isaiah 26:20-21 Isaiah 62:5 Ephesians 5:31-32
	12. Marriage _____ Supper	After the 7 days is completed, the bride and groom come out of the wedding chamber and there is a grand wedding feast for all of the invited family, friends, and guests. It is a time of celebration with music and dancing.	<i>Cheder Yihud</i> (seclusion)	Revelation 19:6-9 Revelation 22:17 John 3:29
	13. Depart for _____ New Home	The Bride and Groom now depart, leaving the groom's father's house, for their new home and life together in a home prepared by the bridegroom.		Revelation 21:1
	Other Tradition (modern)	Breaking of the Glass: life is fragile, end to a shattered past, Mazel Tov, destruction of temple		