

JEWISH MARRIAGE CUSTOMS SHOW THE EVENTS OF CHRIST'S RETURN

⇒ **Bible Reading:** Revelation 19:7-9.

⇒ **Aim:**

- To increase our, love, readiness and understanding of Christ's return.

⇒ **Introduction:**

- Bible marriage customs centre in the two events of betrothal and wedding.
 - The relationship between husband and wife, pictures the relationship between God and His people, Israel (**Hosea 1-3**), and between Christ and His church (**Ephesians 5:22-33**).
 - The following stages in a Jewish marriage teach the main events surrounding our salvation by Jesus Christ as our heavenly bridegroom and His Second Coming.

⇒ **1. The Negotiation Stage**

- A price had to be paid by the bridegroom and accepted by the bride.
 - As Rebekah was asked about Isaac, "wilt thou go with this man?" and she said, "I will go", so every sinner must answer the question if he wants Jesus Christ to be His Saviour.
- As Jesus Christ shed His precious blood to pay for our sins and redeem us, so we must accept that price He paid to be saved.
 - "Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your Spirit, which are God's." (**1 Corinthians 6:19-20**).
 - "Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, ...but with the precious blood of Christ..." (**1 Peter 1:18-19**).
- **Question:** Have you accepted the price of Christ's shed blood to pay for your sins to be your Saviour?
- Some gifts the Groom's father has given us that Jewish brides were given are:
 - **a) Servants:** "They sent away Rebekah and her nurse and Abraham's servant." (**Genesis 24:59**).
 - God the Father gives us angels as "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation." (**Hebrews 1:14**).
 - **b) Clothes:** "The servants brought forth...raiment, and gave them to Rebekah." (**Genesis 24:53**).
 - As Abraham's servant gave Rebekah clothing, so God the Father has given believers clothing of Christ's righteousness.
 - "His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white. For the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints." (**Revelation 19:7-8**).
 - "He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." (**Isaiah 61:10**).
 - Jewels represent people won to Christ. (**Malachi 3:17**).
 - The Bride wore embroidered garments (**Psalms 45:13-14**).
 - **c) Spiritual gifts:** "He gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers." (**Ephesians 4:11-12**).

⇒ **2. The Betrothal Stage**

- “Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together.” (**Matthew 1:18**).
 - God’s love and faithfulness to believers are pictured as a betrothal.
 - “I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, in judgment, in lovingkindness, in mercies, and in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord.” (**Hosea 2:19-20**).
 - **See Ephesians 5:23,24,27,28,30,32.**
 - The espoused bride would wear a veil that said to this world, “I’m not my own, I’ve been bought with a price.”
 - God wants us to wear the veil of separation so people know we belong to Christ, and not to the world.
 - “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world...” (**1 John 2:15-17**).
- ⇒ **3. The Preparation Stage**
 - The groom would go home to prepare for the wedding and to make everything ready.
 - He could not return for his bride until his father said, “go get your bride.”
 - So Jesus Christ is preparing a place in heaven for His Bride the church.
 - “In my Father’s house are many mansions...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.” (**John 14:2-3**).
- ⇒ **4. The Snatching away of the Bride.**
 - When all things were ready, the groom would come in the night to the bride’s place.
 - Before he entered the room, he would call out “Behold, the bridegroom cometh.” (**Matthew 25:6**).
 - He could not take his bride unannounced.
 - So it will be at Christ’s return from heaven for His Bride the church.
 - **See 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18**
 - **Question:** Are you ready for Christ’s return?
 - Would you be left behind to enter the 7 year tribulation?
 - Would you be ashamed to face Christ because of some sins in your life?
 - Get right with God today.
 - Christ will come one day, catch away His bride from this wicked earth, and bring her into the wedding chamber of heaven.
 - This was known as the wedding “procession” where the groom (Christ) and His friends (OT saints as in **John 3:29**) went with the bride (NT church) to the groom’s house, with singing, for the marriage supper.
 - “She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions (OT Jews) that follow her shall be brought unto thee with gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king’s palace (heaven).” (**Psalm 45:14-15**).
- ⇒ **5. The Examination Stage (The Judgment Seat of Christ)**
 - The groom would remove his bride’s veil to see if she really was the bride he had sacrificed for.
 - (Jacob got the wrong wife Leah when he thought he had married Rachel).
 - So, one day, Christ will remove the veil from each believer at the Judgment Seat of Christ and -
 - **See 1 Corinthians 3:13-15.**
 - **See 2 Corinthians 5:10.**

- **See Daniel 12:3** - “They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.”
- **Question:** How will you feel when your life’s work for Christ is examined & made manifest for all to see?
 - Will you receive a reward, or will you suffer loss by all your useless activities being burned up.
- ⇒ **6. The Consummation stage lasting 7 days (years).**
 - While earth is enduring the horrors of the 7 year Tribulation, Christ and His Bride the Church will be enjoying the greatest marriage of all time.
 - Parents and friends would first bless the couple and wish them well (**Genesis 24:60; Ruth 4:11**).
 - The father of the bride drew up a written marriage contract, called the “Ketuba” in the Mishnah.
 - The bride chamber was prepared.
 - The parents escorted the bride and groom to this room (**Genesis 29:23**).
 - “Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber.” (**Psalm 19:5**).
 - Before coming together, prayer was offered by husband and wife.
- ⇒ **7. The Marriage Feast (Revelation 19:7-9)**
 - The Marriage Feast continued for 7 days as in **Genesis 29:27**:
 - “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready (v.7).
 - Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the lamb.” (**Revelation 19:7-9**).
 - These celebrations were times of rejoicing and music (“gladness and rejoicing” **Psalm 45:15**).
 - All believers will be present at this marriage feast.
 - Contrast this happy marriage feast of Christ with the unholy feast of antichrist’s armies being eaten by birds (**Rev. 19:17-19**), and the antichrist burning his whore and eating her flesh. (**Rev. 17:16**).
 - **Question:** Will you be at the happy marriage supper of the Lamb?
- ⇒ **8. Setting up House Stage.**
 - We will do this with Jesus when we return to earth with Him.
 - “The LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee”. (**Zechariah 14:5**).
 - The LORD shall be king over all the earth (**Zech. 14:9**).
 - We shall return with Christ to earth which will be our home for 1000 years of peace and happiness, which we will set up for God’s glory.
 - This 1000 year rule of Christ will be the greatest time of joy, peace and prosperity the world has ever known.
 - To some Jesus will say:
 - “because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.” (**Luke 19:17**).
 - “And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.” (**Rev. 5:10**).
 - **Question:**
 - Are you proving yourself faithful to Christ now?

- Let us live for Christ now so He will say to us “Well done thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou unto the joy of thy Lord.” (**Matthew 25:21**).