

# Biblical Marriage

## Jesus and His Bride ( The Church )



Insights from a Jewish wedding process painting a beautiful biblical portrait.

Matthew 16:18 (NKJV) “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”

Ephesians 3:10-11 (NIV) “His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Ephesians 5:22-33 (NKJV) 22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. 24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so [let] the wives [be] to their own husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. 28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord [does] the church. 30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 31 “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife [see] that she respects [her] husband.“

The **ancient Jewish wedding tradition** provides a powerful lens through which we can understand the relationship between **Jesus Christ** and **The Church**.

Several steps in a traditional Jewish wedding closely mirror events in the life and teachings of Jesus and the New Testament story of redemption.   The Bible begins with a marriage and will end with a marriage.

### 1. The Marriage Covenant (Betrothal)

In ancient Jewish culture, a marriage began with a **betrothal covenant**. The groom would offer a **bride price** to the bride's family to seal the agreement.

Parallel:

We believe Jesus paid the **ultimate price** for us, through His sacrifice. He gives His bride "gifts" through The Holy Spirit to use while we await His return.

- This covenant idea echoes teachings in **the letter to the Ephesians** about Christ giving Himself for the church.
- **Ephesians 1:13-14 (NIV)** "And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is a **deposit guaranteeing** our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of His glory."
- **2 Corinthians 1:21-22** (NIV) "Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, 22 set His seal of ownership on us, and put His Spirit in our hearts as a **deposit, guaranteeing** what is to come."

The betrothal made the couple **legally bound**, even though the wedding celebration had not yet happened.

*"We have been bought at a price."* - *1 Corinthians 6:20 & 7:23 says.*

## **[2. The Cup of the Covenant](#)**

During the betrothal ceremony, the groom offered a **cup of wine** to the bride. If she drank from it, she accepted the covenant.

Parallel:

- At the **Last Supper**, Jesus offered the cup and said it represented the **new covenant**. Recorded in the gospel of Luke & others. **Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25.**

The imagery suggests acceptance of a covenant relationship.

### **3. The Groom Prepares a Place**

After the betrothal, the groom returned to his father's house to **prepare a place for his bride**, often building a room onto the family home.

Parallel:

- Jesus told His disciples in **Gospel of John 14:2–3**:

“I go to prepare a place for you.”

The idea is that the bridegroom will return later to bring the bride to the prepared home.

### **4. The Waiting Period**

During this time:

- The bride prepared herself. Remaining faithful to her husband to be. Process of sanctification, purification and cleansing. Living a life set apart. Not messing around with someone else. Living in purity. Keeping your heart only for HIM.

- The groom prepared the home.
- The exact time of the groom's return was often **unknown to the bride**. She had to always be ready.

Parallel:

- As Christ followers, we are called to live in readiness for the return of **Jesus Christ**. No man knows the time or hour. He will come like a thief in the night. He will come suddenly like lightning strikes from the east to the west. When people say “peace and safety”, be alert and aware. Remain vigilant. Look out for His coming. Living with a daily expectation.
- This theme appears frequently in the teachings recorded in the **Gospel of Matthew**.

## [5. The Surprise Arrival of the Groom](#)

Traditionally, the groom arrived **unexpectedly**, often at night, with a shout and the blowing of a trumpet.

Parallel:

- The New Testament describes Christ's return with a **trumpet call**.
- This imagery appears in *1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 (NKJV)* “*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. 17 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. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.”*

The bride and her attendants would go out to meet him.

## **6. The Wedding Celebration**

Finally, the couple would celebrate with a **large wedding feast** lasting several days.

Parallel:

- The Bible ends with the **Marriage Supper of the Lamb** in **Book of Revelation**. Oh, what a glorious day that will be. To be in the presence of The Lamb, The Living God, for all of eternity. Where there will be no more pain, no more sin, no more suffering, no more fear, no more death. Only eternal inexpressible joy. It's hard to imagine living in a sinful, fallen world.

Here:

- **Jesus Christ** is the bridegroom
- The **Christian Church** is the bride.

This feast symbolizes the **final union between Christ and His people**.

### **The Big Picture**

Many theologians see the Bible's story framed by marriage imagery:

- **Genesis** – the first marriage (Adam and Eve)
- **The Gospels** – Jesus described as the bridegroom

- **Revelation** – the final wedding feast - **Revelation 19:1-10**

✨ **A fascinating detail:**

Jesus performed His **first recorded miracle at a wedding in Cana**, described in the **Gospel of John**—turning water into wine. Many scholars see this as symbolically pointing to the **joy and abundance of God’s covenant relationship with His people**.

Jesus is coming back soon. Our marriages should be a picture reflecting His relationship with His bride the church.

Are you ready? If not, why not? Would you like to be ready? Starts with making Jesus The Lord of your life.

Read Luke 14:15-24 (Parable of the great supper.