

Wedding of the Messiah

Life's Greatest Treasure

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 to Myself;
 That where I am, there you may be also.
 John 14:2-3

In today's hectic modern day life, it is easy to get so caught up in the challenges of everyday living that one can lose sight of where they are actually headed -- the path on which all Believers are traveling. *Y'shua* had some important things to say about the cares of daily life and how we are to handle them, so we can focus on what is important.

There is no doubt, that each one of us must faithfully accept the personal responsibilities we have been given and deal with them as effectively as possible. However, life is not just a matter of dealing with daily tasks, or with the need to earn an adequate living to support ourselves and our families (although that is a very necessary matter). It is also important to put all of life's worries into a proper perspective in relationship to the *Big Picture*.

~ Storing Up Treasure ~

First of all, *Y'shua* pointed out that it is important to identify what the word "treasure" means to each one of us as individuals -- for all of us tend to focus on what we consider to be our "treasure."

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."
 (Matt. 6:21)

For example, many (if not most) Americans believe that treasure consists of material things. This is natural, for we are physical creatures and we have physical needs. However, it seems that our society is overly possessed with a need to collect as much "stuff" as possible, thinking that material "things" will

bring happiness and success, filling the spiritual void so many feel. *Y'shua* plainly said that an inordinate love of money (or things) can overwhelm one's love for God:

"The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good [a Good or Generous Eye], your whole body will be full of light. ²³ But if your eye is bad [an Evil or Stingy Eye], your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

"²⁴ No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon [Gk. *mammonas* = treasure]."
 (Matt. 6:22-24)

This is why *Y'shua* said what He did to a wealthy young man who professed to be keeping the commandments and wanted to follow Him:

"The young man said to Him, 'All these things [commandments] I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?'

"²¹ Jesus [*Y'shua*] said to him, 'If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.'

"²² But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

"²³ Then Jesus [*Y'shua*] said to His disciples, 'Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. ²⁴ And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than

for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."
 (Matt. 19:20-24)

Apparently, the young man had no family responsibilities, so he would have been able to sell all he had without doing harm to others -- yet he chose to cling to his "treasures" instead of following the Word of Life.

~ That Which Is Important ~

Instead of hoarding up this world's treasures in this life, *Y'shua* said we need to place everything we have, including our very being -- physical and spiritual -- into the hands of His Father and our Father -- the great, awesome, and mighty God of the universe. When we do that, our material worries will become greatly diminished and may, in time, even disappear. However, it takes diligent practice to become proficient at setting aside material worries in order to overcome the need to gather more material goods:

"Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?

"²⁶ Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? ²⁸ So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; ²⁹ and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰ Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?'"
 (Matt. 6:25-30)

There is something far more important, than material well being, which needs to capture our full attention -- that is preparing ourselves for our coming role in the *Kingdom of Heaven* (here on earth). That is, indeed, *Life's Greatest Treasure* -- it is the very purpose of our lives:

"For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ But **seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.**

³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

(Matt. 6:32-34)

Once you have discovered this *Greatest of Treasures*, do everything within your power to assure you will not lose it:

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

(Matt. 13:44)

Take care to do, each and every day, those physical things which are pressing and needful for life. However, while performing your daily tasks, try to keep your mind focused on the ultimate goal -- obtaining your place in the *Kingdom of Heaven* as a king and/or priest under Messiah *Y'shua*.

~ More Than a King ~

But *Y'shua* is even more to us than our soon coming King -- He is also our *Betrothed Husband*:

"For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ [Messiah]. ³ But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ [Messiah]."

(II Cor. 11:2-3)

What does it mean to be *Betrothed*? It is far more than the modern day American concept of an engagement which can be broken at will by either party. *Betrothal*, as it was practiced in the 1st century *Ancient Wedding*, meant the couple was bound in a legal marriage that had not yet been consummated. It could only be dissolved by a legal divorce (called a

Get גֵּט in Hebrew). A *Get* could only be issued by the Bridegroom.

Now we, as *Messianic Believers*, are in a state of *Betrothal* to *Y'shua* -- the very *Word of God*:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."

(John 1:1-4)

Y'shua came into the earth as that *Word* made flesh. During His time here He *Tabernacled* (lived in the temporary shelter of His flesh) among men and became the Savior of all mankind (if they will only accept Him as such). He also became the *Betrothed Husband* of those whom the Father has selected to be part of the *First Resurrection*:

"But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ [Messiah], and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

(Rev. 20:5-6)

As members of the *Bride of Messiah*, we need to keep our minds and hearts focused each and every day on the imminent return of our Husband *Y'shua*. When that day arrives, He will take us to the *Bridal Chamber* for the *Consummation* of the marriage. Then we will be clothed in spirit bodies just like *Y'shua*:

"Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

(I John 3:2)

With that in mind, let us proceed to examine the *Ancient Hebrew Wedding*, so that we may understand more deeply what is really important in this life, as we await the arrival of our Husband, *King Messiah*.

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~ The Ancient Wedding ~

And as the bridegroom rejoices
Over the bride,
So shall your God rejoice over you.
Isaiah 62:5

Weddings were much different in ancient Israel and Judah than they are in modern America. The entire attitude of how mates were selected, how the arrangements were made, what the engagement period was like, and how the actual marriage took place, were far different from today's customs. In addition, the roles which the parents of the Bride and Bridegroom played in the wedding were also much different. For example, in today's wedding the most important person in the wedding party, outside of the Bride and Groom, is the mother of the Bride. Often times she is more in control of the actual wedding than is the Bride herself. However, in the ancient wedding, it was the father of the Bridegroom who played the most important role.

The Ancient Wedding was divided into three major stages:

- ◆ The Match -- *Shidduch* שִׁידוך (Shee-dookh).
- ◆ The Betrothal -- *Eyrusim* אֵירוּסִים (Ehr-oo-seem').
- ◆ The Nuptial/Consummation -- *Nissuim* נִשְׂוּיִם (Nee-soo-eem').

In addition, there were a number of subsections within these stages that need to be considered if one is to fully understand how the *Ancient Wedding* was practiced and how it relates to our current relationship with *Y'shua*. Each part of the wedding had a very important function and could not be skipped without diminishing the entire process and thereby possibly placing the marriage relationship on an infirm foundation.

~ The Match ~

~ Finding a Suitable Mate ~

It stands to reason that no marriage can take place without there being the matching of a man and a woman. In today's world this usually means that a

man and woman choose each other through a process called courtship.

Such was not the case in the ancient world, for in those days marriages were arranged. This custom is still practiced in some societies today, especially in the world of strict Orthodox Judaism.

Anciently, the *Shidduch* (Match) was often arranged by the respective fathers of the Bridegroom and the Bride. However, sometimes it was made by a third party called a *Shadcan* שדכן (shawd'-khahn) or Matchmaker.

The purpose of matching two people for marriage was so the couple could avoid the trauma that sometimes comes from a marriage that is based more on physical attractiveness and hormones than on good sense. Of course, there was no guarantee that an arranged marriage would be any happier, especially if the fathers were more interested in making a match for their son or daughter that was based on meeting their own needs or desires (personal status, political needs, or economic considerations) rather than on those of their offspring.

There was one escape clause to the arranged *Shidduch* (Match) -- both parties (the potential Bridegroom and the Bride) had the right of refusal. They did not have to marry the person that had been selected for them, although they may well have been under extreme pressure to do so. However, that decision had to be made prior to the completion of the *Betrothal Ceremony*.

~ The First Match ~

It is important to remember that the concept of matching a man and woman did not originate with mankind, for the very first man and woman who ever lived on earth had their mates chosen for them by their Creator. *Adam* אָדָם (Ah-dahm') and *Chava* חַוָּה (Hah-vah' = Eve) were created explicitly for each other, and therefore were perfectly matched from the beginning:

"And the LORD [YHVH] God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.' . . .

"²¹ And the LORD [YHVH] God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. ²² Then the rib which the LORD [YHVH] God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.

"²³ And Adam said:

**"This is now bone of my bones
And flesh of my flesh;
She shall be called Woman,
Because she was taken out
of Man.'" (Gen. 2:18, 21-23)**

According to Jewish tradition the matching of every couple is done by God Himself, so the husband and wife can be brought into a unique oneness. Therefore, no two marriages are exactly the same, however all marriages are to function in a manner in which each party complements the other:

"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." (Gen. 2:24)

According to Scripture, it is evident that husbands and wives have different but equally important roles to play in the marriage relationship. This relationship, while difficult enough when both parties are striving to follow the instruction book of God (the *Torah*), is even more difficult when sin is brought into it by one or both parties. The concept that husband and wife are equal before God, but fulfilling different roles in a marriage, is evident from the writings of Peter:

"... being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered." (I Peter 3:7b)

>>> *The Bride of Messiah:* As *Messianic Believers in Messiah Y'shua*, we have been individually selected by the Father to be a member of the *Bride of Messiah*:

"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. ⁷ Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. ⁸ For I have given to them the words which

You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.

"I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. ¹⁰ And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them." (John 17:6-10)

~ The Betrothal ~

>>> *The Ancient Wedding:* At an appropriate time following the *Match*, the couple would move on to the *Eyrusim* (Betrothal). The *Betrothal* is divided into four segments: the *Negotiation*, the *Ceremony*, the *Promise*, and the *Waiting Period*.

~ The Negotiation ~

Anciently, when a couple became of marriageable age it was time for the *Negotiation* to commence. Traditionally this would take place when the *Hatan* חָתָן (Hah-tahn = Bridegroom) paid a visit to the father of the *Kallah* כַּלָּה (Kahl-lah' = Bride) for the specific purpose of negotiating a marriage contract with him. This contract was called, in Hebrew, a *Ketuvah* כְּתוּבָה (Keh-too'-vah), and this document still plays an important role in the modern Jewish wedding. The *Ketuvah* spelled out all of the terms and conditions of the forthcoming marriage. It was also a document written to protect the wife should the husband decide at some future time that he wished to divorce her, for it was the *Ketuvah* that guaranteed the wife a suitable settlement if such a situation should develop.

>>> *The Bride of Messiah:* Our *Ketuvah* is the *Written Torah* which was given to our fathers at Mt. Sinai -- a *Ketuvah* which *Y'shua* did not destroy:

"Do not think that I came to destroy [kataluo = dissolve] the Law [Nomos = Torah or Instruction in Heb.] or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill [pleroo = make complete]. ¹⁸ For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass

away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

¹⁹ 'Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.' (Matt. 5:17-20)

>>> *The Ancient Wedding:* However, the Children of Israel were not able to keep their *Ketuvah* (*Torah*) agreement because of the weakness of their flesh:

"For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit." (Rom. 8:3-4)

>>> *The Bride of Messiah:* In contrast, the *Bride of Messiah* can keep the *Torah* commands because she has been given a *New Covenant* -- one which allows the *Torah* commands to be written on her heart as opposed to stone. Therefore, the *Bride of Messiah* is capable of obeying from the heart, and when she does stumble, the blood of *Y'shua* is there to wipe away her sin so that she might be placed back on the right track:

"But now He [*Y'shua*] has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. ⁷ For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.

¹⁸ Because finding fault with them [*the people*], He says:

'Behold, the days are coming,' says the LORD [*YHVH*], 'when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah

-- ⁹ not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD [*YHVH*].

¹⁰ 'For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days,' says the LORD [*YHVH*]: I will put My laws [*Torah* = *our Ketuvah terms*] in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ¹¹ None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, "Know the LORD [*YHVH*]," for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. ¹² For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.'" [from Jer. 31:31-34]

(Heb. 8:6-12)

* *The Bride Price* *

>>> *The Ancient Wedding:* Included in the *Ketuvah* would be the *Bride Price*; the amount which the *Hatan* (Bridegroom) would pay to the father of the *Kallah* (Bride) for allowing him to marry her. Sometimes, if the *Hatan* was very poor, the *Bride Price* would not be paid up front, but would be added to the stipulated divorce amount should he ever leave her.

While the *Bride Price* was usually money, it could also consist of other valuables or even labor. We find both of these examples within the marriage negotiations of the Patriarchs.

In the first example, the father of the Bridegroom (*Avraham*) sent a servant to negotiate both the match and the *Bride Price*. This, of course, is the story of the marriage of *Yitzchak* יִצְחָק (Yeetz' hahk = Isaac) to *Rivkah* רִבְקָה (Reev'-kah = Rebecca) (Gen. 24).

Another one of the Patriarchs went back to that same household many years later to find a suitable, God matched, Bride for himself. That Patriarch was none other than *Yitzchak's* son, *Ya'akov* יַעֲקֹב (Yah' ah'-kohv = Jacob).

Ya'akov also found a young maiden by a well. Perhaps it was the very same

well where the servant of *Avraham* found *Rivkah*, his mother. This time it was the daughter of *Lavan*, (*Rivkah's* brother) who came forth to water the flock. Her name was *Rachel* רָחֵל (Rah-kehl'). *Ya'akov* was so taken by *Rachel* that he offered a *Bride Price* that *Lavan* could not refuse:

"Now Jacob loved Rachel; and he said, 'I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter.'" (Gen. 29:18)

>>> *The Bride of Messiah:* Our *Bride Price* has already been paid by our Husband *Y'shua* -- with His own blood:

"And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear; ¹⁸ knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ [*Messiah*], as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." (I Pet. 1:17-19)

"Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." (I Cor. 6:19-20)

>>> *The Ancient Wedding:* Anciently, once the *Shidduch* (Match) had been made, and the *Negotiations* were completed, it became time for the next step in the wedding process.

~ The Betrothal Ceremony ~

Everything was now in order for the actual *Betrothal Ceremony* to take place. In Hebrew this ceremony is called the *Eyrusim* (Betrothal). The prospective *Kallah* (Bride) was called into the room. The *Hatan* (Bridegroom) had already made known his intentions to go through with the marriage by successfully negotiating the *Ketuvah* (Marriage Contract) with the

father of the Bride. Now it was her turn to say "yes" or "no."

As the daughter appeared before her Father and prospective *Hatan* (Bridegroom), her mind must have been filled with both anticipation and apprehension. She needed to have complete trust that her father had selected a suitable mate and that he had negotiated a favorable *Ketuvah* (Marriage Contract) for her.

After the daughter entered the room, and was presented to the prospective *Hatan*, he would pour a glass of wine and hold it out to her. If she accepted the cup and drank of it, they were, at that very moment in time, legally married, for she had accepted the "Cup of the Covenant." They were, now considered to be husband and wife, and could not abandon the union unless a written *Bill of Divorcement*, (*Get*) was issued.

This "Cup of the Covenant," from which they drank, is called the *Kiddish* קִדֵּשׁ (Kid'-desh) cup. *Kiddish* comes from the Hebrew word *Kadosh* קָדוֹשׁ (Kah-dohsh) which means "holy" or "set apart." The symbolic significance of partaking of this cup of wine is that the young couple were now set apart for each other and must forsake any thoughts or actions that might mar the holiness of their union.

>>> *The Bride of Messiah*: The initial *Betrothal Ceremony* between *Y'shua* and His Bride took place at the *Passover Seder* (the *Last Supper*) when He introduced new meanings to the ancient traditional symbols of the bread and the wine:

"And as they were eating, Jesus [*Y'shua*] took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body.'

"²⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you. ²⁸For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. ²⁹ But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.'" (Matt. 26:26-29)

For all of us, who have come along much later in time, our *Betrothal* to *Y'shua* is sealed in two ways. First of all by being immersed* (baptized) in the name of *Y'shua*:

"Then Peter said to them, **'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ [*Y'shua HaMashiach*] for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.'**" (Acts 2:38-39)

The second way we seal our *Betrothal* is by partaking of the "Cup of the Covenant" each year at *Passover*:

"For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus [*Y'shua*] on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.'

"²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.'

"²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.'" (I Cor. 11:23-26)

~ *The Betrothal Promise* ~

>>> *The Ancient Wedding*: Before leaving the *Betrothal Ceremony*, the *Hatan* (Bridegroom) traditionally gave a brief speech which was meant to comfort his *Kallah* (Bride). It would go something like this:

"Because we have both partaken of the "Cup of the Covenant," we are now legally married. However, we cannot yet live together as husband and wife. I must return to my father's house and prepare the *Chuppah* חֻפּוּת (Who'-pah = the *Wedding*

Chamber) for you. Because I go to do that, you can be assured that I will return for you as soon as my Father gives his permission. Then I will bring you to the *Chuppah* for our honeymoon. After that, we will be together for the rest of our lives, and wherever I live, that is also where you will live. In the meantime, you must stay here in your father's house until I come for you."

With that farewell, the *Hatan* would take leave of his *Kallah* and return to the house of his father. From that point on, the *Kallah* was required to veil herself whenever she went out in public, so that everyone would know she was *Betrothed*, but no one would know her actual identity. Just like today, where the identity of the individual members of the *Bride of Messiah* is hidden because one cannot know for sure who are the *Wheat* and who are the *Tares* -- for outwardly they all look identical (Matt. 13).

>>> *The Bride of Messiah*: Our *Betrothed Husband*, *Y'shua*, also made a *Betrothal Promise* to His Disciples (and through them to all of us) at the *Last Supper*:

"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ² 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. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴And where I go you know, and the way you know.'" (John 14:1-4)

~ *The Waiting Period* ~

>>> *The Ancient Wedding*: The young couple then entered the longest and most trying time of the *Eyrusim* (*Betrothal*) -- the *Waiting Period*. The Bridegroom returned to his father's house to prepare the *Chuppah* (Wedding Chamber), while the Bride continued living in her father's house and began her preparations for the final stage of the wedding. During this time the Bridegroom and the Bride did not

*Note: All participants in a *Passover Seder* would have been ritually immersed prior to the *Seder*. A ritually impure person could not partake of the *Passover*.

see each other. The *Waiting Period* usually lasted about one year.

>>> *The Bride of Messiah*: Believers have now been in a *Waiting Period* for nearly 2000 earth years. We long for our Husband to return for us so that we may be fully married to Him -- but we must wait until the full membership of the *Bride of Messiah* has been completed. During these past 2000 years, a great multitude of men and women have been called into the *Bride of Messiah* and gone to sleep in their graves while awaiting their *Resurrection* when *Y'shua* appears:

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. ⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed -- ⁵²in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written:

'Death is swallowed up in victory.'

⁵⁵ O Death, where is your sting?
O Hades, where is your victory?'

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ [*Y'shua HaMashiach*]."

(I Cor. 15:50-57)

* *The Chuppah* *

>>> *The Ancient Wedding*: During the time of separation, the *Hatan* (Bridegroom) was extremely busy. He was responsible for preparing a *Chuppah* (*Wedding Chamber*) that would satisfy his beautiful *Kallah* (Bride) -- one that was sufficiently stocked so they could live in it for a full seven days without coming out. That meant he had to make provision for

adequate food and water, plus the necessary sanitary facilities.

The tradition of the *Chuppah* has its foundation in other Scriptures as well. For example, in Psalm 19, the joy that a Bridegroom feels when he finally emerges from the *Chuppah*, after spending seven full days in deep intimacy with his bride, is compared to the shining of the full sun in the heavens:

"The heavens declare the glory of God;

And the firmament shows His handiwork. . . .

^{4b} In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun,

⁵ Which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber [*Chuppah*],

And rejoices like a strong man to run a race."

(Psalm 19:1, 4b-5)

>>> *The Bride of Messiah*: Today, our Husband *Y'shua* is preparing a *Chuppah* in heaven for our wedding. During this time He is also busy being the *Intercessor* between the members of the *Bride* and our Father in heaven, for it is through *Y'shua* that our prayers to the Father are heard and answered:

"For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus [*Messiah Y'shua*], 'who gave Himself a ransom for all, ...'"

(I Tim. 2:5-6)

"There is also an antitype which now saves us -- baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ [*Y'shua HaMashiach*], ²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him."

(I Pet. 3:21-22)

* *The Father's Responsibilities* *

>>> *The Ancient Wedding*: Whether it was a mansion or a small room, the *Hatan* (Bridegroom) was not allowed to return for his *Kallah* (Bride) until his father approved the *Chuppah*.

Not only did the father of the Bridegroom have a responsibility to see that his son had prepared the *Chuppah* properly, he also had to determine if his son was adequately prepared for marriage. In addition, he also had to be aware of the condition of his son's Bride. Was she ready to take on the responsibilities of being a wife and mother? The father would not send his son to fetch the bride until she too was adequately prepared for marriage.

Thus, the responsibility of the father of the Bridegroom was very great. He was the one individual who had total control over when the final stage of the wedding would take place.

>>> *The Bride of Messiah*: *Y'shua* Himself said that only the Father knew when He would return to this earth to fetch His *Bride*:

"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only."

(Matt. 24:36)

* *The Bride's Preparations* *

>>> *The Ancient Wedding*: While the *Hatan* prepared himself and the *Chuppah* for the forthcoming *Nuptials/Consummation*, the *Kallah* too was busy. She had to learn how to be a good wife. Thus, the Bride began a year long training program, usually under the supervision of her mother. She learned how to prepare tasty and nourishing food. She learned how to keep a clean house under the strict laws of *kashrut* כַּשְׁרוּת (kash-root' = ritual and food preparation rules). She also learned how to make herself attractive to her husband through the proper use of cosmetics, jewelry and clothing.

>>> *The Bride of Messiah*: Today's *Bride* must also be in a constant state of preparation (see our booklets and recorded teachings on *Preparing the Bride*) in order to be ready when *Y'shua* returns. She too, must learn how to make herself beautiful -- but her beauty must go much deeper than the skin -- it primarily involves the heart:

"Do not let your adornment be merely outward -- arranging the hair,

wearing gold, or putting on *fine* apparel -- ⁴ rather *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible *beauty* of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. ⁵ For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, ..." (I Pet. 3:3-5)

~ Nuptials and Consummation ~

>>> *The Ancient Wedding*: The final stage of the wedding process consisted of the *Nissuim* (Nuptial/Consummation). This was when the *Betrothed* husband and wife first had conjugal relations and began living together. To properly facilitate this final stage there were yet other preparations that had to be made. The first of these was the selecting of the attendants.

*** The Bridesmaids ***

The *Kallah* (Bride) would select a number of Bridesmaids who would assist her with her wedding preparations. The actual number is unknown but in the Gospel of Matthew the number ten is mentioned:

"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom." (Matt. 25:10)

Whether this was a traditional number or not is unknown. The purpose of the number ten, in this parable, was to signify completeness. E.W. Bullinger, in his book, *Number In Scripture*, comments about the number ten:

"...ten is one of the perfect numbers, and signifies the perfection of Divine order ... Completeness of order, marking the entire round of anything, is, therefore, the ever-present signification of the number ten. It implies that nothing is wanting; that the number and order are perfect; that the whole cycle is complete." (p. 243).

*** The Male Attendants ***

The male attendants were two in number and sometimes referred to as the "Two Witnesses."

One of these witnesses is said to have represented *Moshe* מֹשֶׁה (Mowshay = Moses) and the other *Eliyahu* אֵלִיָּהוּ (El-lee-yah'-hoo = Elijah the Prophet). *Moshe* was the attendant for the *Kallah* (Bride), while *Eliyahu* was the attendant for the *Hatan* (Bridegroom). In Jewish teaching, the children of Israel were considered to be the Bride of *YHVH* (having been married at Mount Sinai) and they were attended to by *Moshe*. Therefore, the *Moshe* attendant (in the *Ancient Wedding*) was the one responsible to see that the *Kallah* was ready for the arrival of the *Hatan*, and he would be the one to escort her out to meet him. In the case of the children of Israel, they actually requested that *Moshe* take over the responsibility of being their mediator, even after the full marriage had taken place:

"Then they said to Moses, 'You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.'" (Ex. 20:19)

Meanwhile the *Eliyahu* attendant was designated to announce to the entire community that the *Hatan* (Bridegroom) was on his way.

All of these attendants (the Bridesmaids plus *Moshe* and *Eliyahu*) had to be carefully selected, for they all played significant roles in preparation for the *Nuptial/Consummation Ceremony*.

>>> *The Bride of Messiah*: Today we await the coming of *Elijah* to announce the eminent return of the Messiah:

"And His disciples asked Him, saying, 'Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?'"

"Jesus [Y'shua] answered and said to them, 'Indeed, Elijah is coming first and will restore all things.'" (Matt. 17:10-11)

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet

Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD [YHVH].

⁶ And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."

(Mal. 4:5-6)

As members of the *Bride*, we must have our spirits tuned to listen for the announcement of the heavenly *Voice* calling us in the spirit of *Eliyahu*:

"And I heard another voice from heaven saying, 'Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.'" (Rev. 18:4)

*** The Mikvah ***

>>> *The Ancient Wedding*: Another important aspect of the Ancient Wedding was the immersion of the *Kallah* (Bride) in a *Mikvah* מִקְוָה (meek'-vah) or immersion pool just prior to the actual *Nuptial/Consummation Ceremony*. In the modern Jewish wedding the Bride's immersion takes place the evening before the actual wedding.

In Jewish teaching, ritual immersion is performed anytime a person changes their status. Therefore, the *Kallah* must be immersed just prior to the *Nuptial/Consummation* of her wedding, because she is changing status from being *Betrothed* to being fully married. The ritual immersion provided her with the ritual cleanliness that she needed so that she would not bring impurity to her marriage bed. It is important to note here that the purpose of the immersion was not to cleanse the body, for the individual being immersed is expected to be fully bathed prior to the immersion. The purpose was to establish ritual purity through the waters of immersion.

*** The Coming of the Bridegroom ***

Everything would now be ready for the *Hatan* (Bridegroom) to go and fetch his *Kallah* (Bride). His father would have checked the *Chuppah* for one last

time and approved it as being in proper order. He would also have deemed that his son was prepared to take on the responsibilities of full married life. Likewise, the reports the father would have received concerning the Bride also would have been favorable. All was ready. The father would then say to his son, "Go and fetch your *Kallah*."

At that point feverish activity would begin to take place. The *Hatan* would call his two attendants. The one representing *Moshe* would contact the Bride's family to make sure that everything on that end was properly prepared. Now it was time for everyone involved to swing into action and take care of all the last minute preparations.

In the *Ancient Wedding* practice, the Bride would have had sufficient time to perform a ritual immersion between the time she was warned of the impending arrival of her Husband and the actual time that he arrived to take her to the *Chuppah*.

The *Kallah* would call for her Bridesmaids, and then go to the prescribed place to perform a ritual immersion. Upon returning home she would dress in her wedding gown, clean and white. She would apply her makeup and put on her jewelry. At that point the *Kallah* was radiant, she was beautiful, and she was so excited that she could hardly contain herself.

Meanwhile the *Hatan* would also be preparing himself. Whether he too went through a ritual immersion is unclear, but that is quite probable. After all, he also was experiencing a change of status -- from being a betrothed husband to being fully married.

At last all was ready. The *Hatan* would then set out for the *Kallah's* house with his *Eliyahu* attendant, plus some other friends. By that time it would have been night, so they would take lamps full of oil to light the way. They also would take a *shofar* שֹׁפָר (show'-fahr = ram's horn trumpet) with them to blow as they proceeded through the village streets. It was a very noisy event and all the town would be awakened by the sounds of the *shofarim* and the shouts of joy from the *Hatan's* entourage. The townspeople would get

out of bed to look and see who was going to fetch their *Kallah*. Once they had identified him, they would be expected to dress and hurry over to the home of the father of the Bridegroom so they could be there when the happy couple arrived.

~ Stealing the Bride ~

When the *Hatan* arrived at the door of the *Kallah's* home he would enter to find a fully dressed, fully veiled and ritually clean *Kallah*, along with "*Moshe*" and all of the assembled Bridesmaids. Also present would be the parents, and the younger brothers and sisters of the Bride. While the father of the Bride looked the "other way," the Bridegroom would escort his Bride out of the house. This was known as "stealing the Bride."

If the *Hatan* could afford it, he would have brought along a wedding liter (called an *apiryon* אִפְרִיּוֹן [ah-peer-ree-ohn']), or carriage, for his *Kallah* to ride in to her wedding. It would be carried by poles set on the shoulders of strong men, all friends of the *Hatan*:

"Who is she that comes up from the desert

**Like columns of smoke,
In clouds of myrrh and frankincense,**

Of all the powders of the merchant?

**⁷ There is Solomon's couch,
Encircled by sixty warriors
Of the warriors of Israel,
All of them trained in warfare,
Skilled in battle,**

**⁸ Each with sword on thigh
Because of terror by night.**

⁹ King Solomon made him a palanquin [the *apiryon* or wedding liter]

Of wood from Lebanon.

**¹⁰ He made its posts of silver,
Its back of gold,
Its seat of purple wool.**

**Within, it is decked with love
By the maidens of Jerusalem.**

**¹¹ O maidens of Zion, go forth
And gaze upon King Solomon**

Wearing the crown that his mother

**Gave him on his wedding day,
On his day of bliss."**

(Song of Songs: 3:6-11 TNK)

This passage is a poetic expression of the wedding procession of King Solomon. There we can see how the *Kallah* rides within the *Wedding Liter*, while King Solomon rides alongside where everyone can see him. Also mentioned are the Bridesmaids, called here the *Maidens of Jerusalem*.

Of course, the parents of the Bride would also follow along to the *Nuptials Ceremony*. Even though they were not as important to the wedding as was the father of the Bridegroom, they did have an important role to play.

>>> *The Bride of Messiah*: We will also be "stolen" away by *Y'shua*:

"For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night."

(I Thess. 5:2)

The *Bride of Messiah* will then be taken to the *Chuppah* in heaven in a miraculous manner. One might refer to it as a *Heavenly Apiryon*. Those who were sealed into the *Bride*, and have already died, will be resurrected from their graves -- while those who are still alive in the flesh will be changed from flesh into spirit. Together they will rise to meet their Husband *Y'shua* in the air. It will be an event that all the earth will see and hear:

"For if we believe that Jesus [Y'shua] died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus [Y'shua].¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.¹⁶ 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 [Messiah] 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.

¹¹⁸ **Therefore comfort one another with these words."**

(I Thess. 4:14-18)

~ The *Nissuim* Ceremony ~

>>> *The Ancient Wedding*: It is not known exactly how the actual *Nissuim* (Nuptial/Consummation Ceremony) was performed. Perhaps, a priest or rabbi was present to conduct some type of service. Most likely, the *Ketuvah* (marriage contract) would have been publicly read and witnessed by the attendants. Also included in this ceremony would have been the sharing of a cup of wine by the *Hatan* (Bridegroom) and the *Kallah* (Bride). This cup (like the *Betrothal* cup) is also called a *Kiddish* cup ("holy" or "set apart"), and it signifies that the couple were committing themselves to set apart their marriage as a holy union. The sharing of the cup of wine also signified that the *Hatan* and *Kallah* were about to become *echad* אֶחָד (eh-khad' = one) or "one flesh:"

"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one [echad] flesh." (Gen. 2:24)

Perhaps the respective fathers would have made short speeches accepting the *Kallah* and *Hatan* into their respective families.

However, the most important part of the ceremony was when the *Hatan* escorted his *Kallah* into the *Chuppah* or *Wedding Chamber*. Once they closed the door they were not to be seen for seven full days. It was expected that during this time the couple would come together in conjugal relations for the very first time. It was the *Consummation* event which actually sealed the marriage, not the signing of any documents or the reading of the *Ketuvah*. If the marriage was not consummated, then no marriage took place, and a bill of divorcement could be written to dissolve the *Betrothal*.

Meanwhile, on the outside, some other things were taking place. The *Eliyahu* attendant would station himself at the door of the *Chuppah*. After the marriage had been consummated, the *Hatan* would come to the door of the

Chuppah and tell the *Eliyahu* attendant (who was known as "the friend of the Bridegroom") that they were now fully married:

"He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled." (John 3:29)

Eliyahu, the "friend of the bridegroom," would then announce, to the people assembled that a marriage had been consummated and all of the people who had followed along would begin a celebration that was to last until the couple came out of the *Chuppah*. At that time the *Ishshah* אִשְׁשָׁה (Eeshshah' = wife) might well have recited to her *Ish* אִישׁ (Eesh = husband) a famous phrase of marital love from Scripture:

"My beloved is mine, and I am his." (Song of Songs 2:16)

>>> *The Bride of Messiah*: *Y'shua* will conduct His *Bride* to a *Chuppah* in heaven for *Spiritual Consummation*:

"Then a voice came from the throne, saying, 'Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!'

"And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, 'Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.'"

(Rev. 19:5-8)

God takes marriage very seriously. He does not want any sort of defilement to come upon the marriage bed, for human marriage is a physical type of His relationship with the *Children of Israel*. Therefore we, as Believers, must also be sure that we do not bring any type of spiritual defilement into our marriage relationship with *Y'shua*. Our raiment has been made righteous by our

Husband's cleansing blood and must remain so.

~ The Wedding Supper ~

>>> *The Ancient Wedding*: Even though the guests had been celebrating from the time the consummation was announced until the couple emerged from the *Chuppah*, there was yet another celebration that was to take place. This was the official *Wedding Supper*, and it began shortly after the *Ish* אִישׁ (husband) and *Ishshah* אִשְׁשָׁה (wife) came out into public following their seven day stay in the *Chuppah*:

From that time forward the *Ishshah* (wife) appeared unveiled in public so that everyone would know who she was.

~ A New Home ~

After the seven day *Wedding Supper* was complete, and all the festivities had quieted down, the husband and wife were ready to settle down in their new home. If they were of sufficient means, they would procure a home of their own in which to dwell. If they were poor, they might go to live with the parents of the Bride or with other relatives:

"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." (Gen. 2:24)

>>> *The Bride of Messiah*: *Y'shua* and His *Bride* will have a home of their own -- it is this earth. But before they (we) can settle down, there will be a lot of cleanup work that needs to be done:

"Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

"And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses [this is the Bride]."

"¹⁵ Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶ And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (Rev. 19:11-16)

Once *Y'shua* and His *Warrior Bride* have subdued His enemies here on earth, they will settle down and turn their attention to bringing 1000 years of real peace to the inhabitants of the earth. That peace begins with the binding of *HaSatan*:

"Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ² He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³ and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

"⁴ And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus [*Y'shua*] and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ [*Messiah*] for a thousand years." (Rev. 20:1-4)

During that time, when *Y'shua* is King of kings and Lord of lords, the

I will betroth you to Me forever;
 Yes, I will betroth you to Me
 In righteousness and justice,
 In lovingkindness and mercy;
 I will betroth you to Me
 In faithfulness,
 And you shall know the LORD.
Hosea 2:19-20

members of His *Bride* will be functioning as lesser kings and priests under Him:

"And they sang a new song, saying:

**'You are worthy to take the scroll,
 And to open its seals;
 For You were slain,
 And have redeemed us to God by Your blood
 Out of every tribe and tongue
 and people and nation,**

**¹⁰ And have made us kings and priests to our God;
And we shall reign on the earth."** (Rev. 5:9-10)

~ Conclusion ~

The *Ancient Wedding* has profound implications for Believers, for we are already in the *Betrothal* stage of our marriage relationship with *Y'shua HaMashiach*. All of us have been *Matched* to *Y'shua*; we have accepted the "Cup of the Covenant" and thereby become *Betrothed* to Him. Now we are in the *Waiting Stage*, preparing for *Y'shua* to return to claim us as His very own.

"For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ [*Messiah*]." (II Cor. 11:2)

Therefore, we must continue to follow the instructions of our Husband:

"...A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. ¹³ And he called his ten servants, delivered to them ten pounds, and said to them, "Occupy till I come."" (Luke 19:12-13 KJV)

How should we "occupy" ourselves? By preparing ourselves as the *Bride of Messiah*, so that He will be pleased with us when He comes to "steal" us away to the *Chuppah*:

"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. ⁸ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine

linen is the righteous acts of the saints." (Rev. 19:7-8)

Set not your heart on the material treasures of this life -- set your heart on *Life's Greatest Treasure* -- becoming a member of the *Bride of Messiah*:

"Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand [in the *Chuppah*] before the Son of Man." (Luke 21:36)

Shalom!

DEW & SAW

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Exploring the Hebrew Roots of the Faith Once Delivered
Tevet/Shevat/Adar/Aviv, 5778

January/March, 2018

A View From Beit Shalom

Go up in peace to your house.
1 Sam. 25:35

Shalom Aleichem,

(Peace be unto you.)

During this most troublesome time in world history, may all of you reading this issue dwell in complete peace when facing the challenges of each new day. Stay calm, knowing that our Father is in Heaven and that *Y'shua* (His very own Son) sits at His right hand awaiting the command to return to this earth as King of kings and Lord of lords (may He come quickly and in our time):

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus [*Messiah Y'shua*]." (Phil. 4:6-7)

~ Stay Focused ~

With all of the turmoil going on in the world today (and in many of our personal lives), it is easy to become distracted by the cares of this life and world. Always guard against falling among thorns, as per the warning in the *Parable of the Sower and the Seed*:

"Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity." (Luke 8:14)

This danger is especially evident today, as modern technology allows instant access to all the troubles going on throughout the entire world, thereby producing many thorns to entangle us. Trouble has always been the stock in trade of the media -- as they constantly dwell upon the bad news of the world. Bad news is what draws viewers and that is what draws advertising money (one of the major gods of this world).

As a result of the incessant bombardment of bad news, it is easy to become confused on what are the really important matters in life. It is easy to become distracted by all of the world's troubles and not stay focused on our special calling from God:

"And Jesus [*Y'shua*] came and spoke to them, saying,

'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' Amen." (Matt. 28:18-20)

Some may object, saying they are not called to be an evangelist. As a full time occupation that may very well be true for not everyone is called to the same job:

"... He Himself gave some [*to be*] apostles, some [*to be*] prophets, some [*to be*] evangelists, and some [*to be*] pastors and teachers, ..." (Eph. 4:11)

Nevertheless, each one of us is instructed to be ever ready to share our faith concerning what the future has in store -- not just for those who believe and are baptized, but for all of mankind:

"Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time.

***Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.*" (Col. 4:5-6)**

One could say we are to be *Evangelists on Call* -- taking positive action when needed.

~ Featured Inside ~

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~ Sharing the Good News ~

On occasion we receive calls from *Hebrew Roots* subscribers, who are sharing the Good News of the coming *Kingdom of God* with others. It may be with family members, with neighbors, or a study group at their current Church. The venue is not what is important. What is important is that the Gospel (*Good News*), of the soon coming *Kingdom of God*, is being shared with other potential *Talmidim* (Disciples). As Believers, we have all been given the authority to teach the very same message which *Y'shua* brought from the Father to this earth some 2000 years ago:

"Jesus [*Y'shua*] came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying,

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

(Mark 1:14-15)

In certain cases, these sharers of the Gospel use some of our material in their outreach efforts. Popular items include (but are not limited to) booklets such as *The Quiet Revival*, *Torah Basics*, and *A Believer's Guide to Complete Righteousness*.

Do not hesitate to request materials if you need them. However, before distributing any literature (from us or anyone else) first obtain a copy and review it, to make sure it is what you need, before ordering multiple copies to share with others.

~ Sukkot 2018 ~

We had a wonderful time, last year, at the new *Season of Our Joy Sukkot* site in east Texas. It is our plan to return there again this year as well. The dates are September 24th (beginning the prior evening) through *Shemini Atzeret* on October 1st. If you wish to join with us make reservations early, as space is limited: www.sooj.org

~ A Big Thank You ~

It is also time to give a really big THANK YOU to those of you who provide support for the *Hebrew Roots Ministry*. This includes not just those who contribute funds, but those who hold us up in prayer as well. If it were not for our faithful supporters there

Hebrew Roots is published by Dean & Susan Wheelock and supported entirely by the prayers and freewill donations of its subscribers. Subscriptions are free (based on availability of funds) to anyone who sincerely desires to "...grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ [*Y'shua HaMashiach*] ..." (II Pet. 3:18)

Those wishing to assist financially in this teaching ministry can do so by sending a check or money order, payable in US funds, to:

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would be no *Hebrew Roots*. That would strike a blow to many of our incarcerated Brethren, who do not have easy access to *Messianic* teachings. They really appreciate having the tools needed to study and learn the words of life.

~ A Reminder ~

Once again, a reminder to our incarcerated Brethren. We are only able to provide materials which *Hebrew Roots* produces -- those items listed on the *Materials Order Form*.

When requesting material (especially if you are a new subscriber), PLEASE write very clearly so that mistakes are kept to a minimum and mail is not returned to us as undeliverable. It helps to have your name, number, and address on your enclosed form or letter so we can compare it with the envelope return address if necessary.

~ This Issue ~

A central theme in this issue is how we, as individual Believers, must sanctify our relationship with our Father, His Son, and our community, so that we may be better equipped to bring the profound message, of eternal life and the coming *Kingdom*, to the attention of friends, relatives, and neighbors:

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear ..."

(I Pet. 3:15)

Issue 18-1 begins with an article on the *Wedding of the Messiah*. It is entitled *Life's Greatest Treasure* and shows how the Ancient Hebrew Wedding practices are a near perfect template for our marriage relationship with the Savior of the world, *Y'shua HaMashiach* -- and the great hope which that understanding provides for everyone who believes.

We welcome a new contributor to our growing family of writers. Derek Kyle is a *Torah* scholar of the first rank. His article, *Speaking to the Heart* contains a great nugget of *Torah* truth which can be applied to everyday living.

The *Early Ekklesia* series continues with an article entitled *Walking in the Way*. Here we explore a non-canonical 1st century *Ekklesia* work called the *Didache* (pronounced Did'-ah-kay). It is said to have been a manual for the new Gentile Believers who were entering the *Ekklesia* in the 1st century. It also contains much good information for those entering the *Messianic* movement today.

~ Current Offers ~

Three previously recorded CD's are in the process of being re-recorded into DVD format. They are all from the *Origins Series: The Origins of Sunday Worship* parts I and II (OR3 and OR5) and the *Origins of Ancient Sunday Worship* (OR6). Orders will be filled as soon as they are completed.

A new booklet is also in the works and it too, if requested, will be sent out when completed. It is called *Torah Basics II* and contains three articles from past issues which are now out of print: *Old Testament Canon Integrity*, *Everyman's Torah*, and *The Other Torah*.

If you would like to have any of the current offers, you may place your order by completing and returning the enclosed *Offer Form* or the *Materials Order Form*. (Be sure to include your name and address with all correspondence.) If you would like extra copies of materials, to pass on to friends and/or relatives, please indicate the quantity desired and consider including a donation to help cover printing and mailing costs. All contributions are greatly appreciated.

May the peace of God
be with you always,

Dean & Susan Wheelock

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