

Behold! He Comes!

Hine Ze Ba

"The voice of my Beloved! Behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills." Song of Songs 2:8

The second coming of the Lord has parallels with the ancient Jewish wedding and the seven major feasts of the Lord celebrated by Jews and many Christians worldwide. The Old and New Testaments or Covenants are seen as "marriage" covenants. Israel was God's chosen bride (Isaiah 62:5) This invitation was extended to "whoever will" when Jesus died on the cross. In the last days Israel as a nation will accept Jesus (Yeshua HaMashiach- his Hebrew name) as their Savior and Bridegroom (Romans 11) and the Bride will become one-believing Jew and Gentile- one new man (or in wedding terminology- the Bride). The theme of the Bride is seen in the Old Testament in direct scriptures but also in types, shadows, and in hidden meanings in the Hebrew language. In the New Testament also, there are direct scriptures but also many references to the wedding in the parables Jesus told and in many references Paul gave.

The Blood Covenant

The "scarlet thread of redemption" binds the Old Testament with the New. Blood covenanting was the most sacred and enduring of all covenants and formed a bond that could not be broken. The two parties became as one; sharing blood was the sharing of life. The word "friend" in the East means a covenant partner. Ten steps usually accompanied the blood covenant ceremony between two Hebrew males or groups:

- 1. Exchanging of garments-** The garments represented their character and personalities. They were becoming one. (This can be seen in the story of David and Jonathan)
- 2. Exchanging belts and weapons-** The belt was used to hold their weapons. To give one's belt was to give one's strength. Each one was saying, "I'll fight your enemies and you'll fight mine!"
- 3. Cutting the Covenant-** The word covenant is *beriyth* which means a compact by passing between the pieces. The partners would cut an animal in half and place each half on a structure with walking space in between. They would start on opposite ends, walk between the pieces making a figure 8 and then face each other. They were saying to God: Do to me as this animal if I break this covenant! It was considered a walk of death-death to independent living to take on the life of the other. (Gen. 15)
- 4. Raising arms and mixing blood-** They would make an incision in their wrists or arms (usually bound by a rope) and commingle their blood. They would wipe the blood on covenant papers. These papers were sewn up in a leather case and suspended around the neck and bound on the arm¹
- 5. Make a scar-** Each partner would put dirt into their incision causing a permanent scar. It reminded them of their covenant bond.
- 6. Exchanging of names-** They exchanged names representing authority (sometimes giving a white stone)
- 7. Exchanging gifts-** They exchanged gifts but the commitment

¹ Trumbull, Clay, The Blood Covenant, Impact Books, 1975, p.5-6

was greater than that. Those covenanting were ready not only to give their lives to one another but give that which was dearer than life itself. To give up one's son to a covenanting partner would be the highest devotion of covenant. (See Genesis 22 - when Abraham was willing to sacrifice Isaac. God gave up his son for us)

8. Ratified by oaths- The promises and penalties of the covenant were written on a document sealed with a token of blood.

9. Celebrate a memorial feast- They would celebrate the covenant with a meal including bread (representing the body) and unfermented wine (representing the blood)

10. Planting a memorial- They would plant a tree or set up a stone memorial to remember the covenant. **Remember (Hebrew- zakar)** is a covenant word.

Marriage- a Blood Covenant

From earliest times, the ancient Jewish wedding was considered a blood covenant. In the Hebrew word for bridegroom **khatan** the root idea is of binding and severing, the covenanting of blood. Once a male child is circumcised, he is referred to as a bridegroom of blood.² The word for bride- **kallah**- means perfect and refers to her faithfulness and consecration to the covenant and her purity in waiting for the groom who leaves for a year after betrothal to prepare a home for her in his father's house.

The seven major feasts designated by God in the Old Testament were called "testimonies" or visual reminders so that his people would remember their marriage covenant with Him. Each of the feasts has many meanings. But in each is an allusion to the 12 steps in an ancient Jewish wedding.

- 1. The Bride is chosen.** The father would choose the bride for his son and send out a trusted servant to do so. (See Genesis 24). **Passover** or *Pesach* (the barley harvest) also meaning to cross over was the time God chose Israel as his bride.

According to Clay Trumbull in The Threshold Covenant³ blood sacrifices in the East originated at the threshold of the home. Before welcoming a guest into the home, a blood sacrifice was offered at the threshold. If the guest stepped over or crossed over the blood, he was welcomed in as part of the family. If a King was the honored guest and a blood sacrifice was not prepared, an executioner would be sent to slay the household members. A blood sacrifice was offered on the threshold of the new bride and groom. The custom still persists today of the groom carrying his bride over the threshold (they were stepping over the blood). A bloody hand signature was put on the door and lintels of that home and a bloody hand signature affixed to the primitive marriage certificate. Flowing blood was essential where two were made one in marriage covenant. There was no

² Trumbull, p. 222

³ Trumbull, Clay, The Threshold Covenant,

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binding covenant without blood in family relations.

At the first Passover, every Jewish home put blood on the top and sideposts (in the form of a cross!). Not only were they protected from the death angel, they were covenanting with their Creator. Israel was chosen as God's bride and afterwards any idolatry or worship of other gods was considered adultery.

Jesus (Yeshua in Hebrew)(1 Cor.5:7) was our Passover lamb. He died exactly at 3:00 p.m. at the very time the passover lamb was being offered for the sin of the nation. The Passover festival also includes the Feast of Unleavened Bread (*Hag HaMatzah*) (symbolic of his burial), and the Feast of First Fruits (*Bikkurim*) (symbolic of his resurrection). When you and I accepted Jesus as our personal Lord and Savior by asking him to forgive us of our sins and live in our heart, we applied the blood of Jesus to the door of our hearts. And we have the authority to claim the protection of that blood from any invasion of our enemy, satan.

2. The bride is purchased. A bridal price or *mohar* is paid by the groom. Again this is associated with **Passover** and Yeshua our Passover lamb. When He said, "*It is finished!*" on the cross, he probably said the Hebrew word *ka'lal* meaning to complete or perfect. It is the same root as the word for bride *kallah* meaning perfected or undefiled one. Jesus was saying, "Bride, I have paid the bridal price. You are mine!" Ephesians 1:18 refers to this calling us "the redemption of the purchased possession".

3. Mikvah- The immersing, baptism of bride or **niddah** time where the bride physically immerses herself (**mikvah**) and where she examines herself daily until the wedding day. This time of purification and the seven days prior to the wedding might be compared to the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread beginning on the 15th of Nisan.

4 The bride and groom are betrothed to each other. The first stage of marriage was called *kiddushin* or *erusin*. The couple was considered legally married then but they did not physically live together yet and did not physically consummate their marriage. God betrothed himself to Israel at Mt. Sinai on **Pentecost** or *Shavuot* (the wheat harvest) The shofar or ram's horn (symbol of covenant and of God's voice) is sounded on this day and is called the **First Trump** (See Ex.19:16)

5. A written document (ketubah) or betrothal contract (shitre erusin) is drawn up. In this ketubah or marriage contract it states the bridal price, the promises of the groom and the rights of the bride. The word *ketubah* means "that which is written". At **Pentecost** the Ten Commandments were given. It was not a law of do's and don'ts but a loving marriage contract between God and His bride. The Word of God (both Old and New) are our ketubah- our love letter and our written marriage contract.

6. The bride must give her consent. On Mt. Sinai, Israel said, I do. When you and I accepted Jesus as our Savior and Lord, we are also saying, "I do" as well. Romans 10: 8-10 says we must believe in our heart and confess with our mouth that God has raised Jesus from the dead to be saved.

7. Gifts were given to the bride and a cup of the covenant was shared between the bride and groom. The rite of betrothal is completed when the groom gives something of value to the bride and she accepts it. Now the gift given is usually the ring. When the groom places the ring on the bride's finger, betrothal is completed.

It was on **Pentecost** (*Shavuot*) that the Holy Spirit was poured out on the 120 believers in the Upper Room. They spoke in other tongues. Now the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor.12) are available to every believer. The infilling of the Holy Spirit for empowerment is available to every believer and is every believer's "seal" or wedding ring. (Rings in Bible times had a seal or stamp and were used to sign their name. To have a ring denoted authority.)

On *Shavuot*, two loaves of bread (made from yeast) are waved before the Lord- symbolically representing the future union of believing Jew and Gentile- the bride in Christ.

The cup of the covenant shared and sealed the bride and groom also with the drinking of unfermented wine. Jeremiah 31:31-33 describes the new covenant which would be given to Israel in which the law would be written in her heart.

8. The bridegroom departed, going back to his father's house to prepare the bridal chamber. He says to the bride, "I go to prepare a place for you; if I go, I will return again unto you." Jesus said this to his disciples in John 14:1-3.

9. The bride is consecrated and set apart for the time that the bridegroom is away building the wedding chamber. The groom could not come back until the father okayed the final preparations. He could come back at any day or time. The bride had to be ready. She had her bags packed. The Song of Songs refers to her state: "*A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse: a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.*" A garden enclosed is a metaphor for a chaste woman. She is said to have "dove's eyes" (S.of S. 1:15) eyes for no other.

The fall feasts are preceded by a forty day period called *Teshuva*. (The word *schuw* is the root word and it means to return or repent). This period is to be an intense period of repentance between God and the individual. Each person is expected to write letters to friends and relatives restoring relationships and renew bonds. It was to be the time of greatest repentance, greatest giving, and greatest seeking after God.

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For the forty days before Rosh Hashanah, the shofar is sounded every day. On the day before Rosh Hashanah it is quiet. It is believed that the Day of Judgment is hidden from satan. "Believers never said when the day of Rosh Hashanah was; they simply said, 'Of that day and hour no one knows, only the Father.'"Because Rosh Hashanah was known to be the hidden day, the statement of Yeshua ('of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only'- Matt.24:36) is actually an idiom for Rosh Ha Shanah."⁴

10. The bridegroom returns with a shout, Behold, the Bridegroom comes! and with the sound of the shofar (ram's horn). One block before the arrival of the groom, a shout goes forth and a the shofar is sounded. The bride fully awake and ready was carried in an *aperion* - carriage supported by four poles- and taken to her groom. This is associated with **Rosh Ha Shanah or the Feast of Trumpets**. Other names and meanings of this feast are:

Rosh Ha Shanah- head of the year, birthday of the world (Passover is during the first month of the religious new year but Rosh HaShanah is the first month of the civil new year)

Yom Teruwah- 100 times the shofar is sounded celebrated for two days. The last time it is sounded is called the **Last Trump**.

Yom Ha Din- Day of Judgment

HaMelech- Coronation of the King Messiah (In the ancient Jewish wedding, the bride and groom are referred to as a king and queen!)

Yom HaZikkaron (Day of Remembrance)

Chevlay shel Mashiah- birthpangs of the Messiah or Jacob's Trouble

Opening of the Gates

Natsal- The Resurrection of the Dead or as we know it in the NT - the rapture

The Last Trump

Yom Hakeseh- The Hidden Day

It is believed by Jews that on this day, the righteous will be resurrected and rewarded as the books are opened. The wholly wicked and "average" or intermediates will have 10 days (there are seven days between the two feasts) to repent. The righteous are hidden with God in heaven during these "seven days" symbolizing the seven year tribulation period.

This might be compared to the parable Jesus told of the Ten Virgins.(Matt.24) Ten virgins were to assist the bride in getting ready. All had lamps. All had oil (had the Holy Spirit so all are Christians) but only five had **extra** oil. But all were sleeping. They were all to be awake. They were not cognizant of the urgency of the hour. The bride is not mentioned in the parable because she is fully awake. The bride will be those believers that have extra oil, and are awake and ready!

Some Messianic scholars feel that this is the wedding day-

⁴ Chumney, Eddie, The Seven Festivals of the Messiah, p.138

Kiddushin/Nesu'in. They believe that the seven year tribulation period is likened to the seven days the bride and groom are in the wedding chamber - a special room prepared by the groom- where they physically consummate their marriage after the formal vows while the guests wait feasting outside the chamber. The friend of the bridegroom waits outside the door for the message that the physical consummation has taken place. At his signal, great rejoicing breaks forth.(John 3:29) The blood stained linen from this night is preserved as proof of her virginity.(Deut. 22:13-21) (This is not the wedding feast because the bride and groom are not present. The wedding feast takes place at the **bride's house**.)

11. The Wedding Day- Nesu'in In the ancient Jewish wedding, the bride and groom fasts from food and water all day before the wedding and recite the whole book of *Tehillim* (Psalms).

The bride encircles the groom seven times (called seven circuits) showing her submission of him, her protection of him, her belonging to him, and his belonging to her.⁵ (Jeremiah 31:22)

Seven denotes she is a perfect and pure bride.

The bride receives a crown of flowers, gold, or silver for her faithfulness from the groom. This "lover's crown" is referred to in James 1:12:

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

After taking the vows, the groom also places his tallit on her shoulder signifying he would take care of her (the government is on his shoulder) and they both as "king and queen" preside over the throne and proceed to the wedding feast held at the **bride's house**.

When making their vows to each other, they stand under a *chupah* (sometimes spelled *huppah*). This wedding canopy is usually made with a large tallit or banner held up by four poles. This represents the wedding chamber built by the groom as an addition to the father's house where the physical consummation was to take place. This is referred to in the Song of Solomon (Songs) 2:4:

"He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love."

Seven blessings are recited. The first blessing is recited while the couple partakes of the second cup of unfermented wine sealing the covenant (the first cup is taken at betrothal). The last

⁵ Lash, Jamie, The Ancient Jewish Wedding, p. 7

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blessing is:

".... Soon O Lord our God, may there be heard in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of joy and gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the jubilant voice of bridegrooms from their canopies, and of the youths from their feasts of song. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who makest the bridegroom to rejoice with the bride."⁶
Compare this to Jeremiah 33:11!!!!

Yom Kippur or the **Day of Atonement** occurs ten days after Rosh Hashanah (seven days in between). This day is a fast day for the cleansing of the sanctuary and the whole nation On this day and the end of the tribulation period Israel as a nation will recognize her Messiah.. Zechariah 12:10 says:

"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn."

Other names for Yom Kippur are:

Face to Face

The Day or the Great Day

The Fast

The Great Shofar (Shofar HaGadol)

Neilah (the closing of the gates)

On this day the priest would go into the Holy of Holies in the Temple behind the veil and take one goat *La Adonai* and offer this sin offering for the cleansing of the sanctuary and the nation and sprinkle the blood seven times on the mercy seat and the altar of burnt offering. On this day God's great name Yahweh would be uttered. The other goat called *La Azazel* or the scapegoat was released in the wilderness and pushed off a cliff. The priest would symbolically lay the sins of the nation on him. Jews believed azazel represented satan. Other scholars feel that Jesus was not only the offering for sin (*La Adonai*) but he became sin and thus released us from the guilt of sin. Whereas the Spring Feasts inaugurated the redemption, the Fall Feasts completed or consummated the redemption. Thus, it typifies the final cleansing and eradication of sin at Christ's second coming.

It is believed that on this day the gates of heaven will be closed. The Great Shofar is blown at the end of the day ushering in the Messianic age which many scholars believe to be a literal 1000 reign of Messiah on earth.

12. The Wedding Feast (held at the bride's house) After the vows and formal ceremony, the guests and bride and groom proceed to the bride's home where the wedding feast is enjoyed

⁶ Lash, Jamie, [The Ancient Jewish Wedding](#), p. 29

for seven days. This can be compared to the **Feast of Tabernacles or Sukkot (sometimes spelled Succot) (the fruit harvest)**. After the somber feast of Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur, this is an extremely joyful feast.

It was customary for the couples who accompanied the bride and groom to the *chupah*, both men and women to circle the groom seven times along with the bride. In the celebration of Succot, the Torah is encircled seven times just as the bride encircles the groom. (Seven is the number for perfection and symbolizes her submission of him.) After the bride and groom drink from the cup of unfermented wine, the groom then breaks it with his right foot. Seven days of celebration followed the feast.

The names and themes of *Sukkot* are:

1. **The Season of Our Joy**
2. **The Festival of Ingathering**
3. **The Feast of the Nations**
4. **The Festival of Dedication**
5. **The Festival of Lights**
6. **THE FEAST**

After the somber celebration of Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur, this most joyous of all feasts is celebrated by constructing a temporary tabernacle or *succah* consisting of four poles and the top being laden with four branches- the willow, myrtle, and the palm (called the *lulav*) and the etrog (a citron- a fruit shaped like a lemon but sweeter and spicier). The etrog represents the Gentiles or non-Jewish believers. As part of ceremony, the etrog is turned upside down. Then it is turned right side up and joined with the other three. It represents that a marriage is taking place.

When I was in Israel in 1993 at the time of *Sukkot*, I saw the sukkots or tabernacles on second and third story apartment landings and outside homes. They actually live or camp out in these structures (at least for part of the day) for seven days. There was excitement in the air as Jewish men carried the four branches. Each branch represents to the Jews:
willow- those with no taste (learning of the Word) and no fragrance (good deeds)
myrtle- those with fragrance (good deeds) but no learning (taste)
palm- those with taste (learning) but no fragrance (good deeds)
etrog- those with both taste (learning) and fragrance (good deeds) (But IN CHRIST we are complete!)

The water pouring ceremony became the focus of the joy at this feast. This ceremony became riotous in its intense joy. The priests were divided into three divisions. Each carried willows, swishing and swinging them (representing the Holy Spirit) as they made their way to the pool of Siloam. As they reached their respective gates, a shofar would be blown and a flute (called the pierced one representing the Messiah) player would lead the procession. They would circle the altar seven times proclaiming

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'With joy we will draw water out of the well of salvation' (Isaiah 12:3). A priest would pour a golden pitcher of water in one of the holes of the altar and his assistant would pour wine in the other hole (symbolic of Jesus' death when blood and water poured out of his side). In this context Jesus declared: *If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*" (He was talking about the infilling of the Holy Ghost that is available to every believer.)

Another part of the ceremony was the lighting of the temple. Four enormous golden candlesticks (50 cubits high) were lit in the court illuminating so much that there was no courtyard in Jerusalem that was not lit up. With bright torches and singing psalms of praise, the men that were head of the religious schools would dance well into the night. Their torches glistened like diamonds and could be seen from afar.

From this context, Jesus declared in John 8:12 that He was the *Light of the World*. When a woman caught in the act of adultery is brought before Jesus, Jesus writes in the earth. What he wrote is told in Jeremiah 17:13 *O Lord, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters.*

Historically, it was a time Israel remembered God's provision in the wilderness. Prophetically, it points to the future millennium, the Messianic age. Spiritually, it represents that we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth and heaven is our home.

There is much evidence that Jesus was really born during the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles and circumcised on the last day. In the future, this will be the day of the wedding feast of Christ and one bride- believing Jew and Gentile. Jesus is the Beginning and the End. In the future, all nations will celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles: *And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. (Zechariah 14:16)*

Revelation 19:7 says, *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.* Verse 9 says, *"....Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb...."*

How to we get ready? First, wash yourself in the BLOOD OF THE LAMB by asking for forgiveness for your sins and accepting Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior. Believe he died for your sins and rose again on the third day. Make him your Lord by being obedient to his word by trusting Him to help you do that. When you sin, ask for forgiveness from God and the one you offended. Stay in fellowship with Him by worshipping him, listening to Him, reading and studying His Word, and loving his people. Walk in joy because you have been made the righteousness of God in Christ! The same blood

that saved you will keep you close to Him and far from sin.

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