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Fall 2011 Newsletter

Shalom and L'shana Tova from Lightbeacon Ministries. At this time of year, the L-rd has really been speaking to me about the fall Jewish feasts and

G-d's prophetic time table of events. As Messianic Jews, we need to be a help to the Church and show them how G-d's covenants with Israel are a picture of how we can answer many end times questions such as the timing of the rapture, great tribulation and second coming of Messiah. This year along with the feasts themselves the L-rd has shown me other ministries and prophets who all compare the end times events to the traditional Jewish marriage. Let's look at the nuts and bolts of the traditional Jewish marriage in Yeshua's day to try to understand what he and the other prophets were trying to say.

1. In biblical times, the first thing that would happen would be the "Betrothal," the first major step in a Jewish marriage. This established the marriage covenant. Jesus established an eternal covenant through His blood. His Holy Spirit is the "ring" (if you will) - sealing the bride with a guarantee that He will return for her. (Hebrews 13:20, Luke 22:20, *Ephesians 1:13).
2. The next step would be the "*Ketubah*" or marriage contract including the "dowry." At the home of the prospective bride, the Jewish bridegroom would negotiate with her father to determine the price (*mohar*) that he must pay to purchase his bride. Yeshua paid a price to purchase the church (bride). The price He paid was His life and blood. (Acts 20:28, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20). Once the bridegroom paid the purchase price, the marriage covenant or *Ketubah* was established, and the young man and woman were regarded as husband and wife. From that moment on, the bride was declared to be consecrated or sanctified; set apart exclusively for her bridegroom. So the church is said to be sanctified and set apart exclusively for Messiah Yeshua. (Ephesians 5:25-27, 1 Corinthians 1:2; 6:11, Hebrews 10:10; 13:12) As a symbol of the covenant relationship, the groom and bride would drink from a cup of wine over which a betrothal benediction had been pronounced. The third cup during the Passover Seder serves as the symbol of the covenant through which Messiah Yeshua has obtained the church (bride). (1 Corinthians 11:25). At the wedding in Cana, this is why Yeshua says to his mother, "Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come." He was trying to tell her that it wasn't the right time in his ministry to get involved in the marriage!
3. Time of Preparation- After the marriage covenant was established, the groom would leave the bride's home and return to his father's house. There he would remain separate from his bride for a period of 12 months. During the twelve months the groom would build extra rooms onto his father's house for a sort of honeymoon celebration that would last 7 days. Parallel to the custom of the Jewish groom preparing living accommodations for his bride in his father's house, Yeshua has been preparing living accommodations for the church in His Father's house in heaven. (John 14:2)
4. Wedding feast. At the end of the 12 months, the groom's father would give permission for the groom to go get his bride. **Only the Father would know the exact time that this would occur.** The groom, best man and other male escorts would leave the Jewish groom's father's house and conduct a torch light procession to the home of the bride. Traditionally, they would go to the bride's home and sound a "trumpet" and make a lot of noise. Just as the taking of the Jewish bride was accomplished by a procession of the groom and male escorts from the father's house to the bride's house, so the taking of the church (bride) will be accomplished by a procession of Messiah Yeshua and an angelic escort from heaven to the home of the church. (1 Thessalonians 4:16). After the Jewish groom received his bride together with her female attendants, the enlarged wedding party would return from the bride's home to the groom's father's house. Similarly, the church (bride) will return with Christ to His Father's house in heaven after she is taken from the earth to meet Him (1 Thessalonians 4:17, John 14:2-3). Upon arrival there, the wedding party would find that the wedding guests had assembled already.

In the same manner, Messiah Yeshua and the church (bride) will find the soul of Old Testament saints assembled in heaven when they arrive. These souls serve as the wedding guests. Shortly after arrival, the bride (remaining veiled) and groom would be escorted by the other members of the wedding party to the bridal chamber (*huppah*).

While the groomsmen and bridesmaids would wait outside, the bride and groom would enter the bridal chamber alone. There in the privacy of that place they would enter into physical union for the first time ~ consummating the marriage that

was covenanted earlier. Parallel to the custom of the Jewish groom and bride entering into physical union after their arrival and thereby consummating the marriage that was covenanted earlier, Messiah Yeshua and the church (bride) will experience spiritual union after their arrival in heaven; thereby consummating their relationship covenanted earlier.

After the marriage was consummated, the groom would announce the consummation to the other members of the wedding party waiting outside the chamber. These people would in turn pass this news on to the wedding guests. Upon hearing this good news, the wedding guests would begin the feast and make merry for the next 7 days. During those 7 days of the wedding festivities (sometimes called "the 7 days of huppah"), the bride remained hidden in the bridal chamber. In correspondence with the Jewish bride remaining hidden in the bridal chamber for 7 days after arrival at the groom's father's house, the church (bride) will remain hidden for a period of 7 years after arrival in heaven.

So, at this time of the fall Feasts, we can now see even more clearly that Rosh HaShana corresponds to the time when our Father in heaven will tell the bridegroom Yeshua that it is time for the Church to be "called up." Then we will be in heaven at the Father's house. On earth, the Great Tribulation will occur. After Rosh HaShana, Jewish tradition speaks of 10 "days of awe" (Yamim Noraim) before Yom Kippur where Jewish people use works such as prayer (Tefillin), charity (Tzedakah), and even repentance (*Teshuva*) to become inscribed in the book of life. This corresponds to the Great Tribulation on earth before Yeshua's second coming. But what always bothered me is that it is 10 days, not seven to correspond with 7 years. Now, if you count Erev Rosh HaShana, Rosh HaShana itself and Yom Kippur itself as three feast days that leaves 7 days (i.e. seven years of great tribulation). If this is true, it is clear that Israel will repent of their sins and rejection of Yeshua nationally on Yom Kippur at the end of the Great Tribulation when Yeshua returns for the second coming, NOT the rapture! Yeshua will defeat the anti-messiah at the end of the Great Tribulation and we will immediately usher in the Millennium with the first celebration of Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles). As the scripture in Zechariah says, those nations who attacked Jerusalem will come up to the city to celebrate Sukkot or they will receive no rain. We will live on earth with Yeshua for 1000 years. Revelation says 20:7 says ⁷ And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,⁸ And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom [is] as the sand of the sea.⁹ And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. In the next newsletter we will explain how and why this happens!

Shalom,

Ben and Liz Cassutto

Newsflash - Lightbeacon Ministries has been blessed to have a relationship with Living Stones Church in Salisbury, Maryland. We are in negotiations with them to start a Messianic Fellowship on Delmarva. Please pray for this move of G-d. If you would like to help us in this work and make a contribution or to order copies of our books (*The Last Jew of Rotterdam, Buried Treasure*), go to www.lightbeaconministries.com.