

The Bride

Revealed to Mankind

By Ron Harmon

Introduction

A universe is a wondrous place for all to consider and marvel over its magnificence. Since those very first words in Genesis chapter one, "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*" man has searched for answers to his creation. "Why am I here," is a familiar question heard frequently in communities of supposed academics. "What is the purpose of it all," is another question spoken out loud for all to ponder. These questions and others like them are the driving forces for those seeking answers as to why they exist.

Unbeknownst to most, there is a truth and an answer for those questions, but it's not what many might expect. The why and what is the subject of this booklet while also attempting to expose those burying the truth from the world.

As far as I understand, there is no great cabal of men capable of hiding the truth from Godly worshipers, only the influence emanating from Satan. This vile creature's influence in religion is enough to blind good folks from the apparent

purpose of mankind. God himself also blinds mankind to an extent for the sole purpose that He may have mercy upon them at the judgment day. God's motivation is about mercy and selection, Satan's motives are about deception.

God has a plan. He is working it out and is preparing the world for an event unlike any other in the universe's history. You want to understand why you are here? You're here because God is creating a family; it's that simple. How you fit into that family is entirely up to the individual. Reading this little booklet is the first step in understanding and unraveling that mystery.

Please believe me when I say I'm no prophet or great oracle. No, I'm a simple man with simple means willing to write what I know to be true. Anyone and I mean anyone, can read and see what I'm about to give you—they need only to accept what the Bible says. You might be saying to yourself, "this is your interpretation of the Bible." In response to those that think that; I say I have no interpretation, I let the Bible speak for itself. If you mean I have a bias, you would be correct; I will stand on the side of our Creator and the words of the Bible at every opportunity.

In the event some don't believe me, I will make a solid effort to systematically go through the

scriptures together with the reader, gleaning nuggets of truth from the pages so there will be no mistakes.

Let's begin this study as we should do every time we seek the wisdom of God. Let's begin by praying for enlightenment and guidance. Let's also pray if something is hidden, it will be revealed, and if we have wrongly discerned scriptures we'll have the heart to accept change.

What is the Messiah doing?

God's people are incredibly astute students of the scriptures, and someone will occasionally ask a question that leaves someone like me scratching their head for a brief moment. One particular person recently asked, "Why did the Messiah come in the flesh here on earth? What was His purpose for coming?" Well, maybe that was two questions, but they revolve around the same issue.

My answer back was more about the Messiah's relationship with His future Bride than anything else, but truthfully there were several reasons why Christ came to earth some 2000 years ago. Although I believe paying the price for His Bride (dowry) in the form of His life and blood was at the top of the list, another reason was equally important.

The Messiah needed to establish His place as the ruler of this world. He secured His kingdom by overcoming the obstacles of flesh and blood bound by all men and women. I will also add He supplanted Satan's claim to this world by His conquering His powerful influence **Matthew 4:1-11**, *Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. ³ And the tempter came and said to*

Him, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.”⁴ But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.’”⁵ Then the devil *took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple,⁶ and *said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written, ‘He will command His angels concerning You’; and ‘On their hands they will bear You up, So that You will not strike Your foot against a stone.’”⁷ Jesus said to him, “On the other hand, it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’”⁸ Again, the devil *took Him to a very high mountain and *showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory;⁹ and he said to Him, “All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me.”¹⁰ Then Jesus *said to him, “Go, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.’”¹¹ Then the devil *left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him.

I can see the first 18 verses of John's first chapter as the premiere explanation for the Messiah's return. Understanding the Messiah's purpose requires careful dissection of the verses for a proper explanation. **John 1:1-8**, *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 came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

In these first five verses, we are told the Messiah was the Creator of the material universe. All things came to be, and there is nothing in the universe that wasn't created by the Messiah. This universe was created for Him, by Him, for His expressed purpose and benefit.

By saying the Messiah was the *logo* (word) establishes Him as the representative of the family of God (Elohim) here on earth. The word Elohim defines multiple gods. This particular word is used multiple times in the first chapters of Genesis, describing the family of the true God. For instance, in **Genesis 1:26**, *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness;*

This phrase occurs several times in the first chapters of Genesis, referring to God's family, but the same word is also used to describe multiple pagan gods. (*Exodus 12:12, it describes "the gods of Egypt*).

It's essential to understand this point because in verse one it says the Messiah was with God. To

be with someone means there was more than one. It's a subtle point but very relevant, as we will soon see. In the New Testament pages, we are introduced to the Father in heaven by the Son, the Messiah. By the Messiah's own recorded words by His disciples, we learn about two eternal beings: the Father, and the other, the word or logos.

In Him is life, which He gave to man as physical existence. He also brings life to mankind spiritually by His coming. On the other hand, darkness implies death; in contrast, the Messiah is the light of life for all mankind driving death and darkness away.

In the first five verses of the first chapter of John, we see the Messiah described as the Creator, spokesman, the bringer of life both physical and spiritual, and introduces the figure referred to as the Father.

How can that possibly be matched? The answer is in the next set of verses; so, let's keep reading.

Verse 6, *There came a man sent from God, whose name was John.* ⁷ *He came as a witness, to testify about the light, so that all might believe through him.* ⁸ *He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light.*

What is light? Light is the enlightenment of knowledge or truth. He brings clarity into the darkness of this world, where frankly, it is still very murky. The take away from this set of verses is, the Messiah came to bring truth and enlightenment and eternal life where it *had not* existed before.

I know what you must be thinking in the back of your mind, "there was physical and spiritual life before the Messiah came in the flesh, but that wouldn't be totally true. It's only true to this point; there was physical life, but men's spiritual existence hadn't yet happened previous to that moment in time. We see proof of that fact in a couple of chapters later in the same book of John **John 3:13**, *No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man.*

Does man ascend to heaven after death after the Messiah came in the flesh? No we are told in **1 Corinthians 15:20-26**, ²⁰ *But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.* ²¹ *For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead.* ²² *For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.* ²³ *But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming,* ²⁴ *then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father,*

when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. ²⁵ For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. ²⁶ The last enemy that will be abolished is death.

There is an order to all things Godly and a reason behind the process. That reason has to do with a change in the nature of mankind. The Messiah isn't called the firstfruits for just any ol' reason. He is the first of a brand new creation...He is a combination of the Human Spirit with the Holy Spirit, the first time this combination had *ever* occurred.

The purpose of this conversion is the salvation of mankind. That salvation begins with the Messiah being married to like-kind; it's a law in the scriptures, kind must be with kind. We too, must make that spiritual change. Our proof can be found in **2 Corinthians 5:17**, *Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.*

By the Messiah coming to earth and taking on human form, then dying for the sins of all mankind, He becomes the life bringer and a first for all mankind. **Verses 9-10**, *There was the true light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was*

made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

The world didn't know Him, they didn't recognize Him, nor did they accept Him as the Messiah. Do you find that incredible?

If so, let me dazzle you a little more. The real Messiah isn't accepted to this very day; need proof? I will supply all the evidence you need as this book unfolds; just stay tuned, as the saying goes.

Laying everything out right now would spoil the surprise, and I want to present everything in context, but be assured proof is coming.

Verses 11-13, *He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.* ¹² *But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,* ¹³ *who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.*

Here is the crux of this portion, "*But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God,*"

These are words from the apostle John that illustrates a purpose for the coming of the Messiah. The scriptures explicitly say that because His own didn't receive Him (Hebrews), He then turns to those who will believe in Him (gentiles).

The Hebrews became bogged down in the swamp we call tradition. It's a swamp filled with monsters like desire, slothfulness, complacency, and arrogance. It was a powerful place blinding the occupants and preventing them from looking outwards and seeing the truth.

Those that can see the truth and accept the Messiah's will be rewarded by becoming a member of the house of God. The Father calls the willing "children," the Messiah calls them His future Bride. **Verses 14** *And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

The Messiah was begotten from the Father in heaven, which kinda flies in the face of that ol' trinity doctrine. How can someone beget themselves, even if they are God? The Messiah in the New Testament describes a very personal relationship between the Father and the Son in a way that makes a three in one personage sort of schizophrenic, in my humble opinion. The Messiah prayed to the Father, why would He do this if He was the Father? If more proof is needed for you die-hard Trinitarians, then look at this set of scriptures. **Revelation 5:1-7**, *I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book written inside and on*

*the back, sealed up with seven seals. ² And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "**Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?**" ³ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it. ⁴ Then I began to weep greatly because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it; ⁵ and one of the elders *said to me, "Stop weeping; behold, the **Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David**, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals." ⁶ And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a **Lamb standing, as if slain**, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. ⁷ And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.*

The Lamb (Messiah) takes the scroll out of the hand of a great, powerful being sitting on a throne, which can only be the Father. I don't care what you think you may know, but the simple fact is Christ wouldn't be portrayed as two separate beings in one place at the same time. **Please** consider this before you invest your salvation in doctrines that have no basis for truth.

Regardless, the Messiah became human flesh and gave up His eternal life as the Creator to make

all this happen. He did all this to bring salvation to the world and establish His kingdom, ultimately paying the Dowry price.

*Verses 15-17, John *testified about Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.'" ¹⁶ For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. ¹⁷ For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.*

The significant part of these verses is the statement, "*For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.*"

Many will take this statement and run to the highest hill, shouting that God's law is done away. Is that what this verse actually says? No, it merely says the law was given through Moses, which is true. It was given through Moses by the Messiah. **1 Corinthians 10:1-5**, *For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; ² and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; ³ and all ate the same spiritual food; ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. ⁵ Nevertheless, with most*

of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness.

It is evident by these verses that the Messiah was the *Being* that gave Moses the tablets of stone with the laws written upon them. So, what truth came by the Messiah? I can, without a doubt, say a huge part of the truth was about man's existence and what *our* creation is all about. He also brings forth the Father's presence in heaven for the first time for all to understand there is more than one eternal being.

Verses 18 *No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.*

It's an unequivocal statement, no ambiguity what-so-ever; no one has seen or heard the Father. It's another piece of evidence stating the Messiah is the God of the Old testament. Both have to be present in the New Testament to accomplish the mission the Messiah has set out to complete.

Perhaps that is the biggest story of all; the Father's presence was necessary for multiple purposes. Not the least of which was so He could stand in as a go-between the Bride and Bridegroom. He became the Being to which the church was to pray to in the absence of the Messiah. That absence

will be explained further in the booklet; I don't want to get ahead of myself.

Why a Mystery?

Can God marry? If God could marry, who would He marry? When and where would that marriage take place? Where would God and His wife live together after they married, and how long would that marriage last? Lastly, where does God go to find a bride?

The typical answer from main-stream churches to these questions, "it's a mystery." Mysteries are not a real answer to scriptural questions because God will reveal His plan to those He wishes to understand.

Mysteries don't always occur exclusively in religion; there is mystery in all of life, especially in other studies. But for the world, they appear to be found most often surrounding the nature of God. But it's the fallback position of a tired leadership and is a cop-out at best. The term mystery in religion might be seen as a nefarious way to deceive folks. Mysteries formed deep within the recesses of religion become puzzles, conundrums, inspiring flashes of deceptively evil inspiration, creating their own maze of doctrine.

Nothing is more mysterious than the "Bride of Christ" spoken of in scripture, but there is nothing deceptive about the Messiah's marriage. It's only a mystery because the truth is supplanted by those blinded by jealousy.

By applying jealousy to their motivations, my meaning is simply one of doctrinal positions. The mainstream world is married to their teachings, refusing to consider any other explanations for certain phrases in the Bible. Phrases that imply this is a marital relationship between the Messiah and His church.

As we have already seen, the Bible talks a considerable bit about the Messiah taking a bride and being married. Is the Bible speaking in metaphors and analogies, or is there a wedding that is actually going to occur? We live in a world of one-way Joes, where traditions have become the lighthouse of truth for so many generations.

The misty fog of misunderstanding, coupled with man's traditions, shroud the truth with "mystery". The result, the light of truth is prevented from reaching everyday church-going parishioners' understanding. Certain scriptures contribute to a particular bias focused toward institutional teachings, which pressure folks not to stray too far

out into the weeds of individual thinking (or beliefs, for that matter).

Society is inevitably stuck with a mind-bending conundrum when scriptures within your Bible demonstrate the church of God in a marital relationship with Christ. It's true...you cannot find the phrase "The bride of Christ" in your Bible. This phrase is stated in various other ways, which we will explore further as we proceed.

Merely ignoring verses and not speaking about the Bride won't make them disappear or mean any less to God. So why build a theology absent of this beautiful illustration of God's love? Likely because it threatens man's perceived hold on power (this is the root of man's jealousy), which he foolishly believes he has over God. The fact is, churches simply cannot afford to let congregations know the truth because it would expose the lies they preach.

Truth is the apple cart that cannot be left standing upright by Satan. Understanding our genuine relationship with the Messiah and the Father, helps the wheels stay connected to the ground of truth.

Undeniable truth possibly could open doors in the form of questions directed at main-stream ministers who arrogantly couldn't merely brush them away. Nor, could they twist them, fitting in

some pagan-based theology without exposing their own agendas.

These “ministerial” men and women would be forced to address issues based on scripture, culture, and history that could shine significant light upon these verses, perhaps even for the first time. Unfortunately, the fact is many “ministers” are ill-equipped with proper knowledge even if they know the truth. Anything other than a short reference to Israel's past is a subject that threatens their hold on man's beliefs, so they subjectively refuse to make those connections. The Messiah's subject of marrying His church is one issue best left unaddressed in their world, and that's very sad indeed.

If we say, "We're not afraid of what the scriptures teach," then perhaps, we have a place to begin and a chance at learning these beautiful teachings from our Creator. It's also a chance to open our minds to other teachings of Christ.

On the other hand, If you're happy with your beliefs and don't want to question religion's common consensus, maybe this booklet isn't for you. However, before you leave, let me add one more thing. Men—even the greatest of them—are flawed. They make mistakes—the greater the man, the greater the errors he can make.

Preachers and ministers make mistakes, don't fool yourselves. It happens all the time, and ministers often see their mistakes exposed on television. I know Christians don't want to think their ministers could or would deceive them, but they are men, and all (including me) are flawed human beings. Knowing this tidbit, why blindly follow men or women who stand in pulpits and teach weekly without question from those sitting in their pews? Why swallow their words and teachings, hook, line, and sinker without investigating what they say? Especially when it's so blatantly obvious that they are contradicting scripture?

I have to ask, does observing man's tradition make you feel comfortable or secure? Or, instead, is your attitude, scripture be hanged? Do you feel your Pastor's word holds more weight than God's holy words? Do you also understand you will be required to answer those questions, if not today, then in the future?

I've ranted on long enough and gotten off the subject somewhat, but I felt these words needed to be said before we get into the meat of the matter. We're going to proceed forward and discover this special relationship man will have with the Father and Son. Don't come along if you wish, but

remember, you'll not hear what I'm about to teach from your minister in Sunday morning worship, so here's your chance to learn a beautiful lesson and the true purpose of mankind.

The Hebrew Betrothal

Attempting to understand God's relationship with man begins first by understanding how a Hebrew wedding was performed in ancient Israel. Why is this important, you might ask? That's a very perceptive question, and one I would answer as we go along in the study. I know I keep saying that, but please hold on; it's coming.

The act of marriage first begins with a betrothal between the Bride and Bridegroom; that should be obvious to the average Bible student. What isn't so obvious....in ancient Israel, this could take place at any time before the actual wedding....even as very young children. Parents would frequently make arrangements for the betrothal of young children; it was a way of binding families together for a common purpose. This is a cultural practice done even today in parts of the middle east .

Another way a betrothal would occur is when a young man falls in love and desires a certain woman for his Bride; he then goes through a series of steps to claim his Bride.

He first must go to the father of the bride and set up a dowry. Once the bride price was agreed upon by the young woman's father, the young man

would pour a glass of wine for the young woman. If she drank the wine, it would indicate her acceptance of the proposal. See ladies, you do have a say in all this. God hasn't dismissed you like so many believe. That's important because the church comprises many individuals of both sexes, representing the Bride. Each of those individuals must partake of the wine, showing acceptance of the agreement.

The betrothal process would then be complete until the actual marriage. The betrothal then became a legally binding contract between the couple, and they would for all intents be married. The noticeable difference was that the marriage was not yet consummated and couldn't be until the actual wedding was complete. A typical betrothal period was one to two years. During this time, the Bride and Bridegroom would prepare for the marriage event and typically wouldn't see each other during this period. Hence the answer to the question, why did the Father need to be a go-between?

If the Bride needed to get a word to Her intended husband, she went through Her Father. We are commanded to go through the Father in the absence of the Messiah. **Matthew 6:5-15**, "*When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by*

men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. ⁶ But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.

⁷ "And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. ⁸ So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.

⁹ "Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰ 'Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ 'Give us this day our daily bread.

¹² 'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³ 'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

¹⁴ For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive theirs, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.

The Father is the focus and who we are to address, not the Messiah, Virgin Mary, or any other deity.

Just as the Bridegroom would pour a cup of wine for his Bride to drink to seal the marriage

contract, so Jesus poured wine for His disciples. His words described the significance of the cup in representing the bride price for the marriage contract. He then took the cup, gave thanks, and offered it to them, saying, *"Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom."* (**Matt. 26:28-29**) The disciples drank from the cup, thus accepting the contract.

The elect is the betrothed to Christ and are His chosen people or church. We are told that by no uncertain terms in scriptures.

We can't drink from the bride cup and maintain worldly relationships outside the marriage, the scriptures make that very clear. **1 Corinthians 10:21**, *You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.*

One cannot sign a covenant with Satan, and one with the Messiah.

Oh, but that's not all; there is a covenant meal mentioned in the verse above, accompanying the cup of wine. The meal came in the form of bread representing the broken body of the Messiah. **John 6:51-58**, *I am the living bread that came down out*

of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh." Then the Jews began to argue with one another, saying, "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves.

You can't share this treasure with the world, it's an exclusive invitation for only those chosen by God.

Who is this Bridegroom?

As we already said, the process began with a young man desiring to marry a young woman and making that desire known to His Father. Who is this young man, and why is He essential for this story? He is the Messiah, the Creator, the one that gave His life for the salvation of mankind.

The young man's Father would prepare a contract or covenant and present it to the young woman's Father. Because of the absence of a Father for the Bride, the Messiah's Father in Heaven stands in both rolls for this ceremony. He is perfectly qualified for this purpose since there can be no higher authority in heaven or earth.

The Contract

The typical contract would illustrate the young man's desires and promises to provide for the young woman for the duration of their lives together. There could be penalties for breaking a marriage contract, even death if it involved infidelity.

Make no mistake about it, this was a covenant by the highest standards. A marriage actually falls under the terms of a blood covenant .

In marriage, under the Old Testament rules and laws, blood covenants involve the shedding of blood. A woman's virginity was an extraordinary and treasured thing in the eyes of God. Her virginity was an intricate part of the blood shedding in this blood covenant of marriage therein binding the marriage. After the wedding night, the young woman's parents would preserve the bedding as evidence of her chastity.

By the way, the Hebrew word for making a covenant is literally, in Hebrew, "to cut a covenant." Much of the ancient traditions have filtered down to us today, but we simply don't recognize them in the present form. The covenant partners would eat a covenant meal as we have already illustrated, consisting of bread and wine. The same occurs

today with a wedding cake and a toast with wine or champagne.

There is also an exchanging of names, vows (terms of the contract) offered and a scar made by cutting a place (hand) on each participant's body. These are just three parts commonly used in executing a blood covenant in ancient Israel. An excellent book to read on this subject, "*The Blood Covenant*" by *H Clay Trumbull*.

In the contract, terms and conditions were laid out, guaranteeing the man's side of the contract and what he was willing to offer to the bride. Most notably, as we mentioned, was the "bride price." In the Messiah's instances, His dowry was his life and blood, which He offered to the Father in heaven and was accepted. Look at these verses for confirmation of this offering.

1 Corinthians 6:15, Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! ¹⁶ Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two will become one flesh." ¹⁷ But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one Spirit with him. ¹⁸ Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against

his own body. ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, ²⁰ for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

Since there was no Father for the Bride to accept the conditions, the Father in heaven stood in that position. God's people will one day have to also be accepted by the Father as the Bride of the Messiah. The bride price was compensation to the young woman's family, removing her from their everyday life. The Father of the Bridegroom would present the contract to the Bride's Father to seal the contract.

Consider this, a transaction like this in the heavenly realm couldn't take place if the trinity existed. If there was no actual Father in heaven then the Messiah wouldn't need to present a dowey. There had to be a separate Father as well as the Son for this to be a legitimate covenant. I believe this is why the Father became so prominent in the New Testament.

The purchase of a Bride

At the beginning of this booklet, one of the questions I asked was, "why did Christ come to earth and take a flesh and blood form? One of the reasons was He came where His Bride resides (earth), presenting His marriage proposal to a people that were not considered His people. Remember, He once was married to Israel and Judah, but they either rejected Him or twisted His covenant.

The marriage contract that the Messiah brought was the new covenant, which was more about who He was selecting as His Bride along with the terms they both were bound by. As we saw, Jesus paid the bride price with His life and blood which is the beginning of the new contract.

During the Last Supper, when breaking bread, He spoke of the price He was paying, "*This is my body given for you.*" (**Luke 22:20**). **Hebrews 8:15**, makes it clear that Jesus died as the price for the new covenant: "*Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance.*" The terms are the same as in the Old Testament the people are new, His Bride isn't just Hebrews; they are from all around the world. Scripture references include

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Corinthians 6:19-20, 1 Peter 1:18-19, Acts 20:28, and John 3:29.

The marriage contract—the new covenant—is described throughout scripture: *"This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD, "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people...they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest."* ***Jeremiah 31:31-34*** adds, *"For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."*

Looks to me like one day in the future, the Messiah will have a bride composed of Hebrews and additionally, others who will follow Him without question. Reading the seventh chapter of Revelation actually reflects on this very point. ***Revelation 7:4-12***, *And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel: ⁵ from the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand were sealed, from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand, from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand, ⁶ from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand, from the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand, from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand, ⁷ from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand, from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand, from the tribe of Issachar twelve*

thousand, ⁸ from the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand, from the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand, from the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand were sealed.

⁹ After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; ¹⁰ and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." ¹¹ And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² saying, "blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen."

These are the combined peoples called the elect, the Bride of the Messiah. These are the ones we will focus on going forward, not the world of half-believers.

I understand most folks are more focused on the old covenant becoming obsolete, insinuating the Torah was now outdated and done away. It would appear most Christians are more committed to

lawlessness than understanding the deeper meaning of these comments.

Understanding begins with the covenant being centered around a relationship between a bride and a bridegroom. Remember, the Messiah was in a marital relationship with both houses, the house of Israel and the House of Judah. **Jeremiah 3:6-10**,
⁶ Then the LORD said to me in the days of Josiah the king, "Have you seen what faithless Israel did? She went up on every high hill and under every green tree, and she was a harlot there. ⁷ I thought, 'After she has done all these things she will return to Me'; but she did not return, and her treacherous sister Judah saw it. ⁸ And I saw that for all the adulteries of faithless Israel, I had sent her away and given her a writ of divorce, yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear; but she went and was a harlot also. ⁹ Because of the lightness of her harlotry, she polluted the land and committed adultery with stones and trees. ¹⁰ Yet in spite of all this her treacherous sister Judah did not return to Me with all her heart, but rather in deception," declares the LORD.

In ancient Israel, a man couldn't give a woman a divorce certificate unless they were married or betrothed. Pretty much the only reason this would ever happen was when infidelity was found in one

of the parties. It's abundantly clear this was the case with both Israel and Judah. Under the new covenant, the Messiah establishes with the people He has chosen; it will be a more profound commitment. It will be based upon a willing bride who loves God with everything they are. They will love the Messiah (Bridegroom) with all their hearts and minds. They will show their love of the Messiah by doing whatever He asks, **John 14:15**, *If you love Me, you will keep My commandments*

Under the terms of a covenant, the Bridegroom promises His protection, to provide and take care of His wife. These promises are an underlying theme in both the New and Old Testaments. With ancient Israel we can see a list in **Deuteronomy 28:1-14**, *"Now it shall be, if you diligently obey the LORD your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. ² All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you if you obey the LORD your God: ³ "Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country. ⁴ "Blessed shall be the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground and the offspring of your beasts, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock. ⁵ "Blessed shall be your basket and*

your kneading bowl. ⁶ "Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.

⁷ "The LORD shall cause your enemies who rise up against you to be defeated before you; they will come out against you one way and will flee before you seven ways. ⁸ The LORD will command the blessing upon you in your barns and in all that you put your hand to, and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God gives you. ⁹ The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, as He swore to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways. ¹⁰ So all the peoples of the earth will see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they will be afraid of you. ¹¹ The LORD will make you abound in prosperity, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your beast and in the produce of your ground, in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers to give you. ¹² The LORD will open for you His good storehouse, the heavens, to give rain to your land in its season and to bless all the work of your hand; and you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. ¹³ The LORD will make you the head and not the tail, and you only will be above, and you will not be underneath, if you listen to the

commandments of the LORD your God, which I charge you today, to observe them carefully, ¹⁴ and do not turn aside from any of the words which I command you today, to the right or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

The Messiah has done no less with His church in the New Testament. There are at least 13 Promises to His Bride in Revelation 2 & 3.

- *I will grant to eat of the tree of life*
- *A crown of life.*
- *not be hurt by the second death*
- *receive hidden manna*
- *a white stone*
- *a new name*
- *authority over the nations*
- *give him the morning star*
- *Clothed in white*
- *Become a pillar in God's kingdom*
- *Wear the new name of God and His city*
- *I will come in and dine with him, and he with Me.*
- *Sit with Him on His throne*

Okay, we have already canvassed over many aspects concerning the wedding of the Messiah to His holy church. Now we need to combine

scriptures with the ancient custom showing the complete process.

A House First

The betrothal period was filled with many challenges, the least of which was preparing a place to live. This responsibility fell exclusively upon the Bridegroom, but first, he would prepare a wedding chamber for the honeymoon— typically built in the Bridegroom's Father's house.

The wedding chamber had to be built to the groom's Father's exact specifications and had to be a place of elegance for His precious bride. In this chamber, the bride and groom were to spend seven days there. If the bridegroom was asked when the wedding was to be, he might well say, *"It is not for me to know; only my father knows."*

Just as a bridegroom would have told his bride that he would prepare a place for her, so Jesus told His disciples, *"In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."* (**John 13:1-3**)

In ancient Israel, the bridegroom could get his bride only after his Father approved. Similarly, Jesus said, in **Mark 13:32-33** "*No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come.*" Now the wedding, what an extraordinary event that will be.

A Bride in Seclusion

While the bridegroom was off preparing the wedding booth, making everything perfect. The bride was considered to be consecrated—set apart or "bought with a price." The bride would wear a veil while away from her home....the covering hid her identity and also let all others know she was promised.

For the bride, it was a time she spent in preparation for her upcoming marriage. God's people, now consecrated or set apart, should be waiting in anticipation for the return of our Bridegroom (Messiah). Our time here on earth should be spent actively preparing ourselves for the Messiah's return. In the example of the ten virgins given in **Matthew 25:1-13**, *"Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the Bridegroom. ² Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. ³ For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, ⁴ but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps. ⁵ Now while the Bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep. ⁶ But at midnight there was a shout, 'Behold, the Bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' ⁷ Then all those virgins rose and trimmed*

their lamps. ⁸ The foolish said to the prudent, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' ⁹ But the prudent answered, 'No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' ¹⁰ And while they were going away to make the purchase, the Bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut. ¹¹ Later the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, lord, open up for us.' ¹² But he answered, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you.' ¹³ Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour.

Here is a fascinating story illustrating the custom when a bride was waiting on her day of marriage. It is a story representing the church of the Messiah, His holy Bride. Just a side note, but we call those things attached to the Father and Son "holy" because holy means to be "set apart." The church of the Messiah is most definitely set apart from the rest of this world. In this story, all the virgins are members of God's holy church. The implication is clear, not everyone in God's church will be part of the wedding; they will not be in the 1st resurrection.

The foolish virgins' lamps lacked sufficient oil to light a flame, signaling to the Bridegroom that they were ready. The Messiah didn't say, "you have

no hope," He simply told them to go buy some oil, implying there would be another opportunity for them to have some sort of relationship with the Messiah in the future.

The question of the ages is, "*what does the oil represent?*" Many have said it is the holy Spirit, but that would be contrary to scriptural evidence. Simon Magus attempted to purchase the holy Spirit from the apostles in Samaria, resulting in a strong rebuke from Peter. **Acts 8:14-21**, *Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent them Peter and John, ¹⁵ who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶ For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was bestowed through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, ¹⁹ saying, "Give this authority to me as well, so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." ²⁰ But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! ²¹ You have no part or portion in this matter, for your heart is not right before God.*

It's evident in my opinion one cannot buy the Holy Spirit, so ruling that out, what else could it possibly be? In my opinion, it's works; one must have works to illustrate their readiness to the Messiah. Christ says to the seven churches in the book of Revelation. **Revelation 14:13**, *Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on."* "Yes," says the Spirit, *"that they may rest from their labors, for their works follow them."*

Christ says our works follow us wherever we go, even into death. Works are also described as the clothing the saint wears in **Revelation 19:8**, *It was granted her to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white."* *Fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.*

Clothing requires the wearer to make themselves ready, or they'll stand before the Creator naked and afraid. Fence-sitters don't make the 1st resurrection, nor do they receive a white wedding gown, only those willing to put their hands to the plow and never look back.

Those that don't make the 1st resurrection will have an ample opportunity to be in the 2nd resurrection mentioned in **Revelation 20:11-15**, *Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven*

fled away, and no place was found for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. ¹³ And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. ¹⁴ Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵ And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

The wise in the example of the ten virgins, had with them ample oil along with their lamps. The Bridegroom lingered, and the awaiting brides became lethargic and eventually fell asleep. When the hour-glass struck midnight, the cry rang out: Here's the Bridegroom! *Come out to meet him!*

This is the event many call the rapture or the 1st resurrection for the church of God mentioned in ***1 Thessalonians 4:13-18***, *But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with*

Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. 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 not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

This event is also covered in **1 Corinthians 15:49-55**. The culmination of facts revealed in these verses is that the church of God is veiled and waiting on her future husband. While in that period of waiting, she mustn't become lazy and lethargic; she must be diligent and working to fill her lamp with oil.

“Therefore, keep watch because you do not know the day or the hour.”

Day of the Wedding

Before a wedding can happen, the bridegroom must get his bride to the altar. Once the bridegroom's Father deemed the wedding chamber

ready, he would tell the bridegroom that all was ready and instruct him to go get his bride. This would typically be midnight, as was the custom. Don't worry, everyone was in on the charade...it was their custom of that time. Recall the story of the Ten Virgins in Matthew 25; it was midnight when the bridegroom came. **Matthew 25:6**, *"But at midnight there was a shout, 'Behold, the Bridegroom! Come out to meet him.'*

The young man would then grab his ladder, lantern, and anything else he deemed necessary and head off to her home at a brisk pace.

The bridegroom would abduct his bride secretly, like a thief at night, and would take her to their wedding chamber. Sound familiar? It should, it's a statement every Christian associates with the rapture. **1 Thessalonians 5:2**, *For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.*

As the bridegroom approached the bride's home, he would shout and blow the shofar (ram's horn trumpet) so that she had a warning to gather up belongings she had planned to take with her.

1 Thessalonians 4:16, *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.*

The bridegroom and his friends together would arrive at the bride's house to retrieve her and her bridesmaids. This was their custom of the time, a beautiful rehearsal of a promise made by the Creator to His people.

Just as the bridegroom would come for his bride in the middle of the night with a shout and the sound of a shofar, so the Lord will come for His holy church, His Bride.

Ask yourself this, "do you think the bride was watching and waiting in anticipation?" Was she ready, or was she sleeping? **Mark 13:35**, *Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning:*

The Marriage

The moment has finally arrived, and both the bride and bridegroom are ready for the final ceremony. The bride and groom and entourage would then return to his Father's house for the anticipated event.

In Jewish culture today, it's important to note that it is customary for the wedding couple to fast on their wedding day—it is considered a day of purity according to "The Book of Jewish Customs" by Harvey Lutske.

Also included was a ritual mitzvah for cleanliness in preparation for a new life together as a family. Purity and cleanliness were the theme of a marriage that could last for decades. I find that interesting considering God's holy people are required to cleanse themselves and maintain that purity. **Acts 22:16**, *Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.'*

This blessed event is rehearsed every year during the Day of Atonement. This is the one day all of God's people are commanded to fast, no exceptions. **Leviticus 23:26-32**, *The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,* ²⁷ *"On exactly the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of atonement; it shall be a*

holy convocation for you, and you shall humble your souls and present an offering by fire to the LORD. ²⁸ You shall not do any work on this same day, for it is a day of atonement, to make atonement on your behalf before the LORD your God. ²⁹ If there is any person who will not humble himself on this same day, he shall be cut off from his people. ³⁰ As for any person who does any work on this same day, that person I will destroy from among his people. ³¹ You shall do no work at all. It is to be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwelling places. ³² It is to be a sabbath of complete rest to you, and you shall humble your souls; on the ninth of the month at evening, from evening until evening you shall keep your Sabbath."

This is a ritual cleaning, which is absolutely necessary, but more needs to happen at the same moment. Every bride wants and desires that perfect wedding dress. Later on in this booklet, we will dig deeper into this aspect of the wedding, but first, we need to finish this thought. So, God's people must also be dressed in righteousness. **Galatian 3:27-29**, *For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you belong to*

Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.

Being neither Jew or Greek bundles everything together considering who is the future bride of the Messiah. All are included in the seed of Abraham that are in covenant with the Messiah. That consists of the House of Israel and the House of Judah, and gentiles.

This verse serves as a marker of change taking place in the lives of everyone who call themselves disciples of the Messiah.

Once all the vows are made, the cake and wine are consumed; the newly married couple then retires into their chuppah for seven days. It's a canopy raised upon four posts, which represents the temporary wedding tent of ancient times. It's a secluded place where the bride and bridegroom would spend seven days getting to know one another and happens immediately after their wedding.

Wearing a proper Dress

As already stated, a bride in today's world wouldn't be caught dead without the best wedding dress they could manage to afford. In the Hebrew custom, the bride was whisked away to the father's house in a fine white linen gown fit to be married in. We see a very distinct correlation with the white dress in **Revelations 19:6-9**, *And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. ⁷ Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.⁸ **And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.***

⁹ And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

The Messiah's Bride will be wearing the family's wedding gown passed down to her. It's the righteousness of the Father, and Son passed down to the Bride. There could be no more perfect dress, nor could anyone imagine a greater attire for a beautiful

bride. Even today, brides expect their wedding dresses to be white, representing purity and goodness. Little has changed in 2000 years because the Messiah hasn't changed. **Malachi 3:6**, *"For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed."*

Let's Not Forget the Wedding Gifts

One of the enjoyable parts about a wedding is all the gifts a couple receives. Today a couple may expect a waffle iron, crockpot, bedding, towels, or an array of other kitchen or household items as gifts. Anything to set up a modern house would likely be a candidate for a donation to help the new couple overcome hardships.

In Israel, the bridegroom would present the bride with a unique assortment of gifts, the purpose of which was to show the bridegroom's love for his bride. Sometimes the bridegroom would give the gifts during the betrothal period, intending to kindle the love for him during the long betrothal period. **1 Corinthians 12:4-11**, *Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. ⁶ There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. ⁷ But to each one is given the*

manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸ For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰ and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kind of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.

The Messiah has given His Bride different gifts to help her but none more significant than the gift of the Holy Spirit: **1 John 4:13**, *"We know that we live in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit."* Also in **John 14:26** the Messiah described His gift by saying, *"But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."*

Let's take a moment and review what we just went through, not forgetting the scriptural influence. In creation, there is a man and woman, a

single bridegroom and bride that is the natural order of all things God. It was so in the beginning; it's confirmed today. God created one man and one woman, and nothing falls between the two for any kind of consideration.

Next is the creation of all things which we now know was by the Messiah's hand, (**John 1:1-5**) who is also the Bridegroom and for the expressed purpose of making a family. A careful examination of scripture in both the Old and New Testaments show this whole exercise called man, was the Messiah's plan all along. Scripture is saturated with references to an impending marriage and family of God.

The Messiah was the entity bringing light and life into the world while driving away darkness and death at the same time. Remember, darkness cannot exist where there is light, and death cannot exist where eternal life exists.

Then, the introduction of the Father, who plays a significant role in His Son's marriage. There is a marriage foretold in prophecy that will occur one day very soon. It's predicted by a multitude of scriptures, including the not so obvious ones. They hold great promise for those willing to follow the Messiah.

According to **Colossians 2:17**, *things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.*

While going through elements of a Hebrew wedding and aspects of a blood covenant, they give us the answer as to why the Messiah became flesh and blood. Why He felt it necessary to die for the sins of mankind, and why He said the things He said in regards to His Bride. There are several sources on the market one can obtain for a more complete understanding of the wedding of the royal couple, Christ, and His church.

Marriage was first devised in the kingdom of God before becoming an institution here on earth. I don't believe a union between God and man can be that easily diminished by man's deviant behavior. The effort to nullify God's institutions and holy word is an abomination, and those engaging in this willful aberration will suffer the consequences.

If all earthly things are true duplicates of those things found in the heavenly kingdom, then we should attempt to understand their place here on earth more fully. There is even more, we should consider our daily worship and relationship with God. The shadowy connection extends to God's most holy celebrations, His Holy Days listed in **Leviticus 23**.

A significant part of the wedding events are rehearsed every year through His holy days; this is no secret to God's people. Not wanting to sound dismissive or condescending, but the world can't understand God's plan because they don't rehearse the wedding.

Believe it or not, God gave us His plan, and it is laid out plainly in what is called His holy days.

The Holy Days

Remembering back when I was young and reading about God's holy days was strange to say at the least. I recall thinking, why would someone give up bread for 7 days? What sense could that make in light of glorifying God? Or, why would someone fast for 24 hours? What can that possibly have to do with worshiping God? It made a lot more sense to celebrate Christmas or Easter, now those were religious holidays, Right?

It wasn't until years later the irony of that belief landed on me like a thousand-pound bale of hay. Consider what I just said, it made more sense to me for religion comprising elves, magic, and illusion than the Creator's desires.

In my defense, I was told these are Jewish, not to worry. Christians operate under a separate set of rules, but who made up those rules? Just who in heaven or earth has the power to change God's rules?

Why does God say in **Leviticus 23:2** that these days are His? I missed that fact when I was younger, and one statement I also think most folks miss. If these are God's days, the **ONLY** days listed in the Bible, both New and Old, which we are commanded to observe, shouldn't we be paying a bit

more attention? These days are important because we see His plan for man through these days?

The word "convocations" can also mean rehearsal, so the question becomes, "what would we be rehearsing?" Could these days perhaps be a wedding, rehearsal? Could these annual holy days listed in Leviticus show us what all this is about—the purpose for man's creation, for the sacrifice of Christ, and all that is in between? Has the world missed the true meaning of God's celebrations putting their spiritual salvation in peril?

What do the following days represent?

Weekly Sabbath

Passover

Days of Unleavened Bread

The Wave Sheaf Offering

Pentecost

Feast of Trumpets

Atonement

Feast of Tabernacles

Last Great Day

Let's visit these Holydays of God one by one, more comprehensively, to see the message they send. The Hebrew wedding should be our reference

as we categorize each with a particular Hebrew custom.

While elements of a wedding are still fresh in our minds, we'll begin with the most obvious of God's Holydays. Please keep in mind as we go through these days, God says these are His days.

In discerning these times we, (men & women) must resist attaching any nationality to what God calls, His own. I understand Leviticus 23 begins by addressing Israel, but Israel is God's people, NOT a nation here on earth. **Galatians 3:29**, *And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.*

So, please believe me when I say these days have as much to do with God's people today compared to any nation 2 or 3 thousand years ago.

Weekly Sabbath

It's a time of rest and a time to reflect on the Messiah (the Bridegroom), including all His blessings. It's also a time of fellowship, of coming together, foreseeing a time in the future when all of God's people will be together in His kingdom under Christ's rule.

It's curious the Holydays begin with the weekly Sabbath, but not so much when you consider

one of its most important purposes. The weekly Sabbath is the sign of His Holy people (**Ex. 31:12**) it tells the world these are God's people.

It's an obvious sign, one that is in plain view, not hidden from the world. If one observes the Sabbath, it says to Satan that I belong to the Messiah with all my heart and mind.

PASSOVER

Passover teaches us that Jesus Christ is our Passover lamb—sinless and blameless, without spot or imperfection. Christ became human, divested Himself of all celestial glory, gave His life so that the sins of humanity could be forgiven and their death penalty would be removed. Equally important, Passover is the time that we renew our covenant with Christ by eating bread and drinking wine that represents Christ's body and blood, as well as following Christ's example of washing the feet of others showing humbleness. This day also represents the marriage agreement between Christ and His Bride (the church). ***1Cor.5:7; 1Pt.1:18-20; Rom. 3:25; Duet. 16:1; Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:12, 22-24; John 13:4-5, 14-15***

Once again, portraying the dowery the Bridegroom had to offer for the hand of his Bride.

The Messiah paid that price without hesitation because He loves humanity that much.

UNLEAVENED BREAD

On the 15th day of the month of Abib, we are to eat unleavened bread for seven days to represent getting the leaven (or sin) out of the body, cleansing us for our role as the Bride of Christ at his return. Examples in the New Testament are in, *Acts 12:3; Acts 20:6 and 1Cor. 5:8.*

The Bride cleanses herself and maintains that purity until marriage, when she and the groom are united in marriage.

WAVE SHEAF OFFERING

This day symbolizes the resurrection of Christ our King (the Bridegroom) being accepted by the Father as the new creature He became, and also the dowry He offered in the form of His sacrifice and blood. His offering had to be untouched and clean of any contaminants from the physical earth...an unblemished sacrifice. The perfect Bridegroom for His church (the Bride), He was the first of His kind, a new creature. He was the first fruits of this plan.

Lev. 23:9-14, I cor. 15:20, Col. 1:15-18, 2 Cor. 5:17

It's the one day listed in **Leviticus 23** that doesn't require God's people to do anything in the form of worship. The Messiah did everything that needed to be accomplished by offering the dowry and being accepted by the Bride's Father.

PENTECOST

Pentecost—or Feast of Weeks—is celebrated as the date of the church's formation. It also is a reminder that we were once in the bondage of sin until Christ brought us out. It represents the cleansed saints and the body of Christ, making herself ready for Christ's return.

It also identifies who Christ church is and who God is working with today. Not only are Hebrews being called, but many from the gentile nation are hearing the invitation. Related to this day is the parable of the Marriage Feast.

Matthew 22:1-14, *Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying, ² “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his Son. ³ And he sent out his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast, and they were unwilling to come. ⁴ Again he sent out other*

slaves saying, 'Tell those who have been invited, "Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fattened livestock are all butchered and everything is ready; come to the wedding feast."' ⁵ But they paid no attention and went their way, one to his own farm, another to his business, ⁶ and the rest seized his slaves and mistreated them and killed them. ⁷ But the king was enraged, and he sent his armies and destroyed those murderers and set their city on fire. ⁸ Then he *said to his slaves, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. ⁹ Go therefore to the main highways, and as many as you find there, invite to the wedding feast.' ¹⁰ Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered together all they found, both evil and good; and the wedding hall was filled with dinner guests. ¹¹ "But when the king came in to look over the dinner guests, he saw a man there who was not dressed in wedding clothes, ¹² and he *said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without wedding clothes?' And the man was speechless. ¹³ Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' ¹⁴ For many are called, but few are chosen."

The original guest (Hebrews) ignored, insulted, and beat the servants sent to call them to the wedding. So, the alternative for God was to extend His glorious invitation to those outside the original royal directory. The story ends with a warning in the form of someone trying to crash the party....which is not going to happen. Those God hasn't called, aren't invited....they can't come to the wedding, no matter what your minister says.

This feast of Pentecost was continually held by all the apostles and converted Christians well after Christ's death, showing that these feasts were not done away and were continually observed throughout the generations. Examples: *Acts 2:1; Acts 20:16; 1Cor. 16:8*

TRUMPETS

The blowing of the trumpet is a signal or announcement of an event—a signal that something is coming, an alert. It pictures the day that Christ returns to earth to get His Bride (the church).

Example: *Rev. 19:6; 1Cor. 15:49; 1Thess. 4:16-17*

It's the day the Father tells His Son to go and retrieve His Bride. It's time to bring her to the Father's home, and the preparations begin in earnest.

ATONEMENT

This holy day is illustrated by fasting (abstaining from both food and water from sundown to sundown). The Hebrew wedding represents the acceptance of the Bride (the church) by the Father in heaven. When Christ returns, it will represent the acceptance of the saints as the Bride of Christ by the Holy Father in Heaven, and the joining together at the marriage supper. Examples: **Acts 27:9**; **Matt.22:1**; **Rev. 19:8**

It began with our baptism into the church of God. In **Leviticus 16:1-34**, we see the ancient atonement service for Israel—probably the most misunderstood chapter in the Bible. This is the fulfillment of the Day of Atonement, and Christ taking his Bride to the Father's throne for acceptance of the marriage with Christ. The two goats are both represented in each one of us. They are identical in every respect, you can't tell them apart because they represent the same entity. **Leviticus 16:16** reveals that the goats are for the people of Israel. When applied to us, we are one person before our baptism, another afterwards. Our sins go away 'as far as the east is from the west' the old you DIES, the new you begins a spiritual life with Christ. In **Leviticus 17:11** , it says, “*life is in*

the blood.” Where does the high priest take the blood of the goat that was sacrificed? To be sprinkled on the mercy seat? The high priest (Christ) takes the life (the new you) to the throne of the Father (the mercy seat). What a beautiful service to remind us year by year of this glorious time in the kingdom of heaven.

FEAST OF TABERNACLES

This feast has been observed since Israel's people were freed as slaves from Egypt. It is celebrated by staying seven days in a temporary dwelling (Chuppah) and is a rehearsal as newlyweds with Christ. It represents a time of great blessing for saints and the world. It is the rehearsal of Christ and the church for seven days, where the full word of Christ is revealed to the saints. It represents the consummation of the relationship between the church and Christ. Examples: *John 7:8-10; Zech 14: 16-21; Rev 3:20-22; Rev. 22:12-17*

LAST GREAT DAY

This day represents the groom and Bride emerging from their temporary dwelling. The Bride

had been veiled to the entire world until this very moment. Once the church has been revealed when the veil is lifted, a great celebration will occur, unlike any other celebration up to this time. This is the first resurrection—the one the world awaits with great anticipation. Now the work begins for those who have become the priest and kings in the Kingdom of God. Examples: **Rev. 1:6; Rev. 5:10; 1Pt 2:5**

You may ask yourself, “Why would the Father and Christ go to such extremes?” The obvious answer, they don't want to be alone any longer. They are reproducing themselves, they are making a family. The Father and Son choose this as the way to reproduce regardless of what we think about the process. Humans understand reproduction in physical terms and God's ways may seem contrary to our thinking. God says our ways are not His ways **Isaiah 55:8-9**, *For My thoughts are not your thoughts nor are your ways My ways, says the Lord. ⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.*

Christ first breathed life into His future Bride, then instituted rules for her to follow and use as a guide. You also might ask, “Why not just create man like angels were created?” Fair question, but

they would be created beings, not born into the family. They wouldn't be their flesh and blood, so-to-speak.

Christ desires this to happen more than anything else. He gave up being eternal and took the form of a man in order to make this happen. He ended his eternal life risking everything he was, is, or ever would be in the future. He was born again as a new creature—the first of a kind—and the church (*Bride*) will follow. There will be billions, if not trillions of children.

A Time for Teaching

The more important lesson, though, is the time the bride and groom are in the wedding chamber together—a time of great learning—knowing what Christ knows about being part of God's family, and learning how to use that new power to teach and guide the rest of the world.

It's important, because there will be children—billions and billions of them, a countless number. In **Revelations 20:11**, "*The great white throne judgment*" of those that didn't become the Bride (1st resurrection), 1,000 years later who are resurrected and given a chance to become a part of the family as well, as the children of Christ and His Bride. In **Ezekiel 37:1** (*the valley of dry bones*), we see a physical resurrection taking place, and they say in verse 11, "*Our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off.*" Why would they say that if they were recently resurrected from the dead? Perhaps, because they didn't come up in the 1st resurrection? Any one of God's people will immediately know upon being raised from death to physical form; they missed a great opportunity to become part of the Bride.

Christ says in **Revelations 3:21**, "*To him who overcomes, I will grant to sit with Me on My*

throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne." You can't sit on a King's throne unless you are related, especially if you value your life. You become related to Christ through His church (*Bride*), which is the only route anyone can possibly take. It's a very narrow path, one that few can consciously sustain.

UNVEILING OF THE BRIDE

The veil covering the Bride's face had multiple purposes, not merely to hide her face. Although the wedding customs of the Hebrews dictated hiding the bride's identity. The veil was a simple piece of attire she wore, covering her face throughout the betrothal and up until she entered the huppah. I suspect it also was an attempt to prevent others from being attracted to her incredible beauty and a desire to possess her.

Another reason for hiding her identity might include security reasons; if she can't be identified, she can't be influenced. No one was allowed to see the bride's face, and no one supposedly knows her identity except the Father. Consider this custom compared to the church of the Messiah today. Obviously, it's hidden to the world at large—veiled in a shroud of mystic ignorance from a world and

blinded by Bridegroom himself? Consider this verse, **Matthew 13:13**, *This is why I speak to them in parables: "Though seeing, they do not see; through hearing, they do not hear or understand."*

Only after the seven days in the wedding chamber, the bride and groom would emerge on the eighth day, and the veil is lifted for the world to see her for the first time. It will be at that time, and not until then will the Messiah's true church be known to the billions that ever lived.

Satan will be bound and cast into outer darkness, unable to influence mankind ever again. A time when man will take that step into his true purpose and become more than He or She ever thought possible. There are no worries in the Father and Son's kingdom, no hurt, no pain, only light, hope, and eternal life. Away from Satan's influence, man's nature will be one of significant predominance (**Revelations 22:1-5**).

In **Revelations 22:12-17**, we see the Bride extending the same gesture as Christ did on the Last Great Day. The Messiah and His Bride are illustrated as calling out to those that will obey, "Come to us, come join our family and be filled with truth, wisdom and the light. **Revelations 22:12-17**, *The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the*

one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.

It's an unimaginable world which physical humans can't reach without first being invited.

Only the most trusted and the most loyal of all mankind will be part of the Bride. In **I John 14:15**, Christ said, "*If you love me, keep my commandments,*" a statement, **NOT** a request.

Man in his incredible arrogance, says the commandments are no longer relevant. Is the law the Messiah says to keep truly no longer necessary to observe? The truth is they are stipulations in the betrothal contract, stipulations for the Bride to follow. Christ could not do away with the laws without doing away with the marriage contract, and He wouldn't do that.

If the Sabbath and Holy-days are important to the Bride and Groom in the millennium (**Zechariah 14:16-21**) and were essential to God in the past, why wouldn't they be important today?

These days are the one thing that identifies the Bride to the world. Look at this set of verses **Exodus 31:12-14**, "*The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,* ¹³ *"But as for you, speak to the sons of Israel, saying, "You shall surely observe My sabbaths; for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know*

that I am the LORD who sanctifies you. ¹⁴ Therefore you are to observe the Sabbath, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people."

Those keeping the Sabbath are those who comprise the church of God, His holy Bride. It also says in **Hebrews 13:8** that "*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*"

Malachi 3:6 reads: "*For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed.*" Wow! God doesn't change. Christ is the same in the past, present, and future. Is there something we've missed in Sunday school? Is there something that was left out when it comes to the traditions we keep? Have ministers faltered before the throne of the Father?

Understandably, this idea of us becoming part of the Bride is an enigma to many because it has never been explained adequately. The idea of a man being considered a bride may offend manly instincts; remember the words of Christ, **Mark 8:38**, "*For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.*"

We aren't familiar with these concepts, and the world just portrayed, and unlike the one we have been taught all our lives, this future world is filled with hope. Hopefully, this booklet will help you see the church more than you ever did before, as this is the most important doctrine man can come to understand. However, it's always up to you to go further than you thought you ever could.

Conclusion

In pursuing this form of a scriptural investigation, I retrogressed toward simplification. It was my contention the authors of the Old and New Testaments meant what they said and said what they meant. It doesn't matter what anyone thinks or says—none of the current occupiers of this world were alive two thousand years ago.

To say the words in particular verses are metaphorical is a blatant assumption....speaking plainly. Yes, there are metaphors in the Bible, I agree entirely, but the Messiah marrying His church isn't one of them. In my humble opinion, there simply is overwhelming scriptural evidence to say otherwise.

It's become all too easy to play the metaphor card when scriptures don't agree with one's particular religious philosophy. Thinking on that basis leads to guessing the author's intent surrounding the context of the targeted scripture. Once more, in my humble opinion, that leads to sloppy research and sometimes dishonest translations.

I say this because we have just concluded a thorough study of the Bride of the Messiah, God's true church. I won't bow or cower to those that

refuse to acknowledge the divine nature of God's true church.

I must say this in earnest, if you are an adamant believer in the Father and Son, you shouldn't accept anything less than the full unbiased truth. Do your own study to verify all I have presented in this book; please, don't merely take my word for anything.

I have attempted to say what you just read as kindly as possible, but sometimes it may seem harsh regarding others. It's not my intention to insult or belittle anyone, only to point out hope in scripture that was given to those God is calling.

For more interesting lessons, read the booklets: (The Sabbath Day), (Two God's Two Churches and two Doctrines), by Ron Harmon.

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