



Marriage of the Lamb

a Fall Festival Overview

by Tim Kelley

The understanding and observance of God's festivals are fundamental to keeping in tune with YHVH. They outline His desire to have a relationship with His people and teach of His commitment to them. Without the festivals, a person cannot truly have a *personal relationship* with God or with His Son. Why? Because the festivals also teach of our role in that relationship.

HaSatan has continually tried to separate God's people from the festivals. If he can get them to forget the festivals, he's well on the way to getting them to completely misunderstand their relationship with God. That's one of the reasons HaSatan has attacked the observance of the New Moon. By stopping the New Moon observance, as he did at the time of the Macabbees and attempted to do at the Jewish dispersion, the people would no longer have a monthly reminder of the festivals, thus observance would cease.

Paul clearly understood that the festivals were a picture of what YHVH was doing with Israel. In a letter to the believers in Colossi, he said:

ESV Colossians 2:16-17 Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.

Though much of the redeeming work of the Messiah was accomplished by the time Paul came to understand Yeshua, he realized that Yeshua's major role was yet to come, for just in the case of the children of Israel, a redeemed people may technically be free, but until their enemy is overthrown, they will never really be free. Thus, the unfulfilled festivals are indeed, shadows of things Yeshua has yet to accomplish.

God's relationship with His people is typified by the marriage relationship. YHVH gave us marriage so we could know how to interact with Him. The festivals portray various aspects of the traditional Hebrew marriage ritual. In regards to the festivals, some of the marriage ritual has been fulfilled, but other parts of the ritual are yet to be fulfilled.

In this study we will briefly discuss the parts of the marriage that have been fulfilled – parts that are pictured in the spring and summer festivals, then concentrate on what's yet to be fulfilled – pictured by the fall festivals. Keep in mind that this study is not intended to present a prophetic view of the end times, but merely to equate the moedim (the festivals) with the Hebrew wedding ritual.

For the first 2000 years of man's history, YHVH dealt with people who were, for the most part, rebellious to His ways. During that entire span of time, very few people turned to their Creator. Of the nearly 1100 pages of my Bible, only 8 are dedicated to that first 2000 years. But then there was a man who chose to leave the ways of man behind and truly seek his God. That man was Abraham, and because Abraham truly wanted to serve YHVH, God chose him and his descendants to become a people through which he would begin to reverse the evils of the previous 2000 years. This was the beginning of a relationship with Abraham that continues today. On the evening of Passover God made an agreement with Abraham by which He told Abraham that He would take Abraham's descendants to be His people. On that evening, a match was made and the marriage process began.

Roughly 400 years later, Abraham's descendents were "grown" - you might say - and YHVH began to "court" the woman, the descendant of Abraham, that He had promised to marry; but before He could really court her, He had to purchase her back from the one to whom she had become enslaved. On Passover evening He stood between her and the destroyer in order to protect her and her children, then within days, completely destroyed her enemy.

For the next 50 days, he showed her all the things he could and would do for her. He set a canopy - a chuppah or covering - over her by day, and a fire to protect her at night. When she arrived at His place, on Shavuot, He formally proposed to her.

As in all good Hebrew weddings, they both agreed to the rules of the relationship - the Ketuba, or as we know it, the Ten Commandments - a compilation of all that YHVH would want her to do to ensure a happy and successful marriage. Thus Israel became betrothed to the God of the Universe. But as a betrothed woman, Israel did not live up to the responsibilities of a woman who is betrothed to a man. She played the harlot and eventually sold herself into spiritual slavery. She would need to be redeemed once again -

ESV Isaiah 52:2-3 ² Shake yourself from the dust and arise; be seated, O Jerusalem; loose the bonds from your neck, O captive daughter of Zion. ³ For thus says the LORD: "You were sold for nothing, and you shall be redeemed without money."

Thus, roughly 1500 years after becoming betrothed, Messiah Yeshua came on the scene to once again redeem Israel from slavery. At Passover He died, thus freeing Israel from the captivity she was under, but instead of consummating the marriage, He followed the Hebrew wedding pattern and left to prepare a dwelling place for her - the chuppah. On the night before He was crucified, He said to His closest disciples -

NKJ John 14:2-3 ² "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

"I go to prepare a place for you" - the promise a young Jewish man would say to his betrothed just before leaving her to build and furnish his house - his chuppah. Yeshua was in effect telling them that He would be leaving to prepare his kingdom, and when His Father deemed it was the correct time¹, He would return and fetch His bride. So this is the state we find ourselves in today.

Now, let's turn our attention to the fall festivals - Yom Teruah, Yom Kippor, and Sukkot.

Yom Teruah is the first of the fall festivals. It means the Day of Blowing, or the Day of the Awakening Blast. A Teruah is a sound made by the trumpet or Shofar blower. Traditionally, it's a series of 9 staccato blasts. In numbers 10, the priests are told to blow a Teruah to signal the camp of Israel to proceed toward the Promised Land -

ESV Numbers 10:5-6 When you blow an alarm (*teruah*), the camps that are on the east side shall set out. ⁶ And when you blow an alarm the second time, the camps that are on the south side shall set out. An alarm is to be blown whenever they are to set out.

¹ Mark 13:31-33 ³¹ "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. ³² " But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

³³ "Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is.

Teruah also means to shout. It's the word that's used when the Israelites shouted after circling Jericho seven times and the walls of Jericho came down. It's also the shout the people made when David brought the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem.

In Jewish understanding, this day pictures the beginning of the birth pains of The Messiah, a time of tribulation that continues till the Messiah returns on Yom Kippor. Their understanding of the birth pains beginning on Yom Teruah is based primarily on a prophecy found in Zephaniah –

ESV Zephaniah 1:14 The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter; the mighty man cries aloud there. ¹⁵ A day of wrath is that day, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, ¹⁶ a day of trumpet blast (*shofar*) and battle cry (*teruah*) against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements.

So in this respect, the Teruah that is sounded is a cry that warfare has begun. YHVH is turning the armies of man loose. The destruction will be immense, but this all takes place so that mankind, especially Israel, will repent and turn back to God.

But there's another aspect of of Yom Teruah which is not bleak, but instead joyful – at least for those who are walking with God. Remember that, according to Numbers 10, a teruah was to be sounded to signal that Israel was to set out for the Promised Land. Could Zephaniah be hinting that some of God's people would be setting out for the promised land on Yom Teruah?

ESV Zephaniah 1:7 Be silent before the Lord GOD! For the day of the LORD is near; the LORD has prepared a sacrifice and consecrated his guests. (*hakadish karuah* – “called his holy ones”)

The phrase “consecrated his guests” comes from the Hebrew words *hakadish karuah* that could also mean “called his holy ones”. In other words, a time of gathering His holy people, those who have set themselves apart to YHVH and have been fulfilling His purpose. Continuing in Zephaniah, this becomes even more clear –

ESV Zephaniah 2:1 Gather together, yes, gather, O shameless nation, ² before the decree takes effect- before the day passes away like chaff- before there comes upon you the burning anger of the LORD, before there comes upon you the day of the anger of the LORD. ³ Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, who do his just commands; seek righteousness; seek humility; perhaps you may be hidden on the day of the anger of the LORD.

So, to be hidden away seems to be part of what Yom Teruah is about. It appears that Paul was thinking along these lines when he said –

NKJ 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

Keep in mind that since Yeshua ascended to heaven, He's been hard at work preparing the *chuppah* for His bride, waiting for His father to give Him the signal to go fetch His bride. Paul picks up the story there by showing that on Yom Teruah, the day that no man knows, He leaves the heavenly realm and descends to earth with a host of angels, and as Jewish tradition points out, He and his angelic friends

announce His arrival with shouting and the sound of the shofar². He "steals away" His bride and takes her to the chuppah. Is this where it ends? Not exactly. Tradition shows that they only spend seven days (or in this case, seven years) in the chuppah.³

The next moed (feast day) is Yom Kippur. This day is nine days after Yom Teruah, but in Jewish eschatology, takes place at the conclusion of the birth pains. In ancient times, it was the day the national sins of Israel were forgiven.⁴ This day is not alluded to in the New Testament in regards to the Hebrew wedding, but is referenced in that context in the book of Joel.

The book of Joel is about the Day of the Lord, which is a Hebrew idiom for the *Birth Pains of the Messiah* which begins on Yom Teruah. Joel describes an event that happens after the birth pains have been underway for some time -

NKJ Joel 2:15 ¹⁵ Blow the trumpet in Zion, Consecrate a fast, Call a sacred assembly . . .

When we get to this passage, we have come to the end of the Birth Pains. There has been repentance in the hearts of Israel which culminates in a great fast – clearly Yom Kippur. Now notice what happens on this day -

NKJ Joel 2:16-18 Gather the people, Sanctify the congregation, Assemble the elders, Gather the children and nursing babes; Let the bridegroom go out from his chamber, And the bride from her dressing room. ¹⁷ Let the priests, who minister to the LORD, Weep between the porch and the altar; Let them say, "Spare Your people, O LORD, And do not give Your heritage to reproach, That the nations should rule over them. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?' " ¹⁸ Then the LORD will be zealous for His land, And pity His people.

The bridegroom goes out of His chamber and the bride from her dressing room (the KJV says *closet*), but the Hebrew word translated *dressing room* is chuppah. So it appears the bride and groom leave the chuppah on Yom Kippur . . . and where do they go? I'm not quite sure, but I believe they return to earth, or if the chuppah was already on earth, they go from the wilderness to Jerusalem, specifically the Mount of Olives.⁵

² "We cannot go to the Book of Revelation and say that the voice of the seventh angel (Revelation 11:15) is the last trump. In the first century, the last trump (shofar) meant a specific day in the year. In Judaism, there are three trumpets (shofarim) that have a name. They are the first trump, the last trump, and the great trump. Each one of these trumpets indicates a specific day in the Jewish year. The first trump is blown on the Feast of Shavuot (Pentecost) (Exodus [Shemot] 19:19). It proclaimed that G-d had betrothed Himself to Israel. The last trump is synonymous with Rosh HaShanah, according to Theodore Gaster in his book, *Festivals of the Jewish Year*, in his chapter on Rosh HaShanah. Herman Kieval also states the same thing in his book, *The High Holy Days* (Volume I, Rosh HaShanah, Chapter 5, Footnote 11), in the chapter on the shofar. The great trumpet is blown on Yom Kippur, which will herald the return of the Messiah Yeshua back to earth (Matthew [Mattityahu] 24:31)." (Eddie Chumney - Hebraic Heritage Ministries)

³ Gen. 29:27

⁴ Lev. 16

⁵ Zech. 14:4

The next festival is Sukkot, the feast of Tabernacles. By this time, Yeshua has established Himself as King of Israel. The millennial Kingdom has begun, and the task of teaching the nations to turn to YHVH is about to begin. But before that all happens, there is a wedding that must take place.

NKJ Revelation 19:7 "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."

This is the day that the son's of Abraham have been looking forward to for 3500 years. YHVH and Israel are now husband and wife and it's time to rejoice. This is the event that was always on Yeshua's mind, after all, His first public miracle was at a wedding. This is also the day that Yeshua's father has been looking forward to also, for if tradition holds true, He will be crowned King on this day –

NKJ Song of Solomon 3:11 Go forth, O daughters of Zion, And see King Solomon with the crown With which his mother crowned him On the day of his wedding, The day of the gladness of his heart.

This is still not the end of the story. God put His entire plan of salvation in the framework of a marriage relationship, but getting married and having a big wedding is not the end of the story. God told Abraham that his descendants would be as the stars in the heavens and as the sand of the sea. All the earth's population up to this point has yet to come close to that. So what's next?

The purpose of the millennial kingdom is restoration. The earth will need to be restored; all mankind will have to be restored; but when all is restored, the eighth day begins. This day is called Shemini Atzoreth, the Eighth Day Assembly.⁶ Even though it's the eighth festival, and it begins at the conclusion of the Millennium, it is in reality the beginning of a new cycle, thus it's really the first day. You might say we're back in the Garden of Eden; back to the original purpose for the creation of man.

Scripture says that all YHVH had made was "very good". I would presume that includes Adam and Eve. Before their fall, Adam and Eve were given a mandate –

TNK Genesis 1:28 God blessed them and God said to them, "Be fertile and increase, fill the earth and master it . . .

This is the purpose for which man was created, to fill up the earth, and I believe that as the bride of Messiah Yeshua, we will be performing what we were created for. Our role as the bride of Messiah is to produce godly offspring, for only then can Messiah Yeshua truly fulfill His destiny -

ESV Isaiah 9:6-7 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Shalom Alecheim!

⁶ Some people believe this is the Last Great Day as referenced in John 7, but the Last Great Day is a Jewish reference to Hoshanna Rabbah, the last day of the seven-day Feast of Tabernacles.