

Parable of "The Wedding Banquet".

Matthew 22:1-7.

Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying:

The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.

Then he sent some more servants and said, Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.

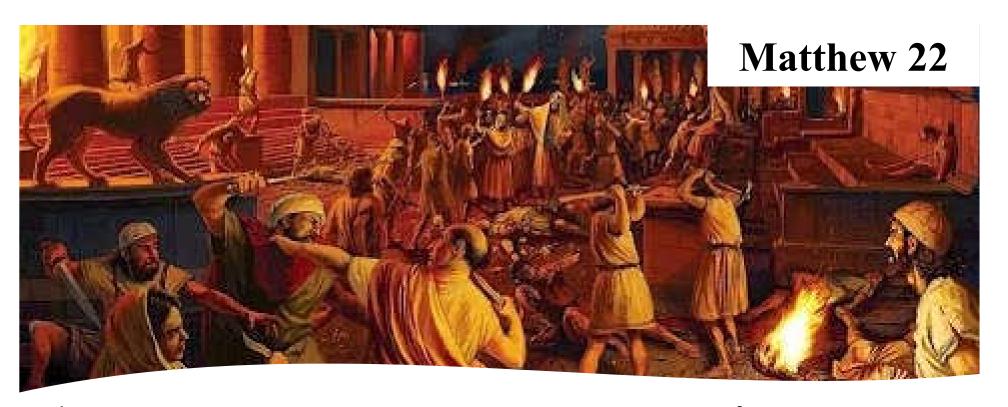
But they paid no attention and went off, one to his field, another to his business. The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.

Parable of "The Wedding Banquet".

Matthew 22:8-14.

Then he said to his servants, The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find. So, the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.

But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. He asked, How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend? The man was speechless. Then the king told the attendants, Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are invited, but few are chosen.



¹ Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: ² The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son.

³ He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.

The invite went out to the Jews, but they refused to come.

The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.

Prophetic of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD and the End times.

Matthew 22.

¹⁰ The servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.

The Gospel message is taken to the Gentiles.

Acts 18:6.

But when they opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent of it. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.





11 But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. 12 He asked, How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?
13 Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The Parable of the Wedding Feast is also a warning to us, to make sure we are relying on God's provision of salvation, not on our own good works or religious service.



Parable of "The Wedding Banquet".

In other words, many people hear the call of God, but only a few heed it.

- Weddings can be a spectacular affair. Thousands of rands are spent trying to produce a perfect moment in time that will join a couple together in marital bliss.
- The bride is dressed in her pure white wedding dress, the groom stands nervously at the front of the church. It is a special moment in the lives of those two individuals and for the people who know and love them.
- Weddings, here on earth, are a special thing! Sadly a spectacular wedding does not assure a successful marriage. Some really nice weddings end in divorce within a few years.



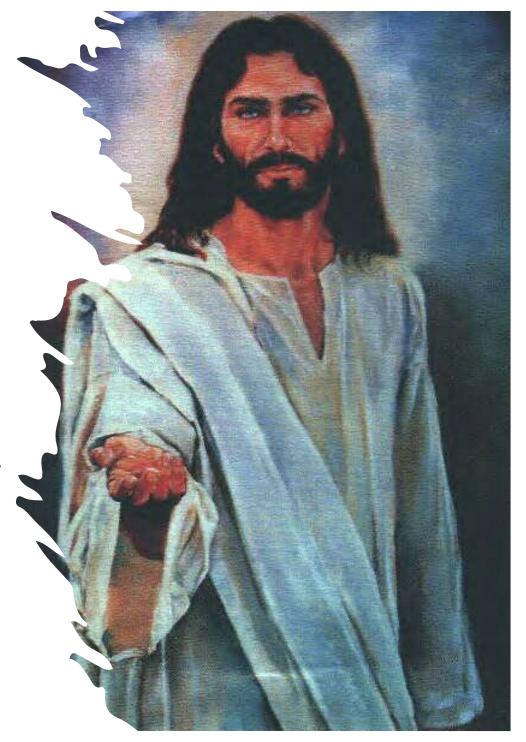
Marriage.

Marriage in Heaven.

Matthew 22:29.

Jesus replied, You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God. At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.

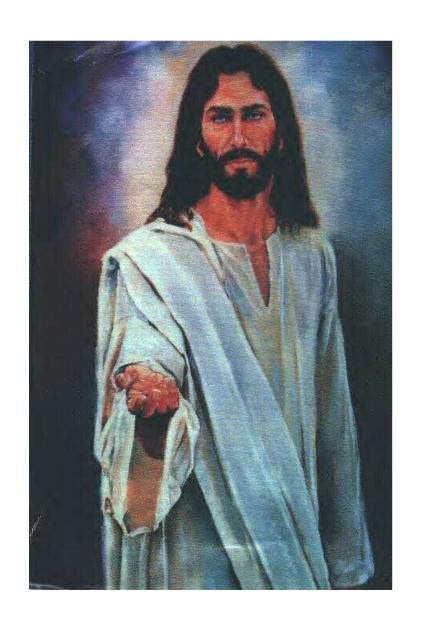
But there will be a marriage in heaven as we will see clearly laid out in Scripture.



Most couples are looking for a marriage that will last and bring happiness! It is referred to as a "Match made in Heaven."

However while some marriages are seemingly made in heaven, they still have to be lived out here on earth. That, in itself, makes them all less than perfect.

But there is a marriage that will be successful, it is the eternal marriage, not made between a man and a woman, but between Jesus Christ himself and believers who receive Him as their Saviour.



A match made in Heaven.

The stages of the traditional Jewish Marriage.



a) The Proposal.

The young man prepared a Ketubah, (Kit to bah) or marriage contract (or covenant) which he presented to the intended bride and her father.

Included in this was the "Bride Price", which was appropriate in that society to compensate the young woman's parents for the cost of raising her, as well as being an expression of his love for her.

The Jewish Wedding Paralleled in Salvation.

Jesus offers people in this present age, a "New Testament" or Covenant.

a) The Proposal.

We, just like those in the Old Testament, are saved by faith in God's revealed promises. They looked in faith to the coming of the Messiah Jesus Christ and we look back on the finished work of Christ and the cross where Jesus paid the sins of the world.... The New Testament is not a new way to be saved, but a new promise in what our salvation would bring. We become the body and Bride of Christ. We have a special close relationship with Him now and in eternity. There is no relationship closer than that of a husband and wife.

b) Acceptance.

To see if the proposal was accepted, the young man would pour a cup of wine for his beloved and wait to see if she drank it. This cup represents a blood covenant.

If she drank the cup she would have accepted the proposal and they would be betrothed. The young man would then give gifts to his beloved, and then take his leave.

The young woman would have to wait for him to return and collect her.



b) The acceptance of the proposal.

There would be no wedding if the bride did not respond to the offer of marriage. The young man pouring a cup of wine for his perspective bride clearly symbolizes Jesus' blood that He poured out for our sins. We go to the Lord's Supper to see this truth.

Matthew 26:28.

For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Luke 22:20.

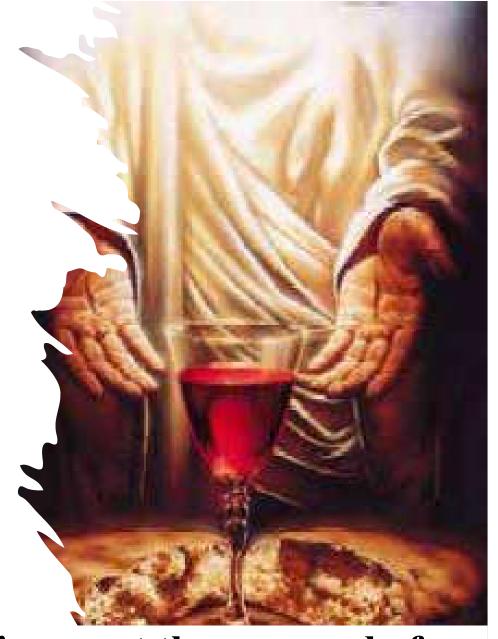
Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.



John 1:12.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

When a person by faith receives Jesus Christ as their Saviour it is a picture of the bride accepting the proposal of the Bridegroom.



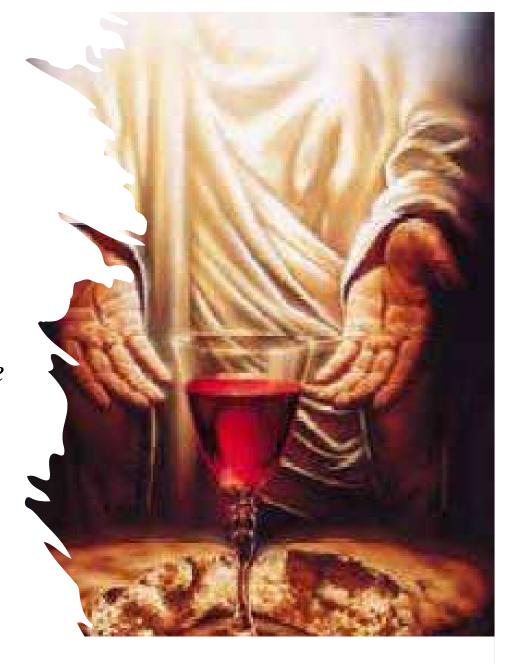
All the bride has to do is accept the proposal of marriage.

No wonder James writes to the Jewish Believers and calls them adulterers.

James 4:4-5.

Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?

Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"?



We have accepted the proposal of marriage.



This being his Father's home...the Father was the one who would say when the wedding chamber was ready and when the marriage might take place.

If someone would ask the Bridegroom when the day of the wedding was, he would reply "Only Father knows."





Jesus' Gift to His Bride.

After a bridegroom gave his bride a contract and made a covenant with her, he would give her gifts called a "mattan" and the father would give her gifts as well called the "shiluhhim".

These gifts sustained his bride for the duration of their separation till their wedding day.

The gift given by Jesus Christ and the Father was the gift of the Holy Spirit to sustain us till Jesus returns for His bride. This was initially fulfilled at Pentecost and the Bride of Christ now eagerly awaits the Bridegroom.

The Promise to His Bride.

Galatians 3:22.

But Scripture has locked up everything under the control of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.



The Bridegroom's promise.



As in the Jewish wedding the Bridegroom leaves to prepare the new home for His Bride, so our Bridegroom goes to prepare the wedding chamber. He promises to come again and receive her to Himself, that where the Bridegroom is so will be the bride.

John 14:1-3.

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

Jesus' sealed His promise to His Bride.

Writing to the Ephesians Paul tells them of the promised inheritance that we have and goes on to say that we are sealed with the holy Spirit of promise.

Ephesians 1:13-14.

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession, to the praise of his glory.

So, Jesus Christ the Bridegroom has offered to us a covenant, a proposal of salvation, but we will see that the proposal is conditional to the "Purity of the Bride".



The Betrothal.

Erusin (is the Hebrew term for betrothal. In modern Hebrew, "erusin" means engagement, but this is not the historical meaning of the term, which is the first part of marriage (the second part being nissuin) (Wikipedia) The betrothal was binding and could only be undone by a divorce with proper grounds, such as the bride being found not to be pure, (see Joseph and Mary -Matt 1 v18-19)

A Jewish Marriage.

Until late in the Middle Ages, marriage consisted of two ceremonies that were marked by celebrations at two separate times, with an interval between.

First came the betrothal [erusin]; and later, the wedding [nissuin]. At the betrothal, the woman was legally married, although she remained in her father's house.

She could not belong to another man unless she was divorced from her betrothed. The wedding meant only that the betrothed woman, accompanied by a colourful procession, was brought from her father's house to the house of her groom, and the legal tie with him was consummated.

The Betrothal.

The proposal of marriage is made to the Father, the bride accepts the proposal and officially the couple is betrothed.

The bride is now "sanctified" or set apart to her husband, the only way to break the covenant was divorce and the only grounds for divorce was that the bride, had deceived the bridegroom and was not pure.

We see the example of this when Joseph found out that Mary was with child.



e) The Betrothal.

Matthew 1:19.

Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.

Yet, in the marriage of a believer to Jesus Christ there can be no impurity, it is completely removed by Jesus Christ. The believer is forgiven of all their sins and clothed in His righteousness.



Like the Jewish marriage custom the betrothal begins with a contract presented by the Bridegroom. Jesus Christ is the Bridegroom and He presents to all men His contract of salvation and He pays the price. The price for the redemption of His bride was His sacrifice on the Cross.

1 John 2:2.

And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. (Propitiation means full payment)

Matthew. 26:28.

For this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

This covenant was not the one He made with Israel, but a new covenant made with those who would believe in Him and become part of "The Church".

Hebrews 8:6. (Explains this covenant)

But in fact the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, since the new covenant is established on better promises.

Jesus gave us a better covenant with better promises.

To Israel God promised the coming of the Messiah and the Messiah's kingdom where Israel would be at peace and prosper. He promised them they would finally have the land that he gave to Abraham that extends from the Nile river in the south to the Euphrates in the north. To believers Jesus has promised something much better. The Gospel is God's proclamation of the this new covenant. Jesus further revealed this New Testament or covenant when He gave us the Lord's Supper:

1 Corinthians 11:25.

After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

Satan is not going to just stand back and do nothing he will try ruin God's plan for us to be part of "The Bride of Christ"

2 Corinthians 11.1-3.

I hope you will put up with me in a little foolishness. Yes, please put up with me!
I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy.
I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him.
But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.





2 Corinthians 11.4 & 13-15.

For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the Spirit you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough.

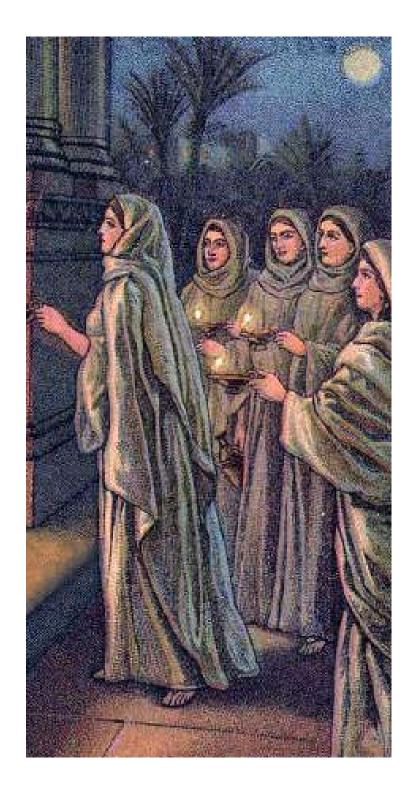
For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness.

The Bridegroom returns for His Bride.

When the wedding chamber was ready the bridegroom could collect his bride.

He could do this at any time so the bride would make special arrangements. It was the custom for a bride to keep a lamp, her veil and her other things beside her bed.

Her bridesmaids were also waiting and had to have oil ready for their lamps. When the groom and his friends got close to the bride's house they would give a shout and blow a shofar to let her know to be ready.



The Bridegroom comes for His bride.

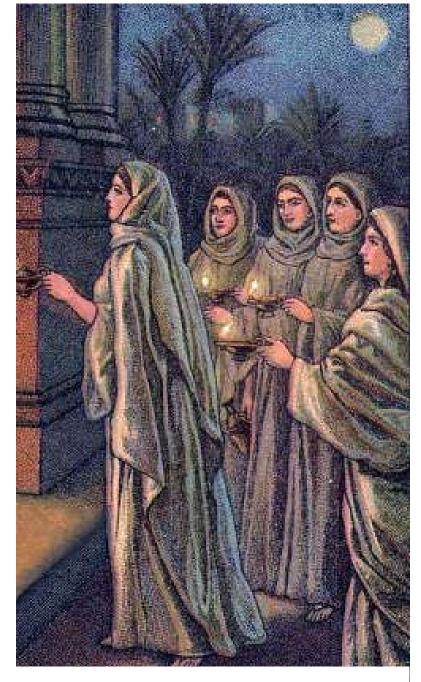
At the proper time appointed by the bridegroom's father a messenger would be sent to announce the bridegroom's coming and the bridegroom taking his wife.

The bride not knowing when the bridegroom would come was to keep herself ready at all times.

In Matthew 25 Jesus gave the parable of the ten virgins who were called to a marriage supper. These virgins when they heard the Bridegroom was coming would go to meet him and light the way with their lamps.

The groom, best man and other male escorts would leave the groom's father's house and conduct a torch light procession to the home of the bride.

The groom's arrival would be preceded by a shout. This shout would forewarn the bride to be prepared for the coming of the groom.



The Bridegroom comes for His bride.

Jesus announces His return for His Bride.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so, we will be with the Lord forever.





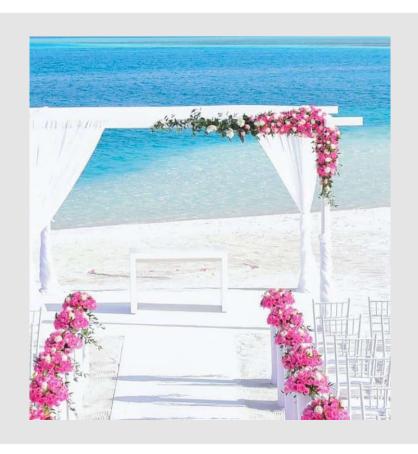
The wedding chamber and the Chuppah.

Before leaving the young man would announce, "I am going to prepare a place for you, I will return for you when it is ready".

The usual practice was for the young man to return to his father's house and build a honeymoon room there. This is what is symbolized by the chuppah or canopy which is characteristic of Jewish weddings. He was not allowed to skimp on the work and had to get his father's approval before he could consider it ready for his bride.

If asked the date of his wedding he would have to reply, "Only my father knows."





The wedding chamber and the Chuppah.

John 14:1-3.

Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that 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.

The wedding chamber and the Chuppah.

Typically it would be a year before he came for his bride. Meanwhile the bride would be making herself ready so that she would be pure and beautiful for her bridegroom. During this time she would wear a veil when she went out, to show she was spoken for.

(she has been bought with a price)



Matthew 24:36-42.

But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away.

That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left. Therefore, keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.

An Unknown day and hour.

The Wedding Feast.

Once the Bridegroom arrived the wedding ceremony would take place and the bride and groom would spend their honeymoon night together in the home provided by the bridegroom. The bride would be adorned in her "wedding garments." Shortly after arrival the bride and groom would be escorted by the other members of the wedding party to the bridal chamber (chuppah).

Prior to entering the chamber the bride remained veiled so that no one could see her face. While the grooms men and bridesmaids would wait outside, the bride and groom would enter the bridal chamber alone.

Following the marriage there would be a seven day Feast "A Marriage Feast."

The "Marriage Supper of the lamb".

Revelation 19:5-9.

Then a voice came from the throne, saying, Praise our God all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great! And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thundering's, saying, Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!

Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the MARRIAGE of the LAMB has come, and His wife has made herself ready. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, Write: Blessed are those who are called to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb!

The Wedding.

When the wedding party arrived at father's house the newly weds went into the wedding chamber and the groom's best friend stood outside waiting for the groom to tell him that the marriage had been consummated.

When the couple emerged there would be much congratulation and the Marriage Supper could begin.

Then all the friends really started celebrating for the seven days that the couple were honeymooning.





The Marriage Feast in the Old Testament is a seven-day event.

Genesis 29:21-22 (Jacob and Leah)

Then Jacob said to Laban, Give me my wife. My time is completed, and I want to make love to her. So, Laban brought together all the people of the place and gave a feast....

Laban replied, It is not our custom here to give the younger daughter in marriage before the older one. Finish this daughter's bridal week; then we will give you the younger one also, in return for another seven years of work.



Judges 14:10-12. (Samson and Timnah)

Now his father went down to see the woman. And there Samson held a feast, as was customary for young men. When the people saw him, they chose thirty men to be his companions.

Let me tell you a riddle, Samson said to them. If you can give me the answer within the seven days of the feast, I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty sets of clothes.

The Marriage Supper of The Lamb.

Although in ancient times, the wedding feast (seudah) after the nissuin might have included seven full days of food, music, dancing and celebrations (Judges 14:10–12), today the Jewish ceremony is usually followed by a wedding supper and reception with food, wine, music and dance.

However, Orthodox Jews celebrate after the wedding for seven nights, with friends and family, hosting festive meals in honour of the bride and groom.

John the Baptist refers to himself as the friend of the Bridegroom.

John 3:22-30.

An argument developed between some of John's disciples and a certain Jew over the matter of ceremonial washing. They came to John and said to him, Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan the one you testified about look, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him.

To this John replied, A person can receive only what is given them from heaven. You yourselves can testify that I said, I am not the Messiah but am sent ahead of him. The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. He must become greater; I must become less.

Relationship not religion gets you into the Marriage feast. Luke 13:22-30.

Someone asked him, Lord, are only a few people going to be saved? He said to them, Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to.

Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, Sir, open the door for us. But he will answer, I don't know you or where you come from.

Then you will say, We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets. But he will reply, I don't know you or where you come from. Away from me, all you evildoers!



Relationship not religion gets you into the Marriage feast.



Luke 13:22-30.

There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out.

People will come from east and west and north and south and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God. Indeed, there are those who are last who will be first, and first who will be last.