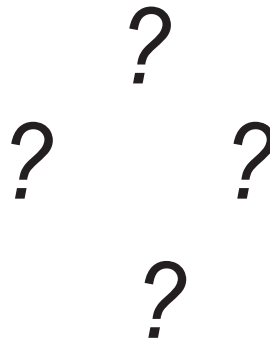




March 2013

**Passover begins
at sunset on
March 25
this year.**



Passover Blessings in Yeshua,

Questions, Questions, Questions, Questions

Passover is all about questions; asking questions is a very Jewish thing to do. A little child initiates both the traditional and Messianic *seders by asking questions*. He asks, "Why is this night different from all other nights?" Things are done differently on the eve of Passover. Only unleavened bread is eaten. Only bitter herbs are eaten. Herbs are dipped twice. Guests eat their meal reclining rather than sitting. Most people are familiar with these customs. But a little known fact about Passover is that a book of the Bible (not Exodus) is intricately connected with the holiday: *Shir Hashirim*, the Song of Songs.

Why is the Song of Songs read on the Sabbath of Passover? Bridal imagery is used throughout the Holy Scriptures to describe the relationship of God to Israel. God married His people Israel when He took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt (Jer. 31:32). The Song of Songs is considered a love song between God and His people, expressing a mutual relationship of love and commitment. The God of Israel expresses His love for His people over and over in the *Tanach*: "*I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy; I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the Lord*" (Hosea 2:19-20).

Isaiah 62:5 is traditionally considered to be a promise from God concerning Israel's return to God and God's return to His people at the end of days. "*For as a young man marries a virgin, so shall your sons marry you; and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.*" Israel was God's first love, and He is even now wooing her back to Himself because of His eternal covenant with her.

The Song of Songs is also a love song for the New Covenant bride. We as believers are betrothed to the Son of God, Yeshua the Messiah, whose love for us is reflected in Solomon's love for the Shulamite maiden. This is a love stronger than death (Song of Songs 8:6).

Did God pay a bride price for Israel?

Yes. The God of Israel actually followed the ancient Jewish wedding customs when He took Israel as His bride. Brides were purchased. A *mohar*, or bride price, was paid for them by the prospective bridegroom. God was reminded of His purchase of Israel in Psalm 74:2, "*Remember Your congregation which You have purchased of old, the tribe of Your inheritance, which You have redeemed.*" What price did the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob pay for Israel? Blood. A high price. We often think of the blood of all the lambs that were killed as per God's instructions so that their blood could be applied to the lintel and doorposts of each Israelite home. But for God, the price also included the blood of each firstborn in Egypt who were part of God's creation. Jewish people do not rejoice over the slaying of the firstborn. In fact, a drop of wine (symbolizing joy) is spilled on a plate when this plague is mentioned, diminishing their joy because of the suffering of part of God's creation.

It was God's love for Israel that made Him willing to pay such a high bride price. In the same way, Yeshua's love for His bride compelled Him to pay the highest price—His own blood. *"Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold...but with the precious blood of Messiah, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot"* (I Peter 1:18-19).

Was Israel Given Bridal Gifts at the Exodus?

After the Lord God told Moses of His plans to bring the Israelites out of the affliction of Egypt into a land flowing with milk and honey, He informed him that in order for this to come to pass, He would have to strike Egypt with all His wonders. After that, Pharaoh would let them go. God's plan continued: *"And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall be, when you go, that you shall not go empty-handed. But every woman shall ask of her neighbor, namely, of her who dwells near her house, articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing; and you shall put them on your sons and on your daughters. So you shall plunder the Egyptians"* (Ex 3: 21-22).

Imagine the scene – Israel leaving Egypt dressed not as slaves, but as princes and princesses. The jewels now belonged to the Jews! God certainly outdid Himself in fulfilling that part of the ancient Jewish wedding – the giving of gifts by the bridegroom to his bride at betrothal. Years earlier, His friend Abraham was also pretty lavish in providing the bridal gifts for his son Isaac's bride, *"Then the servant brought out jewelry of silver, jewelry of gold, and clothing, and gave them to Rebekah..."* (Gen 24:53).

The New Covenant Bride received her multi-faceted bridal gift, the *Ruach HaKodesh*, after her bridegroom died for her sins and rose again for her justification. This gift, more precious than silver or gold, is a living bridal gift. The Lord has given us the Spirit in our hearts as a deposit – a token of our bridal inheritance (2 Cor 1:21-22). Through Him, we receive every gift, including the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, gifts of healings, the working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits and tongues and interpretation (I Cor 12:8-11). Other spiritual gifts that adorn the Bride of Messiah include ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, ruling and mercy (Rom 12:6-8).

Did Israel Become a Consecrated Bride?

Yes. Israel was set apart unto God when He brought His people to Mount Sinai and entered into covenant with her. She had passed through the Red Sea after being redeemed from Egyptian bondage, in what must surely be the most dramatic awe-inspiring bridal *mikvah* of all time! (Even today, a bride cannot be legally married in Israel without having first been to the mikvah or pool of immersion. Consider the implication for Messiah's bride!)

Once at Mt. Sinai, the wedding ceremony began. Details of the ceremony are found in Exodus chapter 19 where we read that the children of Israel arrived at Mt. Sinai three months after leaving Egypt. God called to Moses from the Mount: *"Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine'"* (Ex 19:3-5). Israel, like all Jewish brides, had the opportunity to give her consent. She did. *"Then all the people answered together and said, 'All that the Lord has spoken we will do'"* (Ex 19:8).

God specifically told Moses to tell His people that they were to be consecrated (*m'kudeshet*) to the Lord: *"And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation"* (Ex 19:6). *"Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes. And let them be ready for the third day'"* (Ex 19:10-11).

Was Israel Given A Bridal Ketubah?

The Torah (Law) was Israel's wedding contract or *ketubah*. In it, He gave His people guidelines for a life consecrated to their God. He began by reminding them, *"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage"* (Ex 20:2). The Ten Commandments

followed, which included God defining the “One and only God” relationship that Israel must have. No idols. No graven images. The God of Israel called Himself a “jealous God.” He wanted to be Israel’s one and only love (not unreasonable in any marriage). He assured her: *“In every place where I record My name I will come to you, and I will bless you”* (Ex 20:24).

God had claimed Israel as His own at the Exodus. The desire of His heart was that His people would come to know, love and trust Him. The marriage covenant that He ratified at Sinai was actually a fulfillment of a promise that God had made to His friend Abraham: *“And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God”* (Gen 17:7-8). An everlasting covenant. An everlasting homeland. An everlasting love. All bridal gifts from an everlasting God. God even came to the *huppah* first, as all Jewish bridegrooms do. *“The LORD came from Sinai, and dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, and He came with ten thousand saints; from His right hand came a fiery law for them. Yes, He loves the people...”* (Deut 33:2-3).

Unfortunately, Israel, God’s bride, was not faithful to the covenant, but He was determined to win her back. How would He accomplish this? - Through a new and better covenant. The Lord spoke through the prophet Jeremiah about this New Covenant – a new marriage covenant for Israel. *“Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah – not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”* (Jer 31:31-34)

This “new covenant” is proclaimed in the part of the Bible that is known as the New Testament, which is actually the new *ketubah* for Israel and the entire world. Our new *ketubah* tells us how we, as believers in Messiah, are to live as a separated people, keeping the commandments of God through the power of the Holy Spirit. It was at a Passover *seder* that Yeshua drew a parallel between the two marriage covenants. Instead of instructing His talmidim to only remember the marriage covenant at Sinai as they partook of the *matzah* and wine at Passover, He told them to partake of the elements as a remembrance of the new marriage covenant sealed in His own blood (Luke 22: 19-20). The first covenant had also been sealed in blood, as was the Jewish custom. (See Exodus 24:6-8.)

How does God plan to win Israel back?

We read about God’s plan to woo Israel back to Himself in Hosea chapter 2 *“...I will allure her, will bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfort to her. I will give her her vineyards from there, and the Valley of Achor as a door of hope; she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt. ‘And it shall be, in that day,’ says the LORD, ‘that you will call Me ‘My Husband,’ and no longer call Me ‘My Master,’ for I will take from her mouth the names of the Baals, and they shall be remembered by their name no more”* (Hosea 2:14-17).

The Lord refers to Israel and the Valley of Achor, meaning “troubled” in another verse, indicating that He will bring blessing out of affliction for His people. (God always looks to do us good in the end!) *“I will bring forth descendants from Jacob, and from Judah an heir of My mountains; My elect shall inherit it, and My servants shall dwell there. Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the Valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down, for My people who have sought Me.”* (Is. 65:9-10)

Israel will return to the LORD in the last days. This is prophesied many times throughout the

Tanach (the Hebrew Scriptures). Part of God's plan is to use gentile believers to provoke Jews to jealousy, because of their close, holy walk with the Lord. Many of you are in that bridal company! God may also use the loss of all her friends and allies around the world to get Israel to look up to the One who loves her with a covenantal, everlasting love.

Consider this glorious promise, *"For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim. Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They shall fear the LORD and His goodness in the latter days"* (Hosea 3:4-5). Yeshua is the Davidic King that Israel will seek in the last days. You are a part of that prophetic picture as you join Jewish Jewels in prayer and financial giving.

Did God and Israel Have a Marriage Supper?

There is always food at Jewish weddings, even at the one on Mount Sinai. God told Moses to come up to join Him on the Mount, along with Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel. This happened right after the people said *"We will do it,"* and agreed to obey all that the Lord had said, and were sprinkled with the blood of the covenant. *"Then Moses went up, also Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and they saw the God of Israel. And there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in its clarity. But on the nobles of the children of Israel He did not lay His hand. So they saw God, and they ate and drank."* (Ex 24:9-11) Imagine sharing a (marriage) covenant meal with God!

The time is coming, possibly very soon, when we too will partake of a marriage supper with our HEAVENLY BRIDEGROOM. His Father will be the Host. It just might be a Passover Seder, since the focus of the Feast will be Yeshua, our Passover. This marriage supper is given a name in the last book of the bible: *"...Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!"* (Rev 19:9).

As you celebrate Passover this year, it is our prayer that God uses you to share about His eternal love and covenantal faithfulness for His Jewish people. He has neither abandoned nor forgotten them. As for believers, we pray for a greater revelation of Yeshua as both the One who delivers us from spiritual Egypt, and the Lover of our souls whose nuptial name is "The Lamb." *"...Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!"* *"...Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!"* (Rev 5:12-13) Amen.

Love in Messiah, our Passover Lamb,



Jewish Jewels Television Airtime Schedule - March 2013

LOCAL TV STATIONS

AIRTIME:	STATE:	CITY:	STATIONS:
TUE 6:00 PM	AK	North Pole	KJNP TV 4
MON 10:00 PM	FL	Tampa/St. Pete.	WCLF TV 22
THU 11:30 AM	FL	Miami/Ft. Laud.	WHFT TV 45
SUN 1:30 PM	FL	Tallahassee	WVUP TV 45
SAT 10:30 PM	FL	West Palm Beach	WFGC TV 61
SUN 2:30 PM	GA	Columbus	WYBU TV 16
SUN 1:30 PM	IA	Dubuque	KFXB TV 40
THU 6:30 AM	ID	Twin Falls	KJCY TV 38
MON 11:30 AM	IL	Chicago	WJYS TV 62
SUN 1:30 PM	MO	New Bloomfield	KNLJ TV 25
THU 8:30 AM	NC	Goldsboro	WHFL TV 43
SUN 4:00 PM	NJ/NY	NYC/New Jersey	WMBC TV 63
THU 5:30 AM	OR	The Dalles	KRHP TV 14

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SATELLITE NETWORKS (EST)

DirectTV

SAT 2:30 PM Ch. 373 - WORD Network
 SUN 4:00 PM Ch. 93 or 900 - WMBC
 MON 8:30 PM Ch. 376 - CTN (Christian Television Network)
 THU 8:30 AM Ch. 378 - NRB Network

Dish Network

MON 8:30 PM Ch. 376 - CTN (Christian Television Network)



CABLE NETWORKS (EST)

AT&T U-Verse

SAT 2:30 PM Ch. 575 - WORD Network For other cable networks check local listings....

Comcast Cable

SAT 2:30 PM Ch. 486 - WORD Network
MON 11:30 AM Ch. 386 - MCTV Network

Time Warner Cable

SAT 2:30 PM Ch. 386 - WORD Network
