

That The World May Know: Fire on the Mountain – Session 5: I Led You Like a Bride

God Prepares His Bride, Israel

If the wedding of God and his bride, Israel, occurred at Mount Sinai, we should expect a time of courtship when God showed himself to be a faithful and loving husband. The prophet Jeremiah reveals when and where that courtship took place: “as a bride you loved me and followed me through the desert, through a land not sown.”

1. How did God feel as he watched his bride come across the desert and approach the foot of his mountain?
Jeremiah 2:1 – 3
Isaiah 62:1 – 7
2. How did Israel feel when God came to them at Mount Sinai?
Exodus 19:16-19
Psalm 105:38 – 45
Isaiah 30:29
3. How do these images of God and his bride, Israel, help refresh your love and inspire delight in your relationship with God?
4. What instructions did God give to the Hebrews to prepare for the wedding? How did these instructions communicate the need for holiness and purity before God?
Exodus 19:9 - 24

God Places His Chuppah over Israel

In a traditional Jewish wedding, the bride and groom come together under a chuppah (canopy). The chuppah symbolizes the protective covering God provides for the couple as they begin their marriage. This beautiful picture is rooted in the covering of God's presence that he provided when he brought his bride to Mount Sinai.

1. What covered Mount Sinai as evidence of God's presence when he met with Moses and Israel?
Exodus 19:16 – 19
Exodus 20:18 – 21
Exodus 24:15 – 18

How had God prepared the Hebrews to know what their meeting with him would be like?
Exodus 19:9

What had the Hebrews done to prepare for their meeting with God?
Exodus 19:10 – 17

2. The chuppah has a special meaning in the context of marriage. What word picture is conveyed in Psalm 19:1 – 6?
3. How deeply does God love his people? How compassionately does he care for them?
Ezekiel 16:1 – 14

What commitment does God have to nurture life, beauty, purpose and holiness in his people—regardless of the condition in which he finds them?

Are you understanding what it means to meet God under his chuppah?

God Prepares the Ketubah

In ancient times, covenants formally defined many kinds of relationships, including the marriage relationship. Covenants were documented carefully to spell out the mutually agreed upon responsibilities and commitments of the parties involved. The Bible describes Israel as God's bride, so in keeping with the marriage metaphor, the Ten Commandments can be viewed as a ketubah.

1. What did God do for his people that expressed a deep love for them?
Exodus 19:3 – 6
Deuteronomy 7:6 – 12
2. The Ten Commandments are God's ten vows or guidelines for a good relationship like the one he desired to have with Israel. On which act did God base his commands for his people?
Exodus 20:2
3. For what kind of relationship did God create these commands?
Jeremiah 2:1 – 2
Isaiah 54:5
Isaiah 62:5

The Bride Has an Affair

God continued to love his unfaithful bride. When God came down to the Hebrews, fire, smoke, thunder, and the trembling of the earth beneath their feet filled their senses. Even with all that, they turned their affection toward a golden calf!

1. What kind of love did God have for his people? What kind of relationship was he establishing with them at Mount Sinai?
Exodus 16:3 – 6
Ezekiel 16:8
2. Israel made some specific promises in order to express the love for God and protect the sanctity of their ongoing relationship with him, but quickly reneged when put to the test. Which acts had the Hebrews agreed not to do?
Exodus 20:3 – 6 and 23
3. While Moses was getting the ketubah from God, the people camped at the bottom of the mountain were getting restless. What did Aaron and the Hebrews believe had happened to Moses? What did they do about it?
Exodus 24:17 – 18
Exodus 32:1 – 6
4. When Moses saw the calf and the behavior of the Hebrews, what was his response? Why was it significant?
Exodus 32:19 - 30

Celebrate the Covenant

Obedience is the language of love. God deeply loved Israel and delivered his people from bondage to bring them into a personal and intimate relationship with him—their “husband” and King. Obedience was the “love language” by which God wanted his people—his bride—to express their love toward him.

1. God made a covenant with Israel that is summarized in the Ten Commandments. On what basis did God give Israel the opportunity to have a covenant relationship of love with him?
Deuteronomy 7:6 – 8
2. How were the Hebrews to demonstrate their love for God because he had brought them to himself like a bride?
Exodus 20:6
Deuteronomy 6:4 – 8
Deuteronomy 7:9
Deuteronomy 10:12 – 13
3. Who else in the Bible is described as the bride of God?
John 3:22 – 30
2 Corinthians 11:1 – 4
Ephesians 5:22 – 33
Revelation 19:5 - 8

Scripture References

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| Genesis 17 | Jeremiah 31 |
| Exodus 16 | Ezekiel 16 |
| Exodus 19 | Ezekiel 16 |
| Exodus 20 | Hosea 1 |
| Exodus 24 | Hosea 2 |
| Exodus 32 | Hosea 3 |
| Leviticus 19 | Joel 2 |
| Leviticus 20 | Malachi 2 |
| Leviticus 22 | Matthew 5 |
| Numbers 5 | Matthew 7 |
| Deuteronomy 4 | Matthew 22 |
| Deuteronomy 6 | Luke 6 |
| Deuteronomy 7 | John 3 |
| Deuteronomy 8 | John 14 |
| Deuteronomy 10 | Romans 8 |
| Deuteronomy 32 | 2 Corinthians 3 |
| 1 Chronicles 5 | 2 Corinthians 11 |
| 2 Chronicles 5 | Ephesians 2 |
| Psalms 17 | Ephesians 5 |
| Psalms 19 | 2 Timothy 1 |
| Psalms 105 | Hebrews 9 |
| Isaiah 30 | 1 Peter 2 |
| Isaiah 54 | 1 John 2 |
| Isaiah 62 | 1 John 5 |
| Jeremiah 2 | 2 John 6 |
| Jeremiah 3 | Revelation 19 |

Chuppah: Canopy

Mikveh: Bath pool

Ketubah: Marriage contract

Segulah: Treasured possessions

Na'aseh V'nishmah: We do