



# The Zion Letter

The Monthly Newsletter of For Zion's Sake Ministries, Inc.  
PO Box 1486 Bristol, TN 37620  
www.forzionsake.org

Phone: 276-644-1678 \* Fax: 276-644-1689 \* Email: [contact\\_fzs@forzionsake.org](mailto:contact_fzs@forzionsake.org) \* Web: [www.forzionsake.org](http://www.forzionsake.org)

## Who is the Bride of Messiah?

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Did you know that traditional Jewish wedding ceremonies for thousands of years have begun with the words "*Baruch Haba B'Shem Adonai*" (*Blessed is He Who Comes in the Name of the Lord*); this includes Messianic Jewish weddings too. At the beginning of the ceremony the Rabbi calls out this famous phrase, and the groom walks down the aisle, usually escorted by one or both parents. If you are a Christian, this call which begins the traditional Jewish wedding for the bridegroom, should be very familiar to you:

*"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, Blessed is He Who Comes In*

*The Name Of The Lord!" (MT 23:37-39).* Yeshua/Jesus knew exactly what He was saying to the Jewish people, and any Messianic Jewish Rabbi familiar with the New Testament should understand the message clearly.

Yeshua was saying to His Jewish people (speci cally those in Jerusalem), I'm your Bridegroom and I'm not coming back for the wedding until you call out to me with the very words every Jewish Rabbi says to begin a Jewish wedding! In fact, nobody is going to see Him until the people of Jerusalem cry out to Him to come back using those very words; why? Because He said so. We can infer a few things from this important verse, recognizing the fact that Jerusalem must be the one to call for the Bridegroom: **1. If Jerusalem must call for the Bridegroom to return, then it would appear that the Bride**

**and the Bridegroom are both Jewish. 2. The wedding will take place in Jerusalem, likely at the Ezekiel Temple (Ezek 40-47). 3. Only Messianic Jews in Jerusalem (likely rabbis) familiar with Mt 23:37-39 would know to cry out to Yeshua/Jesus to begin the Marriage Ceremony of the Lamb with "Blessed is He Who Comes in the Name of the Lord!"**

In addition, Matthew 24 tells us that **nobody** will see Him until Jerusalem calls for their Bridegroom, *"And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn and they will see the Son of Man coming On The Clouds of the Sky with Power and Great Glory," Mt 24:29-30.* God's word makes it quite clear in this verse that ALL THE TRIBES OF THE EARTH will see Him come; that starts with Jerusalem and thus Israel, home of the Twelve Tribes of Jacob. In fact as I mentioned, Yeshua says it is the people of Jerusalem, likely Messianic



Jewish leaders who will call for the Bridegroom with the opening words of the Jewish wedding. **Hosea 2:19** confirms that Yeshua actually chose the Messianic Jews to be His Bride.

### **A Jewish Bride goes against nearly 2000 years of Christian Theology:**

For nearly two thousand years Christians have been taught that they alone are the Bride of Christ. Can God's Son have two brides? Is Yeshua a Polygamist? Of Course Not! Yeshua only has one bride just as there is one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. I will attempt to unravel the mystery of how God chose Israel as the Bride for His Son and How Christians are grafted into the Bride. In order to grasp what I am saying, it is important to understand the Jewish wedding, the Kinsman redeemer and the Torah,

because few things about this can only be one truth and that is one Bride and one Bridegroom.

### **The Betrothal:**

The traditional and ancient Jewish wedding had a specific order to it that began with the marriage arrangement (shiddach, see Gen 24:1-4) where in Middle Eastern culture, the father of the groom chose the bride for his son, followed by the marriage contract (ketubah) which states what each party promises to do and give to each other. The marriage contract is followed by the bride price (Mohar or Dowry as we commonly call it in the West); which is then followed by the mikvah (ritual immersion/purification). Next, the betrothal ceremony known as the Erusin or the Nissuin and lastly the wedding ceremony (Kiddushin)!

We see this played out in Genesis 24 where Father Abraham sends his most trusted servant to his relatives in Babylonia to find a bride for his son Isaac. In this scenario, Abraham is a type of God the father, his servant is just that, a messenger and a man of God with the authority of Abraham. He chooses the bride, he made a contract with her brother; he paid the bride price and betrothed her to the son – the son of Abraham; this is a picture of being betrothed to Messiah which we will look at more in depth. She (Rebekah) agreed to accept the son of this man she had never seen as her bridegroom. Just like we have a choice to accept the Son of God, she had a choice whether to accept the son of Abraham as her groom. There are a few things about the ancient Jewish wedding that are missing from the story of Isaac and Rebekah, but most of it is there. To learn more about the steps of the ancient Jewish wedding, please go to [www.forzionsake.org](http://www.forzionsake.org), click on livestream, and scroll down to “The ancient Jewish Wedding, part 1” or go to the For Zion’s Sake Ministries Facebook page and watch the sermon given several weeks ago.

When the father of the groom chooses a bride for his son, she has the chance to accept or reject the proposal (the bride always had to accept the proposal, just as you and I have to accept Yeshua). There is one thing wrong with the concept of God’s Son being betrothed and married to the Church; it’s that the Jew is missing. Yes, for nearly 1800 years we Jews have been missing, not just from the betrothal ceremony between Christ and His Church, but we were expelled from the Church entirely



by Emperor Constantine at Nicea in 325(A.D.). As we shall see, the Jew plays a very important role in the betrothal process, in fact it was a famous Jew who betrothed the congregation at Corinth to God’s Son, Yeshua: **“For I have betrothed you to one husband that I may present you as a pure virgin to Christ,” 2 Cor. 11:2.** His name is Paul, **“circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the Tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews...a Pharisee,” Phil. 3:5-6.** If it took a Jew to betroth the entire assembly at Corinth to the Messiah, did it take a Jewish believer like Paul to betroth all the Churches to Christ? To clarify, just because it is only mentioned once doesn’t mean it wasn’t necessary in all cases. In fact, how many times do you hear the Son of God mentioned

in the Tanakh (Old Testament)? I can think of only five in the whole O.T. (Psalm 2:6-12, Dan 3:25, Dan 7:13-14, Isaiah 9:6, and Proverbs 30:4). In fact, the O.T. only mentions the Virgin Birth once in Isaiah 7:14; once! So my point is God doesn’t have to repeat Himself to make a point. The question is why did Paul have to betroth the assembly at Corinth to be the Bride of Messiah? We will fully answer this question in part two of this message.

### **God betrothed His Son to Israel:**

I have heard it said that God betrothed Himself to Israel and the Church was betrothed to Christ. Although this would be a very convenient way to keep the Church and Israel separated, the fact is that God the Father never marries, and the Son is betrothed to Israel (as we shall see). If the Son was betrothed to both Israel and to the Church it would make Him a polygamist and we know that Yeshua/Jesus has only one bride, so let’s see what the Word says. In Hosea 2:19, God is speaking kindly to Israel. He says in v. 14, **“Therefore behold, I will allure her (Israel), Bring her into the wilderness and speak kindly to her”** He says much more, but for the sake of space I encourage you to read all of Hosea. In verse 19, God says to His Chosen people, **“I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and in justice, in lovingkindness and in compassion, and I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness Then you will know the Lord”** Hosea 2:19-20. To know the Lord is to know Yeshua/Jesus, who was the one speaking “tenderly” to Israel in the passages of Hosea 2 and 3. Remember, Yeshua is the Word; He is the one speaking!

In Hosea we see God/Yeshua wooing wayward Israel back to Him, then in chapter three we see the prophet Hosea forced to go and pay for his own prostitute wife to come back to Him and remain with Him; it as an example of Israel whom

God says will come trembling to the Lord and to His goodness in the Last days, (See Hos 3:1-5). To get around this obvious betrothal of Jesus to His Jewish people, some Christian theologians and pastors have mistakenly taught that God the father betrothed Himself to Israel and Jesus betrothed Himself to the Church. This is a fairy tale and a false teaching. There is no marriage of the Father in the Bible, only a marriage of the Lamb, Yeshua/Jesus, THE Lamb of God! Remember, **“Yeshua is the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.”** He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being,” John 1: 1-3. He is the light of the world, He is 100% God and was also 100% man; A true mystery — God with us, and present throughout history!

Yeshua gave Israel His terms of the Marriage contract in Exodus 19 and in other places such as Deut. 28, but we Jews failed to keep the contract or to remain faithful to God; so He called us a prostitute (spiritually) and used the prophet Hosea to demonstrate His faithfulness to faithless Israel (See Hosea 3). Later in Jeremiah 31:31, God promised to renew His marriage covenant with Israel. A promise He kept on that miraculous Passover when He went to the cross after declaring His intentions to the twelve (representing the twelve tribes of Israel). Yes, Yeshua is the Bridegroom of both the Old and New Testament, He is the Word and although He was concealed in the Tanakh (Old Testament), the Tanakh was talking about Him! What promises then do the Christians have? If Yeshua is not a polygamist, how can He be engaged and married to both Israel and to the Church? We will discuss this topic in its fullness in part two of this newsletter.

#### **Conclusion:**

In Jeremiah 31:31 God promised to make a New Covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah not like the covenant He made with them in the desert; His covenant which they broke though as He was a **Husband to them**. Yeshua spoke of that renewed betrothal at the Last Supper, which was a Passover meal (See Luke 22, Mt 26). He gave His life as the Bride price for His Chosen people and for all who would join them as we will talk about next letter. I am not saying that Christians aren't part of the bride; what should shock us, from this article, is the absence of the Jews from the wedding story and of the wedding ceremony [itself] to a Jewish bridegroom.

When you read the Bible, you should always keep in mind that you are reading a two to four thousand year old Middle Eastern book written first in Hebrew. THEN it was translated to Greek, Aramaic, Latin, and eventually nearly every language on earth! Do you really think men such as

Peter, James, Matthew, and John wrote the Gospels (or the books named after them) only in Greek rather than Hebrew being “unlearned” men? (See Acts 2:7, Acts 4:13). In the Next *Zion Letter* we will examine why we have been taught that Messiah has two Brides when the Bible is clear that Yeshua only has one beautiful chosen bride. Stay tuned!

***With Love in Yeshua,  
Rabbi Joe***

*If you are enjoying these teachings feel free to print them and share them with a friend. Please encourage your friends to sign up for Rabbi Joe's teachings at [www.ForZionsake.org](http://www.ForZionsake.org)*

**We apologize for the confusion about the recent 911 changes to the synagogue address**

**Please understand, we have not moved or changed locations**

**The city of Bristol, Virginia has implemented a new 911 addressing system and changed the addresses in Bristol, VA**

Same location but here is “new” 911 address:  
580 Norfolk Ave, Bristol, VA

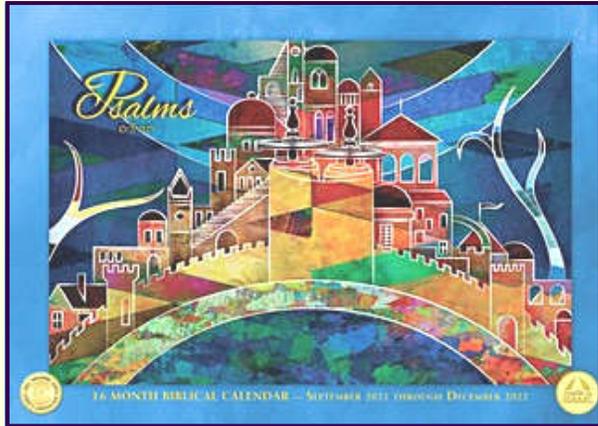
*[formerly known as]*  
1128 New Hampshire Ave, Bristol, Virginia \*\*\*

**\*\*\*To make matters more confusing:\*\*\***

*Google Maps & all current GPS guidance are still pinning our location by using  
1128 New Hampshire Ave.*

*We are advised this will likely be the case for the next year or so until all systems are updated*

***We are still using the PO Box  
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## *Lion of Judah Messianic Congregation*



Meets weekly  
**Saturdays**  
**11:30 AM**  
580 Norfolk Ave Bristol, VA