

COMMUNION AS PART OF THE BIBLICAL MARRIAGE CEREMONY

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March 13, 2021

1. God ordained marriage between one man and one woman as a divine institution. (Gen. 2:24, 25; Matt. 19:5, 6; Mk. 10:6-8; Eph. 5:31-33)
2. In the Old Testament, God the Father was the husband to Israel, His wife. *"The Lord said I was a husband to them."* (Jer. 31:32c; Isa. 54:5, 6; Ezekiel 16:8)
3. Israel broke the marriage covenant (the Mosaic Covenant) and played the harlot. (Jer. 31:32-34; Ezek. 16:15-59)
4. God the Father will restore Israel as His wife in the last days, in the Millennial Kingdom. (Ezek. 16:60-63; Jer. 31:31; 30:3)
5. In the New Testament, it is revealed that God sent His Son to earth to accomplish many things:
 - a. *"...you say correctly that I am a king, and for this I came into the world to testify to the truth."* (John 18:37)
 - b. *"...the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost."* (Luke 19:10; Matt. 18:11vl.)
 - c. *"...the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and give His life a ransom for many."* (Matt. 20:28)
 - d. *"I must preach the Kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose."* (Luke 4:43)
 - e. Jesus came to into the world to die for the sins of the world. *"But for this purpose I came to this hour."* (John 12:27d; 2 John 2:2)
 - f. Jesus said, *"For judgment I came into the world, that those who do not see may see; and those who see may become blind."* (John 9:39)
 - g. *"The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the Devil."* (1 John 3:8)
 - h. The Son of Man came to take a bride. *"...for the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church,..."* (Eph. 5:23-32; Rev. 19:7-9; 21:9; Rev. 22:17)
6. Just as Abraham sent his servant to find a bride for Isaac from among his own people (Gen. 24), so also God sent John the Baptist to announce the bridegroom, Jesus Christ, to His **bride-to-be, the church**. *"Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"* (John 1:26-34)
7. John the Baptist was the antitype of Elijah, the prophet spoken of as the forerunner of the coming of the Messiah. (Mal. 4:5; Matt. 17:10-13; John 3:27-30) Prior to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ another antitype of Elijah will appear, as the **"best man,"** alerting the friends of the bridegroom that the wedding has been consummated and inviting them to the **"marriage supper of the Lamb."** (Rev. 11:3-12; 19:9)

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8. Jesus speaks of the future church which He would build (a body of believers). (Matt. 16:13-18) Jesus is the head of the body. (Col. 1:18; Eph. 5:22-27)
9. During the last Passover that Jesus shared with His disciples, He took a cup and said, *“This cup which is poured out for you is **the new covenant in My blood.**”* (Luke 22:20b) *“This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink (it), in remembrance of Me.”* (1 Cor. 11:25; Mk. 14:22-25)
10. This cup called the **“cup of redemption”** in the communion service has three aspects:
 - a. First, the **price aspect** of the cup signifies the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, paying the sin debt for everyone, once and for all time, sufficient to forgive everyone’s sins. (Matt. 20:28; 26:27, 28; John 4:42; Heb. 10:10; 1 Pet. 2:24a; 1 John 2:2)
 - b. Second, the **promise aspect** of the cup represents the New Covenant promised to Israel in Jeremiah 31:31. This covenant was ratified, signed in blood. (Luke 22:20b) This covenant has a future promise for the nation of Israel of a land, a kingdom, and a King, the Lord Jesus Christ. (Matt. 26:29)
 - c. Third, the **toast aspect** of this cup represents the betrothal of Jesus Christ to His bride-to-be, the church. Believers who drink this cup answer His proposal affirmatively and become His anticipated and promised bride. (Matt. 26:27; Mk. 14:23; 1 Cor. 11:25)
11. The **marriage contract** was sealed by the bride-to-be and the groom sharing a cup of wine together. **This toast** signifies two things (in Hebrew society):
 - a. The bridegroom’s willingness to sacrifice for His bride; that is, to pay the **“bride price.”** *“You have been bought with a price.”* (1 Cor. 6:19, 20; 7:23a) *“...with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, (the blood) of Christ.”* (1 Pet. 1:18-19)
NOTE: This price covered the loss of cash flow for the father-of-the-bride for her upbringing and the loss of a laborer in the family.
 - b. The bride’s willingness to wait until the bridegroom prepared a place for the couple to live, usually a structure adjacent to the father’s house. Then the marriage could be consummated.
NOTE: The time for this preparation was usually about one year! Only the father would decide when the bridegroom could go to get his bride for the marriage ceremony. (John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Matt. 24:36-38) (Gen. 6:11-14, 18)
12. This **toast** in the communion service anticipates the return of the Lord, as the bridegroom, to take His bride, the church, to the **wedding ceremony**. This will occur at the **“rapture.”** (John 14:1-2; 1 Thess. 4:13-18)

13. After the “**rapture**” the bride, the church collectively, is made ready for the wedding at the *bema*, (Greek - βῆμα - bema, “*the judgment-seat of God*”). (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-27; Rom. 14:10; 1 Cor. 3:8-15; Rev. 19:7, 8)
14. The **wedding** of the church and Jesus Christ and the **consummation** of the marriage take place in heaven over a period of seven years in the bridal chamber.
 - a. This is similar to the seven days the Hebrew bride and groom were in their bridal chamber.
 - b. This also parallels the seven days Noah and his family waited in the ark before the flood came and took all the unbelievers away. (Gen.7:4, 10)
 - c. The seven-year absence of the church and the Lord will be during the future tribulation on the earth for the judgment of the unbelievers and the purification of the Hebrew believers and their converts, prior to the second advent. (Dan. 9:27; Dan. 7:25; 12:8-13; Rev. 12:6, 14; 13:5; Matt. 24:9-31)
15. After the wedding ceremony and the consummation, the bride, **the church**, and the **groom**, the Lord Jesus Christ, will come out of the bridal chamber and proceed to the earth for the reception, the “**marriage supper**” of the Lamb. (1 Thess. 3:13; Rev. 19:9; Luke 12:35, 36)
16. Just prior to the “**marriage supper**” the Lord must win the final victory of the **Armageddon Campaign** while the church watches. (Rev. 19:11-21; 2 Thess. 1:6-10)
17. The “**marriage supper**” and entrance into the Millennial Kingdom are to be enjoyed by the Old Testament saints and the tribulation martyrs in resurrection bodies, the living saints who live through the tribulation, and of course the bride, the church. (Matt. 7:21; 8:11; 25:34; Lk. 13:28-30)
Wedding parables:
 - a. Those in wedding clothes (Matt. 22:2-14)
 - b. The five wise virgins (Matt. 25:1-13)
 - c. Those invited dinner guests (Luke 14:16-24)