



WHAT IS BETROTHAL? (THE BETROTHAL MOVEMENT)

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TEXT: Deuteronomy 20:7 And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her.

Deuteronomy 22:23 If a **damsel that is a virgin** be **betrothed** unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her; 24...ye shall stone them with stones that they die; the damsel, because she cried not, being in the city; and the man, because he hath **humbled his neighbour's wife**: so thou shalt put away evil from among you.

**Judges 14:7 And he went down,
and talked with the woman; and
she pleased Samson well.**

**8 And after a time he returned
to take her.**

10 So his father went down unto the woman:
and Samson made there **a feast**; for so used
the young men to do.

16 And **Samson's wife** wept before him...

20 But Samson's wife was given to his
companion, whom he had used as his friend.

Judges 15:1 But it came to pass within **a while after**, in the time of wheat harvest, that Samson **visited his wife** with a kid; and he said, I will go in to my wife into the chamber. But her father would not suffer him to go in.

Deuteronomy 28:30 Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her: thou shalt build an house, and thou shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof.

Hosea 2:19 And **I will betroth thee unto me for ever**; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies.

20 I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord.

Matthew 1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother **Mary was espoused to Joseph**, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

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.

20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, **fear not to take unto thee** Mary **thy wife**: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

25 Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and **took unto him his wife:**

25 And **knew her not till** she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name **JESUS.**

2 Corinthians 11:2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

"Talmudic law held that the consent of the persons betrothed was essential to the validity of the betrothal."

(Biblical Antiquities, 1888)

"The Jewish marriage was consummated originally in one single event. As a recent writer puts it, it was a cash transaction - the money for the bride paid and the bride delivered. But in Biblical times we already hear of two separate marriage functions, betrothal and nuptials..." (Epstein, *The Jewish Marriage Contract*, 1925)

"Legally this division of the single marriage event into two meant only a postponement of the delivery of the bride to her husband. Betrothal, or erusin, represented the full consummation of the marriage. From that moment on, the betrothed...was in every respect the wife of her husband. Nuptials...had no legal significance whatever...the legality of the marriage alone was determined by the betrothal, but nothing more than that."

(Epstein, *The Jewish Marriage Contract*, 1925)

"Out of the entire ketubah only one clause was effective at the time of betrothal, the marriage clause, 'Be thou my wife according to the law of Moses and Israel'..."

(Epstein, *The Jewish Marriage Contract*, 1925)

" ..the ketubah was [in later ages] shifted from betrothal to nuptials...The Alexandrian Jews...invented a new phrase to be inserted in the ketubah, 'when thou comest into my house'...making the ketubah specifications apply to nuptials even though the instrument was written at betrothal. The Palestinian Jews permitted no such innovation..." (Epstein, *The Jewish Marriage Contract*, 1925)

"The separation of betrothal from nuptials...broke down in the Middle Ages, because people were too poor to arrange for two separate feasts, and to this day the two are celebrated together.."

(Epstein, *The Jewish Marriage Contract*, 1925)

"Elaborating on the mishnaic framework, the Babylonian Talmud...presents an ordered progression of steps, comprising **engagement** (shiddukhin), **betrothal** (erusin/kiddushin), and **consummation** (nissu'in)."

(The Cambridge Guide to Jewish History, Religion, and Culture)