

God's Everlasting Covenant

presents

Yeshua Takes a Bride

One Sunday morning, while reading Sandra Teplinsky's most recent book called *Israel's Anointing*, something she wrote piqued my interest. Sandy is an excellent and gifted teacher. Her insights into the purpose for and ministry of Israel and the Jewish people are refreshing, and she presents them to her readers with compassion and grace. She was writing about the Jewish concept of marriage and "taking" a bride. Here is the excerpt from page 58-59 of her most recent book:

The earliest wedding practice in the Bible involved a man simply "taking" a woman as his. First, he would obtain the permission of her father or male guardian, who secured the consent of the bride-to-be. Then the groom would take the young woman into his tent and consummate the union, as did Isaac with Rebekah (see Genesis 24:67). God uses the same word for "taking" when He delivers His people from Egypt. We can assume the Hebrews likely understood that He was talking of marriage when He said, "I will *take* you as my own people, and I will be your God" (Exodus 6:7, emphasis added).

This is not a concept which is taught in most circles of Christendom, but it made sense. So, giving credit to Sandy's inspiration, we decided to do a mini study on how the word "take" is used in the Scriptures.

Indeed, Sandy's explanation of the word "take" in Genesis and Exodus is correct. The Hebrew word in Strong's is #3947 laqach. It is from a primary root meaning: to take, accept, bring, buy, carry away, fetch, get, infold. As is often the case in Hebrew, there is an underlying intensity of meaning beyond what is on the surface, and that inference is: receiving, seize, send for, take away, take up.

This is the word used in Genesis 24:51: Here is Rebekah; take her and go, and let her become the wife of your master's son, as the Lord has directed.

There is no inference here – it is clear from the meaning of the text that this was a "taking" that meant marriage. Note also that when Abraham's servant arrives at Rebekah's home to ask to take her as Isaac's wife, it was the custom for the bride-to-be to give her consent.

Genesis 24:57: Then they said, "Let's call the girl and ask her about it." So they called Rebekah and asked her, "Will you go with this man?" "I will go," she said.

Part of the marriage contract in those days was the consent of the woman. She was not simply "taken" against her will.

Later, Isaac speaks to his own son, Jacob in Genesis 28:1: So Isaac called for Jacob and blessed him and commanded him and said to him: You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padan Aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father and take yourself a wife from there of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother.

The very first time we see the word laqach used in the Tanakh is when the LORD God took Adam and placed him in the garden to work it and take care of it (see Genesis 2:15). This is the first time we see a separation of Adam from the rest of the animals. He is taken and placed in the garden. The next time we see the word, it is used in the context of marriage. It is the word used when the LORD God formed the woman Eve, taking a rib out of the man (see Genesis 2:21-23).

The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it...so the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman' for she was taken out of man."

Certainly we can ascertain the obvious implication that God was forming Eve in order to be in a marriage covenantal relationship with Adam. The other very significant thing to notice is that the LORD God made woman from a part of Adam's body. Both the separation of Adam's rib from the rest of his body and the formation of that rib into his bride has prophetic significance. It is a Messianic "type" and pictures the future Bride of Messiah being separated from the rest of His body. This "type" takes place many times throughout the Scriptures, as we will see a bit later.

Another instance of the word "laqach" is used when God instructed His people about the first Passover in Exodus 12. The Israelites were to "take" (#3947) a lamb out of their sheep or goats (v. 3, 5), "take" of the blood and put it on the lintel and two doorposts (v. 7), and they were to "take" hyssop to apply the blood (v. 22). It is also the same word used in describing what the priests were to do in the Temple sacrificial system.

This entire process of God "taking" the people of Israel, the giving of Torah, and Israel's acceptance is actually a marriage covenant between Israel and the LORD. He was taking them as His wife, His Bride. The sacrificial system and the Temple worship were part of the marriage covenant between them. He gave them land and His teachings and instructions (Torah), and He promised that He would sustain them in that land. His part was to make them His people and into a great nation so that they could fulfill their destiny to be a light to all the nations. Their part was to obey His Torah. This is a picture of a "ketubah" or marriage contract. It is the center piece of a Jewish wedding and corresponds to our modern day marriage vows. The *ketubah*, accepted by both

parties, is what keeps their relationship separate from all other relationships. It is holy or set apart for a special purpose. It is a binding contract, where each one has his or her part to fulfill. For Israel, this purpose was to make them into a kingdom of priests that served all other nations by bringing them Torah and teaching them God's ways. Israel was to be a light shining in the darkness, to lead and guide the Gentile nations into the same covenantal relationship with God.

Before we move on, there is another noteworthy use of the word "take" in the Tanakh. It appears in the story of Esther.

When the turn came for Esther (the girl Mordecai had adopted, the daughter of his uncle Abihail) to go to the king, she asked for nothing other than what Hegai, the king's eunuch who was in charge of the harem, suggested. And Esther won the favor of everyone who saw her. She was taken to King Xerxes in the royal residence in the tenth month, the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign. (Esther 2:16)

Here, Esther was taken to the King with the intention that she would be selected as his new bride. This is exactly what happened. She was taken out of the rest of the virgins and became his queen.

In the Apostolic Scriptures, what most refer to as the New Testament, the comparable word in Greek is #3880 paralambano. It actually comes from two words: para, which is a preposition meaning: from beside. The other word is lambano, which means: to take, get hold of, seize or remove, catch, obtain and receive. The strongly implied meaning is: to take away or take up.

Let's examine a few of the verses where this word is used. First, in Matthew 1:20 speaking of Joseph's consideration to divorce Mary after she was pregnant: But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife..."

Matthew 2:13: When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.

Matthew 2:19-20: After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child's life are dead."

In these instances, "take" is being used in the sense of taking away, as in escaping.

Matthew 4:5, speaking of the temptation of Yeshua: Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple.

Matthew 4:8, another temptation: Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.

This pictures the devil trying to entice Yeshua away from obedience to His Father. In a sense, the devil is tempting Yeshua to break the covenant made between him (as the Son) and his Father.

We're now going to look at another picture of "separation" in the Apostolic Scriptures. We turn again to the gospels.

Mark 9:2: After six days Yeshua took Peter, James and John with him and led them up to a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them.

Matthew 17:1: After six days, Jesus took with him Peter, James and John, the brother of James, and led them up to a high mountain by themselves.

These are the same event written in two different gospels. The picture here is one of separation and setting apart Peter, James and John from the other disciples. What is being set apart? It is a picture of holiness. They were invited into a deeper intimacy with Yeshua as he revealed more of himself and who he really was.

Now let's go back to Mark 14:33 to Gethsemane: He (Yeshua) took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch."

Again, we have Yeshua separating out Peter, James and John. These were his closest friends, and he reveals himself and his distress to only them. This is intimacy, sharing one's deepest feelings with those he trusted, those he loved. Yeshua was separating these followers from everyone else and invited them to be with him in his darkest hour. He asked them to watch for him – he knew what was coming. He knew who was coming to betray him. Isn't this what happens between a bridegroom and his bride? He invites her to see himself as no one else sees him. It is a reflection of their special relationship with one another.

Perhaps the most telling use is in Matthew 24:40-41 which describe what most of us have typically referred to as the Rapture: Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

Remember earlier when we talked about Isaac sending his father's servant to take his bride, Rebecca...and Esther being taken out of (from the midst of) all the other virgins to be King Xerxes' wife. We believe that these scriptures describe the taking away of Yeshua's bride. They are taken out from the rest of the followers of Yeshua, in the sense of separation. They are seized or taken up. There is a division that takes place,

just as Yeshua divided Peter, James and John from the rest of the disciples for his Transfiguration and for Gethsemane.

It doesn't seem fair, does it? Did Yeshua love Peter, James and John more than the rest of the disciples? No, we do not believe this is the case. This is not about His love. Nor is it an issue of salvation. The other disciples were still His followers ...but Yeshua does choose to reveal and share more with those who accept his invitation to go deeper. We believe it is because they show a desire for deeper intimacy with him. They show him, by how they *hear and obey*, that they want to be taken to a deeper place by him. Yeshua didn't love Peter, James and John more than the others. Rather, they loved *him* more.

This is what we believe happens to the true Bride of Yeshua. She will want to go deeper. She will want to be holy, set apart for her Bridegroom, for she will love Him more than anything or anyone. And she will prove it by her obedience to the ketubah. She is the one who accepts and wants to live by Torah. She understands that Torah is her marriage covenant with him. She loves Torah, and by violating it, she understands that she violates her marriage covenant. She will be preparing herself, by keeping herself pure, by watching and waiting for her Bridegroom to come and take her away for the wedding of the Lamb.

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his bride has made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he [an angel] said unto me, "Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he added, "These are the true sayings of God."

Revelation 19:7-9

You may be asking about the fine linen, clean and white. This brings to mind the garments that the Priests wore as they ministered to the LORD in the Temple. Their undergarments were all of fine white linen. The only type of material that could be used in their clothing and in the Temple was fine linen. All during the year, the Priests wore an ephod and breastplate over their fine linen garments. On Yom Kippur, they only wore their white linen garments. It was quite a sight, because after performing the sacrifices, their white garments were splattered with blood. When God accepted the blood offering of the goat as atonement for Israel's sins once each year, He saw them as righteous. Revelation tells us that "the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." We are being reminded that it is the blood of the Lamb, Yeshua, which has made us righteous. Those who have accepted the blood of the Lamb will, like the Priests, be clothed in fine white linen. It will be the ultimate Yom Kippur service! But like the priests, the Bride must continue in holiness. We must be set apart from the rest of the world by how we live. We must be washed by the Word, the Living Torah, so that we will be without spot, wrinkle or blemish.

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the *ekklesia*, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify [set apart] and cleanse [purify] it with the washing of water by the Word, that he might present it to himself a glorious *ekklesia*, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; that it should be holy and without blemish.” (Ephesians 5:25-27)

Do you desire to be chosen as Yeshua’s Bride? Are you getting ready for your Bridegroom? Are you keeping covenant with Him? Will He find you set apart from everyone else, living in purity, allowing His Word (Torah) to wash and purify you so that you have no spots, wrinkles or blemishes? This is what He is looking for in His Bride – an *ekklesia*, an assembly of believers who are holy and without blemish.

We are working on another study that goes deeper into the subject of the Bride that we hope to finish soon. Watch for it!

For further study on “Spots, Wrinkles, Blemishes” we strongly encourage you to listen to the teachings by Pastor Mark Biltz at El Shaddai Ministries. They are excellent and will open your eyes to what this saying means in the Apostolic Scriptures (New Testament).

<http://elshaddaiministries.us/audio/spots.html>