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Marriage
7: 1-13

Paul has explored the meaning of **dying** with **Messiah** (**to see link click Bp – The Messianic Mikveh**), and the concept of **slavery** (see **Bt – Slaves of God**), building on the groundwork already laid (see **Bl – Midrash on Adam**). Now, in relating these ideas to **the Torah**, **he** introduces the new analogy of **marriage**. It is important to understand that throughout this chapter it must be kept in mind that **Paul** was not anti-**Torah**, as some suppose, but that **he** had a high view of **the Torah**. In fact, **he** teaches us that **the Torah is holy (Romans 7:12)**, **perfect, and gives freedom, provided one uses it in the way the Torah itself intends (First Timothy 1:8; James 1:25),** which is our blueprint for living (see the commentary on **Deuteronomy Bk – The Ten Words**).

Every year in the late spring I am reminded of another important wedding anniversary. This one is celebrated on the holiday of **Shavu'ot** (Pentecost in Greek) which is the time when the marriage took place between **YHVH** and **His people Isra'el**. You remember the history. At Passover we recount the redemption from the slavery of Egypt. Yet this nation of former slaves was taken into the wilderness on their way to the Promised Land. Unfortunately, it was a bit of a detour in the Sinai for various reasons. However, it was just 50 days after the first Passover that the people found themselves at the foot of Mount Sinai. Moshe ascended the cloud-covered mountain (reminiscent of a chuppah) and received the divine revelation of

the Torah from the very presence of **God**. As with the **Jewish** wedding ceremony, the written words of Torah could rightly picture the Ketubah between the groom **(God)** and the bride **(Isra'el)**. Likewise, there was a public statement of marriage at that time as the bride responded *"na'aseh v'nishmah,"* or: *All that **the Lord** has spoken, we will do* **(Exodus 19:8)**. This was perhaps the most powerful "I do" in history! From that time of **Shavu'ot** one could say that the **Jews** entered into a sanctified relationship with **the Holy One**. Of course, this marriage, like most, has had its ups and downs. Even at some stages of the last 3500 years it seemed that divorce was inevitable. But by **God's** grace, He has never cancelled the Ketubah (the **Jewish** marriage contract) with **Isra'el** as the B'rit Chadashah verifies. **Paul** put it this way as **he** speaks of **Isra'el** and the **Jewish** people: **The gifts and callings of God are irrevocable (Romans 11:29).** It should be noted that while **Ha'Shem** has never forsaken **His** people, the door has been opened to others beyond **Isra'el** to also enter this personal marriage relationship with our **Groom**. For those of us who believe in **Yeshua** as **God's Messiah**, it is quite fitting that **He** is called **the Groom** for all true believers, **Jew** or Gentile. How perfect is the symbolism as we see **Yeshua** lifting the cup of the B'rit Chadashah as if to enter into the betrothal stage of the marriage with **His** disciples at that last meal together.

This is where we stand at this point of history. **God** entered into the marriage with all the people who said "I do" on that first **Shavu'ot**. How appropriate it is to look at this holiday as the spiritual anniversary for all who have said "I do" to the great bridegroom, **Messiah Yeshua**. As with our earthly anniversaries, it seems that **Shavu'ot** is the perfect time to consider our original biblical vows and to prayerfully evaluate them. **God** has certainly fulfilled **His** part of the contract. How do you measure up to those vows of the Ketubah on this upcoming anniversary on **Shavu'ot** this year? Chag **Shavu'ot** semayach! (Happy **Shavu'ot** Holiday)!