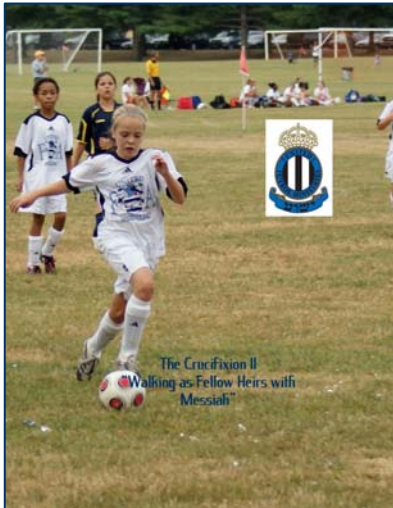




UNITED FÚTBOL MINISTRIES

"Walking with the KING, for the World, through the gospel of Jesus the Messiah"



Gethsemane and the Cup of Betrothal

By Pastor Billy Elias

*"Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to His disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷ And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed. ³⁸ Then He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me." ³⁹ And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this **CUP** pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will." (Matthew 26:36-39 N.A.S.B)*

To me this is perhaps the most passionate portion of scripture in the Word of God portraying the humanity of Jesus the Messiah. I have often found His prayer in Gethsemane not only to be comforting and powerful, but telling. Through it we see our Messiah as He suffers and struggles with a choice; God's Will or His own. It is the struggle of that choice which has always intrigued me, and I must confess, at times perplexed me. For me there has always been something very mysterious about this recorded event in Matthew.

In it we see the Messiah for who He is, the Natural born Son of the Living God, and we see Him agonizing over this choice set before Him by His Father. As you read this account of Gethsemane in the synoptic gospels, you will see that this event in Gethsemane not only caused great agony and grief to the soul of Messiah as recorded in Luke chapter 22, but this entire account seems to be a negotiation between His Father and Himself. One that could not be settled with a mere word or prayer, but with countless visits, petitions and tears. One that needed the intervention of an Angel to Minister to the Messiah as He poured His heart out in this seemingly passionate council held between the two. As I have read these accounts over the years of my salvation, and as I begin to see deeper into a culture, a root system that supercedes the writing of Torah itself, I find myself seeing that perhaps this event in the place known as the Olive Press, exceeds the scope of mere debate between the two over suffering, hardship, and judgment.

In Gethsemane I have found questions, that in my own heart and soul needed answers. Questions about this cup that Yeshua - Jesus asked the Father to have passed from Him, and why? What did this debate, this negotiation have to do with the coming death, burial, and resurrection that would seal the ones that would choose Him forever? Finally, why the drama, the torment, the grievous effect on our Messiah as He sought the Father in Heaven so vigorously and fervently?

I remember when I was first saved and entered into Bible studies and discipleship, I was taught that the “cup” that Jesus asked pass from Him was called the “Cup of Suffering” and that in **Matthew 20:22-23** (*But Jesus answered, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?” They said to Him, “We are able.” He said to them, “My cup you shall drink; but to sit on My right and on My left, this is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by My Father.”*) was found the basis for Christian persecution and martyrdom. I was taught that this “cup of suffering” is offered to all of us, and it is one of trial, hardship, pain, and agony for the furthering of the gospel if we choose to accept it.

I wish to offer you a different view on this cup that Yeshua - Jesus asked pass from Him in Gethsemane. This cup was and is rich in Hebraic culture, set forth with the Hebraic mindset, and certainly embraced by this Jewish Messiah.

*The LORD is the portion of my inheritance and my cup;
You support my lot. (Psalm 16:5)*

Psalm 16:5 is very interesting because in this Psalm we first learn that there is a cup available for us from the Father.

I think to fully understand Psalm 16:5 and what happened in Gethsemane we have to have a understanding of the first of two stages in the Jewish wedding called the Erusin, or the Betrothal stage.

The Erusin, (commonly called the Kiddushin, coming from the root word Kodesh which means holy, and being set apart for holy use) is the portion of the marriage process in which the prospective bridegroom and bride are set apart to each other. It is known as the preparation phase of the marriage. It is at the onset of the Erusin that the price for the bride is set, and agreed upon by all parties involved. Therefore, the price being set for the bride is the price of redemption being paid by the bridegroom.

According to Dr. Douglas Wheeler in his series called Betrothal of God, he says that the price, the payment for the bride was more than just a dowry. He says it was payment for the Ketubah, it was lavish gifts given to the woman before she entered into Erusin. In short it was the price and treasure given to the bride before the marriage began, during the sanctification period, and after the marriage was consummated.

For the bride and bridegroom to fully complete the Erusin and enter into the sanctification phase they needed to sign what is known as the “Ketubah” The Hebrew



word Ketubah literally means “*that which is written.*” This document was the marriage contract, the covenant between the bride groom and the bride. It was not a pre nuptial agreement, but a contract of mutual obligation. In the document it identified who the groom was, and where the couple would live upon completion of the marriage process. This document contained how the husband would cherish, sustain, and support his bride as his treasure from heaven. It is a document that symbolizes a new beginning, i.e. a new covenant not about what you can’t do or take from one another, but about what you will do and give to one another as a result. It was a contract of service and sacrifice based on love, respect, and a covenant promise.

In order for this contract to become binding it needed to be accepted by both parties and agreed upon. Both would debate the contract with their fathers and then all would come together for the sealing of this contract.

With the price for the bride set, the gifts given, and the covenant ready to be



accepted and sealed, something very interesting would happen. Wine would be poured into a cup. According to Dr. Wheeler, the prospective bridegroom would then put a gift in the bottom of the cup, either a piece of gold or silver or a ring. He would then drink half of the pass it to his prospective bride and turn his back on her. If she drank from the cup under her own free will, that sealed their betrothal, and the two were now considered married and the Erusin was completed.

The Rabbis teach that traditionally a year would pass before concluding the marriage with the Nisuin, which in

Hebrew means the “*lifting up of the bride*”. This is when the husband brings his wife into his bedchamber and the two begin their married life together.

Now the cup that was passed from the groom to his future bride is called the Cup of Betrothal. It is also known as the Kiddush Cup, or Cup of Sanctification. Drinking from this cup meant that the two had established a covenant and were exclusively set apart to each other even though they would not at this point consummate the marriage or live together in the same home.

The bride groom would then recite to his new bride a pledge in which he promised to prepare a place for her. He would confirm the covenant entered into for Erusin. He promised to come again and take her to himself. He did this after the cup of betrothal; the cup of sanctification was passed, received and finished.

I offer you this explanation of the cup Jesus wanted to pass from Him in Gethsemane. The cup He refers to as He cries out, “*My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Thy will be done,*” **Matthew 26:42** (N.A.S.B.) It was the Cup of Betrothal, the cup of Sanctification which would set Him apart to His bride and His bride to Him. It was to be sealed! A New Covenant!

Now perhaps you can have a better understanding of what was going on in Gethsemane as recorded by Luke in **Luke 22:44** “*And being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground.*”

Luke records the “fervent” negotiation between Jesus and His Father concerning the Erusin – the Ketubah, the Price to be set for His bride. At Gethsemane, the place of pressing, (the Hebrew word meaning olive press) Jesus was signing the wedding contract! He was signing the Ketubah! He was negotiating with His Father in Heaven the very price to be paid for this bride! She offered Him nothing but sin, adultery and the lifestyle of harlotry. She was corrupt, wild, and known to run to idols and into fornication. The price negotiated by His Father in heaven for the redemption of this bride was His life! This is what prompted Paul to write in **1 Corinthians 6:20** that we have been purchased with a price! That price, what He would pay and give to His bride, was His Death burial and Resurrection as the Natural born Son of the Living God as set forth in Ketubah signed to redeem us as His Bride.

What else does Paul say of the Erusin, the betrothal? *2 Corinthians 11:2 ... for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin.*

Remember that in order to be betrothed both parties must drink from the Cup of Betrothal, the Cup of Sanctification. Sanctification means to be set apart from sin and set apart to God! When Jesus walked back into the presence of His disciples after the Ketubah was set, and He had drunk from the Cup of Betrothal, He told them that *“The hour is at hand.” (Matthew 26:45)* This proclamation shows the Messiah ready to fulfill the call on His life, and face what His Father had set forth for Him in the Ketubah. He had drunk from His Cup! He had accepted His Father’s will, and agreed to set apart His bride to Himself. What is more He has passed the cup to us to drink from and accept what He has done for us so that we can be sanctified unto Him. In it is the gift of life, more precious than silver, gold, and jewels! This is the New Beginning, the New Covenant B’rit Hadesha or as it is more commonly known the New Testament, we have with Messiah!

Pastor Billy Elias is the founder of both Lacey Home Fellowship and United Fútbol Ministries, an international soccer outreach. An ordained minister in Restoration Fellowship International, his ministry features teaching lessons for successful Christian living by emphasizing the Hebraic thought of both the Hebrew Scriptures and the Apostolic Writings. Billy and his wife Peggy and their five children reside in Lacey Township New Jersey.

