



## Communal Culture: Marriage and Family

### Notes

#### Male Roles

- Work outside the Bet Av on the family land
- Teach the older sons outside work/a trade
- Supervise the children who are watching the family's flocks
- The patriarch is in charge to provide for and protect the Bet Av with the help of the Bet Av's members. He hires, supervises, and works with other men from his Bet Av.

#### Female Roles

- Work inside the Bet Av with the children for food production, other domestic tasks
- Teach the younger children household tasks, family traditions, and Torah
- Teach the girls to become good wives and mothers
- The matriarch supervises work within the Bet Av, including food production and rationing, trades for items in the marketplace.

#### Betrothal, Marriage, Inheritance

- The goal of marriage is to produce children, especially sons
  - Having no children is shameful
    - Luke 1:25 - The Lord took away Elizabeth's reproach when she became pregnant
  - Need a male heir to carry on the family name.
  - High mortality rate for women, infants, and children
    - Genesis 35:16-20 - Rachel died giving birth to Benjamin
- Arranged by both sets of parents; the girl and boy can accept/refuse
- Betrothals
  - Example: Genesis 24 - Negotiation for Rebekah
  - The hope is the marriage will strengthen both Bet Avs, an economic partnership
  - Bride price by the groom's family to the bride's family to compensate for the economic loss of their daughter
    - Genesis 29:18 - Brideprice of Jacob working
  - Dowry from the father to the daughter as a financial safety net
    - 1 Kings 9:16 - Dowry for Solomon's wife (city of Gezer)
- Son built a room onto his father's house; the father said when he could return for his bride

- Choosing next patriarch
  - Done by current patriarch and matriarch
  - May cause disputes among brothers, example: Joseph in Genesis 37
  - Usually the firstborn
    - Receives double inheritance to have resources to run the Bet Av
    - Jacob adopted Joseph's two sons so he would receive the double inheritance (Genesis 48)
    - Sometimes God chose the younger (e.g Jacob over Esau, David over his brothers)

### Jesus, our Bridegroom

- John 14:2-3 Preparing a room for us in his father's house
- Matthew 24:36 The father says when the son can return for his bride
- Matthew 24:42 We, the bride, are to be ready and watch for his return
- Revelation 19:6-19 The wedding supper of the Lamb
- 1 Peter 1:3-4 Awaiting an imperishable inheritance

### Discussion Questions

1. The Proverbs 31 woman is the ideal woman in their culture showing her industrious, hardworking, and honorable. What roles do you see her doing that we discussed? Read the prologue for the chapter -- who taught the teacher?
2. How old do you think Jesus' mother Mary was when she bore him? How does that affect how you view her faith and trust in God?
3. Why might Jesus still be in his family home with Mary until he starts his ministry? Note that Joseph is no longer being mentioned, presumed dead.
4. Read Luke 10:38-42. Compare the actions of Mary and Martha to those expected of women and men.
5. Ephesians 1:13-14 What is our inheritance? How does God demonstrate this promise?
6. Luke 18:18 What is the significance of inheritance here?

### Recommended Resource

[http://thectp.org/Notes/Bride/Bride\\_2.pdf](http://thectp.org/Notes/Bride/Bride_2.pdf)

Learn more about first-century wedding customs and their links with Jesus.

