

The Forgotten Jesus Podcast

S3E17

Title – The Engagement Process in the 1st century - (Luke 1:26-27)

Description – How did you get engaged in the 1st century? There were no dating apps or websites. Today we'll look at the process of engagement in the 1st century.

Today we're back in Luke 1, looking at the birth of John, but we left off with some homework from Luke 1:25

²⁵ "The Lord has done this for me. He has looked with favor in these days to take away my disgrace among the people."

Remember, she was childless, and barren, and in that culture society viewed them as under a curse from God if you couldn't have children.

Who says basically this same thing in the OT? Rachel - Genesis 30:22-24

²² Then God remembered Rachel. He listened to her and opened her womb. ²³ She conceived and bore a son, and she said, "God has taken away my disgrace." ²⁴ She named him Joseph and said, "May the LORD add another son to me."

Luke 1:26-27

²⁶ In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man named Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

V. 26 - "the sixth month" - not the 6th month of the year, but the 6th month of Elizabeth's pregnancy.

Nazareth was a blip on the radar, most of the maps didn't even have it on there, because it was a town of about 200 - 300 people. It was an insignificant, backwoods place. But it was a hotbed of insurrection and copious genealogy note takers, because they all knew the passage from Isaiah talking about the one (Messiah) who would come from there.

"...to a virgin engaged to a man named Joseph." - the betrothal process was a legally binding contract. It wasn't just something that you could say, "I'm out." You had to legally get a divorce to end the engagement / betrothal process.

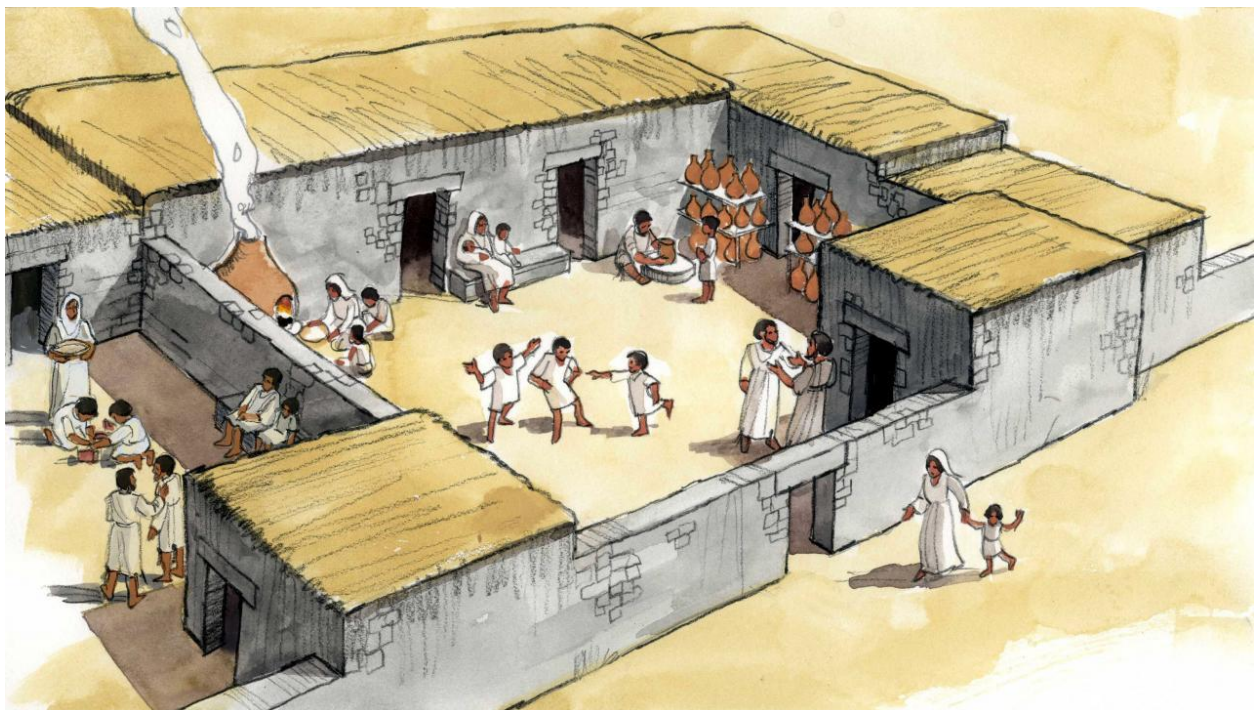
To get engaged back then, the father of the husband would normally go out and select a woman for the son.

The boy is normally 18, but some scholars believe Joseph was older, because after Jesus was 12, we don't hear about Joseph from scriptures anymore.

According to the Mishnah boys were normally 18, girls were in their teens. Mary is believed to be 15-16.

The father would come with the son and would meet the bride. They would meet with the father of the bride and negotiate the bride price. After the price was negotiated the fathers would toast with a glass of wine. The groom would also take a cup of wine drink from it and offer it to the bride. The bride would then take the cup and drink from it as well to seal the engagement.

The father of the groom and the groom would then leave to go home and work on building an addition to the father's home. They would work and work, but it was up to the father to finally declare the build complete so that the groom could go to get his bride.



When the time had come, the father would tell the son to go get his bride. The Groom would have a forerunner to announce the coming of the son and begin the wedding feast week.

The forerunner would run ahead and announce the coming of the groom. The townspeople would be excited, but every bride to be would be in their home wondering if this was their groom coming for them.

So every bride had to be ready and waiting, because you never knew when your groom was coming back. (Jesus's parable of the brides)

So the groom would arrive, and knock on the door, and the bride would open the door and realize that the groom had kept his word that he'd given her when he shared the cup of wine with her to start the betrothal / engagement process.

John 14:1-4

"Don't let your heart be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? ³ If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself, so that where I am you may be also. ⁴ You know the way to where I am going."

Next week, what's the very next thing that happens that foreshadows a wedding feast with Jesus and the disciples?