

No, I did not get up in the middle of the night to watch it. Come to think of it, I might have still been trying to fall asleep when it started. However, yes, I admit I recorded it. I doubt I'll sit and watch it straight through, but I do have some interest and curiosity about it, and let's face it, it is not something that happens every day. So I'll watch at least some of it.

Here's something that I find interesting—although I did not and still have not said what it was that I recorded, I'll bet a Shabbos nickel that just about everyone here tonight knows what I am talking about. Let's see a show of hands. How many of you knew that I was talking about the royal wedding?

I sent out a Tweet asking if a royal wedding was a Friday night sermon topic. I said it would need a Jewish angle, and asked if anyone could suggest one. I got some interesting responses, but in the end, decided two things:

1. The wedding does give me a Friday night sermon, and;
2. None of the suggestions struck the right note in me—although one suggested that the bride's family has some Jewish background, which is interesting but I did not have time to research it.

So instead, from my own head, comes the connection between Judaism and the royal wedding. I state it in the form of a riddle: Without a monarchy, what two things can never happen in Israel?

Answer: Royal weddings, and the coming of the Messiah.

With regard to royal weddings, as the lawyers say, *res ipsa loquitur*, the thing speaks for itself. No royal family, no royal weddings, unless some foreign princess chooses Israel as a site for a destination wedding. But what about the Messiah? How can the lack of a king in Israel prevent the coming of the Messiah?

The answer is very simple. The word messiah is simply the English term for a Hebrew word. The Hebrew word does not mean savior, redeemer, or anything like that. It simply means that the person or object in question has had olive oil put on it to mark it for sacred service. Every Jewish Biblical priest or king was so anointed, and so was a messiah. But the one everyone is waiting for, the capital T capital M The Messiah—a term never found in the Hebrew Bible—that's a different story.

Just about every Jew in the United States knows Mary was the name of Jesus' mother. A tiny fraction know the name of Moses' mother (Yocheved). This fact shows just how much Christian perspective we take in without realizing it. Most Jews believe that the Christians say Jesus was the messiah and we say he was not. They do not realize that the term messiah has come to mean something completely different for Christians than it does

for Jews, and they have absorbed some of that Christian perspective without realizing it.

Very simply put, here is the Jewish view. There will come a time of universal peace, universal belief in God, and the ingathering of the exiles to Israel. When that time comes, whomever happens to be the King of Israel is **The Messiah**. But without an anointed king, no messiah.

Therefore, we can explain two things at once: why we do not believe Jesus was the messiah, and why almost none of us believe the Lubovitcher Rebbe was the messiah. There was no universal peace, no universal belief in God, no ingathering of the exiles, and neither man was the anointed king of Israel. Is it really that simple? Indeed it is.

So the royal wedding turns out to be the basis for a very simple but essential Jewish message: the messiah is not on his way! If we are waiting for him, we are doing nothing

but wasting time. Not that I am saying the messiah will never come. That is not my point at all. My point is that we cannot sit and wait for the messiah, we must proactively *bring* The Messiah by achieving what now seems unachievable: universal peace. Let's start with that one. Then we can go on to the other facets of the Messianic age. What about the no monarchy problem? My suggestion is let's work on the universal peace and universal belief in God. If God still wants the Messiah to be the king of Israel, I have no doubt that God will figure out how to do that. So mazal tov to William and his bride, we can all make a *l'chaim* for them later, and then it's back to our mission as Jews: making the world better. How great would it be if we could turn Israel's lack of an anointed king from a theoretical problem to a practical problem. All we need is universal peace. Let's get busy.