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PROJECT



[AP 77 - Syriac Christian Wedding in India](#)

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Call Number	AP 77
Part Number	Part I – Syro Malabar Church
Title	Syriac Christian Wedding in India
Duration	24 : 37
Place of Recording	Archived Film documentary produced in 1985
Date of Recording	1985
YouTube URL	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S7LHjWxxWD4
Video Segment(s)	

Notes

Here is a chapter from the annals of the history of the St. Thomas Christians in Kerala, India. Caution: Although the film was made in 1985, it is not a representation of Christian marriage in Kerala, in the 20th century; rather, it recreates a traditional wedding from a bygone era, when youngsters were given in marriage as soon as they reached puberty. The celebrations included several rituals at home and at church (see under Topics, below). Songs (in Malayalam and Syriac) and dance and instrumental music were essential components of the four-day long celebrations. Some of the rituals seen in the film continue to be a part of the marriage ceremony (for example, the tying of thali, a heart shaped gold pendant with cross embossed on it) of all the St. Thomas Christians even today. A few of those rituals and songs, however, are extant only among the Knanaya Christians, an endogamous community among the St. Thomas Christians.

The film is the result of concerted efforts of a team of scholars and experts led by Rev. Dr. Jacob Vellian, Mr. Churmmar Choodal, and Rev. Dr. Jacob Kollaprampil. We are grateful to them for giving an audio visual representation of the songs, customs and practices that are specific to the St. Thomas Christians in Kerala. The film is uploaded here as part of the Aramaic Project because it sheds light on the religious practices during the Aramaic era of the Indian Christians. The film includes the singing of two Syriac chants, “[Qandisa alaha](#)” and “[Bar Mariyam](#)” and the instrumental version of another popular Syriac chant, “[Sagdinan mar.](#)” The CMSIndia is grateful to Fr. Jacob Vellian, the founder director of Hadusa, for granting permission to upload this film on its YouTube channel.

Topics:

1. Image and voice of Dr. Chummar Choondal ([1:48](#))
2. Pennu kanal (literally, seeing the bride)
3. Betrothal ceremony at the home of the bride, in the presence of a priest ([3:02](#))
4. Paricamuttukali (Dance with swords and shields). ([3:15](#))
5. Beautifying the groom at the groom’s house on the night before the wedding ([4:06](#))
6. Mailanchi, beautifying the bride, the night before the wedding ([5:00](#))
7. Ritual feeding of the bride ([6:42](#))
8. Groom, seeking the blessings of the elders ([7:50](#))
9. Bride, seeking the blessings of the elders ([8:08](#))
10. Procession to the Church ([9:28](#))
11. Panchwadyam musical instrumental accompaniment ([10:28](#))
12. Trisagion in Syriac ([12:05](#))
13. Wedding vows ([12:38](#))



14. Tying of thali and chanting of [alleluia](#) (14:02)
15. Blessing over the couple, in Syriac (14:25)
16. Singing of the Syriac chant, “[Bar Maryam](#)” (14:42)
17. Procession from church to home with musical accompaniment (16:02)
18. Ritual carrying the bride

19. Women’s ululation
20. Ritual of welcoming the bride to the groom’s home
21. Groom’s mom blessing the couple
22. Feeding the couple with milk and banana
23. Giving gifts of garments
24. Melody of the Syriac chant, “[Sagdinan mar](#),” Festival meal

Dr. Joseph J. Palackal, CMI

Related Videos

- [AP 137](#) - Syriac chants during the wedding at Dallas, USA: Denny & Neena
- [AP 141](#) - Marriage of Ribin Jose and Reshma: Reclaiming an old custom
- [AP 149](#) - Bilingual Nuptial Qurbana: wedding of Anija and George Njarakunnel
- [AP 169](#) - Wedding of Dixon and Nivya. Ramsa at the home of the groom. Reviving old customs.
- [AP 170](#) - Wedding of Dixon & Nivya. Chantham Charthal (beautification) of the groom
- [AP 226 \(215\)](#) - കിരീടം വാഴ്വ് : Crowning ceremony at Syro Malabar wedding. Sherin & Treesa
- [AP 259](#) - Revival of Crowning ceremony. Syro Malabar wedding of Joseph & Jiss, Kalathil

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