

WEDDING PREPARATION BOOKLET



MAZEL TOV ON YOUR UPCOMING WEDDING!

CHABAD OF CORONADO

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Letter from the Rabbi

Dear Bride & Groom,

Mazal Tov! Congratulations on your engagement. We hope your happiness will continue to grow and that you will succeed in laying the foundations for a warm, loving and nurturing home.

As much as getting married is exciting, it can also make us nervous. The purpose of this Wedding Preparation Booklet is to simplify your preparations as well as to relieve as many anxieties as possible concerning the routine mechanics of the wedding. You will also find a clear outline of the Jewish Marriage Traditions along with an explanation of the symbolism of each one.

Research has shown that the more you are aware of these traditions, the more meaningful and spiritually significant your wedding will be. Should you have any queries, I will be happy to advise you.

It is my humble hope that this small compilation will contribute to the material and spiritual enhancement of your wedding. May you merit building a beautiful Jewish Home together and be a source of "Nachas" and pride to your families and to the Jewish nation.

Sincerely,
Rabbi Eli Fradkin
Chabad of Coronado

Information for Bride & Groom

"A successful marriage is dependant on inviting G-d into the relationship."

–The Talmud

Marriage is a holy institution in Judaism. It is a sacred bond, a mutual fulfillment, an inherent good and divine command. The will of the Creator desires that His work may endure. This sanctity is reflected in the details of the wedding ceremony and in the entire wedding day proceedings, prior to the consecration under the Chupah (wedding canopy.) Standing under the Chupah, their life's destiny is set, and all past reckoning erased.

INVITATIONS

Most printers can help you with the wording and selection of your English copy. A Jewish wedding invitation should also have some Hebrew calligraphy. There are many possibilities, all quite eye pleasing. Most good printers can help you with the Hebrew script as well. The Rabbi will be glad to assist you in creating a proper Hebrew text.

PURCHASING THE RING

The ring, which the Groom gives the Bride, is the single most important object under the Chupah. The Groom makes the official proposal of marriage by offering it to the Bride. Her acceptance indicates her agreement to accept his offer of marriage. Observed by two Kosher witnesses (specifically appointed prior to the Chupah), this transaction actually makes the marriage, legally binding the husband and wife together according to Jewish Law.

It is therefore imperative that the ring is purchased by the Groom and that it be entirely in his possession (of course he may delegate his Best Man to hold on to it for him). Under the Chupah, he gives it to his wife to become hers permanently.

A family heirloom, which would then be returned to someone other than the Bride, is therefore unacceptable. To use such an heirloom, the Groom would have to buy it legally beforehand and then be able to present it to the Bride as hers forever. If so desired, such an arrangement would be acceptable. Please advise the Rabbi if this is the case so that he may make certain the "transfer" is legally binding according to Jewish law.

When choosing the ring, make sure it is a plain round gold band without any settings or engravings. Creative designs to fit in with an engagement ring may be made after the wedding only. Alternatively, a less expensive plain band may be purchased and fitted for the right forefinger, for use under the Chupah. If at all possible the ring should be shown to the Rabbi several weeks prior to the wedding allowing for ample time to replace if necessary.

THE COUNTDOWN

There is an ancient Jewish custom that Bride and Groom separate from each other's company for one week before the wedding. Essentially, this is for religious-spiritual reasons. However it also allows the Bride and Groom some necessary solitude for personal introspection at this important juncture of life. Recent studies have indicated that there might be some sound psychological benefits as well. After all, in this final week we tend to be nervous and possibly even irritable. As a result we might just say or do something we would regret afterwards. Of course it goes without saying that the sense of anticipation will be greatly heightened after having been apart for this short period of time and the reunion at the Chupah is that much more intense and special.

THE SHABBAT BEFORE

On the Shabbat morning prior to the wedding the traditional "Aufruf" takes place. This simply means that the Groom is called up to the Torah for an Aliyah. (Don't worry it is not another Bar Mitzvah. All you need do is recite the blessings before and after). This Aliyah provides a dose of spiritual strength for the formidable task ahead. In the Holy Zohar (the first and all time classic of Jewish mysticism) it is written that before G--d created the world he looked into the Torah for inspiration. Likewise, before we build our own little world, we seek out the Torah and look to it for guidance and direction in life. Afterwards, the congregation may shower the Groom with sweets in keeping with a time-honored Jewish tradition.

Information about the Wedding Day

THE WEDDING DAY

Besides being a very special day, it also is a very sacred one. It is more than a twinning of bodies; two souls are being reunited. The wedding day is actually considered a personal Yom Kippur for Bride and Groom. The “good news” is that all your sins are forgiven and one is able to begin a new life unburdened by past failings or inadequacies. The “bad news” is that it is customary to fast (i.e. abstain from food and drink). Don’t worry, it’s not as difficult as it may sound. When all is said and done nerves and a hectic schedule really do keep food off our minds anyway!

The fast begins at daybreak on the wedding day (please confer with the Rabbi to ascertain the exact time, if you wish you may rise and eat something before that) and ends immediately after the Chupah when you will be served refreshments. (No need to bring along sandwiches). The purpose of fasting of course, is not only to squeeze into a tight dress (or tuxedo), but rather to be less physical so that we can be more spiritually attuned to the sanctity of the day.

Day of Atonement

On Yom Kippur proper, in the traditional prayer text we mention three central themes: Teshuva, Tefillah and Tzedaka, commonly translated as: Repentance, Prayer and Charity. It logically follows that on their own personal Yom Kippur, the Bride and Groom should incorporate these three observances as an integral part of their spiritual preparation for the wedding.

Teshuvah / Repentance

Fasting is often associated with repentance. The reason isn’t that self inflicted pain will compensate for the thrill of sin, rather it is simply that abstinence from food helps put us in the frame of mind for introspection and soul searching. To be sure the Torah’s definition of repentance isn’t only to stop being bad and become good. Instead it can be more appropriately translated as return. A return to your essential self and to what is rightfully yours is what we call “Teshuva”. In this spirit on this day both Bride and Groom ought to spend a few private moments reflecting and meditating on ways in which they can enhance their own relationship as well as their relationship with G-d. A wedding is a new beginning and therefore provides a wonderful opportunity to begin observing more Mitzvot. In summation a good firm resolution for the future is what Teshuvah is all about.

Teffilah / Prayer

Bride and Groom should each put a “Do Not Disturb” sign on their doors for a significant period during this day. Your prayers are very powerful on your wedding day.

Use this gift wisely to pray to Hashem for a happy, healthy marriage with happy, healthy children amidst abundant prosperity and Nachas. Use your Siddur and add your own personal prayers as well. If there was ever a day for a man to put on Tefillin, this is it.

Traditionally, the afternoon prayer for Erev Yom Kippur is recited. This also contains the "Al Chet" confessional. It should be pointed out that on a deeper and more mystical level, Tefilla/Prayer is more than just one entity petitioning a higher one. Instead the Hebrew word Tefilla really means to connect. To become one with your Maker, so that divine energy will come through you into our world to heal the sick and to cause rain to fall. This power of Tefilla is available to you with exceptional potency on your wedding day. Seize the moment and utilize it appropriately.

Tzedakah / Charity

Each of you should perform the Mitzva of Tzedakah by putting a significant amount of money into an envelope on the wedding day and earmarking it for the Jewish charity of your choice. Additionally resolve to attempt to be more charitable in the future. Bear in mind though, that Jews are not supposed to simply "give charity"! You see "giving charity" means being nice and giving away your money. But who says it is your money to begin with? It is money put in your trust to be disbursed for good things and for others when they will need it. On your wedding day, work on changing your attitude and instead, resolve to do what is right.

Doing what is right means putting the money where it belongs. That is the true definition of giving Tzedaka. Doing this in general and on your wedding day in particular is highly appropriate. Try to make it the foundation upon which your home is built.

The above three endeavors will certainly help prepare you for the solemn service, which is to follow and will certainly help you to elicit divine blessing and benison for your future married life together.

KABBALAS PONIM – GREETING THE CHATTAN AND KALLAH

There is an ancient Jewish custom that Bride and Groom separate from each other's company before the actual wedding. It allows the Bride and Groom some necessary solitude for personal introspection at this important juncture of life. Recent studies have indicated that there might be some sound psychological benefits as well. Therefore, separate welcoming receptions are held for the Chattan and Kallah. At the receptions, relatives and friends greet them and offer their heartfelt wishes.

During the Kabbalat Panim the Ketubah will be signed. The Ketubah literally means "that which is written" is the authentic, traditional Jewish marriage contract and in it

the Groom pledges to carry out his obligations as a husband according to Jewish law and custom. ". It is the formal marriage contract and is a crucial element of marriage, without which a couple is forbidden to live together.

Long before the era of modern prenuptial contracts the Ketubah was protecting the rights of Jewish wives. The Rabbi will ask the Groom to indicate his acceptance of this pledge by accepting an object which will be handed to him (usually a handkerchief) and raising it up in his right hand in the presence of two witnesses, after which the two witnesses will affix their signatures.

Tenna'im – The Conditions of Marriage

Jewish tradition specifies that prior to the marriage ceremony, standard "Tenna'im" (conditions) be stipulated in a written document by the groom and bride and their respective parents. This document is read aloud, underscoring the commitment of the Chosson to fulfill his promises to his Kallah.

After reading the tenna'im, the mothers of the couple break a plate, signifying that just as the breaking of the plate is irreversible, so should the marriage be an everlasting one.

The Wedding Arrival Time

Bride and Groom and retinue members should arrive approximately 30 minutes before the Kabbalat Panim is scheduled to begin. During the Kabbalat Panim the Ketubah will be signed.

Badeken (Veiling The Bride)

The Rabbi will then lead the Groom, fathers and retinue into the bridal area where the Groom will confirm that the Bride is indeed the right woman. (This positive ID goes back to the biblical story of Jacob who mistakenly married the wrong sister. Ever since then, we've been double-checking). He will then bring the veil forward to cover the Bride's face. There is important symbolism here.

The Bride is demonstrating traditional Jewish modesty in covering her. The Groom hereby indicates that he is marrying this woman not only for her external charms, which are now veiled from view, but also for her inner qualities. What he is really saying is that this relationship is not merely skin deep; it is profound and real. The Bride's and Groom's parents and grandparents will then bless the Bride.

Unterfihrrers (Chaperones)

The notion that someone must "give the bride away" is actually not of Jewish origin at all. Under the Chupah, she will be giving herself to the man of her choice. It is traditional, however, for both Bride and Groom to be escorted to the Chupah by

Unterfihrrers (Chaperones). Bride and Groom are considered King and Queen tonight and as such it is seen as inappropriate for them to walk unescorted.

The ideal qualities of Unterfihrrers are for them to be a married couple (preferably a first marriage) and that they have children.

Now in most cases, the parents of Bride and Groom meet these traditional requirements perfectly. They are a married couple who have children, namely the Bride and Groom. Father and Mother of the Groom will therefore accompany him to the Chupah and remain there. The Bride accompanied by her father and mother will almost immediately follow them.

In instances where this is not the case, (e.g. when one parent is deceased, parents are divorced, or a parent is not present for whatever reason) the parent (or parents) who is (are) present should accompany their child to the Chupah. In addition, in order to enjoy the blessing associated with the Unterfihrrer tradition, one should invite a married couple to walk immediately behind the Bride and Groom. This may be grandparents, uncle and aunt, brother and sister-in-law or any married couple who are parents. In this way, the natural parent (parents) are still leading their own child to the Chupah and the good omen of having a married couple as Unterfihrrers may still be achieved.

You may be assured that this system works smoothly and adds to the spiritual and aesthetic beauty of the Chupah ceremony. If there are any problems regarding these arrangements, feel free to discuss it with the Rabbi early enough to allow you to invite the Unterfihrrers of your choice. (According to custom, a woman who is pregnant should not serve as Unterfihrrer).

The Procession

Best Man and pole holders take their places at the Chupah before the procession begins. The order of the procession to the Chupah is as follows:

- The Groom and his parents on either side of him arm in arm.
- Grandparents of the Groom (if present)
- Flower girls, Page boy (these are optional)
- Maid or matron of honor, (optional)
- Grandparents of the Bride (if present). If there is a single grandparent, a grandchild from the retinue may wish to accompany him/her up the aisle
- Bride accompanied by her parents, Father and Mother on either side, arm-in-arm

Under the Chupah, Bride and Groom stand in the center facing east, mothers and grandmothers on the Bride's side, fathers and grandfathers on the Groom's side, the Best Man behind the Groom, Maid of honor behind the Bride and Bridesmaids behind them or behind the mothers.

THE CHUPAH / CANOPY

The wedding ceremony takes place under a Chupah. Open on all four sides, the Chupah is likened to Abraham's house, which, according to tradition, had entrances on all four sides as a reflection of his great hospitality. In coming under the Chupah, the couple makes a statement that their house will be as open to guests as was Abraham's tent.

Because the Chupah is meant to represent a house, it can be erected outdoors under the stars, as Abraham was promised that his descendants would, one day, be like the "stars of the heaven." Since every Jewish marriage is a continuation of Abraham's descendants, it is befitting that the marriage be conducted under the stars.

We are taught that generations of departed ancestors of the newly wedded couple descend from the "world of truth" to attend the wedding of their children. The Chupah (canopy) symbolizes the Jewish home.

The Seven Circles

The Groom comes under the Chupah first, designating this as his home. Once he has acquired a "roof over his head", his Bride joins him in this new family venture. Before she stands at his side, she wants to ensure that her home will be safe, secure and well protected from any harmful, outside elements. She therefore circles her home, symbolically casting a protective aura and building a spiritual fortress around it. She is also indicating that she is binding him with certain obligations. The various protections and obligations always number seven. She circles seven times, as seven represents the cycle of life (the days of the week etc.) and all areas of life are thereby protected.

Seven signifies a creative completion, like the seven days of creation, a passage beyond the physical into the spiritual. Just as the seventh day was the creation of the Shabbat, the day that completed the creation of the world, so do the seven circles around the Chattan signify their completed quest for each other.

The walk should be slow and dignified, while the band will play soft and inspirational music. There is no need to rush. If the Bride has a long train, the Maid of Honor should lift it at the steps and give it to the Bride to hold over her arm before she begins circling.

During the wedding ceremony the Kallah stands at the right side of the Chattan, as the Psalmist states, "at the right hand does the queen stand."

A man once asked his teacher: For how long is the Chattan considered a king and the Kallah a queen? As long as you treat your wife as a queen, you are considered a king, was the teacher's response.

The Ceremony

The Talmud and custom advise us that the marriage ceremony should entail three aspects: the giving of a valuable (ring), the presentation of the ketubah, and the adjournment to a private room (representing intimacy).

It takes two witnesses to attest that all three aspects of the consecration have taken place "in accordance with the laws of Moses and Israel." Two witnesses are called upon to stand under the Chupah and witness the procedures.

The wedding ceremony (under the Chupah) actually consists of two parts. First there is Erusin and then there is Nesuin. These two ceremonies were originally held as much as a year apart, but it later became the custom to hold them together.

The Blessings

The Rabbi recites two blessings - one over the wine (the wine could be white so don't to be afraid of staining the gown!) and the other on the consecration of the marriage. It is vital that Bride and Groom answer Amen to each of these blessings as well as to the seven blessings (Sheva Brachot) soon to be recited by various people upon whom the honor will be bestowed. "Amen" essentially means "I believe and affirm that" and it is an endorsement of the blessings just recited. Although whoever hears a blessing should always respond with Amen, it is Bride and Groom who will be doing the drinking and the blessings are being recited especially for them. Their Amen is therefore most important.

Bride and Groom will then be given to drink from the cup, the Groom by his father (or Unterfihrer) and the Bride by her mother (or Unterfihrer).

The Ring

As mentioned previously, this is the single most important item in the Chupah service. The Best Man gives the Rabbi the ring, who will show it to the witnesses so as to ascertain it's approximate value, thus ensuring the validity of the marriage soon to be performed. The Bride gives her flowers to her mother or Maid of Honor. Gloves, if worn, should be removed at this point. The Groom places the ring on the Bride's right forefinger.

The significance of the ring lies in its being a circle, without an end. The implication is that the love between bride and groom will be the same - everlastingly happy!

The general custom is for the groom to give a gold ring, to show that the bride is as precious to him as gold. For various reasons, there is no precious stone, or engraving,

on the ring. A perfectly smooth ring represents the perfectly smooth, untroubled cycle of life and in order to ensure that there be no uncertainty or confusion as to its value. The perfect roundness of the ring symbolizes an unspoken prayer; just as a ring must be made of plain gold without blemishes or obstructions, so it is hoped that the marriage will be one of simple beauty, free from strife or conflict which might, G-d forbid, destroy its perfect "roundness."

The Groom recites the traditional words which are actually his proposal of marriage. He places the ring on her index finger loosely at first, then says:

“HAREI AT MEKUDESHEH LI B'TABAAT ZU K'DAT MOSHE V'YISROEL”
 “Behold Thou Art Betrothed to me with this Ring
 in accordance with the Law of Moses and Israel”.

He then fits the ring on more securely. The Bride's acceptance of the ring indicates her acceptance of the marriage proposal and as “actions speak louder than words”, she need not recite anything. Accepting the ring is a most eloquent “I Do”. From this point on, you are officially married.

These words signify the divine origin and holy seal of truth that characterize both Torah (the laws of Moses and Israel) and the marriage. The "law of Moses" refers to laws actually derived from the Torah itself. The "law of Israel" refers to later legislation and custom. The sentence contains 32 Hebrew letters, the numerical equivalent of the word lev (heart).

The Ketubah

The Ketubah is then read; first in the original Aramaic and, thereafter, optionally read in English. This separates the first part of the marriage ceremony (Erusin) just concluded, and the second part (Nesuin) about to begin.

This reading separates the betrothal blessings - from the marriage blessings (known as the “Sheva Brochos” or seven blessings). The ketubah is a binding document that details the husband's obligations to his wife. In the ketubah, the Chatten pledges that he will “work for, honor, cherish, provide for, and support in truth [his wife], according to the practices of Jewish husbands.” The standard ketubah is written in Talmudic Aramaic and dates back thousands of years.

Following the reading of the ketubah, the contract is handed over to the Kallah by the Chatten. Should this document be lost, the couple may not live in the same house until a new contract is drawn up.

Sheva Brachot - Seven Marriage Blessings

Thereafter the Sheva Brachot will be recited. A second cup of wine is used for these Seven Blessings. Again, remember to respond to each blessing with Amen. (The Rabbi will prompt you just in case you should be somewhere on cloud nine). After the conclusion of the Sheva Brachot, Bride and Groom will again be given to drink from the cup of blessing by the other parents (or Unterfihrrers).

The second stage in contracting a marriage is known as Nesuin. This is derived from the verb Nasa meaning to lift or take, indicating that the man is taking the woman as a wife. Although husband and wife are bound to each other with Erusin, they do not become related to each other as family until the Nesuin.

The only way to accomplish Nesuin is by the couple being under a Chupah. The idea was to invite people and to recite the Seven Blessings. Without such a ceremony, the marriage would not be complete.

Breaking The Glass

After all the wine has been drunk, to conclude the Chupah the now empty glass will be placed at the Groom's feet. Traditionally, the breaking of the glass was incorporated into the ceremony to remind everyone that even at the height of one's personal joy, we must nevertheless remember our communal pain over the loss of the Temple. The breaking of the glass symbolizes the breaking of our hearts as we remember the catastrophe.

"By remembering sad times in an hour of happiness we enable ourselves to recall happiness when there is reason to be sad."

The fact that the Temple is still not rebuilt and Jerusalem not yet restored to all her former glory leaves us with a touch of sadness, even during our greatest Simcha. It is appropriate that we recall the absence of our national joy during this time of our personal joy. Breaking the glass is our way of praying for Moshiach, the rebuilding of the Temple and an end to Exile and national insecurity. The Chosson breaks the glass with his right foot. Mazal Tov!

Mazal Tov!

Good wishes and embraces are exchanged by the family members under the Chupah.

YICHUD

Now that the public wedding ceremony is complete the Bride and Groom are given several minutes of privacy. This is known as Yichud -togetherness and it puts the finishing touch on the Halachic side of the wedding. It indicates to all that this couple is now married.

These few minutes are very special - an island in time. You have just been married, the nerves of the Chupah are over, and the tumult of the reception has not yet begun. It is therefore a natural and ideal time for the first expressions of marital love and affection. Surely a "first kiss" will be much more meaningful in private instead of in front of crowds and cameras. This is also the perfect time for that special gift. Refreshments will be there for you to break your fast.

THE RECEPTION

Seudas Mitzvah – Wedding Feast

Most Jewish celebrations (marriage, circumcision, etc.) are followed by a seudah (meal or feast) to honor the occasion. At this meal all guest participate in the mitzvah of "L'sameach chassan v'kallah" (to make the Chattan and Kallah rejoice, or to rejoice with the Chattan and Kallah.)

As a Mitzvah, the meal is very important. The Talmud relates many instances where the greatest of our sages have set aside their diligent study of Torah in order to rejoice with the new couple. By dancing around the Chattan and Kallah, the community expresses its support for the couple. As a part of the Jewish people, they need never fear facing life alone.

This is really a continuation of the religious ceremony. One should try to make the wedding reception a "Yiddishe Simcha," with Jewish modesty and separate dancing a priority. Jewish music and Hora dancing create a unique atmosphere, which makes your wedding a truly special occasion.

Hamotzi

Although it is often customary to invite Rabbis to recite the Hamotzi blessing over the bread at the beginning of the meal, it is actually more traditionally correct to honor the Groom with this blessing. The Rabbi will not be offended.

Speeches

One "custom" that need not be adhered to is that of the Best Man revealing all the darkest secrets of the Groom's (or Bride's) past. This is in very bad taste. Speeches at the wedding reception should, ideally, contain a concept about marriage from Jewish Thought and Tradition. Brief the speakers well in advance as to what is expected of them.

Sheva Brochas

At the end of the Seduas Mitzvah, birchas ha'mazon (grace after meals) is recited, and the same sheva brochos that were recited under the Chupah are repeated. Bentsching

(Grace after Meal) and Sheva Brochas (the seven matrimonial blessings) may be performed by any capable, knowledgeable individual. There is no requirement that a "professional" be engaged. It is a good opportunity to honor anyone who has not been recognized as of yet.

Finally as they say in the classics, "this is not the end, only the beginning". The Rabbi is always available for "after sales service". Feel free to be in touch.

AFTER THE WEDDING

In contradistinction to a non-Jewish custom, in which the Chatten and Kallah travel to a honey-moon location, Jewish custom prefers that the couple begin their new life together in the comfort of their familiar community. In the week following the wedding, it is customary that friends or relatives host festive meals each day in the new couple's honor. Each festive meal is called "sheva brochos" after the seven blessing that are recited.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

1. **The Jewish way in Love and Marriage** by Rabbi Maurice Lamm
2. **Made in Heaven** by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan
3. **Hedge of Roses** by Rabbi Norman Lamm
4. **Pardes Rimmonim** by Rabbi Dr. M.D. Tendler
5. **The Secret of Jewish Femininity** by Tehila Abramov

Sheva Brachot – 7 Blessings

Blessing 1

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי הגפן

Baruch Ata Ado-nai Elo-hainu Melech HaOlam, Boreh Pri HaGafen

Blessing 2

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, שיהכל ברא לכוודו

Baruch Ata Ado-nai Elo-hainu Melech HaOlam, SheHakol Barah Lichvodo

Blessing 3

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, יוצר האדם

Baruch Ata Ado-nai Elo-hainu Melech HaOlam, Yotzer Ha'Adam

Blessing 4

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר יצר את האדם בצלמו,
בצלם דמות תבניתו, והתקין לו ממנו בגין עדי עד: ברוך אתה יי, יוצר האדם
Baruch Ata Ado-nai Elo-hainu Melech HaOlam, Asher Yatzar Et Ha'Adam
Betzalmo, b'Tzelem Dmut Tavnit, VeHitkon Lo Mimen Binyan Adei Ad.
Baruch Ata Ado-nai, Yotzer Ha'Adam

Blessing 5

שוש תשיש ותגל העקרה, בקבוץ בניה לתוכה בשמחה:
ברוך אתה יי, משמח ציון בבניה

Sos Tasis VeTagel HaAkarah, BeKibbutz Bane'ha Letocha BeSimcha.
Baruch Ata Ado-nai, Mesame'ach Tzion BeVaneha

Blessing 6

שמח תשמח רעים האהובים, בשמחה יצירך בגן עדן מקדם:
ברוך אתה יי, משמח חתן וכלה

Samach TeSamach Re'im Ahuvim, KeSamechacha Yetzircha BeGan Eden MiKedem.
Baruch Ata Ado-nai, MeSame'ach Chatan VeKalah

Blessing 7

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר ברא ששון ושמחה, חתן וכלה, גילה רנה דיצה
וחדנה, אהבה ואהבה שלום ורעות, מהרה יי אלהינו ישמע בערי יהודה ובחוצות
ירושלים, קול ששון וקול שמחה, קול חתן וקול כלה, קול מצהלות חתנים מחפזים,
ונערים ממשתה נגינתם: ברוך אתה יי, משמח חתן עם הכלה

Baruch Ata Ado-nai Elo-hainu Melech HaOlam, Asher Barah Sasson VeSimcha,
Chatan VeKalah, Gila Rina, Ditza VeChedva, Ahava VeAchava, Shalom VeRe'ut.
MeHera Ado-nai Elo-heinu Yishama BeArei Yehudah U'Vchutzot Yerushalayim,
Kol Sasson V'eKol Simcha, Kol Chatan V'eKol Kalah, Kol Mitzalot Chatanim
MeChupatam, U'Ne-arim Mimishte Neginatam.
Baruch Ata Ado-nai, MeSame'ach Chatan Im Hakalah

Information for the Wedding Planner

KETUBA WRITING

Table set with chairs for Chatan, Kallah, 2 kosher witnesses, and Rabbi. 2 pens, photographer, parents. Close friends and relatives can be invited if you wish. Rabbi will fill in the details of the Ketubah. The Rabbi will briefly explain the acquisition that will be preformed and content of the Ketubah. Kosher Witnesses must be fully observant males that are not related to either family or to each other. They must know their complete Hebrew name and their father's Hebrew name.

Estimated time: 15 minutes

* Rabbi will need the complete Hebrew names of Chatan and Kallah, as well as the names of their fathers, and if they are a Cohen, Levi or Israelite.

BADEKEN

We will now proceed to the Badaken, when the Chatan will veil his Kallah. This practice is reminiscent of our matriarch Rivkah who modestly veiled herself upon first seeing her husband Yitzchok. The veil also symbolizes that marriage is not only an external face-to-face bond, but rather a deep soul connection. This can be done in the same location and all guests can be invited or it can be done in a separate location with the Kallah sitting in her special chair.

The Chatan will most likely be escorted by his father and father-in-law and accompanied by all of us to veil the Kallah.

Estimated time: 5 minutes if in a different location.

If the Badeken is done at the same location with just a small group, the other guests can be invited to go out to the chupah in the meantime.

The Chupah will take place after the Badeken, please proceed to the Chupah.

After the Chatan leaves the Badeken, announce a number of times where the Chupah will take place and how to get there. Many people feel lost when the Chatan / Kallah and both sets of parents suddenly disappear.

CHUPAH

If people are being honored with holding the Chupah poles, help them do so now.

I do not advise having people hold the poles of a freestanding Chupah as this will block the view of the participants.

Invite everybody to take their seats. Please set cell phones to vibrate during the Chupah ceremony.

If you are having any others as part of the procession, they go before the Chatan and the Kallah (Bride and Groom).

- Prepare tall (taper) candles in glass holders for each of the escorts, i.e. parents, grandparents, (those who will be circling with the Kallah if she wants them to). Matches to light the candles. Candles are not mandatory.
- Glass cup, non stemmed that will be broken afterwards. Please do NOT get thick unbreakable Pyrex-like glass.
- A cloth napkin to completely wrap the cup.
- Sealed bottle Kosher wine to be opened under the Chupah by the Rabbi.

The Chatan will most likely be escorted by his father and father-in-law to the Chupah. The Kallah will most likely be accompanied by her mother, mother-in-law (and grandmothers).

As she enters the Chupah together with her entourage she will circle the Chatan seven times with the male and female entourage. These seven circuits represent a seven-fold bond as explained in the Kabbalah that the marriage will establish between the Chatan, Kallah and their families. The Kallah will then stand to the right of the Chatan. Have someone who will take all the candles away from the parents at the end of the circles.

CEREMONY

The Rabbi will begin the service with select Hebrew blessings. The Chatan and Kallah will be given a sip from the wine.

2 witnesses will be called to the Chupah at this point (or earlier). The Chatan will then place the ring on the right index finger of his Kallah. At that moment the two halves will become one whole.

As the Chatan places the ring on his Kallah's finger, he says, "*Harei at mekudeshet li b'tab'at zo kedat Moshe v'Yisrael*", which means, "Behold, you are consecrated to me with this ring according to the laws of Moses and Israel." These words signify the

divine origin and holy seal of truth that characterize both Torah (the laws of Moses and Israel) and the marriage.

Someone will read the Ketubah followed by the rest of the blessings and drinking the wine. Rabbi will then share a short thought followed by breaking the glass.

At the height of our joy, the Chatan breaks a glass to remember our Temple, our true home, which still remains destroyed.

MAZEL TOV!!

Estimated time: 30 minutes

YICHUD ROOM

Chatan and Kallah proceed to a private room that can be locked. They will remain in the room for 7 minutes privately. The 2 witnesses will need to remain outside the room for that period of time.

Estimated time: 10 minutes

FESTIVE MEAL

Wedding Checklist

- ☐ Bride's chair
- ☐ Pottery plate to break (wrapped)
- ☐ Veil
- ☐ Badeken Room
- ☐ Groom's Coat / Kapatah / Kittel / Gartel
- ☐ Chupah canopy
- ☐ Candles / Torches
- ☐ Siddur
- ☐ Rebbe's Letter
- ☐ Kosher wine
- ☐ Thin glass cup for Kiddush and breaking (with wrapping)
- ☐ Wedding ring – belongs to Groom
- ☐ Yichud Room
- ☐ Silver Spoon
- ☐ Food for Yichud Room

Wedding Honors List

Honor	Name	Relationship to Bride / Groom
Ketubah Witness 1		
Ketubah Witness 2		
Sheva Brachot 1 & 2		
Sheva Bracha 3		
Sheva Bracha 4		
Sheva Bracha 5		
Sheva Bracha 6		
Sheva Bracha 7		

Tallit Significance	
Chuppah Procession	

MAZEL TOV!



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