



Essentials: Marriage

Genesis 2:18 (about partnership and/or leadership, i.e. Moses)

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לֹא טוֹב הָיִיתָ הָאָדָם לְבֶדּוֹ אֶעֱשֶׂה לוֹ עֹזֵר כְּנֶגְדּוֹ:

The Eternal God said, "It is not good for man to be alone; I will make a fitting helper for him."

Mishneh Torah, Marriage 1:2 (traditional attitudes to marriage)

משנה תורה, הלכות אישות א' ב'

ב (וְלִקְחוּחֵין אֱלוֹ מִצְוֹת עֲשֵׂה שֶׁל תּוֹרָה הֵם. וּבְאֶחָד מִשְׁלֹשָׁה דְבָרִים אֱלוֹ הָאִשָּׁה נִקְנִית. בְּכֶסֶף. אוֹ בְשֵׁטֶר. אוֹ בְּבִיאָה. בְּבִיאָה וּבְשֵׁטֶר מִהַתּוֹרָה. וּבְכֶסֶף מִדְּבַרֵי סוּפְרִים. וְלִקְחוּחֵין אֱלוֹ הֵן הַנִּקְרָאִין קְדוּשֵׁין אוֹ אַרוּסֵין בְּכֹל מְקוֹם. וְאִשָּׁה שֶׁנִּקְנִית בְּאֶחָד מִשְׁלֹשָׁה דְבָרִים אֱלוֹ הִיא הַנִּקְרָאת מְקַדְּשֶׁת אוֹ מְאַרְסֶת :

(2) And taking a wife as such is a positive commandment of the Torah. And a woman is acquired through three means: money, a contract, or through intercourse. Marriage through intercourse and by contract is from the Torah, and by money is Rabbinical [lit. "the words of the Scribes"]. And this acquisition is what is called "Kiddushin" or "Erusin" in several places. And a woman who is acquired through one of these three means is called a "Mekudeshet" or "Meureset".

Song of Songs 2:16 (frequently sung at Jewish weddings)

שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים ב' ט"ז

דוֹדִי לִי וְאֲנִי לוֹ הָרְעָה בְּשׁוֹשַׁנִּים:

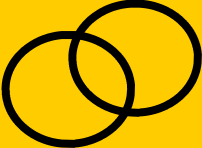
My beloved is mine And I am his Who browses among the lilies.



THE JEWISH WEDDING

THE WEEK AFTER
Sheva Brachot?

AFTER THE CHUPAH
Yichud?



UNDER THE CHUPAH
CIRCLING?
WELCOME: Baruch HaBa, Mi Adir
[Readings]?
ERUSIN (BETROTHAL) - Blessings, 1st cup of wine
[Vows]?
Ring Exchange
Ketubah; Address
[Readings]?
NISSUIN (MARRIAGE) - Sheva Brachot + Wine
Blessing; Break glass
Ketubah/Civil signing

GETTING TO THE CHUPAH
Procession? Order? Music?

THE DAY
Fasting?
Receptions?
Bedecken?

WEEK BEFORE
Mikveh?
Aufruf?

Defining Key Terms (Source: Ritualwell.org)

Kiddushin: The first part of the traditional Jewish wedding service in which the groom acquires the bride by giving her a small token, usually a ring, and declaring that she is betrothed to him according to the laws of Moses and Israel. Today, most non-Orthodox couples have made this ceremony completely egalitarian. Some, disliking the property aspects of the ceremony, have dispensed with it altogether, substituting a *brit shutafut* – a partnership covenant.

Chuppah: marriage canopy symbolizing the couple's new home.

Ketubah: The Jewish wedding contract. Traditionally, the *ketubah* protected the wife in marriage by spelling out the husband's obligations to her and guaranteeing her a financial settlement in case of divorce. Throughout the ages, *ketubot* (plural) have been illuminated and calligraphed, becoming significant as Jewish art. Today, all manner of egalitarian *ketubot* are written and adapted. Some dispense with the financial and legal aspects, focusing more on the emotional and spiritual sides of the relationship. Others maintain the rabbis' concern with the practical, but also define mutual obligations for each spouse.

What is the **Progressive Jewish** attitude to marriage?

1. No concept of “living in sin” prior to marriage
2. Marriage is not transactional (ceremony is not an act of *kinyan* – acquisition)
3. No asymmetry in the wedding ceremony (everything is done mutually, i.e. *kiddushin*)
4. These attitudes apply equally to same-sex partnerships

English Translation of the Orthodox Aramaic Text:

On the _____ day of the week, the ____ day of the month _____ in the year five thousand seven hundred and _____ since the creation of the world according to the reckoning which we are accustomed to use here in the city of _____ in _____. That _____ son of _____ of the family _____ said to this maiden _____ daughter of _____ of the family _____, “Be my wife according to the law of Moses & Israel, and I will cherish, honor, support & maintain you in accordance with the custom of Jewish husbands, who cherish, honor, support & maintain their wives faithfully. And I here present you with the marriage gift of virgins, two hundred silver zuzim, which belongs to you, according to the laws of Moses & Israel; and I will also give you food, clothing & necessities, and live with you as husband & wife according to the universal custom.” And _____, this maiden consented and became his wife. The trousseau that she brought to him from her father’s house in silver, gold, valuables, clothing, furniture & bedclothes, all this _____, the bridegroom accepted in the sum of one hundred silver pieces, and _____ the bridegroom consented to increase this amount from his own property with the sum of one hundred silver pieces, making in all two hundred silver pieces. And thus said _____ the bridegroom, “the responsibility of this marriage contract, of this trousseau, and of this additional sum, I take upon myself & my heirs after me, so that they shall be paid from the best part of my property & possessions that I have beneath the whole heaven, that which I now possess or may hereafter acquire. All my property, real & personal, even the shirt from my back, shall be mortgaged to secure the payment of this marriage contract, of the trousseau & of the addition made to it, during my lifetime and after my death, from the present day and forever.” _____ the bridegroom, has taken responsibility of this marriage contract, of the trousseau & the addition made to it, according to the restrictive usages of all marriage contracts and the additions to them made for the daughters of Israel, according to the institutions of our sages of blessed memory. It is not to be regarded as an indecisive contractual obligation or as a mere formula of a document. We have followed the legal formality of symbolic delivery (kinyan) between _____ son of _____ and _____ daughter of _____ this maiden and we have used a garment legally fit for the purpose, to strengthen all that is stated above.

English Translation of the Reform Aramaic Text

On the ____ day of the month of ____ in the year ____ corresponding to ____ here in London, the bridegroom ____ said to the bride ____, "Be my wife according to the law of Moses and Israel and I will cherish, respect and support you in the faithful manner in which sons in Israel cherish, respect and support their wives."

And the bride ____ said to the bridegroom ____, "Be my husband according to the law of Moses and Israel and I will cherish, respect and support you in the faithful manner in which daughters in Israel cherish, respect and support their husbands."

And the bride ____ agreed to the proposal of the bridegroom.

And the bridegroom ____ agreed to the proposal of the bride.

Accordingly, they both entered into this covenant of love and companionship, of peace and friendship, to create a Jewish home to the glory of the Holy Blessed One who makes the People of Israel holy through the holy covenant of marriage.

This has taken place in our presence and all is valid and binding.