

125  
Hirsch

TITLE: The Jewish Wedding or Jewish Values

In the Torah, portion Vayes Hebecho, "The Groom from Sura took for his wife... God is present here, the father of us, a bridegroom coming to meet his bride Israel. The Groom, or Sura, who is coming between two levels. God Jewish marriage process of this marriage between two levels on Mr. Sura. The Jewish wedding is special.

Even the symbols of the Jewish wedding are more than symbols. They also speak about what is necessary in order to have a happy and fulfilling marriage. The bride and the groom, the rabbis teach us, are considered as if they are reborn on their wedding day. All their previous sins are forgiven. That is why it is customary among Orthodox Jews for the bride to go to the mikvah, which is a symbol of rebirth, and for the couple to fast on their wedding day. It is a symbol that they are starting out anew.

The groom and the bride are escorted to the chupah by their parents and the marriage takes place before at least a minyan. This signifies that the couple is not just getting married for themselves. They are getting married in order to forge a new link in the chain of Jewish generations. They are not getting married just for themselves but for the Jewish people and for their parents. It signifies that their parents have successfully completed one of the major tasks incumbent upon every Jewish man and woman: to raise their children in such a way so that they will one day stand under a chupah and get married. <sup>A message</sup> This is, in a certain sense, the parents' graduation. They have successfully fulfilled one of their charges: to make sure that Jewish generations do not end with them.

One ancient Jewish tradition is for the bride to circle the groom as we circle the synagogue on Simchas Torah. This is to demonstrate that from now on the bride should be the most precious thing in the whole world to the groom and vice versa. The bride and groom stand under a chupah, which is a strange structure. It has a roof but no sides. This is to teach the couple that the most important thing in marriage is that they share common values and aspirations. The chupah stands for the couple's home. The sides of the home could be made of platinum or gold, but if the couple does not share common goals and aspirations, the marriage will not work.

~~THE GLASS WITHIN A STRAW VALUE~~  
WEDDING ITEMS PORTRAY JEWISH VALUES, FUTURE  
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky  
PAGE TWO

On the other hand, the sides of the couple's home could be made of straw or tin, but if the couple share common goals and aspirations, the marriage will endure and the couple will be happy.

The couple drinks from two cups of wine. These cups signify fruitfulness, success, inner joy, and happiness. Children should be the desire of every couple. They add, they do not subtract from the couple's own relationship. They deepen this relationship. There are two cups of wine because not just material success is needed in a marriage but inner joy and happiness are needed. A couple can enjoy good material success but be miserable in their own home. People looking at them from the outside could think what a wonderful couple they are, but if the inner dynamics of their relationship ~~is not~~ <sup>right these marriage</sup> will not endure. The couple must respect each other's individuality.

In the Jewish tradition, respect is more important than love in a marriage because unless a couple respects each other and treats each other with kindness their love will wither.

That is one of the meanings, too, of the breaking of the glass. Glass is different from other objects. Iron rusts, wood rots, but a piece of fine cut glass can last for centuries and every morning as the hues of the sun reflect in the glass new colors and new beauty can be seen. However, glass has a defect. If it slips through your hands, it smashes into a million smithereens and cannot be reconstituted. Treating your spouse with disrespect causes the glass to slip from your hands and causes love to be smashed into a million smithereens.

Drinking from the same cup also signifies that the couple must share the good and bad in life. Their marriage must be based on "we", not "I". Their marriage must be the most important thing in their lives. If their

~~THE JEWISH WEDDING & JEWISH VALUES~~  
~~WEDDING ITEMS PORTRAY JEWISH VALUES, FUTURE~~  
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky  
PAGE THREE

careers or other things take precedence, the marriage will have a hard time enduring. The ring, too, signifies that the husband takes upon himself to support and be faithful to his wife and, by her acceptance of the ring, the wife declares that she will be faithful to him. Fidelity is also essential in a marriage.

To sum up, the Jewish marriage ceremony, itself, tells the couple what it is that is needed to build a sound marriage: 1) That they are getting married not just for themselves but for the Jewish people and, therefore, they are not to cut their ties with their families or their religion. They are to also realize that the number one person in their lives should now be their spouse, but they are not to cut off their other relationships. 2) That they must share common goals and aspirations and put their marriage before everything else. 3) That they should want to have children. 4) That they must always treat each other with respect otherwise their love will wither. 5) That they must be willing to share with each other all life's experiences and not shut out the other partner. 6) That they must be faithful to each other and the husband must be willing to support his wife.