

MARRIAGE

Judaism Practices

Marriage: a legal union between a man and a woman (or in some countries, two people of the same sex) as partners in a relationship.

What happens & why

- Once a couple decides to marry, they become **betrothed**
- A betrothal ceremony traditionally happens **12 months before** the wedding.
- At the last **Shabbat** service before the wedding, the **groom blesses the Torah**, to represent the Torah guiding the marriage.
- During the betrothal, the **ketubah**, a **wedding contract**, is drawn up. This sets out the husband's (or couples) duties.
- The ceremony is led by a rabbi under a **Chuppah which symbolises the couples home**.
- The couple fast on the day to cleanse themselves of sin.
- The bride may **wear white** as a symbol of **sexual purity**
- the **ring** has objective value which symbolises **the value of the relationship**
- The **bride circles the groom seven times** to symbolise the couple making time for each other every day of the week.
- They **recite two blessing over wine** and the groom places the ring on the brides finger.
- The **groom breaks a glass** to symbolise the **destruction of the temple** in Jerusalem.

In the Tanakh it says...

'That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become **one flesh**'.

'Behold you are consecrated to me by means of this **ring**, according to the rituals of Moses and Israel.'

The groom says this while placing the ring on his brides finger.

Marrying out, is when someone marries a non-Jew, also called intermarriage.

Most **Orthodox Jews** are against marrying out because a couple may not agree to raise their children in the Jewish tradition.

Most **Conservative Jews** are against marrying out but may accept it if the partner who is not Jewish may convert to Judaism in the future.

Most **Reform Jews** accept marrying out but would prefer that their children be raised in the Jewish tradition.

Rites of passage: Ceremonies that mark important transitional periods in a person's life, including marriage.

Past Exam Questions

2019: Explain two ways in which the marriage ceremony helps Jews to understand marriage. (5)

Possible Questions

Explain two ways Jews are influenced by the customs that take place at the marriage ceremony. (5)

Explain two customs that take place during the marriage ceremony. (5)

'Marriage is the most important rite of passage.' (12)

'Betrothal is the most important part of the marriage ceremony.' (12)

Rites of passage Influences

- **influences** Jews to uphold traditional and strive to fulfil each rite of passage
- **influences** Jews to believe it is their duty from God to marry
- **influences** Jews to date with the intention of marriage
- **influences** Jews to ensure they find the right partner for marriage