# Ketubah

The Ketubah is a marriage contract, required by Jewish law, attesting to the commitments and obligations *Bride* and *Groom* make to each other as a married couple. It is one of the oldest elements of Jewish weddings, dating back over two thousand years. Prior to the ceremony, the Ketubah was signed by *Bride* and *Groom*, *Rabbi* and witnessed by *Witness* and *Witness*.

# The Chuppah

*Bride* and *Groom* will be married under a wedding canopy known as the Chuppah, which symbolizes the home they will build together. The Chuppah rests on four poles, yet has no walls reflecting the idea that family and friends will always be welcome in their home.

# Blessings of Betrothal - Kiddushin

The Kiddushin begins with the recitation of opening blessings. The first is the blessing over the wine. *Bride* and *Groom* will share a cup of wine, a Jewish symbol of joy and the sanctification of a celebratory time. The second blessing expresses the sacredness of the marital bond.

# Exchanging of the Rings

Following these blessings, *Bride* and *Groom* will exchange rings. According to Jewish law, the rings must be solid metal, devoid of any cuts or stones. As the rings are circles with no beginning and no end they symbolize that *Bride* and *Groom*’s love is never ending.

# The Seven Blessings - Nisuin

The Sheva Brachot (Seven Blessings) comprises most of the wedding liturgy. These seven blessings symbolize the seven days of creation. The blessings represent the joy of creation both in the ancient times and the newest creation which occurs under the Chuppah. A second glass of wine is shared at this time.

# The Breaking of the Glass

At the conclusion of the ceremony, *Groom* will break a glass by stepping on it. Tradition says that this represents the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. Other modern interpretations say that the broken pieces of the glass remind us that life is fragile and even in times of great joy, we must not forget our people’s journey throughout history. The sound of the glass breaking is greeted by shouts of “Mazel Tov” - a wish for good fortune to the newly married couple.

# Yichud

Immediately after the ceremony, *Bride* and *Groom* will adjourn to a private room for several minutes of yichud (seclusion) to share their first moments together as husband and wife.

Siman tov, u’mazal tov, Ye’hei lanu ul’chol Yisrael
(May good fortune come to us and to all Israel)