



YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

On the day of his wedding and on the day of his heart's joy (Shir Ha'shirim 3:11). The Talmud tells us that the phrase on the day of His wedding refers to the day that Hashem gave us the Torah; and on the day of his heart's joy to the building of the Beit ha'Mikdash. (Ta'anit 26b)

R. Akiva expounded that the Divine Presence dwells with a husband and wife when they merit and respect each other. He explains that the Hebrew words for man and woman (איש and אשה respectively) are rearranged to spell יה אש – the [holy] fire of God. If they do not respect each other, however, God is not a part of their relationship, and the Divine name יה is removed, leaving only the word אש – fire, symbolizing that a fire consumes them. (Sotah 17a)

The holiday of Shavuot is often compared to a marriage between God and the Jewish people. Matan Torah and the Mt. Sinai experience concretize the romantic relationship between *haKadosh Baruch Hu* and *Knesset Yisrael*. What better time than this to remind ourselves of Rabbi Akiva's comments cited above, to recall that respect is central to marriage and all of our relationships. Our respect for our marriages cast a penetrating light on how we celebrate our covenantal connection to God. The truest testimony of our sacred relationship with God is defined by how we engage in our personal marital lives.

It is therefore appropriate to begin this edition of the *Holiday To Go* with the request from our Roshei Yeshiva (p. 4) that all marriage ceremonies be performed only after a halakhic prenuptial agreement has been signed. Such a simple act ensures that religion will never be used as a tool against a spouse and allows us to make our marriages the finest recreations of Matan Torah, so that all of our lives are guided by the norms and mores of Jewish tradition.

For further information about the halakhic prenuptial agreement, please visit www.theprenup.org.

Chag Sameach,

Rabbi Kenneth Brander

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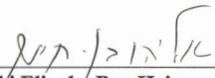
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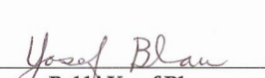
קול קורא לחבר הרבנים ולתלמידינו ולציבורנו


An Important Message to Our Rabbinic Colleagues, Students, and Community

We are pained by the challenges facing individuals in our community who have been denied a *get* long after their marriages have been deemed irreconcilable. Many of these challenges could have been avoided had the couple signed a halakhically and legally valid prenuptial agreement at the time of their marriage. We therefore strongly urge all rabbis, educators, and community leaders to counsel and encourage engaged couples to sign such an agreement.

The widespread utilization of halakhic prenuptial agreements is a critical step in inoculating our community against the distressful problem of the modern-day *agunah*. Use of halakhic prenuptial agreements should become standard throughout the Jewish community for all engaged couples. Halakhic prenuptial agreements have been extremely effective in assuring the timely issuance of the *get*. Encouraging proper halakhic behavior in the sanctification and the dissolution of marriage will thereby demonstrate “*de’rakheha darkhei noam, ve’khol netivoteha shalom*” - the Torah’s ways are pleasant and all its paths are peaceful.


Rabbi Eliyahu Ben-Haim

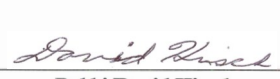

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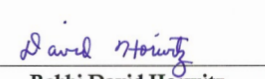

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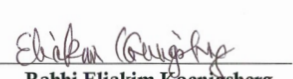

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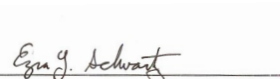

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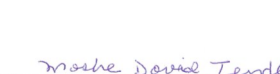

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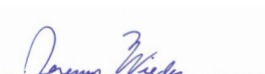

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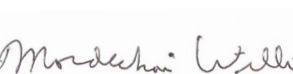

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תשע"ב – 5772