

Shoel U'Mashiv

Being Mekadesh with a Hollow Gold Ring

Rabbi Noah Whittenburg

Q - “We were hoping to save a little money on our wedding ring and use a hollow gold ring. Is that kosher for a Jewish wedding?”

A - What is a hollow gold ring?

The classic ring is fairly straightforward—it is made from solid gold. A hollow gold ring, as the name implies, has an empty space inside of it. The purpose of this empty space is to save on materials and subsequently, save on price. However, the hollowness subtracts from the durability of the ring. But because of its cheaper price, it is becoming an increasingly popular option for young couples.

What do we use for the ring at a wedding?

The *Mishna* in *Kiddushin* 2a says that *Kiddushin* (Halachic engagement) can be done using one of three methods: money, a document, or marital relations. The *Shulchan Aruch E.H.* 26:2 says the general *Minhag* is for a man to use a ring to be *Mekadesh* a woman (which is considered to be money). The ring must be worth at least a *Perutah*. In modern currency, that is about 3-5 cents. The *Shulchan Aruch E.H.* 31:1 says that there is no need to evaluate the ring, as long as it is clearly worth a *Perutah*. However, in 31:2 he says not to use a ring that most people will misevaluate. Therefore, we avoid using rings with stones or with engravings since most people do not know how to accurately evaluate them. Instead, we use a plain ring that is easy to evaluate.

Can a hollow ring be used?

Rabbi Yona Reiss *shlit”a* told this author that it is better not to use the hollow gold ring for *Kiddushin*. The reason, based on the discussion above, is that hollowness affects the price, but most people are not proficient at recognizing and evaluating it. Therefore, this would be exactly what the *Shulchan Aruch* says to avoid. Rather, one should use a solid gold ring that is generally easy to evaluate.