

By the Grace of G-d
Purim-Koton, 5719
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Sholom uBrocho:

I duly received your letter, and this is in reply to your questions:

a) Whether you should insist on having the Chuppah 'outside.'

No doubt you mean having the Chuppah under the sky, which is the important thing, and this can often be done inside, since ~~in~~ many halls have a retractable, or removable, roof so that the Chuppah can indeed be under the sky.

I trust you will not have to 'insist' very much, but that this will be readily acceptable, for having the Chuppah under the sky is something which is connected with Mazzel. Inasmuch as the question concerns marriage, which makes the foundation for the everlasting edifice (Binyan adei-ad) for a happy home, surely everything should be done to fulfil all the aspects which are connected with Mazzel at the time of the Chuppah, and this is one of them, as is stated in many holy books.

b) On the matter of disagreement regarding furniture.

Generally speaking, in matters connected with the house furniture and furnishing and the like, the matters which our Sages call the 'mundane' aspects, one should consider the wishes of the future housewife. At the same time, it is clearly a matter of good sense not to get involved in debts which may be difficult to meet afterwards, all the more so as you have to undertake mortgage obligations, etc., as you write.

c) With regard conduct becoming a Yeshivah Bochur, etc.

The thing to keep in mind is that your conduct is bound to have an immediate influence on the conduct of your entire home, especially that of your wife, the Akeres Habayis. The father and husband sets the tone for the others to follow. In practice, when one tries to emulate someone else, even with the utmost effort, it rarely comes up to the full 100%. Therefore, it

is necessary so to conduct oneself, that after making allowances the copy not fall too short of the original, so that at least the minimum requirements of the Shulchan Aruch (even without Hiddurim) would be fulfilled.

This should be your guiding principle also, and even more so, in your meeting with other people, especially in your teaching position, and general standing in the congregation and community.

Referring specifically to the question of going to certain places of amusement, in view of the fact (in addition to the above considerations) that you have told your fiancée that you will ~~continue~~ discontinue this, you should bear in mind that if you do not practise as your preach, it will not only display a weakness on your part in matters of Yiras Shomaim, but your fiancée will consider it a precedent to further concessions and liberties in this direction.

d) You ask my advice as to how to ensure mutual peace and harmony in married life.

As you know, the Torah is the key to it, as it is written, "Its ways are ways of pleasantness and all its paths are peace." In matters of the Torah pleasantness should be coupled with firmness, especially in such fundamental aspects of marriage as Taharas Hamishpocho, and all other things of Torah and Mitzvoth which the Torah requires with the utmost stringency. Yet, it is this very stringent observance that ensures the pleasantness and peace of married life, while capitulation or concession even 'temporarily' in these matters, 'in the interests of peace,' can only have lasting contrary effects.

Nowadays, environment and the people one mixes with, have a considerable effect on one's personal conduct and the conduct of the home. Therefore, one should always seek the company and environment of only such real friends as have a beneficial and encouraging influence in all matters of Torah and Mitzvoth, and introduce your fiancée into a similar environment.

With blessing,