בס"ד

FROM THE SHIURIM OF

Rabbi Daniel Glatstein

Bereishis: WEDDING IN PARADISE

Delivered 8 October 2026

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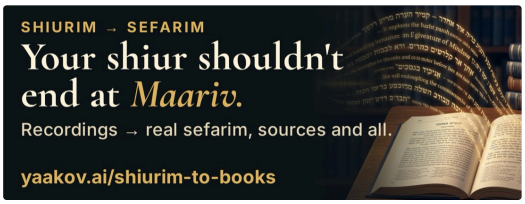
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BEFORE YOU BEGIN

If every chosson is a king whose sins are forgiven, what entitles him to that kapparah, and why does a wedding hall keep echoing Gan Eden?

The question. The Medrash reads ויבן as literal: Hashem Himself braided Chava's hair, adorned her with twenty-four ornaments, poured the kiddush cup, and sent Michoel and Gavriel as shoishvinin. A chosson resembles a king in five ways, says the Medrash, and the Shevet Mussar adds a sixth: his sins, like a king's, are forgiven. The Pele Yoetz insists that telling him so is the real mitzvah of the wedding.

The turn. Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, in Made in Heaven, proposes why: every chuppah reenacts Adam and Chava's wedding, celebrated before the chet, so the couple reverts to that sinless state. He marks this "original" — and a teaching cannot simply be invented. It needs grounding, which the Medrash, the Agra d'Pirka, and the Mateh Moshe, a talmid of the Maharshal, supply explicitly.

Where it lands. Once grounded, everything aligns. Adam davened the first Mincha before meeting Chava, hence Mincha at the chasunah. He owned nothing, hence the chosson's empty pockets. The Shelah explains the kittel: Hashem paired the warning of death with the command to marry, since marriage answers mortality with continuity. Thirty-two letters of kiddushin echo thirty-two appearances of אלקים in maaseh bereishis.

The picture. Seven brachos count Hashem's blessing to Adam and Chava; ten chuppos, malachim dancing, malachim guarding the poles, angels catering from מעון, Hashem as chazan — Adam's wedding supplies every detail. Rashi explains that שהכל ברא לכבודו and the creation-brachos exist to honor the chesed Hashem showed Adam and Chava, not merely to bless this couple.

What to carry in. The first chesed in the Torah was not clothing Adam and Chava after the sin, but Hashem braiding Chava's hair before it. Every chasunah recreates that first, sinless union, and every attendee's job is to say so aloud to the chosson and kallah. And since Hashem renews maaseh bereishis daily, married life itself can be lived, each day, as Gan Eden revisited.

◆ *The Ribono Shel Olam as Wedding Planner*

The Medrash on Parshas Bereishis takes note of a strange word. The pasuk says that Hashem built the tzela He took from man into a woman, and then ויבאה אל האדם — He brought her to man.[1] But what does it mean that He *built* her? The Medrash answers: קישטה ככלה ואחר כך הביאה לו — He adorned her like a kallah and only then brought her to him. The Ribono Shel Olam Himself did the kallah's makeup and her jewelry.

Now, I have discovered that makeup artists are quite expensive these days. The jewelry is not cheap either. Imagine Hashem Himself coming to take care of all the kishutim. And the Medrash adds another layer: in some places braiding hair is called building. Just as we have discussed elsewhere in tefillah that braiding is sometimes called gidol, making big, so too it is called binyan, building. Which means that ויבן is to be read literally — the Ribono Shel Olam did Chava's hair.

Rabbi Chama bar Chanina asks: do you imagine that Hashem simply plucked her out from under some sycamore tree in Gan Eden and handed her over? He placed twenty-four pieces of jewelry on her. Today people ask how many gifts a chosson must give a kallah — the ring, a bracelet, pearls (which I believe have gone out of style), a watch, depending on the circles and the era. Chava received the full regalia: twenty-four ornaments, and the One who put them on her was Hashem Himself. And hinted in the very word ויבאה, whose numerical value is twenty-four.

Every wedding needs brachos. Who was the mesader kiddushin? The Medrash says that the Almighty took the כוס של ברכה and blessed them. Every chosson needs someone to walk him down — the shoishvinan, the unterführer, the best man; you cannot walk down the aisle alone. Adam's shoishvinin were Michoel and Gavriel. They escorted him to the chuppah. From all of this the Medrash derives that Hakadosh Baruch Hu adorns kallos, blesses chassanim, visits the sick and buries the dead — and the proof text for מקשט כלות is ויבן ה' אלקים את הצלע. The same idea appears in the Gemara in Brachos.

That the Ribono Shel Olam Himself braided Chava's hair is, when you stop to think about it, a staggering thing.

◆ *Why the Chosson's Sins Are Forgiven*

Everyone is familiar with the Medrash that חתן דומה למלך, a chosson resembles a king, and that there are five points of comparison. A king is praised by all; so is a chosson. A king wears בגדי כבוד; so does the chosson. A king has the great feast set before him; so does the chosson, for seven days. A king never goes out unaccompanied; a chosson too has a shomer — that is where the custom comes from. A king's face shines like the sun; so does a chosson's.

The Baal Shevet Mussar, Rabbi Eliyahu HaKohen of Izmir, adds one more: just as a king's sins are forgiven, so are the sins of a chosson. But why? What exactly did he do to earn kapparah? He took the leap, and for that Hashem wipes the slate clean?

The Pele Yoetz writes something that should change the way we attend weddings. Many people go to a chasunah and miss the whole point entirely. How was the wedding? The food was good, the ambiance was good, the orchestra was good. But you do not go to a wedding to eat the food. You go to be mesameach

chosson v'kallah. And the Pele Yoetz says the ikkar simchas chosson is to tell him: **do you realize that Hashem is forgiving your aveiros today?** That is the essential mitzvah.

The Gemara teaches אגרא דבי הילולא מילי — the reward for attending a wedding is the words you say there. And even if, let us say, the kallah is not objectively the most striking creation to have emerged in the six days of Bereishis, you are still permitted to say כלה נאה וחסודה. Even if the match looks to you like a catastrophic lapse in judgment, you are allowed to say what a beautiful kallah, what a beautiful mishpacha. You must find a way to convince the chosson and kallah that they made a wonderful decision. It does not matter that nobody present agrees. It does not matter that he may figure it out within the week. Tonight you tell him.

If you drove two and a half hours to Lakewood, paid a hundred dollars in gas and tolls, dropped a check — and then forgot to say a single word to the chosson and kallah, what in the world did you come for? You did not even fulfill the mitzvah. Figure out something to say. And according to the Pele Yoetz, the best thing to say is: you are getting married, Hashem is being mochel your avonos, keep your neshamah clean from here on. Look how much Hashem loves you. You are דומה למלך. Everyone here tonight is honoring you.

In the Sefer Eretz HaTzvi this is read into the bracha itself: שמח תשמח רעים האהובים — gladden the beloved companions. How? By telling them how fortunate they are that Hashem has forgiven their sins. Forgiven like whom? Like Adam HaRishon, who at the moment of his wedding also had no aveiros, since he had not yet eaten from the eitz hada'as. And that is precisely what the bracha continues: כשמחך יצירך בגן עדן מקדם.

◆ *Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan and the Sefer Made in Heaven*

There is a sefer which happens to be one of my favorite books, and I want to feature it here. It is an English work called Made in Heaven, written by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan. It is not merely a likut. Everything Rabbi Kaplan wrote is the most comprehensive treatment of its subject, period — and this is not only the most comprehensive work on marriage, it is full of original material.

Rabbi Kaplan was born in 1934 and passed away in 1983 at the age of forty-eight. He was among the best-versed scholars of Kabbalah in the last hundred years. He passed away while climbing a ladder to change a light bulb — a very mystical way to go; he was, after all, on a sulam. His literary output is unparalleled. If you look at when he began a sefer and when he finished it, it is uncanny. He completed the Living Torah in a matter of months, shortly before his passing. The Handbook of Jewish Thought, volume one and volume two. The Me'am Lo'ez — which he translated not from the Hebrew but from the original Ladino, a language he learned in order to do it. The Torah Anthology, dozens upon dozens of volumes. NCSY commissioned him to write pamphlets on basic mitzvos — tefillin, tzitzis, mikvah, Shabbos, Jerusalem — and they are astounding works. He produced translations of Kabbalah, introductions to Kabbalah, and translations of the works of Rav Nachman of Breslov.

In fact, he is probably responsible for the fact that Rav Nachman of Breslov has a kever one can visit today. In 1979 the government in Uman was going to demolish the cemetery in which Rav Nachman is buried. One of the Rabbanim of Breslov called Rav Moshe Sherer, called the Lubavitcher Rebbe, called Rav Pinchas Teitz, and they were introduced to Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan. On a manual typewriter he sent out the exact longitude and latitude of Rav Nachman's kever, and when Jimmy Carter met with Brezhnev in Vienna, because of Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan the Kremlin decided not to destroy it.

And think about what that has meant. There was a well-known story this past year: a prominent Litvishe Rosh Yeshivah was challenged that if he would spend Rosh Hashanah in Uman, a donor would give millions of dollars to his yeshivah. After asking a sheilah, he went. Afterward a philanthropist in Brazil dreamed that Rav Nachman came to him and instructed him to make that Rosh Yeshivah happy, because the Rosh Yeshivah had been away from his yeshivah for Rosh Hashanah. When the philanthropist said in the dream that he did not know who the Rosh Yeshivah was, the Rosh Yeshivah himself then appeared to him. That tens of thousands of Yidden have a kever to go to at all is in part the influence of Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan. He is buried on Har HaZeisim, not far from my grandfather.

I went through Made in Heaven this week — and when I say I went through it, I mean the whole thing. I had once used it to assemble mareh mekomos on how the minhagim of a wedding are derived from Kabbalas HaTorah; you may remember that shiur from years ago. This is a different topic entirely, and several of the ideas I want to lay out are marked by him in his notes as original.

◆ *Three Original Suggestions: Kapparah, Fasting, and Mincha*

Why is Hashem mechaper the aveiros of chosson and kallah? Rabbi Kaplan suggests: because every wedding is a reenactment of the union of Adam and Chava, and when Adam and Chava married in Gan Eden it was קודם החטא. The couple is reverting to the state of Adam and Chava before the sin. I looked at the note to see whom he was quoting. The note says: original.

And here I want to share something that is almost personal. **You cannot simply invent an idea in Torah.** You cannot decide on your own that a wedding is a reenactment of Adam and Chava's union in Gan Eden. You need a basis. Once a basis exists, then you are entitled to build upon it and suggest that this is why Hashem forgives the aveiros of a chosson. But to assert the premise itself out of thin air is too innovative. So we will need to find grounding for it in Chazal — and we will.

His second suggestion concerns the fast. What do a chosson and kallah do on the day of their wedding? They fast. I did not fast, because I was married on Rosh Chodesh — Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan. But absent that, one is supposed to fast on his wedding day, and it is quite unclear where this is derived from. The Rishonim say that just as Klal Yisrael fasted when Hashem gave the Torah, so too one fasts when he marries. The difficulty is that we have no source that Klal Yisrael fasted on the day of Matan Torah. As an aside, in this book he

suggests a source: the pasuk says that at Har Sinai they ate and drank, and Chazal explain that they derived sustenance from the Shechinah as though they had eaten and drunk — which means that in fact they did not eat and did not drink. That is an interesting source that there was fasting at Matan Torah.

But his own suggestion is this: we know that Adam and Chava, on their very first day, were in a state of perfect harmony — before they ate from the eitz hada'as. So we take the chosson and kallah back to that state and say: before you eat, you are like Adam and Chava in Gan Eden before they ate. Also marked original.

The third suggestion I found remarkable. There is a sefer, Shulchan Ha'Ezer, one of the most comprehensive works on chasunah, written by Rav Yitzchak Tzvi Leibowitz. He quotes the sefer Chuppas Chasanim — written, I believe, by Rav Refael Meldola, who is buried in London; how he ended up there is a story for another time. It is one of the earliest works on chasunah, and he records that the minhag in Livorno was that on the day of the marriage Mincha is davened in the house of the chosson. Before Shemoneh Esrei they would sing to the chosson, after Shemoneh Esrei no Tachanun is said in the chosson's house, and they would say Mizmor מ"ה.

Lema'aseh, this is brought in halacha: you daven Mincha at the chasunah. And when I saw it, I thought — no kidding you daven Mincha at the chasunah; where else would you daven? But that is not the tone of it at all. It does not read like convenience. It reads as though Mincha is **part of the chasunah**. Do not daven in shul that day. I was once at a hall in Lakewood at Mincha time, and the hall has a shul in it, and I said, let us all go to the shul. No! You do not daven Mincha in the shul. You daven in the Beis HaChosson, at the chosson's tish.

Why? What has Mincha to do with a chasunah? Chazal say לעולם יהא אדם זהיר בתפילת המנחה — one must always be careful with Mincha — and the Gemara explains that it is because Eliyahu HaNavi was answered at Mincha. But the Arizal says that the very first tefillah ever recited was Mincha. Adam HaRishon could not have davened Shacharis; he was created in the middle of the day. The first tefillah in history was Adam HaRishon's Mincha on erev Shabbos.

Now picture it. Hashem creates him and tells him: I have a very good shidduch for you. Adam says, I wonder which one You mean — there were not many candidates. And what did Adam do before he got married? He davened Mincha. Therefore the poskim say Mincha is part of the chasunah. And what is Rabbi Kaplan's source? Original. As he writes: since Chava was brought to Adam just after he was created, it emerges that he recited the Mincha service before he was married, and the custom continues to this day. Yitzchak legislated Mincha as a fixed tefillah, but the first one ever davened, says the Ari, was Adam HaRishon's.

◆ *Empty Pockets and the Kittel*

What does the chosson wear under the chuppah? A kittel. You could hardly design a worse garment for the occasion. He has a beautiful new suit, a nice tie, cufflinks — and we take the cufflinks off. Heaven forbid he should wear jewelry under the chuppah. Where does that come from? Nobody knows.

Here is a fourth original idea. In many circles the custom is that the groom has nothing in his pockets. One reason given is that the bride should take him as he is, with empty pockets. But beyond that, the chosson stands in the place of Adam HaRishon, and Adam owned nothing. When Adam came to Chava — what do you have? A portfolio? Mutual funds? Bitcoin? Adam says: I have nothing. I have not even opened an account. I do not have a driver's license. Since Adam HaRishon entered his marriage empty-handed, we remove the chosson's cufflinks, take his wallet out of his pocket, take off his watch. Source? Original. Which is to say there is no explicit source for any of these — and that is exactly why we need to establish from Chazal that a wedding genuinely is a reenactment of Adam and Chava in Gan Eden.

Now the kittel itself. People get a certain satisfaction out of it, but let us be honest about what it is: it is your burial shroud. You will be buried in it. When the worms get to you, you will be wearing your kittel. So why do we put it on him on the happiest day of his life? The man searched for years, it was stressful, he finally found the right one, he is about to walk down — and just before he does, we say, would you mind putting on your tachrichim?

The Likutei Maharich brings an astonishing Shelah. The Gemara in Brachos relates that the Chachamim came to a wedding and were asked to sing, and the song they sang was: woe to us, for we are going to die. That was the hit of the evening. Nowadays they sing עוד ישמע. In the times of the Gemara they sang, woe, we are going to die — and it rhymes.

Why sing about death at a wedding? The Shelah HaKadosh offers a precise diyuk. Hashem tells Adam: do not eat from the eitz hada'as, and if you do, you will die. And then, immediately, Hashem says: it is not good for man to be alone, you need a wife. Have you ever wondered about that juxtaposition? Adam was having a fine day, and Hashem delivers two items in sequence: you eat that fruit and you drop dead, and by the way, you need to get married. The Shelah explains that it is precisely because death entered the picture that marriage became necessary. You must marry because one day you will die and there will be no perpetuity. You need a continuum. **The institution of marriage exists because of the phenomenon of death.** That is why, when the Chachamim were asked to sing at the wedding, they reminded everyone: the reason we are here is that life is not permanent, and you must prepare the next generation. And therefore there is a mitzvah of פרו ורבו.

So the Likutei Maharich explains the kittel: just as Adam HaRishon was told to marry because מות תמות, so too we explain to the chosson what he is doing there. Because the chosson is standing there thinking, what am I doing here? Are we sure this is a good idea?

It was the yahrtzeit of the Chasam Sofer two days ago. The Chasam Sofer, in his second marriage, married the daughter of Rav Akiva Eiger. She was very young and he was already advanced in years, and apparently she did not grasp quite how much older he was until she was walking to the chuppah. She turned to her father and said, Tati, he is so old. He is so old. And her father gave her a quick answer: he is not getting any younger.

That is the chosson's question. I have been in yeshivah for ten years on my own schedule — is this a good idea? So we put the kittel on him and we tell him: this is what you are doing, and this is why you are doing it. It is not the cheeriest thought. But it is the reality. And the association with Yom Kippur, with the kapparah of the day, is itself a further reason for the kittel.

◆ *Sheva Brachos, the Chuppah, and the Angels*

In the Sefer Tanya Rabbasi — which is essentially the Shibbolei HaLeket, and is not to be confused with the Sefer HaTanya; Tanya Rabbasi is from the Rishonim — the question is asked: what is the source of Birkas Chasanim? The answer: from Hakadosh Baruch Hu Himself, who gave brachos to Adam and Chava.

The Radal on Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer makes the count explicit. What was the bracha Hashem gave them? פרו ורבו ומלאו את הארץ וכבשוה ורדו בדגת הים ובעוף השמים ובכל חיה. Count them: פרו, one. ורבו, two. ומלאו, three. וכבשוה, four. ורדו, five. ובעוף השמים, six. ובכל חיה, seven. Seven brachos, explicit in the pasuk. That is the makor of sheva brachos.

Why is there a chuppah at all? That is really a separate shiur, and one of the reasons given is that Hashem suspended the mountain over Klal Yisrael כגיגית. But the Gemara in Bava Basra says that Hakadosh Baruch Hu made ten chuppos for Adam HaRishon in Gan Eden.

So picture the whole affair. The Ribono Shel Olam did the hair. The Ribono Shel Olam adorned the kallah. The Ribono Shel Olam gave the brachos. Michoel and Gavriel escorted the chosson. Who were the dancers? Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer says the malachim were the dancers, drumming and dancing before them. And Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer continues that the malachei hashareis guarded the chuppah — in other words, who were the pole guys? At every chuppah there are the four men firmly entrenched at the poles. At Adam's chuppah, the poles were held by malachim.

And who was the chazan? One might answer simply that if we do not hire a chazan, the kallah's brother will sing, and that is mamash a sakanah — the last time he sounded halfway decent was in the second grade choir. This is not amateur hour. But the Medrash says that the chazan at Adam's chasunah was the Ribono Shel Olam Himself. You do not grab a random relative. Hashem was the chazan.

◆ *Who Walks Down First*

Who walks down the aisle first? It is a wonder that in America they still let the chosson walk down first. Where does that come from? The Bnei Yissaschar writes in Agra d'Pirka that at the yichud room she should enter first, but at the chuppah he goes first — because Hashem first created Adam HaRishon. Adam came down into this world first, and only then did the Ribono Shel Olam bring Chava to him. The order is not arbitrary; it is five thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven years old, dating to the first wedding in Gan Eden.

The Maharal holds that at the yichud room too the man should enter first, not like the Agra d'Pirka, and al pi halacha the man goes in first — because the home is meant to be his bayis.

There is an interesting Rama: our minhag is that two people escort the chosson to the chuppah. The Mateh Moshe, a talmid of the Maharshal, quotes the very Medrash we saw, that this emulates the wedding of Adam HaRishon, where Gavriel and Michoel escorted him.

And now, friends, notice what has happened. These are no longer original suggestions. The Medrash states explicitly that Hakadosh Baruch Hu braided her hair and adorned her, and that Michoel and Gavriel escorted Adam. The Agra d'Pirka says the order of walking down is learned from the wedding in Gan Eden. And the Mateh Moshe — listen carefully, because the Mateh Moshe is a kadmon, a talmid of the Maharshal — says that the reason for the halacha of the Rama, that two people escort the chosson, is learned from that Medrash. **The basis we were looking for exists.**

◆ *Seven Circles and Thirty-Two Letters*

The kallah circles the chosson seven times. Which is, if you think about it, a little frightening — when we circled Yericho seven times the walls came down, and the seven hakafos on Hoshana Rabbah are likewise about knocking down the enemy. So why does she circle him seven times?

The source is attributed to Kabbalah, and Rabbi Kaplan writes in his notes that we have no clear source. His own suggestion is that the woman represents the earth — Mother Earth — and when Hashem created the world, how many times did the earth circle the sun? Seven. Every wedding is a reenactment of the creation of the world, and she is enacting it symbolically. It is maaseh bereishis taking place again.

Now take the words themselves: הרי את מקודשת לי בטבעת זו כדת משה וישראל. Count the letters. Thirty-two. And here is why, and this is why I told you at the outset that this is a Bereishis shiur. The Arizal says that the reason the kiddushin is effected with those words is that they contain thirty-two letters — corresponding to the thirty-two times the Name אלקים appears in the account of creation at the opening of Bereishis. And Sefer Yetzirah teaches that Hashem created the world with ל"ב נתיבות חכמה, thirty-two pathways of wisdom.

What has one to do with the other? The answer is that marriage is a reenactment of the creation of the world. And the Mateh Moshe writes this explicitly — this is a very strong and very firm source.

Why seven brachos? The Mateh Moshe brings from the Kolbo — not like the Gemara, which says Hashem made ten chuppos for Adam HaRishon, but like the Medrash that He made seven. And he explains that the reason for the seven brachos, and perhaps he means the seven days of sheva brachos, is that maaseh bereishis took seven days, and the purpose of marriage is the creation of the world. Why was the world created? לשבת יצרה, to be populated, for the sake of the mitzvah of פרו ורבו. The seven days therefore indicate that a marriage is a reenactment not only of Adam and Chava in Gan Eden, but of the creation of the world itself. This is an early Acharon saying outright that a wedding reenacts maaseh bereishis.

◆ *Mazel Tov and the Caterers from Ma'on*

What does everyone shout when the glass breaks? Mazel tov. Where does that come from? One answer: because he needs it. But here is another. Where did Chava come from? From him. When Adam saw her he said [2] זאת הפעם עצם מעצמי ובשר מבשרי לזאת יקרא אשה כי מאיש לקחה זאת. Take the words מאיש לקחה זאת — their roshei teivos spell מזל. Mazel is a reference to the very pasuk Adam said when he met Chava: you found your rib, you got a good one. Others suggest the roshei teivos of מזריע זרע למינהו, meaning: be faithful. That comes from one of the early mekubalim, the Kehillas Yaakov.

And what bracha do we make at a chasunah? שהשמחה במעונו. Now, מעון is one of the seven heavens enumerated by the Gemara in Chagigah. Why specifically מעון? Why not שחקים, why not ערבות? There are many heavens.

The Shitah Mekubetzes explains: who dwells in מעון? The malachei hashareis. And the Gemara in Chagigah says that the malachei hashareis brought Adam and Chava their meal. In other words — what did Adam and Chava eat at their wedding? Who catered? The angels. Angel catering. Which bakery? Angel's Bakery. They catered the wedding, and the angels reside in מעון.

So when we say שהשמחה במעונו we are telling the chosson and kallah: exactly as the malachim brought food to Adam HaRishon and Chava, coming from מעון, so right now the angels are attending to you. This is the Shitah Mekubetzes, a Rishon, saying that the simcha of this chosson and kallah is literally a reenactment of the wedding of Adam and Chava in Gan Eden.

◆ *What the Sheva Brachos Are Actually Saying*

Once you see it, the sheva brachos themselves are perfectly transparent. They are all articulating that the Ribono Shel Olam should gladden this chosson and kallah just as He gladdened Adam and Chava.

After borei pri hagafen, the next bracha is שהכל ברא לכבודו. Rashi in Kesubos asks: what in the world does that have to do with a chasunah? Everything was created for Hashem's honor — very nice to know, but why here? Why not also make the bracha of זוקף כפופים while we are at it?

The answer is that before we say a word about the union of this chosson and kallah, we first recognize and honor Hashem. We say: Ribono Shel Olam, do You know why we gathered here tonight? Not only to make these two happy. We came to make them happy because **we know that You made Adam and Chava happy in Gan Eden**. We came tonight to pay tribute to the chesed You did for Adam HaRishon. Rashi says that שהכל ברא לכבודו is not part of the regular order of sheva brachos at all — it is a separate bracha, acknowledging that the purpose of gathering at a chasunah is to pay tribute to that chesed. In fact, says Rashi, strictly speaking it should be recited the moment you walk into the hall; we simply attach it to the kos, the way we smell the besamim over the kos even though technically it has nothing to do with it.

Which means that one of the most important things to have in mind at a chasunah is: I have come here to honor Hashem. How am I honoring Him? By gladdening this chosson and kallah, and thereby remembering the chesed Hashem did for Adam and Chava in Gan Eden.

Then comes the next bracha, יוצר האדם, and then אשר יצר את האדם בצלמו. Why, at this young man's wedding, are we discussing the creation of man? Rashi explains that we are really working our way toward the third bracha — Hashem created man and then formed Chava from him, which is called the יצירה שניה. First Hashem created Adam alone, and then Hashem said, no, this arrangement will not accomplish the purpose; I will separate Chava out of him. So we speak of the first formation and then of the second.

But still — why are we blessing Hashem for the creation of Adam and Chava in Gan Eden at a heimishe chasunah where the chosson is wearing a shtreimel? What do they have to do with Adam and Chava? The answer is that this chosson and kallah standing before you are a recreation of the world. They are today's Adam and Chava. At this very moment the Ribono Shel Olam is recreating the world, and standing there you are being reminded of the chesed He did for the first couple. And we say to them: you two young whippersnappers — just as the Ribono Shel Olam gladdened Adam and Chava in Gan Eden, so should Hashem gladden the two of you, wherever in the world you end up living.

◆ *The First Chesed in the Torah*

Bear in mind through all of this that it was all before the chet. Adam and Chava were married before they ate from the eitz hada'as.

And that yields something that struck me only now. The Gemara in Sotah says that the Torah is כולה חסד — it opens with Hashem clothing Adam and Chava and closes with Hashem burying Moshe Rabbeinu. But the truth is that the clothing of Adam and Chava was not the first chesed in the Torah. The first chesed in the

Torah was Hashem braiding Chava's hair and adorning her for her chasunah. **That was the first chesed in the Torah.**

So this is a perspective on Hashem's chesed, and a perspective on what a wedding is, what a marriage is, and what a person ought to be thinking when he attends a chasunah. Many of the minhagei chasunah are indeed learned from Matan Torah — but they are learned no less from Adam and Chava, כשמחך יצירך בגן עדן מקדם.

And since Hashem is מחדש בכל יום תמיד מעשה בראשית, this is not reserved for the night of the wedding. For all of you who are married: every single day, think of yourself and your marriage as Adam and Chava in Gan Eden. May it be a union, with Hashem's help, of great simcha, לנצח נצחים.

Sources

1. Bereishis 2:22. ויבן יהוה אלהים את־הצלע אשר־לקח מן־האדם לאשה ויבאה אל־האדם:
2. Bereishis 2:23. ויאמר האדם זאת הפעם עצם מעצמי ובשר מבשרי לזאת יקרא אשה כי מאיש לקחה־זאת: