

Lesson 4: Henna Party

Appendix A - Henna Party Invitation

HENNA PARTY INVITATION

You're Invited to Celebrate with Us!



Welcome to our Henna Celebration

Celebrate Middle Eastern Traditions with these Items!!

Did you know?????

When in their home countries Jews would celebrate this ceremony on the day of the wedding prior to the Kiddushin (betrothal).

Today, many Moroccan and Yemenite Jews (in Israel and in other communities) celebrate this tradition one week before the wedding in a separate celebration. The aim of the celebration is to wish the new couple well, to bless them with good fortune and health and to protect them from the evil eye and other negative influences. ¹

COME AND ADORN YOURSELF WITH HENNA!!!!



Did you know????? Henna is used for decoration and is great smelling plant?!!

Henna is a plant-based paste used to decorate the skin. Henna is a natural dye produced from the leaves of the henna plant, a small flowering shrub (scientific name: *Lawsonia inermis*). The henna plant grows all over the world in hot, dry areas, from North Africa across the Middle East and throughout Southern Asia. It has been used to create beautiful, temporary body art in cultures around the world for thousands of years.

¹ <http://www.hennabysienna.com/>

The leaves contain a dye molecule, *lawsone*, that stains skin and other organic material (wool, leather, nails, hair, etc.)

Henna is mentioned in the Bible! It's been around for thousands of years!

In the Hebrew Bible, in the book Song of Songs mentions the henna shrub several times, using the Biblical Hebrew word **כפר** (*kopher*).

For example, in the Song of Songs (Song of Solomon) 1:14, we read:

“My beloved is to me like a cluster of **henna [blossoms] in the vineyards of 'Ein-Gedi”**

אשכל הכפר דודי לי בכרמי עין גדי



This is thought to refer to the henna flowers; they are extremely fragrant, are used in perfumes, and are said to have been the Prophet Muhammed's favorite scent.

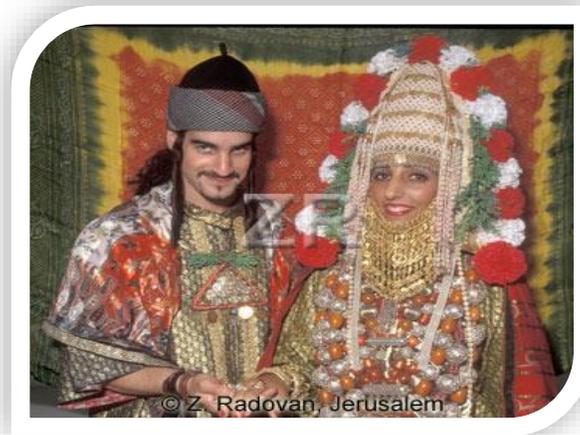
Henna, the plant, is mentioned several times in the Bible. In particular, Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo ben Yitzchak, France, 11th century) commented that clusters of Henna flowers are a metaphor for forgiveness and absolution, showing that God forgave those who tested Him in the wilderness. So too the bride and groom are given a clean slate with which to begin their lives together.²

² <http://www.jewishtreats.org/2009/05/henna.html>

Who doesn't like dressing up???

Wear celebratory dress!!!! Below are some ideas for possible outfits. Come dressed in Moroccan or Yemenite garb. Or wear anything festive! How will YOU dress up?

The Yemenite bride wears a traditional headdress called the *tishbuk lulu*.



[citation](#)



[citation](#)

In Morocco, the bride and groom wear Caftans



[citation](#)

Did you know? Henna is used for spiritual protection and is used as a charm for good luck!!

Jews in Morocco considered the henna plant to have certain properties that protection and bless similar to what their Muslim neighbors termed *baraka*. Jewish homes in Morocco would often have a *hamsa*, or stylized hand, drawn on the wall in henna to protect the inhabitants of the home. Before moving into a new house, Jews in Tlemcen (eastern Morocco) would sprinkle henna powder in the four corners of each room and leave it there overnight to pacify any spirits inhabiting the building, so that they would allow their human tenants to live with them in peace. This custom was practiced among Algerian Jews as well.

Today henna is commonly used in Sephardi/Mizrahi Jewish pre-wedding bridal celebrations, with different designs symbolizing icons meant to protect the bride. Demons and evil spirits are supposed to be driven away as the henna is used to disguise the couple with intricate ink designs that may last weeks on the wedding couple's skin.

Guests are sometimes encouraged to spread henna on their palms afterward as a symbol of good luck.

And what's a party without music????

Let's learn this song, so that we can all sing and dance the night away!!

During the ceremony, the guests and relatives sing and make the ululations [wailing noises] to express their happiness about the bride's imminent marriage. There is much music and dancing, as well as an elaborate feast. ³

Ahalan Wa'Sa'alan by Maurice El Medioni

Ahalan Wa'sa'alan Ahalan
Bee-kum
Pirchato Elbi, Nifrach Bee-Kum
Sichtu Yachbibi Macha Lee
Yum

אהלן וסהלן אהלן ביקום
פרחתו אלבי ולפרח ביקום
זיתו יא חבבי מחבאליום
אהלן וסהלן אהלן ביקום

Hello and Welcome
You have made my heart
happy, I will be happy with you.

Dance my dear ones, on this
happy day

³ <http://www.jewishtreats.org/2009/05/henna.html>

And of course, let's EAT!!!



[citation](#)

Lots of sweets!!!

Moroccans make incredible traditional marzipan desserts



[citation](#)