



MEET SARA AND TZACHI: FROM CALIFORNIA AND ISRAEL

Sara grew up at Temple Beth Torah in Ventura, CA. Tzachi met Sara while on a speaking tour with the IDF in the U.S. Seven years later, Sara fell in love with Tzachi and Israel so she made Aliyah and became an Israeli citizen. When they decided to marry, the couple quickly learned there was no way to do so in Israel -- for one reason only: **Israel has granted a monopoly over all Jewish marriages to the Orthodox Chief Rabbinate. They do not consider Sara Jewish because of her Conservative conversion at infancy.**

THE BACKSTORY:

Israel only recognizes Orthodox rabbinic authorities for Jewish marriages. No Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist, or Renewal rabbi has the authority to officiate at weddings. Israel also does not allow civil marriages for anyone, Jews and non-Jews alike, even though the overwhelming majority of Israelis support freedom of marriage, as well as religious freedom and equality as promised in Israel's Declaration of Independence.

No other democracy in the world similarly denies its citizens the right to marry.

Sara is but one example of the hundreds of thousands of Israeli citizens who are denied the basic civil and human right of marriage, and the millions more who are denied the right to celebrate their marriage in a way befitting their beliefs. **It is estimated that more than half of the next generation of American Jewry will not be considered Jewish enough by the ultra-Orthodox Chief Rabbinate to legally marry in Israel nor enjoy equal rights and status.**

Hiddush is dedicated to work with American Jewish communities and like-minded Israeli organizations to guarantee freedom of marriage for all Jews in Israel, Southern California, and all over the world!

Read Tzachi's account of their marriage saga at: <http://bit.ly/197af88>.

ISRAEL'S MARRIAGE POLICIES DIRECTLY AFFECT YOU!

Sara could be any of our daughters, or sons for that matter, any of our grandchildren. This is a love story, and a feel-good story about American Jews and Israeli Jews finding that there is more that binds us than separates us.

When Sara and Tzachi applied to be married in the state of Israel, the Chief Rabbinate, which has hegemony over what are called the "personal status" issues of marriage, divorce and burial, rejected their application. Sara was not Jewish, they said. The Conservative mikvah which oversaw her conversion at infancy is not recognized because it is not Orthodox.

Sara is not the first Temple Beth Torah child to be told she wasn't Jewish enough in Israel. Our work as a sacred community is to advocate for the day when every one of our children and grandchildren are embraced as citizens and as Jews in the State of Israel.

—Rabbi Lisa Hochberg-Miller
of Temple Beth Torah,
Ventura, CA

GET INVOLVED!

Visit Hiddush's Freedom of Marriage Map and write Israeli policy makers at: marriage.hiddush.org

Sign on to the vision for religious freedom at: hiddush.org



Hiddush - Freedom of Religion for Israel, Inc.

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