

Gamelia

A Festival Celebrating the Marriage of Hera and Zeus

Our Ritual Today

Gamelia, also known as the Theogamia, (“marriage of the gods”), celebrates the wedding of Zeus and Hera. The word “gamelia” was also used to refer to the offerings made by a new husband at the first celebration of the Apaturia after his marriage. His bride may also have been introduced to and registered with the phratry at this time.

Since this is a very festive occasion it is appropriate for participants to wear beribboned myrtle or flower garlands on their heads. Offers include yellow apples, (to represent the apples of the Hesperides that were given to Zeus and Hera at their wedding) nuts and dried fruits along with the usual barley, wine and incense. The altar may also be decorated with myrtle leaves, or flowers, (for marriage) peacock feathers, (for Hera). There will also be a candle for Hestia and Hephaestus. A censer with charcoals.

Purification of People

The Priest of Zeus will pour the Lustral Water (spring water mixed with sea salt) over the hands of the participants who will say; “Far off, Far off; Even to the Profane. Participants will gather around the altar in a semi circle.

Purification of the Temenos

[Normally the following would take place after calling for “solemn silence” Priest/Priestess will walk around the area sprinkling it with Nator. (baking soda and salt,) but this time it will be more Lustral water]

After this, the fire tender will light the fire saying: “I conjure you sacred fire whose mother is Hestia and whose Father is Hephaestus”. After which the barley is passed around with each person taking a small handful and tossing it into the fire.

First libation

“Sponde! Hestia guardian of hearth’s fire, yours is always the first and the last.”

First Hymnodia

Priest will ask for solemn silence again

Print outs of libation prayers will be available as well as Orphic Hymns

At this time someone can read the Orphic Hymn to Zeus.

Libation to Zeus:

While all offer their cups, Herald leads the people in saying:

Sponde! Zeus, Son of Kronos and Rhea, King of Gods and Men, Ruler of Olympus. Brother and Husband to white armed Hera. God of Marriage, of Oaths and families. We call upon You with whatever name it pleases You to be called! Witness our oaths to our partners, families, friends and to the Immortal Gods. Teach us to honor our commitments.

Everyone will pour a libation to Zeus and drink.

Second Hymnodia

Priestess will ask for solemn silence

At this time someone can read the Orphic Hymn to Hera

Libation to Hera

Sponde! Hera daughter of Rhea and Kronos, Queen of Olympus, sister and wife to Zeus. Goddess of Marriage, Leukoenos, (white-armed) Parthenos, (Virgin) Nympheuomene, (led as a Bride) We call upon You with whatever name it pleases You to be called! Bless those unions which we enter, grant that they remain faithful and good. Help us overcome any disputes between us and those we love.

Libation to the Olympians as a group

“Sponde! Immortal Olympians, Come join our host.”

Activities:

Someone can read a myth concerning the marriage of Zeus and Hera. (either from the Iliad, or Zeus’ seduction of Hera or their 300 year long wedding night from Kerényi’s Gods of the Greeks)

After which participants may make a sacrifice or libation to Them and say something about their own relationships if they choose.

Feast

We eat of the foods that are cooked after giving a portion to the Gods.

Closing Libations

“Sponde! Immortal Olympians, Come join our host.”

Libation to Hera

Sponde! Hera daughter of Rhea and Kronos, Queen of Olympus, sister and wife to Zeus. Goddess of Marriage, Leukoenos, (white-armed) Parthenos, (Virgin) Nympheuomene, (led as a Bride) We call upon You with whatever name it pleases You to be called! Bless those unions which we enter, grant that they remain faithful and good. Help us overcome any disputes between us and those we love.

Libation to Zeus:

Sponde! Zeus, Son of Kronos and Rhea, King of Gods and Men, Ruler of Olympus. Brother and Husband to white armed Hera. God of Marriage, of Oaths and families. We call upon You with whatever name it pleases You to be called! Witness our oaths to our partners, families, friends and to the Immortal Gods. Teach us to honor our commitments.

“Sponde! Hestia guardian of hearth’s fire, yours is always the first and the last.”

Participants will clean the area so that is the same as when they arrived. After the clean up, Herald will lead us saying: “Be brave for all good things have come to pass.”