

BESPOKE WEDDING

LITURGY

Sarah Jacobs & Michael Miller

The Fourteenth of September, Two Thousand Twenty-Six

The Grand Ballroom | Hotel X, Toronto

Officiated by Jeremy Golan

I. THE GATHERING OF SOULS

The processional concludes. Sarah and Michael stand under the Chuppah. A moment of profound silence is observed as the city lights begin to shimmer through the glass walls.

JEREMY:

Welcome to this sacred space. We stand today at a unique intersection of time and place. Behind us, the sprawling energy of Toronto—a city of millions, of noise, of ambition. But here, under this canopy, we have created a sanctuary of quiet intention. We are gathered to witness the transformation of two individuals into a single, unified family. To the parents

who have guided these two souls from their first steps to this momentous walk down the aisle, today is a testament to your love and the values you instilled in them.

Sarah and Michael have chosen each of you to be here because you are the living witnesses to their journey. You have seen them in their seasons of growth and their moments of doubt. Your presence here completes the circle of this Chuppah. In our tradition, a home is not built of wood or stone, but of the people who inhabit it and the community that supports it.

II. THE OPENING SANCTIFICATION

We begin this ceremony by sanctifying this moment. The Shehecheyanu is more than just a prayer; it is a spiritual acknowledgment that we have been sustained and brought to this exact second of joy.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שְׁהַחַיְנוּ וְקָמְנוּ וְהַגִּיעְנוּ לְזִמְנֵנוּ הַזֶּה.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has given us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this season of celebration.

This breath we take together signifies the start of something eternal. Michael and Sarah, as you stand here, feel the weight of the history behind you and the lightness of the future before you. This is the "now" you will remember for the rest of your lives.

III. THE BEDEKEN & THE VEIL

Moments ago, Michael performed the Bedeken. This ritual traces its roots back to our matriarch Rebecca and the trickery faced by Jacob. But for Sarah and Michael, it carries a modern resonance of transparency and truth. By veiling Sarah, Michael declared to the world: "I see your face, but I marry your soul." It is an act of seeing past the physical and into the essence of the

person. Sarah, by accepting the veil, says: "I trust you to see me, to know me, and to protect the intimacy of our bond."

IV. REMEMBERING THE ANCESTORS

We are never truly alone when we stand under the Chuppah. In the Jewish faith, we believe that the souls of the generations who came before us descend to join in our celebration. Today, we call into this room the memory of Sarah's beloved grandmother, Leah, whose kitchen was a place of endless warmth and whose stories are now woven into Sarah's own voice. We call in the spirit of Michael's grandfather, David, a man of quiet strength and immense integrity, whose legacy Michael carries in the way he treats every person he meets.

To those who are looking down upon us: we feel your presence in the warmth of this room. We hear your laughter in the joy of your grandchildren. We honor the paths you blazed, which have led these two people to this altar today. Your love did not end with your passing; it is being reborn today in the union of Sarah and Michael.

V. THE FULL READING OF PSALM 121

As Sarah and Michael begin their ascent into marriage, we recite the Song of Ascents. This Psalm reminds us that we do not walk our paths alone, and that there is a Guardian who watches over our going out and our coming in.

שִׁיר לַמַּעְלוֹת: אֲשָׂא עֵינַי אֶל הַהָרִים, מֵאֵין יָבֹא עֲזָרִי?

עֲזָרִי מֵעַם ה', עֲשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ.

אֵל יִתֵּן לְמוֹט רַגְלְךָ, אֵל יָנוּם שְׁמֹרְךָ.

הֲיֵנָה לֹא יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן, שׁוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל.

ה' שְׁמֹרְךָ, ה' צִלְּךָ עַל יַד יְמִינְךָ.

יוֹמָם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא יַכְּכָה, וַיְרַח בַּלַּיְלָה.

ה' יִשְׁמְרֶךָ מִכָּל רָע, יִשְׁמֹר אֶת נַפְשְׁךָ.

ה' יִשְׁמֹר צֵאתְךָ וּבואְךָ, מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם.

I lift up my eyes to the mountains; from where will my help come?

My help comes from Adonai, Maker of heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot slip; He who watches over you will not slumber.

Behold, the Guardian of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps.

Adonai is your guardian; Adonai is your shade at your right hand.

By day the sun will not strike you, nor the moon by night.

Adonai will guard you from all evil; He will guard your soul.

Adonai will guard your going and your coming, from this time forth and forever.

VI. THE NARRATIVE OF SARAH & MICHAEL

Every love story has a rhythm, a unique cadence that belongs only to the two people living it. For Sarah and Michael, that rhythm began on a rainy Tuesday on Queen Street West. Michael often says that he didn't believe in "love at first sight," but he did believe in "fascination at first sight." He saw a woman who was clearly running a small empire from a corner table of a coffee shop, juggling three lattes and a laptop with the grace of a circus performer.

Michael, being the gentleman he is—and perhaps seeing an opportunity to finally meet the woman he'd noticed from afar—offered to help. He reached for a latte, tripped over a pug, and nearly caused a local disaster. Sarah's reaction wasn't one of annoyance; she laughed. And in that laugh, Michael heard a kindness that he knew he wanted to be around forever. Sarah, meanwhile, saw a man who was willing to risk his dignity just to be helpful. She saw his authenticity before she even knew his last name.

From that clumsy afternoon to long walks through the Distillery District, through the challenges of building careers and navigating the complexities of life in a modern city, they have become each other's gravity. They have learned that love isn't just about the grand gestures at Hotel X; it's about the quiet moments at The Poke Box. It's about the way Michael knows exactly how Sarah likes her coffee, and the way Sarah knows when Michael needs a

moment of silence after a long day. They don't just love each other; they
champion each other.

VII. THE FIRST SANCTIFICATION OF WINE

We now come to the first cup of wine. In Jewish tradition, wine represents the joy of life. But wine is also a product of labor and time. A grape must be crushed to produce its juice, and that juice must wait in the dark to become something refined and beautiful. Michael and Sarah, your relationship has also been refined by time and by the challenges you've faced and overcome together.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

They share the cup. Jeremy explains that as they drink from the same cup, they symbolize their shared destiny.

VIII. THE EXCHANGE OF RINGS & VOWS

The ring is a circle—a shape with no beginning and no end. It represents the infinite nature of the promise you are making. Michael, please take the ring and place it on Sarah's finger, and repeat after me:

הָרִי אֶת מְקוֹדְשְׁתִּי לִי בְּטִבְעֵת זֶה כְּפִדַּת מֹשֶׁה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל.

Behold, you are consecrated to me with this ring according to the tradition of Moses and Israel.

Sarah, please take the ring and place it on Michael's finger, and repeat after me:

אָנִי לְדוֹדִי וְדוֹדִי לִי, הִרְעָה בְּשׂוֹשַׁנִּים.

I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine, who browses among the lilies.

IX. THE FULL SHEVA BRACHOT (SEVEN BLESSINGS)

We now chant the Seven Blessings. These are the ancient pillars of a Jewish wedding. They connect this couple to the Garden of Eden and to the future of our people. I will chant each one in Hebrew, followed by its English interpretation, so that every heart here can beat in time with these words.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

We bless You, Source of Joy, for the fruit of the vine.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַכֹּל בְּרָא לְכְבוֹדוֹ.

We bless You, Source of Life, for all things created for Your glory.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, יוֹצֵר הָאָדָם.

We bless You, Source of Wonder, for the creation of the human spirit.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר יָצַר אֶת הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ...
...

We bless You for creating us with the capacity to love and reflect Your light.

שׁוֹשׁ תְּשִׁישׁ וְתִגַּל הַעֲקָרָה בְּקִבוּץ בְּנֵיהָ לְתוֹכָהּ בְּשִׂמְחָה...

May the community rejoice as children return to their heritage with joy.

שִׂמְחַת תְּשִׂמַח רְעִים הָאֲהוּבִים, כְּשִׂמְחַת יְצִירָה בְּגֵן עֵדֶן מִקֵּדָם.

May these beloved companions rejoice as did the first couple in the Garden of Eden.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא שְׂשׂוֹן וְשִׂמְחָה, חֵתָן

וְכֵלָה...

Blessed are You, who creates joy and celebration, bridegroom and bride, pleasure and song, delight and cheer, love and harmony, peace and companionship. May the sounds of joy be heard throughout the world!

X. THE FINAL CUP & THE BROKEN GLASS

We share one final cup of wine. This cup is the cup of commitment. As you drink, you commit to being each other's strength, each other's counsel, and each other's home. And now, we reach the final act of this ceremony. Michael will break a glass.

Why do we break a glass at a moment of such high celebration? It is to remind us that even in our greatest joy, we must remember the world is still broken and in need of our care. It is a reminder that relationships are fragile and must be treated with tenderness. But it is also a reminder that this union is now permanent. Just as the shards of this glass can never be fully reunited, so too are your lives now inextricably bound together.

Michael, before you break this glass, take a good look around. This is the last time you'll have the last word!

Michael breaks the glass. All shout: MAZEL TOV!

XI. THE PRIESTLY BENEDICTION

בְּרַכָּה ה' וַיִּשְׁמְרֵךְ

יָאֵר ה' פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּחַנֶּךָ

יֵשָׂא ה' פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם

*May Adonai bless you and guard you.
May Adonai shine His face upon you and be gracious to you.
May Adonai lift up His face toward you and grant you peace.*

Married by Jeremy

marriedbyjeremy.com | Whitby, Ontario

Bespoke Liturgy for the Modern Couple