Our wedding day is a collection of Jewish Customs and traditions. The wedding ceremony is broken down into different parts and this program was created to help enhance your understanding of each. We hope that you enjoy!

# Wedding Traditions

## Ketubah

The Ketubah is a marriage contract, required by Jewish law, attesting to the commitments and obligations Sara and Jordan make to each other as a married couple. It is one of the oldest elements of Jewish weddings, dating back over two thousand years. Prior to the ceremony, the Ketubah was signed by Sara and Jordan.

**Witnesses to the Ketubah Signing**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Gary MayerDear Friend of the Bride and her Family | Mitchell WeisbandUncle of the Groom |

## Bedeken

The Bedeken is the veiling ceremony during which the groom placed a veil over the bride. The Bedeken took place before the ceremony and is considered one of the most moving elements of a traditional Jewish wedding. By covering his bride with a veil, the groom ascertained her identity, and confirmed that he is marrying the woman of his heart’s desire.

## The Chuppah

Sara and Jordan will be married under a wedding canopy known as the Chuppah, which symbolizes the home that they will build together. The Chuppah rests on four poles, yet has no walls, reflecting the idea that family and friends will always be welcome in their home.

The canopy of the Chuppah is the prayer shawl (Tallis) that Sara was given at her Bat Mitzvah. The Tallis was designed and painted by hand on silk by Dr. Louise Albagli, a dear friend of the Goldstein family.

**The Chuppah Pole Holders**

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| --- | --- |
| Sara HajdamowiczAunt of the BrideDavid Evangelista“Uncle” of the Bride | Christopher HajdamowiczUncle of the BrideDr. Arcangelo ImberStep-brother of the Groom |

## Hakafot

The bride, the bride’s mother, and the groom’s mother circle the groom (Hakafot) seven times. Two interpretations of the significance: seven is the number of days of creation, and the wedding ceremony is the creation of a new household; seven is the number of times the phrase “when a man takes a wife” occurs in the Torah.

## Blessings of Betrothed - Kiddushin

The Kiddushin begins with the recitation of two blessings. The first is the blessing over the wine, a Jewish symbol of joy and sanctification of a celebratory time. The second blessing expresses the sacredness of the marital bond.

The Kiddush cup from which Sara and Jordan will drink from belonged to Sara’s Great-Grandparents, Sara (Sara was named in her honor) and Max Goldstein, who lived in Slovakia. The Kiddush cup was made to honor their 15th wedding anniversary. This Kiddush Cup is the only item that Sara’s late grandfather, “Aba” Asher Rosenthal, was able to take with him when he fled the Nazi Occupation and joined the Jewish Resistance Movement. Sara, Max, and Asher’s youngest sister, Mindy, all perished in the Holocaust. May their memories be a blessing.

Sara and Jordan will also drink from the Kiddush cup that her parents, Linda and Bruce, used at their wedding 31 years ago and which was a gift from her mother to her father.

## Exchanging of the Rings

Following these blessings, Sara and Jordan will exchange rings. According to Jewish law, the rings must be solid metal, devoid of any cuts or stones. As the rings are circles with no beginning and no end, they symbolize that Sara and Jordan’s love is never ending.

For the ceremony, Sara will be using her Bubbie’s wedding band which Bubbie wore when she married Sara’s late grandfather, “Aba” (Asher). Jordan will be using his PopPop’s wedding band which he wore when he married Jordan’s late grandmother, Faye, and wore for 53 years.

## The Seven Blessings - The Sheva Brachot

The Sheva Brachot comprise most of the wedding liturgy. These seven blessings symbolize the seven days of creation. The blessings represent the joy of creation both in the ancient times and the newest creation which occurs under the Chuppah.

**The Sheva Brachot Readers**

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| --- | --- |
| Rabbi Jacob B. PerlmanElizabeth and Mitchell MayerDear Friends of the Bride and her FamilyMindy and Steven WeisbandAunt and Uncle of the GroomNancy and Mitchell GoldsteinAunt and Uncle of the Bride | Ronnie Neff and Andy ShambergDear Friends and Cousins of the GroomWendy Goldstein and Gary GoldsteinAunt and Uncle of the BrideKathy and Michael MondDear Friends and Cousins of the Bride |

## The Breaking of the Glass

At the conclusion of the ceremony, Jordan will break a glass by stepping on it. Tradition says that this represents the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. Other modern interpretations say that the broken pieces of glass remind us that life is fragile and even in times of great joy, we must not forget our people’s journey throughout history. The glass that Jordan breaks will join the glass that the bride’s father, Bruce, broke at his wedding to Sara’s mother, Linda, in 1983 as it is wrapped in the same napkin and contains the shards of glass from their wedding 31 years ago. The sound of the glass breaking is greeted by shouts of “Mazel Tov,” a wish for good fortune to the newly-married couple.