

Sarah & Mahlon

This day we begin the
adventure of a lifetime . . .

The Great Lakes Garden
In Niagara Falls State Park



Saturday
The twenty-third of July
Two thousand and eleven
At Four o'clock in the afternoon



Iris '08



يا باه‌ا‌ل‌اب‌ه‌ا

This Arabic Calligraphy is written in English as
"Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá".

The meaning is "God is the Most Glorious of the Most
Glorious" and is considered the Greatest Name of God
among adherents of the Bahá'í Faith.



Order of the Ceremony

The Great Lakes Garden
In Niagara Falls State Park
Niagara Falls, New York

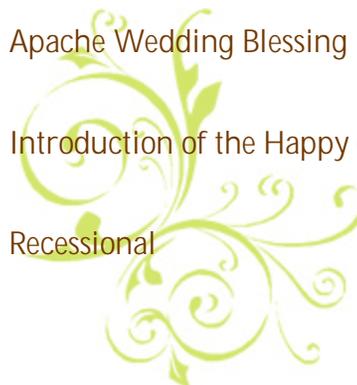


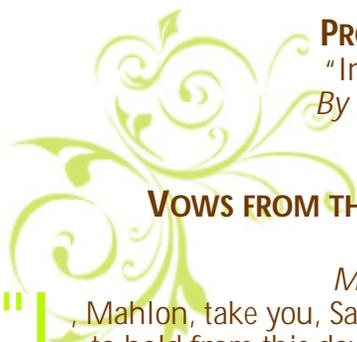
With grateful hearts, we want to thank all of you for sharing this Milestone in our lives. Without the support of our families, we would not be here today. You have all played a significant part in making us who we are today and we thank you.

Mahlon & Sarah



Processional	"In Your Eyes" By Peter Gabriel
Introduction to Bahá'í Marriage	Dennis Smith Chair, Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Amherst, New York
Vows From the Christian Tradition	Mahlon Bush & Sarah Barnhart
Bahá'í Marriage Prayer	Waldo Bush Father of the Groom
The Marriage Tablet	David & Delana Barnhart, Parents of the Bride
Exchange of Bahá'í Vow	Sarah Barnhart & Mahlon Bush <i>Witnessed by Sarah Moore & Nina Bush</i>
Exchange of Rings & a Kiss	Mahlon & Sarah Bush
Apache Wedding Blessing	C. A. Bush, Mother of the Groom
Introduction of the Happy Couple	Dennis Smith
Recessional	"You're My Best Friend" By Queen





PROCESSIONAL
"In Your Eyes"
By Peter Gabriel

VOWS FROM THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION

Mahlon Bush

"I, Mahlon, take you, Sarah, for my lawful wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and health, until death do us part."

Sarah Barnhart

"I, Sarah, take you, Mahlon, for my lawful husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and health, until death do us part."

BAHÁ'Í MARRIAGE

Dennis Smith

As to the question of marriage, according to the law of God: First you must select one, and then it depends on the consent of the father and mother. Before your selection they have no right of interference.

Bahá'í marriage is union and cordial affection between the two parties. They must, however, exercise the utmost care and become acquainted with each other's character. This eternal bond should be made secure by a firm covenant, and the intention should be to foster harmony, fellowship and unity and to attain everlasting life...

In a true Bahá'í marriage the two parties must become fully united both spiritually and physically, so that they may attain eternal union throughout all the worlds of God, and improve the spiritual life of each other. This is Bahá'í matrimony.

Among the majority of the people marriage consists of physical relationship and this union and relationship is temporary for at the end physical separation is destined and ordained. But the marriage of the people of Baha must consist of both physical and spiritual relationship for both of them are intoxicated with the wine of one cup, are attracted by

& A KISS!
Mahlon & Sarah



APACHE WEDDING BLESSING

C. A. Bush

Now you will feel no rain
For each of you will be shelter to the other.
Now each of you will feel no cold
For each of you will be warmth to the other.
Now there is no loneliness for you
For each of you will be companion to the other.
Now you are two persons
But there is one life before you.
Go now to your dwelling place to enter into the days of your togetherness
And may your days be good and long upon the earth.

INTRODUCTION OF THE HAPPY COUPLE

Dennis Smith

RECESSIONAL

"You're My Best Friend"
By Queen

Perfume your nostrils with the fragrances from the flowers of love. Attune your ears to the soul-entrancing melodies of love. Let your aims be as generous as the banquets of love, and your words as a string of white pearls from the ocean of love. Drink deeply of the elixir of love, so that you may live continually in the reality of Divine Love.

Although not considered part of the Sacred Texts of the Bahá'í Writings, this is attributed to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, as part of a talk given in 1918. It is frequently used in Bahá'í wedding ceremonies.

EXCHANGE OF THE BAHÁ'Í VOW

Sarah Barnhart

"We will all, verily, abide by the Will of God."

Mahlon Bush

"We will all, verily, abide by the Will of God."

Witnesses

Sarah Moore

Nina Bush

EXCHANGE OF RINGS . . .

Mahlon & Sarah Bush



one Peerless Countenance, are quickened with one Life and are illumined with one Light. This is the spiritual relationship and everlasting union. Likewise in the physical world they are bound together with strong and unbreakable ties.

When relationship, union and concord exist between the two from a physical and spiritual standpoint, that is the real union, therefore everlasting. But if the union is merely from the physical point of view, unquestionably it is temporal and at the end separation is inevitable.

Consequently when the people of Baha desire to enter the sacred union of marriage, eternal connection and ideal relationship, spiritual and physical association of thoughts and conceptions of life must exist between them, so that in all the grades of existence and all the worlds of God this union may continue forever and ever for this real union is a splendor of the light of the love of God.

Likewise if the souls become real believers they will find themselves ushered into this exalted state of relationship, becoming the manifestors of the love of the Merciful and exhilarated with the cup of the love of God. Undoubtedly that union and relationship is eternal.

The souls who sacrifice self, become detached from the imperfections of the realm of man and free from the shackles of this ephemeral world, assuredly the splendors of the rays of divine union shall shine in their hearts and in the eternal paradise they shall find ideal relationship, union and happiness.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith, p. 372

BAHÁ'Í MARRIAGE PRAYER

Waldo Bush

He is God!
O peerless Lord! In Thine almighty wisdom Thou hast enjoined marriage upon the peoples, that the generations of men may succeed one another in this contingent world, and that ever, so long as the world shall last, they may busy themselves at the Threshold of Thy oneness with servitude and worship, with salutation, adoration and praise. "I have not created spirits and men, but that they should worship me."¹ Wherefore, wed Thou in the heaven of Thy mercy these two birds of the nest of Thy love, and make them the means of attracting perpetual grace;

that from the union of these two seas of love a wave of tenderness may surge and cast the pearls of pure and goodly issue on the shore of life. "He hath let loose the two seas, that they meet each other: Between them is a barrier which they overpass not. Which then of the bounties of your Lord will ye deny? From each He bringeth up greater and lesser pearls."²

O Thou kind Lord! Make Thou this marriage to bring forth coral and pearls. Thou art verily the All-Powerful, the Most Great, the Ever-Forgiving.

'Abdu'l-Bahá

THE MARRIAGE TABLET

David & Delana Barnhart

The bond that unites hearts most perfectly is loyalty. True lovers once united must show forth the utmost faithfulness one to another. You must dedicate your knowledge, your talents, your fortunes, your titles, your bodies and your spirits to God, to Bahá'u'lláh and to each other. Let your hearts be spacious, as spacious as the universe of God!

Allow no trace of jealousy to creep between you, for jealousy, like unto poison, vitiates the very essence of love. Let not the ephemeral incidents and accidents of this changeful life cause a rift between you. When differences present themselves, take counsel together in secret, lest others magnify a speck into a mountain. Harbour not in your hearts any grievance, but rather explain its nature to each other with such frankness and understanding that it will disappear, leaving no remembrance. Choose fellowship and amity and turn away from jealousy and hypocrisy.

Your thoughts must be lofty, your ideals luminous, your minds spiritual, so that your souls may become a dawning-place for the Sun of Reality. Let your hearts be like unto two pure mirrors reflecting the stars of the heaven of love and beauty.

Together make mention of noble aspirations and heavenly concepts. Let there be no secrets one from another. Make your home a haven of rest and peace. Be hospitable, and let the doors of your house be open to the faces of friends and strangers. Welcome every guest with radiant grace and let each feel that it is his own home.

No mortal can conceive the union and harmony which God has designed for man and wife. Nourish continually the tree of your union with love and affection, so that it will remain ever green and verdant throughout all seasons and bring forth luscious fruits for the healing of the nations.

O beloved of God, may your home be a vision of the paradise of Abha, so that whosoever enters there may feel the essence of purity and harmony, and cry out from the heart: Here is the home of love! Here is the palace of love! Here is the nest of love! Here is the garden of love!

Be like two sweet-singing birds perched upon the highest branches of the tree of life, filling the air with songs of love and rapture.

Lay the foundation of your affection in the very center of your spiritual being, at the very heart of your consciousness, and let it not be shaken by adverse winds.

And, when God gives you sweet and lovely children, consecrate yourselves to their instruction and guidance, so that they may become imperishable flowers of the divine rose-garden, nightingales of the ideal paradise, servants of the world of humanity, and the fruit of the tree of your life.

Live in such harmony that others may take your lives for an example and may say one to another: Look how they live like two doves in one nest, in perfect love, affinity and union. It is as though God had kneaded the very essence of their beings for the love of one another.

Attain the ideal love that God has destined for you, so that you may become partakers of eternal life forthwith. Quaff deeply from the fountain of truth, and dwell all the days of your life in the paradise of glory, gathering immortal flowers from the garden of divine mysteries.

Be to each other as heavenly lovers and divine beloved ones dwelling in a paradise of love. Build your nest on the leafy branches of the tree of love. Sail upon the shoreless sea of love. Walk in the eternal rose-garden of love. Bathe in the shining rays of the sun of love. Be firm and steadfast in the path of love.