

# Spiritual Readings for Weddings

## Benediction of the Apaches (Apache Wedding Blessing)

Now you will feel no rain,  
For each of you will be shelter to the other.  
Now you will feel no cold,  
For each of you will be warmth to the other.  
Now there is no more loneliness for you.  
For each of you will be companion to the other.  
Now you are two bodies,  
But there is only 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.

## “Love Is Friendship Caught Fire” -Laura Hendricks

"Love is friendship caught fire; it is quiet, mutual confidence, sharing and forgiving. It is loyalty through good and bad times. It settles for less than perfection, and makes allowances for human weaknesses. Love is content with the present, hopes for the future, and does not brood over the past. It is the day-in and day-out chronicles of irritations, problems, compromises, small disappointments, big victories, and working toward common goals. If you have love in your life, it can make up for a great many things you lack. If you do not have it, no matter what else there is, it is not enough."

## Sonnet XLIII, from Sonnets from the Portuguese-Elizabeth Barrett Browning

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.  
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height  
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight  
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.  
I love thee to the level of every day's  
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.  
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;  
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.  
I love thee with the passion put to use  
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.  
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose  
With my lost saints, -- I love thee with the breath,  
Smiles, tears, of all my life! -- and, if God choose,  
I shall but love thee better after death.

## **On Love-Kempis**

Love is a mighty power, a great and complete good. Love alone lightens every burden, and makes rough places smooth. It bears every hardship as though it were nothing, and renders all bitterness sweet and acceptable. Nothing is sweeter than love, nothing stronger, nothing higher, nothing wider, nothing more pleasant, nothing fuller or better in heaven or earth; for love is born of God. Love flies, runs and leaps for joy. It is free and unrestrained. Love knows no limits, but ardently transcends all bounds. Love feels no burden, takes no account of toil, attempts things beyond its strength. Love sees nothing as impossible, for it feels able to achieve all things. It is strange and effective, while those who lack love faint and fail. Love is not fickle and sentimental, nor is it intent on vanities. Like a living flame and a burning torch, it surges upward and surely surmounts every obstacle.

## **Blessing For A Marriage-Freeman**

May your marriage bring you all the exquisite excitements a marriage should bring, and may life grant you also patience, tolerance, and understanding.

May you always need one another -- not so much to fill your emptiness as to help you to know your fullness. A mountain needs a valley to be complete. The valley does not make the mountain less, but more. And the valley is more a valley because it has a mountain towering over it. So let it be with you and you.

May you need one another, but not out of weakness.

May you want one another, but not out of lack.

May you entice one another, but not compel one another.

May you embrace one another, but not out encircle one another.

May you succeed in all-important ways with one another, and not fail in the little graces.

May you look for things to praise, often say, "I love you!"; and take no notice of small faults.

If you have quarrels that push you apart, may both of you hope to have good sense enough to take the first step back.

May you enter into the mystery that is the awareness of one another's presence -- no more physical than spiritual, warm and near when you are side by side, and warm and near when you are in separate rooms or even distant cities.

May you have happiness, and may you find it making one another happy.

May you have love, and may you find it loving one another.

## **Marriage Joins Two People in the Circle of Its Love-Edmund O'Neill**

Marriage is a commitment to life, to the best that two people can find and bring out in each other. It offers opportunities for sharing and growth that no other human relationship can equal; a joining that is promised for a lifetime. Within the circle of its love, marriage encompasses all of life's most important relationships. A wife and a husband are each other's best friend, confidant, lover, teacher, listener, and critic. There may come times when one partner is heartbroken or ailing, and the love of the other may resemble the tender caring of a parent for a child. Marriage deepens and enriches every facet of life. Happiness is fuller; memories are fresher; commitment is stronger; even anger is felt more strongly, and passes away more quickly. Marriage understands and forgives the mistakes life is unable to avoid. It encourages and nurtures new life, new experiences, and new ways of expressing love through the seasons of life. When two people pledge to love and care for each other in marriage, they create a spirit unique to themselves, which binds them closer than any spoken or written words. Marriage is a promise, a potential, made in the hearts of two people who love, which takes a lifetime to fulfill.

### **I Love You-Croft**

I love you, not only for what you are, but for what I am when I am with you. I love you, not only for what you have made of yourself, but for what you are making of me. I love you, for the part of me that you bring out. I love you, for putting your hand into my heaped-up heart, and passing over all the foolish, weak things that you can't help dimly seeing there, and for drawing out, into the light, all the beautiful belongings that no one else had looked quite far enough to find. I love you, because you are helping me to make of the lumber of my life, not a tavern, but a temple. Out of the works of my every day, not a reproach, but a song. I love you, because you have done more than any creed could have done to make me good, and more than any fate could have done to make me happy. You have done it without a touch, without a word, without a sign. You have done it by being yourself. Perhaps that is what being a friend means, after all.

### **Excerpt from "The Art of a Good Marriage"-Wilfred Arlan Peterson**

A good marriage must be created.  
In marriage the little things are the big things.  
It is never being too old to hold hands.  
It is remembering to say, I love you at least once a day.  
It is never going to sleep angry.  
It is having a mutual sense of values, and common objectives.  
It is standing together and facing the world.  
It is forming a circle that gathers in the whole family.  
It is speaking words of appreciation, and demonstrating gratitude  
in thoughtful ways.  
It is having the capacity to forgive and forget.

It is giving each other an atmosphere in which each can grow.  
It is a common search for the good and the beautiful.  
It is not only marrying the right person -- it is being the right partner.

### **“Sooner or Later”**

“Sooner or later we begin to understand that love is more than verses on valentines, and romance in the movies. We begin to know that love is here and now, real and true, the most important thing in our lives. For love is the creator of our favorite memories, and the foundation of our fondest dreams. Love is a promise that is always kept, a fortune that can never be spent, a seed that can flourish in even the most unlikely of places. And this radiance that never fades, this mysterious and magical joy, is the greatest treasure of all -- one known only by those who love.”

### **"Sonnet 18"-William Shakespeare**

"Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?  
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:  
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
And summer's lease hath all too short a date;  
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;  
And every fair from fair sometime declines,  
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;  
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,  
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;  
Nor shall death brag thou wand'rst in his shade  
Which in eternal lines to time thou grow'st  
So long as men can breathe and eyes can see,  
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee."

### **"Sonnet 116"-William Shakespeare**

"Let me not to the marriage of true minds  
Admit impediments. Love is not love  
Which alters when it alteration finds,  
Or bends with the remover to remove.  
Oh no, it is an ever-fixed mark,  
That looks on tempests and is never shaken,  
It is the star to every wandering barque  
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken  
Love's not time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks  
Within his bending sickle's compass come.  
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,  
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.  
If this be error and upon me prov'd,  
I never writ, nor no man ever loved."

## "Surrender" -Ella Wheeler Wilcox

“Love, when we met,  
‘twas like two planets meeting.  
Strange chaos followed; body, soul, and heart  
Seemed shaken, thrilled, and startled by that greeting.  
Old ties, old dreams, old aims, all torn apart  
And wrenched away, left nothing there the while  
But the great shining glory of your smile.

I knew no past; ‘twas all a blurred, bleak waste;  
I asked no future; ‘twas a blinding glare.  
I only saw the present: as men taste  
Some stimulating wine, and lose all care,  
I tasted Love’s elixir, and I seemed  
Dwelling in some strange land, like one who dreamed.  
It was a godlike separate existence;  
Our world was set apart in some fair clime.  
I had no will, no purpose, no resistance;  
I only knew I loved you for all time.  
The earth seemed something foreign and afar,  
And we two, sovereigns dwelling in a star!

It is so sad, so strange, I almost doubt  
That all those years could be, before we met.  
Do you not wish that we could blot them out?  
Obliterate them wholly, and forget  
That we had any part in life until  
We clasped each other with Love’s rapture thrill?  
My being trembled to its very centre  
At that first kiss. Cold Reason stood aside  
With folded arms to let a grand Love enter  
In my Soul’s secret chamber to abide.  
Its great High Priest, my first Love and my last,  
There on its altar I consumed my past.

And all my life I lay upon its shrine  
The best emotions of my heart and brain,  
Whatever gifts and graces may be mine;  
No secret thought, no memory I retain,  
But give them all for dear Love’s precious sake;  
Complete surrender of the whole I make.”