**WEDDING SPEECHES**

**FOR**

**BEN LISSMAN**

1. **SHABBOS DINNER**

Hello everyone and thank you for joining us tonight. Traditionally, Shabbos signifies a resting period.... one in which we pause, reflect, and connect to our spirituality, our roots, and our families. Sometimes, there are special occasions that inspire even greater connection and joy. Tonight, on this Shabbos evening, I want to welcome all of you as we officially begin the celebration of the marriage our children, Katie and Jon. As we share this moment, right now, I’m reminded of a time honored ritual that usually happens a little earlier in the year.... It would have been **enough** to have the blessings of a wonderful Shabbos dinner... **DAYENU**... it would have been **enough** to see our children, Katie and Jon, find one another... **DAYENU**... it would have **DEFINITELY** been **enough** to have the chance to share this with all of you... **DAYENU**... but to have this **TRIFECTA** of love, family, and togetherness... **PRICELESS**...

I want to wish sincere congratulations and heartfelt **MAZEL** to Jon and Katie for raising such **FANTASTIC** parents... (**Wait for the laugh**) and I would like to invite you to raise a glass as I propose a toast.... To Katie and Jon ... It’s been said that “Too much is never enough...” I agree with that as long as we’re talking about love and family, health and happiness, adventure, laughter, and the true, infinite connection that soulmates find in each other. **L’Chaim**!! Thank you!!

**2. REHEARSAL DINNER**

Hello everyone... and thank you for joining us tonight.... after a hard (**Name the length of time of the rehearsal**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ hours of rehearsing and practicing our roles and positions in tomorrow’s “**main event**,” is there a better way to recharge and bond? Elizabeth and I thought this would be just the right place... as we break bread together... before Jon and Katie **break that glass** tomorrow, this rehearsal dinner helps us to “pregame,” share some stories about our families, friends, and, of course, this great couple, and raise a glass... or two... in celebration of love, marriage, family, and friends.

To all of you that have traveled from far and wide.... across countries and continents, causeways and highways and more importantly, to those of you that have braved the Lincoln Tunnel... (**Wait for the laugh**), your support of, and dedication to, Katie and Jon is noble, valued, and greatly appreciated. This dinner and wedding, **KNOCK ON WOOD**, is a once in a lifetime event, and I cannot imagine any others with whom we would want to share this moment. It will go down in the books as a true, lifetime, memory. We are all so very blessed.

I would like to propose a toast.... To Katie and Jon and all of you, While life is not a “dress rehearsal,” fortunately tradition provides... Here’s to love, marriage, and **PRACTICE**!!! Thank you all... **ENJOY**!!

**3. WEDDING**

Hello everyone, I am Jon’s father, Ben, and, like many who have preceded me... I, too, would like to say a few words in honor of my son, Jon, and my new daughter, Katie. Life has a way of revealing itself... it has a way of being cyclical... sometimes it looks like the frustration of going in circles... sometimes, with fresh perspectives, those circles transform into the magical ups and downs like those we find on a ride on a colorful carousel.

In those ups and downs on the carousel of life, we get the chance to grab at a gold ring. And when we are lucky enough to find it, we hold on **tight**. That’s how I believe it’s been for Katie and Jon. They’re young, they’re bright, and thankfully they are both aware enough to recognize when their **BASHERT** entered their lives. Clearly, they were, and are, “meant to be.” Fortunately, it was each one for the other, and now that they’re married, the magic will continue.

I want to say a few words about my son... he’s bright, sensitive, and engaged in **LIFE**. (**If you want to make a little joke, you can say**) ... some say he **takes after me**... (**pause a little and wait for the laugh**) ... and as a keen observer of people, and with his outgoing personality, he **COULD** get into some... **predicaments**... and sometimes he taps into that **BASHERT** thing... I remember he told me a story... he was with some friends and they were on the subway after a soccer game. He spotted a couple of young, Orthodox Jewish men on the train, and began a conversation... as only Jon can do... and long story short... after candid confessions... and unexpected chemistry, they are now good friends, they study Torah together, and Rabbi \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ performed the wedding ceremony today. So much goodness in life is “meant to be” if we are open and receptive...

That’s just a small example of the humanity and bond that we, as loving, compassionate souls can create. Before they met, Jon and Katie were individual satellites... looking to connect. Now thanks to **BASHERT**, we are all connected through them. I want to congratulate Katie’s parents, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. It’s a privilege to be connected to parents who have raised such a fine daughter... To all of you.. friends... family... neighbors, thank you for sharing our joy.

I would like to invite you all to raise a glass as I propose a toast... To Katie and Jon, here’s to a lifetime filled with love and happiness, humor and partnership, and all the goodness that’s meant to be.... Congratulations!! We love you!!! Thank you all!!