



WELCOME TO

*Priyanka*  
&  
*Akash's*

WEDDING CEREMONY

May 11, 2024

# *Vivaha Samskara*

## **(Wedding Ceremony)**

Weddings are a combination of *Shastras* and *Samskaras*. *Shastras* are rules that have been handed down to us for many generations to help us lead a meaningful life. *Samskaras* are specific rituals for various occasions that will help us achieve mental, physical, and emotional prosperity. A wedding is the meeting point of *Shastras* and *Samskaras*, with a generous addition of *Sampradayas*, or traditions special to a geographic region or family.

Our wedding is a combination of rituals from Gujarati (Akash) and Telugu (Priyanka) traditions, and we are honored to celebrate with you. You can follow along with this guide during the program to learn more about each ritual.



## **1. Baraat - The Groom's Reception**

Akash, his friends, and family sing and dance their way to the wedding ceremony. (Despite the Bride's pleas, Akash decided not to arrive on a horse). The Bride's family formally welcomes Akash in what is called the *Pokwanu*, and then escorts him to the mandap.

## **2. Gauri Pooja - Prayers to Goddess Parvati**

Gauri is the Goddess Parvati in the Hindu religion. She is the Goddess of purity and virtue. Through this pooja, Priyanka seeks the blessings of the Goddess for a prosperous married life. This pooja happens in parallel with the Baraat.

## **3. Ganesh Pooja - Prayers to Lord Ganesh**

A prayer to Lord Ganesh, the Remover of Obstacles, is performed so that the marriage ceremony takes place without impediments. The first prayer in any Hindu ceremony is always to Ganesh to ensure everything proceeds smoothly.

## **4. Kanya Aagman - Arrival of Bride**

Priyanka is escorted by her maternal uncles to the mandap. Once the Bride is at the mandap, verses (*Manglashtak*) are chanted as the veil is lowered and the couple exchanges flower garlands (*Jai-Malas*).

## **5. Jeelakarra Bellam - Inseparable Mixture**

It combines cumin seeds (*jeera*) and jaggery (*bellam*) into an inseparable mixture. The couple places this mixture on each others heads. It is considered a symbol of married life's sweetness and bitterness. The Jeelakarra Bellam ritual is significant because it represents the couple's commitment to each other and their shared journey through life. It is believed to bring good luck and prosperity to the couple and to ensure a long and happy marriage. In the yogic tradition, the placing of this mixture bonds the souls.

## **6. *Mangalya Dharana* - Tying the Thread**

Akash will tie a sacred turmeric colored thread with a special pendent around the neck of Priyanka. This tying of thread signifies the long term bond of married life.

## **7. *Akhanda Saubhagyavati* - Secrets to a Happy Marriage**

Married women speak the secrets of a happy marriage into Priyanka's ear.

## **8. *Talambralu* - Showering of Rice**

This is a ritual performed at Telugu weddings. During this ritual, both, the Bride and Groom are showered with rice by their family members and friends to symbolize good luck and prosperity. The rice used in this ritual is usually raw, uncooked rice, believed to bring wealth and abundance to the couple's new life together. The talambralu ritual is considered significant because it is a celebration of the couple's new life together and a symbol of their love and support from their families and friends. It is also believed to bring umpteen good luck and prosperity to the couple and to ensure a long and happy marriage.

## **9. *Mangal Phera* - Circling the Fire**

Now that Priyanka and Akash have been joined in holy matrimony they join hands to lead a life of togetherness. The Bridegroom holds the right hand of the Bride and with the sacred fire as witness, thank the Gods for their blessings. The upper clothes of the Bride and Bridegroom are tied in what is called the *Garth Bandhan*. Priyanka and Akash then walk around the sacred fire four times.

## **10. *Saptapadi* - The Seven Steps**

Priyanka and Akash take seven steps together signifying that their union will be stable despite the changing demands of life. With each step, they make a vow out loud to each other:

1. We promise to provide for each other and our families.
2. We promise to develop our spiritual and mental wellness.
3. We promise to share prosperity and worldly goods.
4. We promise to fill each other's hearts with great joy, peace, trust, and spiritual values.
5. We promise to raise a household that promotes health and virtuosity.
6. We promise to grow old together.
7. We promise to remain lifetime companions and friends.

## **11. *Sindoor, Mettalu, Vungarala Sambararam* - Adornment**

After receiving kumkum on the forehead, Akash places a toe ring on Priyanka. The newlyweds then play a small game and compete to see who can find one final ring in a pot. The winner receives bragging rights for life. Both Priyanka and Akash really want to win.

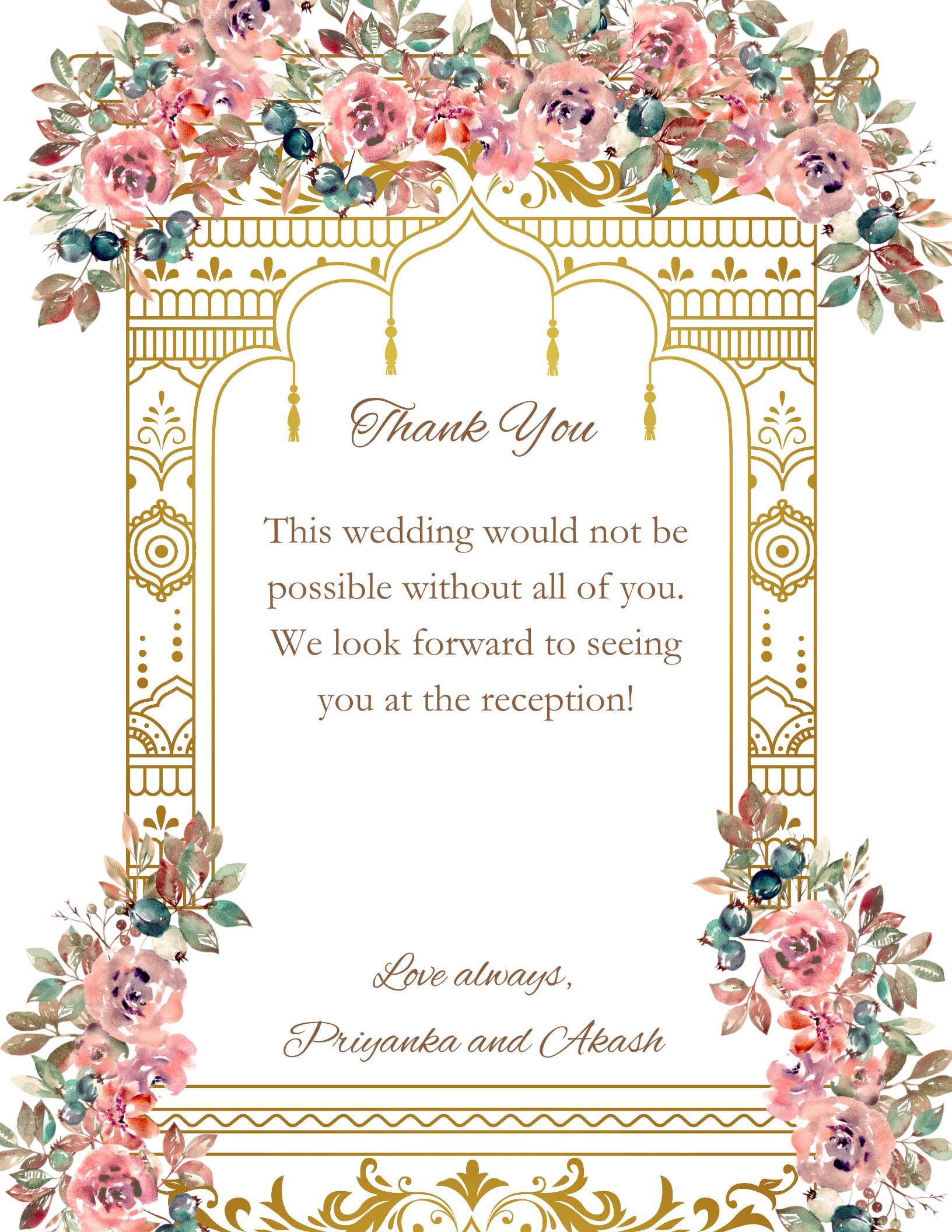
## **12. *Arundhathi Dharshanam* - Viewing the Star**

Priyanka and Akash view the *Arundhati-Vasistha* twin star. The Groom shows the Bride the twin stars as a symbol of marital fulfillment and loyalty.

## **13. *Ashirvad* - Blessings**

The priest and family give their blessings to Priyanka and Akash for their newly married life.





*Thank You*

This wedding would not be  
possible without all of you.  
We look forward to seeing  
you at the reception!

*Love always,  
Priyanka and Akash*