



החתן הרה"ת חיים מאיר שי' גרינבערג

והכלה מרת חי' מושקא תח' גראנער

לרגל בואם בקשרי שידוכים ביום כ"ד טבת ה'תשע"ו

נדפס ע"י הוריהם

הרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק וזוגתו מרת מאריאשע בדנה שרה שי' גראנער

הרה"ת ר' ישראל וזוגתו מרת חנה שי' גרינבערג

Moments Before

THE REBBE'S SIDDUR TO CHASSANIM

In the pictures presented here, dated 19 Shevat 5750, we see the Rebbe descending from the second floor of his house for *mincha*, holding two *siddurim* (one mostly obscured from view). One is the Rebbe's personal *siddur Torah-Ohr* from which he davened each day, and the other is a special *siddur* that the Rebbe generally lent to *chassanim* to daven *mincha* from on their wedding day. A *chosson* is seen accepting the sacred item with both hands directly from the Rebbe.

THE LAST MINCHA

One's wedding day, in addition to being a very joyous and happy occasion, is a very solemn and serious time as well. Many have the *minhag* (cited by Rema in Shulchan Aruch) to fast during that day¹, to increase in *tzedaka* and other such activities.

Indeed, the *chosson* recites *viduy* in *shemone esreh* of *mincha*, just as one does on Erev Yom Kippur, seeking Hashem's *brachos* for life ahead.

Naturally then, it is also a time when *chassanim* and *kallahs* seek to strengthen their *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe, to receive his *brachos* as well.²

Perhaps this is how a long standing *minhag* evolved; one that began even before the Rebbe officially accepted the *nesius*.

Chassanim made a point to daven the last *mincha* before the *chupah* from a special *siddur*, which they would personally receive from the Rebbe, along with a brief *bracha* and encouragement "זאלסט אויסבעטן אלע גוטע זאכן".

THE SIDDUR

The exact origin of this particular *siddur* remains somewhat of a mystery. Many speculate that it was given to the Rebbe as a gift from the Frierdiker



Rebbe, and perhaps had been designated for this task precisely for that reason.

One thing that we do know is that this *siddur* was used by the Friediker Rebbe and it contained a typographical error which the Friediker Rebbe himself corrected by hand, with his *ksav yad kodesh*—and which was later made famous in a *sicha* of the Rebbe³—in the *siddur*, the *sefira* corresponding to Pesach Sheni had been erroneously printed as being *Hod ShebeChesed*, instead of the correct *sefira*, *Chesed ShebeHod*.

HOW IT WORKED?

While the logistics of this time-honored tradition changed over the years, the core idea remained the same. A personal moment for a *chosson* to receive the Rebbe's *bracha* and daven from his holy *siddur* before embarking on his life's journey.

For many years, the practice was that *chassanim* waited for the Rebbe in *Gan Eden Hatachton*. The Rebbe would then emerge from his room with two *siddurim*, and would hand the *chosson* the second one. As was the case several times, when two *bochurim* were getting married the same day, the Rebbe handed the *siddur* to one, who would then pass it on to the next. To determine who would be *zoche* to receive the *siddur* directly from the Rebbe, the Rebbe would ask if any of the *chassanim* was a Kohen. If neither was, then the Rebbe would ask whose wedding was first⁴. Alternatively, it would be handed in alphabetical order of the *chassanim*'s last name.

In the earlier years, along with the *siddur* the Rebbe would also lend the *chosson* a *gartel* that had been passed down from *rabboseinu nesienu*—since the *minhag* is to begin donning a *gartel* starting from the last *mincha* before the *chupah*. But that was ultimately discontinued because the *gartel*, which was very old and thin, started coming apart and eventually loosened.

Over the years, it became more commonplace for the parents and grandparents of both the *chosson* and the *kallah* to accompany the *chosson* to receive the *siddur* from the Rebbe, making this

moment an opportunity for the extended family to receive the Rebbe's *brachos*.

The Rebbe would give each person present a coin for *tzedakah* along with his personal wishes for the occasion.

WHEN

As the Rebbe left his room at 770 to go to *mincha*, usually around 3:15pm, he would hand the *siddur* to the *chassanim* waiting in *Gan Eden Hatachton*, the hallway right outside the Rebbe's room. For the duration of much of the year after the *histalkus* of the Rebbetzin, on Chof-Beis Shevat 5748, the Rebbe remained at his home on President Street. During that time, "Lubavitch" relocated from 770 to the Rebbe's house, where all weekday *tefilos*, *sichos* and dollar distributions took place. It was there too, that the Rebbe would give the *siddur* to the *chassanim*—this took place at the landing of the staircase, as we see in these pictures.

However, when the Rebbe would go to the Ohel—which meant that *mincha* would be postponed pending the Rebbe's return—*chassanim* would receive the *siddur* as the Rebbe left for the car. When leaving from his house, *chassanim* would receive the *siddur* in the kitchen which led to the back door of the house, where the car would wait.

EXCEPTIONS

As it was not out of the ordinary for Lubavitcher weddings to take place out-of-town, making it difficult for the *chosson* to daven *mincha* on the day of his wedding in New York, those who had no alternative would receive the Rebbe's *siddur* at the latest possible time, before departing.

While the Rebbe generally gave *chassanim* a *siddur* other than his own, as mentioned above, there were times that the Rebbe did give his personal Torah Ohr *siddur*.

One such occasion was on 3 Nissan 5741, when two *chassanim*—Reb Hillel Dovid Krinsky and Reb Moshe Goldstein—were both waiting in *Gan Eden Hatachton*. As the Rebbe came out of his room with the regular *siddur* for *chassanim*, he asked which of them was going to be married first. When

Reb Hillel Dovid replied that he was, the Rebbe gave him the *siddur* and continued on to mincha. Returning a short while later, this time with his own *siddur* in hand, the Rebbe went ahead and gave it to the Reb Moshe (after first removing from it the loose papers interspersed throughout).

After 27 Adar I 5752, the *siddur* was generally given to *chassanim* through a member of *mazkirus*. On the days that the Rebbe participated in the *minyán* for *mincha*, *chassanim*

were able to receive the *siddur* from the Rebbe himself, in the specially outfitted room at the back of 770. ¹

1. Rema Even Ha'ezer 61:1
2. Until 5723 the Rebbe personally performed the *siddur kiddushin* at the marriage of many Lubavitcher couples, and before the *hascholas hanesius* in 5710, occasionally participated in the dinner as well. See "A Chassidisher Derher" issue 6 (66) p. 30 for more on this.
3. See Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5710 p. 47.
4. See below regarding out-of-town weddings.



LEVI FREIDIN via JEW 240761