



LM

Wedding Celebration
of
Levi & Mushky
Glitsenstein

27 Av 5772 – August 15, 2012
Anchorage, Alaska

B”H

To our dear family and friends,

It is our honor and pleasure to welcome you to the celebration of the marriage of our children, Mushky and Levi, at the first Chassidic Jewish wedding to ever take place in Alaska.

The Chassidic Jewish wedding is a tapestry woven from many threads: historical, mystical, biblical, cultural and legal, which have been carried from generation to generation, forming a chain of Jewish continuity dating back more than 3,800 years.

Many of the beautiful and meaningful customs of the Chassidic Jewish wedding ceremony may be new and unfamiliar to many of you. This guide has been prepared for you to help explain some of our unique wedding traditions in order to help you enjoy this joyous occasion to its fullest.

We thank you for sharing in our simcha and allowing this day to truly be a celebration among beloved family and friends.

Rabbi Yosef & Esty Greenberg
Rabbi Israel & Faiga Glitsenstein



LEVI & MUSHKY GLITSENSTEIN



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*Wedding of
Levi & Mushky
Glitsenstein
Schedule of Events*

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5:30 pm

Kabbalat Panim / Greeting of the Bride

In the foyer.

All guests are invited to partake in h'orderves. Please feel free to greet and congratulate the bride and visit with friends.

Kabbalat Panim / Greeting of the Groom

In the Groom's Room on the second floor.

The groom, officiating rabbis, family members, and the groom's close friends partake in the groom's preparation for the marriage ceremony.

6:15 pm

Bedeken / Veiling Ceremony

In the foyer.

Please make an aisle space for the groom to approach the bride for the veiling ceremony.

After the veiling, all guests are asked to move to the terrace and prepare for the Chuppah ceremony. In case of inclement weather, feel free to observe the Chuppah from the foyer. There will be a sound system set up for this.

6:30 pm

Chuppah Ceremony

On the terrace.

Please take a seat. Men will be seated on the left, women on the right.

At the end of the ceremony, please feel free to greet and congratulate the bride and groom as they walk down the aisle.

7:15 pm

Appetizers

In the foyer.

Guests are invited to the foyer for buffet appetizers and a champagne toast while the family joins the bride and groom for pictures.

7:45 pm

Ballroom Opened

Please take a seat. Men will be seated on the right, women on the left.

Please enjoy a salad course as you await the bride and groom.

8:00 pm

Bride and Groom Enter

Guests are all welcome and invited to rejoice with the bride and groom in dancing.

Dinner to follow.

LEVI & MUSHKY GLITSENSTEIN



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*Guide to the
Chassidic Jewish Wedding*

The Chassidic Jewish Wedding

Marriage is central to the human experience because only in harmony with a partner in marriage, do we reach our fullest potential in life. According to the mystical teachings of Kabbalah, prior to the conception and birth of a child, the soul is one entity in the spiritual realms. When it descends to this world, it is split and invested into two persons: male and female. At the time when one finds his or her “destined one” (Bashert) the soul fuses together and wholeness is then achieved.

The Jewish marriage ceremony is called “kiddushin” in Hebrew. From the same root as the word “kiddush” it means to sanctify, to make holy. The Jewish wedding is the act of taking the love between two people and adding the infinite dimension of G-d’s blessing. As they invite G-d into their relationship, they are bringing sanctity into their home and world.

A Jewish marriage also constitutes a binding legal agreement, entered into by both the bride and groom. The rituals and customs of the Chassidic wedding are comprised of both legal particulars and spiritual themes — the body and soul of the Jewish wedding.

The serious atmosphere which prevails beneath the Chuppah is the result of the appreciation of the sheer awe of the moment the union takes place, and it is that very same appreciation which triggers the unbridled joy which follows at the reception an appropriate celebration for an event of this magnitude.

Kabbalat Panim:

Greeting of the Kallah (Bride) and Chosson (Groom)

Two separate receptions are hosted for the bride and groom simultaneously as, traditionally, the bride and groom refrain from seeing each other during the week of the wedding until that magical moment when the groom comes to veil his bride.

At the bride's reception, she sits on her symbolic "Queen's Throne" surrounded by her family, as she is greeted by her guests and accepts their warm wishes.

At the groom's reception, he greets his guests amidst songs and L'Chaims (toasts) and delivers a Chassidic discourse describing in Jewish mystical terms the spiritual elevation attained by the bride and groom through their bond in marriage. At this time, the legal components of the marriage are being finalized. The Tena'im (betrothal agreement between the families) and the Ketubah (the marriage contract which details the obligations of the groom to his bride) are signed in the presence of witnesses. After the reading of the Tena'im, the mothers of the bride and groom break a plate, signifying that just as breaking the plate is irreversible, so should the marriage be an everlasting one.

Bedeken:

The Veiling of the Bride

The groom is escorted by family and friends to the bedeken veiling ceremony at which time he places a veil over the bride, an ancient biblical custom dating back to the Matriarch Rebecca who veiled her face upon meeting Jacob for the first time.

The placing of the veil emphasizes the focus on inner beauty, modesty, and dignity that characterize the Jewish woman and gives the bride the gift of privacy at such an emotional moment. According to tradition, the Divine Presence shines from the face of the bride just as it did from the face of Moses after his communion with G-d at Sinai. Like Moses, who covered his face, so too the bride covers her face during the sacred moments of the marriage ceremony.

At the conclusion of the bedeken ceremony, the parents and grandparents bestow blessings upon the bride.

Marriage Ceremony Music & Garments: Symbols of solemnity and holiness

Throughout the procession, beginning with the groom's procession to veil his bride through the bride joining the groom at the Chuppah, you will hear a mystical composition that evokes a deep spirituality which was written by the founder of the Chabad Lubavitch movement, Rebbe Rabbi Schneur Zalman (1745-1812), which highlights the solemnity of the occasion.

The wedding day has all the sanctity of Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish year. In fact, the wedding day is deemed a private Yom Kippur for the couple, a time for repentance and spiritual growth through prayer and fasting. The bride's veil is completely opaque in order to provide her with total privacy for reflection and prayer as she meditates with the Divine Presence that shines upon her face during this sacred time. The groom's white garment, called

“kittel” (which is traditionally worn on Yom Kippur) and the bride’s gown are both symbolic of the holiness of the day.

The Procession of the Groom

The wedding ceremony begins with the groom being escorted to the Chuppah by his father and future father-in-law. The groom then waits for the bride to be escorted by her mother and future mother-in-law to join him under the Chuppah.

It is customary for the parents and grandparents accompanying the bride and groom to carry candles, symbolizing that the couple’s life together will be one of light and joy. The candles are reminiscent of the flashes of lightning and fire which surrounded the Israelites at Mt. Sinai — the marriage of G-d and Israel.

The Chuppah

The Chuppah, which represents the couple’s new home together, is placed outdoors, under the stars, recalling the promise of God to Abraham that his seed be as numerous as the stars. It represents the couple’s desire that their new home be under the protection and guidance of G-d Al-mighty.

Open on all four sides, the Chuppah symbolizes the hospitality of the first Jewish couple, Abraham and Sarah, whose tent was open to all who came to seek out their teachings and hospitality. By coming under the Chuppah the couple demonstrates their intention of making their home an island of calm and caring to those adrift on the stormy seas of life.

The Procession of the Bride

Upon entering the Chuppah the bride and her entourage will circle the groom seven times before coming to stand at the groom's right side. With the groom at the center, the bride weaves a protective web of love and devotion around her husband.

As she circles around the open Chuppah and home, she creates a secure, protected, private space in which both she and her groom will dwell and establishes an anchor of spirituality for her home.

Seven signifies the complete natural cycle, a reference to the 7 day cycle of creation. A passage from the material into the spiritual, a journey through the weekdays on into the holiness of Shabbat, symbolizing the couple's journey towards finding each other.

Once the bride comes to stand by her groom, the "Baruch Haba, Mi Adir," a hymn to welcome the bride and groom and a request for the Al-mighty to bestow his blessing upon them, is sung by a cantor.

The Rebbe's Letter

The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, of sacred memory, customarily responded to invitations to participate at a wedding by sending a personally signed letter of blessing to the bride and groom.

The Rebbe took special interest in preserving Jewish life and culture in Alaska and the world over. His inclusive vision, unconditional love of humanity, leadership and dedication continue to be the

inspiration and guiding light for our families and communities. With the knowledge that his blessing remains present in the lives of the groom and bride, the text of the letter personally received from the Rebbe by the bride and groom's parents at their own wedding is read and translated.

The Marriage Ceremony

The ceremony is composed of two parts: Kiddushim (betrothal) and Nissuin (marriage). The marriage ceremony, officiated by the rabbi, begins with two blessings. The first blessing is over wine, symbolically setting the tone for the joyousness of the occasion. This is followed by the second prenuptial blessing that thanks G-d for the sanctity of marriage. The couple then shares the wine from the cup to remind themselves that they will share together for the rest of their lives.

The Ring

The central act of the marriage ceremony is the giving of the ring to the bride in the presence of two witnesses, accompanied by a declaration of betrothal by the groom.

The ring is simple and perfectly smooth, free of engraving, design or flaw symbolizing a silent prayer that the marriage be one of simple beauty, truth and respect, unmarred by conflict. The ring is made of gold to indicate that the bride should be as precious as gold to the groom.

The betrothal declaration contains 32 Hebrew

letters, the numerological value of the Hebrew word “lev” (heart). In the declaration, the groom is making the statement that, just as the covenant of the laws of Moses and Israel are of divine origin, bear the seal of truth, and are eternal, so shall the marriage covenant between them be.

Ketubah:
The Marriage Contract

The Ketubah, or marriage contract, written by renowned Jewish sage Rabbi Shimon ben Shetach (120-40 BCE) over 2100 years ago, is the first marriage document in human history which directly addresses and protects the rights of women in the marriage.

Following the betrothal, the Ketubah is publically read in the original Aramaic, the common language of that time in which it was written. It is the greatest love letter ever written in history. In it, the groom takes it upon himself to cherish, honor, love and support his bride. He mortgages all of his possessions to her, even the shirt off his back, and commits to share everything he owns with his true love, his beloved wife.

Sheva Brachos:
The Seven Blessings

Seven blessings, paralleling the seven days of creation, are now recited over a second cup of wine by family members and honored guests. The blessings acknowledge and thank G-d for the creation of humanity, the survival of the Jewish people, and for the new found love, friendship, peace and joy of the bride

and groom in this marriage. Following the blessings, the bride and the groom will again share from the wine cup.

Breaking the Glass

At the conclusion of the ceremony under the Chuppah, the groom breaks the wine glass. At the height of this joyful occasion, the breaking of the glass reminds us that, even at the happiest occasions, we must remember and be aware of our fellow Jews around the world, especially those who mourn personal losses in Israel, as well as the national loss of the destruction of Jerusalem and its ancient Holy Temple.

In recalling this void in their lives, specifically at their highest joy, the new couple is connected to their past and reminded of the obligation to help "rebuild the Temple" in their own lives. As they create a new future together, they remember the suffering of other peoples and their commitment to Tikkun Olam to perfect and bring healing and peace to the world, ushering in the Messianic Era.

Yichud: Privacy of the Couple

Immediately after the ceremony, the bride and groom adjourn to a private room amid joyous singing to spend their first moments of married life alone together. The few minutes the couple share together allude to their new intimate relationship and also emphasizes that during their new life together their privacy must be respected. Soon after this the couple joins their guests at the wedding feast.

Wedding Feast

The wedding reception is called a "Seudas Mitzvah" (Mitzvah Feast) to honor the occasion as it is a mitzvah to participate in a feast honoring the new couple. During the meal, all of the guests are invited to participate in the mitzvah of "Simchas Chosson V'Kallah" which means to rejoice with the bride and groom. In accordance with Jewish tradition, men and women celebrate separated by a "mechitza" (partition) and do not dance together. This separation reflects the values of "tznius" (modesty), one of the virtues which helps Jewish marriages excel. At the end of the feast "birkas hamazon" (Grace after Meals) is recited, and the same Sheva Brachos that were recited under the Chuppah are repeated.

The Seven Days Celebration

The bride and groom begin the first week of their new life together in the embrace of their family and community. For the week following the wedding, festive meals are held each day in the new couple's honor, just like Jacob celebrated his marriage to Leah for seven consecutive days. Each meal is called "Sheva Brachos" referring to the seven blessings that are recited again.

The entire community is invited to join Mushky and Levi for the community Sheva Brachos Celebration, which will take place on Saturday, August 18th, immediately after Shabbat services at the newly renovated Jewish Campus.

MAZAL TOV!

BIRKAT HAMAZON — GRACE AFTER MEALS

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Birkat Hamazon
Grace After Meals

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