



# Chanukah Gelt

In honor of Chanukah, we present you with this composition recounting the various occasions when the Rebbe distributed Chanukah Gelt to his Chassidim. The following is excerpts from the Chanukah issue of “Leben mitten Rebbe”

## **Chanukah Gelt to the Yeshivah Bochurim**

During the Farbrengen of Yud-Tes Kislev, 5712, the Rebbe spoke with great fervor, encouraging the Bochurim to increase in Hafotzas Hamaayonos, adding that this must be out of the time of Seder. The Rebbe also mentioned that he had recently received a listing from the Hanhalah consisting of those Bochurim who had kept the morning Seder during the past few weeks, and was very unsatisfied; therefore, all of the Bochurim are to make a firm decision to come on time for the next ten days. The Rebbe concluded, “Whoever keeps Seder will be rewarded with something special, and don’t come later with complaints that you didn’t know!”

Ten days later, on the fifth night of Chanukah, the Rebbe told Rabbi Y. Jacobson that whoever had come on time to Seder Chassidus at least three times since Yud-Tes Kislev would be allowed to come to his room and receive Chanukah Gelt. After all the Bochurim had entered, the Rebbe looked at the list and told Rabbi Jacobson that he notices Bochurim

present who hadn’t kept Seder. Rabbi Jacobson answered that they probably had come in without permission. Hearing this, the Rebbe smiled and said, “In general, I don’t mind if you act with leniency, but now is not the proper time. Either way, whoever is already here will not be chased out!”

The Rebbe then passed his right hand over his forehead, became very serious, and began saying a Sichah, concluding: “As today is Chanukah, and Jewish custom has it that ‘Chanukah Gelt’ be distributed, I shall hand each of you some

Chanukah Gelt from the Rebbe's reserve. Since it comes from the Rebbe, the quantity is not relevant, for even a small amount blesses its receiver with success."

With these words, the Rebbe handed out a silver dollar to every Bochur, wishing each of them "Ah Gutten Chanukah" (there was a total of forty-two Bochurim present).

The next day, a few Bochurim told Rabbi Jacobson that they always kept Seder, but they didn't receive Chanukah Gelt since they had attended the wedding of Dr. Seligson. When the Rebbe was informed about this, he asked if they were given permission to be at the wedding. Rabbi Jacobson said that if they would have asked, they would have been granted permission, but the Rebbe didn't agree.

From then on, this became the custom every year. On the night before or after the fifth day of Chanukah, the Bochurim would go into the Rebbe's room and hear a Sich'a, after which the Rebbe distributed a dollar to each of them.

### **Chanukah Gelt for the Bochurim comes to an end**

The abovementioned system continued until 5720, after which the Rebbe ceased to give Chanukah Gelt to the Bochurim. (This may be one of the things that the Rebbe was referring to when he told Rabbi Hodakov that after 10 Shevat 5720, ten years after the passing of the Frierdiker Rebbe, there would be a few changes in conduct. The Rebbe hinted the reason for this in a Sich'a on Simchas Torah, 5732, when the Rebbe reprimanded Chassidim for not appreciating the good things that he gives them. One of the things that the Rebbe mentioned was giving Chanukah Gelt to the Bochurim every year.)

Nonetheless, in 5721, the Rebbe did respond to the request of R' C.S. Brook (Mashpia of Yeshivas Achei Temimim, Rishon L'tziyon) and sent Chanukah Gelt to the Bochurim in his Yeshiva. This was on condition that they would all be tested on their studies and that the results were sent to the Rebbe.

In addition, the Rebbe often requested of the administration in many of the Lubavitcher institutions worldwide that Chanukah Gelt be distributed to those students who learn Chassidus. In a sense, the Rebbe utilized this as an incentive for those who did not study Chassidus until then to begin to do so.

### **Special distribution for participants in Mivtza Chanukah**

In 5734, the Rebbe initiated "Mivtza Chanukah" in full swing. The Rebbe personally treated each participant in this

#### **Mivtza to Chanukah Gelt:**

A notification was given before Chanukah to all, stating that anyone who would participate in Mivtza Chanukah was to personally receive Chanukah Gelt from the Rebbe! Indeed, on the second night of Chanukah, the Rebbe asked that those who had already joined and carried out this Mivtza, and were prepared to continue to do so the next day as well, should come to the door of his room where Chanukah Gelt would be given to them. They would each have to bring along a note from the administration of "Tzach", acknowledging that they had indeed done so.

With that, two lines immediately formed; one downstairs near R' Dovid Raskin, to obtain the note, and the other near the Rebbe's door to receive Chanukah Gelt. The Rebbe was very meticulous in giving only to those who carried a note. Even the Rebbe's secretaries, Rabbis Hadakov, Groner and Klein were asked to show their note, and only then received their Chanukah Gelt. ∞

