



שובה דה, עד מרת'

A Niggun that Echoes to this very day

“שובה, שובה ה’ עד מתי והנחם
על עבדיך. שבענו בבקר חסדיך
ונרננה ונשמחה בכל ימינו. יראה
אל עבדיך פעליך והדרך על
בניהם. ויהי נועם ה’ אלקינו
עלינו, ומעשה ידינו כוננה עלינו
ומעשה ידינו כוננהו.”



The singing intensifies and the excitement rises exuberantly as the Rebbe waves both his holy hands around, over and over again. Expressing a deep sense of longing; longing for Hashem to bestow His ultimate compassion upon us and end our lengthy *Galus*, yet at the same time, conveys a message of hope; hope and joy that the final salvation is but a short time away, this *Niggun* is sung at the Rebbe’s weekly Shabbos *Farbrengen*.

A similar scene repeated itself each and every week in those final months leading up to the dreadful day of *Chof Zayin Adar* when the Rebbe fell ill.

It was a long standing tradition dating back years; the first *Niggun* sung by the Shabbos *Farbrengen* was the Yud-Aleph Nissan *Niggun* of that year. But on Yud Aleph Nissan, 5751, something was different.

“I remember that first time very well,” relates Reb Feitel Levin, composer of the *Niggun* “*Shuva*”.

“I had completed the final product on a Thursday night, and by the time Shabbos came, the crowd of *Bochurim* and *Anash* had already listened to my recording and well learned the new tune.

“When the Rebbe entered the *Shul* for *Kabbolas Shabbos*, everyone sang the *Niggun* in unison and waited to see how the Rebbe would react. One can only imagine the joy that filled my heart when I saw the look of sincere pleasure evident on the Rebbe’s face that first time he

heard the *Niggun*. And his liking of the new *Niggun* only grew with time, as is by now well-known”.

♦

Of all the many *Niggunim* composed yearly in honor of Yud Aleph Nissan some linger in the hearts and minds of Chassidim until today, having left an impression as unique and different, out of the ordinary. Among them, and perhaps above them all, stands the *Niggun Shuva*, constantly sung in the Rebbe’s presence until *Chof Zayin Adar*, 5752.

Any Chossid from that period will confirm that this *Niggun* was uniquely cherished by the Rebbe (and consequently, by the *Bochurim* and *Anash*). This was unmistakably clear from the way he vigorously encouraged the singing of this *Niggun*.

In those last few winter months of 5752, the Rebbe gave of himself to the Chassidim in a manner unparalleled in previous times. As the weeks passed, more and more nights were devoted to distributing dollars to the public, and on more occasions than ever before, the Rebbe personally handed *Kuntreisim* to each and every Chossid, man, woman, and child, often with *Lekach* and dollars.

And accompanying all of these precious moments was the *Niggun Shuva*. The Rebbe would encourage the singing of “*Shuva*” heartily, pausing briefly in the midst of the distribution to motion his encouragement to the crowd.

It is this that makes “*Shuva*” so spe-

cial. More than the emotion encapsulated by the *Niggun* itself, in its lyrics and heartfelt tune, it is the memories of these treasurable moments (specifically as they were the months preceding *Chof Zayin Adar*) that stir the strings in the hearts and souls of Chassidim who were privileged to experience them with their beloved Rebbe.

♦

Rabbi Eliezer Zaklikovsky relates:

“The Rebbe vigorously encouraging us when we sang “*Shuva*” at the *Farbrengens* was literally a weekly occurrence, at the Shabbos *Farbrengens*, and eventually it was almost expected. But one particular week still stands out in my mind.

“On that Shabbos, we began “*Shuva*” as usual, and the Rebbe motioned with extraordinary force. It was then that I noticed a chilling sight: Attached to the Rebbe’s holy hand was what appeared to be the remnant from an IV treatment of some sort. One can only imagine the impression this had upon me. The Rebbe, obviously not in the best of health, nevertheless saw it important to convey his encouragement to the Chassidim’s song, leading and inspiring them to sing even stronger”.

Ever since *Chof Zayin Adar*, Chassidim await the day that we’ll be able to sing a new *Niggun* for the Rebbe in his full health and glory. In the meantime, we pray, ...עד מתי? והנחם על עבדיך...
—Relent, Hashem; how much longer? Have compassion upon Your servants...