

זענען מ'ס'3'שע"ג

לעבן מיטן רבי'ן

"CHAIN LETTER" OF GEULA ZAYIN MAR-CHESHVAN 5746

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תשובה וגעגוגים

לנגד עינינו נצב כמו חי השמחה והריקוד דשמח"ת, עלייתו לתורה בשמח"ת, כלומר, לא רק באופן של זכרון בעלמא, כי אם זכרון מתוך געגועים ותשוקה!...

היכן הוא - שואל את עצמו מתוך רגש של געגועים - אותו מעמד ומצב נפלא שבו עמד בשעת השמחה והריקודים או בעת העלי' לתורה בשמח"ת?!

(משיחת ליל ז' מר-חשוון תשמ"ו)

The seventh day of Cheshvan is the day when we begin asking for rain during davening. The reason given: on this day (during the time when the Beis Hamikdash stood) the last of the Yidden who had come up to Yerushalayim to be Olé L'Regel returned home; we therefore waited with our request so that the rain would not disturb him during his trip.

As the Rebbe points out, this day is symbolic for two reasons: a) it stresses how far one must go with Ahavas Yisroel towards a fellow Jew, avoiding any discomfort for them at all costs; b) it culminates the completion of the festive month of Tishrei and fully begins ordinary life in this mundane world - "Ve'Yaakov holach l'darkoi".

Although the Rebbe elaborated on the significance of this day throughout the years, one of the only times that the Rebbe held a Farbrengen exclusively in honor of "Zayin Cheshvan" was in 5746. It was truly a remarkable Farbrengen, full of interesting insights. We bring here just a few of them.

Missing Simchas Torah

Towards the end of the first *Sicha*, the Rebbe pointed out that one of the lessons we must take from Zayin Cheshvan is to strengthen *Achdus Yisroel*.

For all throughout the month of *Tishrei*, *Yidden* were together in *Shuls*, celebrating the *Yomim Tovim* together and so on. And even once the month is over, we could still live with the unity we experienced during *Tishrei*, because we can still feel the *Yom Tov* freshly; we still see the "leftovers" from *Simchas Torah* on the table! Not only the physical leftovers, but also the spiritual "leftovers"; the dancing and celebration with the Torah, as well as the *Aliya* to the Torah on *Simchas Torah*, are still alive in front of his eyes! This memory also brings along a sense of longing, "If only I could still be in that same setting, the way I danced and rejoiced with the Torah on *Simchas Torah*," he thinks to himself.

But after Zayin Cheshvan, when all this is over, it is important to keep these memories alive, and continue living with the same feeling of *Achdus Yisroel* as we did until that day, in the *Yom Tov* spirit.

Chain Letter

Another interesting point was towards the end of the Farbrengen, when the Rebbe brought out the lesson from the daily study of Rambam - that a Jew must demand from Hashem to bring the *Geula*. After quoting from two important sources (*Rada"k* and *Chid"i*; see page 3) about the importance of demanding the *Geula*, the Rebbe related a very interesting story:

One of the letters I received lately was from a certain woman who was in distress and felt quite scared. She tells me that she has received a letter from someone, and at the end of the letter, the sender instructs her to copy the letter and forward it to ten additional people. If she complies, the letter tells her, she will be rewarded, and if not she will feel quite sorry...

The letter itself was full of nonsense, and the sender did not sign his name, so she doesn't even know where it's coming from. Now she is asking me if she should be intimidated by the threats that the letter carries, and follow the instructions by forwarding the ten copies.

I obviously answered her that she should tear the letter up and dispose of it, and forget the entire story!

Later on I thought to myself, why is it that this was brought to my attention? I don't know this woman from anywhere and she does not know me either. She only heard about my name and therefore sent the letter to ask my advice. So why would this ever have been brought to me in the first place? Until I understood: in order that we utilize this method for good and holy things.

Now that we have learned about this "chain-letter" method of sending out a letter and instructing the receiver to forward it on, it would be a good idea that each person should compose a letter quoting these two sources about the importance of demanding the *Geula*, and instruct the recipient to forward it on to ten more people. Obviously, all the threats must be omitted and replaced only with blessings!

Now, the people who we call "*Shpitz Chabad*" may think that it's time to stop everything they are doing and just sit writing letters all day. Let me therefore be clear: each one should only write ten letters and no more! If you have free time on your hands afterwards, sit and learn Torah instead!

טענת הלכנה "אין ב' מלכים"
ומענת הקב"ה
ראה לקו"ש חלק ל'
בראשית שיחה ב'

THE GREAT FIRE

(Taken from Sefer Hatoldos Admur Maharash, SIE. Compiled by the Rebbe from the Sichos of the Friediker Rebbe.)

It is impossible to record the memoirs of our family without mentioning this most important event, namely the great fire that occurred in the capital city of our family. This fire was a milestone in the stories of the family, for it served as a reference for the time that events took place. Often, indeed, when we heard people telling of various happenings related to our family, they would set the time as "this event happened before the Great Fire... that event happened after the Great Fire," etc.

Another reason that the fire needs to be mentioned in the history of the family is that it caused major changes in the lives of the family members. Knowing the reason for these changes will enable us to understand better the changes themselves.

During the summer of 5628¹ there was a second great fire. The fire that broke out while the Tzemach Tzedek was still living is called the "First Fire" while that of 5628 was the "Second Fire." In the Second Fire, all the houses and the courtyard burned down. Nevertheless, the elder chassidim always referred to the First Fire as "the Great Fire," because in that one very many manuscripts were burned, as we shall see later. Certainly, this event deserves an important place in our family's history.

When the saintly Mitteler Rebbe was still living, the arrangements were that he and his small children² lived together. Because of his poor health, they lived in a large extensive mansion. He needed good fresh air, for he suffered from emphysema caused by ailing lungs and a weak heart. Attached to his house was a very large building that served as an assembly hall. [Because this hall was extremely large,] the Mitteler Rebbe's chassidim would say as a witty remark that "In the Rebbe's assembly hall one can begin reciting *Hodu* at one end of the hall, and before he gets to the opposite end, he is already up to *Aleinu*."

He would say *Chassidus* in this hall. Those who remembered it said that two thousand people could stand there at ease. It was also very high. There was a garden in the back of his house and in summertime he would sometimes go there to sit for several hours. They would bring out a chair and a table for him, and he would study there.

All his sons-in-laws³ lived in different streets. After the Mitteler Rebbe passed away, his house burned down. They then built a house of ordinary size, in which Rebbetzin Sheina and her son Reb Baruch lived. The Tzemach Tzedek continued living in his original home. His sons Reb Baruch Shalom, Reb Yehudah Leib, and Reb Chayim Schneur Zalman⁴ all lived in different places in town.

During the year 5594⁵ the Tzemach Tzedek purchased a parcel of land to build a house for himself.⁶

A certain elder chassid from Radomysl (who was present at the time) told me the traditional story that the house was completed at the beginning of Adar

5594 but the Rebbe was then not yet ready to move in. My great-grandmother Rebbetzin Chayah Mussia was then pregnant with her son, my grandfather the Rebbe Maharash. She went to see the house, and while she was there her labor began. There were still no furnishings of any sort in the house and so they borrowed a bench and some cushions from the neighbor, Reb Avraham,⁷ who lived just across the street to the north.

There, in the new house, she gave birth to my grandfather the Rebbe Maharash. The Rebbe then dedicated the house and moved in, and the *bris* was held there. There are many stories about these events, and they will (with G-d's help) be recorded in the biographical sketch of the Rebbe Maharash.⁸ He lived there from that day until the house burned down in the year 5616. He gave the house he had previously lived in to his son Reb Yehudah Leib.

One day during the month of Elul 5616, some wagon drivers arrived transporting merchandise, and they lodged in one of the local boarding houses. There was no room at the inn for their wagons and horses, and so the innkeeper asked either Reb [Menachem] Nachum⁹ or his son Reb Schneur¹⁰ to allow them to park their wagons and horses in his yard, where he had a large horse stable. He consented to this as a favor to the innkeeper, and so the wagon drivers also lodged there.

That night a very strong wind blew. One of the wagon drivers lit his pipe and he was careless with the match. The hay that was stored there caught fire and enormous flames broke out. Within minutes the walls of the barn were on fire, and they were barely able to rescue the owner's family. Within another few minutes, the wind had carried the fire to all corners of the city. The houses caught fire and almost the whole city burned down, resulting in great loss.

It was at that period that the Tzemach Tzedek was denounced in the Zalkind affair¹¹ and he was reluctant to keep his manuscripts in his possession, for fear that the authorities would search his house and discover the manuscripts. He divided them for storage in three places: i) at the home of the Chief Rabbi Reb Avraham; ii) at the home of Reb Todros the butcher; iii) at the home of Reb Avraham Michel the bookbinder.

As soon as the fire broke out, my grandfather the Rebbe Maharash ran to his father's house. His mother the Rebbetzin was then ill, and so he procured a carriage to transport her away from the city. Meanwhile, he had left my grandmother the Rebbetzin alone with the small children and two servants. Thus, they were unable to save anything from their house and all his *seforim* and manuscripts were consumed along with everything else in the house. They were left without even a shirt, for everything had perished.

The Tzemach Tzedek ran to Reb Michel the bookbinder's home to see what had happened to his manuscripts, while the Maharash ran to the butcher's home. It did not occur to either of them to run to the Rav's home.¹² On his way rushing back from the home of Reb Todros, the Maharash noticed that the Rav's house was on fire, and

(Continued on page 3)

... Nightfall was approaching and R'Yaakov stood in the corner to daven Mincha. The terrifying cries which could be heard during his davening moved me very deeply. During his davening I thought to myself "I wish I could daven Neilah on Yom Kippur like R' Yaakov davens a regular weekday mincha..."

R' Yaakov Zechariah Halevi was born on simchas Torah 5646 in the city of Shedrin to his parents Reb Zev Volf and Yehudis Maskalik, who were Kodinver chassidim. The majority of the city inhabitants were Chabad chassidim and the young lad absorbed the chassidishe atmosphere which permeated the city and was attracted to Chabad. In the 5661, when he turned 15 he decided on his own to move to the city of Lubavitch to continue his studies in Yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim. For eight years straight he toiled in the study of Torah and Avodas Hatefilah and excelled especially in everything connected with Ahavas Yisroel.

As an older bochur, in his last few years in Yeshiva, he devoted much of his time to caring for the younger bochurim in the lower classes, personally tending to their ruchniyus'dike and gashmiyus'dike. If a bochur had a swollen finger, who did he turn to? Reb Yaakov! Not for nothing was he called "the Mother of the Bochurim", not for nothing did the Rebbe Rashab say "in the Yeshiva there is a bochur who takes after Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev..."

When he reached the age of Shidduchim in 5666 he was suggested Miriam Rachel, the daughter of Reb Tuvia Margolin from the city of Zolbin. He stayed there after his wedding until the summer of 5671 when he was offered the position of Rav in Zuravitz, and, at the directive of the Rebbe Rashab, he accepted the position. Reb Yaakov was characterized by his sweet and nice nature as he strengthened and supported the Yidden of the city in their service of Hashem. Even in the hardest moments a smile could be found on his face, his face shining with joy. The "Mother of Tomchei Temim" became the "father" of a full community. The townsmen of Zuravitz felt that they had a someone who cared for them and they responded in kind. Around 5680, for many reasons, Reb Yaakov was forced to move to Moscow.



When the Communist persecution began, and Yiddishkeit was forced underground, the Frieddiker Rebbe gathered a group of yungerleit to strengthen Yiddishkeit and spread Torah until Mesiras Nefesh. Reb Yankel stood at the forefront of this group, laboring to keep Yiddishkeit alive. The Frieddiker Rebbe said about him, "If I would have had twenty Yankelach I would turn over Russia..."

(To be continued)

he was busy rescuing a large box. The idea that the box might contain anything other than the manuscripts did not enter his mind as he went over to assist him. But when he inquired whether all the manuscripts were accounted for, Reb Avraham cried out loud, "Oy vey! I completely forgot about the manuscripts."¹³

Hearing this, the Maharash became agitated and upset, and came close to the fire, which had already engulfed the roof and the walls of the house. One of the young "sitters" who was present¹⁴ took no heed of the danger and sprang into the smoke-filled house. He searched until he located the box. By this time, the burning beams of the structure were beginning to collapse and it was only with great difficulty that the young scholar managed to save himself by jumping out of a second story window on the northern side of the house. All the windows on the southern side¹⁵ were already actively burning. Thus, the box perished in the fire, right next to the door.

When the Tzemach Tzedek heard the news, he shed many tears over it. He declared that his efforts and toil of eight years of his youth were now gone. He was quite incensed at the Chief Rabbi Reb Avraham for

his negligence. He also dismissed his attendant Reb Chayim Dov¹⁶ because he had not come to the rescue when the fire first started.

1. After the Tzemach Tzedek had passed away [in 5626].
2. I.e., those who were still little boys and girls.
3. I.e., the Tzemach Tzedek and the husbands of his other daughters.
4. These were already married at that time.
5. Or possibly the end of 5593. [See supra, p. 1 referring to a fire in the year 5592: "The house of the Tzemach Tzedek was not touched by the fire of the year 5592. Nevertheless, after that fire he decided to purchase a plot of land on which to build a large house and beis hamedrash."]
6. It was the place where the large study hall now stands, where the students of Tomchei Temimim study.
7. The Chief Rabbi of the city.
8. [See Sefer HaToldos Admur Maharash, SIE.]
9. A son of the Mittlerer Rebbe.
10. A son-in-law of the Tzemach Tzedek.
11. [See Toras Shalom, pp. 81-82.]
12. [They were sure that the Rav would rescue the manuscripts before anything else].
13. The box he was rescuing contained jars of honey!
14. [In Toras Shalom, ibid., it states that he was Reb Tzvi "the Red-Haired," one of the Tzemach Tzedek's attendants.]
15. Those windows faced the street in front of the Rebbe's house.
16. A highly-respected chassid.

רד"ק

"ויעתר ה' לארץ ותעצר המגפה מעל ישראל, וקביל ה' צלות דיירי ארעא. ובדרש כל האלפים האלה שנפלו בימי דוד לא נפלו אלא ע"י שלא תבעו בית המקדש. והרי דברים קל וחומר, ומה אם אלו שלא ה' בימיהם ולא חרב בימיהם, נפלו על שלא תבעו אותו, אנו שהי' בימינו וחרב בימינו, על אחת כמה וכמה. לפיכך התקינו זקנים ונביאים ליטע בפייהם של ישראל להיות מתפללים שלשה פעמים בכל יום השב שכינתך ומלכותך לציון וסדר עבודתך לירושלים אכ"ר סלה"

(פי' רד"ק, סוף שמואל ב')

החיד"א

"אמרו בילקוט תהלים רמז תשל"ו אפילו אין ביד ישראל אלא הקיווי כדאי הם לגאולה בשכר הקיווי. . . ובזה פירש הרב הגדול מהר"ר יוסף דוד זלה"ה. . . מטבע ברכה אח צמח דוד עבדך מהרה תצמיח וקרנו תרום בישועתך כי לישועתך קיונו כל היום, דאומרו כי לישועתך אינו מובן, מה נתינת טעם היא, דאם מן הדין, נזכה בלא קיווי, והן לא, מה יועיל הקיווי? אבל ע"פ האמור א"ש, והכי פירושה: אח צמח דוד וכו', וכי תימא שאין לנו זכות, מ"מ תצמיח, כי לישועתך קיונו, ויש לנו הקיווי, ובשכר הקיווי כדאי שתגאלנו".

(חיד"א בספרו מדבר קדמות, ערך קיווי).

Minhagim in Aleinu

Q&A

The last tefilla of every davening, the final few words of our communication with Hashem, Aleinu is an ancient Tefilla that carries much meaning, our praise and thanks for being set aside as a separate nation, the Chosen People.

In Sefer Haminhogim it says a number of things regarding Aleinu. One of them discusses the Nusach; another speaks of a specific practice:

Our Minhag is not to say the word **'Umisballim'** after the words "Sheheim Mishtachavim..." And one should spit out saliva after saying those words, "Sheheim Mishtachavim L'hevel V'lorik" before continuing on with the words Va'anachnu Korim...

Where does the phrase "Sheim Mishtachavim..." come from, who originated it? And why do we spit right after these words?

Before we answer those questions let us first look into the history of this Tefillah, who established it and why.

In a number of Seforim it speaks about a tradition that it was originally established by Yehoshua when he was conquering Yericho. It is explained that Yehoshua established it when he entered into Eretz Yisroel to differentiate between the Jewish nation and the gentile nations, as it clearly says in the text of Aleinu. Sefer Iyun Tefillah says that it was established by Rav (the Amora) along with the rest of the same of Rosh Hashonah Mussaf.

The "Kolbo" explains these seemingly contradictory origins by saying that Yehoshua established it and Rav added some new terms that the Tanoim had instituted, such as "Hakodosh Boruch Hu" and Shchinah".

Why was Aleinu placed at the end of nearly every single Tefillah?

The Levush writes: The reason Aleinu was put at the end of Davening is to give praise and bow to Hashem before we leave Shul, just as a servant does when taking leave of his master.

The Bach brings a different reason:

"Before we start our day of business with Goyim, we firmly etch into our hearts the unity of Hashem and that He will destroy their idols. Doing this helps a person withstand any temptations he might have while dealing with idol worshippers."

According to these reasons there seems to be no reason to say Aleinu after Mincha because no one leaves right after but usually remain in Shul to daven Maariv. In light of this there are opinions who hold it is indeed not said after Mincha and some even say also not after Maariv. Nevertheless it is still our Minhag to say it three times a day, after each Tefillah, following the precedent in the siddur Chemdas Yaakov.

The origins of the phrase "sheim mishtachavim..." is from the Reb Amram Gaon among other places. The Alter Rebbe included this in his Nusach when he established Nussach Chabad.

We all know of our Minhag to spit out saliva after the words

V'lorik, before continuing on with the words "Va'anachnu Korim..." The reason for this is brought in Hayom Yom (Tes Teves) that through talking we create saliva, therefore we spit out the saliva created from saying the words Sheim Mishtachavim... because we don't want to have any benefit from it.

Although this is our Minhag, it is not accepted by all opinions. The Shaloh in fact writes very strongly against it:

There are is a large number of people who spit by Aleinu, and they don't know why they are doing it. A large majority of them don't even understand Loshon Hakodesh and they end up spitting by the words Va'anchnu Korim... [Which is the exact opposite of the intention] this practice is also very dangerous because the Goyim may think that we are referring to them when we say "K'chol Hamonam"... therefore whoever can put a stop to this should do so and better to teach them to bow properly according to Halachoh."

The Taz however supports this Minhag. He brings a proof from the following Halacho in the Mechaber. There is a Din:

"One who spits out of anguish for a wound or a sick person and then says a Possuk has no share in Olam Habo."

The reason for this is because it is as if he spat over Hashem's name and that is an embarrassment.

"Don't question this from what we see by Aleinu [for seemingly that is exactly what we are doing]," continues the Taz, "Because by Aleinu everyone knows that the spitting is in disgust of the idol worshippers and Hashem's name that we say right after that is praise and respect."

This is a deeper look into one of the many, many Minhagim that we have. It is important to bear in mind that each and every Minhag was carefully chosen and established and in many instances kept through Messirus Nefesh. The beauty and importance of our Minhagim are explained in many places and they hold a very important place in Darkei Hachassidus.



מחבר ש"ס ללימוד הרמב"ם

הל' אשיות פרק כה	הל' כלים פרק ו-ח	ג' חשון	ו'
הל' גירושין פרק א	פרק ט-יא	ד' חשון	ש"ק
פרק ב	פרק יב-יד	ה' חשון	א'
פרק ג	פרק טו-יז	ו' חשון	ב'
פרק ד	פרק יח-כ	ז' חשון	ג'
פרק ה	פרק כא-כג	ח' חשון	ד'
פרק ו	פרק כד-כו	ט' חשון	ה'