

א חסידים דער הער

EXPANDED EDITION



חודש כסלו ה'תשע"ב | CHODESH KISLEV 5772

בס"ד

א חסיד'ישע דערהער

A Chassidishe Derher

**Expanded Edition Issue 1
Chodesh Kislev 5772**

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A Letter from the Rebbe

3 The Rebbe; Our Father

א ציור פון א חסיד

4 Reb Chaim Yehoshua

Moreh Shiur

5 Rambam

Rosh Chodesh Kislev

6 Maladetz'n!

שערי נגינה

8 "U'viyom Simchaschem"

10 Kislev

9 Chassidus Behind Bars

14 Kislev

10 Dancing from a Distance

19 Kislev

12 Rosh Hashana L'Chassidus

Chanukah

18 Chanukah Gelt

20 The Rebbe's Farbrengen

23 Behind the Picture

Through the Keyhole

24 A Peek into Yemos Hamoshiach



The Rebbe; Our Father

A Letter from the Rebbe

The following letter appears in *Igros Kodesh* vol. 10 pg. 287. In his response to the rhetoric of some Misnagdim, the Rebbe teaches us here that all of *Darkei HaChassidus* is perfectly true to classic sources in *Yiddishkeit*, and that Chassidim should bear no shame (*Chas V'Sholom*) and pride themselves with that which our Rebbeim have taught us.

B"H,

2 Shevat, 5715

Brooklyn.

Shalom Ub'rocha!

...In regards to your writing about those who have approached you in protest that Yud Tes Kislev is referred to as "Rosh Hashanah L'Chassidus"; you can find [a rebuttal] in the preface to *Kunters Umaayon*¹, where the words of the greatest leaders of the Misnagdim from the previous generation (to whom those of today do not even compare to...) have been quoted [in defense of this statement].

Also regarding their criticism of the fact that we refer to the Alter Rebbe as "*Avinu Harishon*" (our first father); I fail to comprehend what difficulty exists here altogether! Do we not find in **numerous** places in the words of *Razal* that a student refers to his teacher as "my father"? As a matter of fact, this perception finds itself **clearly** in a *Possuk* (*Melachim II*, 2; 12), "*Avi, avi, rechev Yisroel u'farashav*" - "My father, my father, chariot of Yisroel and its horseman..." [where Elisha refers to his Rebbe, Eliyahu Hanavi, as his father] although he was not his physical father.

From this it could be understood that the one who was a first teacher in a particular field must be referred to as "our first father". All the more so when the above-spoken is concerning a leader amongst the Yidden, whose work - the *Shulchan Aruch*, has been accepted across the whole world as an authoritative voice. Now, a leader of the Yidden is also called a father **for all**

generations, as *Razal* teach us in *Talmud Yerushalmi* (*Nedarim* 5; 6²). If the protester doesn't know the *Yerushalmi*, why then, does he [have the audacity to] to question our holy Rebbeim?

You write regarding the possibility of traveling [away from *Eretz Yisroel*]; this is not at all the proper time for it. There is so much work to be done in *Eretz Yisroel* - and only a fraction of a fraction has been set-off in this regard. Each passing day is a forever-lost article, and particularly regarding the dissemination of books on Chassidus, and more importantly - spreading its teachings and conducts, which regarding the latter, as it seems, nothing substantial has yet been done...

Certainly from the day of the [Friediker Rebbe's] *Yortzeit* and on, a stimulation of encouragement will be instilled in every one of Anash, to be carried through the following weeks and months.

With blessing.

1. Part of this essay by the Friediker Rebbe appears in this issue.

2. "Hillel Hazaken had eighty pair of disciples; the greatest of them all was Yonasan ben Uziel, the smallest of them all was Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai. Once, he took ill and they all came to visit him, but Reb Yochanan ben Zakkai stood outside in the courtyard. Said (Hillel) to them: where is the 'smallest' from amongst you, who is a 'father in wisdom', and a 'father for generations'..." (*Yerushalmi*, *Nedarim* 5; 6)

"A father for generations - here he prophesized that he (Rebbi Yochanan) would ultimately be a leader..." (*Korban Ha'eda*, *ibid*).

א ציור פון א חסיד

Reb Chayim Yehoshua

By Reb Avraham Abba Persan¹

The Famous Chassid Reb Dov Zev Of Yekaterinoslav² related the following story:

While he was a *Shadar* of the Rebbe Maharash, Reb Dov Zev regularly visited the city of Gluchov, where one of the elders of the chassidim, Reb Chayim Yehoshua, lived. Whenever Reb Dov Zev visited Gluchov, he delighted in listening to Reb Chayim Yehoshua tell stories of the chassidim of the old days.

When Reb Dov Zev arrived in Gluchov in the year 5637, Reb Chayim Yehoshua was already an old man of eighty-seven. He felt his end approaching, and so he sent for the elder chassidim of the city: Reb Avraham Zalman HaKohen, Reb Shlomo Menachem the melamed, and Reb Ephraim Fishel the melamed; he requested that they also invite the visiting *Shadar*.

Upon discovering that the chassid Reb Chayim Yehoshua was sick, the gaon Reb Dov Zev went to visit him. Reb Chayim Yehoshua's illness lasted for a month. Although his strength gradually ebbed, he remained in full possession of his mental faculties until the very end, and he told his visitors various stories. The following is his deathbed declaration, as he dictated it to them:

During the year 5593 or 5594 I spent all eight days of Chanukah in Lubavitch with the Rebbe the Tzemach Tzedek. There, I heard three Maamorim, all based on the theme that the war against the Greeks was a spiritual battle. As Chazal teach us,³ [the Greeks demanded of the Jews that they,] "Write upon the horn of an ox that you have nothing to do with the G-d of Israel." But through mesirus nefesh the Jews overcame them. The Rebbe spoke highly of the avodah of mesirus nefesh to sanctify G-d's Holy Name, as was performed by Rabbi Akiva and others like him.

At the time, I was a little over forty years old. I, my four brothers, and my two brothers-in-law, lived in a hamlet called Zastke, near Kalisk [in Vitebsk County of White Russia]. Our father Reb Avraham Yisrael - a chassid of the Alter Rebbe and of his son the Mitteler Rebbe - had originally settled there. He brought us up to study Torah and to be farmers. We also took great pains to observe the mitzvah of catering to guests.

One winter's night during the year 5595 or 5596, we suddenly heard a knocking at the door. Getting out of bed and opening the door, I saw two Jews wrapped in winter cloaks, covered with snow, standing in the doorway. I extended my hand in greeting, and invited them to take off their cloaks and sit near the stove to warm themselves. I also offered them glasses of tea, and bread with butter and whey.

While they sat down to eat, I went out to check the barn. Once outdoors, I heard what sounded like a child crying. I paid no attention to it, for I assumed it was a cat. But when I came closer to the source of the sound, I heard that it was the voice of a child.

"Who's that crying?" I called.

"It's I, Binyomin!" a trembling voice replied.

Following the sound of the voice, I approached the sleigh that the guests had parked at the edge of the courtyard. When I looked inside, my whole body began to quake. I saw two small boys lying there, bound up in chains: one was sleeping, the other crying.

In those days, there were many "snatchers" - men who would kidnap Jewish children, take them away, and sell them to other communities to be handed over to the military. Seeing the children, I immediately guessed that the men were snatchers,



and that these were stolen children. I was afraid that they would also kidnap some of our own children.

I quickly removed the chains from the two boys, lifted them from the sleigh, and took them to the home of my brother Michael, out in the garden. My brother Michael had already woken from his sleep; I told him of my suspicions, and hurried home.

When I arrived home, I found one of the guests sitting next to my son Ephraim Zalman. I woke everyone in the house and whispered to them that these Jews were snatchers, and that they were carrying two boys bound in chains, who had undoubtedly been kidnapped.

The Jew seated near my son Ephraim Zalman said, "He looks like a good boy. G-d in Heaven has burdened me with two sons who are insane, and speak lies. I have no choice but to chain them up and take them to the psychiatrist in Vitebsk."

Meanwhile, my brother Michael gave the children food and drink, and locked them in a room. He then came to my house, and seeing the two Jews he became furious. He went over to them saying, "Shalom Aleichem, Jewish snatchers! Leave this house immediately, or you'll be sorry!"

The two Jews did not yet realize that they had been found out, and one said to the other, "Let's get out of here. As you can see, we've fallen in among heartless Jews who have no pity for an unfortunate person such as yourself, who is taking his insane sons to a psychiatrist.

"I myself," the Jew continued saying to us, "live in a small village, just like you. And when I found out that the tar maker who lives in the forest nearby had children who had gone incurably insane, I took pity on him. I harnessed my horse, and am now conveying him and his two sons to the psychiatrist in

Vitebsk."

The Jews left my house in a huff. When they came to the sleigh and discovered that the children were gone, they immediately returned screaming. But they soon realized that screaming would do them no good, and they hurriedly fled the village, leaving the children behind with us.

A month later, it was my brother Michael's regular time to visit Lubavitch and see the Rebbe the Tzemach Tzedek. When he entered the Rebbe's room and told him about the children, the Rebbe's face beamed with joy. He gave us all his blessing, instructing us to keep the children for a year and then to take them home. The children remained with us and studied together with our own sons under the melamed Reb Yeruchem Zev, doing very well.

From that time on I had an overpowering desire to work at pidyon sh'vuyim. Unable to restrain myself, I went to the Tzemach Tzedek and told him of this great desire. The Rebbe agreed, and prepared an itinerary for me to follow in this work. Three or four months a year - sometimes in the summer and sometimes in the winter - I would journey to various places, and ransom children who had been kidnapped and handed over to become "cantonists." I pursued this work for seven years, until I was finally caught and came within an inch of losing my life.

To be continued...

1. In HaTamim, the subtitle reads, "From stories told by Reb Avraham Abba Persan." It seems, however, that the article was actually written by the Frieddiker Rebbe himself. Apparently the Frieddiker Rebbe had heard the stories from Reb Avraham Abba, and recorded them in his diary. The editors of HaTamim included - as a footnote - a brief biography of Reb Avraham Abba; (a translation appears in a later chapter).

2. See later page 14 for another story figuring Reb Dov Zev.

3. Bereishis Rabbah 16:4.



שער
מורה

Rambam

פרק א'	שלושה פרקים	ו' כסלו
פרק י	פרק ח-י	
פרק יא	פרק יא. הט לבי וגו'. ספר נזיקין הל' נזקי ממון פרק א-ב	ז' כסלו
פרק יב	פרק ג-ה	ח' כסלו
פרק יג	פרק ו-ח	ט' כסלו
פרק יד	פרק ט-יא	י' כסלו
פרק טו	פרק יב-יד	י"א כסלו
פרק טז	הל' גניבה.. בפרקים אלו. פרק א-ג	י"ב כסלו



Maladetz'n!

Because the Rebbetzin was not involved with the day to day goings-on in 770, she did not often witness the boundless love of the Chassidim for the Rebbe. On Rosh Chodesh Kislev 5738, six weeks after the heart attack that kept the Rebbe in bed in 770, rumors had been swirling that the Rebbe would leave 770 that night for the first time since Shemini Atzeres, when the heart attack took place.

The rumors turned out to be true. When the Rebbe was getting ready to leave 770 at about 9:00 at night, people were packed in front of 770, as the strong desire to see our king was then at fever pitch (since most of Anash had not seen the Rebbe

since the events of Shemini Atzeres). The Rebbetzin was watching the joyous spectacle from inside the Friediker Rebbe's Yechidus room, upstairs in 770, with the lights turned off in order not to be seen (and perhaps to see better).

Another fellow and I had the zchus to be there with the Rebbetzin, watching. Suddenly, like a bolt of lightning, a happy niggun burst from the mouths of the assembled throngs, and people were jumping in the air to get just one glimpse of their beloved Rebbe. It was absolutely electrifying – you could feel their love for the Rebbe with your hands. I burst into tears, and out of the corner of my eye, I glanced at the Rebbetzin and it

For Chassidim in our generation, Rosh Chodesh Kislev is one of the most joyous days on the calendar. It was on this day in the year 5738 that the Rebbe recovered from a major heart attack he had suffered on Shemini Atzeres, sufficiently enough to return to his home on President Street, after remaining in his room in 770 for five weeks. When the Rebbe actually walked out the door and appeared on the front stairway of 770, the Rebbetzin was watching from the second floor of 770. The following is a description of the awesome scene as recounted by Reb Mendel Notik, one of the “Mashamshim Ba’kodesh” (Mashbakim), who served at the Rebbe and Rebbetzin’s home.

seemed to me that her eyes also became teary. Then she said in Yiddish/Russian, "Ah-zelche maladyetz'n!" (Roughly translated: Such great boys!) She repeated this a few times, glowing with love.

The Rebbetzin fondly compared the rejoicing that she was witnessed at the moment the Rebbe appeared in front of 770, to that of the Chassidim in the former Soviet Union at the time when her father, the Frieddiker Rebbe, was released from his imprisonment on Yud Beis Tamuz in the year 5687.

When the Rebbe had left and the Rebbetzin was getting ready to leave, I asked her whether she wanted me to come to the house afterwards, in case she'd need something. (She planned to leave 770 after the Rebbe had already left, and the crowds had dispersed.) She did not accept, saying, "You need to rest. Everything will be okay." (Apparently she had seen how I had been so affected moments before.) "I will call you afterwards from the house to tell you that everything is definitely okay, so you won't have to worry." At 11:00 that night the Rebbetzin called me to say, "Everything is fine with my husband. Now get some rest, and we'll speak tomorrow."

[With permission of author, Mrs. M. Hecht, daughter of Rabbi Notik.]



שערי נגינה

“U’viyom Simachaschem”



“U’viyom Simachaschem” is a lively, joyous niggun, whose tune is used on various occasions. Its beautiful words are Pesukim from the Torah, which we say during Mussaf on Rosh Hashana. They speak of the joy that should complement the bringing of Korbanos on various special days, through the blowing of the trumpets.

The Perfect Words

The distribution of “Kos Shel B’rocha” on Motzei Rosh Hashonah 5740 was an exceptionally joyous occasion.

In the midst of singing the lively tune of “U’viyom Simachaschem” (this was a commonly sung tune and was also used with the words of “Sim Shalom”, the words that we have today were applied at this momentous occasion), the Rebbe turned to Rabbi Groner and told him that the words “U’viyom Simachaschem” fit this niggun.

After singing it for a while the Rebbe turned to Rabbi Moshe Teleshevsky and said to him: “The style of piyutim is that after each stanza you go over the first words again [sort of like a chorus]. An example of this is in Selichos when we say the words “Ulai Yeracheim” and after all, you are the Chazzan here”, ended the Rebbe.

The Rebbe’s intention was that Reb Moshe should sing the niggun again.

At the end of “Kos Shel B’rocha” they were singing this niggun yet again. Suddenly, the Rebbe interrupted and announced: “We would do better with a *Simchas Torahdike Niggun*”.

Chassidim then started singing, “Zol Shoin Zain di Geula” without the words. The Rebbe encouraged the singing with both of his hands. The joy and energy that was given off by the encouragement of the singing was like that of *Simchas Torah*. The entire hall, all the chassidim felt at that moment, as if they were standing by *hakafos*.

Levi Freiden (one of the famous photographers of the Rebbe) recounts, that when he returned to Eretz Yisroel and showed the footage of this spectacular event, the chassidim felt very encouraged by what they had seen. For the video served as evidence that the Rebbe had regained his strength, vigor and energy, after the Rebbe’s heart-attack on Shmini Atzeres 5738¹.

At the *Simchas Torah Farbrengen* of that year, they started the Farbrengen with this niggun.

[Excerpts of a Yoman by Rabbi Michael Zeligson]

1. A video recording of this clip can be seen on “Tishrei with the Rebbe” Vol. 1 by Jem.

Chassidus Behind Bars

Reb Pinchas Reizes was a Chossid of the Mittlerer Rebbe. When Rabbi Pinchas passed away, his only heir was a nephew, who unfortunately was a complete scoundrel.

Among the items that came into the nephew's possession was a letter written by the Rebbe to his uncle, asking Reb Pinchas to serve on a special committee to disburse funds for charity. The sum cited in the letter was 4,000 rubles.

The nephew saw this as a golden opportunity to blackmail the Rebbe. If the Rebbe did not give him money, he threatened, he would go to the authorities and tell them that the Rebbe was collecting funds for clandestine, illegal purposes. But the Rebbe was immune to his intimidations. "Not one penny will you get from me," he told him. "Do whatever you want, for I have done nothing wrong and am not afraid of your slander."

Incensed by the Rebbe's response, the nephew carried out his threat. With the help of some unsavory associates he forged the original letter to make it appear as if the Rebbe had 104,000 rubles instead of 4,000 -- a veritable fortune in those days. The Rebbe was accused of various criminal activities, such as trying to bribe the Turkish Sultan, and it was also alleged that the Rebbe's study hall had been built to the exact specifications of the Holy Temple in Yerushalayim, indicating his pretensions to the throne.

On Saturday night, Tishrei 28, 5587 investigators showed up at the Rebbe's house. They conducted a thorough search of the premises. Careful note was taken of all written materials, and anything else they considered suspicious. At the same time, a separate group of investigators measured the Rebbe's study hall; the astonished chassidim could not figure out what they were trying to find.

By that time a large crowd had gathered in front of the Rebbe's house, and everyone could hear the tearful pleading of the Rebbe's family with the police. The only one who seemed to be taking everything in stride was the Rebbe. As if nothing unusual were going on, he withdrew to his room to write a *ma'amar*. A while later he announced that he would receive people for private audiences, which he did.

The following morning the Rebbe was ordered to accompany the police to their headquarters in Vitebsk. Word of the Rebbe's arrest quickly spread, and in every town and village

along the way hundreds of Yidden came out to greet him. Thanks to the efforts of several influential Jews, it was agreed that the long journey would be made in stages, with numerous stops to allow the Rebbe to rest.

When the carriage arrived in Dobromisl, the Rebbe asked to be allowed to daven Mincha in the local synagogue. Afterwards, to everyone's surprise, he said a *ma'amar* on the possuk in Shir Hashirim, "Mayim Rabim Lo Yuchlu." The allusion to his present situation was clear.

The Rebbe was subsequently imprisoned in the city of Vitebsk and placed under tight security. Sometime later it was learned that the formal charge against him was rebellion against the government.

The Rebbe was jailed for one month and ten days, but even from the beginning he was granted certain privileges. Three people were permitted to stay with him, and three times a day, twenty Jews were allowed into his room to daven with him. The Rebbe was also permitted to say a *ma'amar* twice a week in front of fifty people after the Rebbe's doctor testified that it was crucial to the Rebbe's health.

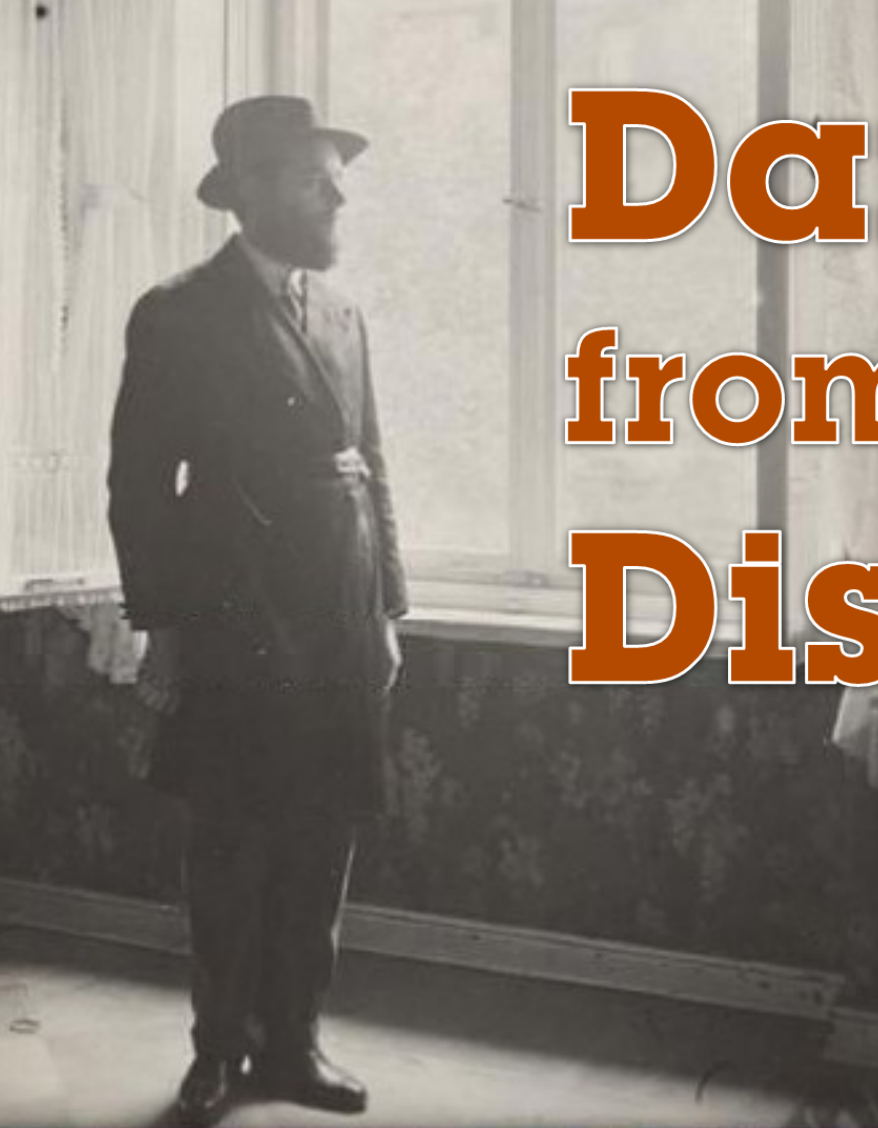
In the meantime, efforts to secure the Rebbe's release were being made behind the scenes. Several high-ranking government officials who had heard about the Rebbe and held him in great esteem tried to exert their influence. The Rebbe was interrogated numerous times, during which he proved that not only were his connections to the Turkish Sultan completely fabricated, but his designs on the Czar's throne were equally fictitious.

At the end of several weeks the results of the investigation were turned over to the Minister of the Interior. The minister was very impressed by the Rebbe's responses to all the questions, and decided that a direct confrontation between the Rebbe and his accuser was in order.

On the designated day the Rebbe dressed in his white Shabbos finery. When he walked into the minister's office, the official was so disconcerted by his angelic appearance that he ordered his servants to bring the Rebbe a chair.

The informer began to heap his invectives upon the Rebbe, but one by one, the Rebbe dismissed the accusations entirely. At one point in the proceedings the accuser addressed the Rebbe as "Rebbe," prompting the Rebbe to turn to the minister and remark, "Did you see that? First he calls me a charlatan and a revolutionary, and in the next breath he calls me Rebbe!"

From that point on the accuser's allegations became increasingly illogical. The minister was so irritated by his behavior that he ordered him to "stop barking," and he was led away in humiliation. The Rebbe was escorted back to his room with great deference, and informed that he would soon be released.



Dancing from a Distance

Yud Daled Kislev, 5689... A date that says so much to the Chossid of our time. One need not probe for a perfect description of its significance any further than the Rebbe's own holy words, "This is the day in which I was connected to you; and you to me..."

The wedding ceremony itself was marked in a most majestic manner, with a ceremony attended by hundreds of Chassidim and world-famous Torah leaders of the time. A most memorable event that left profound impressions upon the hearts and minds of all the participants, remaining with them their entire lives.

The Rebbe's parents, Reb Levi Yitzchok and Rebbetzin Chana, then resided in the city of Yekatrinsk, which at that time was under communist rule. As the wedding was to take place in Warsaw, Poland, the marriage waited for several months with the hope that the Rebbe's parents would be able to attend. But it became clear that the communist officials would not allow the Schneerson family, the pleasure of attending their own son's wedding.

Nevertheless, they were determined not to pass by such an occasion lightly. In her memoirs dated on 14 Kislev 5709, twenty years later, the Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Chana recounts the joyous celebration that took place in their home. She describes in vivid detail the vast preparations that led up to the long-awaited evening, and goes on to articulate how their entire community joined in the celebration with song and dance. The onlookers watched with tears streaming from their eyes as their illustrious Rav danced with his father-in-law and brother, privileged to have been with him in this "bittersweet" moment, despite the heavy price that they would very likely be liable to pay for such "anti-government activity".

The following is a recounting of an episode from that same period, but is less well known. It is excerpts of a letter from the Rebbe's uncle, Rav Shmuel Schneerson, in which he recounts to the Rebbe and Rebbetzin, the occurrences

of the preceding Shabbos, when the Rebbe's "oifruf" was commemorated in his father's home. This too, as was the case of the Chuppah, in the absence of the Chosson:

I speculate that you wish to know of what transpired here on the "big day". Let me begin from the "Oifruf", which I was privileged to have spent together with your parents, may they live and be well. On Shabbos morning following davening, there was of course, a grand Kiddush followed by a festive meal. Although the actual invitees were quite few, a vast crowd participated. A number of speeches were offered to honor the occasion, and the new couple. Above them all, stood the exceptional address of your father, who spoke through his tears of joy that flowed from the depth of his heart. It truly seemed to us as though the Chosson and Kalla sat here at our side, and no barrier of distance existed at all; as if you were with us in totality...

The meal continued on until eight o'clock in the evening, and nearly all the participants remained until its conclusion. In the midst of the meal, as our hearts rejoiced in an upbeat manner, we broke out in a joyous dance as would befit such an occasion - and perhaps even more than befitting... The dance did not only take place on the ground, but it ascended "upward"; we found place to dance upon the table as well. And not only did our souls spread forth, but even our bodies, i.e. we removed our outer garments revealing our tzitzis... All-in-all, it was a day of great celebration, one of sincere joy, truly magnificent. Even I myself "let-loose" a bit ...

As this day concluded, we began the preparations for the wedding, with which we busied ourselves for three consecutive

days, from Shabbos, until Tuesday evening.

We actually celebrated an authentic wedding, although the Chosson and Kalla were not here (something which may have had its affects on the celebration somewhat). However, truth to be told - taking into consideration the sense of joy in the air -, it really seemed as if you were here; not only in spirit, but in body as well!

The grand event commenced at seven o'clock in the evening. Your father opened by notifying all the partakers, with tears in his eyes, of this joyous moment, and requested of them all that they join him in his celebration. Despite the restricted space availability - which may result in some sweating - he asked that as true friends, they overlook the discomfort and sweat along with him on this momentous evening (and this they indeed carried out...).

This was followed by seven or eight speeches, and then your father delivered his words, as is customary. The speeches persisted until eleven o'clock in the evening. In the meantime, a music band was fetched, and the dance was on non-stop. This continued until seven o'clock in the morning. Again, our joy surged forth so much so that it caused an outbreak of our souls and bodies, and we revealed our tzitzis (those who wore no tzitzis opened their outer garments, revealing their shirts...) "And the city of Dyeneper' was beaming with joy!" ("Tzohala Ve'someicha...")

We conducted private dances between ourselves - the invitees, and we had communal dances with the remainder of the community. All-in-all it could be said that one who has not seen rejoicing as such, has not seen true rejoicing in his days...



Rosh Hashana L'Chassidus

"Gutt Yom Tov! Gutt Yom Tov!"

The setting - Lubavitch, the year - 5662.

Happy voices rang out in the hall of the *yeshiva gedola* of Lubavitch on the night of Yud Tes Kislev, *Rosh HaShana*

L'Chassidus, 5662 (1901), that year a Friday night. Candles were lit and tables were royally set, eyes shone and hearts raced, this was a special Yom Tov! A Yom Tov for Chabad *chassidim*, a Yom Tov for *Toras HaChassidus* - a Yom Tov for all of Creation.

The joy reached the heavens; but not many know that this joy almost wasn't ...

Kislev - the Month of Holidays and the Month of Geula.

Historically, *Chassidim* look forward to the *Chag Hageula* of the Alter Rebbe and of the Mittlerer Rebbe. Yud-Tes Kislev was always celebrated in the great hall of the *yeshiva* in Lubavitch with great pomp and joy, the Rebbe Rashab *farbrenging* at the head of the table. Aside from the hundreds of *T'mimim* who learned in the *yeshiva*, hundreds of *chassidim* and *baalei battim* would come from all around to participate in this *farbrengen* with the Rebbe Rashab.

How magnificent was the Rebbe! His face shone with an *Or Eloki*; a light of joy radiating from his pure face. The Rebbe would say a *maamer chassidus* and many *sichos kodesh*, which would warm the heart and feed the *neshama*.

In Cheshvan 5662, the enemies of the Yidden in Russia reared their ugly heads and began persecuting them. In those years, Yidden were only allowed to live in an area called the "Pale of Settlement". The economic conditions in the Pale were very difficult; there was not much opportunity. This, combined with over-crowding, forced many Yidden to find living quarters outside the Pale.

Many of those Yidden received papers stating that they were dentists, a profession that earned them the right to live outside the Pale. Others procured similar documents for other professions, for if one was an "asset to society" they would be allowed to live in the larger cities.

The enemies of the Yidden began a campaign to enact





terrible new decrees against them. Using the excuse that the Yidden were going against the law and had spread beyond the Pale where they were permitted to live, they began stirring the upper echelons of the Russian Government against the Yidden.

In the course of a few days tens of Yidden were arrested. The heads of family were taken to prison and their possessions placed under government seal. (Those affected, including the women and children, amounted close to three hundred souls.)

The community activists wanted to help yet were at a loss as what to. They felt fettered by an overwhelming sentiment of hate towards the Yidden that had spread through the many aristocratic circles and which had affected many government ministers.

The Rebbe Rashab suffered deeply. "A heavy cloud rested upon my father's face," relates the Frierdiker Rebbe in his diary. On Motzei Shabbos 5 Kislev, the Rebbe left Lubavitch, together with the Frierdiker Rebbe. They took the express train to Moscow to begin arranging the release of the imprisoned Yidden and to search for a way to change the government's general attitude towards the Yidden.

To make matters worse, allegations were made that the *Chassid* Reb Mendel Horenstein, brother-in-law of the Rebbe Rashab, burned down his own lumber factory in order to damage lumber belonging to the gentile who shared the

property. The charge was baseless, yet Reb Mendel was imprisoned to await trial.

This is not the place to go into detail on the efforts of the Rebbe Rashab and the Frierdiker Rebbe on behalf of the Jews of Russia, more can be found in the diary of the Frierdiker Rebbe printed as the *hakdama* to *Kuntres U'mayon*. Suffice it to say, that after much effort they succeeded in releasing those imprisoned and began to slowly reverse the Jew-hating trend that had begun to spread amongst the "elite" society.

On Yud Kislev, the Frierdiker Rebbe went back to Lubavitch. On Yud-Tes Kislev, the Rebbe Rashab traveled to Peterburg to; a. secure the release of Reb Mendel Horenstein, b. arrange the return of the confiscated property to their owners, and c. prove the libels to be false and arrange permits to let those imprisoned continue living in the large cities like before.

Let us now return to Lubavitch, and follow the events as they played out in the absence of the Rebbe Rashab.

The trip was sudden and unexpected. Everyone thought the Rebbe would return in time for Yud Tes Kislev, but as days passed, the *chassidim* and *T'mimim* began to doubt whether this would indeed be so.

Doubt became certainty following a committee meeting of *T'mimim* with the Frierdiker Rebbe, *menahel* of the *yeshiva*, officially informing them of the improbability of his father's celebration with the *yeshiva*. The *menahel* told the *talmidim* to celebrate on Yud-Tes Kislev according to the seder set for them by the *Vaad of Mashpe'im and Mashgichim*: students of the *yeshiva gavoha* and *yeshiva ketana* and the *chadorim* would eat together with the Frierdiker Rebbe and *mashpiim*, *mashgichim*, *roshei yeshiva*, *magidei shiurim*, and even those who worked in the *yeshiva* offices.

Both the meals of Friday Night and the meal of Motzei Shabbos would be eaten, everyone together, in the spacious *yeshiva* hall, as opposed to the *yeshiva* dining room where the students usually ate. On Sunday the 21st of Kislev, there would be a *Farbrengen* in the house of the Frierdiker Rebbe and the members of the *Vaad* were to choose which of *bachrim* would join.

However, when the committee, composed of the oldest and most serious *bochrim* in the *yeshiva*, heard what the Frierdiker Rebbe had said, they were stunned. They all yearned to be with the Rebbe Rashab at this *farbrengen*, to see him and to hear every word he uttered, and now...

For the rest of the week preceding Yud-Tes Kislev, preparations went on as usual with the hope and faith that perhaps the Rebbe would return to Lubavitch after all. A special committee of *bochrim* was established to organize the *farbrengens* and festivities. Many guests streamed to Lubavitch for the big day, among them famous *ziknei ha'chassidim*, such as R' Dovid Tzvi Chein from Chernigov (the Radatz), and the outstanding *chassid* Rav Dov Zev Koznikov, the *Rav* of Yekaterinaslav. People were full of anticipation, for who knew? Just maybe...

The *yeshiva's* *hanhala* convened to discuss the upcoming event, deciding that although the Rebbe wouldn't be there, everything would carry on as planned. The *mashpiim* also agreed that the *T'mimim* from other cities, who had already received permission to come to Lubavitch for Yud-Tes Kislev to be with the Rebbe, should still come.

Thursday, the 17th of Kislev. The grand *farbrengen* would be taking place the following evening. Although little time remained, *chassidim* still hoped the Rebbe would make a last-minute appearance, but as time passed, "the cloud of gloom intensified," as the Frierdiker Rebbe put it.

At 8:00 a.m., before Shachris, the two great *chassidim*, the Radatz and Rav Dov Zev, met in shul and in the course of their discussion two courses of action came up. Either they would ask the Rebbe to come back especially for Yud-Tes Kislev, or they were going to travel to him in Moscow. However, travel to Moscow required permits, which no one had, so what would be the answer...? And from hour to hour everyone's sadness grew and the mood became progressively darker.

(The Chassidim were especially looking forward to this Yud-Tes Kislev because the year before (5661) the Rebbe Rashab had not been in Lubavitch.)

In the early evening the Radatz and Rav Dov Zev went to Rebbetzin Rivka, the Rebbe Rashab's mother, with the request that she ask the Rebbe to come to Lubavitch, if only for one day.

The Rebbetzin answered, "I am certain that if he could come, he would certainly do so." Then she added, "I cannot ask of him something which his holy *daas* doesn't agree with." The two *Chassidim* left, heavy hearted.

* * *

At 8:30 p.m. on Thursday, a letter arrived. A holy letter from the Rebbe Rashab dated Yom Reviei, the 16th of Kislev.

The Frierdiker Rebbe rejoiced. At 9:30 he went to the hall of the *yeshiva gedola*, went up to the podium, and in the presence of the *mashgichim*, *mashpiim*, and guests he joyfully announced: "We have just merited a holy letter from my holy father, my



teacher and Rebbe. The letter explains the significance of the upcoming holy day. With Hashem's help, tomorrow night at the *farbrengen*, the letter will be read to everyone."

Although nothing could replace the Rebbe's holy presence, the news of the arrival of a letter from the Rebbe Rashab and that it explained the underlying theme of Yud-Tes Kislev, uplifted everyone's spirits and the great sadness lessened. They eagerly anticipated the contents of the letter, for the Frierdiker Rebbe didn't show it to anyone, even the *mashgichim* for Chassidus.

The members of the committee worked around the clock to ensure that everything would be ready before Shabbos. The *yeshiva's* hall was washed and decorated. Long tables and hundreds of chairs were arranged. Beautiful vessels were brought from the home of the Rebbe Rashab and placed on the tables.

Many *talmidim* worked for hours setting up rows upon rows of candles on the walls. A grand 1,668 candles were set up to correspond to the words "*Chag Rabbeinu ha'gadol v'ha'kadosh nishmaso Eden*." The hall was flooded with light, a marvelous sight to behold.

* * *

The Shabbos Queen spread her wings over Lubavitch. It seemed as though, that not only had an extra *neshamas* descended upon the hundreds of *talmidim* and guests,

but it was a double and redoubled *neshamah* - double for Shabbos and redoubled for the *Chag HaChagim*, Yud-Tes Kislev.

Everyone gathered in the *yeshiva*. The Frierdiker Rebbe instructed the *talmidim* to sit in their usual places for a seder *Chassidus*. The *mashgichim*, *mashpim*, and honored guests sat with the Frierdiker Rebbe at a special table. The hundreds of *talmidim* sat and learned with vigor. The sound of Torah echoed loudly, extending far beyond the windows of the *zal*.

After an hour and a half of learning, the *gabbai* announced a break for *Kabbalas Shabbos*. When *davening* was over, the *gabbai* announced that the Rebbe's letter would now be read.

With measured steps, the Frierdiker Rebbe walked over to the podium flanked by the two *mashgichim* (of the *sidrei chassidus* and *sidrei nigleh*) at his right and left. The sight was reminiscent of the Rebbe's *t'kias shofar*, when the Rebbe stood at the lectern surrounded by *chassidim*. All rose, as is appropriate for *chassidim* being addressed by their Rebbe.

The anticipation was palpable and the inner joy was heightened. Silence reigned; only the sound of the rustling letter could be heard. The Frierdiker Rebbe began reading aloud; each word golden, each letter a sparkling jewel. "My children, *sh'yichyu*," he began, and the loving voice of a father could be heard throughout the hall.

B"H. Yom Dalet, 16 Kislev 5662 Moscow

My sons, gather together on Yud-Tes Kislev, which comes upon us for good - those who learn, their leaders and their teachers and their mashgichim - and rejoice with the joy of the holiday which redeemed our souls in peace, and the light and life of our souls was given to us. This day is the Rosh HaShana for chassidus that our holy fathers bequeathed to us, and this is the Torah of the Baal Shem Tov, z'l.

This day is the beginning of Your work, the completion of the true intention of the creation of man on earth, to further draw down the revelation of the inner light of our holy Torah, which was drawn down on this day in a general way for the entire year. We must arouse our hearts on this day with desire, and inner, essential will with the true [innermost] point of our hearts, which will illuminate our souls with the light of the inner part of His Torah.

From the depths I call out to You, Hashem, to draw the aspect of the depth and pnimiyus of Toras Hashem and the mitzvos of Hashem from the aspect of the innermost and essential Ohr Ein Sof Boruch Hu, so that it illumine the inner part of our souls, so that our entire essence (i.e., our entire beings, the essence and its expressions, etc.) will be [directed] to Him, blessed is He, alone - so that He banish from us every evil

and disgusting trait of the natural traits, so that all our deeds and affairs (whether in avoda, i.e., t'filla, Torah and mitzvos, or in matters of the world which are necessary to sustain the body) are in accordance with the true intention, for the sake of Heaven, as per the desire of Hashem, etc. May Hashem, Father of Mercy, have mercy on us and enliven us in the proper and straight path; forthwith they shall see His countenance, etc.

This was the first time the *chassidim* merited to hear the unique term with which the Rebbe Rashab had used in his holy letter when describing Yud-Tes Kislev, calling it "*Rosh HaShana L'Chassidus*".

Upon conclusion of the reading, all the students sat and sang an old *chassidishe* niggun, a niggun that pierces the heart and reaches to the *neshamah*. The rapturous notes of the *niggun* flowed from the mouths of hundreds of *talmidim*, washing across the room in great waves of song.

At 6:45 p.m., Reb Dov Zev rose to relate the story of the Arrest and *Geula*. In vivid tones he described the pain experienced by the *chassidim* when the Alter Rebbe was taken from them; the agony, the sorrow, the tears. He recounted the entire story up until the release of the Alter Rebbe from jail. He described how the *chassidim* had been somersaulting in the snowy streets of Petersburg, and the tremendous joy they all felt.

At this point Reb Dov Zev took a *Tanya* and taught the famous letter the Alter Rebbe wrote after the *Geula* entitled "*Katonti*." The *talmidim* leaned over the volumes of *Tanya* in front of them, reading the holy letters, learning from the teachings of the *Baal HaGeula*. All listened in utter silence; the only sound that could be heard was the sputtering of the thousands of candles.

When the learning was concluded, an elder *chassid* by the name of Reb Shmuel Betzalel (the Rashbatz) stood up. He had seen many Yud-Tes Kislevs in his time, but this was the first time he heard the extraordinary phrase the Rebbe Rashab wrote designating this day as "*Rosh HaShana L'Chassidus*", elevating it above the other holidays.

The Rashbatz raised a cup for *l'chaim*; the *talmidim* listened in awe to this elder *Chossid* that had merited seeing the Tzemach Tzedek.

"Our day of celebration is exceptionally lofty," the Rashbatz began and his voice shook with emotion, "If not for this day, the day of redemption and freedom of our great and holy Rebbe, we wouldn't know Hashem, Who gave the Torah, for *Rabbeinu HaKadosh* taught us to know Hashem, our Maker. We ought to rejoice on this day of light, and included in this are the words of our luminary the Rebbe *shlita*, that this day is the Rosh HaShana for *chassidus* and the day of revelation of *pnimiyus ha'Torah*. We

must offer thanks and praise to Hashem, who did not deprive us of descendants of *Rabbeinu HaGadol*, the Alter Rebbe.

"*T'mimim!* We have the Rebbe, who stands and serves before Hashem to teach knowledge of Torah and Hashem, Who gave the Torah, - our Nasi and teacher, the crown of our glory, who shows us wonders like in the days of the Alter Rebbe, returning the hearts of beloved children to their Father in Heaven. I raise my cup to the life of our Rebbe, and with all the strength of my soul I call out: "*Yechi Rabbeinu l'olam!* May Hashem bolster his strength and power to carry the tower of light to illuminate the earth and its inhabitants upon it, until the coming of Moshiach!"

A resounding of voices could be heard from one end of the hall to the other: "*Amen! Amen! Yechi Rabbeinu L'olam!* May the members of Tomchei T'mimim and all its administrators live forever!"

These were special moments, not just for the younger *chassidim*, but also for the elder *Chassidim* who sat at the head table. They all raised cups of *l'chaim* and wished each other heartfelt *brachos* for the New Year, the New Year for *chassidus* for all the Jewish people, for good and for blessing.

After a brief break, the meal began, which continued until 2:00 a.m. It was a royal feast befitting the Holiday of Holidays, Yud-Tes Kislev. At the end of the meal, everyone danced, and Lubavitch was filled with "*ora v'simcha v'sason v'yikar.*"

At 3:00 a.m., the Frierdiker Rebbe rose, blessed all present, and with great love he stood to leave the guests and *talmidim*. He turned to leave; the *talmidim* preceded him, standing in the doorway of the building in two long, straight rows. As he walked out they began singing, "*Ki b'simcha tzeitzeiu u'v'shalom tuvalun,*" and they accompanied the Frierdiker Rebbe to his home.

"All the invited guests took enormous pleasure from the splendid celebration, and their hearts rejoiced... The *talmidim* were positively affected by this celebration, for they were brought close to *avodas Hashem*, and they increased their diligence in the study of Torah with faith and sincerity."

With these lines Rabbi Moshe Rosenblum, secretary to the Frierdiker Rebbe, concludes his account of the events.

* * *

The reaction to this Letter was not long in coming. On the



22nd of Teves the Frierdiker Rebbe writes in his diary, how many letters had arrived demanding a copy of the Letter, now termed "The Maamar of Rosh Hashanah of Chassidus". Over one thousand copies were immediately made and sent out to the various communities.

By 7 Nissan, about four thousand, seven hundred and fifty copies had been transcribed and sent out. The Frierdiker Rebbe lists three types of responses that the Mazkirus received in connection to this letter:

1) Twenty-three letters speaking about the great effect 'The Letter' had. They complain that they hadn't been sent The Letter right when it had come out; and (some begging, some rebuking) they assert that had they received the letter in time for Chanuka they would have made another Yom Tov.

2) Twelve letters written with great passion pouring out their wrath on the Mazkirus. One: you who work in the office of Tomchei Temimim are holding back our sustenance. Another reads as follows: this *rishus* to restrain this wonderful light and life, can only be found in someone born in Lubavitch. Koppel (one of the Mazkirim), you remember what the Rebbe [Maharash] said Chanuka 5641 regarding the Lubavitcher *yungerleit*, that *leben yam is truken* (near the sea the land is dry). A third: one who is full and satisfied cannot feel another's hunger, if only you had also lived between those swollen with *nachas* over their *bletter* (pages of) Gemara learned *lishma*, would you then understand the great need, in general for a *Chassidishe vort*, and especially for a Holy Letter from the Rebbe.

3) Nine letters describing the Seudas Mitzva they had made upon the arrival of the Letter, where they had re-celebrated the Yom Tov and blessed the Rebbe.

4) Four letters that are in a category of their own.

a. The *Chassidim* who lived in Brisk received the letter from the Rebbe Rashab making Yud-Tes Kislev into a *chassidic* Rosh HaShana, and they wanted to establish a day of joy on Purim Katan as a substitute for the previous Yud-Tes Kislev. When R' Chaim Brisker heard about this he said, "Don't mix one *simcha* with another. The *Yom Tov* of Yud-Tes Kislev is deserving of a *Yom Tov* in its own right, and specifically in light of this new Letter".

b. The *Chassidim* in Kremenchug established three days of *simcha* (the 16th, 17th and 18th of Shvat), and even the *Poilshe rabbanim*, such as R' Yisroel Yaakov and Rabbi Terechinski, danced without jackets saying, "Chabad, *Baruch Hashem*, lives. May Hashem make that *Chagas* (*chassidim* of Poland) live, too."

c. The *Chassidim* in Vilna had a huge *seuda* as soon as they

received the letter. One of the rabbis in Vilna heard about the meal the *Chassidim* were making and how they regarded Yud-Tes Kislev as Rosh HaShana. He reported this to R' Chaim Ozer Grodzensky, mocking the *chassidim* by quoting the *Mishna* that lists only four Roshei HaShana, while by the *chassidim*, they now had five. The *gaon* (himself bothered by this rabbi's laxity in fasting BHa"b and the observances of *Yom Kippur Koton*) responded: "They are adding – while we are diminishing."

d. A letter from Petersburg telling the following story: The chossid Reb Bentzion Otievsky had come for business purposes to the city. While visiting with his relative Mr. Yakov Otievsky he had showed him the new letter regarding Yud-Tes Kislev. Mr. Yakov, although he was a loose man (not frum), was filled with memories of his Chassidic youth and became inspired to join a Chassidishe farbrengen. He told Reb Bentzion that he wished to host the *seuda yomtov* that would surely be held in the coming days.

On that Thursday, the 10th of Shvat, they celebrated the second *Yomtov* of Yud-Tes Kislev with much gladness and joy. Being that Mr. Yakov's house was not kosher, they brought the food from another Chasid who operated a public kosher kitchen in his guest-house.

After many hours and many more Lechayims, Reb Yakov became very inspired and swore that from that day on he would keep a kosher home by eating only kosher and observing the Shabbos. The very next day he broke his non-kosher dishes and bought new cookware and cutlery; and on Shabbos Shira Reb Yakov closed his business for the first time in 19 years.

Come and see the awesome power *Chassidim* by a chasidishe farbrengen carry. When enthused with the words of their Rebbe they can bring back a nineteen-year-old *oichel treifos* and *mechalel Shabbos*. *Chassidim* underestimate their *ruchniyus'dike* powers.

* * *

Since Kislev 5662, the *chassidim* began calling Yud-Tes Kislev "*Rosh HaShana L'Chassidus*." The *HaYom Yom* begins and ends with Yud-Tes Kislev, as the Frierdiker Rebbe wrote, "Based on the holy letter of the Rebbe [Rashab] about the *Chag HaChagim*, which is the *Rosh HaShana l'Toras Chassidus Chabad*." (In a copy of the manuscript of the *HaYom Yom*, the Rebbe wrote "*Gutt Yom Tov*," and the Frierdiker Rebbe added in his own handwriting, "for a good year in learning *chassidus* and the ways of *chassidus*.")

גוט יום טוב. לשנה טובה, בלימוד החסידות ובדרכי החסידות, תכתבו ותחתימו"

Sources: *Hakdama Kuntres U'mayon* p. 7, 14; *Seifer HaToldos Admur HaRashab*, pp. 752; *Kerem Chabad*, Vol. 3, pp. 45



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. ∞





The Rebbe's Farbrengens

Throughout the past year, the staff at Jewish Educational Media have steadily released full videos of the Rebbe's Farbrengens for each month's Yom Tov or Yoma D'Pagra. This has benefitted thousands of Bochorim and Anash alike. The Farbrengens are viewed in all Yeshivos and in many communities and are literally "*Mechaye nefoshos*"; a pleasure to participate in. Almost like the delight of standing at a real Farbrengen... (if that is at all possible)

Many Bochorim have been asking if this is indeed such a

vital part of bochor's life. "Why can't we suffice with learning the Rebbe's Torah as it has been published and as it appears in its printed form? Must we strain ourselves and stretch our attention -spans to their limits, attempting to follow along as the Rebbe speaks?"

Well, there are many ways to answer this question. It's true, the Rebbe's Torah can be accessed in its printed form, but there is something unique about hearing the sicha coming from the Rebbe directly, in its original form, his own words.



Let us first understand why it's important to learn the Rebbe's Torah in general.

Again, there are many answers to this question and this point can be clarified in more than one way, but let's attempt to touch upon one aspect of the many:

The Rebbe shows us how to fulfill our purpose

Hashem put us into this world for a purpose. We are not

here by mere accident *Chas v'sholom*. The purpose is (as it says in the Mishna and quoted all over Chassidus, especially – literally thousands of times – in the Rebbe's sichos): “*Ani ni'veisi le'shamesh es koini*”. I.e. to serve Hashem by learning Torah and doing Mitzvos, transforming the world into a place where Hashem can have a *Dira B'tachtonim*.

The task we were given is very clear. The problem is that once we're here in *Oilam Hazei* it becomes very difficult to stay focused. Hashem created the world in such a way that what is

true and important becomes concealed, covered over and difficult to recognize. We often don't realize what is expected of us. We tend to forget why we were sent down here and how we are supposed to utilize *Oilam Haze* for the right purposes.

The solution to this is found in the Rebbe's *sichos*. Firstly, it is a constant reminder to stay focused on our mission and not get distracted by the things around us. Secondly, the Rebbe also teaches us **how** to see the things around us as a part of our job to serve the *Aibershter*.

When we learn the Rebbe's *sichos*, we are reminded of what a great privilege it is to be a Yid - we are capable of fulfilling the ultimate mission for which the world was created. True, it's often very difficult - but why should that concern us?

The Rebbe explains to us what a *Neshoma* is and why it came down here. What it means to learn Torah and do a Mitzvah. What is Shabbos, what is a Yom Tov, what should I live with now, what's today's special significance etc.

All of this in such beautiful *oisiyos*, in the Rebbe's words - telling us what our Avodas Hashem means and infusing a true *Chayus* into it.

The Rebbe, leading our generation, knows what people on our level and with our challenges, need. He knows what speaks to us and what motivates us, and gives us the direction. It is clear that the Rebbe's Torah speaks to us personally.

A Bright Light

Let us conclude this point with the famous *mashol* that the Rebbe says very often at Farbrengens about someone who enters into a dark room and can't see anything. The only thing he can do is feel his way around, and even then he can barely tell what things are. He doesn't know if this is a table and he's meant to eat on it, if it's a chair and he's meant to sit on it, or what. Suddenly someone turns on the light; all of a sudden everything becomes visible! Everything is so clear, now you know what each thing is meant for.

The Rebbe's Farbrengen are exactly that. The Rebbe sheds light on every single issue in the world, showing you clearly what everything really is and how to utilize it for Avodas Hashem. Without his words we are simply in the dark.

The primary way that the Rebbe communicated his Torah with his Chassidim throughout the years was through the Farbrengens. There is nothing in the world that can serve as a substitute for listening to the Rebbe himself talk to you. There is no other way to get to "know the Rebbe" and really appreciate what he gives us then by listening or watching Farbrengens.

Besides, when you participate in a Farbrengen it rips you away, at least for a little bit, from the garbage and tumult of *Oilam Haze*. It's really an unbelievable and very real way to feel a connection to the Rebbe.

The Upcoming Farbrengen

The upcoming Farbrengen to be released is Yud-Tes Kislev, 5744. It's a long Farbrengen filled with rich Sichos on a wide array of topics.

Perhaps of the more famous ones is the Sicha in which the Rebbe launched the new "Mivtza" to institute the recitation of "*Hareini Me'kabel*" and "*Ach Tzaddikim*" in all Kehillos. It prompted a major storm in the Jewish world including many interesting accounts and episodes (which will be recorded -*Bli Neder*- in a special edition of "Leben Mitten Rebben" soon to be published).

There was also a very sharply articulated Sicha about the "Mihu Yehudi", and much, much more.

Be sure to participate in that Farbrengen - in body and spirit alike. *Ta'amu ur'u ki tov Hashem!*



Behind the Picture



R-L - The Rebbe; K"K HaRav Modechai Shlomo Freidman, the Boyaner Rebbe

The above picture was taken in 5726 by the Levaya of Reb Shloima Horenshtein, who was a grandson of the Rebbe Maharash.

Reb Shloima Horenshtein, grandson of the Rebbe Maharash passed away. For many years he had davened in the KlioZ of the Boyaner Rebbe on E. Broadway on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, and the Levaye went past the Shul.

The Rebbe being a distant cousin of Reb Shloima (and also his brother was Reb Mendel Horenshtein, the Rebbe's brother-in-law) went to Manhatten for the Levaye.

The Boyaner Rebbe was slowly making his way down the stairs due to his weakness. The Rebbe asked the gabboim if he is allowed to help the Boyaner down the stair (in some *kreizen* the Rebbe is very careful not to touch anyone). When they answered yes, the Rebbe approached the Boayner, took his arm to support him, walking together until the Aron left.

It is known that the Rebbe would send Mishloach Manos to three people each Purim, one Cohen, one Levi and one Yisroel. Until 5730 the Yisroel Mishloach Manos would be sent to Manhatten, to the Boyaner. However by Purim of 5731 the Boayner had passed away.



Through the Keyhole

A Peek into Yemos Hamoshiach

After Techiyas Hameisim, all the Chachamim and Nevi'im from all the generations will be alive. What will be their relationship with Moshiach?

The question is an interesting one because when Moshiach comes, all Nevi'im and leaders of the Jewish People, past and present, will hear Torah directly from Moshiach. All Yidden, young and old, scholarly and simple, will learn Torah alike, just as the Yidden learned Torah from Moshe in the desert. If so, what will be the status of the other Talmidei Chachamim, in

comparison to Moshiach?

The Rebbe explains that Moshiach will only teach the mystical dimension of Torah to the entire Jewish People. With regard to the Torah's revealed aspects, such as practical halacha, the scholars will not need to learn this from Moshiach, as they themselves are experts in the field. As the Alter Rebbe writes: "Moshe and Yehoshua and the Zkeinim of all the generations, who already know Nigla of Torah, will not receive new Halachos from Moshiach".

They will learn the inner essence of Torah from Moshiach, a revelation so high it will seem entirely different and new as the *possuk* says: "A new Torah will go out from me".

(Likutei Torah Parshas Tzav, 17:1; Toras Menachem 5746, Vol. 3 p. 138.)



A Chassidishe Derher
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