



The Month of Kislev

- The month of Kislev has many special aspects to it. It is commonly referred to by Yiddish as “*chodesh hageulah*.”¹ The Rebbe once noted that due to the many Yomim Tovim in this month, the entire month is considered one Yom Tov, to the extent that the month of Cheshvan can be called Erev Yom Tov (even though Cheshvan doesn’t even contain one Yom Tov).²

- Since the month of Kislev is the third month from Tishrei, the beginning of the year, it is especially connected to Torah (which was given in Chodesh Sivan—the third month from Nissan). In light of this, the Rebbe instructed Chassidim to increase their study of Torah—*nigleh* and Chassidus—quantitatively and qualitatively.³ The Rebbe also wanted Chassidim to learn at least one thing from the Torah of each of the first three Rabbeim every day of the month, and if possible from every Rebbe.⁴

The year 5749* marked 200 years since the passing of the Tzemach Tzedek. The Rebbe instructed that the learning of Chassidus in Chodesh Kislev be in a way clearly paralleled with *nigleh*, which was the Tzemach Tzedek’s unique form of learning.

- The month of Kislev is also called a Chassidisher month. Therefore there should be an increase of:
 1. Farbrengens for men, women, and children throughout

the month (especially on special occasions, like on Chassidishe Yomim Tovim and Chanukah) with the purpose of taking upon oneself to increase in the learning of *nigleh* and Chassidus, as well as *hafatzas hamaayanos*. In order for the farbrengens to be most effective, the Rebbe instructed Chassidim to prepare well for the farbrengens in advance.

2. Learning Chassidus during this month, as well as influencing others—both men and women—to learn Chassidus.⁵

The Days of Tes and Yud Kislev - The Mittler Rebbe is born, passed away, and freed from prison

- Today, the Rebbe explained, is especially befitting to increase one’s learning the Chassidus of the *ba’al hageulah* and to make a farbrengen.⁶ The Rebbe specifically encouraged the learning of the Mittler Rebbe’s *maamar Padah Beshalom* (in Shaarei Teshuva).⁷

- The Midrash connects the *possuk* פדה בשלום נפשי with the importance of Torah, *gemilus chassadim*, and davening with a *minyan*. Therefore a day connected to this *possuk* (as it is part of the daily Tehillim) is an opportune time to add in these three things. This includes one’s

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לרגל יום הבהיר י"ד כסלו
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' לוי יצחק הלוי
וזוגתו מרת חנה ומשפחתם שיחיו
רייטיק

personal *avodah* in davening, to be invested to the extent that the body is dripping sweat, as was said about the *avodah* of the Mitteler Rebbe.⁸

- This does not detract from the main theme we consistently saw by the Mitteler Rebbe—revealing the spiritual within the physical, which is the final step in bringing about the *geulah*. As the Tzemach Tzedek said about the Mitteler Rebbe, “If his finger would be cut, Chassidus would spout from it (in the spiritual sense).”⁹

- In 5749*, the Rebbe instructed Chassidim to arrange farbrengens every day from Yud Kislev through Yud-Tes Kislev.¹⁰

Yud-Daled Kislev - The wedding anniversary of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin

- During the farbrengen marking the Rebbe and Rebbetzin’s 50th wedding anniversary, the Rebbe instituted a new initiative—that every *chosson* should be given, in addition to a Shas, also a tzedakah *pushka*.

- The Rebbe also instructed women and girls to form groups wherever there is a Jewish community,

focusing on their involvement in spreading Yiddishkeit, primarily mitzvos unique to women; married women should teach others about the mitzvah of family purity (*taharas hamishpacha*).¹¹

Yud-Tes and Chof Kislev - The Alter Rebbe is freed from prison

- In the days prior to Yud-Tes Kislev, the Rebbe would instruct Chassidim to expand the printing of *sefarim* of *Torah Shebaal Peh*, and to increase the learning of Chassidus, specifically in newly printed *sefarim*.¹²

- As was the case in 5558*, the first anniversary of Yud-Tes Kislev, there should be farbrengens from Yud-Tes Kislev until Chanukah.¹³ For a farbrengen to be most effective, and in order for there to be the most participation possible, all necessary preparations should be done in advance. It is also advisable to ask the advice of multiple people, in order for the farbrengens to be at its best (without any personal agendas, etc.).¹⁴

- On Yud-Tes Kislev, the Rosh Hashanah for Chassidus, each person should *bentch* one another with “לשנה טובה בלימוד החסידות ובדרכי החסידות תכתב ותחתם”, specifically in the singular (as we do on Rosh Hashanah).¹⁵

- In the Hayom Yom for Yud-Tes Kislev, the Rebbe describes the day as a "...a day for farbrengen and taking *hachlatos* to establish times for study of *nigleh* and Chassidus publicly, and to strengthen the *darkei haChassidim* in true friendship." Additionally, the Rebbe encouraged the utilization of the day to add in the three things about which Hashem says *כאילו פדאני לי* ("they are tantamount to redeeming me"): Torah, *tefillah* and *tzedakah*. The Rebbe also stressed that the farbrengens should occur in every home, to further highlight how every person can be a good influence on another.¹⁶

- When the Alter Rebbe was freed, he wrote a letter to Chassidim where he explained that the *geulah* was really for all Yidden. The Rebbe would thus instruct Chassidim to make Yud-Tes Kislev a time of increased *ahavas Yisroel*, especially through teaching Chassidus to another Yid.¹⁷

- In the days after Yud-Tes Kislev, the Rebbe strongly encouraged Chassidim to add in learning *maamarim* of the Alter Rebbe.¹⁸ The Rebbe would also instruct Chassidim at this time to start preparing for Chanukah, in the practical preparations and also to learn the appropriate *halachos*.¹⁹

- The Alter Rebbe requested that there should be a *chalukas hashas* each year in every *minyán* of Yidden. From the year 5663*, the *chalukah* in Lubavitch took place on Chof-Daled Teves. (When the Rebbe asked the Frierdiker Rebbe why this was so, he said that there was no time on Yud-Tes Kislev.²⁰) In 5713*, The Rebbe reinstituted the *chalukas hashas* on Yud-Tes Kislev itself.²¹

- To bring the learning of the whole Shas to fruition, the Rebbe would write his own *masechte*-pledge on paper and encouraged Chassidim to do so as well, in order to make it a tangible concept. He also suggested that the written pledge be entrusted with someone else, thus inclining one to have more of a responsibility to fulfil it.²²

- The Rebbe made it very clear that *tachanun* is not said on Yud-Tes Kislev, and moreover, that saying *tachanun* is wrong.²³

- The Rebbe noted that in the letter written by the Alter Rebbe about his release, he specifically mentions the impact that the story had on the "nations and officers of the world." This is an indication for us to increase our influence on the nations of the world, by teaching them Torah-based morality and *Sheva Mitzvos B'nei Noach*.

Chanukah

- In the days prior to Chanukah, as with every Yom Tov, there should be an increase in *tzedakah*, both physically (that every Yid should have all they need for Chanukah), and spiritually (by increasing one's learning Chassidus connected to Chanukah).²⁴ Of course, as mentioned in *halacha* one should increase *tzedakah* during the days of Chanukah itself.²⁵

- If at every Yom Tov we wish each other with "A *Gut Yom Tov*," how much more so on a day like Chanukah which is themed on spreading light, we should certainly wish each other with "A *Gut Yom Tov*."²⁶

- The Rambam refers to the days of Chanukah as "days of joy." And although there are differences with regards to the *halachos* of *simcha* on this Yom Tov compared to other Yomim Tovim, being that on Chanukah we act with *mehadrin min hamehadrin*, we must do the same in increasing as much *simcha* as possible during Chanukah.²⁷

- With regards to the menorah, there should be specific emphasis on the aesthetics of the mitzvah, to have a beautiful menorah.²⁸

- The Rebbe would instruct Chassidim to also have a menorah in shul lit throughout the whole day (as long as it is in a place that there is no risk of danger for children).²⁹

- The Rebbe explains that the days of Chanukah are a special time to increase in *chinuch*, which in many ways is the theme of Chanukah.³⁰

- On Yud-Tes Kislev 5712*, the Rebbe told the *bochurim* to be involved in spreading Chassidus, however it shouldn't be at the expense of *seider*. The Rebbe then said that in ten days he will be asking for the list of *talmidim* that

come on time, “in relation to a certain matter.” On the fifth night of Chanukah, the Rebbe gave *Chanukah gelt* to the *bochurim*. This occurred every year until 5720*.

- The Rebbe distributed *Chanukah gelt* a few more times throughout the *nesius*, including when Mivtza Chanukah was launched, when he gave *Chanukah gelt* to those who were involved in the *mivtzoim*.

- The Rebbe instructed that *Chanukah gelt* should be given from parents to their children and grandchildren, before and after marriage. And it should be given on every day of Chanukah.³¹ The Rebbe also told Chassidim to give to soldiers they were going to visit for Mivtza Chanukah.³²

- The Rebbe also asked that children should give Chanukah *gelt* amongst themselves.³³

- The Rebbe encouraged Chassidim to make gatherings with children over Chanukah and to speak to them about the story of Chanukah, with lessons that are applicable for their daily lives.³⁴

- In 5748*, the Rebbe said that young children should be educated to have a menorah of their own, lit by the door to their room, their *mikdash me'at*.³⁵

- On Yud-Tes Kislev 5734*, the Rebbe launched the international Mivtza Chanukah campaign, in relation to the Yom Kippur War, focusing on visits to Israeli soldiers on Chanukah, as well as the widows and orphans of those who had fallen in battle.

“On Chanukah one has to ensure that Chanukah candles will be lit in every place where Jewish people live, both in public areas for *pirsumei nisa*, and in private homes, at least one menorah per house. If you meet anyone who doesn't have a menorah, you should give one to them, and it would also be fitting that every child light their own menorah.”³⁶

- *Mivtzoim* on Chanukah is not only meant to reach Yidden. The Rebbe explained that since the menorah is lit in the front of the house for all to see, the goal should be to influence non-Jews too, to increase in the observance of their commandments, which contain the theme of illuminating the world.³⁷

1 Sefer Hasichos 5752 vol. 1 page 125.

2 Sefer Hasichos 5749 vol. 1 page 78 fn. 1.

3 Toras Menachem 5751 vol. 1 page 354-356.

4 Toras Menachem 5749 vol. 1 page 374.

5 Toras Menachem 5749 vol. 1, pages 383-385, 404-405.

6 Toras Menachem 5749 pages vol. 1, 404-405.

7 Toras Menachem 5749 vol. 1, page 407.

8 Toras Menachem 5748 vol. 1, pages 579-582.

9 Sefer Hasichos 5752 pages 149 and 152.

10 Toras Menachem 5749 vol. 1, page 404.

11 14 Kislev 5739 sicha 5.

12 Sefer Hasichos 5748 vol. 1, page 131.

13 Toras Menachem 5750 vol. 2, page 12-13.

14 Sefer Hasichos 5751 vol. 1, page 178.

15 Toras Menachem 5749 vol. 2, page 4.

16 Toras Menachem 5752 vol. 1, page 368.

17 Toras Menachem 5749 vol. 2 page 12.

18 Toras Menachem 5749 vol. 2 page 7.

19 Toras Menachem 5750 vol. 2 page 11.

20 Hayom Yom 19 Kislev.

21 Toras Menachem 5713 vol. 1 page 216. See Sefer Hasichos 5752 vol. 2 page 476 for the explanation.

22 Sefer Hasichos 5752 vol. 2 page 490.

23 Igros Kodesh vol. 7 page 125. See Derher Kislev 5774 page 24 for the full letter in English.

24 Toras Menachem 5750 vol. 2 page 32 - 34.

25 Toras Menachem 5748 vol. 2 page 102.

26 Ibid. Page 65.

27 Toras Menachem 5749 vol. 2, page 30, page 34 fn. 79.

28 Toras Menachem 5750 vol. 2, page 86 fn.

69.

29 Toras Menachem 5750 vol. 2, page 51 fn. 69.

30 Toras Menachem 5748 vol. 2 page 58.

31 Sichos Kodesh 5737 vol. 1 page 358

32 Sichos Kodesh 5734 vol. 1 page 196

33 Likkutei Sichos vol. 20 page 450 - 451. See Derher Kislev 5779 for details about giving *Chanukah gelt*.

34 Sichos Kodesh 5733 Parshas Vayeishev page 209.

35 Toras Menachem 5748 vol. 2 page 64.

36 Sichos Kodesh 5734 vol. 1 pages 195-200.

37 Toras Menachem 5750 vol. 2 page 52.