

טור 'לעבן מיטן רבי'ן הוקדש לזכרון
ולעילוי נשמת
ר' שמואל ב"ר יהושע אליהו ז"ל
ואשתו מרת שרה ע"ה בת ר'
יקותיאל ומרת לאה הי"ד
תנ"צ'ב'ה

ע"י בנם
ר' יקותיאל יהודה
וזוגתו מרת פעסל לאה ומשפחתם
שיחיו
רוהר



A YEAR OF MIRACLES

Kislev 5750

As “*Shnas Nissim*” progresses, events grow more and more exciting; the Rebbe continues to point out incredible nissim that are already underway and many more that are yet to come. The content and tone of the Rebbe’s words at Shabbos farbrengens and at the weekday sichos truly reflect the wondrous spirit of the year.

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“CHANUKAH LIVE,” 28 KISLEV 5750



Where's the Excitement?

The farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Toldos, 4 Kislev, began in a celebratory tone: The Rebbe singled out a group of guests, calling on them to say *l'chaim* together with the one who brought them, instructing that they should sing a Simchas Torah *niggun*.

In the first *sicha*, the Rebbe expressed his surprise at the fact that incredible events are taking place around the globe, yet people don't seem to notice just how extraordinary they are! In Russia, where a brutal Communist dictatorship ruled with an iron fist for 70 years, a total transformation is in the works. The same is true for China, which is also undergoing change and becoming more connected with the rest of the world, in contrast to the way they've been for hundreds of years. India, too, is experiencing positive change, as is Japan and others. These changes have significant positive effects on the lives of millions and billions of people. What is more: anyone who knows a bit of world history understands that in the past, revolutions have always come with bloodshed. But with Hashem's help, these revolutions around the world have been peaceful so far, with almost no bloodshed and even with relative economic stability. This is such a great miracle!

Something even more incredible: the changes that occurred in societies with revolutions in previous generations, even when they came at the cost of terrible war and famine, pale in comparison to the societal transformations happening now with peaceful revolutions. How is it that people are not paying attention to what's going on?!

The Rebbe called on everyone to take a lesson from these world events: First, to recognize and appreciate Hashem's kindness, how the world is moving to a better place so rapidly, and in a peaceful way. Second, to strengthen our belief in the imminent coming of Moshiach indicated by these world occurrences, based on the predictions of Chazal in Gemara Sota.¹

The next week, Shabbos Parshas Vayeitzei, the Rebbe continued on the theme of *Geulah*, connecting the *Geulah* experienced by the Mittlerer Rebbe on Yud Kislev, as well as the *Geulah* experienced by the subsequent Rabbeim, including the Frierdiker Rebbe (on Yud-Beis Tammuz) with the *Geulah* of all the Jewish people. "The Rebbe, *Nessi Doreinu*, took responsibility for every member of the generation to bring the *Geulah*," the Rebbe said. "He already proclaimed that Moshiach is ready to come, all

we have to do is 'polish the buttons' of our clothing. In fact [we've already completed that as well;] all we have to do is polish just a little more..."

The Rebbe called for many Chassidische farbrengens to be arranged in the days ahead, coming from the *Chag HaGeulah* of Yud Kislev, continuing to Yud-Daled Kislev, Tes-Vov Kislev, and then Yud-Tes Kislev and Chanukah.²

There were many weekdays when the Rebbe spoke shorter *sichos* from his *shtender* after Mincha and Maariv. On the night following Yud-Daled Kislev, right after davening, the Rebbe began walking away from the *shtender* while speaking (without a microphone), saying that "Today is Tuesday, when Hashem proclaimed double 'Ki-Tov', and it is the night of the 15th of the month, when the moon is at completion, so we will give each person [a dollar] to be given to tzedakah..."

Upon reaching the bottom of the steps, the Rebbe repeated some of his words into the microphone and began distributing dollars.

As the Rebbe Sees Fit

The next Shabbos, Parshas Vayishlach, once again had an eventful farbrengen.

It was 18 Kislev, the day before the Yom Tov of Yud-Tes Kislev, and the Rebbe dedicated much of his talk to



FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL, CHESHVAN 5750, MARKING THE BEGINNING OF THE COLLAPSE OF THE SOVIET UNION.

A RAV FROM BORO PARK THANKS THE REBBE FOR THE BOCHURIM WHO CAME TO SPEAK AT HIS SHUL.



CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 36287

the theme of Rosh Hashanah L'Chassidus.

After distributing bottles of *marshke* to people who would be making events and farbrengens in the coming week, the Rebbe began singing his father's *hakafof niggun*. Suddenly the Rebbe stood up and danced at his place with great joy, clapping enthusiastically in a way not yet seen since the beginning of Shnas Nissim. The joy in the shul was immense as the Rebbe turned to each side with a big smile on his face, encouraging the singing for a long time.

Toward the end of the farbrengen, a Chossid named Reb Yosef Nemoytin (who had assisted the Rebbe's father, Harav Levi Yitzchok, during his final months in Kazakhstan and had since been privy to a special relationship with the Rebbe) stood up to say *l'chaim*. He first made a loud *bracha* "*Shehecheyanu*," in honor of all the incredible *giluyim* seen from the Rebbe in the recent past, and then he said, "Rebbe, your children [pointing at the crowd] asked me to ask the Rebbe that we should have a farbrengen on Yud-Tes Kislev with the Rebbe.³ Some even asked that the Rebbe should say a *maamar*. I told them that the Rebbe will do as he sees fit; but nevertheless, I'm conveying the message to the Rebbe. And please can I have a piece of *Mezonos*."

The Rebbe gave him a piece of cake and responded,

"You already said the right answer, that I will do as I see fit." Reb Yosef said to the Rebbe, "If so, give me another piece of *Mezonos* for giving them the correct answer!" The Rebbe gave him another two pieces of cake, and the farbrengen concluded soon after.

What To Do During Nittel?

On Shabbos Parshas Vayeshev, the first day of Chanukah, the Rebbe spoke about many interesting subjects, including the fact that the non-Jewish holiday that occurs in the upcoming week. Since public schools are not in session on this day, the Rebbe encouraged everyone to utilize time to gather Jewish public school children and teach them about Yiddishkeit.

This holiday is also the time of "*Nittel*," when many have the custom to refrain from Torah study. The Rebbe encouraged everyone to make sure not to waste time, but to engage in productive activities, like playing chess, which sharpens the mind for Torah study. Additionally, the Rebbe advised that one can use the time to envision the face of the Rebbe Rashab, since we have one extant

photograph of his holy face. This led to an interesting discussion about the photos and paintings of the Rabbeim that we do have, and the fact that no pictures remain of the Rebbe Maharash, the Mittlerer Rebbe, the Mezritcher Maggid, or the Baal Shem Tov.

Of course, the Rebbe spoke extensively about Chanukah; regarding the *minhag* of giving Chanukah gelt to children, and the light of the Menorah, which is clear and evident, even on Shabbos.

At this point, the Rebbe stood up to look at the Menorah standing in the other corner of the shul, and then added: “The *gabboim* forgot to use bigger candles which would stay alight throughout the whole Shabbos. They will surely fix this for next Shabbos [the last day of Chanukah], with candles that will stay lit throughout the entire day, similar to the way it was with the Menorah of the Beis Hamikdash.”

The next Friday after Shacharis, the Rebbe asked to tell the *gabboim* to use regular candles, and to publicize this everywhere

Dollars

As he would every Sunday, the Rebbe spent hours each week greeting thousands of people, offering words of blessing and advice in many areas of life.

On Sunday, 5 Kislev, an individual came to the Rebbe saying that he assists the Chabad Shliach in Arad, Rabbi Bentzion Lipsker. The Rebbe told him to “Keep fighting for all the good things!”

The individual asked the Rebbe if he has anything to convey to the people in Arad, and the Rebbe said, “Give them regards, to all the Jews there, and tell them that Moshiach is coming very soon!”

A child passed by the Rebbe and said, “Moshiach should come right now!” The Rebbe responded, “If you will learn better, Moshiach will come faster!”

On Sunday, 12 Kislev, an individual came to the Rebbe and said that 15 years earlier, he was very sick and the Rebbe blessed him to dance at all his children’s weddings. Now that his last child was getting married, he’s asking the Rebbe for an additional blessing, and the Rebbe said, “Now you have grandchildren. You should be at their weddings too!”

A woman passed by the Rebbe who hadn’t seen him since 5712, and she greeted the Rebbe, saying, “I am the

daughter of [so-and-so],” and the Rebbe said, “I know; and you’re cousins with [so-and-so]. It’s been a long time since you’ve been here last.” The woman asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* and began crying, and the Rebbe said, “There’s no need to cry. Moshiach is coming.”

Gershon Salomon of an organization called “Temple Mount Faithful” was introduced to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe blessed him with *besuros tovos*.

Gershon: “I want to tell the Rebbe about the grave situation at *Har Habayis*. The Arabs are desecrating the place, destroying the remnants of the first and second Batei Mikdash.”

The Rebbe: “Unfortunately, this is nothing new. This situation has been going on for forty years now. This is the fault of the Jewish people for not caring enough about it.”

Gershon: “It’s a weakness on the part of the Jews.”

The Rebbe: “I don’t know if it’s a weakness as much as carelessness. I’m sure they’re all busy with good things, but not with the most important matters of Yiddishkeit for the Jewish people and for Eretz Yisroel. But now is not a good time to speak ill of our fellow Jews. On the contrary, we should be ‘*melamed zechus*’ (seek merits on their behalf); a *zechus* that comes from strengthening Torah and mitzvos.”

Gershon: “Yes, but perhaps it would be a good idea to come out with a proclamation (‘*kol korei*’) that the Jews must not allow this travesty to continue!”

The Rebbe: “There have been many such proclamations. The problem is that there are some people who think that once a proclamation has been issued, with a whole ‘hoo-ha’, they are then free to go about doing more important matters.”

Gershon asked the Rebbe if he can meet with the Rebbe in private to discuss certain important matters, and the Rebbe said:

“You already met with me [now], and I already gave you my main message. If I would meet with you in private, it would show that whatever you said until now was not valid or important. There’s no need to discuss matters in secret; everything should be said publicly, in a loud voice—an actual ‘*kol korei*’, not a written one; one that translates into real action.”

The Rebbe handed Gershon an additional dollar and said:

“This is my symbolic participation in your future writings about matters of Yiddishkeit.”



THE REBBE PARTICIPATES IN THE FUNERAL PROCESSION OF REB NISSEN GORDON.

On Sunday, Yud-Tes Kislev, an individual passed by the Rebbe saying, “My wife is a Lubavitcher.” The Rebbe replied, “You too are a Lubavitcher; you just don’t know it yet.”

An individual with an illness passed by asking for a *bracha* to feel better, and the Rebbe asked him, “Perhaps you wrote a note with your name and your mother’s name?” The man was in shock. He had indeed written a note and put it in his pocket, but forgot to give it to the Rebbe.

On Sunday, 26 Kislev, a *rav* from Boro Park passed by the Rebbe and thanked him for sending shluchim to

speak in his shul on Shabbos. (Since the beginning of the year, the Rebbe had been speaking incessantly about the need to gather Jews together every Shabbos and teach them Torah, and many *bochurim* and *yungeleit* followed through with these instructions.)

The *rav* said to the Rebbe: “I asked the *yungerman*, ‘Where do you get the strength to walk all the way to our shul in the freezing rain?’ and he said, ‘The Rebbe gives us the strength.’”

The Rebbe replied, “The *Aibershter* gives the strength. I pass on what comes from Hashem.”



THE REBBE DELIVERS
A SICHA AT
“CHANUKAH LIVE.”



THE REBBE WATCHES THE SCREEN
DISPLAYING THE CHANUKAH GATHERING
IN MOSCOW IN REAL TIME.



Reb Nissen Gordon Z"L

Throughout Kislev, many interesting and extraordinary occurrences took place in the Rebbe's presence. One of them was the *levaya* of the writer, Reb Nissen Gordon. Decades earlier, Reb Nissen had the great *zechus* of publishing a series of interviews with the Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Chana, in *Di Yiddische Heim* magazine.

On 30 Kislev at 1:30 p.m., the Rebbe came outside to participate in the funeral procession, following the hearse across Kingston Avenue. After crossing Kingston, the Rebbe stood there and waited until all the cars leaving for the cemetery were gone, and then turned around and went back to 770.

International Chanukah Celebration

Of course, the most memorable event this month with the Rebbe was the first “Chanukah Live”—linking

Chanukah celebrations from across the globe with the Rebbe's menorah lighting in 770.

The most special moment of the night was when the Chanukah celebration in Moscow, Russia, was broadcast live in 770. As soon as the images from Moscow appeared on the screen, the Rebbe's face changed; shining with extraordinary *nachas-ruach*. After more than half a century of persecution and attempts to stamp out Yiddishkeit, the light of Chanukah was shining brightly again in the heart of the Soviet capital, illuminating—quite literally—the entire world!

Live feed also came in from the Kosel in Yerushalayim, where the Sefardic chief rabbi, Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu, lit the menorah and delivered a heartfelt speech in honor of the Rebbe. Additional live broadcasting came from Chanukah events in Paris and London as well.

The Rebbe addressed the children and the crowds around the globe with two *sichos*, and then distributed Chanukah gelt to the children through their chaperones, and dollars for tzedakah to everyone else present through



THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN GATHER AT 770 TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FIRST "CHANUKAH LIVE" CELEBRATION WITH THE REBBE.



CHANUKAH GELT.



the "Tankistim."

Later that evening, the Rebbe asked to watch a replay of Rabbi Eliyahu's speech on video in his room (as there were sound complications during the live feed).

Much Nachas

There were many interesting written responses from the Rebbe throughout the month, including:

Rabbi Pinchas Feldman from Sydney, Australia wrote to the Rebbe that he is in need of encouragement. The Rebbe replied (13 Kislev):

אם התוועדות דשבת זו והר"ד של התוועדות דשבת שלפני"ז אינו מחזקו איני יודע מה מחזקו ובפרט שזה שנת ה"מ."

"If the farbrengen of the past Shabbos and the transcript of the farbrengen of the previous Shabbos doesn't offer you encouragement, I don't know what will; especially considering that it is the 40th year [of the Rebbe's *nesius*]."

A *bochur* wrote to the Rebbe that he studied by heart the Rebbe's newly published *maamar* for Yud-Daled Kislev, hoping to cause *nachas-ruach* to the Rebbe, the Rebbe wrote, "You caused *nachas-ruach*. I will mention it at the *tziyun*."

A mother of one of the bochorim wrote to the Rebbe that due to a family situation, her son will not be able to go on shlichus with the Talmidim Hashluchim, and she asked the Rebbe what to do about it. The Rebbe replied:

השליחות כאן בעש"ק אחר חצות וכיו"ב אזכיר עה"צ.

Shlichus is done here on Erev Shabbos afternoon, and the like. I will mention this at the *tziyun*. **T**

1. Based on the Tochen Katzar transcription of the farbrengen.
2. Ibid.
3. In those years the Rebbe no longer held farbrengens during the week.