



The Making of a Yom Tov
**THE MEANING
OF ROSH
CHODESH
KISLEV**

MARKING *40* YEARS, CHASSIDIM SHARE
THEIR THOUGHTS ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE
AND RELEVANCE OF THIS DAY.

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר
ולזכות תלמידי התמימים
בכל אתר ואתר
המסורים לעניני כ"ק אדמו"ר באופן
ד"יתיר מבחיוהי" ממש
נדפס ע"י
הרוצה בעילום שמו



This year marks forty years from the frightening events of Shemini Atzeres 5738 and the Rebbe's subsequent homecoming and celebration on Rosh Chodesh Kislev. We have turned to three Chassidim who were present at that time and asked them to share their thoughts and memories in connection with this very special Yom Tov.

We strongly encourage our readers to see "The Full Story of Rosh Chodesh Kislev" in the Kislev 5777 magazine, as it takes us through the events of those few weeks in great detail. In this article, we attempt to focus more on the meaning of the day. Why is Rosh Chodesh Kislev a Yom Tov? How did it become a Yom Tov? And most importantly what can we take from it in our hiskashrus today?



ZITSHREI 5738, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 22603

THE REBBE DISTRIBUTES LEKACH AT THE DOOR OF HIS SUKKA, HOURS BEFORE THE HEART ATTACK.

Rabbi Mendel Groner

Kiryat Gat, Eretz Yisroel

The Shock

To really appreciate the greatness and true message of the Yom Tov of Rosh Chodesh Kislev, I would like to take you back to that Shemini Atzeres night and the following weeks.

Tishrei was reaching its climax—*hakafos* with the Rebbe. The Rebbe led the first *hakafa*, dancing with Rashag as was customary, and everything progressed as normal until the fourth *hakafa*. Since I was standing so close to the Rebbe's *bima*, I was one of the first to realize that something was not right.

The Rebbe turned to my father, Rabbi Leibel Groner, and said something to him; it only took a few moments to realize that something

was amiss. The things that set off alarm bells in my head may seem small, but we were familiar with the Rebbe's *tenuos* and this wasn't ordinary. When the Rebbe was clapping, I noticed that his hands weren't actually touching each other. The Rebbe had asked my father to bring over his chair, and when he sat down, he leaned back in his chair, which is something the Rebbe never did.

The ensuing panic and hysteria is indescribable. The initial thought was that the Rebbe simply needed air and we should evacuate 770 as quickly as possible so there could be some airflow and ventilation. What had actually taken place was the furthest possibility from our minds.

We were plain and simply scared at that point and no one knew what to do. As 770 cleared out, the Rebbe

turned around and motioned with his hands as if to ask, "Where is everyone?"

As the minutes and hours ticked by, *anash* and *bochurim* slowly started hearing the general details of what happened to the Rebbe. Although some tried to downplay the severity of the situation, we had a pretty good idea of what was going on based on the information we received from the doctors.

At five in the morning, the Rebbe suffered a second and more severe heart attack in his room.

The next morning I went to daven in Hadar Hatorah, because a big part of 770 had been closed so there wouldn't be noise disturbing the Rebbe. When the *minyan* reached *krias haTorah*, each person who received an *aliyah* gave the Rebbe's name for a *Mi Shebeirach*. *Aliyah* after *aliyah* was the

same story; tears were flowing freely as the enormity of the previous night's events started to sink in. Everyone present was shocked to the core.

The hours leading up to the Simchas Torah farbrengen and *hakafos* in good years were spent going on *tahalucha* to bring the *simcha* of the Yom Tov to other communities. That year, however, the feeling was very different. Somber, red eyed from a lack of sleep, and completely scared, we dragged our feet on *tahalucha* with complete *kabolas ol*.

That night, we were given the first piece of good news; the *simcha* that the Chassidim were displaying with their singing and dancing was helping to stabilize the Rebbe's condition. Despite these updates, the mood was dismal; the sweat from the spirited dancing was being washed away by the constant flow of tears.

At some point during the night, I was able to go upstairs (which was officially closed off from the public), and my father told me a very encouraging piece of news. In the hours following the heart attack the Rebbe wasn't able to get out of the bed, but now, within twenty-four hours, the Rebbe was able to get up. I wanted to grab this information and share it with all the Chassidim right away.

My father agreed that I should publicize this. With this goldmine of information and bursting from keeping it to myself, I quickly went up onto the *bima* and motioned for silence. There were throngs of Chassidim, and I told everyone that the Rebbe was able to get out of bed. A big *simcha* broke out and singing suddenly switched from "Der Rebbe zol zein gezunt" to "Der Rebbe iz gezunt." Initially we

were singing, "The Rebbe should be healthy" and we then changed it to "The Rebbe IS healthy."

Although this development was small compared to the larger scope of the concerns that still hovered over us, it was a beam of light in a pitch black night. The night of Motzaei Simchas Torah stands out in my mind as a turning point in regards to our feelings, mood, and general disposition.

A couple of days after Yom Tov, the *bochurim* gathered together in Oholei Torah, and Reb Yoel spoke to us very passionately about what we could do for the Rebbe. "Whenever I tell you to leave space around the Rebbe or not to push too much," he began telling us, "you tell me that the Rebbe is *ruchniyus* and these things don't affect him. Now that we are in this situation, it is precisely the *ruchniyus* that we have to *koch* in. Adding in these things will have the most positive influence."

His words really hit home, because we now had guidance for what we could do instead of sitting

despondently and battling our worst fears.

Yechidus

Despite everything that was going on medically, the Rebbe surprised the Chassidim by holding a semi *yechidus* for the guests who came to spend Tishrei with the Rebbe. The guests filed by as the Rebbe sat at the entrance of *Gan Eden Ha'elyon*. The goal of every Chassid at that time was to simply catch a glimpse of the Rebbe. The yearning was so great that people flew in from California, waited on long lines, and pushed and shoved just to see the Rebbe for a moment as he sat by the door of his room.

The next big development was that the Rebbe would join the *minyán* in the upstairs *zal* for *krias haTorah* on Shabbos. A select group of forty *yungeleit* was allowed in. That's it; there was no way for a *bochur* to get in there.

Understandably the *bochurim* had a stronger than ever urge to see the Rebbe. Ever creative, the *bochurim* climbed up against the window from



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 22793

DR. IRA WEISS AND RABBI YEHUDA KRINSKY IN CONVERSATION. 26 TISHREI 5738.

the outside and tried to peer inside from any angle. When Reb Yoel saw this, he was not pleased, and he told us to go away. “As much as you have an urge to see,” he reprimanded, “you are blocking the airflow into the room.”

Undeterred, we found a new vantage point. This time we climbed onto a railing from the library, watching through the window from afar. The pushing was intense, it felt like we were in 770 trying to see *tekios*. The effort paid off when we saw the Rebbe, even though it was just for a moment. Even more rewarding was seeing the Rebbe smile when he noticed us gathered there.

Although there was a sense of joy from having seen the Rebbe, most of us were left feeling that the situation was bleak. The fact remained that the Rebbe was under intense medical care. We were so desperate that we searched for any way or thing that we could do to help the Rebbe.

This is how we spent and survived the next few weeks.

A Meritorious Day

Moving forward to Erev Rosh Chodesh...

Towards the end of Cheshvan, containers of *seforim* began coming from Poland as they finally released parts of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s library.¹ The Rebbe planned to make a short visit to the library next door to see them. The visit was kept as a complete secret and only a handful of people knew about it.

Those who happened to be outside and saw the Rebbe exit 770 were so shocked that I remember seeing from the window² how a *bochur* who was walking by noticed the Rebbe and fainted on the spot.

The next day, the doctors told the Rebbe that he was able to go home, but the Rebbe suggested that he wait until the evening, Rosh Chodesh Kislev, because a meritorious act is reserved for an already meritorious day.

Although it was not supposed to be a big event—the Rebbe was simply going home—word quickly spread.

There was a palpable excitement as the crowd outside 770 began to swell. It was not a *farbrengen* or *sicha* that we were waiting for, it was simply a chance to catch a glimpse of our dear Rebbe. In fact we had no idea if things were much better medically or what the appearance of the Rebbe would be like.

I clearly remember overhearing conversations between *bochurim* about how the Rebbe would come out. Some thought the Rebbe would walk out with something to lean on, while others strongly opposed such a notion and insisted he would be supported by the *mazkirus*, while yet others were convinced it would be the doctors helping the Rebbe.

While the Rebbe was preparing to go home for the first time in five weeks, the Chassidim outside were preparing as well; emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. It wasn’t a feeling of *simcha*, it was one of deep yearning.

To sing or not to sing?



RABBI LEBEL GRONER BRINGS AN UPDATE TO THE CHASSIDIM. 24 TISHREI 5738.

LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 22709

This was the unasked and unanswerable question.

And then it happened. The door of 770 opened up and the Rebbe walked out... just like every day—upright, walking swiftly, and smiling, without support or help of any kind. The enormous crowd that had assembled to see that moment was thrown into complete shock and excitement.

The best *mashal* that I can use to describe this is that of a pressure cooker. A pressure cooker is a pot that is so tight that it cooks very fast, but when opening it one must be careful to release the pressure slowly or else it can explode all over the place.

For over a month we had been under intense pressure—worried, concerned, and afraid of what would happen next, and then the lid was blown off in an instant with a wave of the Rebbe's hand.

As the Rebbe walked out, he paused and waved his hand just like on Simchas Torah. The crowd burst out singing Napoleon's March with great jubilation. From eight o'clock that evening until at least two in the morning we indeed celebrated Simchas Torah. This time the *simcha* was not due to our *kabbolas ol* but a result of the immense relief that washed over all of us.

Looking back I can say with certainty that the *simcha* was not planned, nor was it supposed to become the Yom Tov that it is. We were just waiting to see the Rebbe. The natural feelings and reaction of the *bochurim* were so strong, however, that it became the Yom Tov of Rosh Chodesh Kislev. We made it.

Even though it wasn't at all planned, the yearning to simply see the Rebbe created such emotion. It is that yearning and longing that we Chassidim have to strive for today.

I remember that on the night of Rosh Chodesh Kislev, after many hours of celebrating and saying *l'chaim*, I went up to Reb Dovid Raskin's room in 770, where Dr. Larry Resnick, who had been caring for the Rebbe for the past few weeks, was staying. This must have been around two in the morning. I knocked on his door and instead of waking him up, I saw that he was sitting on his bed with tears streaming down his face. Dr. Resnick was a very intellectual person and didn't usually display much emotion, yet that night he couldn't control himself, and through his tears he told me, "You should know that I have never seen such joy and dedication."

The next morning the Rebbe joined the *minyan* for *krias haTorah*, and afterwards Dr. Resnick went into the Rebbe's room. "Two people didn't dance last night," the Rebbe told him. "Me and you. We need to make up for this."

This was a clear indication to us, *anash* and *bochurim*, that the Rebbe had accepted and given his seal to the great emotion and *simcha* of the Chassidim. The following Shabbos in 770 was joyous like never before. We felt that the Rebbe had recognized the Yom Tov.

Let's stop for a moment and ask ourselves, "What are we actually celebrating?" Is it the medical miracle that left doctors speechless and without an explanation?

Medically speaking, however, there was no major difference between 29 Cheshvan and Rosh Chodesh Kislev. In fact, as I mentioned earlier, the doctors had already informed the Rebbe that he was able to go home earlier. So what is the cause for the celebration?

The day of Rosh Chodesh Kislev brings out the greatness of the longing to see the Rebbe. The very fact that we couldn't see the Rebbe yesterday and today we could is the greatest reason to celebrate with the most overwhelming *simcha*.

As we think about the *golus* that we are in, and those five weeks fade in comparison to the many years we have been waiting, each one of us needs to know and remember the message of Rosh Chodesh Kislev.

Longing and yearning is in the very nature of Chassidim; it is a key component in our relationship with the Rebbe. Just as Chassidim who were yearning to see the Rebbe during the dark weeks following the Rebbe's heart attack made every effort to bring the Rebbe true *nachas ruach* with new undertakings, *mivtzoim*, davening, and learning; so too, we must act in the same manner today.

As the Rebbe wrote to the Chossid Reb Avraham Pariz one year after the *histalkus* of the Frierdiker Rebbe: "ר' אברהם, מ'דארף צוריק אראפבריינגען דעם רבי'ן—Reb Avraham, we must bring the Rebbe back down."

Just as everyone did everything they could to be reunited with the Rebbe once more at that time, so too, we must give ourselves over to the Rebbe's *inyanim* and bring about the biggest Yom Tov, when we will be *zoche* to see the Rebbe very soon.

May we merit to see the coming of Moshiach, when we will once again be united with the Rebbe—מלך ביפו. May it be *b'karov mamosh*.

THE VERY FACT THAT YESTERDAY WE COULDN'T SEE THE REBBE AND TODAY WE CAN, IS THE GREATEST REASON TO CELEBRATE WITH THE MOST OVERWHELMING SIMCHA.



Rabbi Tzvi Grunblatt
Buenos Aires, Argentina

What is Yet to Come

As the events of that night, Shemini Atzeres 5738, began to unfold in front of our eyes, there is no doubt that we were overwhelmed with confusion and worry. As *bochurim* reveling in the revelations of *hakafo*s by the Rebbe, the situation that we saw was the furthest possibility from our minds.

However, I remember clearly the contradiction of feelings, as we had this inner sense that everything would be okay. It wasn't "if" or "maybe," but "when" and "how."

As Chassidim, can we possibly think any other way? Can another outcome even enter our thoughts?

There is no question that this was a darkness of inconceivable proportions.

Everything we were used to—davening with the Rebbe, watching the Rebbe come and go, being nearby and knowing that the Rebbe was talking to people in *yechidus* all night, all the precious moments with the Rebbe that were just a fact of life—came to an abrupt halt.

Then came the great day of Rosh Chodesh Kislev. A great sense of relief washed over us; finally the darkness was over. The Rebbe was now free to go home without doctors continuously at his side.

It seemed that things were back to normal.

What we didn't realize was that this was the beginning of a completely new era, even stronger and greater than before. The incredible years that followed with *maamarim*, *sichos*, *yechidus*'n, dollars, and the list goes on.

If you think about some of the greatest directives of the Rebbe, you will realize that most of them were after Rosh Chodesh Kislev. The initiative of printing Tanyas across the world—which the Rebbe started that summer—Tzivos Hashem, the *takana* of *limud haRambam*, are just a few that come to mind.

The majority of the Rebbe's *mugadike maamarim* and *sichos* came out after 5738 as well.

Of course there is also the influx of shluchim (myself included) whom the Rebbe sent out across the world, doubling and tripling the infrastructure of shlichus and *Batei Chabad* over the years that followed. It was the strongest call to intensify the spreading of Yiddishkeit and Chassidus, hastening the coming of Moshiach.



20 TISHREI 5738, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 22324



MOTZAEI SIMCHAS TORAH. IN ABSENCE OF THE USUAL FARBRENGEN AND KOS SHEL BROCHA AT THIS TIME, CHASSIDIM WAIT IN DISARRAY. TO THEIR GREAT JOY, SHORTLY AFTER THIS, THE NEWS CAME THAT THE REBBE WOULD DELIVER A SICHA FROM HIS ROOM.

When we think about it a little deeper, the greatness of the day far surpasses these specific details. It is the general indication that after a situation of extreme concealment comes the greatest heights. While we cherish each and every one of the Rebbe's *takanos* and every idea the Rebbe *koched* in, it is important that we look at the larger picture and lesson that the Rebbe is conveying.

Going through life, when we are presented with challenges and possibly setbacks, it is imperative that once we get past them, we reach even higher than before. The Rebbe showed us all that when we overcome a period of low, we are in a position to grow even more and we are given the necessary strength and powers to accomplish just that.

In fact, this message is what makes the lesson, meaning, and feelings of Rosh Chodesh Kislev even more

important and prevalent today after Gimmel Tammuz.

We find ourselves in such a *golus* that it is unfathomable how we are able to cope and carry on. Everywhere we turn it is bleak, with the stark reality staring us in the face that we are living in a world and time that is missing a fundamental element to its functioning. We are unable to see the Rebbe *b'gashmiyus*.

This is exactly how we felt in those days following Shemini Atzeres 5738, because we were unable to see the Rebbe. But this all turned around completely on Rosh Chodesh Kislev.

Each moment of Rosh Chodesh Kislev is vivid in my mind. I will never forget where I was and what we did as we heard the miraculous news. After the Rebbe made his way out of 770 and returned home, we, the *bochurim*, danced and said *l'chaim* with tremendous *simcha*. Eventually, we made our way over to the *aron*

kodesh and completed a task that was cut short; we finished the *hakafos* that were interrupted by the fearful event on Shemini Atzeres. *Nigun* after *nigun*, hour after hour, *l'chaim* after *l'chaim*, we danced and celebrated like never before.

We were immediately drawn into the post Rosh Chodesh Kislev era and we soon discovered that whatever we had supposedly missed out on would be given to us by the Rebbe.

This is not something we had to figure out; the Rebbe made it very clear to us.

Some days after Shabbos Bereishis, the Rebbe mentioned to Dr. Weiss that to compensate the Chassidim for the missed farbrengens of Simchas Torah and Shabbos Bereishis, he will probably hold a special farbrengen.

A few weeks after Rosh Chodesh Kislev, on Zos Chanukah that year, the Rebbe surprised everyone with a farbrengen.³ This farbrengen



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 22762

WE SOON FOUND OUT THAT WHATEVER WE HAD SUPPOSEDLY MISSED OUT ON WOULD BE GIVEN BACK TO US BY THE REBBE.

served as a *seudas hoda'ah* and a compensation for the missed Simchas Torah farbrengen. The Rebbe washed for challah, and in the *sichos*, the Rebbe connected Zos Chanukah with Shemini Atzeres, and conducted the entire farbrengen with much joy and *lebedikeit*.

During the farbrengen, the Rebbe strongly encouraged the singing of the Simchas Torah *hakafos nigun*. Chassidim understood this to be a substitute for the Rebbe's absence at *hakafos* earlier that year. The Rebbe also mentioned the importance of the daily study of Chitas, something usually discussed at the Simchas Torah farbrengen.

The Rebbe announced that he will distribute *kos shel bracha* following the farbrengen, stating that the distribution now is "like the distribution of Motzaei Simchas Torah, even though it was distributed then through a *shliach* and *shlucho shel adam k'moso*."

In fact, over the next few months, the Rebbe continued with a theme of *hashlama*: he distributed *kos shel bracha* a total of six times throughout the winter. The Rebbe made up for everything, and as Chassidim we have to be thankful and grateful for this.

This is really a most important message for us today; the Rebbe will not remain in debt. Everything that we have been sorely missing over these

long, hard years, will be made up to us in the greatest way possible.

Back then we relied confidently on the words of the Rebbe that we should be *b'simcha* and through that we will help the Rebbe's *gezunt* and bring about the ascent we were longing for. We forced ourselves to ascend from the feelings of doom, and, indeed, we were given a Yom Tov.

Similarly, now, we must be firm in our faith, knowing that the revelations to come will be so great that they will defy the current darkness of *golus* and bring about the greatest times, when we will be united with the Rebbe very soon. By looking back at 5738, we gain strength to internalize this and bring the *geulah* that we are all waiting for.

We are obligated to be thankful for what happened in the past, but more significant is to think about what is yet to come.



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEW 22877

MOTZAEI SHABBOS, 3 CHESHVAN 5738. CHASSIDIM LISTEN TO THE FARBRENGEN AS THE REBBE SPEAKS FROM HIS ROOM.

Rabbi Yaakov Winner

Melbourne, Australia

Defying Nature

To appreciate Rosh Chodesh Kislev today, we need to “get back to basics.” We are all familiar with the famous ruling of *Chazal* (associated mainly with Pesach) that we will mention *Yetzias Mitzrayim* even when Moshiach comes. The question is raised: What is the purpose of doing so? Won’t we have something much greater at that time?

Along those lines, an even more apparent question begs to be asked; if we are still in *golus*, Yidden are still being persecuted, we have no *Beis Hamikdash*, and we have been through so many tragedies, why are we even celebrating freedom?

In order to appreciate the answer, we need to change our whole

perspective and understanding of what happened in Mitzrayim so many years ago. The Rebbe often quotes the Maharal’s explanation,⁴ that with *geulas Mitzrayim*, the element of being free people was implanted inside each one of us, so despite challenges and hard times that were yet to come, we can never again be completely enslaved.

As the Rebbe Rashab said⁵ (and the Rebbe repeated countless time): “Only our bodies are in *golus*, not our *neshamos*.” A Yid, with the power of his *neshama*, can transcend all the trappings of *golus*. The *neshama* of a Yid is free from all earthly forces or powers.

When analyzing the story of Rosh Chodesh Kislev, a similar idea can be applied. This certainly wasn’t just about the Rebbe going home; there was an eternally relevant lesson to be ingrained in our mind and hearts:

What a Rebbe is. That Shemini Atzeres and the events surrounding it, culminating with the celebration of Rosh Chodesh Kislev, taught us the lesson of what a Rebbe is in a very demonstrative and evident manner.

Throughout those events, we, the Chassidim and the entire world, saw how a Rebbe is higher than nature. We were witness to how the rules of nature pose no limitations.

There are so many examples that bring out this point, some are more common knowledge while others are less known.

For example, immediately after the Rebbe sat down in his seat, water was brought over to the Rebbe, but the Rebbe refused to take a drink out of the sukkah and before *kiddush*. I can vividly recall how Reb Binyomin Klein was practically laying on the steps of the Rebbe’s *bima* and begging the Rebbe to have a drink.

THROUGHOUT THOSE EVENTS, WE, THE CHASSIDIM AND THE ENTIRE WORLD, SAW HOW A REBBE IS HIGHER THAN NATURE.



NIGHT-LONG SINGING AND DANCING ON THE EVE OF ROSH CHODESH KISLEV 5738.

The Rebbe did not leave the shul until all of the *hakafos* were completed, and the Rebbe himself went to the middle of 770 and danced with Rashag for the seventh *hakafa* (as was customary). Even when the Rebbe went upstairs and came to the sukkah, he insisted on making *kiddush* on wine, not grape juice, before eating or drinking anything.

Another famous incident is the way the Rebbe adamantly refused the recommendation—almost command—of most of the medical professionals to go to the hospital. So much so, that the doctors exclaimed, “If you don’t listen to us then we can’t take responsibility for your condition.” This was not just an empty threat; eventually all the doctors left and the Rebbe was all alone until Dr. Teichholz, and eventually Dr. Weiss, arrived.

Later on, the Rebbe insisted on opening every piece of mail himself, not allowing any member of *mazkirus* to open even a single envelope, because they were sent to him personally. Just two days after the heart attack, on Motzaei Simchas

Torah, the Rebbe said a *sicha* from his room! During the following days and weeks, the Rebbe answered letters, said *sichos* and *maamarim* from his room many times, and much much more; in other words, “business as usual.”

Those who saw it first hand can attest that they were witnessing something well beyond any rules of nature.

This idea was not a novel concept that suddenly appeared, it is a fundamental part of what a Rebbe is; on Rosh Chodesh Kislev this came into full view of the entire world.

The Alter Rebbe explains in Tanya⁶ that the life of a *tzaddik* is not a physical one but rather a spiritual one made up of serving Hashem with *emunah*, *ahava*, and *yirah*. Even the physical life of a Rebbe is fully spiritual and far beyond the realms of nature.

Rosh Chodesh Kislev Today

When internalizing this concept as a central theme of Rosh Chodesh Kislev and the events surrounding it, we come to the realization that it is more relevant today than ever before.

The Gemara says⁷ about Moshe Rabbeinu “מה להלן עומד ומשמש אף כאן” —*tzaddikim* continue to lead their disciples from on high after their *histalkus* just as they led them during their lifetime.

Even more so, in that same chapter of Tanya the Alter Rebbe quotes the Zohar that says, “צדיקא דאפתור אשתכח” —a *tzaddik* is more present in all the worlds after his *histalkus* than he was during his lifetime.

For us living now after Gimmel Tammuz this is a crucial and life-saving point. It gives us the fuel we need to keep going strong—continually thriving. The Rebbe is leading us and taking care of us just like before, and even more so, because the Rebbe is beyond the physical limitations of the realms of nature. We can connect to the Rebbe and receive his guidance and *brachos* as always, and even more than before.

There is a famous concept in the Gemara about a legal document whose authenticity was brought into question, which is known as “שטר שיצא” —*עליו ערעור*. The Gemara explains that

HISVAADUS CHASSIDIM IN 770 MARKING ROSH CHODESH KISLEV, 5752.





LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 188024

after it is once again proven credible, it becomes stronger than ever, because it has withstood the test and challenge thrown its way.

Similarly with Rosh Chodesh Kislev, the unrestricted and supernatural life of a Rebbe was challenged and now everyone can see just how literal this is.

Everything for Chassidim

There is another important and meaningful point that I would like to share in connection with Rosh Chodesh Kislev.

In the larger scope of events surrounding the incident on Shemini Atzeres and the subsequent miraculous recovery and going home, there is one story that at first glance seems small, but upon deeper thought it encapsulates another important lesson about a Rebbe: A Rebbe's commitment and devotion to the Chassidim is absolute. A Rebbe is completely selfless.

A few hours before the *hakafos*, on Hoshana Rabba 5738, the Rebbe distributed *lekach* for many hours and was then going to go home to have the *seuda* of Hoshana Rabba with the Rebbetzin. There wasn't much time until Yom Tov would come in, but it was an opportunity for the Rebbe to go home and eat something.

Moments before the Rebbe left 770, he was notified that more people who hadn't yet received *lekach* had arrived, and that another line had formed. The Rebbe immediately changed his plans, notified the Rebbetzin, and began distributing *lekach* again. By the time this second *chaluka* was completed, there was no longer any time for the Rebbe to go home for the *seuda*.

We happen to know this story because it was shared as one of the many details surrounding the events of that night, but one can just imagine or better, know with certainty, that this happened countless other times.

Everything and anything for the Chassidim. And to think that this was one of the last things the Rebbe did before the occurrence later that night! It speaks volumes of the dedication a Rebbe has to *klal Yisroel*.

In reality, it's more than dedication—this is his life; a Rebbe gives all he has for the sake of his Chassidim and those he is entrusted with.

This is seen in many places throughout the Torah in connection with Moshe Rabbeinu's commitment to his generation. On one occasion⁸ Moshe tells the Yidden, "I went up to Har Sinai to get the *luchos* for you and I didn't eat or drink for forty days and nights."

We saw this by our Moshe, the Rebbe, day in and day out.

This small incident among thousands of others highlights this important point and should have us all thinking how we can reciprocate. The Rebbe gave everything for the Chassidim. What can we do and what can we give for the Rebbe?

Let us all dedicate and rededicate ourselves to fulfilling the Rebbe's work, staying focused on the task at hand, for which the Rebbe gave us so much *kochos* and continuously asks from us to do just that extra mitzvah, bringing about the coming of Moshiach *teikef umiyad mamosh!* **T**

1. See *Rescue of the Library*, Derher Adar II 5774, for an overview of the release of the library in Poland.

2. I was in the library at the time, because my brother Yossi and I were given the job of laying out the *sefarim* on the table to make it easier for the Rebbe to view them.

3. See *Seudas Hoda'a - Zos Chanukah 5738*, Derher Teves 5774, for an overview of this farbrengen.

4. *Gevuras Hashem* perek 61.

5. *Sefer Hasichos* 5687, p. 169.

6. *Iggeres Hakodesh*, siman 27.

7. *Sotah* 13b.

8. *Devorim* 9:9





THE REBBE ENTERS THE
SHUL FOR MAARIV ON ROSH
CHODESH KISLEV 5752.

LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 221524