

UPON ENTERING 770, THE REBBE ENCOURAGES
THE SINGING, YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5732*.



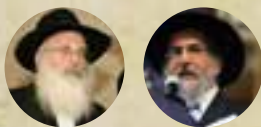
לע"נ
הרה"ח ר' אליהו ציון ע"ה
בן הרב חנני' ע"ה
נלב"ע כ"ז ניסן ה'תשע"ג
תנ"צ'ב'ה'

נדפס ע"י בנו
הרה"ת ר' יגאל ישראל
וזוגתו מרת ח' צירליא
ומשפחתם שיחיו
ניאזוף

זה היום עשה ה'

Hisvaadus Chassidim

Yud Aleph Nissan



As we approach the auspicious day of Yud-Aleph Nissan, A Chassidisher Derher sat down for a farbrengen with two shluchim, Rabbi Yossi Paris of Montreal, QC and Rabbi Binyomin Scheiman of Des Plaines, IL. They shared with us some recollections from their time by the Rebbe, and guidance on how to approach Yud-Aleph Nissan today.

A Yom Tov for Everyone

Rabbi Paris: I was a *bochur* in 770 in the late 5720s* and early 5730s*. Those were the years that Yud-Aleph Nissan really became the public Yom Tov that it is today. We were *zoche* that the Rebbe shared the day with us Chassidim and all of *klal Yisroel*, giving us the opportunity to take part in his *simcha*. Today it is a given that we add in our *hachlatos* in preparation for

Yud-Aleph Nissan, we give *matanos* to the Rebbe, make *farbrengens* and do all we can to be by the Rebbe on this day. But like many things in *dor hashvi'i*, this was something built up over time.

In general, if we look back at previous generations, the Rebbeim celebrated their birthdays privately. The Rebbe Rashab said a *maamar* every year on his birthday. If Chof Cheshvan fell out on Shabbos he said

it publicly but if it was a weekday he said it only in the presence of the Frierdiker Rebbe.

Chassidim also didn't celebrate their birthdays and many in previous generations did not even know the exact date of their birth.

Chai Elul was a *chassidishe yom tov* for centuries before it was revealed by the Rebbe Rashab that it was the birthday of the Baal Shem Tov and the Alter Rebbe. Even when the Rebbe



Rashab “revealed” it, he only told this to the Frierdiker Rebbe, who chose to make it public many years later.

When we look at Yud-Aleph Nissan, we find the same. Nobody really knew when the Rebbe’s birthday was. Interestingly, when the Rebbe published *Hayom Yom* in 5702*, he placed the Frierdiker Rebbe’s instructions regarding a *yom huledes* in the *Hayom Yom* for Yud-Aleph Nissan, but no one really knew this



was the Rebbe’s birthday. The first time Chassidim learned about the date was in 5707*, when the Rebbe was visiting his mother, Rebbetzin Chana, in France. Rebbetzin Chana suggested to a small group of Chassidim there that they should ask the Rebbe to farbreng because it’s his birthday—and the Rebbe agreed.

However, it remained a *Yom Tov* among Chassidim for many years before the Rebbe began farbrenging and officially celebrating the day with us.

The first time the Rebbe made a farbrengen for Yud-Aleph Nissan was in honor of his sixtieth *yom huledes*, in 5722*. That year, Tzach (Lubavitch Youth Organization) made a huge *shturem* all over the world for people to make *hachlatos* in the number 60 in honor of *shnas hashishim*. On the day of Yud-Aleph Nissan, Rabbi Hodakov went into the Rebbe’s room before Mincha with the stacks of *duchos* containing all the *hachlatos*. When he came out, he announced that the Rebbe would hold a special farbrengen that night.

But besides for that one year, Yud-Aleph Nissan was still celebrated quietly. When I was growing up in Kfar Chabad there was a big public farbrengen on Yud-Tes Kislev and Yud Shevat, but not on Yud-Aleph Nissan. In yeshiva, we farbrenged in the dormitory rooms ourselves. I remember one year Reb Yoel farbrenged in a *bochur’s* house, not in yeshiva. I heard from Reb Leibel Raskin a”h that when he was a *bochur* in the 5710s*, they were uncomfortable to even farbreng

openly, and they made secret farbrengens for Yud-Aleph Nissan.

This all changed in 5731*. That year when the Rebbe returned from the Ohel, it was announced that he would hold a farbrengen between Mincha and Maariv. This caught everyone by total surprise. In that farbrengen the Rebbe said the famous *maamar* “*Beyom ashtei asar.*” It was a short farbrengen with one *sicha* and a *maamar*.

Perhaps the purpose of that surprise farbrengen was to kick off the festivities for the Rebbe’s seventieth year, *shivim shanah*, Yud-Aleph Nissan 5732*.

That year thousands of people came from all over the world. It was the largest crowd 770 had seen until that point.

For months before Yud-Aleph Nissan, *bochurim* and *anash* made *hachlatos* in the number 70. 70 *maamarim* by heart, 70 *blatt* Gemara, 70 dollars to *tzedaka*, etc. The *hisorerus* was incredible. There were four *niggunim* made that year on the Rebbe’s new *kapittel!*

There was also great excitement in the Jewish world and beyond. Many world leaders and elected officials sent letters of recognition, scrolls of honor, and keys to cities to present to the Rebbe at the big farbrengen, in recognition of Yud-Aleph Nissan.

The *hachanos* reached their peak at the Purim farbrengen, about a month before Yud-Aleph Nissan, when the Rebbe spoke openly about it, responding publicly to those that had asked what they could give the Rebbe as a *matana* for his birthday. The Rebbe requested that all *matanos*

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for his birthday should also include an element of Torah. Never before had the Rebbe so clearly and publicly addressed the celebration.

On the day of Yud-Aleph Nissan, Rabbi Hodakov, in the Rebbe's name, distributed \$71 to the head of every Chabad *mosad*. The Rebbe was celebrating together with his Chassidim.

There is no need to describe the famous farbrengen that year. Everyone is surely familiar with the Rebbe's announcement of the formation of

71 new institutions, and pledging 10 percent of the costs for each new *mosad*.¹ There is a video of that incredible farbrengen and I highly suggest that people take the time to watch it.

From that year on, the Rebbe farbrenged every year on Yud-Aleph Nissan (until 5745*).

We are truly fortunate that the Rebbe chose to celebrate his own birthday with his Chassidim, something that did not exist in all the previous generations.

The Day it all Started

Rabbi Scheiman: Obviously, for us as Chassidim, Yud-Aleph Nissan is the most important day on the calendar. If not for Yud-Aleph Nissan, "אי לא האי" "יומא" ("...If it weren't for that day...")²

In the farbrengen of 7 Adar 5745, the Rebbe speaks about the birth of Moshe Rabbeinu. Rashi says that when Moshe Rabbeinu was born "נתמלא" "הבית כולו אורה," the house became filled with light. The Rebbe elaborates on the *chiddush* in Rashi's words: Even before Moshe Rabbeinu had a *bris*, before



10 NISSAN 5744, YOSSIMELAMED VIA JEM 75465

KSAV YAD TO A CHOSSID WHO VISITED THE REBBE FOR YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5732*:

ת"ח על הקורת רוח וכו' מביקורו כאן בימים אלו.
ויה"ר שיהא ג"כ לתועלת הרבים (נוסף על שכל יחיד - עולם מלא הוא).
אזכיר עה"צ להנ"ל ולחה"פ כשר ושמח.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR THE PLEASURE OF HAVING YOU VISIT HERE IN THESE DAYS.
MAY IT BE HASHEM'S WILL THAT IT ALSO BE FOR THE BENEFIT OF MANY (IN ADDITION TO THE FACT
THAT EACH INDIVIDUAL IS AN ENTIRE WORLD.
I WILL MENTION ALL OF THE ABOVE AT THE OHEL, AND FOR A KOSHER AND HAPPY PESACH.

he even had a name, as soon as he entered the world, he didn't even have to do anything, the house was filled with light.³

In a farbrengen on Yud-Beis Tammuz, the birthday of the Friediker Rebbe, the Rebbe explains that the "house" refers to Hashem's house, this world. The Rebbe's birthday is not just a *simcha* for those who live in his "house," his Chassidim, but for the whole world, because on that day a new light began illuminating the entire world.⁴

On a personal note, Yud-Aleph Nissan always stood out to me more than any other *yoma depagra*. I started noticing that the Rebbe comments on the number 11 at every opportunity.

In Chassidus the number 11 symbolizes higher than *hishtalshelus*. The world is made up of ten *sefiros*, that's the natural order, and 11 is above that, reaching the *atzmus* of Hashem.⁵ Eleven represents the deepest connection with Hashem.

In the farbrengen of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5745*, the Rebbe connected

this with the famous words of the Alter Rebbe that he doesn't want Gan Eden or *olam haba*, "מער ניט אז" —only Hashem Himself." In another *sicha*, the Rebbe says that the coming of Moshiach is connected specifically with 11.⁶

On another occasion, the Rebbe offered a lengthy explanation on when the early seeds of *yetzias Mitzrayim* and the birth of *am Yisroel* actually began—on the Sunday before they left *Mitzrayim*, which occurred on, you guessed it, Yud-Aleph Nissan.⁷



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THE FARBRENGEN OF YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5732*.

On Chof-Beis Shevat 5752*, the Rebbe even said that the uniqueness of the number 22 is that it's double 11!

Rabbi Paris: On this note, I remember something interesting the Rebbe said in connection with Yud-Aleph Nissan on Shabbos Hagadol 5729*: The *possuk* in Yehoshua tells us that the Yidden who were born in the desert did not have a *bris mila* until the end of the 40 years, right after they crossed the Yarden. What date did this occur? The Rebbe quoted several sources that indicate it was actually on Yud-Aleph Nissan.

The mitzvah of *mila* is unique in the fact that it is one of two *mitzvos aseh* that warrant *karres* if they're neglected (the other one being *Korban Pesach*). When one fulfils the mitzvah of *mila*, the potential *karres* is transformed into a positive act. This is similar to the concept of *לדונות ונעשו לו*

זכירות—that when one does a proper *teshuva*, his *aveiros* are transformed into merits.

I remember how a few days later at a farbrengen with Chassidim, someone pointed out that the Rebbe is actually hinting to the nature of Yud-Aleph Nissan and what it really means: The Rebbe's whole life is about bringing myriads of Yidden back to Yiddishkeit. No wonder this lesson about *mila* happened on Yud-Aleph Nissan!

Traveling to the Rebbe

Rabbi Scheiman: During the court case over the *sefarim*, the Rebbe spoke a lot about “מה זרעו בחיים אף הוא בחיים”, just as his [the Rebbe's] children are alive, so too he is alive.” On numerous occasions, the Rebbe says that when we see “*zarò bachaim*,” then we know that “*hu bachaim*.”

We are the *zarò bachaim* of the Rebbe. When we act as *zarò*, the

Rebbe's children, then most certainly “*af hu bachaim*,” the Rebbe is alive and relates to us in this way too.

As the *zarò bachaim* of the Rebbe, it is important that we make the effort to go to the Rebbe as often as possible, on the various *yomei depagra* and especially for Yud-Aleph Nissan.

Before Yud-Aleph Nissan 5742*, the Rebbe's 80th birthday, the Rebbe said in a *sicha* that people should not travel to come in. Many shluchim couldn't resist and went anyways; it's the Rebbe's birthday, how could one not be there?! By nature I'm a *kabbalas ol'nik*, so I stayed in Chicago that year. I also convinced some of my fellow shluchim to stay.

Imagine how we felt when we watched the hookup and heard the Rebbe thanking everyone for coming, adding that he would give each participant a *Tanya* as a token



Not knowing what to do, he asked the Rebbetzin, and the Rebbetzin answered him “we didn’t mean friends.”

of appreciation. We saw the shluchim from Chicago who had gone in, go by to get a Tanya. The others who I had convinced to stay with me were very upset with me, to say the least.

Interestingly, it was later published in the “Encounters” by Reb Zalmon Jaffe, how he was planning to be by the Rebbe that Yud-Aleph Nissan, but after the Rebbe said not to come in he was thinking of cancelling his trip. Not knowing what to do, he asked the Rebbetzin, and she replied that, “We didn’t mean friends.”

We are friends, or even more so as I said earlier, children. This is our father’s birthday. If one asks his father whether or not to fly in for

his birthday party, of course he’ll say not to. Every father would tell his children not to waste their money, not to bother themselves, etc. But certain things you don’t ask! You go, and once you’re there it is very much appreciated.

Especially now after Gimmel Tammuz, we have to show even more that *zar’o bachaim*, and the way to do that is by going to the Rebbe just like before.

After Gimmel Tammuz, my wife and I decided that our family’s schedule of going to the Rebbe would continue unchanged. A few years later, we were driving for Yud Shevat, and one of my younger daughters asked if

this time she would get a dollar from the Rebbe. I guess she realized that the last few times she didn’t get one.

My wife told her that when we go to the Rebbe we always get *brachos*. If the Rebbe has time, maybe he’ll come out and *daven* with the Chassidim, *farbreng*, have *yechidus* or give out dollars, but we always get the *brachos*.

The Rebbe is certainly pouring out *brachos* on this day. There is no more opportune time to be in close proximity to the Rebbe than on Yud-Aleph Nissan.

Bringing Nachas to the Rebbe

Rabbi Paris: The focal point of Yud-Aleph Nissan is to bring the Rebbe *nachas*.

In Montreal for a number of years, Rabbi Berel Mockin would arrange a meeting in the weeks approaching Yud-Aleph Nissan to determine what

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matana we would bring the Rebbe that year. One year we decided that our *matana* was a new mikvah in Montreal. Every member of *anash* gave \$1000 and we built a beautiful mikvah.

It was clear to every person that Yud-Aleph Nissan was about bringing something to the Rebbe, you couldn’t come empty handed.

Every year, as it gets closer to Yud-Aleph Nissan, our shlichus centers around what we are bringing to the Rebbe for his *yom huledes*. Every extra mitzvah that we do with someone, every tefillin that we put on, every *shiur* that we make, at the forefront of our mind is that this is something I can take to the Rebbe for Yud-Aleph Nissan.

A Matana for the Rebbe

Rabbi Scheiman: You can’t come empty handed to the Rebbe. You have to bring a *matana* and it has to be something substantial.

This year marked 90 years since the Rebbe’s *chasunah* on Yud-Daled Kislev. Chassidim all around the world took on extra *hachlatos* in honor of this milestone.

The shluchim in Chicago had a farbrengen on Chof Cheshvan. At that farbrengen someone recounted how he was once discussing a *maamar* he was learning with Reb Mendel Futerfas. Reb Mendel was animatedly talking about the finer points of the *maamar*, as if he had just learned it. So the *bochur* asked him why he *punkt* now learned this *maamar*.

Reb Mendel told him that he learned this *maamar* as a *bochur* over 70 years earlier but he was taught that you have to live with a *maamar* for a year. So he reviewed it every single day

for a year. When you learn something 350 times it stays with you even after 70 years.

So we made a *hachlata* that each of us would take something and learn it every day from Chof Cheshvan until Chof-Beis Shvat, 90 days in honor of the 90 year milestone.

For my *hachlata*, I chose to learn the *sichos* the Rebbe said on the day I came on shlichus to Chicago, on Rosh Chodesh Adar 5740*.

That day the shluchim were going to leave to Australia. Before Mincha, totally out of the blue, Rabbi Groner came out of the Rebbe’s room and announced that there would be a farbrengen after Mincha.

As that was the day we moved on shlichus, and the whole farbrengen was in essence a *tzeischem l’shalom* for shluchim, I feel a special connection. Over the years I have come to see more and more how so many things in that farbrengen applied directly to me and my own shlichus.

The *matana* that we bring to the Rebbe accomplishes two things. First of all it’s a present for the Rebbe. But in addition to that, it’s also beneficial for us, as it helps us live with the Rebbe more.

Rabbi Paris: In 5735*, the Hebrew schools that my wife and I started in Montreal for public school children were already quite successful. We had around 400 students by then.

I decided that for Yud-Aleph Nissan that year I was going to bring the Rebbe a booklet with the Hebrew names and mothers’ names of all the students in the school.

This was a very difficult task. Many of the children didn’t know their Jewish name so I had to go to each

parent, and getting the parents’ names was another difficult task.

Of course this made us work hard to enroll even more students, to make the list longer. We wanted to bring the Rebbe as much *nachas* as possible.

When I came to New York on 9 Nissan I submitted the booklet to *mazkirus* as our *matana* to the Rebbe.

Shortly afterwards, I received a beautiful answer from the Rebbe.

”נת’ ות”ח ודבר בעתו כו’ ואשרי חלקם ודכל המסייעים וכו’ - שליט”א. אזכיר עה”צ ולחה”פ כו”ש וכל המברך מתברך בבר’ של הקב”ה כו’.”

“It was received; thank you. The timing is appropriate, etc. Fortunate is their lot and that of everyone who assisted etc.—*shlita*. I will mention this at the Ohel, and for a kosher and happy Pesach. [In response to the blessings for Yud-Aleph Nissan:] Anyone who blesses another is blessed with Hashem’s blessing, etc.”

It’s interesting to note that in the letter accompanying the booklet I wrote that we made all the preparations for Pesach in school, with a model *seder* and *ma nishtana* along with everything the kids need to know, and the Hebrew school program was now closed for Pesach.

At the farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke about this. He said it’s “א וילדע זאך”; it doesn’t make sense that the *yeshivos* and Talmud Torahs are closed at the time of year when children need the most education, about how to celebrate the *seder* and to observe the *halachos* of Pesach. All that is accomplished is that the kids are home for a week disturbing their parents’ preparation for Pesach. Better they should be busy practicing the *ma nishtana*.

Since then the school is in session until erev Pesach.

There was a period of time that I didn’t get any answers to the *duchos* I had sent to the Rebbe. One year I came back from the Rebbe to Montreal



THE REBBE LEAVES 770 FOLLOWING THE FARBRENGEN OF YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5737*.

on Yud-Aleph Nissan and went to visit some *baalei batim*.

One of the people I visited never wanted to put on tefillin. This time I told him, “Today is the Rebbe’s birthday, how about you give him a present?” and he agreed. So I suggested that his present to the Rebbe could be to put on tefillin today. He was happy to do the mitzvah in honor of the Rebbe.

When I wrote this story to the Rebbe, I received the first answer in a long time.

Mivtzoim

Rabbi Paris: I once heard a *vort* from the veteran shliach in Montreal, Rabbi Simcha Zirkind a”h, that Yud-Aleph Nissan is an opportune time for doing *mivtzoim*. I always found this to be the case, seeing tremendous *hatzlacha* on the *mivtzoim* I did on that day.

One needs to do all they can to be by the Rebbe on Yud-Aleph Nissan, but after being at the Ohel and doing what we have to do, we are certainly on the right track if we spend the rest of the day doing the Rebbe’s *mivtzoim*.

Indeed, when the Rebbe spoke about not coming in for Yud-Aleph Nissan in 5742* (as mentioned by Rabbi Scheiman earlier), the Rebbe said that instead “people should be active in spreading Yiddishkeit in their place, especially through doing the *mivtzoim!*”⁸

Rabbi Scheiman: In addition to all the *hachalatos* and *matanos*, we should remember that sometimes, the best *matana* we can bring to the Rebbe is ourselves. Showing up can be the greatest gift of all.

Chazal say that when Moshiach comes, all the Yomim Tovim will be cancelled with the exception of Chanukah and Purim. In Chassidus it

is explained that other Yomim Tovim are a reflection of a specific quality of *Elokus*, but Chanukah and Purim are not a specific quality rather Hashem Himself.⁹

So too, Yud-Aleph Nissan is the day when it all began. It is about the Rebbe himself! I don’t know what will be with the other *chassidische Yomim Tovim* but we will certainly be celebrating Yud-Aleph Nissan when Moshiach comes. **❶**

1. For a complete description of this farbrengen and the whole period of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5732, see ‘A Time To Expand,’ Derher Nissan 5776.
2. Based on Gemara Pesachim 68b.
3. Hisvaaduyos 5745 vol. 2 page 1289.
4. Sicha 12 Tammuz 5722.
5. Yahel Ohr page 48.
6. Hisvaaduyos 5745 vol. 3 p. 1724.
7. Hisvaaduyos 5749 vol. 3 p. 7.
8. Hisvaaduyos 5742 vol. 2 p. 1084.
9. Torah Ohr Megilas Esther page 90:4.