

צער האנש

לעט מיטן רבין

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Mitzvos

'ד כסלו

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(משיחת 'ד כסלו תש"ד)

"אהובים וידידים ובני המשפחה" YUD DALIT KISLEV

Yud Dalit Kislev is a day that means so much to us, as Chassidim of the Rebbe. One need not go further than the fact that the Rebbe himself coined this day "The day that has connected me with you and you with me", to fully appreciate the true significance of the day.

Throughout the years, Chassidim saw this special day of Yud Dalit Kislev as a unique opportunity to give the Rebbe gifts in its honor.

For example, in 5729, when the Rebbe and Rebbetzin celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary, Chassidim from all over the world marked the occasion in various ways, as we read in the following Yoman:

In the weeks leading up to Yud-Daled Kislev, 5729, the day that marked 40 years since the wedding in 5689, Chassidim from all around the world expressed their good wishes and blessings to the Rebbe and Rebbetzin. They sent them along with funds for Tzedakah in amounts of forty, while many others undertook new pledges for extra Torah study in commemoration of the day as well.

On Shabbos Parshas Vayishlach, 16 Kislev, the Rebbe responded to all his well wishers, blessing them in return, adding that the blessing be reinforced by increasing in Torah and Tzedakah. The Rebbe specified that even the Bochurim, who are normally involved solely in Torah study, should participate in the Tzedakah as well.

The Rebbe also publicized these words in a letter dated 17 Kislev, which was sent to many of the well wishers.

In fact, ten years later, Yud Dalit Kislev, 5739 (50 years), the Rebbe held a special Farbrengen in honor of the occasion. It was at that Farbrengen that the Rebbe disclosed a very interesting fact: in 5707, when the Friediker Rebbe celebrated 50 years since his wedding, the Rebbe conducted a special campaign (as administrator of Kehos, responsible for all of Lubavitch's publications) as a gift to the Friediker Rebbe in honor of this day. The following is the story as the Rebbe related it at the Farbrengen in 5739:

Amongst those of our Rabbeim who lived to celebrate their own 50th anniversary was also the Friediker Rebbe (13 Elul, 5657-5707). As it turned out, the Mitteler Rebbe's Maamarim were being printed in Shanghai at the time, so in honor of each of the "Sheva Brochos" days in 5707, a new publication was brought to the Friediker Rebbe. Indeed, the Friediker Rebbe was very pleased with this "gift" and especially encouraged the fact that the fifty-year "highlight" was being commemorated.

"My Nachas..."

Often times, a delegation of Chassidim would approach the Rebbe on Yud Dalit Kislev to give a Brocha on behalf of all the Chassidim and the Rebbe would respond by blessing them in return.

Once, when the Chassidim blessed the Rebbe with *Nachas*, the Rebbe remarked: "When the Chassidim are happy and healthy and have *Nachas*, I have *Nachas* as well..."

Why a Farbrengen?

We'll conclude with the words the Rebbe said at the Farbrengen in 5739, giving reason for holding a Farbrengen on such a day in the first place:

In this country, it is common practice that when one celebrates a significant number of years since his wedding day, he holds a gathering for his relatives and friends.

Our Chachomim tell us that when one enters into a city, he is to follow its practices. Hence, we hold this Farbrengen in accordance with the above instruction. And being Jews who attempt to associate all that we do with our Avodas Hashem, His Torah, and its ways, we consequentially utilize such an opportunity as a chance to increase our study of Torah and adherence to its Mitzvos, and as a preparation for Yud-Tes Kislev. And this is especially so when, like this year, we celebrate and commemorate a special milestone; fifty years!

לעילוי נשמה
הרה"ת יוסף צחэк
בן הרה"ח ר' שלמה
שניאור זלמן ע"ה
קיין
נפטר י"ב כסלו ה'תשנ"ט
♦
נדפס ע"י אימוי
תברלחת"א מרת שולא
ובנותיה תח"י

Three Ma'amorim and Stories

A Yud Kislev Farbrengen

Throughout the years of the Rebbe's Nesius, the Rebbe conducted over one-thousand Farbrengens, within which he poured words of Torah and Chassidus to the crowds that gathered to hear him. But a most special moment at each was when the Rebbe recited a Ma'amor. During most of the years, there was a special introductory Niggun sung to prepare for the Ma'amor, and the Rebbe's face became serious as the people present all rose to their feet to remain standing throughout the duration of the Ma'amor.

On certain rare occasions the Rebbe recited two Ma'amorim during the same Farbrengen. This occurrence did not happen often, but it did repeat itself quite a few times throughout the years.

There was only one time throughout all the years of the Rebbe's Nesius when three Ma'amorim were recited at the same Farbrengen. This was on Shabbos Parshas Vayetzei - Yud Kislev, 5722.

This Farbrengen was also unique in the fact that the amount of Ma'amorim recited outnumbered the Sichos! There were only two Sichos, containing stories of the Mitteler Rebbe, the one whose liberation we celebrate on this day (see particularly story #4).

In honor of Yud Kislev, we bring to you some of those stories, as they were recorded and published in *Toras Menachem* vol. 32 pp. 243:

1. "My Father is here"

Some background information to the following story: While the Mitteler Rebbe was confined in imprisonment, a special law was passed granting him permission to bring some of his Chassidim to join him each Shabbos in his cell, so that he may say Chassidus for them. The news of his liberation actually reached him Shabbos, Tes Kislev, close to its conclusion, in the midst of reciting the Maamor "Ato Echad".

There is a well known diary by the Frierdiker Rebbe regarding Yud Kislev, where he describes how on Shabbos, Tes Kislev at *Mincha* time, while the Mitteler Rebbe was standing and reciting a Maamor (as is known, the Mitteler Rebbe often recited *Ma'amorim* while standing), the news arrived that he was free. In the midst of the recitation, the Mitteler Rebbe stopped abruptly and said: "Sha! Make way, my father is here..."

2. Personal Concern

In the Sicha of Yud Kislev 5662, the Rebbe Rashab elaborated upon the Ahavas Yisroel of the Mitteler Rebbe, recounting in great detail about the severe financial situation of the Jewish community at the time. The Mitteler Rebbe pleaded by the government on their behalf that they be granted large plots of land upon which they can settle and farm, thereby forming the "colonies" of Kherson.

The Mitteler Rebbe's efforts were fruitful as such that he was able to bring about the permission for the Jewish folk to pasture their flock in government-owned fields, as well as a tax exemption on the land. The Mitteler Rebbe went so far as to actually travel to the colonies and spend an entire summer with the inhabitants there!

3. "Smicha" to Bless

Beginning with the year 5569, the Alter Rebbe instituted a new

system: those who came to seek his counsel and blessing regarding material matters, i.e. livelihood, communal issues, and so on, the Alter Rebbe himself continued to contend and respond to. But when it came to advice and blessing for spiritual matters, he sent them to the Mitteler Rebbe, saying "Go to my Rebbe..."

At the start of each night when *Yechidus* were to be held, the Mitteler Rebbe came into his father's room, as if to receive "Smicha" to be able to bless throughout the night. But when someone would come in to the Mitteler Rebbe and actually ask for a blessing, he would go again to his father to receive an additional "Smicha" for this specific matter.

It happened once that an individual arrived to seek his blessing, and the Mitteler Rebbe said to him, "The one whom you came for is not in at the moment..." (i.e. the Alter Rebbe wasn't there, so he would not be able to bestow any blessings).

4. Chassidus at Four in the Morning

In the Mitteler Rebbe's days, there was an unbelievable dissemination of Chassidus. In fact, at times it occurred that the Mitteler Rebbe recited Chassidus three times in one Shabbos, sometimes even at four o'clock in the morning!

Each and every one of us must learn from this ourselves, that we mustn't be afraid to study Chassidus even three times in one day, and at night as well - even in the middle of the night at four o'clock in the morning (even if Halachic obligation permits him to remain asleep at that hour).

5. "Rabbin"

The Mitteler Rebbe was very well acquainted with the government of his time. Nevertheless, he lived in constant fear that someone would fabricate false charges against him. This can be found even in the transcription of the *Ma'amorim* which he recited - whenever a mention would be made of "the evil kingdom of Edom" or the like, they were always careful not to spell it out clearly, so that it was not misinterpreted and used to prosecute him.

The Mitteler Rebbe once traveled to see the Czar Alexander, and upon reaching Babinowicz, the Czar referred to the Mitteler Rebbe as "Rabbin" twice; once - while he made the blessing upon bearing sight of a king, and a second time - when the Mitteler Rebbe left.

6. In the Tzemach Tzedek's Words...

After the passing of the Mitteler Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek initially refused to accept upon himself the nesius of Chabad, reasoning that this would rob him of his time to study Torah. When asked, but your father-in-law, the Mitteler Rebbe, led the community nevertheless, the Tzemach Tzedek responded, "How can you compare me to my father-in-law? When my father-in-law merely passed through the *Beis Medrash* one time, he was able to think over an entire *Mesichta*..."

"During my Wedding Meal..."

In a rare moment, during a Shabbos Farbrengen, the Rebbe related a personal story that occurred during his own wedding meal (Shabbos Parshas Nasso, 5747):

During my wedding celebration, the Rebbe, my father-in-law went about amongst the participants distributing Mashke so they can say Le'chaim.

Seeing this, I was could not bear to sit on my own while my father-in-law was standing and distributing Mashke, so I stood up from my place in an attempt to assist him, at least by holding the bottle, or perhaps the small glasses.

But my father-in-law immediately turned to me, signaling that I was to remain seated.

A Jew is always stubborn ("An akshon"), so after a short while that my father-in-law was still distributing Mashke (or perhaps it was wine, I don't recall exactly), I made my second attempt, and began approaching him to extend a hand.

It was then that my father-in-law gave me a real sharp look and I understood that I would have no choice; I must sit.

I did indeed sit down at my place, but obviously with real discomfort ("Oif shpilkes"), until my father-in-law returned to his place and continued on with the meal.

Blessings for the Chassidim

Chassidim relate that while the Frierdiker Rebbe distributed Mashke during the wedding meal, he blessed each one of them with whatever it was that they needed. It's interesting to note that at the Frierdiker Rebbe's own wedding, his father, the Rebbe Rashab did a very similar thing.

The Frierdiker Rebbe relates that during his wedding meal, the Rebbe Rashab went about amongst the Chassidim and drank a Le'chaim with each one, blessing them each with what they needed.



He first married at eighteen [or nineteen] years old, and a few months after the wedding he traveled to Tzemach Tzedek in Lubavitch. In the meantime, his wife died during the birth of their son, and Reb Chaim Ber hurried back for the week of *Shivah*. Later, he married a widow and had three sons, but she too passed away. A few years after her passing, Reb Chaim Ber, at the advice of the Rebbe Maharash, remarried once again in the year 5637.

The Wine Merchant

For many years made a living by selling wine in his town of Kremenchug. Occasionally, he would travel to the city of Kishinov to replenish his stock, and return home to sell them at a profit.

On one such a trip Reb Chaim Ber arrived at the house of his supplier but noticed he wasn't home. Not wanting to waste any time during the wait, he began to delve deeply into thought about Chassidus. When the merchant returned, he saw an amazing sight. Sitting on a chair, Reb Chaim Ber was engrossed in his thoughts and was totally oblivious to the world around him. The merchant called out Reb Chaim Ber's name a few times, attempting to wake him from his reverie, but Reb Chaim Ber didn't respond.

Astonished and slightly awed, the merchant sat and waited for Reb Chaim Ber to conclude his meditation. However, his patience grew thin as the hours passed, and he once more tried to wake Reb Chaim Ber. Calling out his name again, Reb Chaim Ber finally heard him.

Suddenly, Reb Chaim Ber turned to the merchant and asked in surprise, "Why did you change the place of the water container?" The water container in Reb Chaim Ber's house was in a different place of the room then it was by the merchant. Having become so deeply engrossed in his thoughts, he lost his bearings, and thinking he was at home he wondered why the water had been moved from its regular place!

A Popular Name

Reb Chaim Ber the wine merchant, whose full name was Reb Yitzchak Chayim Dovber Haleivi Vilenski, was one of the famous "Kremenchuger Reb Chaim Berach" the Frierdiker Rebbe describes in his writings.

In the words of the Frierdiker Rebbe:

"In the city of Kremenchug there were a number of famous Chassidim who all had the name Reb Chaim Ber."

"Thus, they were affectionately called the "Kremenchuger Reb Chaim Berach." Each of them had exceptional minds..."

They would daven at length and Chazzer Chassidus. All Chassidim – even the ones from Poland – greatly respected and honored them."

Simple Beginnings and an Honorable Wedding

Reb Yitzchak Chaim Dovber – Reb Chaim Ber – was born between the years 5596 - 5598 to his parents Reb Meir and Brocha Vilensky.

Despite the fact that his parents were not well off they wanted their son to have the best education and sent him to the best Melamdim in Kremenchug. He excelled in his studies and already at a very young age his talents were evident.

Quite sadly, Reb Chaim Ber lost two wives when he was still a young man.

(To be continued)

Chassidus, Torah and Mitzvos

Q&A

The following is a letter by the Rebbe (written originally in English) where the Rebbe explains what Chassidus added to Yiddishkeit in general, and why it not only does not detract from the standard Torah observance, but on the contrary. The Letter is dated Yud Beis Tammuz, 5720:

...This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 8th of Sivan, in which you touch upon the influence of Chabad and various other loyalties and obligations, etc.

There is, of course, the general principle that the larger sum already includes the smaller one, or, as our Sages expressed it, "In the sum of 200, 100 is included." I refer to the teachings and way of life of Chassidus [chassidism]. For Chassidus did not come to minimize in any way, G-d forbid, but to add to and strengthen all matters of Torah and Mitzvoth by instilling a spirit of vivacity and enthusiasm into all aspects of Jewish life. The Baal Shem Tov, whose 200th anniversary of the completion of his life's work we have just observed on the 1st day of Shovuoth, placed the emphasis on serving G-d with joy and on the awareness of G-d's Providence which extends to everyone and in every detail, in particular - two basic principles which go hand in hand together. For, when one reflects on G-d's benevolent providence and His constant watchfulness and care, etc., there is no room for anxiety, and the Jew can indeed serve G-d with joy and gladness of heart.

Although you will suspect me of being favorably inclined to the Chassidic point of view, and I will not deny it, and in any case it would be futile to deny it, nevertheless the fact is that Chassidus, far from creating a conflict in the matter of allegiance to the Torah and Mitzvoth, is the ingredient which gives the necessary flavor and zest to all matters of Torah and Mitzvoth, and can only strengthen and vitalize all positive forces in Jewish life.

I say this in all sincerity and with the fullest conviction, and I hope that you will accept these words in the spirit that they are given, especially as I am writing this letter on the auspicious Day of Liberation of my father-in-law of saintly memory, whose life and work fully reflect the above. You are surely familiar with the conditions of Jewish life in Soviet Russia in those days when, under the pressure of extreme religious persecution, many spiritual Jewish leaders fled from that country, and my father-in-law remained to carry the banner of the Torah and Mitzvoth almost singlehanded. His work was not confined to the Chassidic community, as you know, but to all sections of Jewry, including, what you call "the other camp," supporting, materially and spiritually, rabbis, yeshivot and religious

institutions also of the other camp, and with the same selflessness and peril to his personal safety, as he worked for the Chassidic community. This he did from the profound conviction that there are no two camps in the Jewish people; that the Jewish people is one people, united by one Torah, under one G-d. This is a tradition that goes back to the founder of Chabad and the founder of Chassidus in general who emphasized that the Chassidic movement is not the property of one Chassidic group, but the heritage of all our people, and that there will come a day when this will be realized in the fullest measure.

It is remarkable that when one reads the letters and bans by the early opponents to the Baal Shem Tov and his teachings, and if one does so without prejudice and with an open mind, it should make *everyone* a Chosid. In fact, the greater the attachment to, and veneration of, the Gaon of Wilno, the chief opponent of Chassidim in those days, the greater and more loyal a Chosid one should become. The reason is plain, for those letters also state the reasons for opposing the Chassidim, namely, the fear that they may weaken the foundations of the Torah, and Mitzvoth. How wrong those apprehensions were is obvious. Stop any Jew in the street, even one of the most stalwart adherents to "the other camp," and ask him, "What is a Chosid and what is his way of life?" he will unhesitatingly reply something like this: "A Chosid is a bearded Jew with long sidelocks, dressed in an old-fashioned way, who puts on two pairs of *Tefillin*, prays much longer, boycotts the movies, careful to eat only *Shemura* on Pesach[Passover], etc., etc." Further commentary is unnecessary.

I trust this will suffice on the subject matter, since this is the first time we have directly touched upon this question...

ללי' מוד הורמְבָּם		אינטערוֹפֶּרֶשְׁנַּסְתְּרָה	
ט' נסלו	ה' אסורי ביה פרק ז'	ה' נסלו	ט' נסלו
פרק ז'	פרק יג-טו	יא נסלו	פרק טו-זיח
פרק ט'	פרק טו-זיח	יב נסלו	פרק טט-כא
פרק י'	פרק יט-כא	יג נסלו	פרק נב-כד
פרק א'	פרק נב-כד	יד נסלו	פרק כה-כו
פרק ב'	פרק כה-כו	טו נסלו	פרק חח-ל
פרק ג'	פרק חח-ל		

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