

The Weekly *Farbrengens*



MERKAZ ANASH
מרכז אנאש

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EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

YUD-TES KISLEV (I)

A SPECIAL DAY

After the *geula* of the Alter Rebbe, the chassidim wanted to write a *Megillas Yud-Tes Kislev* to be read each year, so they prepared a draft to present to him. The matter was kept a secret until they traveled to Liozna, where they asked for his consent for their project. The Alter Rebbe did not grant it, but told them, "This day will be established as a *Yom-Tov* amongst Yidden, in which *HaShem's* Name will be glorified and thousands of Yidden will be aroused to *teshuvah* and *avoda*. This episode is engraved in the 'heart of Yisroel' above and is written in the heart of every Yid below."

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"א ע' 38)

THE SEUDAS HODA'A

How did the chassidim in Liadi celebrate the *seudas hoda'a* for the *geula* of *Yud-Tes Kislev* which took place in תקס"ב (1801)?

Reb Aizik Homiler described it for us: "That year, during Tishrei, the Rebbe was extremely joyful. He mentioned to the chassidim who were close to him that he had not yet made a *seudas hoda'a* for his *geula*, as one is obligated to do, *al pi halachah*. From this, they understood that the coming *Yud-Tes Kislev* would be something out of the ordinary.

"At the beginning of Kislev, we, the young chassidim of Homil, Bobruisk and the surrounding villages, put together whatever money we had, hired a wagon, and bought a dozen pairs of *volikess*, felt-lined winter boots. We set off together by foot, except that from time to time we took turns resting on the wagon. As we passed through various towns, we were joined by many more chassidim – eight *minyanim* in all – and on Thursday of *Parshas Vayishlach* we arrived in Liadi.

"That *Shabbos* was the most joyous that chassidim ever experienced. During *Shabbos* the Rebbe delivered three *maamarim* – one before *Kabbalas Shabbos*, another early on *Shabbos* morning, and a third *maamar* after *Mincha*. We *chazered* the *maamarim* over and over, under the guidance of the *chozrim*, carefully recalling *divrei harav*.

"On Sunday and Monday people began arriving from far and near, from dozens of towns and villages. The townsmen of Liadi announced that all the *orchim* would be served meals without payment for the

entire week, until after the forthcoming *Shabbos*. Even some of the *goyishe* townsmen took part in the *hachnasas orchim*, and dozens of them even cleared out their houses to make room for *orchim* to sleep. The manager of the estates of Count Liubermirsky announced that every single day a shipment of food would be delivered to them from the count's estates, including 1200 kg (over 2600 pounds) of flour for bread, as well as three cows and a few calves for *shechita*. In addition, he would deliver a few wagonloads of hay for the visitors' horses.

CONSIDER

Over what did the chassidim rejoice on *Yud-Tes Kislev*?

How can we feel today the same joy as they did?

"On Tuesday, *Yud-Tes Kislev*, the chassidim went to *daven* in both the small and the large *beis midrash*, as well as in all the other *batei midrashim* in town. Wherever you went, the place was packed with people. It was announced that after *Mincha Gedola* everyone should gather in the large courtyard of the *beis midrash*, where the Rebbe would say a *maamar*. The courtyard was packed with people, and in the center of the large *beis midrash*, the big *bima* was set up, with a long table on it. Suddenly we heard the huge voice of Reb Shmuel Elye *der Heizeriker* ('the hoarse' – the nickname that jokingly referred to his resonating roar). He announced that the Rebbe was arriving and everyone should be silent. When Shmuel Elye said *Shal* the entire room shook. Soon a group of broad-shouldered *yungeleit* arrived, and like strings, they slipped through the packed crowd, and in just a few short minutes they created a broad path from the door to the *bima*.

"As soon as the Rebbe appeared at the door, we were overcome by awe, a deeply-felt *hadras kavod*. The Rebbe was singing alone, to the words *tze'ena ure'ena*. He was accompanied by a brother on either side, a third brother and two eminent elders behind them, the Rebbe's three sons following, and then the *Tzemaich Tzedek*. Approaching the steps leading up

to the *bima*, the Rebbe began to sing *Keili Atah*, and took his seat at the table, along with those who were with him. As he sang, the awesome *hislahavus* within us grew from moment to moment, and the silence echoing in the *beis midrash* overwhelmed us with an inner dread.

"The Rebbe then began the *maamar* beginning with the words, *pada beshalom nafshi*. When he completed it, the entire *olam* burst out in a joyful *niggun*. In the smaller *yechidus-beis-midrash*, a table had been set for a *seudas hoda'a*. This was attended only by the Rebbe, his sons and brothers, and a few selected elder chassidim."

(סו"ה ש' קיץ ה'ש"ת ע' 49)

CELEBRATING THE YOM-TOV

Amongst chassidim *Yud-Tes Kislev* was traditionally celebrated as an actual *Yom-Tov*. All would dress in their finest attire and would greet each other throughout the day with a meaningful "*gut yom-tov!*"

Tremendous feasts were held in all *shuls* and homes in honor of the occasion. As a child, the Rebbe collected the funds for a special children's feast – this being the only time when he would be involved in something else other than Torah.

(סו"ה ש' תש"ב עמ' 19, ימי מלך ח"א ע' 152)

Year after year, as if for the first time, Reb Nachum, the Alter Rebbe's grandson, would relate in patient detail all the events that took place during the stormy time of the Alter Rebbe's arrest. He would describe the tense atmosphere of that period, the libelous accusation the *misnagdim* brought to the czarist authorities, and their exultation when the Alter Rebbe was arrested. Reb Nachum would then describe the Alter Rebbe's stay in prison, his *geula*, the way in which the good news spread, and the Rebbe's return trip to Liozna from the prison in Petersburg. When he recalled the arrest, his voice would drop, as if he were weeping; when he described the liberation, his voice would rise with the *simcha* of a remembered victory. Like the *Megilla* Reading on Purim, he would tell the whole story once at night and again by day. Moreover, if one of the dignified elder chassidim would join the gathering after he had begun, he would go back to the very beginning and start all over again!

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"א ע' 22)

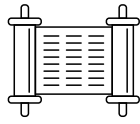


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WEDDING RING

Can a wedding ring be made of white gold?

The Mishna teaches that the act of *kidushin* can be effected by giving the woman money or an article that has monetary value.¹ The minimum value is a *perutah*, the equivalent of 0.025 gram silver, which in today's market is less than two cents.

Nonetheless, Halacha rules that one shouldn't use actual money, or even coins, since the government is able to void them, this is an indication that the currency doesn't have intrinsic value.² Rema quotes the custom of using a ring, and notes that it has a source in Zohar.³

A simple explanation given for the advantage of a ring is so that the woman will have a constant reminder of her marriage.⁴ Another explanation is that she has immediate benefit from the ring (and according to this, it should be a ring that she appreciates). According to these reasons, there is no difference of what material the ring is made.⁵

Shulchan Aruch writes that the wedding band should not have a precious stone to circumvent the woman claiming that she didn't assess the value properly and she wouldn't have agreed to the *kidushin* at the actual value.⁶

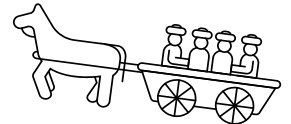
To circumvent a similar issue with the value of the ring itself, the *mesader kidushin* notes out loud that the value of the ring is at least one *perutah* to confirm that the *kallah* agrees to the marriage as long as the ring is worth at least a *perutah*. This is also one reason we cover the *kallah's* face, to demonstrate that she agrees to the *kidushin* regardless of the value.⁷ Nonetheless, we avoid using a ring with a gem since she still might have a claim.⁸

According to Kabbala, though, there is a preference for the material of the ring: Some (including the Rebbe's father) write that it should be silver, which corresponds with *chessed*, since *kidushin* is an act of kindness.⁹ Others, including the Friediker Rebbe, held that it should be gold.¹⁰

Various reasons are offered for the ring being made of gold: (1) gold doesn't deteriorate, symbolizing that the bond of this marriage should last;¹¹ (2) Tehillim (ch. 19) juxtaposes gold to *chupah*;¹² (3) the *poskim* "the honor of a king's daughter is within" mentions gold; (4) gold is softer than other metals, symbolizing that that home should be calm and soft. All these reasons would seem to allow white gold as well. (Some *poskim* claim further that white gold has the qualities of both gold and silver.¹³)

Fitting with the idea that the focus is solely on the actual ring band, Chabad custom is that the wedding band should be totally smooth without any inscriptions.¹⁴

1. קידושין ב' ע"א. ש"ע אה"ע סי' כ"ז ס"א.
2. ב"ש אה"ע סי' כ"ז סק"א (והטעם מהגהות מרדכי קידושין סי' תפ"ח).
3. רמ"א אה"ע סי' כ"ז ס"א.
4. ספר החינוך מצוה תקנ"ב.
5. ס' ציוני הלכה הל' נישואין - פסקי הגר"ש"א ע"כ.
6. ש"ע אה"ע סי' ל"א ס"ב.
7. רמ"א אה"ע סי' ל"א ס"ב. אבל מ"מ אין מקדשים באבן ערושה אבה"ע סי' נ"ח נחלת שבעה סי' י"ב מוח' אות י"ב.
8. ראה ערוה"ש אה"ע סי' ל"א ס"ח שבמשו"ש שיש בה אבן שטועין בשומא אם תאמר שבכל זאת חשבת ששווה הרבה יש חשש לטעות שלה.
9. וגם לשון המשנה האשה הנקנית בכסף.
10. ראה שיחת י"ד כסליו שרבי הייחוס לזה ואמר שבפועל היה זהב.
11. ספר שער שמים מאמר ב שער ב.
12. ראה אנ"ק ח"ג על תכ"ט.
13. ש"ת דברי יציב אה"ע סי' נב.
14. ספר המנהגים, ומהטעמים אולי דעתה להתקדש בשווי החריטה.



R. MICHEL OPOTZKER

R. Yechiel Michel Opotzker was a great chossid of the Alter Rebbe, and one of his first. He had a tremendously deep mind and was a very great *masmid*. He was a great gaon with thorough knowledge of Talmud Bavli and Yerushalmi, the *poskim* and their sources in the Rambam and Rashba, as well as works of Kabbala. R. Michel was known to be a great *baal madreiga* who had *ruach hakodesh* and *gilui Eliyahu*. He was mentor of the famous chossid and *mashpia* Rashbatz.

(רשימות חוברת קכ"ב, לקוטי סיפורים עמ' נ', התמים ח"א עמ' 78)

R. Michel's father, R. Meir Zalman, was a hidden *tzaddik* during the time before the Baal Shem Tov revealed himself. On his 90th birthday, the Baal Shem Tov told R. Meir Zalman:

"The Mishnah states that at age ninety, one begins to speak (לשוח). You know how speak yet you are silent. You should know that your son Michel will speak for you too.

"He will be a *talmid* of my *talmid's talmid* (the Alter Rebbe) who will reveal a new way of serving Hashem:

that proper *davening* is a prerequisite to the understanding and knowledge of Torah, and how even a simple person is able to attain service of Hashem with *ahava* and *yirah*, love and fear."

(ספה"ש תש"א עמ' 96)

When someone who had come from Lubavitch would pass through his town, R. Michel would go out to greet him, grab his beard and *peyos* and plead to be told whatever this man had heard in Lubavitch.

While listening to the report, he would become excited and clap his hands together.

(רשימת היומן עמ' ש"ע"ט)

R. Michel had a wealthy brother who lived in Liozna. When R. Michel was once visiting, the brother started to brag about his home and furniture. R. Michel responded, "There is a type of animal that sits entirely in the mud, but this is not enough for it, as it also wishes to bury its head in the mud..."

(רשימו"ד החדש עמ' 239)

A Moment with The Rebbe



AN OUTPOURING OF CHASSIDUS

After reciting a *maamar* at the Yud Kislev *farbrengen* of 5722 (1962), the Rebbe began telling stories of the Mittlerer Rebbe. "During the times of the Mittlerer Rebbe, there was an outpouring of *Chassidus*. It happened that he recited *Chassidus* three times on one Shabbos, sometimes at four in the morning!

"The lesson is clear," the Rebbe continued. "One could study *Chassidus* three times a day, in the middle of the

night, at four in the morning too..."

And the Rebbe began saying a second *maamar*.

As the *farbrengen* continued, the Rebbe suddenly began preparing for third *maamar*! This is how the renowned *maamar* of *Padah Besholom 5722* came about.

Indeed, three *maamarim* on one Shabbos...

(Toras Menachem vol. 32, page 249)



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