



YUD TES KISLEV (1)

Renewing the Connection

In *HaYom Yom* it is written: *Yud-Tes Kislev* is a day for *farbrengen* and for undertaking positive *hachlatos* to fix times to study *nigleh* and *Chassidus* publicly, and to strengthen the ways of chassidim in true friendship. It is customary to divide up the *Shas* for learning, according to the procedure set out in *Iggeres HaKodesh*.

(היום יום י"ט כסלו)

In the winter of תרס"ב (1901), the Rebbe Rashab was in Moscow for the purpose of *pidyon shvuyim*. He succeeded in annulling a libel against some Yidden who had been arrested, but did not want to leave until they were actually freed.

On *Motzoei Shabbos*, which was *Yud-Gimmel Kislev*, the Frieddiker Rebbe called a meeting of the committee of older *bochurim* of Tomchei Temimim. He told them that it was doubtful whether the Rebbe Rashab would return to Lubavitch for *Yud-Tes Kislev*, but the schedule would nonetheless go on as planned. On the following *leil Shabbos* all the *talmidim* would have their *seuda* in the main *zal* together with their *masp'rim* and *roshei yeshiva*, and there would be another *seuda* on *Motzoei Shabbos*. In addition, some privileged *bochurim* would join a special *farbrengen* with the Frieddiker Rebbe on Sunday night. Hearing that the Rebbe Rashab might not be in Lubavitch in time for *Yud-Tes Kislev* brought tears to the eyes of some of the older *bochurim*.

The Frieddiker Rebbe relates: A few days before *Yud-Tes Kislev*, many respected *orchim*, and the *talmidim* of nearby Lubavitch *yeshivos*, began to arrive in Lubavitch. There still was a hope that my father would return in time. On Thursday morning some chassidim discussed the possibility of either asking the Rebbe to come in from Moscow, or suggesting that they travel to join him there – though this was highly improbable for they lacked traveling permits. The hours elapsed and the cloud of sadness grew, especially since the Rebbe had not been with them in Lubavitch the previous *Yud-Tes Kislev*.

At 8:30 PM on Thursday night a letter arrived from my father, the Rebbe. At 9:30 I entered the *zal* and announced that we had merited

receiving a holy letter which explained the meaning of the approaching *Yom-Tov*, and that it would be read out on *Chag HaGeula*. This piece of news raised the spirits of the chassidim, and they eagerly anticipated the hour when the letter would be read.

On *erev Shabbos* after *Mincha*, I directed that everyone should learn *Chassidus*. An hour-and-a-half later we *davened Kabbolas Shabbos*, and then everyone returned to their places, ready to hear the letter. I stepped up to the *bimah* together with the two *masgichim* and read out the letter word by word. It reads in part:

Yud-Tes Kislev is the *Yom-Tov* on which our soul's illumination and *chayus* were given to us, this day is *Rosh Hashana* for Chassidus [...] It is the fulfillment of the true intention behind the creation of man on earth – to reveal the light of the inward part of our holy Torah. [...] It is our duty, on this day, to awaken our hearts with an innermost, deepseated desire and will, in the very core of our heart, that *HaShem* illuminate our *neshama* with the light of His Inner Torah. [...] "From the depths I called to You, *HaShem*," to elicit the depth and *pnimiyus* of *HaShem's* Torah and *mitzvos* to illuminate the inwardness of our *neshama*, so that our entire being will be dedicated to *HaShem* alone, to banish from within us any of the natural traits that are evil and unworthy – so that everything we do, both in our service of *HaShem* and in worldly matters, will be carried out *leshem Shamayim*.

Everyone stood and listened with shining faces, and as I finished they broke out with a joyous *niggun*.

(לקו"ד ח"ד ע' 1518, קונ' וזמנין ע' 15, היום יום בתחילת)

A Day for Chassidishe Growth

Early in תרפ"א (1920), the Frieddiker Rebbe, his mother Rebbetzin Shterna Sara, his three daughters, and many *bochurim*, became very ill. The doctors said that the Frieddiker Rebbe's situation was serious, but *Boruch HaShem*, on *Yud-Tes Kislev*, his health took a turn for the better. Instead of *farbrenging*, he wrote the following letter to the *temimim* and *Anash*:

On this holy day, which is the *Rosh HaShana* for *Chassidus* and for *kabbalas ol malchus Shamayim*,

every individual should do his *avoda* conscientiously, and beg that *HaShem* give him the strength to go in the way of the Alter Rebbe. On this day, as the Alter Rebbe stands before *HaShem*, asking that we and our children be strong *begashmiyus uveruchniyus*, everyone should give *tzedaka* to the *mosdos* that follow the will of the Alter Rebbe. Every person, young and old, should undertake to learn Torah every day, each according to his level, and should accept upon himself *ol malchus Shamayim* for the entire year. Keep in mind that on this day all of the Rebbeim, from the Baal Shem Tov on, are helping us. Be very careful with this day because it is holy.

The Frieddiker Rebbe concludes his letter with the words, "*lechayim velivracha*".

(אגרות קודש מוהרי"צ ח"א ע' קכ"ב)

It was the evening of *Yud-Tes Kislev* תרפ"ו (1925) and the Frieddiker Rebbe was sitting in the *zal* in Rostov, looking solemn and earnest. Finally, he spoke up and said:

"One *Yud-Tes Kislev*, my father, the Rebbe [Rashab], did not come out to address the crowd of chassidim who had gathered for a *farbrengen*. I entered his study and found him fearfully serious, and he said, 'Today, after all, *Yud-Tes Kislev*, is *Rosh HaShana*. This plainly means that it is a time for *teshuva*.' I told him that people were waiting, so he obliged and *farbrenged* for a short while and left."

After relating this episode, the Frieddiker Rebbe stood up and returned to his study.

(לשמע אדון ע' 141)

The Alter Rebbe said regarding *Yud-Tes Kislev*, "Whoever rejoices in my *simcha*, I will take out from distress to relief, from *gashmiyus* to *ruchniyus*, and out of Gehinnom."

The Tzemach Tzedek explained that "rejoicing in my *simcha*" means holding onto the Alter Rebbe's "door-handle" ("*kliamkeh*") – by learning Torah and by doing *avoda*.

(ס"ה ש"תרצ"ט ע' 315)

CONSIDER THIS!

■ Is *Yud-Tes Kislev* a day to be earnest or a day of celebration?

www.McWigs.com

MC MILANO Premium WIGS COLLECTION

1-888-MILANO-3



ELITE STERLING

www.EliteSterling.com
1-800-845-4670



Higher standards of kashrus & quality

MachonStam.com
718-778-STAM
415 Kingston Avenue



www.SELLMILESNOW.com
732-987-7765

Gambling

Is it permissible to play *dreidel* for money?

- The Mishna¹ states one who gambles (*mesachek bekuvya*) is unfit to be a kosher witness. There is a dispute in the Gemara as to the issue of gambling.
- One opinion considers the one who wins the money to be a thief. The gamblers bet money believing that they would win and as such did not give it wholeheartedly (*asmachta*). The winner is therefore stealing from them and the theft disqualifies him from serving as a witness.
- Others argue that gambling cannot be an *asmachta*, since the gamblers realize the possibilities to losing, while *asmachta* only applies when the condition is in the individual's hands, and he hopes to prevent that condition from actualizing. Therefore, their commitment to give the money is binding, though they are unhappy about it after the fact.
- According to the second opinion, the reason that a gambler cannot serve as a witness is because he is not engaged in productive activity (*osek beyeshuvo shel olam*). One who earns his livelihood from gambling and not from a trade or business lacks a level of seriousness about life and cannot be a *yarei shomayim*². In addition, such a person does not appreciate how hard it is to earn money and would not mind giving false testimony³.
- A practical difference between the opinions is one who holds a regular job and gambles from time to time. If the issue is the lack of productivity, the gambling would be permitted, however if the issue is stealing, the gambling would still be prohibited.
- Another difference would be one who earns a living from gambling with non-Jews. Since secular law recognizes *asmachta* as a valid transaction, the non-Jew wholeheartedly commits himself to the deal, the winnings is not theft and is permissible. However since he is not leading a productive life, the second opinion would still disqualify the gambler from being a witness.
- Some Rishonim write⁴ that the dispute is only if the person may serve as a witness, however all agree that it is forbidden to gamble, since gambling is a disgusting practice which causes one to lose his possessions. Therefore, even if one has another job, and he gambles only with non-Jews, it is still forbidden.
- The position of the Rav Yosef Karo (the 'Mechaber') in Shulchan Aruch⁵ is unclear. Some understand⁶ his ruling to reflect the first opinion (*asmachta*) with the additional stringency forbidding one to gamble in all instances. The Remo's⁷ opinion is like the second opinion even *lechatchilah*, permitting gambling if it is not one's primary occupation. Accordingly, *Sefardim*, who follow the rulings of the *Mechaber*, are forbidden to play *dreidel* for money, while *Ashkenazim*, who follow the Remo, are permitted occasionally.

Please note that the above may not be applicable for your situation. Consult your Rov for a final psak.

1. סנהדרין כד ע"ב.
2. ראה רש"י על המשנה שם.
3. כ"כ הטור בחו"מ סי' לד בביאור הא דאני עוסק בישונו של עולם.
4. ראה תשובות ריב"ש סי' תלב ועוד. וי"א שכ"ה דעת הרמב"ם ה' גזילה פ"ו ה"א.
5. בבירור דעת הרמב"ם ובישוב הסתירות בשו"ת רבנו מאד הדרכים, חלקם לוקטו בשו"ת יביע אומר ח"ז חו"מ סי' ע"ש.
6. חו"מ סי' ש' שע סעיף ב-ג ובמקומות שנשמנו בנו"כ שם.
7. בשו"ע שם. והאריכו בהרהר אחרונים בישוב הסתירה בדברי בא"ח סי' ס"ב.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

לזכות הילד ארי' לייב הכהן שי'

שיגדלוהו הוריו לתורה לחופה ולמע"ט

נדבת הרה"ת יצחק הכהן ורעיתו עדינה שיחיו ליפשי"ן

OUR HEROES

Reb Boruch Mezhibuzher



Reb Boruch was the son of the daughter of the Baal Shem Tov, Odel, and her husband Reb Yechiel ("Der Deitchel"). He studied under the tutelage of the Maggid of Mezritsch and Reb Pinchas Koritzer and went on to become a Rebbe in Mezibuz. He was known for his sharpness and his conduct was beyond the understanding of the masses. Reb Boruch passed away on the 18th of Kislev, תקע"ב (1811).



Reb Boruch Mezhibuzher was a staunch opponent of the Alter Rebbe and even promised *Gan Eden* to anyone who would harm the Alter Rebbe. One chossid took it seriously and awaited an opportunity to earn the promised reward. Once, as the Alter Rebbe was traveling alone, the chossid threw a stone towards the coach of the Alter Rebbe. It pierced the carriage and hit the Rebbe. The Alter Rebbe turned and gave the man a piercing stare. The chossid began to shake uncontrollably. When he realized that the shaking wasn't temporary, he traveled to Reb Boruch. "I did as you said Rebbe, now please cure me..." "What did you do?" asked Reb Baruch. "I threw a stone at the Alter Rebbe since you promised *Gan Eden* to whoever harms the Alter Rebbe."

"Fool!" answered Reb Boruch, "what I promised will be fulfilled, but what you got, I will not take away." The chossid remained this way his entire life and his children and grandchildren also had the same defect. The constant shaking was a sign that they were from this family.

The Alter Rebbe once said that his *machlokes* with Reb Boruch was a continuation of the *machlokes* between Shaul HaMelech and Dovid HaMelech.



Once, an important *Rov* spent Shabbos with Reb Boruch. After the meal, the *Rov* absentmindedly took a candle from the *amud* and started looking for a Gemoro, obviously forgetting that it was Shabbos. No one said anything because he was a very respected *Rov*. Reb Boruch however turned to him sternly "it is quite a *chutzpa* you to take a candle from my *amud*." The *Rov*, taken aback, immediately returned the candle to its place.

Reb Boruch acted in this way with great wisdom. Had he exclaimed "It is Shabbos!" the *Rov* may have been so shocked that he would have dropped the candle and extinguished it, further desecrating the Shabbos.

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

Yechidus of a Twelve Year Old

Reb Yisroel Yosef Zalmanov relates:

"When I turned twelve years old, I was *zoche* to a special *yechidus*. I went in on the 11th of Shevat, at 8:30pm.

"The Rebbe said, 'Although the mitzvos are only binding once a boy turns thirteen, there is one exception, the *mitzvah* of *neder*, which is also incumbent on a twelve year old.

"What is a *neder*? A *neder* is made about something permitted but unnecessary. The person vows to abstain from indulging in this permissible activity.

"This is what is demanded from a chossid, even a twelve-year-old chossid. Clearly, the forbidden is out of the question. A chossid, though, must also know the concept of *lifnim mishuras hadin*, serving Hashem beyond the letter of the law."

(Heichel Menachem, vol 2, page 207)

לזכות השליח שלום דובער בן לובה