



YUD-TE'S KISLEV

A Holy 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 *teshuva* 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)

Amongst chassidim Yud-Tes Kislev was celebrated as a real *Yom-Tov*. All would dress in their finest attire and would greet each other throughout the day with 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.

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

Renewing the Connection

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 Frierdiker 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'itim* and *roshei yeshivah*, and there would be another *seuda* on *Motzoei Shabbos*. In addition, some privileged *bochurim* would join a special *farbrengen* with the Frierdiker 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 Frierdiker 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, קוני ומעיין ע' 15, היום יום בתחילתו)

A Day for Chassidische Growth

Early in תרפ"א, the Frierdiker Rebbe, his mother Rebbetzin Shterna Sara, his three daughters, and many *bochurim*, became very ill. The doctors said that the Frierdiker 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 Frierdiker Rebbe concludes his letter with the words, "*lechayim velivracha*".

(אגרות קודש מוהרי"צ ח"א ע' קכ"ב)

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*.

(סה"ש תרצ"ט ע' 315)

CONSIDER THIS!

■ Is *Yud-Tes Kislev* a day of celebration or of *cheshbon hanefesh*?

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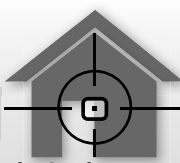
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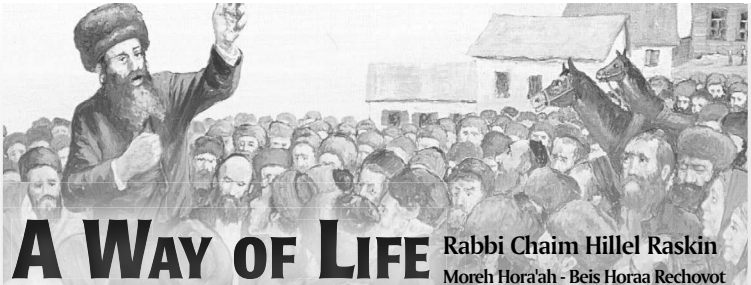


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OUR HEROES

Maharil of Yanovitch



Reb Yehuda Leib (Maharil), born around 5509 (1749) to Reb Boruch and Rivkah, was the younger brother of the Alter Rebbe. He was the first systematic transcriber of the Alter Rebbe's *maamorim*, and transcribed most of the *maamorim* of *Torah Or* and *Lekutei Torah*. When young men came to learn in Liozhna, the Maharil arranged for them to be tested and set-up for their material needs, in addition to his role of generally overseeing them in learning and conduct. Toward the end of his life he lived in the city of Yanovitch and served as the *rov* there. He passed away in approximately the year 5586 (1826). Many of his responsa were printed in the *sefer Sheiris Yehudah*.

In the year 5524 (1764) when the Alter Rebbe was eighteen years old, his brother the Maharil suggested that he travel to Mezritch, contending, "To learn, you know. *Chassidus* however, you do not know at all." With the help of his wife, Rebbetzin Sterna, the Alter Rebbe purchased a horse and wagon and set off for Mezritch together with the Maharil. When they arrived in Orsha along the way, the horse died. The Alter Rebbe discerned that the reason for this was because the Maharil did not get his wife's wholehearted consent for the trip. He told his brother, "It seems you do not need to travel. Return home and I will continue alone. Whatever I will receive, I will share with you."

(לקו"ד ח"ג ע' 966, בית רבי פ"ב)



The Rebbe once related in a sicha:

The Alter Rebbe's brother, Reb Leibele Yanovitcher, once asked the Alter Rebbe why he speaks about certain concepts and levels in *avoda* which *chassidim* are not able to and seemingly will never reach. [The question becomes stronger: If a *chossid* would not be told and therefore would not know about this particular level, he is then considered a "*shogeg*" for not reaching it. If he does know about it, and even learned how to reach it, though nonetheless does not, he is considered a "*meizid*."] The Alter Rebbe answered that it says in *Yechezkel*, "And I will remove the heart of stone from amongst you." "Stone" represents the *yetzer hora*, which is in the mind; so why does it say "the heart of stone" and not "the mind of stone?" The reason is because the mind can and needs to be transformed now in the time of *golus*, through learning and understanding the concepts found in *Chassidus*. This prophecy will come to full fruition when *Moshiach* comes, when there will also be the removal of "the heart of stone."

(שיחות קודש תש"ל ח"ב ע' 441)

ליכות הילד מנחם מענדל שי' דעוולין שיגדלוהו הוריו לתורה לחופה ולמע"ט

Shidduch Calls

When asked about my roommate in a *shidduch* call, am I obligated to say that she is messy?

- The prohibition of *lashon hara*¹ forbids speaking harmfully about another Jew, even when it is true. The obligation of *ahavas Yisroel* requires a person not to say about someone else what one wouldn't want said about himself.²
- However³, it is only *lashon hara* if it is repeated for no positive purpose. If the information is shared for a reasonable purpose there is no prohibition of *lashon hara*, provided that: (a) One is certain that the facts are true. If one heard it from a **reliable** source he should say that this is what he heard (a rumor should not be repeated at all). (b) The facts are stated, with no exaggerate. (c) One's intention must be to help and prevent potential harm. If one is also interested in *besmirching* the prospect, he may not share the information and should recommend someone else who they can speak to.
- One may only share information that will bring benefit. However, if the inquirer trusts the judgment of the responder, one should only say that it's not a good *shidduch* without sharing the details. Likewise, if the *shidduch* was already finalized, one may not warn them of a flaw unless it justifies canceling the *shidduch*⁴.
- To avoid misleading the inquirer (in either direction), one should not offer general descriptions ("he's a *chassidische bocher*" "she dresses *tznius*") but should offer concrete examples. Also, since certain flaws may be suitable for the other party ("he's absentminded" "she's messy"), one should first inquire about what they are looking for before sharing irrelevant negative information.
- The one who is researching the *shidduch* should not accept the information to be definitely true, but rather as a possible concern. He should state clearly that he is calling for the purpose of a *shidduch* so that the one answering is not transgressing *lashon hara*⁵. One should not approach an enemy of the *bocher* or girl, since even true information will be shared not solely for the purpose of benefiting the parties, thus causing that person to transgress⁶.

1. ספר החינוך מצוה רלו. 4. שם.

2. ראה שבת ל"א ע"א. 5. קונטרס ביום שידובר ע' ל"ד.

3. חפץ חיים הל' לשה"ר פרק י' אות ב', 6. חפץ חיים כלל ד' אות י"א בהגה"ה. ובהל' רכילות פרק ט' אות ב'.

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

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

Davening Times



When the great Jewish Russian exodus of 5706 (1946) finally abated, a large contingency of *chassidim* settled in Paris and its surroundings. Reb Chonyeh Levin lived in Aubervilliers, a suburb of Paris, together with some ten other Lubavitcher families.

In 5718 (1958), after answering his questions in *yehidus* the Rebbe asked him, "Tell me, what time do you begin *davening* in the *anash shul* of Aubervilliers on Shabbos?"

Reb Chonyeh answered, "Being that the *mikvah* is a great distance away — a good forty-five minute walk — the *davening* begins at 10:30." He then added, "It happens that until everyone gathers and puts themselves together, *davening* could be delayed until eleven o'clock."

The Rebbe was not pleased. He gave Chonyeh a message to deliver to *anash* of Obevley: "Tell them in my name, that the *chazzan* should already begin *hodu* at ten o'clock sharp."

(Kfar Chabad issue 761 pg. 27)

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