

The Weekly Farbrenging



YUD-TES KISLEV (II)

RENEWING THE CONNECTION

In *HaYom Yom* it is written: *Yud-Tes Kislev* is a day for *farbrenging* 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 *Iggers 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 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 *mashpi'im* and *roshei yeshivah*, and there would be another *seuda* on *Motzoei Shabbos*. In addition, some privileged *bochurim* would join a special *farbrenging* 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 the *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 *mashgichim* 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, deep-seated 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, קוב" ומעיין ע' 15, היום יום בתחילתו)

CONSIDER

Is Yud-Tes Kislev a day to be earnest or a day to celebrate?

A DAY FOR CHASSIDISHE GROWTH

Early in תרפ"א (1920), 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." And the Frierdiker 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 Frierdiker 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 *farbrenging*. 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 Frierdiker 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 him 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*.

(סד"ש תרצ"ט ע' 315)

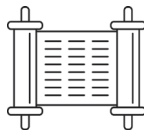
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ALTER REBBE'S KSAV

What is the history and significance of the Alter Rebbe's ksav?

In the era of the Maggid, chassidim had *tefillin* with Ksav Arizal, generally identical to the Ashkenazic Ksav Beis Yosef, except for variations in several letter shapes to conform to the views of the *mekubalim* (see issue 855).

At some point, the Maggid instructed the Alter Rebbe to fine-tune a ksav that would satisfy both the halachic and kabbalistic requirements, and the Alter Rebbe did so.¹ The Alter Rebbe taught this ksav to the *sofer* R. Reuven of Yanovitch, who wrote the Alter Rebbe's *tefillin* and *mezuzos*, and who in turn transmitted it to subsequent generations of *sofrim*.² This tradition differs somewhat from the Alter Rebbe's description of the letter forms in his Shulchan Aruch.³

From the Tzemach Tzedek's *teshuvos*, it's clear that the Alter Rebbe's ksav was in use in his time.⁴ The Rebbe Maharash wrote several *megillos* in the Alter Rebbe's ksav (though the one in the Rebbe's library was touched up at a later point without preserving the precision of the original ksav). The Friediker Rebbe had *tefillin* in Alter Rebbe's ksav, purchased *tefillin* in this ksav for his sons-in-law, and sent a Torah to Kfar Chabad written in this ksav.⁵ (Moshiach's *sefer Torah* was commissioned from a *sofer* in Eretz Yisroel who wrote Ksav Arizal since no Chabad *sofrim* were available at that time.)

From his arrival in America through the early years of the *nesius*, the Rebbe tried to track down any remaining *sofrim* with an unbroken *mesora* of the Alter Rebbe's ksav. Although one can try to work out the ksav from the STaM that we have,⁶ the Rebbe notes that it's hard to figure out what are the defining components dictated by the Alter Rebbe and what are just stylistic nuances from the *sofer's* handwriting. Sadly, following the great destruction of WWII and Stalinist Russia, no *sofer* who could clarify all these doubts was found.⁷ (The standardized ksav Arizal in use today is likewise not based on an unbroken oral tradition.⁸)

Despite this, the Rebbe encouraged *sofrim* to learn to write in Alter Rebbe's ksav, and for people to purchase *tefillin* and *mezuzos* with this ksav.⁹

When purchasing ksav Alter Rebbe, it's important to buy from a *sofer* who knows this ksav well and knows how to write it properly.¹⁰ And only such a *sofer* should check the *tefillin* since others may treat certain changes as faults.

8. ראה ס' מסורת האותיות ע' ל. יריעות שלמה ח"ב ע' יז.
9. ראה אג"ק ח"ה ע' רט וחט"ו ע' שט. עדותו של הרב אליעזר צבי צירקינד בכפ"ח גל' 996 (ושהרבי הזמין אצלו תפילין בככתב זה עבור דוד צייס ומזוזות בככתב זה עבור ביתו). ושם מפי גברת שארף שהרבי הורה לה בשנת תש"נ לקנות מזוזות ואם אפשר שיהי' בככתב אד"ה"ז. וכן ספרי תורה של ילדי ישראל נכתבו בככתב זה.
10. וראה מכתב הר"י בלינוב בתיקון קוראים חז"ק דהיות שאין לנו מסורת ברורה מה הן הדברים העיקריים שאותן תיקן אד"ה"ז, לכן יש להקפיד על כל פרט ופרט שבפרשיות המיוחסות, דיתכן דפרט זה הוא הוא מתקנתו של רבינו. ועוד שם שחמיו הגר"מ לנדא ז"ל אישר סת"ם בככתב אד"ה"ז שנכתבו והוגהו בקפדנות דבלי דיוק יכול להתעורר שאלות של כשרות האותיות ממש.

1. ראה אג"ק מוהרי"צ ח"ט ע' נג. וראה קובץ ידע עם גל' ה' תשרי תשי"ט ע' 71-70. ובבית רבי פ"י ("תיקון התפילין ע"פ קבלת הראשונים וקבלת האר"ז"ל בכתיבת..."). ויא' שרצה ג"כ לשלב בין שיטת האר"ז"ל והבית יוסף כנראה באותיות שעטנ"ז (ז' ג"ץ).
2. ראה אג"ק מוהרי"צ ח"ג ע' שכה.
3. ראה אג"ק ח"א ע' שפד.
4. ראה דברי השואל בשו"ת הצ"צ אור"ח סי' יד וסי' יח אות.
5. במדועה בסוף חוברת ז' של קובץ 'התמים' אודות הזמנת תפילין מהסופר זלמן וויינשטיין בככתב המקובל אצל אנ"ש מאד"ה"ז. אבל ישנו עדויות (כפ"ח גל' 987 ע' 54) שהזמין תפילין עבור הרבי מסופר בא"י שכתב רק בככתב אר"ז"ל. ובקובץ הער"ב אה"ת גל' תתפח ע' 58 שלמגניה התפילין של רבינו היתה הוראה שלא לגלות את צורת הכתב.
6. ראה שע"ת ריש סי' ל"ב.
7. ראה אג"ק ח"ח ע' קמא, ח"י ע' רנג, וח"ד ע' מא.

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



R. NOCHUM OF CHERNIGOV

R. Menachem Nochum Glatman was a chasid of the Mitteler Rebbe and the Tzemach Tzedek, and one of the senior *talmidim* of R. Eizel Homiler. He served as the Rov of Chernigov until his passing in 5620, and he was succeeded by R. Peretz Chein.

eternity, 'I – Hashem – am first and last," while you cry when you speak of man's fate, "Man is created from dust and is destined to be dust..."

(שמר"ס ח"ב ע' 85)

During his time as a Rov in Chernigov, the longtime *chazzan* passed away. A new candidate stepped forward, but R. Nochum was reluctant to take him. The new applicant complained to R. Nochum, "How was the last *chazzan* better than me? He cried as he *davened*, and I do too!"

R. Nochum replied, "Here's the difference: the previous *chazzan* cried when he spoke of Hashem's

During one *farbrengen*, R. Nochum drank a lot of *mashkeh*, and when he headed home after the *farbrengen*, several chassidim followed behind him to make sure he was fine.

As he approached his home, he stood for some time and muttered, "You can turn this way or that way, think here or there, at the end of the day there is nothing besides Him – *ein od milvado!*"

(כתר מלכות ע' 217)

A Moment with The Rebbe



לזכר נשמת מרת חוה לאה בת ר' שמשון הכהן ע"ה

WHERE RESOURCES SHOULD GO

In a letter to the Rebbe from early winter 5733, Chabad activists in Eretz Yisroel suggested a groundbreaking initiative for the upcoming Yud Tes Kislev.

"Reb Shlomo Maidanchink is in touch with Mr. Noach Moses of the Yediot Achronot newspaper," they wrote to the Rebbe, "and he proposed to include a picture of the Rebbe in every paper for 19 Kislev. Mr. Moses said the cost would be between ten and twenty thousand *lirot*..."

"This is an acceptable practice here, where occasionally the Presidents, Prime Ministers or Army Chief's picture is delivered with the newspaper. If the Rebbe agrees, we will

progress. We can also include a *possuk* of saying of Chazal with the picture."

The Rebbes response was delivered via telephone from Rabbi Chodakov to Reb Efraim Wolf:

"The proposal is outrageous. The sum is totally exorbitant, and even much less shouldn't be spent on this. Perhaps if it were one thousand *lirot*, a picture of the Alter Rebbe should be distributed. But this kind of money should be spent on publishing a *maamor* or a *Likutei Levi Yitzchok*.

"Such money shouldn't be spent on *nochamachen di velt* (copying worldly norms)..."

(Askonus Tziburis p. 233)

לעילוי נשמת

מרת מוסיא בת ר' אברהם ישעי' ע"ה שטראקס

נפטרה כ"ה אדר תשפ"ד