

The Weekly *Farbrengens*



MERKAZ ANASH
מרכז אנאש

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EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

YUD-TE'S KISLEV (II)

RENEWING THE CONNECTION

In *HaYom Yom* it is written: *Yud-Tes Kislev* is a day for *farbrengens* 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 Friediker 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 *farbrengens* with the Friediker 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 Friediker 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:

CONSIDER

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

"*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 *neschama* 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 *neschama*, 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*.

(לקי"ד ח"ד ע' 1518, קוב" ובעיני ע" 15. היום יום בתחילתו)

A DAY FOR CHASSIDISHE GROWTH

Early in תרפ"א (1920), the Friediker Rebbe, his mother *Rebbetzin Shterna Sara*, his three daughters, and many *bochurim*, became very ill. The doctors said that the Friediker Rebbe's situation was serious,

but *Boruch HaShem*, on *Yud-Tes Kislev*, his health took a turn for the better. Instead of *farbrengens*, 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 Friediker 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 Friediker 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 *farbrengens*. 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 Friediker Rebbe stood up and returned to his study.

(לשמע אהן 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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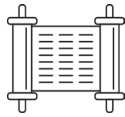
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MENORAH AT THE GAZA FRONT

How should a soldier at war in Gaza fulfill the mitzva of ner Chanuka?

Chazal instituted the mitzva of ner Chanuka as an obligation on each family or "home."... An unmarried soldier away from home can, if he wants, rely on his father's hadlaka at home, and that is the minhag of the Sefardim.

With a married soldier whose wife is lighting at home, the situation is more complex, since the Beis Yosef holds that lighting would be an unnecessary bracha. Yet, the Terumas Hadshen holds that he can choose not to be yotzei with his wife's lighting so he can light on his own.

What about a soldier in combat at the front?

The mitzvah of ner Chanuka is "ner ish ubeiso," to have candles lit at one's home. Thus it would seem, that one who doesn't have a home or place of lodging for the night (i.e. he is in transit) isn't obligated to light.

Soldiers on the battlefield who are sleeping in tents, tanks, or abandoned homes, can light at these stations. Soldiers sleeping under the open sky are subject to a debate in halacha. While some say that they don't light at all since they are "homeless," others contend that the mitzva of Chanuka candles is on the person and not connected to a home at all, and even soldiers sleeping outdoors should light.

- 1. שבת כ"א ע"ב. וראה תרומת הדשן...
2. ראה שבת כ"א ע"ב.
3. ראה שו"ע ורמ"א ס' תרע"א ס"ב.
4. ב"י ס' תרע"ז דהו"ל ברכה שא"צ.
5. פנ"י שבת כא ע"ב.
6. ס"ז ס' תרע"ז ס"ב. שו"ת אגרות משה יו"ד ג ס' יד וספר הליכות שלמה - חנוכה על רנו.

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REB CHAIM BER WILENSKY

Reb Yitzchak Chaim Dovber HaLevi Wilensky ("Reb Chaim Ber Kremenchuger") was born around 5597 (1837) and was a chossid of the Tzemach Tzedek, the Rebbe Maharash and the Rebbe Rashab. He was one of the "Kremenchuger Beralach," a group of great chassidim in Kremenchug named DovBer after the Mittlerer Rebbe.

My father's words are good, so he had what to work with, but he didn't take anything from my additions (those last words the Rebbe said with a smile). The skill of listening, I saw in him. He listened without making a single move, yet all of his limbs heard. He listened with his entire being, until he became red behind his ears."

In another section, the son writes:

Everything about him gave the opposite impression of who he really was. Starting from his outward appearance—which mostly had nothing to do with him—he didn't look like a "chossid": He was a tall man with hardened facial features, a beard as neat as if it were trimmed, and he was extremely particular about the cleanliness of his clothes.

In a questionnaire which the Frierdiker Rebbe sent to Reb Michael Wilensky to fill out about his father, he writes what he heard from the Rebbe Rashab at a gathering of Simchas Beis Hashoeiva in the year 5654 (1894):

First the Rebbe spoke about the previous chassidim of Kremenchug, and then he said "Olam HaTikkun [the realm of correction and stability] began with Chaim Ber." He continued to speak of how wary my father was of behaving in a manner that might make him look pretentious: how much he deliberated until he decided to wear a gartel for davening.

He looked as though he were a cold and calculated man who is impressed by nothing, someone who knows his value and is confident in himself. So much so that people would joke that he was a man whom death could not reach, due to his healthy body and nerves of steel. The truth, however, was quite the opposite, and those who were close to him, dubbed him, "the cold firebrand."

He then added, "He was here for several years. I had then repeated my father's maamar for him with my own 'introduction.'

For the full questionnaire and other stories, see "The Cold Firebrand - The Life of R. Chaim Ber Wilensky" in Perspectives Fifteen.

A Moment with The Rebbe



YUD TES KISLEV FARBEISEN

The zechus of partaking in the physical preparations for the Yud Tes Kislev farbrengen has always been cherished by Chassidim. As a child, despite being generally introverted, the Rebbe personally arranged the children's farbrengen.

exerted himself to assist in the farbrengen preparations.

In a letter to him, the Rebbe wrote:

"I was please to read that despite the difficulties, you partook in the preparations of the Yud Tes Kislev farbrengen... Although it was seemingly only the material part of the farbrengen, it is noticeable that the gashmiyus has an impact, and it affects the ruchniyus as well..."

Likewise, we find the Rebbe Rashab writes to his son the Frierdiker Rebbe, "I was happy that you celebrated the yom tov well, and I was especially pleased that your daughters were involved in setting the table."

During the Sinai campaign of 5717, Reb Binyomin Levin of Kfar Chabad

(Yemei Melech Vol 1 p. 152; IGK Rashab Vol 2 p. 731; Igros Kodesh Vol. 14 p. 308)