

The Weekly *Farbrengens*



MERKAZ ANASH
מרכז אנאש

למען ישמעו • וישב תשפ"ה • 806
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

YUD-TES 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 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 *farbrengens* 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 *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*.

(לקריאת ח"ד ע' 1518, קוב" ומועדין 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 *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 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 *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 Frierdiker Rebbe stood up and returned to his study.

(לשמע אהרן 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*.

(סדר"ש תרצ"ט ע' 315)



Yoseph Shomer
Certified Public Accountant

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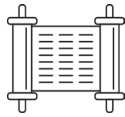


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SIBLING AFFECTION

May a bochur hug his younger sister?

To affectionately touch any of the forbidden relatives (arayos) is forbidden.

While the Ramban holds it is a safeguard miderabanan, the Rambam holds it's a de'oraisa transgression of lo sikrevu, and the halacha follows this view. Within this view, the poskim debate whether non-affectionate touch is also forbidden min hatorah or whether it's prohibited miderabanan and permitted in cases of need. Any lustful thoughts would always make any form of touch prohibited.

Affectionate touch is completely prohibited, even for relatives who are not arayos, such as a niece or cousin. However, poskim permit holding a young girl's hand while crossing the street or the like. (See more on this topic in issue 632.)

Unintentional touch — e.g., sitting next to a woman on a bus — isn't halachically prohibited according to many poskim. However, it is preferable to avoid when there's a choice, and some poskim are stringent due to the risk of it leading to inappropriate thoughts.

Shulchan Aruch rules that with specific close relatives that usually don't pose a concern of inappropriate thoughts — namely, a sister or aunt — hugging and kissing is disgraceful, foolish, and forbidden (dvar isur). Though it lacks any lustful pleasure and isn't forbidden by the lav of lo sikrevu, it is nonetheless prohibited miderabanan.

Non-affectionate touch between a brother and grown sister is a permitted by some. (See issue 780 regarding hearing a sister sing.) Hugging a young sister — under 11, or under 6, according to some — does not pose an issue.

Parents and children may touch each other affectionately. Poskim rule that the same is true for grandchildren and great-grandchildren, though some advise being stringent with a married granddaughter.

- 1. ראה ש"ך יו"ד סי' קנ"ז סק"י.
2. אג"מ יו"ד ח"ב סי' קל"ז. ולהעיר משלחן מנחם ח"ו ע' מ' ואילך לגבי איטור חו"ג בילדים מאומצים.
3. ראה נט"ג יחוד פנ"ב ס"ג והע' ה' שמתיר עד גיל שש ושבע ומה טוב להחזיק בבגדה.
4. ראה אג"מ אה"ע ח"ב סי' י"ד. וראה שו"ת משנה הלכות ח"ד סי' קפ"ו.
5. ראה שו"ת שבט הלוי ח"ד סי' קל"ו.
6. שו"ע אה"ע סכ"א סי"ז.
7. ראה שו"ת משנה הלכות ח"ד סי' קפ"ו ד"ה "ומכאן צ"ע". ולהעיר

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

Our Heroes



R. ZISKIND KURNITZER

R. Ziskind was a Rov in Kurenitz and the son of R. Zalman Kurnitzer, an outstanding chossid of the Alter Rebbe. He was great in Torah and Chassidus and was a devoted baal madreiga and chassidim used to say that he had ruach hakodesh.

(בית רבי ח"ג (הוצאה חדשה) עמ' 394, שמועות וסיפורים ח"א עמ' 263)

There was once a terrible plague in Kurnitz and many children were passing away r"l. R. Ziskind asked that everyone come to the main shul on a given date to daven to Hashem to avert the decree.

The night before, he instructed his shamash to go to the cemetery and take a small stone from atop two different graves. The shamash said that he was afraid to go at night to the cemetery all alone, but R. Ziskind gave him his staff and encouraged him.

When the shamash returned, R. Ziskind instructed him to place one stone at

the entrance of the men's section of the shul, and the other at the entrance of the women's section. As people started pouring into shul the next day there was suddenly a tumult; a man had tripped over a stone and was badly hurt. When the doctor arrived the man was pronounced dead. The same thing happened to a woman in the woman's section.

It later emerged that these two people had been sinning, and had caused the plague. R. Ziskind had seen this with ruach hakodesh and arranged for the sinners to be caught. This brought an end to the plague.

(שמועות וסיפורים ח"א עמ' 263)

On the day R. Ziskind passed away, when no one else thought that his time had come, he asked that the doctor, a kohen (who may not be under the same roof as a deceased person), leave the house, sensing that he was about to pass away.

(חסידים הראשונים ח"א עמ' 58)

A Moment with The Rebbe



לזכות שניאור זלמן בן חוה לאה וכל משפחתו שיחיו לכל המצטרך בגשמיות ורוחניות

FOR THE SAKE OF CHASSIDUS ITSELF

As the 19 Kislev 5723 farbrengen drew to a close, the Rebbe said a short sicha, which was later edited for public dissemination:

"The main point of all the sichos is this: One must learn Chassidus, with persistence, diligence and in abundance (בשופי בהתמדה ושקידה).

"I am referring also to working people. Their spare hours should be flooded and drenched in Torah learning, and Chassidus in particular...

"A Yid should allow himself to become proficient in Torah Or, Likkutei Torah, obviously Tanya, Hemsheichim and

Maamorim..."

The Rebbe then made himself clear: "I mean this simply. The learning will indeed influence the deed, but that is not what I am getting at. I mean it in my heart: Learn Chassidus diligently!"

Later that year, the Rebbe wrote to someone, that besides for learning Chassidus as a preparation for davening, "obviously you should also designate a separate daily study period to learn Chassidus lishma, for the sake of Chassidus itself!"

(Toras Menachem vol 35 p. 304; Igros vol 22 p. 515)

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