

The Weekly Farbrengens



855 • יוצא תשפ"ו • לחצן ישמעו
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

YUD-TES KISLEV (I)

A SPECIAL 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 *teshuvah* 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)

THE SEUDAS HODA'A

How did the chassidim in Liadi celebrate the *seudas hoda'a* for the *geula* of *Yud-Tes Kislev* which took place in תקס"ב (1801)?

Reb Aizik Homiler described it for us: "That year, during Tishrei, the Rebbe was extremely joyful. He mentioned to the chassidim who were close to him that he had not yet made a *seudas hoda'a* for his *geula*, as one is obligated to do, *al pi halachah*. From this, they understood that the coming *Yud-Tes Kislev* would be something out of the ordinary.

"At the beginning of Kislev, we, the young chassidim of Homil, Bobruisk and the surrounding villages, put together whatever money we had, hired a wagon, and bought a dozen pairs of *volikess*, felt-lined winter boots. We set off together by foot, except that from time to time we took turns resting on the wagon. As we passed through various towns, we were joined by many more chassidim – eight *minyoneim* in all – and on Thursday of *Parshas Vayishlach* we arrived in Liadi.

"That *Shabbos* was the most joyous that chassidim ever experienced. During *Shabbos* the Rebbe delivered three *maamarim* – one before *Kabbalas Shabbos*, another early on *Shabbos* morning, and a third *maamar* after *Mincha*. We *chazered* the *maamarim* over and over, under the guidance of the *chozrim*, carefully recalling *divrei harav*.

"On Sunday and Monday people began arriving from far and near, from dozens of towns and villages. The townsmen of Liadi announced that all the *orchim* would be served meals without payment for the

entire week, until after the forthcoming *Shabbos*. Even some of the *goyishe* townsmen took part in the *hachnasas orchim*, and dozens of them even cleared out their houses to make room for *orchim* to sleep. The manager of the estates of Count Liubermirsky announced that every single day a shipment of food would be delivered to them from the count's estates, including 1200 kg (over 2600 pounds) of flour for bread, as well as three cows and a few calves for *shechita*. In addition, he would deliver a few wagonloads of hay for the visitors' horses.

CONSIDER

Over what did the chassidim rejoice on Yud-Tes Kislev?

How can we feel today the same joy as they did?

"On Tuesday, *Yud-Tes Kislev*, the chassidim went to *daven* in both the small and the large *beis midrash*, as well as in all the other *batei midrashim* in town. Wherever you went, the place was packed with people. It was announced that after *Mincha Gedola* everyone should gather in the large courtyard of the *beis midrash*, where the Rebbe would say a *maamar*. The courtyard was packed with people, and in the center of the large *beis midrash*, the big *bima* was set up, with a long table on it. Suddenly we heard the huge voice of Reb Shmuel Elye *der Heizeriker* ('the hoarse' – the nickname that jokingly referred to his resonating roar). He announced that the Rebbe was arriving and everyone should be silent. When Shmuel Elye said *Shal* the entire room shook. Soon a group of broad-shouldered *yungeleit* arrived, and like strings, they slipped through the packed crowd, and in just a few short minutes they created a broad path from the door to the *bima*.

"As soon as the Rebbe appeared at the door, we were overcome by awe, a deeply-felt *hadras kavod*. The Rebbe was singing alone, to the words *tze'ena ure'ena*. He was accompanied by a brother on either side, a third brother and two eminent elders behind them, the Rebbe's three sons following, and then the *Tzemach Tzedek*. Approaching the steps leading up

to the *bima*, the Rebbe began to sing *Keili Atah*, and took his seat at the table, along with those who were with him. As he sang, the awesome *hislahavus* within us grew from moment to moment, and the silence echoing in the *beis midrash* overwhelmed us with an inner dread.

"The Rebbe then began the *maamar* beginning with the words, *pada beshalom nafshi*. When he completed it, the entire *olam* burst out in a joyful *niggun*. In the smaller *yechidus-beis-midrash*, a table had been set for a *seudas hoda'a*. This was attended only by the Rebbe, his sons and brothers, and a few selected elder chassidim."

(ס"ה ש' קיץ ה'ת"ת ע' 49)

CELEBRATING THE YOM-TOV

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

(ס"ה ש' תש"ב ע"ב ימי מלך ח"א ע' 152)

Year after year, as if for the first time, Reb Nachum, the Alter Rebbe's grandson, would relate in patient detail all the events that took place during the stormy time of the Alter Rebbe's arrest. He would describe the tense atmosphere of that period, the libelous accusation the *misnagdim* brought to the czarist authorities, and their exultation when the Alter Rebbe was arrested. Reb Nachum would then describe the Alter Rebbe's stay in prison, his *geula*, the way in which the good news spread, and the Rebbe's return trip to Liozna from the prison in Petersburg. When he recalled the arrest, his voice would drop, as if he were weeping; when he described the liberation, his voice would rise with the *simcha* of a remembered victory. Like the *Megilla* Reading on Purim, he would tell the whole story once at night and again by day. Moreover, if one of the dignified elder chassidim would join the gathering after he had begun, he would go back to the very beginning and start all over again!

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"א ע' 22)

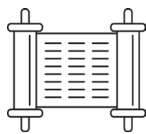
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KSAV OF STAM

What is the difference between the various *ksovim* used for STaM?

Halacha requires that *Stam* be written in the Ashuri script whose letter shapes follow the tradition of the Gemara and Rishonim, tracing back to Har Sinai. Ideally, this is to be transmitted in an unbroken chain or oral tradition. Yet, deviations from the accepted script don't invalidate the letters *b'dieved*, provided they retain their correct basic forms.¹

The Rambam in Hilchos Tefillin doesn't describe any specific script, presumably relying on the common knowledge in his time, and only cautions against misshaping letters, such as a *beis* that looks like a *kaf*.² The Sefardic Rishonim followed this general approach, without discussing and analyzing precise, nuanced guidelines for the script.³ But early on, a script conforming in many aspects to the *mekubalim* was adopted by the Sefardim, and became known as *Ksav Vellish* (or "Sefardi").⁴

Conversely, the Ashkenazic Rishonim discussed and delved more into the nuances of the traditional script as transmitted by the *sofrim* of each generation.⁵ A thorough compilation, Baruch She'amar (15th century), is quoted in detail in the *Beis Yosef*, and this became known as *Ksav Beis Yosef*, in use by Ashkenazim.

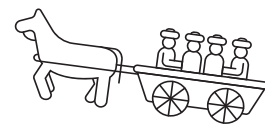
The Arizal introduced variations to eight or nine letters in this *Ksav Beis Yosef* based on Kabbala. One major variation is that the left arm of several letters (e.g., *tes*) has a head like a *zayin* rather than a *vav*.⁶ This *ksav*, as described in the *Kisvei HaArizal*, became known as *Ksav Arizal*, in use by chassidim. Within each *ksav*, there were slight differing nuances, depending on the region and the styles of the *sofrim*.

All the *ksavim* are kosher, and represent varying traditions in the *Ksav Ashuri* dating back to the *luchos* given at Har Sinai. At the same time, one should endeavor to follow the *mesora* of their family and community. While some *poskim* raise an issue of *tarti desasri* with having *mezuzos* of varying *ksavim* on different doors of one home, in practice it's permitted, though it's *hiddur* that they should all be the same (see issue 265).

1. ראה מנחות לד ע"א. טור או"ח.
2. רמ"א שם ס"א ושוע"ר שם.
3. רמב"ם הל' תפילין פ"א.
4. ראה מאמרי הרב דוד גרינפעלד ה"ט.
5. ראה בזה ס' אותיות הרב ע' ג-ד.
6. ראה היעב"ץ במור וקציעה או"ח.

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

Our Heroes



REB YISROEL NOACH OF NIEZHIN

Reb Yisroel Noach, the fourth son of the Rebbe the Tzemach Tzedek, was born in the year 5575 (1815). In his first marriage, he was the son-in-law of Reb Yekusiel Zalman Valles, son-in-law of the Mittlerer Rebbe. After his first wife passed away he married the daughter of Reb Nochum, son of the Mittlerer Rebbe. He lived in Lubavitch where he served as the *rosh yeshiva* in his father's *yeshiva* (founded in 5602 (1842)). The Tzemach Tzedek also appointed him to respond to many of the *halachic* queries sent to him, leaving only the more difficult ones for the Rebbe to answer himself. In 5628 (1868), two years after his father's passing, he moved to Niezhin and became a rebbe. He passed away on the first day of Chol Hamoed Pesach 5643 (1883), and is buried in Niezhin. He was the last of the Tzemach Tzedek's sons to pass away.

Reb Yisroel Noach would cry a lot, especially during *davening*. Not even knowing why, those *davening* along with him would also cry uncontrollably.

He was once standing in the adjacent room

before going into *yechidus* with his father and noticed the *sefer Chovas Halevovos* on the table. When he opened the *sefer*, it opened to *Shaar Hakniah* (Gate of Submission) and tears flowed freely from his eyes. By the time he went into *yechidus*, the pages were soaked.

Reb Mordechai Yoel Duchman once asked Reb Yisroel Noach, "Since you are a leading *tzaddik* of the generation, when you cry, you draw down bitterness into the world. Why do you do so?" Reb Yisroel Noach replied, "But you know Mordechai Yoel, for us it's a different type of tears."

(רשימות דברים עמוד 149, לשמע און עמוד 62)

When Reb Yisroel Noach needed to build his house in Niezhin, he called together a few *baalei batim* to hear their opinion. After they offered their suggestions he explained, "My father the Tzemach Tzedek said that when one needs to do something and is unsure how to do it, he should ask the opinion of the *baalei batim* and do the opposite."

(לשמע און ע' סו)

A Moment with The Rebbe

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



THE PRESENT POTENTIAL

"The bochurim are devoted to *hafotzas hamayonos*," Reb Shmuel Levitin reported to the Rebbe in a Teves 5727 *yechidus*.

"This is how I am being comforted," the Rebbe responded with discontent.

"Since the year 5715 there has been a real possibility to bring Moshiach, but the potential wasn't utilized... The main thing is, that there must be dedication to *uforatztzo* of Chassidus; it is essential to actually learn Chassidus, and that it should permeate the *yungeleit* that stand by the *farbrengens*..."

Reb Shmuel tried to intervene, with a

positive view, saying that there are more than two hundred *yungeleit* standing at every *farbrengen*.

But the Rebbe was not consoled.

"If these two hundred *yungeleit* would spread Chassidus in the shuls, and be active in *hafotzas hamayonos*, we could have brought Moshiach. And then, there would also not have been any *parnassa* worries..."

"Chassidus was never as revealed as it is now," the Rebbe continued, "and there are no true opponents, even those that seemingly oppose are not truly against..."

לעילוי נשמת

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

נפטרה כ"ה אדר תשפ"ד