

The Weekly Farbrenge


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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"ג (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 *minyanim* 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 *goyische* 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 *Tzemaich 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."

(סה"ש קיץ ה'ש"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.

(סה"ש תש"ב עמ' 19, 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)

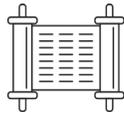

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ENTERING A NON-KOSHER RESTAURANT

May I attend a business meeting in a non-kosher restaurant?

When someone does something that can appear like a forbidden action, even if in truth they aren't doing anything wrong, there is a concern of *maris ayin*, "the way it appears to the eye."¹ On several occasions, the Gemara mentions examples that are forbidden due to *maris ayin*. *Poskim* debate if this idea extends beyond those specific examples and the majority view is that it does.²

There are two concerns at hand: (1) If the onlooker mistakenly thinks we are doing a forbidden action, he might come to do the *aveira* himself, thinking that it is allowed; (2) Even if the onlooker won't emulate our example, we are instructed against doing anything that will raise suspicion against us, "*veh'yisem nekiyim*."

Based on these two concerns, R. Moshe Feinstein prohibits entering the building of a non-frum synagogue which has a kosher *minyán* in a side room, if the side *minyán* isn't widely known. Likewise, one may not sit in a non-kosher eatery, since onlookers may think they can eat there.³

Yet, in a difficult situation, R. Moshe allows purchasing kosher food there in a discreet manner, following the view that *maris ayin* "in private" doesn't apply in situations of need or *simchas yom tov*. In this case, we trust that those inside will see that he's eating kosher, and if he encounters a Jewish passerby, he must explain that he is very hungry and is therefore allowed to enter to buy kosher food.⁴

Other contemporary *poskim* argue that one may be lenient even under regular circumstances since if the eatery has products that are kosher, onlookers won't think that the eatery's entire selection is kosher (though a kosher restaurant is still preferable when available).⁵ Some take this a step further and write that by attending a business meeting in a non-kosher restaurant and abstaining from non-kosher food, he creates a *kiddush Hashem*.⁶

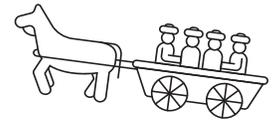
If the workplace has designated eateries where business meetings are regularly held, there is further room for leniency since it is known that one is there for the meeting and not to eat.⁷ If the eatery doesn't primarily serve non-kosher items — e.g. coffee shop or vegetarian eatery (with various *kashrus* issues, including *bishul akum* — there is also less concern, especially if it is *maris ayin* regarding *derabanan* prohibitions.

In practice, when needed there is room to be lenient, yet one should consult a *rov* to take all factors into consideration.

1. ראה לדוגמה שו"ע יו"ד סימן פ"ז ס"ג.
2. ראה פר"ח יו"ד סי' פ"ז סק"ז, וראה
3. אג"מ אור"ח ח"ב סי' מ'.
4. ראה רמב"ם יום טוב פ"ב ה"ו.
5. ראה שו"ת אבני ישיפה ח"ו סי' קמ"ג.
6. אמת ליעקב ע' ת"ס בערה מהפי
השמועה.
7. שו"ת מנחת אשר ח"א סי' ס"ז.

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

Our Heroes



R. ZALMAN SCHERBINER

R. Zalman Scherbiner was a chossid of the Tzemach Tzedek, Rebbe Maharash, and Rebbe Rashab. A son-in-law of R. Yehoshua Eliyahu, the Rov of Horki, R. Zalman was a *talmid chochom* with broad Torah knowledge, and a generous *baal tzedakah*. He lived in Scherbine, a small farming settlement not far from Lubavitch, and the Rebbe Maharash and Rebbe Rashab would visit him every year to harvest wheat for *matzos*. The Frierdiker Rebbe heard many stories from R. Zalman, before his passing in approximately 5654.

The Frierdiker Rebbe related:

R. Zalman was one of the "Zeideh's Yidden," a close chossid of the Rebbe Maharash. He was a villager, and was fluent in much Gemara, as well as Chassidus and Kabbala.

The Rebbe Maharash would often send a *baalabus* to live in a village, telling them, "If you want bread and long life, I'll guarantee it for you, provided that you live in a village — far from the commotion — so you will have time to learn" (there were others who were given instructions to invest heavily in business). R. Zalman would say that he can't handle the 'commotion' in the town of Lubavitch...

My father, the Rebbe Rashab, enjoyed the "Zeideh's Yidden." After he passed away, my father said: "I believe that Zalman experienced *gilui Eliyahu*, yet he didn't recognize what it was."

(ס' השיחות תרפ"ט ע' 26, רשימת היומנים ע' רס)

The Frierdiker Rebbe related:

Although he was a chossid and *lamdan*,

fluent in Shas and with ample knowledge of Yerushlami and Tur, and fluent in Zohar, Kisvei Arizal and all available *sifrei Chassidus*, he was known among chassidim simply as "Zalman Scherbiner."

When I met him, he was over seventy and his countenance was indescribable; his face expressed great intelligence and good, easygoing *middos*. He was a classic old-time wise *yishuvnik*.

From R. Zalman, I heard tens of stories about life during the fourth and fifth generations of Chabad. When R. Zalman told a story, he would first describe the time, place, and circumstance in which the story occurred, giving the listener a full picture of the event, so that he could envision the Rebbe in the story sitting right there. Then he would proceed to tell the story exactly as it happened without embellishment or commentary.

I recall one Chanukah night, when the elder chassidim — Rashbatz, R. Hendel, R. Aharon and R. Yekusiel of Dokshitz, and R. Zalman Scherbiner — sat together, and shared memories of their years in by the Tzemach Tzedek.

Suddenly, R. Zalman Scherbiner stood up and began to sing the *niggun* with which the Tzemach Tzedek davened Mussaf on Rosh Hashana. At that, the others all stood up and sang together with him. When they came to the passage of "*ashrei ish shelo yishkochecho*," they became impassioned and tears flowed down their cheeks. It was apparent that they were reliving the episode and they felt themselves standing before the Rebbe and watching him daven.

(ליקוטי דיבורים א-ב ע' 234)

A Moment with The Rebbe



TAKE MARRIAGE SERIOUSLY

One *chossan* planned on going with his wife on a honeymoon trip following their *chassuna*.

When he wrote of his plan to the Rebbe, he received a sharp response: "I have never heard of beginning building an everlasting edifice with trips! It seems that it should be with Torah, *mitzvos*, and *avodas hatefila*."

Another *chossan*, who was a gifted clarinetist, told the Rebbe in *yechidus* that he planned on delighting the *chassuna* guests

with a musical performance. The Rebbe rejected his idea, since "a *chassuna* is like a personal Yom Kippur."

The Rebbe then shared a personal experience with him, "At my *chassuna*, I wanted to spend time with the *gedolei Yisroel* who were present, but my father-in-law told me that my own *chassuna* is not an appropriate time for that."

(Sharei Halacha Uminhag Vol. 5, p. 269; Seeds of Wisdom Vol. 2, p. 109)