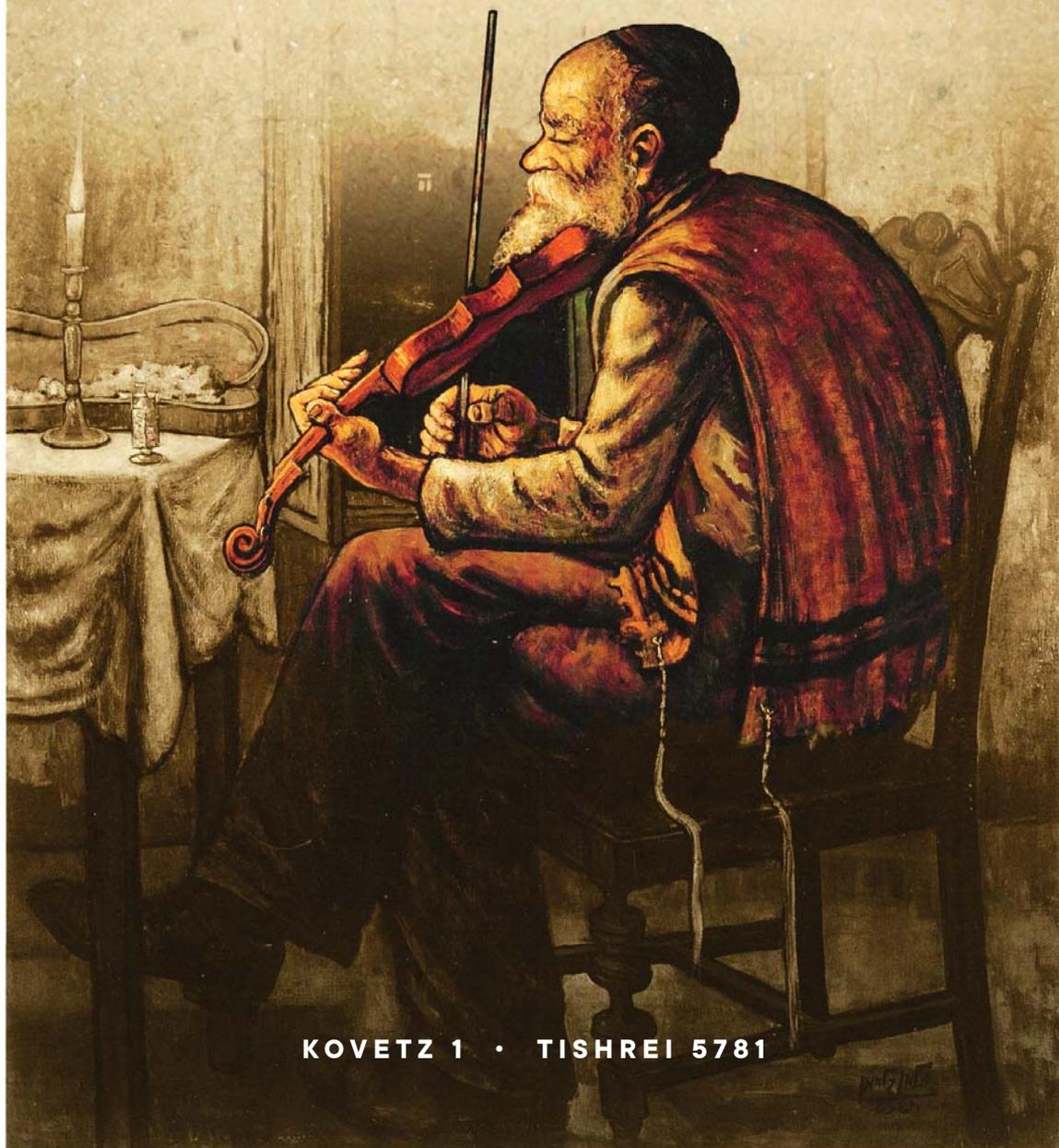


HATOMIM



KOVETZ 1 • TISHREI 5781

יהי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד



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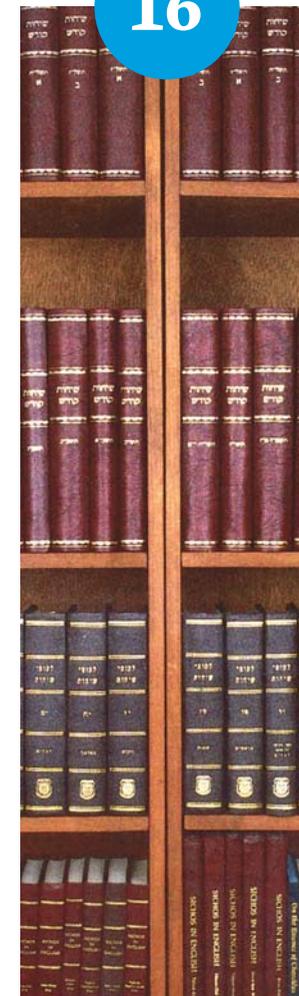
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**BEIS
MOSHIACH**

Be Active Activate Others

A Letter to
Talmidei HaYeshivos



פּוֹתְחִין בְּדַבָּר מַלְכוּת

This letter is from the series of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach's first Michtovim Kloliyim, written prior to Rosh Hashana of 5711. This one was specifically addressed to yeshiva students and outlines their unique responsibilities.

B”H, The First Day of *Selichos*, 5710

To the Students of the *Yeshivos*: May Hashem’s blessing be upon you.

Greetings and Blessings!

With the sanction of the learned Rabbis who head your *yeshivos*, I would like to address myself to you — my dear friends, students of the *yeshivos* — in particular, in addition to my letter of *Chai Elul*.

The happy privilege with which Divine providence has enabled you to be counted among those whose portion in life is Hashem’s Torah, and the unique characteristic with which Hashem has endowed young people, giving them unusual strength and energy — these two gifts charge you with a distinctive responsibility: to stand in the forefront of those who are active, and who activate others, in giving spiritual *tzedaka* to those who are poor in understanding, dispensing this *tzedaka* with a generous eye and an open hand.

Our Sages have stated decisively: The positive commandment of studying Torah is superior, in itself, to the other *mitzvos*. It is considered their equal

because study leads to deed. However, if a particular *mitzva* cannot be carried out by others — for example: if a person knows that his words will be heeded more, or if *what others are doing does not suffice* for the *mitzva* in question — then he is obliged to interrupt his study, perform the *mitzva*, and only then return to his study.

In the days of the approaching month of Tishrei, the month during which every Jew is obliged and privileged “to renew his deeds and improve his deeds,” it is the task of every *yeshivah* student to gird himself with ever-increasing vigor:

(a) **In *avoda* that relates to himself:** to rouse himself in true *teshuva*, accepting upon himself the yoke of Hashem’s sovereignty, the yoke of studying the Torah with the fear of Heaven, and the joyful fulfillment of the *mitzvos*;

(b) **In *avoda* that relates to others:** to bring close those who need to be brought near, and to lend strength to those who need to be strengthened — in the *avoda* of *teshuva*, in the study of Torah, and in the fulfillment of the *mitzvos*. What is called for, above



A facsimile of the original letter as it appeared in 5710; note that it wasn't published on the Rebbe's stationery, perhaps since this was still prior to the Rebbe officially accepting the nesius

all, is an *extensive campaign* in every appropriate manner — that all Jewish boys and girls, children and adolescents, should be given an authentically Jewish education (*chinuch hakasher*) in the time-honored traditions of our people, without compromise.

“The Holy One, blessed be He, said to His people: ‘If you better your ways, I shall rise from the Throne of Judgment and take My place on the Throne of Mercy;

for you I shall transform the attribute of stern justice to the attribute of mercy.”

From one who blesses you and who seeks your blessing — that we all be inscribed and sealed for a good year,

Menachem Mendel ben Chana Schneerson

Son-in-law of the Nasi, his holy honor, Our master, mentor and Rebbe (of Lubavitch); זצוקללה"ה, נבג"ם, זי"ע, הכ"מ

The Leader of The Free World

Dissemination of the Sheva Mitzvos B'nei Noach



מענות בכתב יד קודש

SHEVA MITZVOS B'NEI NOACH - THE ROLE OF THE NATIONS

An answer from the Rebbe from 17th of Menachem Av 5722

במענה לשאלתה הטעם שאין על בני להשתדל לגייר את אר"ה [=אומות העולם] -

לכאור"א יש לו תפקידו בעולם וסדר הנהגתו ע"פ תורת ה': לבני תרי"ג מצות, אר"ה - ז' מצות ב"נ [בני נח] ופרטיהם

רק נשמות מעטות (במספר) ביותר תפקידן גם ענין הגירות

In response to your question as to why Jews shouldn't try to influence gentiles to convert:

Every individual has their mission in this world and the order of his conduct is based on Hashem's Torah: for Jews, it is adhering to the 613 Mitzvos and for the nations of the world it is adhering to the Seven Mitzvos of the sons of Noach and all their details.

Only a select few (in quantity) also have the mission to convert.

Handwritten notes in Hebrew, including the word 'הקוסט' (The Coast) and 'ביור' (Bior). The notes discuss the role of the nations and the mission to convert, with various symbols and arrows pointing to specific parts of the text.

ARE OTHER RELIGIONS COMPATIBLE WITH SHEVA MITZVOS

The Rebbe's edits on a press release following the victory in the Supreme Court regarding the constitutionality of public Menorahs in Sivan 5749 (1989):

The press release read:

"We are pleased with the Court's decision and are not surprised at its ruling... The founders of this country believed in G-d. They came here to escape the religious persecution of governments ... they hoped to establish on these shores a life where people would enjoy religious freedom and worship G-d freely each in accordance with his or her beliefs.

The Rebbe crossed out the line: "each in accordance with his or her beliefs" and wrote why it must be omitted: □ [=which stands for "שאי" — confidential]

Christianity is Avoda Zara, which is contradictory to the seven laws of the children of Noach, which is not the case with Islam, (1)

however, the Christians of today [are just keeping to the] actions of their fathers (2)

Printed text with handwritten annotations and corrections. The text discusses the court's decision and the founders of the United States. The handwritten notes include "הקוסט" (The Coast) and "ביור" (Bior), and various symbols and arrows pointing to specific parts of the text.

We are pleased with the court's decision, and are not surprised at its ruling.

We have always maintained that the ~~founders~~ of the Constitution of the United States never intended to separate government from religion. ~~the~~ founders of this country believed in G-d. They came here to escape the religious persecution of governments that coerced its citizens to abide by an established religion to the exclusion of others. They hoped to establish on these shores a life where people would enjoy religious freedom, and worship G-d freely, each in accordance with his or her beliefs.

For centuries this has been manifest with the motto "In G-d We Trust" engraved upon this country's currency, and with government legislative houses prefacing their deliberations with a prayer to G-d.

THE MENORAH IS PARTICULARLY ~~SYMBOLIC~~ ^{REMINISCENT} OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

It is our fervent hope that the Jewish community will now come together to fully utilize the religious freedom guaranteed and protected by this great country.

EVEN GENTILES ARE COMMANDED IN SETTLING THE WORLD

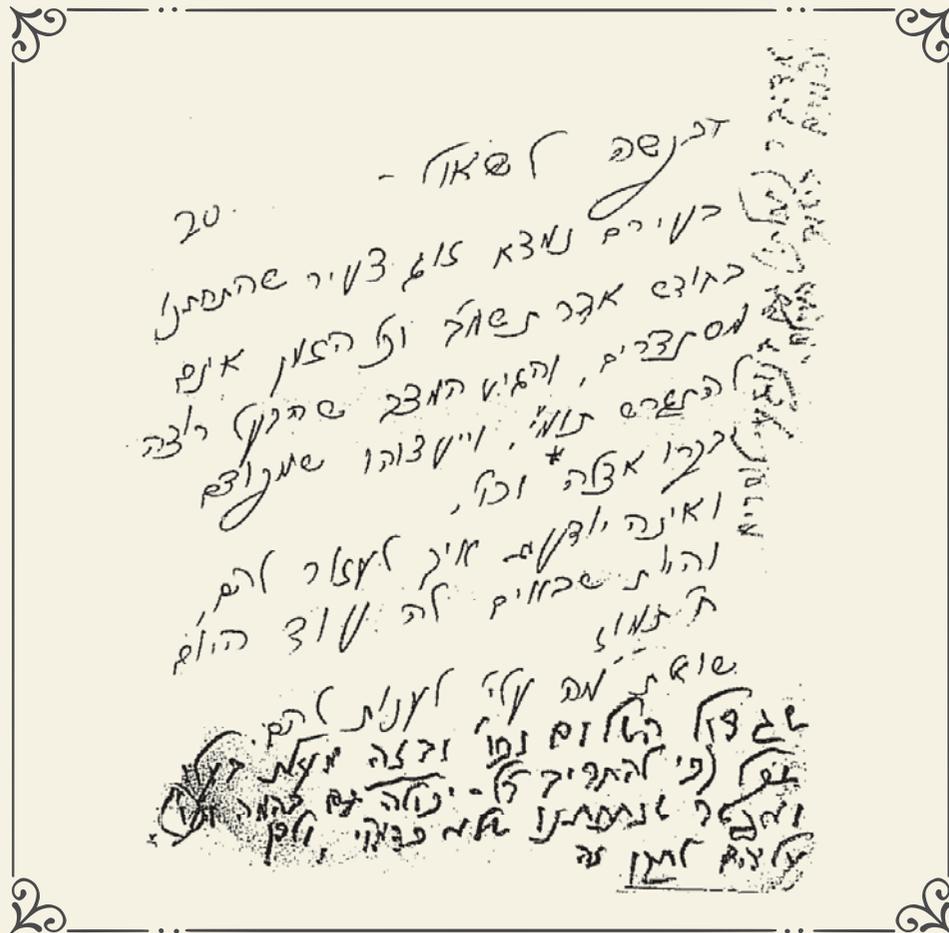
An answer to a woman who asked about what to advise a couple that never got along and are considering divorce:

שגדול השלום וכו' ובוה מעלת בעלי שכל (כי להחריב ר"ל - יכולה גם בהמה וכו') ואפשר שנתחתנו שלא כדמו"י [=כדת משה וישראל] ולכן עליהם לתקן זה

המדובר (תחלתו) גם בנוגע לנכרים שמצווים בישוב העולם

That great is peace etc. and it is in this that is the advantage of intelligent beings (because to destroy r'l - an animal can do as well etc.) and it is possible that they did not marry *k'das Moshe v'Yisrael* [i.e. in accordance with Torah law] and therefore it is incumbent upon them to rectify this...

What is stated here (the first part) pertains even to gentiles who are commanded in settling the world...

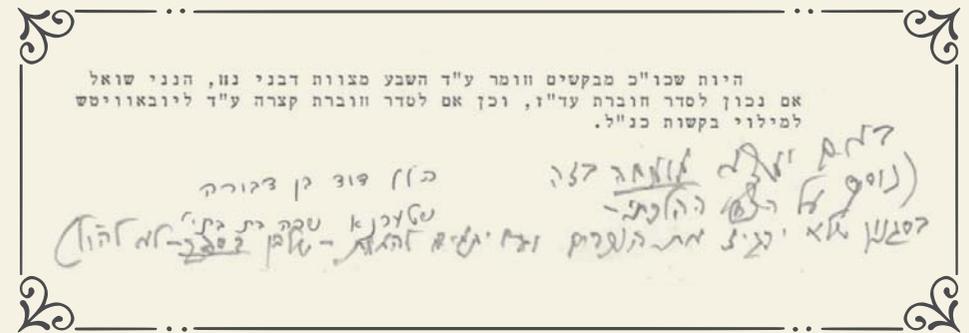


PUBLISHING A BOOKLET ABOUT SHEVA MITZVOS

R"Hillel Dovid Krinsky asked the Rebbe about publishing a booklet about *Sheva Mitzvos Bnei Noach*. The Rebbe responded:

באם ימצא מומחה בזה (נוסף על הצד ההלכתי - בסגנון שלא ירגיז את הנכרים וגם יתאים להאמת - שלכן בספק - לא להו"ל)

If you will find an expert in this matter (who besides [for being knowledgeable] in the halachic aspect of this matter - is an expert in the sense of knowing how to have this publication written in a style that will not provoke the gentiles and at the same time will be faithful to the truth of Halacha etc. therefore [i.e. being that the conditions are hard to meet] if you are in doubt -- do not publish it.



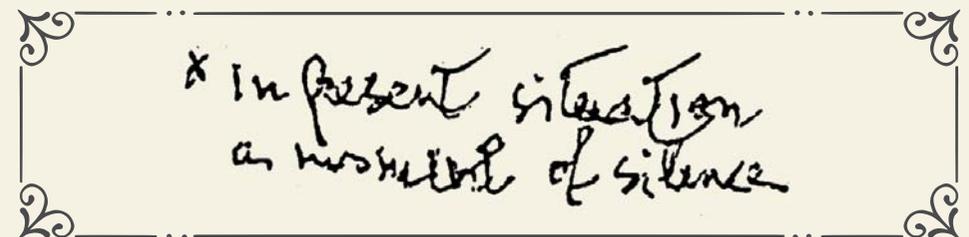
MOMENT OF SILENCE

In 5743 (1943), the Rebbe launched the "Moment of Silence" campaign to institute a moment of silence and reflection as a vital part of education in public schools, so that children will be able to contemplate the fact that the world has a Creator and a Higher force to whom we are all accountable — "a seeing eye and a hearing ear."

Below is an excerpt of an English letter to which the Rebbe added:

In present situation

a moment of silence;



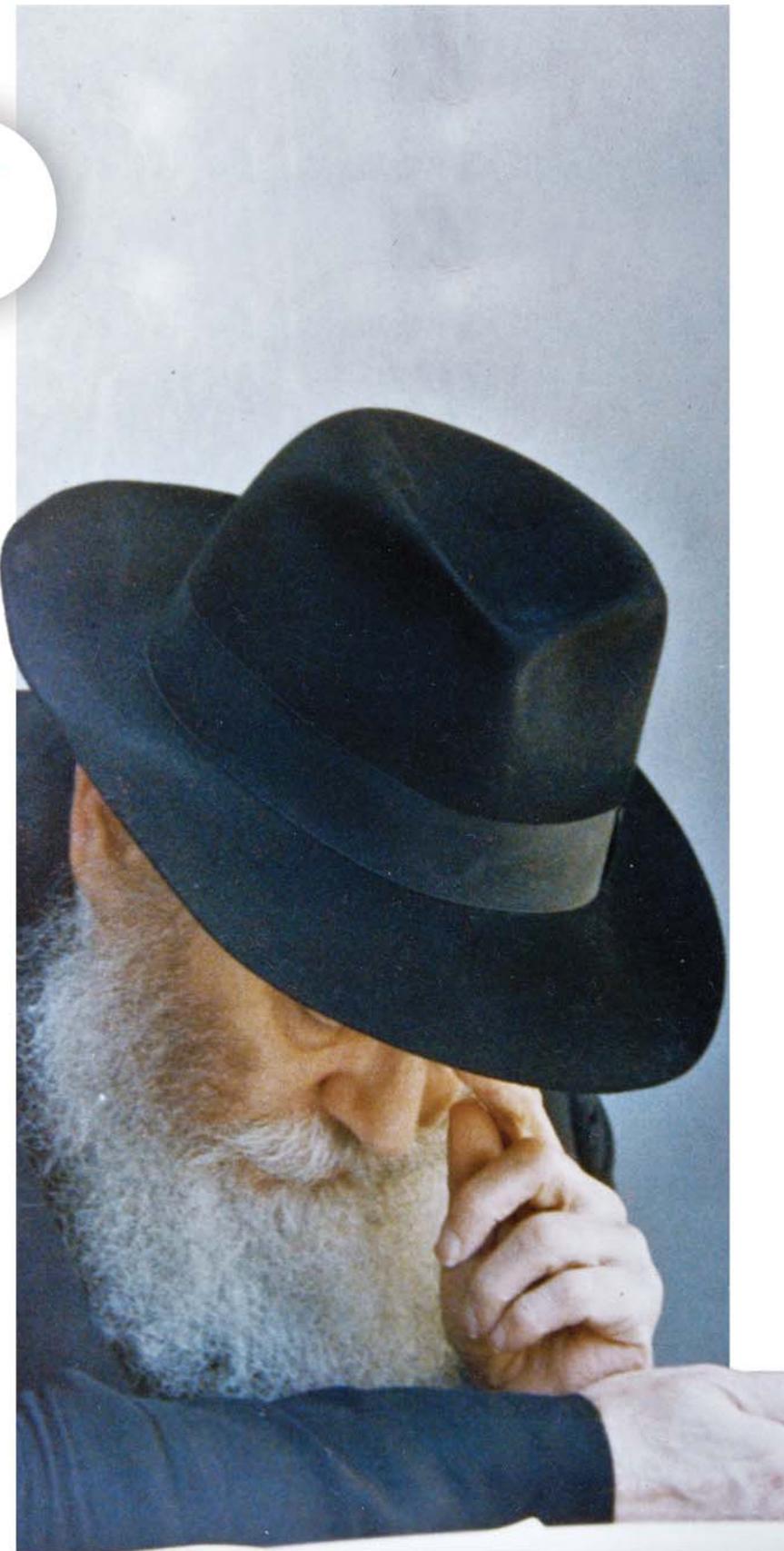
קולי שמועה כחסדך ה' כמשפטך הייני
זינא



TEN MINUTES OF UNSTOPPABLE SOBBING

Short Stories of Rosh HaShana
with the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach

...



HE JUST STOOD AND LOOKED

R' Yosef Goldstein a'h related that he was in 770 during the nesius of the Rebbe Rayatz and carefully observed the conduct of his son-in-law, the Rebbe:

“During the tekios, the Rebbe stood motionless and one saw no expression on his face. He stood on the side and just looked at his father-in-law, the Rebbe Rayatz.”

THE FIRST TIME

In Elul 5712/1952, R' Shmuel Zalmanov and R' Zalman Gurary entered the Rebbe's room and asked him to blow the shofar that Rosh Hashana, as was the practice of the Rebbeim.

The Rebbe said that he did not know how to blow. R' Gurary said, “It's a *chochma* and not a skill; how could the Rebbe not know this *chochma*?” Then the Rebbe agreed, saying he wanted to learn with R' Zalmanov what the Rebbeim would sing to themselves before the tekios.

That year, in addition to the Rebbe saying the verses before and after the tekios, he recited the brachos and blew the first tekia; he left the remaining tekios for R' Mendel Tenenbaum.

WHO DOES THE REBBE THINK ABOUT?

The shliach, R' Berel Baumgarten once wrote to the Rebbe that he yearned to receive permission to be with the Rebbe during the tekios. He said he was committed to being in his place of shlichus in Argentina the rest of Tishrei

and could he just come for Rosh Hashana to hear the Rebbe's tekios.

The Rebbe's reply was: Believe me, during the tekios I think about the shluchim more than about those who are crowded around the bima.

ALL ARE WELCOME

Before Rosh Hashana 5739, after the Rebbe's heart attack at the beginning of the year, the secretaries and gabbaim wanted to make certain limitations regarding the size of the crowd during tefillos and tekios so it wouldn't be as stuffy.

When the Rebbe found out, he spoke about it at a farbrengen that took place on motzoei Shabbos Netzavim. He said, “I do not know what they are planning – when it comes to those matters associated with

.....
There was silence in the shul and the only sound was the Rebbe. Everyone felt they were in a different world, that the Rebbe was trying to split the heavens in a way that was far beyond the norm.
.....

the gabbaim, selling seats etc. I don't mix in; that's their job. But obviously, when it comes to the Torah reading, maftir, tekios, they will allow everyone to enter, with no limitations, both on the first and second days of Rosh Hashana and clearly, whoever enters will do so with



rebbedrive.com

peace of soul and body, without pushing and without all those things that are the opposite of order of holiness as well as that which is the opposite of the non-order of holiness.

DON'T SPARE THE REBBE

That year, with the intention of protecting the Rebbe's health, someone announced that they should not all pass by the Rebbe for kos shel bracha that would take place on motzoei Rosh Hashana.

When the Rebbe heard this, he silenced the speaker and said everyone should pass by and he added that this would only strengthen his health. At the end of the distribution, the Rebbe repeated that all those who refrained from passing by until then (since they were concerned for his health) should stand on line and receive wine from him.

TERRIFYING TEARS

The tekios of 5734 were remembered by all who were present for they were

unusual as compared to other years. "After the Rebbe covered the packages of pidyonei nefesh and the shofaros with a tallis, a terrible cry was heard," said someone who was there. "In that first instant, some may have thought it was the cry of a child who decided just then to cry, but then they realized it was the Rebbe. It was a powerful wailing that defies description, about ten minutes of terrible nonstop crying.

"There was silence in the shul and the only sound was the Rebbe. Everyone felt they were in a different world, that the Rebbe was trying to split the heavens in a way that was far beyond the norm. Even his face during the tekios and the way he said the pesukim were frightening.

"During the verses preceding the tekios there were two paragraphs that the Rebbe said while sobbing, 'al yaashkuni zeidim' and 'ala Elokim b'terua."

It should be noted that the Yom Kippur War began a few days later and we lost thousands of men.

IMPRESSIVE PROCESSION

Starting in 5702 and throughout the early years of the nesius, Chassidim would go to the Botanical Gardens for Tashlich. They went in an impressive procession in which they walked in two straight lines, all singing, with the Rebbe leading the way.

For the entire length of the pedestrian island along Eastern Parkway, traffic would stop as the Chassidim crossed while people all around watched in curiosity. The police escorted the procession with great honor.

The procession also attracted reporters and photographers from the secular media who came to see the captivating spectacle. One could see that it bothered the Rebbe to be photographed on Yom Tov and sometimes he tried to conceal his face.

MAKING AN IMPRESSION

The shliach, R' Zalman Posner related that in 5702, when the first procession took place, he was still a boy. Being an American child who was used to "well-mannered" behavior, this procession made him uncomfortable and he would lag behind, at the end of the procession.

When they returned to 770, an American Jew impeccably attired in holiday dress approached him, took his arm and demanded, "Why are they singing?"

"I stammered. I barely got out anything besides 'Rosh Hashana' and 'Tashlich.'" The man still grasped the boy's arm and he said, "Here, deep inside," pointing at his heart, "I have a spark," and he walked off.

TASHLICH CHANGES

The big procession that took place each year on the way to Tashlich began in 5702 and ended in 5727. At the end of that year, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka said to Rabbi Shneur Zalman Gurary that the long walk was a strain for the Rebbe and she wasn't pleased about it.

R' Gurary hired a drilling company that dug in the yard behind the library to see whether they would find water. Water was found a few days before Rosh Hashana, and a well was set up near 770.

That year it was announced that the Rebbe did not want Chassidim to be present when he went for Tashlich. "Just as when the Rebbe makes kiddush in his house it is a private matter, so too for Tashlich."

Throughout the years, this was one of the few events where Chassidim were not surrounding the Rebbe aside from a few of the secretaries, Rashag, and ten senior Chassidim.

EVERYTHING IS HERE

Erev Rosh Hashana 5711 there was still no ohel built over the gravesite of the Rebbe Rayatz and the Rebbe stood for hours in the rain. When he finished reading the pidyonei nefesh, it was very late.

When all of those who had come were about to leave, they discovered that the gate of the cemetery (near the ohel) was already locked. The Rebbe said, "Everything is here, a minyan etc. We just lack a shofar!"

After attempts at getting a key failed, the Rebbe walked the entire length of the cemetery to the main gate where they boarded the bus and returned to 770.

I WILL COME TO YOU

There were years that the Rebbe said that the Chassidim who had just left Russia should stand near him during the tekios. This began in 5725.

It was shortly after the arrival of R' Mendel Futerfas and R' Asher Sossonkin from Russia. After the Rebbe went to the bima used for the Torah reading, before his aliya, he asked that they stand near him.

Before the reading of the haftora, the Rebbe looked to either side and behind him and asked R' Mendel and R' Asher to come closer.

A year later, in 5726, after the haftora, the Rebbe asked whether R' Asher was there and asked that he stand on the platform. R' Asher hesitated about going up and after arranging the shofaros and handkerchiefs, the Rebbe asked once again whether he was there. Only then did he start the tekios.

In 5727, the Rebbe said that all the Chassidim who left Russia should stand around him for all the tefillos, especially during the haftora and the blowing of the shofar. Before the Torah reading, they announced that all those who left Russia should stand on the platform and during the two days of Rosh Hashana, before the tekios, the Rebbe looked around to see that they were all in place.

The next day, when the Rebbe saw that not all of them were standing on the platform he began looking around to find them.

After saying the verses, the Rebbe said that the children of the Russian immigrants should come up too, and he said that R' Berel Futerfas and R' Mordechai Chein should come up on the platform, as the Rebbe searched the crowd for them.

When they hesitated about going up, the Rebbe said sharply, "If they cannot come to me, I will go to them." When he saw R' Berel Futerfas he motioned with his finger for him to come up. All that time, it was apparent that the Rebbe was not pleased by the delay in their going up to the platform.

מה אהבתי תורתך כל היום היא שיחתי



NAVIGATING THE SEA OF THE REBBE'S TORAH

What's the **difference between** Likkutei Sichos & **Sefer** HaSichos? Why are some volumes of Likkutei Sichos **so large and others thinner**? How many kinds of letters from the Rebbe are there? **Become acquainted with the Rebbe's vast Torah**

...



ספר השיחות

לקוטי שיחות

אגרות קודש

ספר המאמרים

שיחות קודש - התוועדויות



אגרות קודש

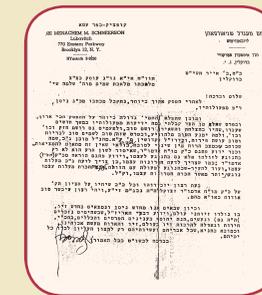
The Rebbe's letters are printed in the 30 volume set of אגרות קודש. These include just the letters until תשל"ח.

The letters include deep explanations in Nigleh and Chassidus, answers on questions in emuna, direction in Shlichus and Chinuch, and letters of encouragement to any Jew who is having a hard time.

There are three kinds of letters from the Rebbe:

1. A private letter written to a specific person or group of people on a personal or communal matter which is connected to him.
2. A letter which was sent out to many people usually in regards to an upcoming Yom Tov or the like, to which the Rebbe added a post script addressing private issues.
3. A "general letter" which the Rebbe addressed to "every Jewish person wherever he may be" which began to come out in תש"ו and were written every year before Rosh Hashana and Pesach, and occasionally for other occasions.

In the later years, when the Rebbe's schedule couldn't allow the time to answer so many letters, he would usually answer briefly to a letter which was sent to him with a sentence or two (sometimes even one word). These answers are called מענות.



In addition to letters in Hebrew and Yiddish, there are also many letters in English which were published separately. After תמוז ג' many Chassidim write to the Rebbe and place the letter in the אגרות קודש; often one will find a clear answer on the page to which he opened to that often leads to great miracles!



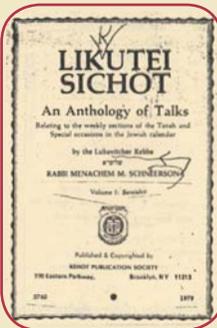
לקוטי שיחות

The meaning of לקוטי שיחות is "A Collection Of Talks". These are Sichos that the Rebbe was מניה as a Kuntres on a specific topic from the weekly Parsha or Yom Tov. Sometimes a Sicha in לקוטי שיחות can be a compilation of up to four times the Rebbe spoke about the same topic from over a 20 year span!

The Sicha is totally rewritten to be one topic that could be learned on its own with countless notes and references.

The Rebbe gave the name לקוטי שיחות in תשכ"ז.

In תשל"ו it became a weekly seder besides a few breaks in the middle (תשל"ב and תשל"ה). Sichos were coming out from the Rebbe before every Shabbos until תשנ"ב פרשת ויקהל.



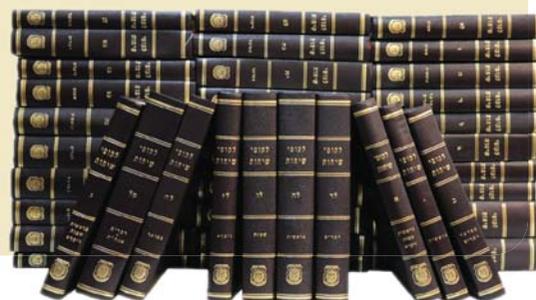
In תשל"ג-ל"ד the Rebbe was מניה the Sichos in Loshon Hakodesh. These Sichos make up volumes 10-14. From תשמ"ו until תשל"ח the Rebbe had the sichos prepared in Yiddish again (volumes 15-29),

and in תשמ"ז the Rebbe returned again to Loshon Hakodesh (volumes 30-39).

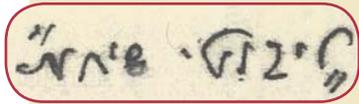
Usually, the הוספות ליקוט would have mainly letters of the Rebbe that people agreed to publish. Every volume has in the back these letters which are published not chronologically, but according to topics.

The sichos were prepared by the members of the חסידות who also took care of printing and sending the sichos worldwide.

Chassidim are still awaiting the new ליקוט, but until then we must קאך in the treasures the Rebbe has already given us.



There are 39 volumes in Likkutei Sichos.



In תש"י the Rebbe began to be old sichos about the weekly Parsha before every Shabbos as an aid for the Bochorim who went to teach Chassidus in shuls. These sichos are the first 2 volumes.



These weekly booklets weren't yet known as Likkutei Sichos, rather as לחזור בבתי כנסיות תוכן ענינים בדא"ח.

In תשכ"ג the Rebbe did so again for another year and these comprise the next two volumes.

In תשכ"ה the Rebbe began reciting Sichos explaining Rashi and was מניה the first eight.

Over the next few years the Rebbe was מניה Sichos at random times. All the sichos from תשל"ב to תשכ"ה are found in volumes 5-9 of the set.

ספר השיחות

At times the Rebbe would be מגיה a certain sicha he recently said, and in the earlier years add and notes. These sichos came out in booklets with the Rebbe's Shaar Blatt in a print format, and later went into the הוספות of the Likkutei Sichos.

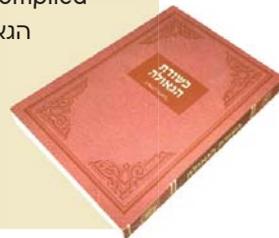


too many הוספות and they became a separate book called השיחות ספר which has 12 volumes from תשנ"ב until תשמ"ז.



The last three volumes are comprised of the sichos of תשנ"א-נ"ב, which are the sichos in which the Rebbe describes the special time we are in – the time of the Geula, and what is required of us in order to live with Moshiach. Many learn these sichos every week again and again. They are also known as דבר מלכות.

Highlights of these sichos were compiled in תשנ"ג in the famous book הגאולה the Rebbe approved that the title מלך המשיח be attached to his holy name!



In תשמ"ח and more particularly in תשמ"ז, the Rebbe began to farbreng every week, after which he would be מגיה the sichos to be published in the newspapers – one week in Yiddish for the *Algemeiner Journal* and one week in Hebrew for the *Kfar Chabad*.



Due to this, there were

ספר המאמרים

A מאמר is called דברי אלקים חיים - this means that when a Rebbe says a maamar, the Shechina is talking out of his mouth!

When the Rebbe says a maamar, everyone stands. The maamar is said with a special tune, and is a very spiritual experience. The maamar usually discusses deep inyonim in Chassidus and Kabbalah.



The Rebbe began to write down his maamorim (see facimile of maamar

Ki sisa 5711), but due to lack of time he didn't continue to do so, and like the sichos, most came out in בלתי מונה.

Occasionally the Rebbe would be מגיה a maamar which would come out in a kuntres.

In תשמ"ז the Rebbe began to recite less maamorim, but began to be מגיה old maamorim in honor of Chassidishe Yomim Tovim until תשנ"ב.

These came out in six volumes of מלוקט - ספר המאמרים.

The rest of the maamorim appear in various sets of ספר המאמרים, some arranged by the years and other according to the parshiyos.

All the באתי לגני ma'amorim (which were said every Yud Shevat until תשמ"ח) came out in a special 2 volume set.



שיחות קודש — התועדויות

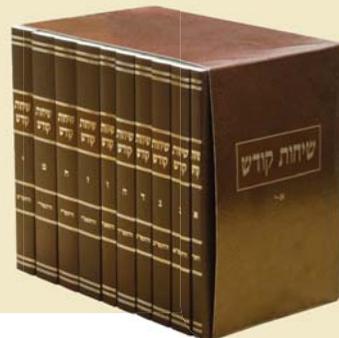
Since the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach began to Farbreng often on Shabbos (at least every shabbos Mevorchim) and Yom Tov.

After the Farbrengen the חוזרים - who listened intently and "recorded" the Sichos in their mind – would repeat the Rebbe's words. After Shabbos the מניחים (-transcribers) would write them down

and have them printed and disseminated throughout the world.

These שיחות are called "בלתי מונה" – "an unedited transcript", because the Rebbe had not checked it over and it would not appear with the Rebbe's Shaar Blatt or Kehos logo.

The hanachos of the years תש"ו-תשמ"א were printed (mostly in Yiddish) in the



set of 50 volumes! A new edition is being published, with all the sichos retyped, many sichos that were missing restored, with references and diaries added.

The hanachos of תשמ"ב-תשנ"ב appear in the תועדויות - תורת מנחם set of 43 volumes! There is another series in the making with the same name that includes all the sichos of תש"ו-תשמ"א translated to Hebrew.



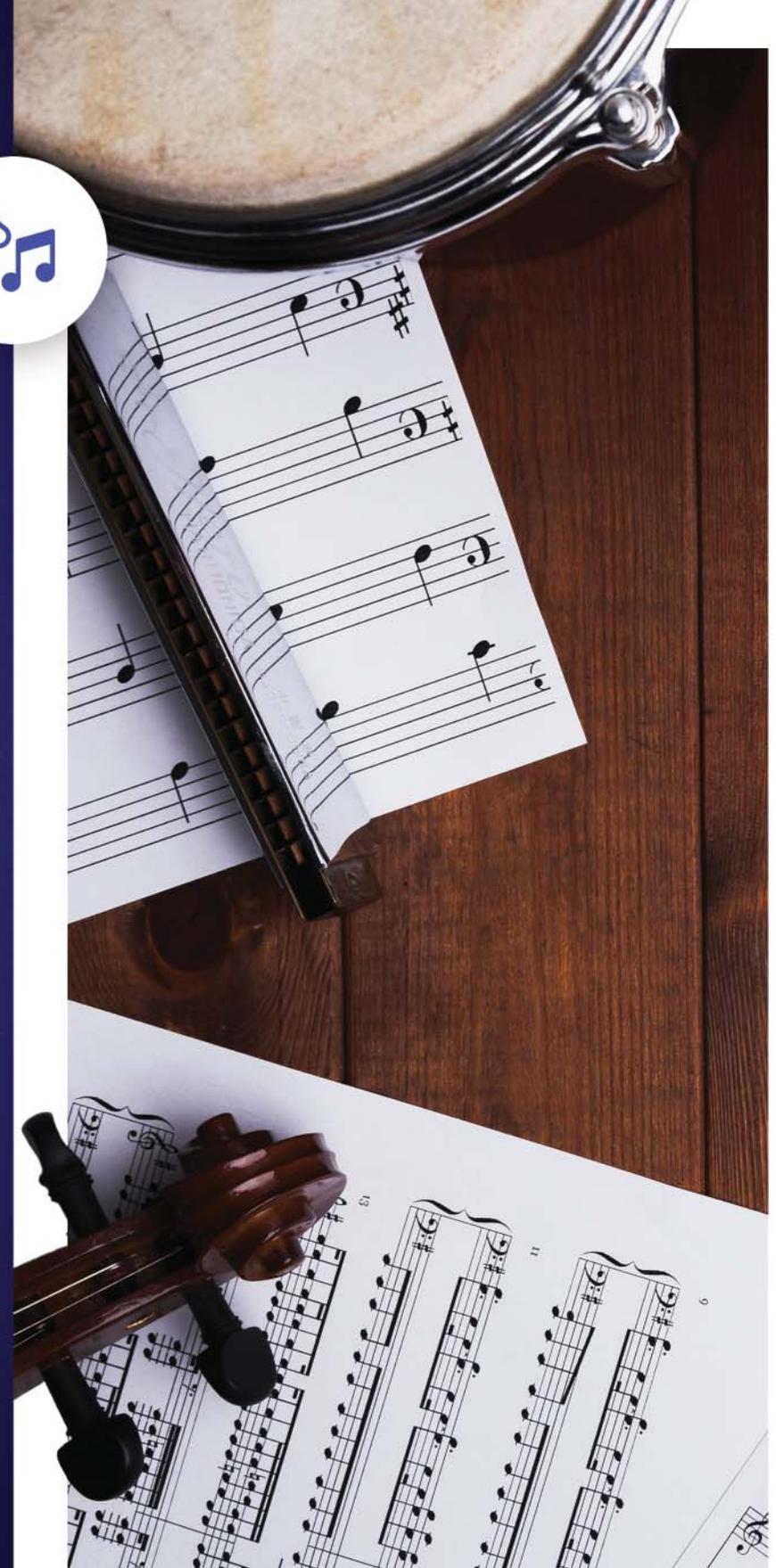
לשמיע אל הרינה ואל התפילה



WHAT'S WRONG WITH NOT CHASSIDISHE MUSIC?

Rabbi Sholom Jacobson
explains the power of song

...



Question:

It is known that Chabad niggunim are different than other niggunim, and as such, their special quality is easily discernible. Still, it is hard to agree with the kana'us (zealotry) for Chabad niggunim exclusively and the dismissal of other niggunim. It's one thing when it's a farbrengen or davening, but what about in one's free time – what's the big problem with singing Jewish or Chassidic songs that add chayus and simcha to one's avodas Hashem?

Answer:

The question can be considered a good, logical question as long as we are not aware of the inner significance of Chabad niggunim. When we learn about what Chabad niggunim are, even if we briefly peruse what appears in the writing of our Rebbeim, we will discover that the question is not a question.

“FREE TIME IS NO DIFFERENT”

First, let us take a look at the idea of separating between the time for learning, davening and farbrengen and one's free time. This approach is somewhat reminiscent of the approach of the maskilim, “Be a Jew in your home and a man when you go out.” As long as you are in the dalet amos of Torah and tefilla, in your private home, conduct yourself as a Jew, but when you go out to the world, when you come in contact with the gashmius of the world, you can forget a bit about the Creator, relieve yourself a bit of the “heavy yoke,” and live like a normal person.

Our Rebbeim fought to the extreme against this approach as we know what the Rebbe Rayatz said when he came to the United States, “America is no different.” Yiddishkeit and Chassidishkeit are not the province of the Old Country; they are relevant even to the America of today.

Even within the earthiness and materialism of the world, there needs to be the awareness of “*Ein od milvado*” (there is nothing but Him). Matters of holiness and G-dliness pertain not just to a specific time and place, to a beis medrash when learning and davening. They need to encompass a person all the time.

Actually, specifically those times and in those places that are not bound by rules from the hanhala of a yeshiva or peer pressure, are the time and the yardstick to see whether these ideas are ingrained within us in a deep and truthful way. Do we live with it, is it part of us, or not so much. Is it something only superficial and peripheral?

When something is firmly fixed within someone, then it makes no difference whether he is at home or at work, at shul or on the street.

Here too, if the advantage and preciousness of Chabad niggunim are understood to be incomparably greater



than other niggunim, this advantage will not change in our free time.

MUSIC – QUILL OF THE SOUL

What is the uniqueness of a niggun and what is its place in the hierarchy of the powers of the soul? I will quote some short excerpts from the Rebbe Rayatz:

Sefer HaSichos 5697, p. 221:

Negina is the language of the soul. In the maamar V'yodaata 5657, the difference between thought and speech is explained. The letters of thought are a revelation to oneself and a concealment from others. The letters of speech are a

concealment relative to oneself and a revelation to others. That is regarding thought and speech, but with negina – that is the language of the soul and its revelation.

Sefer HaSichos 5709, p. 278:

There are various niggunim. There are foolish niggunim in which he taps his foot and claps his hands but it's nothing. It's without an inner content. But there are niggunim pnimiyim, along the lines of “Rebbi Meir would sing (in prayer) with all kinds of song.”

Sefer HaSichos 5702 p. 122:

Language is the quill of the heart and song is the quill of the soul. When you

hear a niggun you can discern whether it is a “filled” niggun or an “empty” niggun.

Sefer HaSichos 5706 p. 52:

A niggun shows a person what state he is in, what state he should be in, and what state he could be in, that he can attain, which is through the revelation of the essence – the essence of the neshama.

A niggun is a doorway and gateway through which you can reach the state you should be in.

Likkutei Dibburim vol. 3, p. 409:

Once ... every Chassid had delight and sweetness in a given niggun ... when he sang that niggun it disconnected him from his simplicity and elevated him from a mundane state.

Sefer HaSichos 5706 p. 47:

The Alter Rebbe said: A niggun has the ability to extricate man even from the deepest mud.

To summarize: A niggun is the quill of the soul. A niggun can remove a person from the lowest place and lift him to the highest of places, which nothing else can accomplish.

THE POWER OF A NIGGUN

There are some interesting facts from which we can see how powerful a niggun is, such as the story told by the Rebbe MH”M on Shabbos, parshas Shemini 5744:

When the Modzitzer Rebbe was sick and went to Berlin to consult with doctors, they told him he needs an operation. However, since his heart was

quite weak, they did not know whether he could tolerate the surgery.

Hearing this, he said they should wait until he sang and became engrossed in the niggun etc – we know that he was musically gifted, and in his great deveikus in the sweetness and pleasure of the niggun, he would not feel what they were doing to him and then they could perform the operation without fear.

That’s what happened. They waited until he sang and became engrossed in the niggun etc, and then they performed the operation and all went well.

What greater tangible testament is there than the fact that thousands of baalei teshuva changed their way of life from one extreme to another with the power

.....
What greater tangible testament is there than the fact that thousands of baalei teshuva changed their way of life from one extreme to another with the power of a niggun!
.....

of a niggun! There are many well known and touching stories that attest to this...

At the same time, for the same reason, if a niggun comes from a problematic source, it can bring a person down because, it depends, to a great extent, not only on the style of the song (soft or

wild) or the words of the song (secular or of holy content) but on the composer.

BEWARE “HIDDEN EVIL”

It is known that everything a person comes in contact with, even something “external” makes an impact on man’s soul. For example, eating. There are types of food that engender bad tendencies in a person and the opposite. Clothing – what you wear affects you. We know that Shabbos clothes help a person absorb the holiness of Shabbos (as in the custom of wearing silk which comes from a living creature). Society – your environment makes a big impact on you.

The same is true for a niggun. Although it is only heard, its impact on the soul is very powerful.

Furthermore, as the Rebbe Rayatz is quoted above, song is the quill of the soul. A niggun expresses that which lies more deeply within the soul because when composing a song, the composer invests and expresses his soul. The inner workings of his soul are expressed within the movements of the music. It is not merely like writing or speaking which comes from man’s external soul garments but from the inside; music is the language of the soul.

This is why one needs to be very careful about niggunim. Not just because of the words or tune which can sound fine, appropriate and even inspiring for avodas Hashem, but mainly because a niggun has something deeper that comes from the soul of the composer and when the composer is in a problematic “state” (to put it nicely), then this is expressed (often in a hidden way) in his music.

If one ought to be careful about reading something written by someone whose views are not in line with Torah, then all the more so must one be careful with music from such a person.

In Chassidus, there are things that are in the category of “hidden evil,” that a person does not discern but whose effects are destructive. This evil can bring a person down (and in a way, is even worse than “revealed evil”), without a person realizing it (see Sefer HaMaamarim 5704 p. 99).

I’m talking about things which, at first glance, do not seem problematic like reading a secular book (a book that is not forbidden). All the more so with a niggun (see Sefer HaMaamarim 5699 p. 98 for the reason why a person can attain “expiry of the soul” through hearing and not through sight).

This is why, one needs to be extra careful with those niggunim that are inspiring and moving, because a person relates to a niggun and is influenced by it more than by a niggun that does not move him that much.

LEVELS OF NIGGUNIM

Specifically, it is important to discern and be aware of the place that a given niggun has within the hierarchy of niggunim as it affects the divine service of a person. From the lowest level to the highest, they are:

1-There are niggunim that are in the category of “niggun asur” (**forbidden** niggun), niggunim that according to Torah are forbidden to listen to. We don’t need to describe them, just to emphasize that just as we need to be careful to avoid forbidden foods, forbidden speech,

forbidden sights, so too, we need to be careful to avoid listening to this music.

2-There are niggunim that are in the category of “niggun shoteh” (**vacuous** niggun), [like the term “hadas shoteh” which means devoid of halachic standing regarding the mitzva of the four species], which includes most tunes and songs that have no “inside” and inner depth. They are empty, without particular meaningful content.

(In this category are included niggunim one needs to beware of and to know what their source is, as we mentioned regarding “hidden evil.”)

3-There are niggunim that are in the category of “niggun memula” (**filled** niggun), niggunim with meaningful content that contain, hidden within, some inner substance, like a niggun that absorbed the warmth and enthusiasm of a Chassid as he davened or that was sung at the Rebbe’s farbrengen. All Chabad niggunim are included.

4-There are niggunim in the category of “niggun mechuvan” (**exact** niggun), those which are associated with our Rebbeim, niggunim whose every tone is exactly aligned with the most exalted spiritual levels.

It is important to emphasize that we need to have very clear lines between the forbidden and the vacuous. Even someone who still does not discern or feel the special quality of Chabad niggunim and even someone who does not discern that which is absent in other niggunim, who will maintain that he is not “holding there,” and niggunim from other Chassidic courts or the frum world in general, are good enough for him, should remember that in any case, he must be very careful

about avoiding listening to forbidden music!

Where there are different views in halacha as to whether a certain niggun is forbidden outright or there may be room to permit it, remember what the Rebbe once said: From listening to such a niggun, fear of heaven will definitely not be increased!

IT DEPENDS ON WHOM YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT

Regarding a “vacuous niggun” there is another point (based on the Rebbe’s response to a Chabad singer). There are people for whom a “vacuous niggun” is a step up like those who are becoming religious. If such a person were to sing with passion the well-known “*v’kareiv pezureinu*” [not the one that was sung at times in front of the Rebbe], it is a step up from where he was coming from, he is getting excited about the impending Geula etc. Previously he was listening to that which is forbidden and now he has made progress.

But for a bachur from Tomchei Tmimim whose entire world is one of holiness and G-dliness, a “vacuous niggun” is a big step down for him. It depends who we are talking about ...

[It’s like what the Rebbe once said, true, the Alter Rebbe said “Moshiach will be written about in the newspapers,” but that doesn’t mean our knowledge of Moshiach should come from there. We need to know about Moshiach from the source, from sifrei Chassidus. Newspapers are for those who haven’t yet come in contact with Chassidus. The purpose of the publicity



in the papers is so that even someone like that will know about Moshiach’s coming.]

“ONE NEEDS TO KNOW WHERE IT COMES FROM”

Although “all Jews are presumed kosher,” there are certain singers who went off the derech, in some manner or another, and did so publicly. So one would not need ruach ha’kodesh to understand that their music is problematic. Obviously,

their music does not reach the ankles of a “niggun memula” or a “niggun mechuvan.”

As for niggunim whose source is unknown, even if we feel inspired by them, we ought to apply the rule “sit and don’t take action, that’s preferable,” because it is very likely that the source is not good as we learn from the following incident.

At one of the farbrengens, the Rebbe asked one of the guests from Eretz Yisrael, who was a well known baal-menagen, to

sing a niggun. He sang an ancient niggun that is sung in many Israeli communities whose words speak of the Jew's deveikus to the Shechina and the tune was also one of deveikus. However, to the surprise of everyone, the Rebbe stopped him and said, "One needs to know where it comes from," and it was not sung again for the Rebbe.

Furthermore, we have singers who are called "Chassidic singers," who took tunes from the goyim and put pesukim to them. The tune remains in the nethermost pits and obviously, a tune from an impure source won't have positive effects. Rather than take a person out of the mud and elevate him to kedusha, a tune like this gets him deeper into the mud.

[There are tunes that our Rebbeim elevated to holiness like the popular tune for "Ha'Aderes v'ha'Emuna." Obviously, only a Rebbe can do this. G-d forbid that people should think that anyone can do this as the Alter Rebbe asks, "How can he raise it up above when he himself is bound down below?"]

THE GREATER POWER OF THE POSITIVE

Considering all the above, we understand how worthwhile it is to try and listen to Chabad niggunim and surely, the niggunim of the Rebbeim, for a niggun that is filled and saturated with inner avodas Hashem we can readily project to what heights it can raise the person.

ניגון המקהלה של אדמו"ר האמצעי

♩ = 68

As for a niggun composed by a Rebbe, whose soul is invested in the movements of the niggun, we cannot even conceive of such a level.

A niggun of the Rebbe is even loftier than his words of Torah as it says in Likkutei Dibburim, quoting the Tzemach Tzedek:

When reviewing a dvar Torah you unite with the nefesh-ruach-neshama of the baal-ha'shemuah, and when you sing a melody of the baal-ha'shemua you unite with his chaya-yechida.

There is another saying, also from the Tzemach Tzedek:

When it says in the Yerushalmi "Whoever says something in the name of the baal-ha'shemua should imagine as though the baal-ha'shemua is standing before him," that is only "imagine" and "as though," but when you sing his tune, then the baal-ha'niggun himself is actually there.

Action is the main thing: Try to listen to recordings of Nichoach that were produced with the Rebbe's instructions and encouragement and which he listened to himself; listen to recordings of ziknei Chassidim; and especially listen to niggunim sung by the Rebbe himself.

WHY GRAZE IN FOREIGN FIELDS?

Another point that is important to emphasize is Chabad identity. As Chabad Chassidim who are connected to the Rebbe, it needs to be clear that these niggunim, with which generations of Chabad Chassidim grew up, niggunim with which Anash and tmimim went through times of mesirus nefesh, and

mainly niggunim sung for and by the Rebbe, should take first place in our lives.

The story goes that the Rebbe found out about a wedding of Anash at which all sorts of songs were played but not Chabad niggunim and the Rebbe said, "Why graze in foreign fields?"

The very fact that one is looking in other places already shows that something is lacking, especially when we don't lack for Lubavitcher niggunim. There are hundreds of nigunei *deveikus*, *gaaguim*, *simcha* and *rikud*. So really, why look elsewhere?

NECESSARY CAUTION

In our generation, with all of its technological advances and "sound effects," recordings of Chabad niggunim have been produced with all sorts of production techniques and background voices. The producer does not necessarily stick to the original notes. Unfortunately, he does with the niggun as he pleases. In a way, this is worse than listening to ordinary Chassidic songs since the innocent listener is confused and learns the niggun wrong.

It is, or at least should be, well known to what extent one should be particular about the exactitude of a Chabad niggun, specifically because of its holy origins and it shouldn't be changed. The holiness of a niggun is like the holiness of Torah – it depends on sticking to the source without adding or subtracting.

There is nothing wrong with an orchestra and choir (the purpose of the Nichoach choir back then was specifically to produce the niggunim in an attractive way), but that's only fine when the beauty is not at the expense of the original tune.

לזכות

הת' מנחם מענדל, חיה מושקא,
חנה, שיינא ושניאור זלמן

קרומבי



In Memory of

Harav HaChosid Rabbi **Tzvi Hersh**
Ben Harav HaChasid Rabbi **Ben Tzion**
27 Elul

Moras Mrs **Rivka**
Bas HaRav HaChasid Rabbi **Tzvi**
29 Tammuz

By her children
HaTomim Rabbi **Shmuel** and
HaTomim Rabbi **Yaakov Mordchai**

Spritzer