

QUOTES FROM THE REBBE ABOUT

MASHKE



Causing the Rebbe pain

A rumor reached me which caused me pain, that sometimes he is not careful regarding drinking Mashke.

(אגרות קודש חט"ז עמוד פב)

What's if for someone even a smaller amount has a chance to make him drunk?

It's already known what our Rebbeim spoke out against drinking Mashke. Meaning, not to drink Mashke at all, unless it's a Zman Simcha, and even then, it must be with a limited amount, according to every person, meaning, that if there's a possible concern that he will get drunk from even a small amount of Mashke, then for him even that small amount is forbidden.

(אגרות קודש חט"ז עמוד פב)

In Our Generation, More Than Ever

...And if this is demanded even in private, then how much more so at a public Farbrengen... Our Rebbeim demanded this for tens of years and for many generations, but in our generation, right before Moshiach's arrival, when the darkness of Golus is even greater, and automatically the Grubkeit of the Guf is greater too, this subject became more important than ever before. Since drinking Mashke (not only to the extent of becoming drunk, but even just drinking in general) can strengthen the Grubkeit and bring about many negative and forbidden outcomes.

(אגרות קודש חט"ז עמוד פב)

We Don't Need a Lot of Mashke

In our times, us Lubavitchers have already received the כוחות through the many easy Maamorim and Sichos in a very understandable way that can affect the listener without needing much Mashke, it's really enough with even just a little.

(אגרות קודש ח"ז עמוד נח)

Less Mashke = More Effective Farbrengen

I see a difference between the effect of a Farbrengen with little Mashke versus a Farbrengen where Mashke is used to the extent that people go out of their Keilim.

(אגרות קודש ח"ז עמוד נח)

L'chaim on Water

At the Rebbe's Purim Farbrengen in 5711, the Rebbe gave a few Chassidim Mashke from his holy cup. Everyone then begin requesting that they too want from the Rebbe's Mashke. Sure enough, the Rebbe poured to the Chassidim until his cup was empty, while a few Chassidim did not manage to get any. The Rebbe instructed that they refill his cup with plain water. The Rebbe then continued pouring water from his cup, telling the recipients to say "L'chaim"!

(התוועדיות תשי"א ח"א פורים)

The Simcha From Water is Greater Than From Wine

Hashem commands "ושאבתם מים בשמחה", draw water with Simcha. Simcha from wine is simply the nature of our physical body. The Chidush of Torah is that a Yid can have the much greater Simcha of water, the idea of קבלת עול, the Simcha that comes from the נפש האלוקית overpowering the נפש הבהמית.

(משיחת שמחת בית השואבה תשי"ח)

Not More Than Three

[Note: Originally, the גזירה on Mashke was limited Mashke to three small cups, only later on (Tishrei 5730) did the Rebbe change it to four small cups, but kept the same maximum total of 1 רביעית (2.9 ounces).]

It is fundamental that they should limit themselves to three cups, and that all three cups together should equal less than a רביעית [2.9 ounces].

The only exception is that the wine for Kiddush is not counted for the count of the three cups.

I am saying this straight out. I'm not saying this on a Shabbos when there are no recordings and then people from another place will come along and want to play around with the meaning of my words. I'm saying this in a time when what I'm saying can be recorded and "engraved" forever, and then this recording can reach to wherever someone wants to hear it.

This is being said with the full strength as when spoken originally and applicable now as well as to the future, that until 40 years old, you'll be "יוצא" with these 3 cups, and even less. Like the story of when Michael Dvorkin heard the great news of Yud Tes Kislev that the Alter Rebbe was

freed, he danced around holding the Alter Rebbe's apartment holding Mashke, but he didn't actually drink.

And as mentioned, I mean it simply and literally, without any interpretations of my words, or any Droshos or hints. I don't want that anyone should come along and translate that I am just saying what I have to say, but the listener should do the opposite... This is meant literally and to every single person.

(י"ב תמוז תשכ"ה)

Simchas Torah and Purim Too

This applies always, whether Shabbos, Yom Tov, Yud Tes Kislev, Yud Beis Tammuz, Simchas Torah, Purim, and any other case one would consider allowing it.

The four cups of wine by the Pesach Seder, and the wine for Kiddush and Havdala is something else. But the drinking at a Farbrengen is at most three cups, and all three together should not exceed רביעית.

The point is not to deprive Yidden from enjoying themselves, rather we want to repeat what the Frierdiker Rebbe said, in the sharpest manner, that Mashke for itself is a דבר מאוס [*something disgusting*], only that sometimes it is needed to remove the negative "covering".

(י"ב תמוז תשכ"ה)

They Think the Mashke Helps Them Overpower Their Yetzer Hora - The Opposite is True!

Unlike the opinion of those who mistakenly think that through drinking Mashke, they'll remove the mud of the Nefesh Habehamis and increase

their Nefesh HoElokis, rather the opposite is true – as the Friediker Rebbe spoke and instructed to publish – that Mashke is a דבר מאוס [*disgusting*]. Those who want to say that it helps them in serving Hashem are “wrapping it in a silk garment” [*making it look holy*], and they even go on to say that this is what the Rebbe wants... They think they are strengthening the Nefesh HoElokis over the Nefesh Habehamis, but the opposite is true, through this they are strengthening the Nefesh Habehamis over the Nefesh HoElokis... He is taking the King’s head and digging it into the place where the Yetzer Hora is.

(יום ב' דחה"ש תשכ"ח)

This is the Indicator to see if he is Connected to the Rebbe

All the excuses are not relevant here, saying that there are bigger matters they do not listen to... we need to know that **this** is not a small matter. In fact, this can be the indicator of whether or not he is holding on to the Rebbe’s “handle” (קליאמקע)... The fact that the Friediker Rebbe instructed to publish that it’s a דבר מאוס shows us that this is something that is relevant, and for all future generations, that Mashke is a דבר מאוס.

(יום ב' דחה"ש תשכ"ח)

Getting Others to Drink – Painful.

There are those not only drink Mashke on their own, but they encourage their friends to drink. Like what’s written in Pirkei Avos which I don’t want to quote...¹ I don’t want to elaborate on a matter which is painful and disturbing.

¹ The Rebbe is probably referring to Pirkei Avos 5:18 which states: “כל המחטיא את הרבים אין מספיקין בידו לעשות תשובה”

Guard Your Friends as Well

They should not only guard themselves, rather they must also insure that the other won't drink more than three.

(ש"פ נח תשכ"ז)

Personal Heteirim?! Never Happened!

At the Shabbos Parshas Shmini Farbrengen in 5725 the Rebbe gave a certain Bochur Mashke, instructing him to distribute the Mashke here and in Eretz Yisroel, but no one should drink more than 3 times. The Rebbe then added:

“I heard that there are those who grant themselves a Heter – such a thing never existed! Please give over the message in Kfar Chabad, Lud and Toras Emes, and get your friends to spread this too, and say it in my name”.

(ש"פ שמיני תשכ"ה)

A ‘Shikker’ is not a ‘Chossid’ and not ‘Chabad’

It's obvious, that what we're saying about Simcha isn't referring to drinking one small cup after another to the point of intoxication, because “a Shikker” is not “a Chossid”, and how much more so not “a Chabadnik”, who is all about intellect and understanding. Moreover, intoxication is related to לויט, not Avraham, and therefore not to Yitzchak, Yaakov, and his son Yosef – the name of our נשיא, the Friediker Rebbe.

If You Think These Restrictions Don't Apply to You, They Specifically Apply to You

There are those who consider themselves “Shpitz Chabad” and therefore think that the restrictions don't apply to them. So to them we are saying – specifically because he thinks that these restrictions do not apply to him, therefore they apply specifically to him! And about his claim that he's “Shpitz Chabad” – firstly, it's a doubt if he's “Shpitz Chabad”, and secondly, that's not what “Shpitz Chabad” is about. What “Shpitz Chabad” is truly about is spreading Chassidus – this is the “decree that you have no permission to doubt” (חוקה חקקתי, גזירה גזרתי, ואין לך רשות) (להרהר אחריה whether you understand it or not!

(ר"ד משיחת ש"פ חקת תשנ"א)

For “עַד דְּלֹא יֵדַע”, One Drop Can Be Enough

For the Chiyuv of drinking “Ad Dloi Yada” on Purim, even one drop can suffice, as long as it can affect him to rise above his טעם ודעת. As we can see for ourselves, that when one truly wants, then one drop is enough, and if ח"ו it's not so [*he doesn't want to rise above his טעם ודעת*], then even a barrel won't help.

(אגרות קודש חי"ד עמוד תקיח)

A Tikkun for Purim and Simchas Torah

“On Purim and on Simchas Torah,” the Chossid began his confession to the Rebbe in Yechidus, “I did not guard the Rebbe's Takono, and I drank more Mashke than the amount the Rebbe instructed. What should I do?”

“The Takono still stands, even on Purim,” the Rebbe replied, “and since you were not careful and you transgressed it, you can fix the wrong by trying to influence at least another two people who did not keep the Takono till today, that they should begin to keep it because of your influence.”

(בסוד שיח ה"ב עמוד 41)

A Bochur who doesn't drink is a good Bochur

This is especially relevant to Bochorim, since they are in the age of “heat” (ימי החמימיות), they should be “יוצא” with watching how an elderly Chossid nears the “Kelishke” [*small L'chaim cup*], but the Bochorim themselves should not drink. And only then, when a Bochur does not drink, is he a good Bochur and a good Tomim!

(משיחת ש"פ דברים תש"מ)

Even a Yid 75 Years Old Should Not Make Kiddush on Mashke

There was a Yid who had his 75th birthday a few months after the famous Sicha of Shabbos Parshas Shmini 5723 when the Rebbe set the guidelines about Mashke drinking. As was customary in those years, he had a birthday Yechidus with the Rebbe. When he left the Yechidus room he shared one of the things he spoke about.

“I told the Rebbe that I've been accustomed for many years that on Shabbos day I make Kiddush on Mashke. Now after the Rebbe's Sicha, I'm afraid that the Bochorim who see making Kiddush on Mashke will throw towels on me! I don't know what to do!”

The Rebbe answered him, “Those Bochorim that will throw towels on you are doing the right thing. Because even a Yid of 75 years should not make Kiddush on Mashke. (The only time to make Kiddush on Mashke is Simchas Torah.) You make Kiddush on wine and later during the

Farbrenge you drink Mashke. But Kiddush has to be on wine, not on Mashke.”

(Rabbi Groner (2018) on the “Stump the Rabbi” series)

Setting the Guidelines

[Presented here is the Sicha of the Rebbe from Shabbos Parshas Shmini 5723 where the Rebbe sets the guidelines about Mashke drinking. In the years that followed, the Rebbe made adjustments to the guidelines. Here is the Sicha laying out the guidelines for the first time.]

Mashke is Disgusting

In the famous Sicha from the Friediker Rebbe regarding drinking Mashke, he says that Mashke is a דבר מאוס [*something disgusting*]. Anyone who will look into the Sicha there will realize that anything that will be said now does not compare to what is written in that Sicha.

Age 40

Based on the Gemara (*Shabbos 152b*) which states “Until age 40, eating is better – from then and on, drinking is better” everything which I will say now mainly applies to those under age 40. (And especially to Bochorim who are not yet married, since for them there are even more reasons why to avoid drinking Mashke.) But even those who are older than 40 need to minimize the drinking of Mashke.

Farbrenge Don't Require Drinking Mashke

This will not diminish Chassidische Farbrenge – as the known story the Friediker Rebbe shared with us, that there were Chassidim who would Farbreng through a whole winter night and at the Farbrenge there was no more than one small “Sotka” bottle of Mashka (a Sotka bottle holds

one (רביעית). And even this small amount of Mashke that was poured from the Sotka bottle to the cups, was poured back into the Sotka bottle at the end of the Farbrengen.

No Kiddush on Mashke

As far as actual action, Kiddush should only be made on wine (or Challah) but not on Mashke. Even though in Shulchan Aruch there's place to say that Mashke should be allowed for Kiddush being that it is חמר המדינה [a respectable drink in this country] and is dear to him – but when he achieves by himself that Mashke should be disgusting to him (like what the Friediker Rebbe said), then it's not anymore dear to him...

And even when making Kiddush, don't drink the entire cup, rather only majority of it (with the exception of Pesach, when one should drink the entire cup).

Not More Than Three

Regarding a Simcha (even Simchas Chosson about which the Gemara states "One who makes a Chosson happy, merits the Torah which was given with five voices") as well as by a regular Chassidisher Farbrengen, we may say L'chaim not more than three times (similar to the cutting of the Omer at which we would say "Magal..." three times). And these three cups should only be small ones, in a manner that all three times together should not exceed רוב רביעית.

Applies All Year Round

...Everything that was said is applicable all year round, whether weekday, Shabbos, or Yom Tov. As well as in all places, whether this country or other countries. Most probably this will be published and given over to those who are not present here now.

Only in regards to one day a year – Purim, I don't want to mix in, for two reasons: One reason is because on Purim we need to reach the level of "עד דלא ידע", and while being in such a state, the Yetzer Hora won't have the

“ידע” [knowledge] to convince him to take Mashke. And the second and main reason is that since by the time Purim is here, Moshiach will probably already be here, and it will be the time of “כולו משקה” – “The world will be full of knowledge of Hashem like the water covers the sea.”

[Note: In this Sicha the Rebbe only allows 3 small cups of Mashke, and does not make an official rule about Purim. Later on, the Rebbe changes the rule from 3 small cups to 4 small cups and also makes the rules apply to Purim as well – except for specific Farbrengens at which the Rebbe explicitly suspended the guidelines. In the Rebbe’s words: “today only, and at this gathering only.”]

(משיחת ש"פ שמיני תשכ"ג)