

**CHABAD
INFO**

Weekly Roundup

THIS WEEK IN THE CHABAD WORLD

ב"ה

No 9

FRIDAY, 18 KISLEV 5784
PARSHAS VAYISHLACH

**CROWN
HEIGHTS
UNITES IN
SUPPORT OF
KSCVK**



DOV HECHTMAN
PHOTOGRAPHY

**SINCE YOU STARTED,
DON'T STOP**

**SHLOSHIM OF R' LEIB SKOBLO
MARKED IN CROWN HEIGHTS**

**STORIES FOR YUD-TE'S KISLEV:
"I WILL REMOVE HIM
FROM HELL"**

יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

Crown Heights Unites in Support of KSCVK

By Chabadinfo Reporter

On Motzei Shabbos Parshas Vayetzei, hundreds filled the Rosa Hall in Beis Rivka for an evening of song and support for the incredible KSCVK, in recognition of all they do for our community.

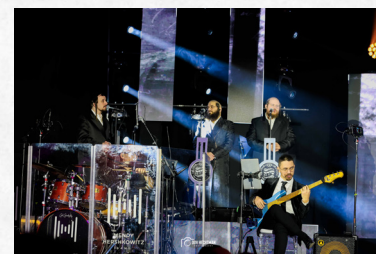
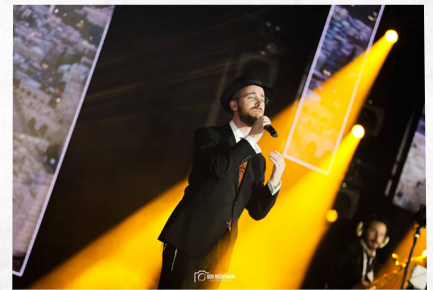
The event was dedicated in memory of the late co-founder of KSCVK, Reb **Shmuel Benjamin A"H**, husband of Mrs. **Devorah Benjamin**.

Moderating the event was **Sam Stern**. **Chony Milecki** led Tehillim for the safety of the Yidden in Eretz Yisroel and across the globe.

The event was joined by the king of Jewish music, the legendary **Mordechai Ben David** and rising star **Naftali Kempah** and **Boruch Sholom Blesofsky**.

Rabbi **Levi Garelik**, Rav of Beis Shmuel, addressed the crowd and spoke about the life of Reb Benjamin and the amazing work of KSCVK.

The event was produced by **Dovid Weinbaum** of DW Productions, with music by the amazing Mendy Hershkowitz Band, with vocal accompaniment by the sweet voices of the Shira Choir.



Photos by Dov Ber Hechtman for Chabadinfo



Shloshim of R' Leib Skoblo Marked in Crown Heights

Family and friends gathered at Beis Gimpel Chaim for the Shloshim Memorial of R' Leib Skoblo, a Crown Heights father and activist, who led Shmira and founded Chaveirim.

R' Skoblo was a dedicated member of the Crown Heights Shmira for over 30 years. founded Chaveirim served as a liaison to the NYPD for the community and was a monumental pillar of strength and Chesed for the Crown Heights community.

Moderating the event was Rabbi Shloimy Greenwald. R' Arele Eichler, led the crowd with reciting the Rebbe's Kapital.

The event was addressed by Rabbi Simon Jacobson; R' Yisroel Friend, son-in-law of R' Leib; Rabbi Levi Garelik, Rav of Beis Shmuel; Rabbi Yanki Prager, coordinator of Shmira; R' Arele Eichler, R' Zalman Skoblo, brother of of R' Leib, among others.



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THIS WEEK IN 770

Beis Chayeinu Celebrates the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's 95th Anniversary

On Monday night, Anash and Chassidim gathered in 770 for the central Farbrengen in honor of Yud Daled Kislev, the 95th wedding anniversary of the Rebbe MH"M and the Rebbetzin.

At the Farbrengen Rabbonim and Mashpi'im shared words of inspiration among them were: Rabbi **Yosef Yeshaya Braun**, Mara D'Asra and member of Crown Heights Beis Din; Rabbi **Zalman Hertzfel**, Mashpia and author of the book Nis-suei Hanesiim; mashpia Rabbi **Dovid Kahanov** among others.

At the end of the Farbrengen lively music broke out.



Temimim Prep for Yud Tes Kislev with Special Seder Sichos

Hundreds of bochurim sat in 770's large shul Sunday night for a special seder Sichos in honor of Yud Daled Kislev and in preparation of Yud Tes Kislev.

The temimim learned the unique Ma'am-ar of "Pada Be Shalom" 5748 – the last Yud Tes Kislev Ma'amer we heard from the Rebbe MH"M, and Sicha to the guests on Motzei Chof Kislev 5749, and part of the Yud Tes Kislev Farbrengen 5743.

Between the Temimim a dollar from the Rebbe was raffled off and was won by Sholom Alpenbein.



THE NEWS BEAT

NCFJE Holds Annual Gala Awards Dinner Featuring Mayor Eric Adams

The National Committee for the Furtherance of Jewish Education (NCFJE) held its 83rd Annual Gala Dinner at the Edison Ballroom in Times Square this past Sunday, November 19th. Hundreds of friends and dignitaries, including NYC Mayor Eric Adams, attended, amongst other city and state officials.

Yankie and Chanie Markowitz of Crown Heights were honored with the Crown Chesed Award. Yankie Berhman, the director of Operation Survival, founder of Jewish Future Alliance, and public relations liaison, received the Community Lamplighter Award. Jacob Frydman was the Guest of Honor.

This year's gala highlighted 70 Years of Toys for Hospitalized Children, which has brought happiness and healing to over a million children facing medical crises. Toys for Simcha, the Israeli branch of Toys for Hospitalized Children, has been at the forefront of helping and supporting victims of terror by distributing clothing, essential items, and, of course, toys.



Cincinnati Yeshiva Celebrates Yud Daled Kislev

Yeshivas Lubavitch Cincinnati, under the leadership of Rabbi **Gershon Avtzon**, always makes a big "shturem" about the Yom Tov of Yud-Daled Kislev "The day that connected me to you and you to me".

The Talmidei Hashluchim prepared a grand "Seudas Hachasuna" for the talmidim and local Anash with *Divrei Hisorirus* shared by Chavrei Hanhalla.

After joyous dancing, the Talmidim sat by Farbrengen for the rest of the night and were inspired to strengthen their Hiskashrus to the Rebbe and their dedication to the shlichus of "Lekabel P'nei Moshiach Tzidkeinu".



MIVTZA TORAH: OHOLEI TORAH ZAL TAKES ON "GANTZ BAVA BASRA"

Over one hundred bochorim in Oholei Torah Shiur Daled join a dedicated track to learn and master the entire Masseches Bava Basra.

While many bochorim in Shiur Daled put a large emphasis on lyun learning, the Rebbe would often point to the significant value that lies within the ability to master an entire Massecha, providing the bochor with a deeper appreciation and understanding of the concepts he's learning.

Revamped this year, Oholei Torah Zal launched a Mivtza Torah. To the amazement of the Hanhala and Menahel Rabbi

Elchonon Lesches, within a few days of establishing the Mivtza in Yeshiva, over one hundred bochorim committed to the new undertaking of learning and mastering the whole Masseches Bava Basra.

The initiative is directed by Shiur Daled Maggid Shiur Rabbi Mendel Wolvovsky, who created a clear curriculum and schedule for the bochorim to follow in order to complete the Massecha by the end of the year, including biweekly tests. Off to a great start, the first test took place last week with over one hundred Talmidim in attendance and passing with flying colors.



New Chabad Lyceum Opens in Odessa

This educational institution caters to children under the care of the Jewish community, with over 120 kids from the Shelter now receiving education in a modern facility.

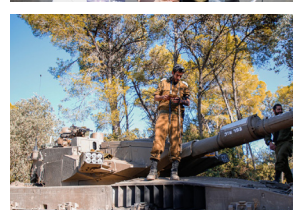
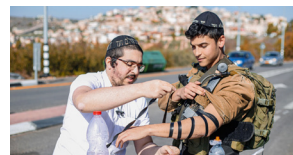
The school was inaugurated by the Chief Rabbi of Odessa and Southern Ukraine, Abraham Wolf. And named after its main patrons, Victoria Timofeeva and Sergiy Oliynyk.



American Temimim 'Conquer' Israel's Northern Border with Mivtzioim

Last Friday, the American Temimim from the Chabad Yeshiva Gedolah Tzfas, headed towards the northern border of Eretz Yisroel to the IDF forces deployed along the border, with the goal of spreading the Rebbe's message and preparing the world for Moshiach.

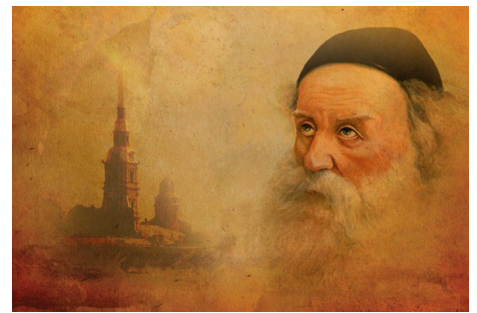
The Temimim moved from one camp to another and brought the soldiers Tefillin, Shabbos candles, Tzitzis, and letters in the Sefer Torah Haklali etc. as protection for them as they protecting Eretz Yisroel.



8 Stories for Yud-Tes Kislev:

“I WILL REMOVE HIM FROM HELL”

“I will remove him from hell” – This is one of the three versions of what the Alter Rebbe said about whomever rejoices on Yud Tes Kislev, as related by the Rebbe Rashab.



A JOINT CELEBRATION

Before the histakus of the Maggid of Mezritch on Yud-Tes Kislev 5533 (1772), he took the Alter Rebbe’s hand and said, “Yud-Tes Kislev is our hilula.” The meaning of this statement is that the teachings of the “fathers of Chassidus,” the Baal Shem Tov and the Maggid, were like the wellspring itself, whereas the teachings of the Alter Rebbe explanations of Chassidus that can be grasped by the intellect effected a dissemination of the wellspring. The union of the wellspring itself with the wellsprings on the outside (“yafutzu maaynosecha chutzta”), required a special effort. This union was accomplished on Yud-Tes Kislev, and this is what the Maggid was alluding to when he said, “Yud-Tes Kislev is our hilula” – our union.

(See *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 25 p. 212.)

WHERE THE ALTER REBBE DERIVES HIS TEACHINGS FROM

This is how the Alter Rebbe responded to the question posed to him by the interrogators about where he had gotten the information which he conveyed in his sermons:

“It is known that even though all wisdom is written in s’farim, nevertheless a person must first learn from a teacher and only then can he learn from the books on his own. That is what happened with me. When I was about twenty years old, while in Vitebsk, I traveled to Mezritch and began learning Kabbala from Rabbi Ber of blessed memory, who passed on over 25 years ago. Since that time I learn on my own from many respected books, from mekubalim, Rishonim, and Acharonim, according to my intellect and understanding. The style of the sermons I deliver are for the most part based on the obvious and the revealed, so that the listeners will understand it well. It is only infrequently, by chance, that I say something simple from the wisdom of Kabbala that can be understood and explained to someone who learned just a little of the Kabbalistic works which are readily available. [I teach] that from which one can derive some benefit in love of G-d and fear of Him, to keep His mitzvos and to pray with concentration from the depths of one’s heart.”

(*Igros Kodesh* vol. 2 p. 137)

SAVED FROM EXPIRATION

When they brought the Alter Rebbe to Petersburg, the interrogator who was the minister’s assistant and who happened to be thoroughly proficient in Tanach by heart asked the Rebbe the meaning of G-d’s asking Adam, “Ayeka?” (where are you?) after the sin [of eating from the Tree of Good and Evil], for obviously G-d knew where he was.

The Rebbe answered by quoting Rashi’s commentary on the verse, but the minister said he was familiar with Rashi. Then the Rebbe told him the famous response (that Hashem asks each one of us where we stand, what we’ve accomplished in the world, etc.).

The Rebbe Rashab related this story at a Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen in 5648 (1887), and he added: Saying this prevented the Alter Rebbe from klos ha’nefesh (soul expiration). For when he was brought to the Petropavlovskaya fortress and locked in the room, he contemplated the prospect of being moser nefesh (having self-sacrifice) for the teachings of the Baal Shem Tov and the Maggid, and as a result of this thought he nearly expired. The above story prevented this, however, for it reminded him that he still had a job to do in this world.

(*Seifer HaSichos* 5698, p. 249-250)

DISMISSED WITH A SMILE

Among the questions that the Alter Rebbe was asked in prison, all of which he answered, there was a question about something quoted at the end of chapter one of Tanya (“all the good the nations do they do for themselves,” and as it says in the Gemara on the verse, “v’chesed l’umim chatas” [the kindness of the nations is a sin], for all the acts of charity and kindness the gentiles do they do only for the sake of self-aggrandizement”). The Alter Rebbe did not answer this question; he just smiled. By not providing an answer based on intellect, and instead dismissing the question without offering an explanation, and even laughing at it the person sees and understands that the question itself is not appropriate.

(*Sicha* 19 Kislev 5729, 5739)

IN THE MISNAGED’S HOME

When the Alter Rebbe left prison he was mistakenly brought to the home of a Misnaged (one opposed to Chassidus), who caused him to suffer with his questions, etc. (Afterwards, he said that the three hours he spent at the Misnaged’s home were more difficult than all the time he had spent in prison.)

When the Chassidim realized the mistake, they came to fetch the Alter Rebbe, but he asked to be allowed to remain there and drink a cup of tea, as the man had prepared it for him.

In this way he expressed the idea of “tov la’briyos” (good for mankind; literally: created beings). Briyos are those who have no good quality other than that they were created by G-d. The Misnaged had made the Alter Rebbe suffer, and wanted him to feel as he had before being released, something which is completely irrational. Furthermore, the Misnaged even thought he was doing a good thing, which is the idea of those who confuse darkness for light, and nevertheless, the Alter Rebbe treated him in a manner of “tov la’briyos.”

(*Sicha* 19 Kislev 5738)

KASHA ON YUD-TES KISLEV

Among those participating in the Yud-Tes farbrengen of 5653 (1892) with the Rebbe Rashab, was

a Chassid who had particularly enjoyed one of the thoughts the Rebbe had expressed about chibuv mitzvos (love of mitzvos).

On Yud-Tes Kislev it is customary to eat kasha. (In Lubavitch they called it “black kasha” and they explained that it was to remember the food the Alter Rebbe ate in prison. The Rebbe Rayatz related in the name of the Chassidim who brought the Alter Rebbe a bucket of water and bread, that this is what he ate. On Shabbos they brought him beer or mead.) Every country has its favorite food, and in Lithuania it was kasha.

When the Jew heard about a love of mitzvos with taanug (pleasure), he ate the kasha with gusto. When the Rebbe noticed that the enjoyment of what he had said had been transferred to the food, which was eaten with pleasure and not the way a Chassid is supposed to eat, he said, “You forgot you are eating kasha.”

He explained that the brain of that individual had enjoyed the explanation of chibuv mitzvos, and this led to a natural pleasure in eating kasha. But the person eating did not sense it since he was occupied with what he had heard. That’s why the Rebbe reminded him to remember he was eating kasha.

(*Seifer HaSichos* 5698, p. 250-1)

“REJOICE IN MY REJOICING”

In 5658 the Rebbe Rashab said there were three versions of the Alter Rebbe’s maamer about Yud-Tes Kislev, where he refers to those who will rejoice in his rejoicing:

Version one: I will remove him from *meitzar* (straits) to *merchav* (expansion).

Version two: I will remove him from the realm of the material to the realm of the spirit.

Version three: I will remove him from hell.

The Rebbe Rashab said that all these versions are true. The first refers to going out from Bria to Atzilus, the second refers to going out from Yetzira to Bria, and the third from the world of Asiya.

The Tzemach Tzedek explained that by saying, “samach b’simchasi” (rejoice in my rejoicing), the Alter Rebbe was referring to anyone who “halt zich an dem Rebben’s kliamke” (holds on to the Rebbe’s doorknob). And this refers to Torah and avoda.

(*Seifer HaSichos* 5699 p. 315)

GUT YOM TOV

At the Yud-Tes Kislev celebration of 5702 (1942), the Rebbe Rayatz said:

We Chabad Chassidim have a custom, a custom of the Alter Rebbe’s Chassidim, that on Yud-Tes Kislev we say, “gutt Yom Tov” before and after Maariv, and throughout Yud-Tes Kislev when Chassidim meet in shul or on the street.

In 5703 the HaYom Yom was printed for the first time. At the end, the entry for 18 Kislev says: “Gutt Yom Tov, l’shana tova b’limud ha’Chassidus v’darkei ha’Chassidus teichaseivu v’seichaseimu” (Good Yom Tov, may you be written and sealed for a good year in learning Chassidus and the ways of Chassidus.)

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Since You Started, Don't Stop

A famous proverb has it that “Ordinary people discuss people, wise people discuss events, and extraordinary people discuss ideas.” This observation is very clever, but this way of framing human discourse may sometimes prove to be a sort of cop-out from dealing with the here and now which our Divine task is to imbue with Divine ideas.

Yiddishkeit is not a religion of ideas alone. The whole objective of Yiddishkeit is to create of this world a *dura brachtonim* — to bring sublime ideas into a world whose default state of being is sometimes below ordinary.

This transition from ideas to events and people can be seen in what is the pinnacle of Yiddishkeit - Moshiach. The *concept* of Moshiach begins as a sublime idea, but the Jewish concept of Moshiach clearly focuses on an *era* of Moshiach that is ushered in and led by a *Moshiach-person*.

We, Chabad Chassidim in the *Dor Hashvi'i* were given the task to make this process come full circle, from concept to fulfillment, and like everything good - this mission isn't void of hardships and challenges.

Bridging the gap from lofty ideas to grounded reality is challenging but essential. Let's analyze this process as it played out in the emergence of Chassidus:

This very dilemma caused conflict among the disciples of the Baal Shem Tov over disseminating Chassidus to the masses.

The Alter Rebbe prioritized accessibility over elitism, using physical analogies to make Divine concepts understandable to ordinary Jews. Yet some colleagues opposed this approach, wishing to avoid the “defilement” of simplification.

The classic story tells of the Baal Shem Tov asking Moshiach when he would come. Moshiach replied: “When your wellsprings spread outward.” This motivated the Alter Rebbe's *derech* of Chabad Chassidus.

However, an oral tradition (which, incidentally, is not brought in Chabad sources...) adds an important detail - upon hearing Moshiach's words, a tear rolled down the Baal Shem Tov's cheek. This tear represented the pain of making lofty crown jewels accessible to a flawed world. The Alter Rebbe's colleagues therefore avoided such public outreach, refusing to cause such anguish.

What was the opinion of the Baal Shem Tov and the Maggid on this very dilemma?

It seems that the Baal Shem Tov and the Maggid themselves seem to perhaps have been undecided on this question until a later point in time.

When imprisoned, the Alter Rebbe asked his predecessors why he was being prosecuted for openly sharing Chassidic teachings. They replied that intense heavenly judgment came against him for exactly this reason.

The Alter Rebbe then asked - if freed, should he cease his public teaching? Their reply: “Since you already started, do not stop. Increase them!”

The intensity of this exchange is sometimes overlooked. It begs a host of questions. Who caused the

kitrug? (Not the *misnagdim* it seems...) Why was the Baal Shem Tov and Maggid's answer of “You should not stop” conditioned by the fact of “since you already started”? Is this perhaps an indication that if the Alter Rebbe would have consulted with them *prior* to developing his *derech* they would have advised him to *not* begin and only after the fact did they endorse what he was doing?

What is unknown is unknown, but there certainly is a message for us here.

As we said, the concept of Moshiach too can be divided into three parts: the idea, the event, and the person.

Moshiach as an idea was long ago introduced to the world. That is Chassidus, *Toras shel Moshiach*. Moshiach as an ideal, as a concept that lies in the upper world of *Atzilus* and will one day materialize in the world is easy to “sell” and to present. It's easy to sell, because it's easy to identify with. We feel com-

“Moshiach is not a hard concept to explain; I have a much harder time explaining *karpas* to secularly-educated people...”

fortable with it. We truly believe in it, as it provides context to all of creation and is a really “neat” way to package and explain Yiddishkeit. As an accomplished speaker and teacher said once, “Moshiach is not a hard concept to explain; I have a much harder time explaining *karpas* to secularly-educated people...”

Moshiach as an event requires more faith. We must step out of the comfort of the idea-world and declare that this idea has begun to take form in this world of action. In the world of action there is more that we stand to lose. And still, events are processes that can take years and decades to unfold, and as such, the prospects of taking that leap of faith to declare unabashedly that *higya zman haGeulah* is not that hard. We're not the only ones doing it, and we have what to point to as support for our commentary of world events.

Moshiach as a person is where it gets especially

tough. We all believe that Moshiach is a person and we all know who it is. We all know that “the *Nasi shebador* is the *Moshiach shebador*.” Anyone would be hard-pressed to find a Lubavitcher Chassid that thinks otherwise. And yet, many of us all the time, and all of us some of the time, find this message of the Rebbe (which in the last few months we heard the Rebbe speak was a central theme presented in unequivocal terms) to be hard to transmit. There's a certain discomfort about it, and blaming it on the “*chutza*,” on people who lack background on this matter finding it difficult to comprehend, is a convenient excuse. But it's only that - an excuse. A Shliach by his very definition is meant to communicate matters that people are unfamiliar with. So why is this message different?

The concerns are many and legitimate, but they must be addressed, not ignored. We must get together to devise ways to do this well and successfully. “It's too hard” is not a Lubavitcher thing to say.

An additional point that should be made on this topic ties in to the aforementioned story of the Alter Rebbe.

Many aspects of the debate on if and how to go about it no longer relevant. It's one thing if we haven't begun it. Then it's a legitimate question whether to start or not. But we're no longer there. The Moshiach-as-a-person train left the station long ago and avoiding the topic is deceitful. It's allowing people to have the impression that there is a group in Chabad that believes in it and a group that doesn't (or at least doesn't think it's an important matter. Which is worse?) Is that what we want people to think? That we gave up on the Rebbe's *besuras haGeula chas v'shalom*?

Yes, we must reassess *how* to do this best. Yes, we must acknowledge that mistakes in presenting this crucial topic have been made. But this must remain front and center in the agenda of Lubavitch.

“Since you started, don't stop.”

“To the contrary, do more.”



FROM THE REBBE'S PEN

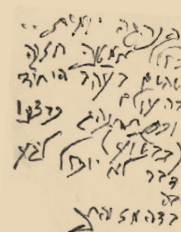
“When You Behave According To His Will, Nothing Can Harm You.”

The Rebbe's response to a woman who requested a bracha that no harm should come upon her:

Daily conduct...[according to the Shulchan Aruch]

Including staunch faith that Hashem alone is the sole *baal habayis* (=master) of the world and when you behave according to His will (as prescribed in the Shulchan Aruch), nothing can harm you.

Check the mezuzos and tefillin

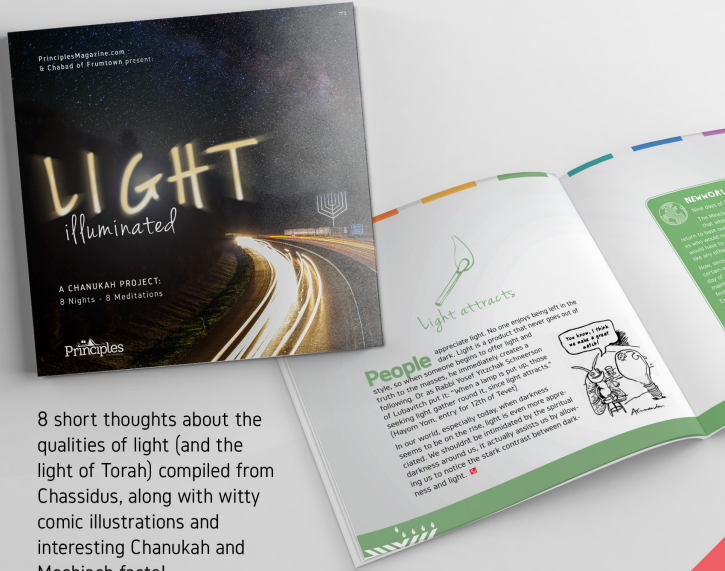


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