

מוקדש

לב"ק אדמו"ר מלך המשיח



לזכות

הבחור הבר מצוה הת' שלום מנחם מענדל הלוי שי'

טויבער

לרגל הכנסו לגיל מצוות ט"ו טבת תשס"ח

יה"ר שיגדל להיות חסיד ירא-שמים ולמדן לנח"ר כ"ק
אדמו"ר מלך המשיח הוריו וקניו שיחיו

נדפס ע"י ולזכות הוריו

הרה"ח הרה"ת יוסף יצחק הלוי זוגתו שמחה ומשפחתם

שיחיו טויבער



לזכות

הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' צבי מרדכי בן שרה

זוגתו שלומית בת שושנה

ולזכות בנם משה לרגל יום הולדתו ט"ז טבת לשנת

הצלחה

ולזכות אחיו ואחותיו:

יוסף יצחק, מנחם מענדל, חנה וחי' מושקא

שיחיו גודמאן



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a CALL to ACTION

ZOS CHANUKAH

HEI TEVES

DIDAN NATZACH

"NITEL NACHT" AND
THE WINTER VACATION

PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION
FROM THE TEACHINGS OF THE REBBE
5748-5752

A PROJECT OF
HaMaaseh Hu HaIkar

Foreword

We are pleased to bring you this newly revised edition of *a CALL to ACTION*. Translated from its Hebrew counterpart, *HaMaaseh Hu Halkar*, this presentation is a collection of practical instruction from the Rebbe's Sichos pertaining to the climax of Chanukah.

HaMaaseh Hu Halkar is a compilation of Hora'os ("directives") culled from the Rebbe's talks in the years 5748 to 5752 (1988-1992), from both edited and unedited sources ("Muga" and "Bilti Muga"); we have expended great effort in our attempt to capture some of the Rebbe's carefully calculated and instructive phrasing. This edition's English translation was provided by Rabbi Yaakov Paley.

At this time, when Moshiach's arrival is imminent, the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, has emphasized the primacy of action. We are now beginning to experience the era when we will fully appreciate "the superiority of deed" above scholarship. May this take place completely and immediately!

Editorial Office of
HaMaaseh Hu Halkar
Zos Chanukah, 5768



a CALL to ACTION

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TEACH THEM TORAH

- We should utilize the winter vacation by reaching out to Jewish children who study in Public Schools and are exposed to the non-Jewish environment.

We should positively influence them by drawing them into a Jewish environment and enrolling them in Jewish schools; we should teach them Torah and matters of general Judaism, and give them a kosher education founded on pure holiness.⁸

ENROLL IN YESHIVAH

- Clearly, we should work on influencing parents to enroll their children – immediately – in an institution where they will receive a fully sanctified education.⁸

Zos Chanukah

The eighth day of Chanukah

INTRODUCTION

The final day of Chanukah carries its own title: “Zos Chanukah” (“this is Chanukah”).

The name is taken from the phrase found in the Torah reading for the eighth day of Chanukah, “Zos Chanukas HaMizbe’ach,” “This was the dedication [offering] of the Altar, etc.” [For a deeper significance, see footnote 4.]

BRING THE CHANUKAH CAMPAIGN TO A CLIMAX

- On the last night of the Yom Tov¹ of Chanukah, a full set of eight Menorah lights shine forth. It is the responsibility of every man, woman and child to utilize this day by completing the activities that compose the Chanukah awareness campaign.
- This involves both “Hashlamah” and “Shleimus” – “making up” for that which is lacking, as well as “perfecting” that which exists – to the very height of perfection.²

PREPARE FOR AN ILLUMINATED YEAR

- The last day of Chanukah serves as a summary that encapsulates all the previous days. We should therefore make an accounting of our Chanukah activities and achievements, in order to draw the themes and lessons of Chanukah into our divine service throughout the year, in concrete action.²

STUDY THE ALTER REBBE’S MA’AMOR

- We should study the discourse authored by the Alter Rebbe (with the added notations of the Tzemach Tzedek)³, which explains the greatness of “Zos Chanukah.” At the very least, we should

8. Parshas Vayeishev 5750; Hisva’aduyos p.51-52.

1. Note that the days of Chanukah are referred to as “Yomim Tovim” (Parshas Vayishlach 5749; Hisva’aduyos p.437, in the footnote).
 2. Zos Chanukah, after Shacharis, 5749; Hisva’aduyos p.90.
 3. Likutei Torah (88b), Derushei Shemini Atzeres; Or HaTorah, Chanukah (vol.5), p.962a (discourse beginning on p.957b, entitled “Boruch SheAsa Nissim”). See also Kuntres Zos Chanukah 5750, Sefer HaMa’amorim Meluket, vol.4, p.109.

FOLLOW THE CURRENT NON-JEWISH CALENDAR

- Nowadays, the timing of “Nitel Nacht” follows the non-Jewish calendar that is used in America and most other countries (including Russia, who used to follow a different calendar), i.e., the 25th of December.³

REBBE’S GAME OF CHESS

- The Rebbe Rashab would spend “Nitel Nacht” playing chess or providing advice for those playing the game.

The reason⁴ behind this practice is that even the very lowliest time on the calendar, which cannot be refined in a “direct” manner via Torah study, should at least be utilized – and thereby elevated – by engaging in a gainful pursuit, such as a game which clearly sharpens one’s mind.²

DON’T SQUANDER YOUR TIME

- The Rebbe Rashab’s custom provides us with an instruction:

We should not squander the time of “Nitel Nacht” by doing nothing at all, G-d Forbid; rather we should spend it in a gainful manner (particularly in a manner that increases wisdom⁵) or to

3. ... Unlike the Russian Calendar that existed prior to the Revolution. (ibid, footnote 63) [December 25 in the Gregorian calendar, comes in the Julian calendar on January 7.]

4. **The lack is not ours**

The Previous Rebbe once recounted how his father (the Rebbe Rashab) would play chess on that night ... This was the Rebbe Rashab’s way of providing a lesson and directive that even during a time which apparently can only be used to guard oneself from evil, a “lack” [as opposed to actively doing good via Torah and Mitzvos], nevertheless, this very lowest point in time ... should at least be utilized, etc. [see main text above for continuation] (ibid, page 50)

5. **Three winning reasons**

... When one does so with the above intentions in mind. (ibid.)

(1) The game of chess increases the sharpness of one’s mind, enabling him to later study Torah on a far better level; (2) it leads to a Kiddush Hashem and the praise of the Jewish people by the gentiles (who prize skilled chess-players and) who see that the Jews are “a wise and understanding nation” in this particular field of wisdom as well; and (3) even as a mundane way to make an income, i.e. as a

omission; grab the opportunity presented by the last days and final hours of Chanukah.⁵ Failing that, make up for it in the days directly following Chanukah – the sooner the better!⁶

THEY’RE WORTH THE MONEY

- There is room to suggest that even those who have already fulfilled this custom should give yet more “Chanukah Gelt.”

After all, just think of the immense Chassidisher “Nachas” (pleasure) that they already derive from their sons and daughters, coupled with all the *future* “Nachas” that they will reap due to the new enhancement in their children’s education that are undoubtedly implementing...⁷

5. Zos Chanukah 5752; Sichos Kodesh p.473

6. **A communal affair**

Despite the prohibition against engaging in mundane or business talk during Shabbos, the Sages ruled that “We look into the needs of the community on Shabbos.” [In keeping with that ruling:] Concerning the customary distribution of “Chanukah Gelt” to boys and girls – all those who have not yet fulfilled this custom (in a perfect manner), should strive to make up for it during the subsequent days... (Parshas Mikeitz 5750; Hisva’aduyos p.88-89)

Chanukah’s not over till you give “Gelt”

The positive resolution in this regard should be made [today] on Shabbos, while it is still Chanukah, or, more precisely, “Zos Chanukah” – the conclusion and culmination of the entire Chanukah.

In some locations, this directive will only reach them following Havdalah [when Shabbos – and the last day of Chanukah – will have concluded]. Nevertheless, since it will be emphasized that the directive was issued in the present Farbrengen ... in close proximity to the Leader of our Generation, on Shabbos and “Zos Chanukah,” the activities that result will clearly retain their connection to Chanukah.

Certainly, though, the directive should be fulfilled as soon as possible, in order to emphasize that these activities come are associated with, and are in fact a continuation of, Chanukah – and were not awkwardly stuck-on after the fact (Yiddish: Nit kein tzugetchepete zach)... (ibid, p.92)

Nothing is lost

Each of us should act to increase our distribution of “Chanukah Gelt,” despite the fact that it will then be after the Ma’ariv prayer [and no longer Chanukah] ... for, as the famous saying goes, “nothing is lost in the realm of goodness” – especially after the immense granting of ability that came with the eight days of Chanukah (and particularly its last day, which included all of the previous)

... Not only is nothing “lost,” but in fact, *everything* can still be accomplished with far greater vigor. (Zos Chanukah, after Minchah, 5749; Hisva’aduyos p.96)

7. Parshas Mikeitz 5750; Hisva’aduyos p.92. See previous footnote.

OIF SHABBOS GEREDT

- When “Zos Chanukah” coincides with Shabbos, resolutions concerning “Chanukah Gelt” should nevertheless be made [despite their reference to money, which is normally avoided on Shabbos].

This should be done while it is still Chanukah – especially as it is also “Zos Chanukah,” the conclusion and finale of Chanukah.⁷

IMPLEMENT CHANUKAH’S MESSAGE

- At the conclusion of Chanukah, each of us (men, woman and children) should resolve to increase – with far greater vigor – in all matters concerning “the flame of Mitzvos and the light of Torah.” This begins with the profuse study of Torah⁸ as well as disseminating Torah and Chassidus.⁹

The Rebbe distributes post-Chanukah Gelt

Publisher’s Note: On Sunday, the 7th day of Chanukah (beginning shortly before Minchah and the kindling of the eighth light of Chanukah and continuing a long time afterwards), the Rebbe distributed “Chanukah Gelt”: Each man, woman and child received a dollar coin (for “Gelt”) and a dollar bill (for Tzedakah).

The following day (Zos Chanukah), after Minchah and after Ma’ariv [*although it was no longer Chanukah*], the Rebbe again distributed a coin and a bill to all present. (Parshas Mikeitz 5752, footnote 152; Hisva’aduyos p.40)

The Rebbe explains

There is a special association between Chanukah and Tzedakah, as is underscored by the custom to distribute “Chanukah Gelt.”

We should continue this practice even *following* Chanukah – and even on Shabbos, in a permissible manner: by hosting guests and so forth.

It was for this very reason that an innovation was introduced to the annual distribution of “Chanukah Gelt,” namely, that we distributed “Gelt” on the night *following* the conclusion of Chanukah. This entirely unprecedented practice was done in order to promote and further encourage the distributing of Tzedakah – either to Tzedakah institutions or to individuals who require aid and support. (Parshas Vayigash 5751; Hisva’aduyos p.103)

8. **Steal from your business – Hashem will repay**

... Both its “revealed” and “esoteric” parts. Simply put, we should study Torah profusely, both in quality and quantity, via “stealing” some time that we had allocated for business pursuits. As a result of this, Hashem will certainly provide him with an abundance of gold and silver to cover all his costs – including expenses incurred by his enhanced performance of Mitvos, tuition fees for his sons and daughters, dowries and wedding gifts for his sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, as well as all that he requires in order to conduct his household with expansiveness, as befits each and every Jew – the descendants of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov. (Parshas Mikeitz 5750; Hisva’aduyos p.88)

9. **You’re working with a pre-paid budget**

... The same applies to disseminating Torah and Judaism, and particularly the teachings of

Nitel Nacht

The Jewish way to pass the Eve of Dec 25th

BRIEF HISTORY AND INTRODUCTION

December 25th is universally celebrated by non-Jews as the birthday of the person upon whom a dominant non-Jewish religion was founded; a person who unfortunately also “carried the Halachic status of ‘a Jew who lures other Jews to idol-worship.’” For that reason, a spirit of extreme spiritual impurity prevails on that night.

Additionally, there was a lengthy period in history when it was common for members of that religion to “celebrate” the eve of Dec 25th by attacking Jews; this led to a Rabbinic decision against keeping the Yeshivas open on the eve of Dec 25th.

In the words of the Previous Rebbe, “It is our custom to refrain from studying Torah on “Nitel Nacht”¹ until midnight.” The reason for this restriction – as heard from his father, the Rebbe Rashab – is “in order not to add spiritual vitality” to the forces of impurity. In other words, we do not wish to add spiritual vitality to “that person” [the one whose birth they celebrate] nor to “those who presently follow his views.”²

“Hayom Yom” (entry for Teves 17) quotes the Rebbe Rashab as saying, “I am not fond of those students who begrudge these eight hours and cannot tear themselves away from Torah study...”

1. What does “Nitel” mean?

The word “Nitel” (ניטל) is an allusion to a “lack.” Others say that the word comes from נִתַּל, meaning “suspended.” In Latin, “natal” means “born”; in this context it refers to the time of birth. (Letter dated 9th Kislev 5735, printed in Likutei Sichos Vol.15, p.554)

2. Letter dated 9th Kislev 5735, printed in Likutei Sichos Vol.15, p.554 and Parshas Vayeishev 5750, footnote 63; Hisva’aduyos p.49-50.

Foreword

We are pleased to bring you this newly revised edition of *a CALL to ACTION*. Translated from its Hebrew counterpart, *HaMaaseh Hu Halkar*, this presentation is a collection of practical instruction from the Rebbe's Sichos pertaining to "Nitel Nacht" and the winter vacation.

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Editorial Office of
HaMaaseh Hu Halkar
Tevet, 5768

FARBRENG INTO ACTION

• Ideally, we should begin implementing the above by holding additional¹⁰ Farbrengens,¹¹ where the participants should (1) further enhance their study of Chassidus¹² and then (2) make positive resolutions regarding the days to come, i.e., to increase their study and dissemination of Chassidus and to increase in all good and holy matters.¹³

PUBLICIZE AND PRACTICE THESE DIRECTIVES

• We should publicize these directives [concerning "Chanukah Gelt" and other positive resolutions] in each and every location. The main thing is for these words to have their desired effect in literal, concrete action.¹³

MORE EACH DAY

• After Chanukah,¹⁴ we should continue¹⁵ implementing the

Chassidus: One should not decrease, G-d forbid, on account of the expenses involved – Hashem will certainly provide an abundance of wealth, as required. The very nature of the world itself supports the complete dissemination of Chassidus, and the necessary gold and silver is already prepared and waiting to be utilized to this end; the wealth is either already in his "pocket" or sitting on his "shelf," or perhaps he still needs to go and collect the wealth that has already been transferred into his ownership... (ibid.)

10. Farbrengens

... These Farbrengens should take place (1) following Minchah, in the time that is Kabbalistically known as "Ra'avah DeRa'avin ["will of wills"; the most sublime level of Shabbos that occurs towards evening, before the holy day's conclusion]; (2) on Motzei Shabbos, during the "meal of David, King Moshiach" ["Melave Malkah"]; and (3) during the next few days. (ibid, p.88)

11. Recipe for a Farbrengen

Simply stated: A Chassidisher Farbrengen accompanied with the saying of "L'chaim!" Naturally, they should be carried out within "Keilim DeTikkun" [in an orderly and acceptable manner], yet elicit and contain the "Oros DeTohu" [powerful levels of divinity with profound accomplishments]. (Parshas Mikeitz 5750; Hisva'aduyos p.92)

12. Food for the innermost soul

In addition to encouraging each other to accept positive resolutions concerning the dissemination of Chassidus, we should also study Chassidus during the actual Farbrengen itself – at least for a brief while; better to skimp on quantity than to lessen the quality, since we are talking about the innermost dimension of the Torah that is bound with the innermost dimension of our souls... (ibid, p.92)

13. Ibid, p.89

14. The next day

Extra emphasis is placed on the day immediately following Chanukah. Although there is no day of "Isru Chag" [the semi-festive day that follows the major

instructions and lessons of Chanukah, and continuously increase – from day to day – in all good and holy matters, persisting with such additions throughout the rest of the year.¹⁶

מוקדש

לכ"ק אדמו"ר מלך המשיח

✧

לזכות

התינוקות גולדה ליבה שתי אברמס לרגל הולדתה נר א' דחנוכה תשס"ח
נדפס ע"י ולזכות הורי בנימין ידידה וזוגתו מיכל ליאורה שיחיו אברמס
יה"ר שיזכו הורי לגדלה לתורה ולחופה ולמעשים טובים ומתוך הרחבה
לזכות מרדכי בן מינדל ורבקה בת גולדה לרפואה שלימה
ולאריכות ימים ושנים טובות

✧

לזכות

הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' צבי מרדכי בן שרה וזוגתו שלומית בת שושנה
בניהם ובנותיהם:

יוסף יצחק, משה, מנחם מענדל, חנה וחי' מושקא; שיחיו גודמאן

✧

יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

festivals] – and there is room to research and expound on this detail – it is nevertheless plainly obvious that the closer we are to Chanukah, the more readily discernable is Chanukah's influence and "continuation."

How much more so on the first day immediately following Chanukah – and even more so on the night directly following its conclusion, at the very start of the evening and even before the nightly Ma'ariv prayer; such a time is *certainly* extremely connected to Chanukah's conclusion – "Zos Chanukah." (Zos Chanukah, after Minchah, 5749; Hisva'aduyos p.95)

15. Festival of light

This can be inferred from all other festivals: If their influence continues to shine throughout the rest of the year, then the light of Chanukah *certainly* illuminates the year. (ibid, p.77, footnote 84)

16. Did Chanukah reach you?

It is plainly obvious that the measuring rod by which to determine whether a person truly absorbed the messages of Chanukah into the depths of his innermost self ... is when, on the day following Chanukah, we see him continuing to fulfill the directives of Chanukah in actuality. (Eve of 5th of Teiveis 5749; Hisva'aduyos p.99-100) See the lengthy explanation there.

Based on spiritual instinct

There is great superiority to Chanukah activities that are continued after Chanukah: We are not doing so merely to fulfill a directive – the theme of Chanukah. Rather, these activities are an innovation that evolved from the Jewish people themselves. They therefore bear a similar virtue to that of a Rabbinic enactment over a Biblical command, or the virtue of a Jewish custom over a Rabbinic enactment. In this case, the continued Chanukah directives do not even carry the obligation of an established Jewish custom. (Parshas Mikeitz 5749; Hisva'aduyos p.77)

a CALL to ACTION

"NITEL NACHT" AND
THE WINTER VACATION.

PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION
FROM THE TEACHINGS OF THE REBBE
5748-5752

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מוקדש
לכ"ק אדמו"ר מלך המשיח



לזכות

הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' צבי מרדכי בן שרה
לרגל יום הולדתו ט' טבת לשנת הצלחה בגו"ר

ולזכות זוגתו שלומית בת שושנה
ולזכות בנם משה לרגל יום הולדתו ט"ז טבת
לשנת הצלחה בגו"ר

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HEI TEVES

Didan Natzach

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FROM THE TEACHINGS OF THE REBBE
5748-5752

A PROJECT OF
HaMaaseh Hu HaIkar

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Editorial Office of
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a CALL to ACTION

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which *oppose* Torah; there is sometimes a need to look at such publications as well, in compliance with the directive "Know what to reply to a heretic."³¹

THANKS IN ADVANCE

- We hereby extend in advance, our thanks – which is the thanks of the entire public – to all who donate texts to the Chabad Library; please do not expect a thank-you letter, for there is simply insufficient time to reply and personally thank each person on an individual basis.³²

HOW TO AVOID FEAR OF OVERUSE

- If you are concerned that by using your Torah texts they will become worn out, there is simple solution: Purchase two of each book! That way you will be able to preserve their appearance...³³

Translated in the memory of

Yitzchok Yosef ben Yaakov Mordechai.

Hashem created in His world, He created for His glory." (ibid.)

31. **Don't try this at home**

It is only that the use of these types of books is restricted to those who are able to utilize them in the proper manner, i.e., they know how to use them for the service of Hashem and His Torah. (Parshas Vayigash 5748; Hisva'aduyos p.173)

The Previous Rebbe was indeed asked about this, when it was discovered that his library included these sorts of books; seemingly, they involve the prohibition of Avodah Zarah (idol worship)... If so, these books fall under the command, "You must utterly detest it and utterly loathe it" (Devarim 7:26). Nevertheless, even these books are necessary for advancing the cause of holiness, by allowing us to fulfill the directive "Know what to answer a heretic (Apikorus)," as discussed on a number of occasions. (Parshas Vayigash 5752; Sichos Kodesh p.489)

32. **The Rebbe accepts your gift**

Note that the donation of Sefarim and the like to a prestigious Library is in some ways similar to the Talmudic law regarding Kidushin (betrothal); "When the case [of betrothal] involves an important personality, then [although normally the man proposing would be required to give the woman a gift with monetary value, here, however,] from the very pleasure that the woman derives from the fact that this important figure has accepted her gift, she completely cedes herself to him." (ibid.)

33. Parshas Mikeitz, Zos Chanukah, 5750; Hisva'aduyos p.90.

Yom Tov and so on.²⁷

OPEN LENDING LIBRARIES

- For the sake of the public, we should put effort into opening Torah libraries that will include books on every area of Torah. We should arrange for such libraries in wherever there is or there will be a Jewish community center; a place of Torah study, Prayer, Tzedakah and the like. And those libraries that already exist should now be expanded.²⁸

SEND YOUR SEFER TO THE CHABAD LIBRARY

- We respectfully ask all Rabbis, authors, and publishers, to donate a copy of their works to the central library of Agudas Chassidei Chabad Lubavitch, in order to expand its collection.²⁹
- We also request book-collectors who own unique texts, rare printings, family heirlooms and the like – which they do not require for the sake of study and so forth – to donate them to the Agudas Chassidei Chabad-Lubavitch Library, for the good of the public.²⁹

ALL BOOKS

- The above request concerns books on every area in Torah, and indeed, books and periodicals on all subjects³⁰ – even those

27. Parshas Vayigash 5752; Hisva'aduyos p.76.

Give generously

It is customary to present a gift – books or manuscripts of Chassidus, texts that have already been published and are now being re-printed or works that are now being published for the first time. We should give them generously to everyone – men, women and children, and even infants ... We should distribute Sefarim in a generous manner. (Parshas Vayigash 5752; Sichos Kodesh p.487)

28. ... In addition to books that are indispensable, such as a Siddur, Chumash, Tehilim and so forth. (Parshas Vayigash 5748; Hisva'aduyos p.173)

Note the teaching of our Sages (Kesuvos 50a), “The verse, ‘His righteousness stands forever,’ refers to one who writes books and then lends them to others.” (ibid, footnote 90)

29. ... In keeping with the request issued on the instruction of the founder and director of the Library, namely, the Previous Rebbe; this occurred following the Library's move to America. For one example among many, see Igros Kodesh, Admur Maharatz, vol.11, p.395. (Parshas Vayigash 5748; Hisva'aduyos p.173)

30. These books can also add to our divine service; as the Mishnah teaches, “All that

The 5th of Teves

“Didan Natzach!”¹

Victory of the Chabad Books

THE LIBRARY

The library of Agudas Chassidei Chabad-Lubavitch was founded and greatly expanded by the Previous Rebbe, while he was still in Russia. As the head of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement, the Previous Rebbe was also the director of the Library.

However, upon gaining permission to leave Russia, he was informed that the library would have to remain behind. He risked his freedom and his life by refusing to leave without the library, with the result that many of the books were “redeemed” and the Previous Rebbe was permitted to take them with him to America.

CHALLENGE

After his passing, a family member claimed the right to inherit his possessions and he removed many books from the Lubavich Library – an activity which greatly disturbed the Rebbe.

The Chassidim saw – and heard – how the Rebbe was deeply pained by this challenge to the Previous Rebbe's continued presence and authority – and by extension, to the Chabad Library and the movement itself.

The Rebbe applied and received permission from the Rabbinical Court to challenge the family member's claim in Federal Court. The court case began on 19th of Kislev 5746 (1985).

VERDICT

On the 5th of Teves 5747 (1987), the Federal Court gave its verdict in favor of the Rebbe, and declared that there is no inheritance of the Previous Rebbe that may be claimed; the Library continues to belong to and serve the Chabad Chassidim.

This verdict gave the Rebbe tremendous joy¹; he delivered special addresses during the following seven days of celebration.

VICTORY

“The victory and redemption of these books that occurred on the 5th of Teves, constitutes a victory and redemption for all of Torah Judaism!

In particular, this is a victory and redemption for the continued and expanded activities to disseminate Torah, Judaism and Chassidus – including the Chassidic teachings of the Previous Rebbe, Leader of our Generation – in an ever-increasing manner.²

It allows for dissemination in a manner that overpowers all obstacles and adversaries in a peaceful and pleasant manner; as it is expressed in Psalms, “Padah BeShalom Nafshi ... Ki BeRabim Hayu Imadi,” “Who has redeemed my soul in peace, etc., for many were with me.” This verse refers to the rebel soldiers of Avshalom’s forces, who although commanded to pursue King David and his men, nevertheless prayed for David’s welfare...”

It is interesting to note that the Rebbe quoted the same verse in reference to the 5th of Teves as the previous Chabad Rebbes had used to express their personal liberation and public vindication.

THE CHALLENGE IS NOT OVER

1. A Teves Chanukah miracle

[The Rebbe compared this victory to the victory of Chanukah; he pointing out that both festivals were established as a time of celebration only on their first anniversary; he also referred to the celebration of Hei Teves as “publicizing the miracle” of “the redemption from captivity.”

Before the verdict was given in Federal Court, the Rebbe compared the proceedings to a story that appears in Vayikrah Rabbah (ch.24, p.3. – See 12th Teves 5747), where the Jews help to bring a struggle between holy and evil forces to a positive conclusion by crying out “Didan Natzach,” “Our [side] is victorious!” Further, following the Court’s ruling, celebrations began immediately and continued uninterrupted for the next seven days; this, the Rebbe stated, was done in order to encompass the entire natural cycle – a full seven days – in the victory. (The festivities continued until the 12th of Teves). See Parshas Vayigash, Hei Teves 5748, p.164.]

2. Present and active

Our Sages tell us that Yaakov Aveinu did not die – rather, “just as his descendants are alive, so is he alive,” and “just as he stood and served Jewry then, so does he stand and serve them now.” The same applies to the Previous Rebbe. (ibid.)

HURRY

- The sooner this is done, the better; we should begin immediately by making resolutions in this regard, and then implement them at the very first opportunity.²⁴

SUBSCRIBE

- In addition to buying printed texts, we should also subscribe and pre-pay for books that will be published in the future; this way, they will be received as soon as they are published.²⁴

PUBLICIZE

- In addition to expanding our private libraries, we should also publicize this drive and its great importance to all around us.²⁵

BOOKS AS WEDDING GIFTS

- There is a widespread custom to provide a bride and groom with Torah texts – traditionally, a set of Talmud for the groom and a Siddur with translation and instructions for the bride.

Nowadays, however, women are well versed in the basics of Judaism and do not need such as gift; instead, we should provide them with books on Halachah that pertain to conducting a household – books that are written clearly and concisely, either in Hebrew or translated. The more books we give, the better!²⁶

GIVE A BOOK

- It is fitting and correct to fully utilize the custom of giving books as gifts; this custom should be expanded to include young children. Books should be given on joyous occasions, before

24. Parshas Vayigash 5752; Hisva’aduyos p.76.

25. Parshas Vayigash 5752; Sichos Kodesh p.489.

26. Give proper Sefarim

... Such as “Siddur Korbon Minchah” – a Siddur with translation, which includes many laws that are important for women to know, all in the language of their vernacular.

Nowadays, women are well educated and knowledgeable, and they no longer require a translation of the Hebrew. In fact, they may well be embarrassed by such a gift. (Parshas Vayigash 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.172)

already own and bring them home or donate them to a library and so forth.²³

According to custom, the acquisition of Torah books or manuscripts should specifically be done through actual payment; this way, the purchaser will value the Sefer – after all, he *paid* for it...

Nothing is for nothing

The Previous Rebbe would publish Kuntreisim (pamphlets) from time to time and had instructed that the price should be printed on their covers ... I once asked him why it was necessary to put the price on the cover – is it not enough that a price is quoted and demanded [when one purchases the pamphlet]?!

The Previous Rebbe answered me, “[Yiddish:] As min hat tzu tan mitten olam – since we are engaging and dealing with the world – [and the Hebrew term for ‘world’ (Olam) stems etymologically] from the phrase ‘Helem VeHester,’ a ‘concealment’ [of G-dliness and true purpose] – it is therefore necessary to negate any concerns that are likely to arise from the world’s distorting tendencies.

And since our Sages state, ‘A physician who heals for nothing (without accepting payment) is worth nothing,’ we could well apply their teaching to our own case: Torah brings healing to the world. If these Kuntreisim were to be acquired freely, ‘for nothing,’ then despite their bringing healing to the world, one might conclude that ‘it is worth nothing.’ We are required to negate such a misconception, to the extent of printing the price on the front cover.”

[That concerned the *printing* of an official price.] However, it did not matter what price is actually paid – sometimes actual payment was an indispensable requirement... (Parshas Vayigash 5752; Sichos Kodesh p.488)

22. Never enough

Each of us should resolve immediately, right now, whilst it is yet Shabbos, to increase the amount of Sefarim we own. We should not make do with the books that we purchased on the afternoon of Erev Shabbos, nor with the amount of books we possessed on Erev Shabbos right before candle-lighting – and not even with those extra books that we acquired in a permissible manner during Shabbos itself, e.g., by receiving a gift and the like. Rather, we should collect more and more Sefarim. (Parshas Vayigash 5752; Sichos Kodesh p.487)

23. Hisva’aduyos 5752, p.75.

The value of each additional book

This is the practical instruction that is to be taken from our Farbrengen: Each of us should acquire additional books. We can readily see for ourselves how each new text that we study facilitates better comprehension of all other texts. At the very least, it improves our intellectual capabilities.

Real books

We should not make do with the new material that is printed weekly – containing either new material (e.g., a new Kuntres, etc.) or merely reprinted material. Rather, we should acquire additional books and manuscripts beyond these weekly publications.

The awareness of this campaign will serve to encourage publishers, for they now know that their books are reaching a wider Jewish audience. (ibid, Sichos Kodesh, p.487-488)

There are still, however, many sacred books and manuscripts belonging to the Chabad Rebbes that languish in Russian captivity to this day. They “represent” the final sparks of holiness in this world, which still require “redemption.” The Rebbe requested that we work towards their restoration.

RECALL THE EVENTS

- This date is “recalled³ and re-enacted” each and every year; through recalling the original events, we cause their re-enactment, generating anew a day that is propitious and a time of divine favor for all that is connected to the “victory of the books.”⁴

TRUE VICTORY: STUDY MORE TORAH

- From now on, we should bolstering and add – with every-greater vigor – to the study of Torah.

That is the measuring rod by which to gauge the *true* victory of the books; that’s how we can determine that “Didan

3. Publicize the miracle

...As has already been announced with full publicity, which constitutes “Pirumei Nisa,” our obligation to “publicizing the miracle.”

4. Utilize the special day

Today is a propitious day and a time of divine favor (Yom Segulah VeEis Ratzon) ... and we have announced that there will then be a Chassidisher Farbrengen in honor of the books.

May it be G-d’s Will that this day will be utilized in a fitting manner and in the most complete manner. (Parshas Vayigash 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.164-165 and 174)

Judaism won

Since we are dealing with a library of international scale that constitutes a vast treasure-house for all of Torah Judaism, it is clear that the victory and redemption of the texts that occurred on the 5th of Teves is in fact a victory and liberation for all of Torah Judaism. (ibid, p.164)

From here to Moshiach

The victory of the 5th of Teves is associated with the concept of redemption; in this case, the redemption of the sacred writings of the Chabad Rebbes.

Further, inseparable from this redemption is the aspect of prayer and requesting the release of the sacred texts; we longingly anticipate their return. Most importantly, we pray for the collective redemption of all Jewry – the true and complete Redemption. (Eve of Hei Teves 5752; Hisva’aduyos p.61)

deHaSefarim Natzach,” “The books won!”⁵

MORE SHIURIM

- We should implement the victory by increasing our Shiurim (study sessions) – particularly public sessions that allow the participants to discuss and clarify the topics being studied.⁶

MISHNAH, HALACHA, CHASSIDUS

- We should study Mishnah as well as the Sefarim (sacred texts) that were “redeemed⁷,” given foremost attention to

5. Best books are worn books

A Torah scroll itself [by its extreme conciseness] emphasizes that its state of perfection is attained only through exerting ourselves in the study of other sacred texts [that expound the Torah’s meaning], which are in fact used on a daily basis.

What, in Torah’s view, constitutes the books’ true victory? It is certainly not a state where they will henceforth be guarded with the greatest of honor, so that no-one dare touch them – like a Torah scroll that is kept locked up in an ark...

Quite the opposite: The more we use them for actual study, the *greater* is their honor – even if the books become worn and torn from extreme use.

This way, we are also honoring and completing the purpose of the Torah scroll that we must keep looked away in an ark; for its main purpose and goal is that its contents will be studied properly until its message is fluent in the mouths of all Jews. This goal can only be attained by actually studying the printed texts.

... In our case, the texts themselves announce that their perfection and purpose – and as a result, their honor – is only realized through their being studied; even at the expense of their physical perfection, i.e., they may become worn and ripped from constant study. (ibid, p.168)

6. Parshas Vayigash 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.168.

The power of discussion

Our Sages tell us that “the Torah can only be acquired in a study group – and not in manner where ‘each one sits in solitude and studies Torah ... [in which case] they grow foolish.’” See the end of Tractate Berachos and the Alter Rebbe’s Shulchan Aruch (Hilchos Talmud Torah, Chapter 4, Law 10). (ibid, footnote 45)

7. Study Mishnah

Hei Teves should cause a bolstering and increase in the study of Torah texts; beginning with the very first text of the Oral Torah, namely, the Mishnah.

[“As the Rambam writes in his Introduction, ‘From the days of Moshe Rabbeinu until Rabbeinu HaKadosh, there was never a composition from which the Oral Torah was taught to the public ... He (Rabbeinu Hakadosh) then collected all of the discussions and laws ... and compiled them all into [what is known as] the Mishnah.’” – footnote 13]

Their freedom is ours

We can now further appreciate how the books’ release leads to the collective release of all Jewry, the ultimate Redemption; as it is written explicitly, “Tziyon

was meant as a means of his participation in our acquiring new Torah texts, fixing worn texts, or donating to a fellow Jew so that they will be able to purchase or fix their Sefarim – especially Chassidic texts, as per the recent custom of striving to acquire manuscripts or published works of Chassidus.¹⁹

BOOKSTORE DISCOUNTS

- In order to make it easier for people to purchase Torah texts – and actually study them – the Rebbe proposed that we negotiate with all publishers and booksellers, encouraging them to announce special discounts on books covering every area of Torah.²⁰

“RESCUE” BOOKS FROM RETAILERS

- Each of us is able to hasten the redemption of those texts that are yet languishing in Russian captivity; we accomplish this by “redeeming” texts that are presently within our reach: Purchase²¹ new²² books and manuscripts in addition to those you

19. The extra dollar

In keeping with the recent custom to make an association between the distribution of Tzedakah and other matters, we will now connect the theme of the Torah texts [that we have just discussed] with the actual giving of Tzedakah.

However, we will introduce an innovation to the regular practice: until now we have concluded our Farbrengens by distributing *one* dollar bill to each man, woman and child, for the purpose of giving to Tzedakah; now, though, we will give an *extra* dollar – as [my] participation in the purchasing of new Sefarim ... to purchase Chassidic texts, either handwritten or printed (specifically purchasing – as opposed to merely studying their content and recalling the information by heart).” (Motzei Hei Teves 5749; Hisva’aduyos p.103-104)

We will now make each person a Shaliach-Mitzvah (an agent to fulfill a Mitzvah); in this case, for the purpose of giving Tzedakah; we will distribute *two* bills: One to do with as you see fit, and the second for Tzedakah. (Eve of Hei Teves 5752; Sichos Kodesh p.477-479)

20. Discount on special dates

Booksellers and publishers should announce a special discount on the Shulchan Aruch and other works of the Beis Yosef – in commemoration of five hundred years from his birth – in order to make it easier for people and to encourage them to acquire Torah texts, and to actually *study* them.

... Since “one Mitzvah leads to another,” they should announce a special discount on *all* Torah texts, covering every area of Torah, in connection with the Hakhel year. (Parshas Vayigash 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.171)

21. Why charge for Torah?

IN THE KIDS' ROOM

- As soon as each boy or girl begins to understand and speak, they should be given their own books, such as a Siddur, Chumash, Tehilim – and a small Tanya¹⁵. These texts should be become the child's personal property and responsibility, and should be placed in their rooms.¹⁶

LET THEM USE IT TILL ITS WORN

- We should assure the children that they may use these books as much as they want; they should not worry that the texts may become dirty or torn – since we guarantee to buy them new and nicer ones.¹⁷ This concern should not even apply to infants, who are more likely to tear the pages.¹⁸

BUY NEW OR FIX OLD

- In 5749 (1989), the Rebbe added an extra dollar to his customary distribution of dollars for Tzedakah. This addition

Hisva'aduyos p.103)

15. 22nd of Shevat 5752; Hisva'aduyos p.265.

16. **Mini-Temple**

Which they will undoubtedly turn into a room of Torah and Prayer by actually studying and praying there; and likewise a room of Tzedakah by keeping a Tzedakah-box there and putting Tzedakah into it daily. We have often discussed how each individual house and room should be transformed into a place of Torah, Prayer and Tzedakah, in fulfillment of the command "Make a sanctuary for Me, so that I may dwell among you" – [each house and room] being a sort of "miniature sanctuary." (Parshas Vayigash 5748; Hisva'aduyos p.172)

Particularly, as of late, the custom has been that even children are given their own Torah texts (and are not merely provided with physical food and clothing); this adds a strength and pleasantness to their lives." (Motzei Hei Teves 5749; Hisva'aduyos p.103)

17. Parshas Vayigash 5748; Hisva'aduyos p.172-173.

18. **Let them jump on Me**

Regarding the verse (Shir Hashirim 2:4), "His encampments (Diglu) upon me are love," our Sages state, "Even when a Jewish infant [is innocently toying with a Torah text and unknowingly] jumps (Daleg) on the written Name of Hashem ... His jumping upon Me is lovely!"

Why is that? Because the entire purpose of Torah is for the sake of the Jews – as is clearly seen in the fact that the Torah consistently precedes its laws with, "Command the Children of Israel, etc.," "Speak to the Children of Israel" and so forth. (ibid, footnote 89)

subjects that will lead to positive action.

- For that reason, we should study laws⁸ from Rambam, the Shulchan Aruch and its commentaries and so forth, which contain the details of the Mitzvos.
- We should also study Chassidus, which enables us to observe those commandments that apply every moment of our lives, namely, to have faith, love and awe of Hashem.⁹

LIVE WHAT YOU LEARN

- The main thing is for this study to totally permeate our entire existence – so that it becomes woven into the very fabric of our every limb, from head to heel – and that we place all the vitality and enthusiasm we possess into our study.¹⁰

(the Jews) will be redeemed with Mishpat ("justice"; a reference to Torah study)."

In other words, specifically through studying Torah, an activity which truly expresses the books' true victory and redemption, we affect the release of "Tziyon," the Jewish people; especially when we study Mishnah – as our Sages state, "The exiles will be ingathered only in the merit of the study of Mishnah."

[See there, footnote 15, quoting the Alter Rebbe, who rules that nowadays, even the study of the laws set down by the Tur and Shulchan Aruch is considered "the study of Mishnah." The Rebbe adds that the Mishneh's redemptive power also extends to the study of these works.]

Torah study's redemptive quality is further emphasized when we study the texts which were redeemed on Hei Teves. ["Even the ingathering of the exiles that is accomplished through the study of Mishnah, is *further* emphasized by specifically using copies of Mishnah (and other Halachic works) from among the books that were released on Hei Teves.

After all, the redemptive quality of studying Mishnah is due to its elevation of the divine sparks that are scattered throughout Creation. Further, as discussed earlier, through redeeming Torah books, their ability to redeem the sparks is likewise increased." – footnote 18]

... Our very act of making a resolution in this regard – when Hashem sees that the resolutions are truthful and will certainly be kept – contains this redemptive power; it is as if the books have actually been studied. ["The resolutions will be kept; especially since they are being made in a sacred location and a "threefold" structure: a house of prayer, Torah and good deeds." – footnote 21] (Eve of Hei Teves 5752; Hisva'aduyos p.60)

8. [As explained in the previous footnote.]

9. ...As it is written, "Know the G-d of your fathers and serve him with a complete heart." (Parshas Vayigash 5748; Hisva'aduyos p.168)

10. **Just think about it**

...As our Sages state, "Just as there [by the Giving of the Torah] there was awe,

PROMOTE TORAH STUDY

- In accordance with the commandment – indeed, the golden principle of the Torah that is described as “Torah’s essential theme, upon which the rest is mere commentary”: “Love your fellow Jew as yourself,” we should stir the Jewish public to increase in their Torah study as well.¹⁰

CHUMASH, SIDDUR, TEHILIM, TANYA IN EVERY HOME

- Each and every Jew should have the texts that constitute the foundation of Judaism in their private home¹¹ – including in their dining room.¹² In addition to a Chumash, they should have a

fear, trembling and perspiration, here, too, [when studying the Torah nowadays] there is [the same].” In other words, “the Torah study of *every* Jew in *each* era (including the time of Exile – even the redoubled darkness of this final Exile) is considered to be the actual words of Hashem that were spoken to Moshe on Mt. Sinai ... it as if he had accepted it this very day at Mount Sinai.” The same concept is emphasized in the text of the daily blessing that we recite over the Torah, “Who *gives* us His Torah” – in the *present* tense!” (ibid, p.168-169)

11. Equivalent to personally writing a Torah scroll

This day is associated with Torah texts. It is therefore the correct occasion to once again mention the great virtue of Torah texts:

It is explained in the Halachic writings, particularly those of the Rosh ... [See Lekutei Sichos, vol.23, p.17 and onward] that nowadays, purchasing Torah texts is included in the fulfillment of the Biblical commandment for each Jew to write his own Torah scroll.

Further, according to most methods of listing the Torah’s commandments, writing a personal Torah scroll is the very *last* of the 613 commandments; since every aspect of Torah contains the utmost precision – particularly matters that appear at the very opening or conclusion of the entire Torah – we could readily appreciate the great virtue of this commandment – being placed as it was, at the conclusion of all the commandments.

Even according to the opinions that differ and hold that purchasing Torah texts is *not* included in the Biblical commandment, it is nevertheless – in their opinion – a *Rabbinic* commandment. And Hashem tells us that “the words of the Rabbis are more precious” to Him; their neglect is also considered “more severe.”

It follows, that according to *all* opinions, the purchasing of Torah texts is uniquely important.

In fact, by purchasing them, we gain both virtues – the virtue of a Biblical command (in accordance with the Rosh) coupled with the quality of a Rabbinic commandment (according with the alternative views).

This could be applied *all* sacred texts – and in particular to texts discussing the inner dimension of Torah’s teachings; they all contain the power of holy writings. (Night after Hei Teves 5749; Hisva’aduyos p.103)

12. Practical considerations

Siddur and Tehilim; in a Chassidisher home, there should also be a Tanya and the like.¹³

BOOKS ON PRACTICAL LAW

- Every house should contain Halachic text explaining the laws that are required on a daily basis; these laws should be studied regularly, so that everyone is aware of what must actually be done.¹³

A HOME FILLED WITH SEFARIM

- When a bride and groom preparing for the creation of a Jewish home, then together with arranging basic household items, furnishing and utilities, they should also ensure that their home contains Torah texts that they will study. Indeed, this should be their *prime* concern; let it be a house filled with Sefarim!¹⁴

This is because we are required to speak words of Torah during mealtimes; further, if any questions come up, the necessary books will be on hand for immediate consultation. (Parshas Vayigash 5751; Hisva’aduyos p.103)

13. Parshas Vayigash 5748; Hisva’aduyos p.171.

14. Stock your shelves with sages

... This includes the interpretation that our entire home along with all of its furnishings and appliances should become permeated with the content of the Torah texts; or, as the Sages state, “Let your home become a gathering place for sages!” (ibid, p.171-172)

Books first

It is stated in this week’s Torah portion, “He [Yaakov] sent Yehudah before him to Goshen”; our Sages explain that this indicates that Yaakov sent Yehudah “in order to establish a House of Study there, from which Halachic instruction will issue forth.” In other words, before settling in any given location, we should first establish “a House of Study from which instruction may issue forth.” On a personal level, this entails making our home into “a House of Study” and “a gathering place for sages.” (ibid, footnote 84)

When do you stop?

In the expression “a home filled with Torah texts,” we should underscore the word “filled”; the true meaning of “filled” means that it cannot contain anything else – there is simply no room for more. Otherwise, it cannot truly be “full.”

As far as we are concerned, as long as there exists in the world, a Torah text which bears relevance to us but has not yet reached our hands, then we cannot consider ourselves as owing “a home filled with Torah texts” in the *true* sense of the word. Since “we tell one who began a Mitzvah to complete it,” we should continue in this activity until it is truly and fully completed. (Parshas Vayigash 5751;