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Sacred & Secure

The Integrity of Eretz Yisroel

**“This Is Only
the Beginning!”**

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
WITH RABBI YOSSIE GRONER

Interpreting the Depth

THE REBBE'S TEACHINGS ON HIS FATHER'S TORAH



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If you do it with joy, it will last

The Rambam opens Sefer Zmanim with the *possuk*: “נְחַלְתִּי הַמָּוֶה כִּי שָׁשׂוֹן לִבִּי הָיָה—I inherited Your testimonies forever, for they are the joy of my heart.”

In the Rambam’s own words, Sefer Zmanim deals specifically with those mitzvos and *halachos* that are limited to certain times of the year, for example Shabbos which is once a week, Pesach in the month of Nissan, and so on.

It is therefore perplexing that the Rambam opens this *sefer* with a *possuk* that refers to mitzvos that are “forever”—nonstop. This term would better fit mitzvos such as believing in Hashem and loving Hashem which are constant *mitzvos* and are forever; not just

because they reoccur consistently, but that they are constant obligations with no interruptions.

The answer is:

Precisely because the laws in Sefer Mada and Sefer Ahava deal with mitzvos that one must perform continuously, the Rambam need not cite a *possuk* to show that these are eternal concepts: The *halachos* themselves indicate that.

In Sefer Zmanim, however, which deals with mitzvos that do not apply all the time but only at certain intervals, it is necessary to ensure that one not think that these mitzvos are in any way only periodical and not constant.

At the very least, it is necessary to ensure that even when learning these time-sensitive *halachos* at a different time of the year, one does not learn the laws with less enthusiasm and vitality, since they technically apply only at certain times.

The Rambam therefore begins specifically this *sefer* with the *possuk*, “I have inherited Your testimonies forever.” The mitzvos in this *sefer* are *eidus*—“testimonies”—testifying to certain events. Shabbos is a testimony that Hashem created the world; Pesach is a testimony (and remembrance) to the exodus from Mitzrayim; Sukkos is a testimony that Hashem had the Yidden dwell in



מחזור הארבעים

40 CYCLES OF LEARNING RAMBAM

לזכות שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר בכל קצוי תבל
להצלחה רבה ומופלגה למעלה מן המשוער

נדפס ע"י

שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר

לפאלם ביטש גארדענס, פלארידא

הרה"ת ר' דוד צבי וזוגתו מרת חנה שיחיו

ויגלר

Sukkos when they left Mitzrayim. Similarly, the other mitzvos in this book are testimonies to events that took place at certain times, and are therefore kept only at stated times.

Nevertheless, these mitzvos must be kept in the manner of, “I have inherited Your testimonies **forever.**” These mitzvos are part of the Torah, and the “Torah which Moshe commanded us is the inheritance of the congregation of Yaakov” throughout all generations—forever.

They are also “forever,” by means of their influence that affects the whole year. Shabbos is one example: The commandment, “Remember the Shabbos day to sanctify it” is an obligation that

applies to all the days of the week. Pesach too: One must remember the *yetzias Mitzrayim* every day of the year.

The rest of the *possuk* then explains the reason for this: “For they are the rejoicing of my heart.” When the mitzvah of Shabbos, for example, is done with “the rejoicing of my heart,” then, although Shabbos is actually kept only one day a week, it nevertheless transcends time for the person. A person lives with the idea of Shabbos on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, until the next Shabbos, when one rises yet higher in his appreciation of Shabbos. The same goes for the meaning of

all the other festivals in the *sefer* of Zmanim—because they are the “rejoicing of my heart,” they permeate the rest of the year until the celebration of that festival next year.

The Rambam begins the *sefer* of Zmanim with this verse as an introduction to the study of the whole book. Although one will be learning about mitzvos that are fulfilled only at certain times, they are nevertheless, in the category of “I have inherited Your testimonies forever” — for “they are the rejoicing of my heart.”

(Adapted from *Sichas*

Erev Shavuos 5744.

*Parts of this translation originally appeared in *Sichos* in English.)*



JEM 102917

<p>ע"י בנם ר' יקותיאל יהודה וזוגתו מרת פעסל לאה ומשפחתם שיחיו רוהר</p>	<p>טור 'לעבן מיטן רבין' הוקדש לזכרון ולעילוי נשמת ר' שמואל ב"ר יהושע אליהו ז"ל ואשתו מרת שרה ע"ה בת ר' יקותיאל ומרת לאה הי"ד ת'נ'צ'ב'ה'</p>
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Presidential Visit

MENACHEM AV 5726*



President Shneur Zalman Shazar was a close friend of Lubavitch and a Chossid of the Rebbe. During his many years in Israeli politics, he was involved in numerous projects on behalf of the Rebbe and Chabad in Eretz Yisroel, and he visited the Rebbe a number of times during his trips to America.¹

When he visited New York in the summer of 5726*, he very much wanted to see the Rebbe,

but this came with more difficulties than expected. Mr. Shazar had already become President of Israel at that time, and some Israeli officials felt that it would break protocol for the President to go to the Rebbe. If Mr. Shazar wanted to see the Rebbe—they contended—it would be more appropriate for the Rebbe to visit him.

As a result of this dilemma, when Mr. Shazar arrived in the U.S. (on a Thursday) he called

mazkirus to inquire if it is possible for the Rebbe to come visit him. The Rebbe responded that he will be visiting the Ohel the next day, and only afterwards will he be able to give an answer.

The next day (Friday) at 3:00 in the afternoon, Mr. Shazar received a telephone call from Rabbi Hodakov telling him that the Rebbe wanted to speak to him. The Rebbe spoke to Mr. Shazar on the phone, and told him that he was not granted permission by his father-in-law to go visit him. The Rebbe said to him in Russian: "I am no longer *balabos!*" i.e. it is not up to him to decide to go.

Mr. Shazar was still under pressure to cancel his visit to the Rebbe, but ultimately his wish to see the Rebbe prevailed.

THURSDAY, 11 MENACHEM-AV

At 7:30 this morning, Rabbis Hodakov, Mindel and Kazarnovsky drove together to the airport to greet President Shazar upon his arrival as per the Rebbe's *hora'ah*. (Rabbi Hodakov wore a *sirtuk* for the trip.)

MOTZEI SHABBOS PARSHAS VA'ESCHANAN, 13 MENACHEM-AV

Already before Maariv, police arrived to prepare the area outside 770 in anticipation for the important visitor coming to see the Rebbe tonight. The tumult grew as a crowd began to form in front of 770, and more and more people began to arrive, hoping to catch a glimpse of this momentous and historical meeting between the Rebbe and Mr. Shazar, the President of Israel at the time.

The Rebbe came into the shul for Maariv at 9:00 p.m. After Maariv, the commotion and frantic preparations began in earnest: Members from the Shin Bet (Israeli Security Agency) and officials from the Israeli Consulate in Manhattan arrived at 770, and at 10:00 p.m. Rabbi Hodakov was asked to provide an (estimated) schedule for the evening. Everyone was asked to vacate the Merkos office, and Rabbi Hodakov spoke alone with a representative of the Israeli security team.

Meanwhile, Reb Shmuel Levitin and Reb Moshe Leib Rodshtein went into the Rebbe's room and they were instructed to go—together with Reb Itche Goldin and some other Chassidim—to the hotel where President Shazar was staying.



CROWDS GATHER OUTSIDE 770



MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SHAZAR AT HIS HOTEL ROOM. R-L REB MOSHE LEIB RODSHTEIN, REB SHMUEL LEVITIN, PRESIDENT SHAZAR, REB ITCHE GOLDIN

More police arrived and Rabbi Hodakov instructed that everyone leave the building of 770. Whoever was still there went outside, including those working in the Merkos office. Police positioned themselves in front of the entrance to keep the area under surveillance. There were police personnel stationed in the *chatzer* outside the *zal* too. Inside, the *zal* was arranged to welcome the President and his entourage when they would arrive.

Accompanied by the delegation of distinguished Chassidim who had come to greet him, Mr. Shazar set out from his hotel. Whilst the motorcade led by a police escort sped through the streets of New York City, Mr. Shazar *farbrenge*d and chatted with the delegation of Chassidim.

The crowd standing outside 770 was estimated by police to be around 4,000 people.

Minutes before President Shazar arrived at 770, Rabbi Hodakov came outside and asked that when the car arrives, Chassidim should sing Napoleon's march to greet him.

לזכות
הרה"ת ר' משה וזוגתו מרת שרה חנה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
גורארי'
טאמס ריווער, ניו ג'רסי



Sacred & Secure

The Rebbe's Campaign to Ensure
"Shleimus Haaretz"—the Integrity
of Eretz Yisroel

One of the Rebbe's most famous campaigns is *Shleimus Haaretz*, the call for Eretz Yisroel to remain complete and secure. In countless *sichos*, the Rebbe addressed the issue time and again, calling on the leaders of the Israeli government to chart a path that would lead them to be safe, strong, and following Hashem's directives.

For a comprehensive collection of the Rebbe's *sichos* on the topic, see *Karasi Vein Oneh*. For a more general overview of the Rebbe's connection to Eretz Yisroel, see *B'rega Ha'emet*, Kineret/Zmora-Bitan, 2017.



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FOUNDATION 1: It's All Ours

Before approaching the topics of wars, land for peace, and Israeli policies, we need to ask ourselves a simple question. What right do we Yidden have over Eretz Yisroel?

Some might respond that the modern Israeli state gained its legitimacy with the United Nations vote of 1947, or perhaps earlier, with Lord Balfour's declaration in 1917. Others might point to the recognition of the international community in our day, and, more specifically, to the support of the United States. Some might even say that the Land of Israel is the Jewish homeland, where our kings, prophets, and farmers lived thousands of years before any of its current residents.

But many of these rational arguments can be refuted. The British revoked Lord Balfour's declaration. The United Nations could overturn their vote at any time and the international community could change its mind overnight. And was Israel really always the Jewish homeland? Our own Torah describes how we expelled the Canaani, Chiti, Emori, Chivi, Prizi, Yevusi and Girgashi from their comfortable homes to make room for the Jewish nation emigrating from the desert. And what if we were there first? The White House sits on land that once belonged to the Native Americans. Does that mean that the president will willingly give up his seat to any Native American that demands it?

So there is only one answer that remains.

In the beginning, Hashem created the heavens and the earth. Naturally, He retains full rights to

His handiwork, and He chose to take Eretz Yisroel from those nations and give it to us. It may have legitimately belonged to the Canaanim at a time, but the moment Yehoshua and the Jewish people came marching through the Jordan river, the land became ours forever.

This is expressed in the first Rashi on the Torah. Did you ever wonder why Torah, a book of laws, begins with the story of creation? The answer is, Rashi says, so that nobody should ever be able to say, "You stole the land from us." We didn't steal it from anyone, then or now. It is ours, granted to us by Hashem Himself — the ultimate owner, by virtue of being its Creator.

This leads us to two very important points:

1) You Can't Just Give It Away.

The Land of Israel isn't the personal possession of any Israeli politician, nor is it the collective possession of all Israeli citizens.

Every Jew owns a parcel of Eretz Yisroel, measuring at least one square *amah*. Did you know that that is the only way you are permitted to do a *pruzbul*? A *pruzbul* can be conducted only by someone who owns land in Eretz Yisroel. The fact that we all do so regularly, every seven years, is because we actually *do* own land in Eretz Yisroel, albeit a very tiny portion.

Therefore, no politician has the mandate to negotiate, let alone transfer, any piece of Eretz Yisroel from Jewish hands to anyone else.

Everyone's Question

When journalist Moshe Ishon was in *yechidus* with the Rebbe, he asked the Rebbe a question, that, in his own words, "many people were asking."

"What gives a person in America the right to opine on policies regarding Eretz Yisroel?"

"The Rebbe smiled," he later recounted, "as if he had heard the question before and was well-versed in all the articles published against him."

"Every Jew," the Rebbe responded, "owns a portion of Eretz Yisroel." The Rebbe explained the idea of the *pruzbul*, and every Jew's one square *amah*.

"You might think," the Rebbe said after a pause, "that a Jew can only give an opinion about his own portion. But that is not the case. He is obligated to give an opinion about the entire situation, and if he remains silent, he carries responsibility for everything that happens there."

(*Karasi Vein Oneh* pg. 74)

Abraham's purchase in Hebron entered in records at UN

HEBRON, Palestine, (AP) — The purchase of the land in Hebron, which Israel bought in 1967, was entered in the United Nations records as a gift to the Jewish people, according to a report of the United Nations Security Council. The report, which was adopted by a vote of 12 to 0, with 4 abstentions, said that the land was bought by the Jewish people from the Arabs in 1967. The report also said that the land was entered in the United Nations records as a gift to the Jewish people.



CHAIM HERTZOG, Ambassador to the U.S. (left), speaking at a podium at the UN. He is surrounded by other officials, including the Secretary-General, who is seated at the table in front of him.

THE JERUSALEM POST REPORTS ON DR. HERTZOG'S SPEECH AT THE UN

Say That Chevron is Yours

Chaim Halevi Hertzog was Israel's ambassador to the United Nations (and later its president), and was famous for his proud and unabashed defense of the Jewish people. In 5736, he attended the Rebbe's Simchas Torah farbrengen. During the *sichos* and the conversation with him, the Rebbe told him to declare from the pulpit of the United Nations that Chevron — which was being hotly discussed at the time — belongs to him personally, as a Levi. He soon did exactly that, and his speech made a significant impact.

Doing so would be theft in broad daylight. It simply does not belong to them.

In addition to this basic point, the Rebbe would often say that the thought of returning land is the greatest slap in the face to the *Aibershter*. In His abundant kindness, He gave us large portions of Eretz Yisroel through amazing miracles. Are we really going to simply turn around and hand them to other nations?

2) Say It As It Is

When presenting your case for Eretz Yisroel, make Torah your foundation.

Israeli representatives have always loved to ingratiate themselves with the international community by talking about its rights based on the United Nations vote or referencing the Holocaust as a reason the Jewish people need a homeland.

But those explanations don't hold water, and the world knows that as well as we do.

The only way to present a legitimate case for Eretz Yisroel is by basing it on the eternal foundations of the Torah.

What is its name?

Geulah Cohen, a well-known journalist and politician, asked the Rebbe why he refuses to use the term “the State of Israel.” The Rebbe responded:¹

“The reason is simple: Eretz Canaan was given to *b'nei Yisroel* at the *Bris Bein Habesarim* with Avraham Avinu, and its name became Eretz Yisroel. This became established over thousands of years, in the Torah, and among all people...

“Changing the name weakens the claim of *b'nei Yisroel* to the land... a new name paints the entire topic as something new that occurred in 1948, seemingly indicating that our claim to the land begins then... contrary to the Torah's perspective.

“Furthermore, there are those that interpret the name ‘the State of Israel’ as part of a general approach: to become a regular nation among the family of nations. This approach has been disastrous, and has caused countless losses, both physically and spiritually.”

The land belongs to us because, “So said G-d!”

It may seem to be an odd explanation for the modern world of the twenty-first century, but its effect is surprising. First of all, a vast amount of the world's population firmly believe in the “Bible.” But moreover: Even if a listener doesn't agree, he will

learn to respect and understand your perspective. People respect people who respect themselves. If you don't have the strength to lay this foundation, all the buildings you will erect on top will just come crashing down.

Higher and Higher ישראל קדמו



The only thing that gives the Torah its significance and importance is that it was given to the Yidden! Therefore, as soon as there is even a minor concern that the Jews might be in danger, *chas v'shalom*, Moshe Rabbeinu did not waste a moment. He did not need to consult with anyone; not even with Hashem Himself. He simply broke the *luchos*; those *luchos* created by the very essence of Hashem...

Because if all of the Torah exists only to bring out the special innate quality of the Jewish people, then the moment that the Torah might be causing them some trouble, *chas v'shalom*, and a choice needs to be made between the Yidden or the Torah, there is no competition at all. Moshe Rabbeinu took the *luchos* and **broke them** in order to save the Jewish people...

(Leil Simchas Torah 5747)

Who Came First?

The source:

The Midrash states:

“שני דברים קדמו לעולם תורה וישראל,
ואיני יודע איזה מהם קודם, כשהוא אומר צו את
בני דבר אל בני”, אומר אני ישראל קדמו...”¹

“Two things preceded the world: Torah and the Jewish people. I don’t know which one of them came first. But when the Torah says “Command the B’nei Yisroel,” “Speak to the B’nei Yisroel,” I can say that the Jewish people came first...”¹

The Rebbe points out that the way this discussion is written sounds quite

unusual. Why does the Midrash assert that “I don’t know” which one came first? Once we establish that the Jewish people came first, isn’t that enough to do away with the question altogether?

No, says the Rebbe. Because down here in this physical world, the Torah seems to be on a higher level than the Yidden. Only when we look deeper into their spiritual sources do we discover the truth—that the Yidden are higher. That is the meaning of “I don’t know” which is greater. Because the fact that the Yidden are greater comes from a place that transcends

knowledge; I **do not** and **can not** know!

This is also why the Midrash uses the term “אומר אני—I say” when offering the conclusion. This is Eliyahu Hanavi talking, saying “I say,” i.e. the essence of his *neshama*, which is always unified with Hashem. It is at that innermost point of the *neshama* that we can recognize its transcendence even over the Torah.²

In a deeper sense:

Torah and mitzvos are merely mediums, so-to-speak, for the Yidden to reach their ultimate potential. When Yidden keep Torah and mitzvos, they connect themselves, as they exist in this physical world, with the essence of Hashem, revealing their true selves in the process. This is the purpose of all of creation: For Yidden to use Torah and mitzvos to reveal the *Atzmus* of Hashem in the physical world and create a *dira betachtonim*.³

In the fall of 5752*, the Rebbe was visited by the Sephardic chief rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu, and



they had an hour-long discussion on various Torah topics. One of the issues spoken about at great length was about how special the Jewish people are, even in reference to the Torah itself.

The Rebbe began by citing the Alter Rebbe's ruling that whenever 10 Yidden come together, Hashem's presence resides among them—even if they are **not** involved in Torah study. "This is because the Yidden are higher than Torah," the Rebbe explained. "Torah itself says that the Yidden came first—not only chronologically, but in order of significance too..."

"This is true even while the *neshamos* are down here in this world, clothed in physical bodies. When a Yid wakes up in the morning—even before he washes his hands and even before he recites Modeh Ani while in a state that he cannot even utter any words of Torah—he still has his *neshama* and is still very much greater than the Torah itself!⁴

Moreover, the Rebbe explained, the superiority of the Jewish people

over the Torah is even regarding their physical bodies. The physical body has the unique quality in the fact that you truly see Hashem's infinite capability of creation in it. The *neshama*, as a spiritual being, does not express Hashem's power of creation as much. Furthermore, only in and with the physical body are we able to fulfill our mission of keeping Torah and mitzvos. Therefore, the body of a Yid

is extremely precious and needs to be properly cared for at all times.⁵

What Does Torah Do?

Although it is true that Yidden are greater and more important than Torah—it is the Torah itself that brings this fact to light and reveals the Yidden's intrinsic value. When Yidden keep the Torah and do what they are supposed to do, this inner

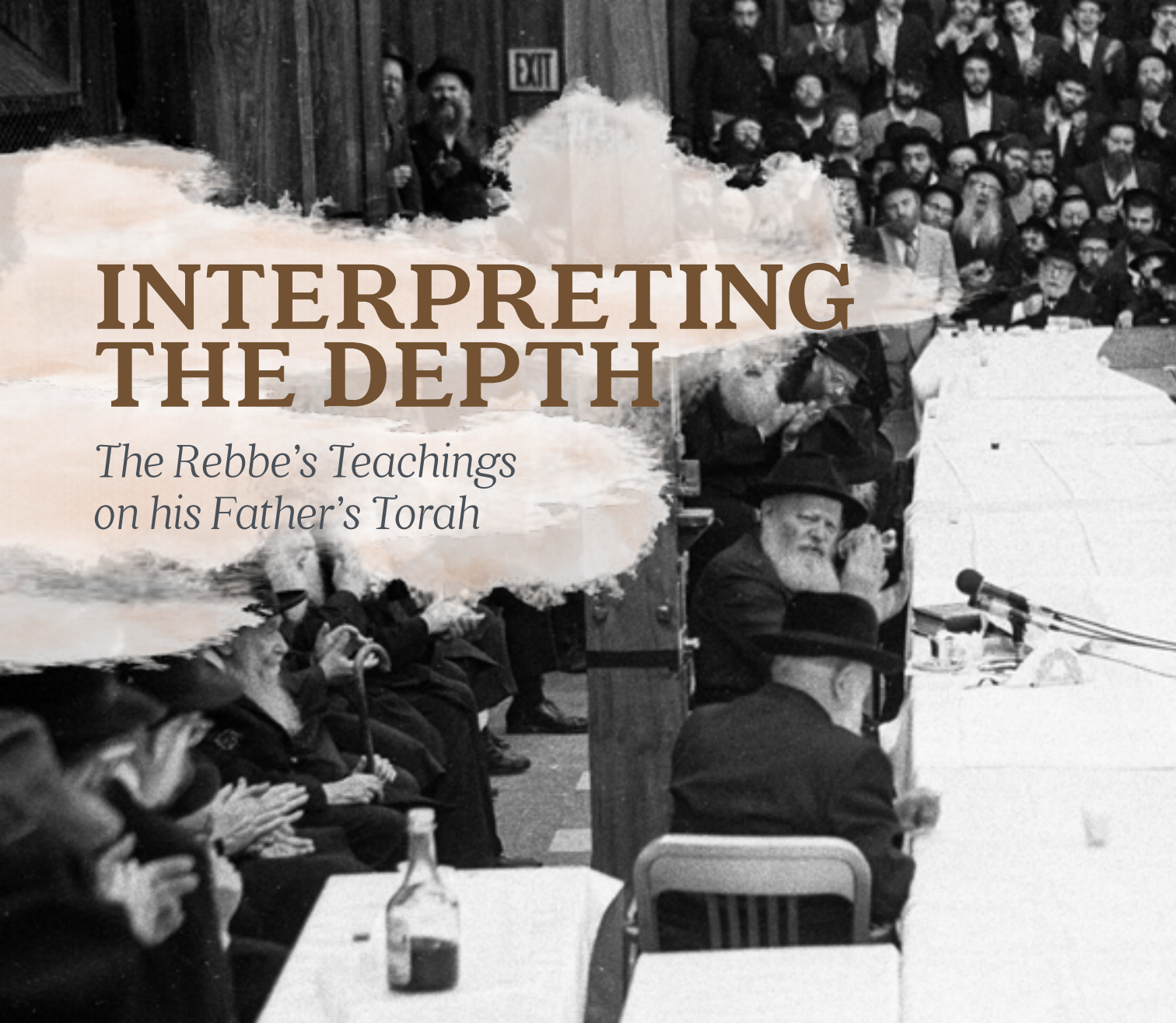
What Was The Alter Rebbe's Focus?

When summing up the Alter Rebbe's accomplishments during his physical lifetime, there are various facets. But the most important thing he accomplished was "הנפש אשר עשו"—The people he made..."

True, he wrote and disseminated much Torah: Tanya, Shulchan Aruch, and all the *maamarim* which cover a vast breadth and depth—"Longer than the earth and wider than the sea."

But they pale in comparison to his accomplishments in the lives of other people. After all, *tzaddikim* are likened to their Creator. In Eliyahu Rabba there is a lengthy discussion of what came first in Hashem's creations—Torah or the Jewish people. And the conclusion is that the thought of the Jewish people came first, before anything else...

(Chof Daled Teves 5741)



INTERPRETING THE DEPTH

The Rebbe's Teachings on his Father's Torah

The story of Harav Levi Yitzchok's writings is a wonder. Of the thousands of pages he authored during his lifetime, precious little reached the free world to be studied by future generations.¹ When the first writings of Harav Levi Yitzchok reached the Rebbe in New York, the Rebbe published them in the set of Likkutei Levi Yitzchok. In the introduction, the Rebbe wrote, "*With gratitude to Hashem I have had a great merit, that a handful of my father's letters, along with several of his sefarim...*

including sefarim... in which he wrote his commentaries on the margins, have reached me..."

Alongside the publishing of these *sefarim*, the Rebbe dedicated many hours delving into them at farbrengens throughout the years. Usually, this was at the Shabbos farbrengen while the *sefer* Likkutei Levi Yitzchok was on the table in front of the Rebbe.

In previous editions of the *Derher*, we had various articles discussing the Torah of Harav Levi Yitzchok, including the story of how these

precious writings reached the Rebbe. In this article we take a look at the *sichos* the Rebbe dedicated to teaching his father's writings, and how ultimately they were gathered together and were published in the first *sefer* to bear the name "*Toras Menachem*."

Much of the material for this article was prepared from *Derher* interviews with Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook, Rabbi Asher Farkash, Rabbi Dovid Feldman, and Rabbi Eli Wolff.



לע"נ
 הרה"ח הרה"ת שמואל דוד
 בן הרה"ח הרה"ת יעקב יוסף ע"ה
 ת'נצ'ב'ה
 נדפס ע"י בנו
 הרה"ת מיכאל יצחק וזוגתו מרת חנה
 ומשפחתם שיחיו
 גורקאוו

Studies in Rashi

One of the most famous revolutionary learning methods the Rebbe introduced is his unique approach to understanding Rashi on Chumash.

In the middle of a lengthy explanation on the Zohar discussing the verses in Parshas Vayishlach where Shimon and Levi attack the city of Shechem, Harav Levi Yitzchok analyzes one Rashi¹: On the words וְאֵת כָּל חֵילָם [they took] all their wealth,” Rashi translates the word חֵילָם as their wealth, bringing three different *pesukim* from Tanach as sources for this interpretation. Harav Levi Yitzchok comments: “[Why does] Rashi find it necessary to bring three sources and does not suffice with one? [Secondly,] why are these sources brought out of order? [Thirdly,] the source quoted from *kapitel* 49 in Tehillim is a later verse as opposed to the same word which is also found in an earlier verse in the same *kapitel*?”

Harav Levi Yitzchok goes on to explain this Rashi in a way of *drush*, learning that each source Rashi cites is telling us what happened with the wealth of Shechem. With this idea, he answers the above questions.

Although this isn't the typical *peshto shel mikra* explanation (and perhaps can fit into the category of things Rashi mentions to answer the questions of a *talmid memulach*), it is fascinating to see how the Rebbe's father analyzes Rashi using the same method of analysis the Rebbe taught throughout the years.

“It is customary on a yahrtzeit to discuss a Torah idea from the one whose yahrtzeit we are commemorating; yet in our circumstance this wouldn't be necessary, similar to the story told in the Gemara²:

“Rebbi Elazar said over a Torah passage during a discussion in the Beis Medrash, yet he did not quote his teacher Rebbi Yochanan while doing so. Rebbi Yochanan was troubled by this until he was told [by the students] ‘Rebbi Elazar is your faithful student, whatever he teaches—everyone knows is your teaching!’

“This episode is told in the Gemara regarding an ordinary student, (i.e. Rebbi Elazar, who wasn't a son of his teacher Rebbi Yochanan). How much more so is this true regarding a faithful student who is also a son of his teacher... in such a circumstance it would be redundant to quote these teachings in his name [i.e. for the Rebbe to quote his father Harav Levi Yitzchok in the

previous sichos], for ‘everyone knows it is your teaching!’”

“We don't know much about the Rebbe's relationship with his father Harav Levi Yitzchok and their relationship through Torah study while the Rebbe was growing up, their learning together and so on,” says Rabbi Eli Wolff, “for the Rebbe spoke very little of it. However, much of their correspondence from after the Rebbe left the USSR has been documented. The Rebbe held onto these precious writings he had from his father, and years later published them in the set of Likkutei Levi Yitzchok, together with the writings that Harav Levi Yitzchok wrote while in exile.

“In these letters, we discover various correspondences in which the Rebbe held discussions in learning. What becomes evident is the similar learning method the Rebbe shared with his father, offering us a window into the education the Rebbe received

A Paralleled Approach

At the farbrengen of Chof Av 5739*, about three and a half hours into the farbrengen, the Rebbe was about to begin teaching a segment of his father's Torah, as he had been doing for several years. This time however the Rebbe began with an introduction, in which he explained why he hadn't yet spoken of his father's Torah until this point in the farbrengen:

* 5739-1979

while learning with his father in his early years.”

“One particular way this comes across,” says Rabbi Dovid Feldman, “is seen from the general approach of Harav Levi Yitzchok. In his notes on the Zohar, Harav Levi Yitzchok zeroes in on the smallest of details, through which he explains how the most abstract ideas that the Zohar is teaching us, express themselves through the most minute and (seemingly) irrelevant details, giving a whole new perspective on what the Zohar states.

“For instance, when the Zohar describes a conversation between Rebbi Yehuda and Rebbi Yosi, Harav Levi Yitzchok comments in his notes why this conversation transpired with Rebbi Yehuda, for he represents *sefiras hachessed*, and Rebbi Yosi, who represents *sefiras hamalchus*, and then goes on to thereby explain why they each said what they said. Or, whether the passage is written in masculine

or feminine tense, and even on such (seemingly) trivial details as the time and place where the passage was said.

“Throughout the Rebbe’s Torah,” continues Rabbi Feldman, “the Rebbe teaches with a very similar approach. In the deepest *maamarim*, the Rebbe focuses on the details of how the previous Rabbeim said the *maamar*, for example the order different things were said, through which the Rebbe teaches a revolutionary idea. Additionally, the notion that the Rebbe explains a piece of *nigleh d’Torah* according to *its pnimius*, and again, every detail is exact, for it is the same Torah—this approach is parallel to Harav Levi Yitzchok’s. The Rebbe sees the whole Torah as one entity, with Torah’s ideas in all subjects weaving together with one another. The Rebbe always concludes with *hamaaseh hu ha’ikar*, the action is essential. The Rebbe takes the loftiest of ideas discussed and translates these concepts into action.”

At Every Farbrengen

In later years, after publishing his father’s Torah, the Rebbe dedicated many hours delving into it at farbrengens.

The first of Harav Levi Yitzchok’s *sefarim* to be published contained notes he had written on Tanya, together with the first *sefer* of notes on the Zohar. These two *sefarim* were printed by Kehos in 5730*.⁵

Here’s how the story began: On Chof Av 5729*, the Rebbe asked that his father’s writings on the margins of his *sefarim* should be printed as soon as possible.

Rabbi Leibel Groner recorded in his diary: “When I entered, [the Rebbe] asked me if Schusterman [’s printing press] is working today. I answered ‘yes,’ and [the Rebbe] said, ‘If so, please give this [the Zohar containing his father’s notes on the margins] to them and ask that they begin working on [preparing] it today...’”

Every day, the Rebbe asked Rabbi Groner for an update on where the work was holding, until one day Rabbi Groner notified the Rebbe that they were having great difficulty deciphering the text. Harav Levi Yitzchok had written in tiny script,

Harav Levi Yitzchok’s Torah is divided into a five volume set:

- *Likkutei Levi Yitzchok - He’aros L’Sefer HaZohar - Bereishis*
- *Likkutei Levi Yitzchok - He’aros L’Sefer HaZohar - Shemos-Devarim* (These two *sefarim* were written on the margins of the Zohar that he possessed in exile.)
- *Likkutei Levi Yitzchok - He’aros Al Sefer HaTanya* - (This was also originally written on the margins of his Tanya that he possessed in exile. As a side note, since the Rebbe received the original Tanya his father had written the notes on, it remained in the Rebbe’s room throughout the nesius.)
- *Toras Levi Yitzchok - Chiddushim U’Biurim L’Shas Mishnah U’Gemara*
- *Likkutei Levi Yitzchok - Likkutim Al Pesukei Tanach U’Maamarei Chazal; Igros Kodesh* (Including the letters and *reshimos* that were sent to the Rebbe during the years before his arrest and exile.)

Important to note is that these five volumes are a very small amount of writings in comparison to the vast teachings of Harav Levi Yitzchok, transcribed during his years as *rav*, which were tragically lost during the war, and to this day have not been found. Once at a farbrengen, the Rebbe stated that his father had written plenty of teachings comprising thousands of booklets!⁴



לזכות
 החייל בצבאות ה'
 מנחם מענדל שיחי'
 לרגל יום הולדתו י"ד מנחם אב
 לשנת הצלחה בכל מכל כל, בגו"ר
 נדפס ע"י הוריו
 הרה"ת ר' דוד וזוגתו מרת פערל גאלדא
 ומשפחתם שיחיו
 טייכטל



You Don't Just Give "Shalom"

This story was related by Rabbi Shmuel Lew, and took place circa 5711-5712*.*

In the early years of the Rebbe's *nesius* there was a Bobover *kehila* in Crown Heights. One afternoon, two Bobover Chassidim were standing on Eastern Parkway; one of the Chassidim was local and the other was visiting from out of town. In those years the Rebbe would walk to 770 from his home or from his daily visits to Rebbetzin Chana.

As these two Bobover Chassidim stood there, the Rebbe was seen walking from a distance. This caught the visitor's attention and he asked his local friend if he knew who this person was because he looked like a very special Jew. He replied, "That is the new Lubavitcher Rebbe."

Excited by this, the visitor decided to approach the Rebbe to give "*shalom*" with a handshake, as is often customary in *Chassidische* circles. His friend tried to advise him not to but before he had the chance to do so, the visiting friend had already approached the Rebbe.

As he shook the Rebbe's holy hand and gave *shalom*, the Rebbe asked him his name and where he was from. He gave his name and told the Rebbe that he was currently living in Cleveland, Ohio.

The Rebbe replied that the community had begun building — or had begun discussions about building — a *mikveh* three years earlier, and had for some reason not seen much progress. The Rebbe asked him if he was aware of this and encouraged him to see what he could do to help make it happen.

The visitor answered respectfully that he wasn't a community activist; he merely lived there, worked for *parnasah* and was not involved in much else.

The Rebbe told him, "But you have more to do with it than I do. You're from Cleveland; I am not. I'm here in Brooklyn and [yet] I must inform you of what is happening with the *mikveh* in your own city?" The Rebbe urged and encouraged him to take upon himself to do what he could to make sure the *mikveh* would be built as soon as possible, and then the Rebbe continued on his way.

Returning to his friend, he repeated what had just transpired and noted how he regretted the encounter because now he has this responsibility. Hearing this, the local replied, "I tried to warn you. Everyone knows that when you see the Lubavitcher Rebbe you don't just give *shalom* — he gives you a job to do." **T**

A group of Orthodox Jewish men, likely Chassidim, are gathered around a large wooden pillar. They are wearing black suits and hats, and many have long grey beards. They are looking at a document held by one of the men in the foreground. The scene is indoors, possibly a synagogue or a community center.

“This Is Only the Beginning!”

Exclusive Interview with
Rabbi Yossi Groner

לזכות
מרת חיה מושקא תחי'
שוחאט
לרגל יום הולדתה - י"ט מנחם אב
ולזכות בעלה הרה"ת שלום דוב בער שיחי',
ובנותיהם ברכה ליפשא, עליזה ושיינדל
תחיינה



**Rabbi Yossi
Groner, head
shliach to the
Carolinas and son
of Rabbi Leibel Groner,
the Rebbe's longtime
mazkir, shares memories
of 770 and of the early
years of his shlichus.**

* 📞 5752-1991

MOTZEI SIMCHAS TORAH 5752*

MORDECHAI BARON VIA JEM 147856

Early Childhood

My earliest distinct memory of the Rebbe is from my upshernish in 5719*. My parents brought me and my twin brother Menachem Mendel to the Rebbe's room. It seemed to me that it was late at night, and I believe it was a night of *yechidus*. With a serious expression, the Rebbe pulled out a pair of scissors from his desk drawer, cut a little piece of my hair and then handed me a silver dollar. He then did the same for my brother.

The next special memory that stands out in my mind is from Simchas Torah 5724*. I was almost eight years old and at the beginning of *hakafos* I was standing on the top of the bleachers to the Rebbe's left. But after some time, I jumped down from my place and joined my father who was standing next to the Rebbe's *shtender* and I was able to see the Rebbe's face throughout *hakafos*.

It was a very special experience. Seeing the Rebbe's unbridled *simcha* as he pointed to all four directions while singing *Ufaratzta* and the extreme hand motions he made during Harav Levi Yitzchok's *niggun* is indescribable. Later that night, after the *seudas Yom Tov* in the Friediker Rebbe's apartment, the Rebbe came downstairs, distributed *l'chaim* to those who accepted upon themselves to learn more Chassidus during the coming year. He then taught two *niggunim*: *Hu Elokeinu* and the slow *Ki Anu Amecha*.

It was a little after 7:00 a.m. when the Rebbe left 770 to go home. It was cold outside and the Chassidim gathered outside in front of 770 were singing the final stanza of *Hu Elokeinu*. I positioned myself inside the front corridor right near the front door of 770 and was the only person near the door.

When the Rebbe came out of his room and walked towards the front

door of 770, he stopped right in front of me and started to wave his hands to the tune the Chassidim were singing outside the open door, while looking straight at me with a big smile. I started jumping up and down singing together with them. This is just one example of the special attention the Rebbe gave us children in those early years.

Crown Heights at the time was a very diverse Jewish neighborhood. We knew that the Rebbe is the essence of *kedusha* and the epicenter of our lives was 770. We spent as much time as possible there and loved hanging around the *bochurim*.

It was common in those days to see the Rebbe walking from his home to 770 and back. Although there was a rotation of *bochurim* who would walk several paces behind the Rebbe at night, during the day the Rebbe walked alone from his home to 770 and to visit his mother, Rebbetzin Chana. At times, non-Lubavitchers would approach the Rebbe and start conversations.

One afternoon the Rebbetzin called the *mazkirus* office with a message for the Rebbe and my father said that the Rebbe was not yet in 770. She expressed concern because the Rebbe had left the house a while back, so my father ran out of 770 and he saw the Rebbe speaking with a certain individual on Brooklyn Avenue. He politely but firmly told him that the Rebbe is very busy and he should

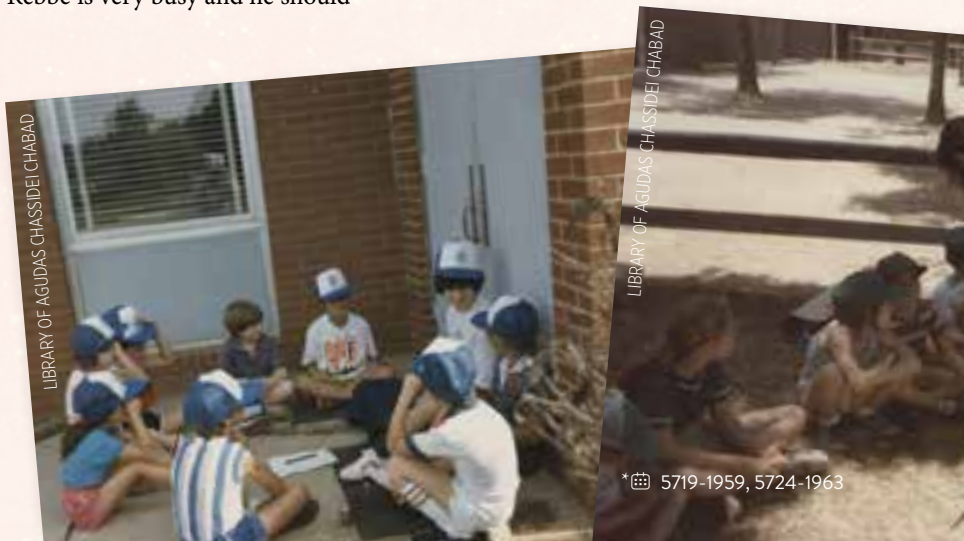
schedule an appointment for *yechidus* at the *mazkirus* office.

One peculiar story about the Rebbe walking in Crown Heights:

There was a small Belzer *shtiebel* on Eastern Parkway between Brooklyn Avenue and New York Avenue. One afternoon they were missing a tenth for a *minyan* and a fellow who was not from the neighborhood and had never seen the Rebbe before, offered to find a "tzenzer" on the street. Standing on the corner of Brooklyn Avenue and Eastern Parkway he saw the Rebbe walking towards the corner and asked if he could help them with the *minyan* in the *shtiebel*...

When my father noticed that the Rebbe was delayed in returning to 770, he ran towards the corner and asked a child riding a bicycle if he had seen the Rebbe, and the child directed him to the Belzer *shtiebel*. Upon entering, he saw the Rebbe standing near the bookshelf looking into a *sefer* as the rest of the *minyan* davened. The Rebbe motioned to my father to remain and then left.

Learning in Oholei Torah, our bus driver was Reb Yankel Holzman. He would sing *niggunim* with us during the ride. One day, as he turned into the service lane of Eastern Parkway we all saw the Rebbe walking towards 770. We were singing a *freilicher Chassidisher niggun* with the bus windows wide open and the Rebbe



waved his hands in encouragement to the *niggun* with a big smile. Reb Yankel stopped the bus, jumped into the middle of the bus and we all started dancing.

From a very young age we were at farbrengens. As children we mainly participated in the *niggunim* and focused on the exciting things that happened at the farbrengen such as when the Rebbe stood up to dance and other special events like that.

When we were 10 years old my brother and I made a *hachlata* to remain for every farbrengen from beginning to end. It was not easy, and it was obviously difficult to follow the *sichos* and *maamarim*, but we encouraged each other. Every Sunday our *melamed* would start class by asking the students to repeat something we had heard at the Rebbe's farbrengen and everyone had a chance to stand up and share something. This trained us to listen as best as we could and try to learn directly from the Rebbe.

Mazkir's Children

We were well aware of the great merit our father had to serve the Rebbe as a *mazkir* and felt a responsibility as his children as well. We barely saw our father throughout the week. Some evenings he would come home briefly between 6:00 and 7:00 p.m. and then rush back to 770, returning home very late at

night, often at 1:00 a.m. He then did much of his work associated with Otzar HaChassidim, preparing *sifrei Chassidus* for publication, since it was difficult to do this work during regular office hours. Early in the morning he would serve us breakfast and leave immediately.

We saw him most on Shabbos. During the *seudos* he would read and explain a letter of the Rebbe and he often shared a fresh story of the Rebbe, which were usually amazing miracles, while obviously omitting any identifying details.

Discretion was ingrained in us from very early on. Although my father never shared what he saw and heard by the Rebbe, it was inevitable that we would see or overhear something that was considered privileged information. For example, writing a letter to the Rebbe from Russia was extremely dangerous, so Chassidim would send their letters to relatives living in New York who then brought them to 770. Another option was to send the letters to our home, addressed to "Zeide." Whenever we saw the Russian envelopes addressed to *Zeide* we immediately put them in a designated spot in our home—without ever speaking about it to anyone—and my father would then bring them to the Rebbe.

The fact that our father was a *mazkir* did not mean we had extra privileges. We had to arrange our own places at farbrengens and all other occasions just like the rest of the kids and *bochurim*. My father never wanted

us to stand out as privileged children. Our classmates would have *yechidus* with their families at least once a year on their fathers' birthdays, but I did not have *yechidus* from my upshernish until bar mitzvah, after which I merited to the annual *yechidus* on my birthday like the rest of the *bochurim*.

Nevertheless, there were some special things we were able to observe that others were unable to. For example, on Chol Hamoed we davened in 770¹ and followed our father as he followed the Rebbe back to his room. Waiting on the steps in *Gan Eden Hatachton* we were able to catch a glimpse of what was happening inside as my father walked in and out. The Rebbe was sitting at the side of his desk learning—every single time. This made a very big impression on me.

The Rebbe always inquired about our family and wanted to know everything about each one of us. I know this from reading my father's diaries now, and we also knew about this at the time in several ways.

An interesting gesture the Rebbe once made to my parents was in 5735* when my brother and I were sent on shlichus to the yeshiva in Kfar Chabad.

Every Lubavitcher *bochur's* dream was to learn by the Rebbe and the *hanhalos* of the yeshivos in Eretz Yisroel, Brunoy and Montreal expressed to the Rebbe that if all the *bochurim* would all flock to New York they could shut down their yeshivos. In Elul of 5734* the Rebbe announced that in order to allow *bochurim* from out-of-town yeshivos to experience learning near the Rebbe's *daled amos*, groups of *bochurim* from New York would be sent as shlichim to out-of-town yeshivos to keep them going.²

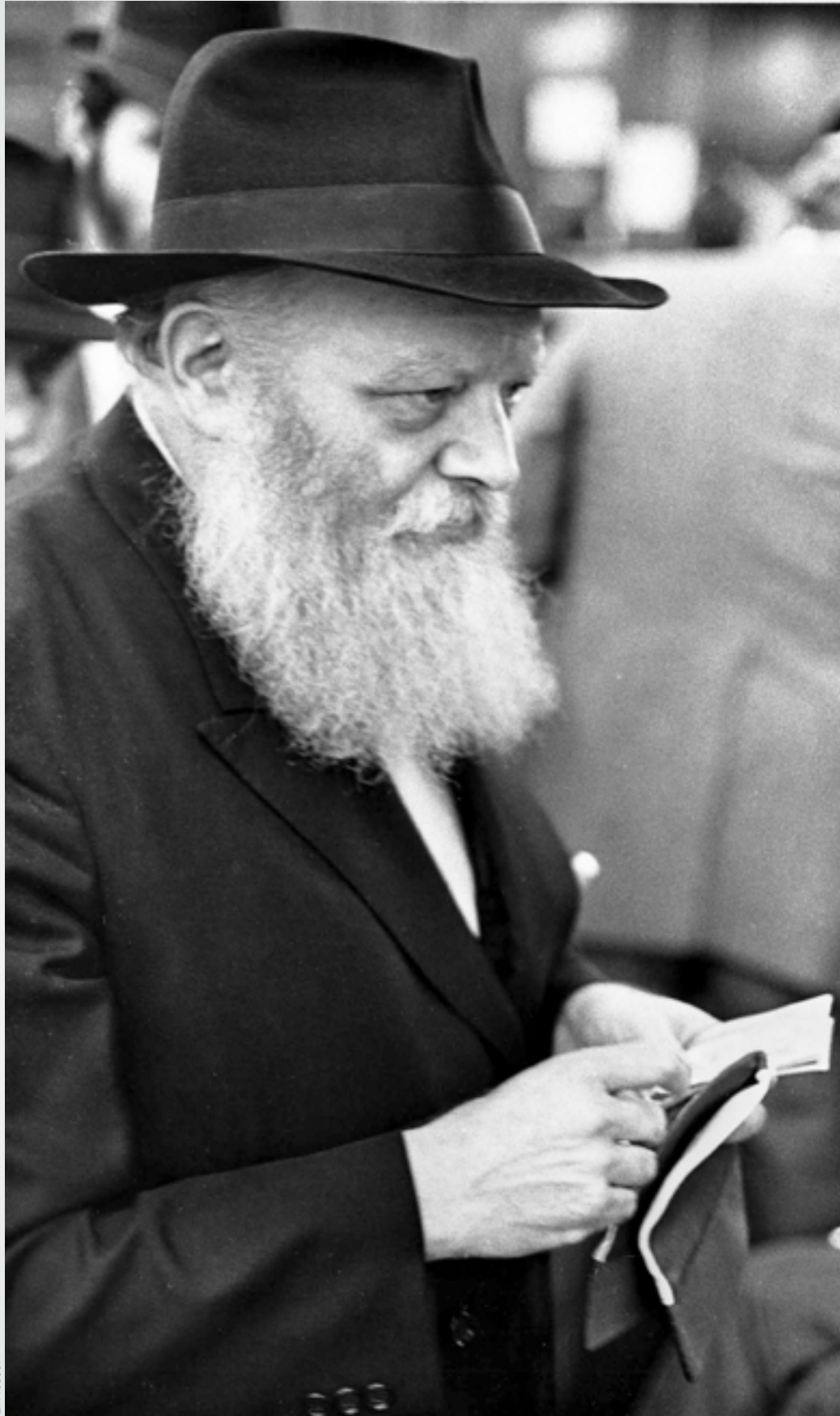
The largest group was sent to Eretz Yisroel to Yeshivas Toras Emes in Yerushalayim and to the yeshiva in Kfar Chabad. When we arrived, a group photo was taken of us and sent to the Rebbe. Upon receiving



5735-1975, 5734-1974



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EXCEPTIONAL SOLDIERS

On 23 Av 5736* a delegation of injured IDF veterans visited the Rebbe, while on a trip to the U.S. and Canada to attend the Paralympics in Toronto. We present a special photo gallery from this unique occasion.

The Rebbe came downstairs and said a *sicha* in *Lashon Hakodesh*. He explained that having a physical weakness or being deprived of a limb or a faculty, indicates that Hashem has given the *neshama* special powers to overcome those limitations and to surpass the achievements of ordinary people. The Rebbe suggested that these people not be called “disabled” or “handicapped” but rather special and unique, as they possess unique potentials that the rest of us do not, as well as the ability to be a living example of how every Yid can serve Hashem with *simcha*, overcoming all challenges.



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