

A Chassidisher **Derher**

א חסידישער דערהער

**Public Torah
Learning**

A CALL THROUGHOUT
THE GENERATIONS

**From Manuscript
to Masterpiece**

MAARECHES OTZAR
HACHASSIDIM



The Capital

*The Story of the
Town of Lubavitch*



ELUL 5784
ISSUE 147 (224)
OCTOBER 2024

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Special Thanks to

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A Chassidisher Derher (ISSN 26411059) (USPS 21880) is published monthly by A Chassidisher Derher Inc, 784 Eastern Pkwy, Brooklyn, NY 11213. Subscription price \$79.95 a year. Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn, NY.

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to A Chassidisher Derher, 784 Eastern Pkwy, Brooklyn, NY 11213.



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This magazine
has been made possible

לזכות
הרה"ת ר' שלום וזוגתו מרת שרה
וילדיהם ישראל, ריסא, חי' מושקא,
אמונה מלכה, יעקב יהודה, ולאה שיחיו
אייזיקוביץ

The month of Elul is special in many ways: It is a preparatory month for the upcoming New Year, a time when the King, Hashem, is “in the field,” a time when we focus on davening and *teshuvah* more than the rest of the year, and so on. One of the special dates that we mark is on the fifteenth: Tes-Vov Elul, the day that the Rebbe Rashab founded Tomchei Temimim.

The Rebbe spoke numerous times that, as a *nossi*, the Rebbe Rashab’s work is everlasting and continues to have an impact within every person who studied in Tomchei Temimim for their entire lives.

In one very memorable *sicha*, the Rebbe extended this point to the physical space where Tomchei Temimim was founded as well. It was shortly after the fall of the Soviet Union, and the Rebbe spoke excitedly about the fact that Chassidim once again visited the original city of Lubavitch and held Chassidische farbrengens there, repeating words of Chassidus and doing *maasim tovim* there.

“If at all times we apply the rule of ‘*Kedusha eina zaza m’mekoma*’ (holiness does not leave its original space),” said the Rebbe, “all the more so does this apply to the original space of the yeshiva in the city of Lubavitch.”

The Rebbe continued that each and every one of those Shluchim who participated in the trip to Lubavitch were themselves *talmidim* of Tomchei Temimim. “In that

sense,” said the Rebbe, “they remain *talmidim* of Tomchei Temimim until the end of their lives...”

As a practical outcome, the Rebbe called for more branches of Tomchei Temimim to be established around the world. Whether they bear the actual name “Tomchei Temimim” or not—the founders are the same and the mission is the same: to learn *Pnininus HaTorah* together with *Nigleh*, in a manner that demonstrates how all of Torah is essentially one; “*Torah Temima*.”¹

In this spirit, you will read a fascinating overview in this magazine about the history of the town of Lubavitch and its place as the capital of Chabad Chassidus for over a century.

The Rebbe points to the establishment of Tomchei Temimim as a major turning point in *hafatzas hamaayanos*, where *talmidim* are molded to be “*neiros l’ha’ir*”—lamps that illuminate the world with the light of Chassidus and pave the way for the coming of Moshiach, may it be *teikef umiyad Mammash*.

The Editors

בברכת כתיבה וחתימה טובה לשנה טובה ומתוקה,
עש"ק עקב, יום ההילולא השמונים, כ"ף מנחם אב ה'תשפ"ד

1 Hoshana Rabba 5752; Sichos Kodesh 5752 vol. 1, p. 173.



לזכות
 החתן הרה"ת ר' לוי שיחי' טייכטל
 והכלה המהוללה מרת חיה מושקא תחי' הנדל
 לרגל נישואיהם כ"א אלול ה'תשפ"ד
 שיבנו בית בישראל בנין עדי עד

נדפס ע"י הורי החתן
 הרה"ת ר' יצחק וזוגתו מרת אסתר שיחיו טייכטל
 נאשוויל, טענעסי

דעם רבינ'ס אַ וואַרט אַ וואַרט

A Word
 on the
 Parsha

Compiled By:
 Rabbi Mendel Vogel

שופטים

כִּי הָאָדָם עֵץ הַשָּׂדֶה וְגו' (כ, יט)

"Is the tree of the field a man..."

In this *possuk*, *Yidden* are compared to a tree, while in other places we find that *Yidden* are likened to grain; for example in Yirmiyahu (2:3): "Yisroel is holy to Hashem, the first of His grain..."

The main difference between trees and grain is that grain is a necessity for human life, whereas trees yield fruit which provide pleasure and delight, but are not essential.

In terms of *avodas Hashem*, this translates into the difference between Torah study and *mitzva* performance:

The fulfillment of *mitzvos* must be grounded in *kabolas ol*—to fulfill the will of Hashem, just as a servant must fulfill the will of his master. In this respect, the observance of *mitzvos* is similar to grain, which is crucial for human existence.

Torah study, on the other hand, should be a joyful and delightful experience, as Chazal say: "A person should always

learn the area [in Torah] that his heart desires." Torah study is, therefore, similar to the fruits of a tree, whose consumption brings pleasure to the person.

When the *possuk* compares *Yidden* to grain, it is referring to a specific attribute of *Yidden*—their observance of *mitzvos* (which is similar to grain).

The *possuk* that compares *Yidden* to a tree is referring to another attribute of *Yidden*—their Torah study (which is similar to the fruits of the tree).

We can now appreciate the *possuk's* precision in its use of the word "*Adam*":

The Torah uses four different titles when referring to man: "*Adam*," "*Ish*," "*Gever*" and "*Enosh*." These four names relate to different aspects of a person's personality, and are used accordingly. "*Adam*" is connected specifically to the intellectual aspect of man.

Since our *possuk* discusses the attribute of Torah study—"עץ השדה"—it uses the title "*Adam*," since one needs to use one's intellect to study Torah.

Takeaway:

By studying Torah with *geshmak* and *chayus*—it will ultimately carry over into one’s fulfillment of *mitzvos*, so that even his *kabolas ol* is with a *geshmak*.

(Adapted from *Maamar Arba’ Roshei Shonim Heim*,
15 Shevat 5731 - *Kuntres 15 Shevat 5751*)

כי תצא

כִּי־תֵצֵא לְמִלְחָמָה וְגו' (כ"א, י')

If you go out to war...

Rashi explains that the *possuk* here is referring to a “*milchemes horeshus*”; a non-obligatory war.

To clarify this concept in terms of *avodas Hashem*:

War, in the spiritual sense, is the day-to-day struggle and confrontation required of every Yid in his *avodas Hashem*—both with the challenges that the material world places before him, as well as those coming from his *yetzer hora* and *nefesh habahamis*.

This war is divided into two categories:

1. “*Milchemes mitzva*”: A war which one must fight (according to the guidelines of the Torah) in order to live a *Yiddische* life of Torah and *mitzvos*; every Yid is obligated to partake in it.

2. “*Milchemes horeshus*”: A war that goes beyond what is necessary for living a life of Torah and *mitzvos*, whose purpose is to expand the influence of *kedusha* in the world; both outwardly—by refining more and more of the material world—as well as inwardly—by making a constant effort to move forward and rise higher in one’s personal *avodas Hashem*.

This is what the *possuk* is teaching us:

A person should not be satisfied with fighting the “*milchemes mitzva*,” claiming that “what the Torah required me to do is enough; why should I put myself in danger for a goal that I am not obligated to achieve?”

One must also embark on a “*milchemes horeshus*”—despite the danger involved—until the ultimate goal of conquering the entire world, and turning it into a *dira btachtonim*, is fulfilled.

Takeaway:

A Yid is expected to do two opposite things at once: The Torah tells a Yid that he needs to embark on an “optional war”—despite the fact that it involves dan-

ger—and at the same time, the Torah commands him to protect himself from any unnecessary danger—“ונשמרתם ונמאד לנפשותיכם.” How is this possible?

Since *Yidden* are connected to Hashem Who is beyond any limitations whatsoever, we therefore also have the capability to transcend nature, and carry even contradictory traits at the same time.

(*Toras Menachem - Hisva’aduyos 5750 vol. 4, p. 222*)

כי תבוא

וְהָיָה כִּי־תָבֹוא אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ נָתַן לְךָ נַחֲלָה וְיִרְשָׁתָהּ וְיָשַׁבְתָּ בָּהּ (כ"ו, א')

And it will be, when you come into the land which Hashem, your G-d, gives you for an inheritance, and you possess it and settle in it.

The interpretation of this *possuk* according to Chassidus and in terms of *avodas Hashem*:

וְהָיָה כִּי־תָבֹוא אֶל־הָאָרֶץ

...The *neshama* descends into this physical and corporeal world.

But one may ask: This descent—with all of its difficulties and dangers—constitutes a huge ‘downgrade’ for the *neshama*. Why, then, does the *possuk* refer to it with the word “[כִּי־תָבֹוא]” a word which Chazal say is associated with joy?

So, the *possuk* continues:

אֲשֶׁר ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ נָתַן לְךָ

Since the *neshama*’s descent is Hashem’s will, and Hashem is a good and benevolent Creator, one has to say that the ‘downgrade’ is not a true one, but rather a temporary withdrawal which ultimately leads to an immeasurably greater elevation—hence the joy.

Still, one may ask: Since the ultimate elevation comes about as a gift from Hashem, it has the drawback of being “נהמא דכיסופא” (*bread of shame that, being unearned, shames its receiver*). How, then, can one rejoice in it wholeheartedly?

The *possuk* therefore continues and explains that it is not considered “נהמא דכיסופא,” for two reasons:

1. וְיִרְשָׁתָהּ

The concept of “נהמא דכיסופא” applies only in a situation where the giver and the receiver are two separate people. When someone is the recipient of an inheritance, however, it is not “נהמא דכיסופא”, since the heir steps into the shoes of the testator, taking his place. There is no separation between the giver and the receiver—they become one.

Yidden are a "חלק אלוהה ממעל ממש"—we are one with Hashem—and, therefore, as in the case of inheritance, there is no "נהמה דכיסופא".

2. וְשִׁבְתָּ בָּהּ.

The ultimate elevation of the *neshama* does not happen by itself—it requires an act of “*yeshiva*”; meaning exertion and effort (the Gemara says that the term “*yeshiva*” is an expression of remaining in one place, an act of persistence and dedication.)

So, at the end of the day, *Yidden* are not just getting a “free lunch,” but are rewarded according to the work they do.

Takeaway:

This is the reason why your *neshama* was sent into this world: To bring *Elokus* into the *gashmiyus*—not to suppress the *gashmiyus*, but to reveal the *Elokus* which is already there.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 9, p. 357)

נצבים-וילך

הַעֲדַתִּי בְּכֶם הַיּוֹם אֶת-הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת-הָאָרֶץ וְגו' (ל', טו)

This day, I call upon the heaven
and the earth as witnesses...

“Hashem said to the *Yidden*: ‘Look at the heavens which I created to serve you. Have they ever changed their ways?’

Has the sphere of the sun ever failed to rise from the east to illuminate the entire world, as it is stated, ‘The sun rises, and the sun sets’ (Koheles 1:5)?

Look at the earth which I created to serve you. Has it ever changed its ways? Have you ever sown [in] it that it did not grow? Or have you ever sown wheat and it yielded barley?

Now, they [heaven and earth] were created with neither reward nor loss in mind—for if they are meritorious [by fulfilling their purpose for which I created them], they nevertheless do not receive reward [for this]; and if they sin, they are not punished. And yet [even with this lack of incentive], they have never changed their ways!

So you, who will receive reward if you are meritorious and who will be punished if you sin—how much more so [should you fulfill My will]!” (Rashi)

Reading Rashi’s words, one notices a distinction between the “testimony” of the heavens and that of the earth:

When it comes to the heavens, Rashi gives only one example of the fact that they don’t deviate from their task:

“Has the sphere of the sun ever failed to rise from the east to illuminate the entire world?”

For the earth, he gives *two* examples:

1. “Have you ever sown [in] it that it did not grow?” 2. “Or have you ever sown wheat and it yielded barley?”

The reason is as follows:

Hashem brought two “witnesses” (heaven and earth) because the observance of Torah and *mitzvos* (with regard to which the heavens and the earth are “testifying”) consists of two parts, corresponding to heaven and earth:

1. Torah study corresponds to the “heavens,” since learning is a mental and spiritual exercise. 2. *Mitzva* performance corresponds to “earth,” since most *mitzvos* are physical acts.

Rashi, therefore, gives two examples of the “testimony” of earth, corresponding to the two categories of *mitzvos* themselves:

1. “Have you ever sown [in] it that it did not grow?” corresponds to מצוות עשה: Just as the earth makes sure to fulfill its role and to grow what is sown in it, so must a person fulfill the *mitzvos* given to him.

2. “Or have you ever sown wheat and it yielded barley?” corresponds to מצוות לא תעשה: Just as the earth does not do things that are *contrary* to its role (like growing seeds that were not sown in it), so must a person be careful to not do that which Hashem forbids.

Takeaway:

The Gemara in Nedarim (39b) tells us, “Each and every day, [the heavenly hosts] shoot arrows and [throw] spears at [the sun and the moon, and only then do they emerge and] illuminate [the world].” The reason for their reluctance is that people on earth have turned them into objects of worship. Yet, nevertheless—despite their complaints and excuses—they never cease to fulfill their task.

When a *Yid* is troubled with questions and doubts; or has excuses not to fulfill the tasks which Hashem has given him; he can take a lesson from the sun which rises every single morning without fail—despite the hesitations or excuses it may have.

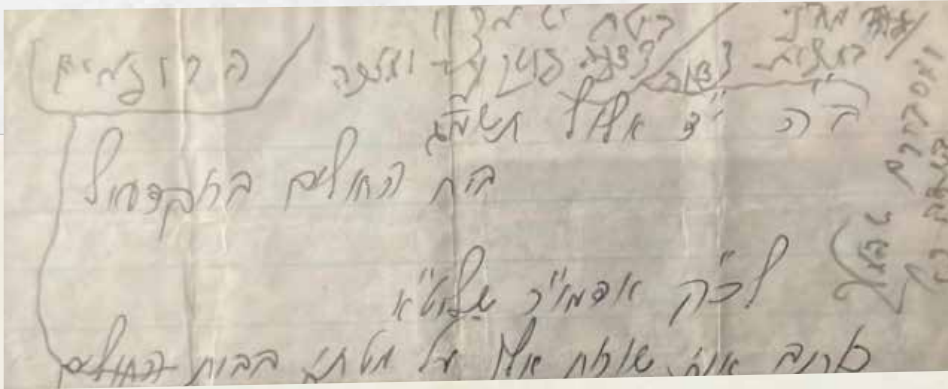
(Sichas Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim-Vayelech 5739)



לזכות
משפחת קארנפעלד
בורביינק, קאליפורניא

STAY FOCUSED

An individual wrote a letter to the Rebbe from his hospital bed, and received the following response:



[בבית החולים] הרופאים
בטח יש אצלו צדקה
פושקע – ומזכה עוד מבני
במצות צדקה ומסברים
שהמלך בשדה כו'

In the letter, he referred to the hospital as a *"beis hacholim"* (lit. a house for the sick). The Rebbe crossed a line through *"hacholim—the sick"* and instead wrote *"harof'im—[a house] of doctors,"* then added:

You certainly have a Tzedakah box with you, and you allow other Jews the privilege of partaking in the mitzvah of Tzedakah. You also explain to them [that we are currently in the month of Elul when] the King is in the field, etc.¹

1. Published in Teshura Chaikin-Shapiro 5783.



MY FIRST TIME SEEING THE REBBE

ELUL 5719

Compiled from the diary of Rabbi Naftali Roth, a bochur from Eretz
Yisroel who traveled to the Rebbe for the first time.

COMPILED BY: RABBI YANKY BELL
WRITTEN BY: RABBI MENACHEM LAZAROFF

טור 'לעבן מיטן רבי'ן הוקדש לזכרון ולעילוי נשמת
ר' שמואל ב"ר יהושע אליהו ז"ל
ואשתו מרת שרה ע"ה בת ר' יקותיאל ומרת לאה הי"ד
תנ"צ'ב'ה

ע"י בנם
ר' יקותיאל יהודה
הזוגתו מרת פעסל לאה ומשפחתם שיחיו
רוהר

Wednesday, 13 Elul

At 11:00 am, El-Al flight 205 landed at the big American airport, and with much gratitude to Hashem, I arrived in New York. A few *bochurim* were waiting at arrivals to pick me up. They greeted me warmly, took my suitcases, and we got into a taxi to Crown Heights.

During the thirty-minute drive, a whirlwind of emotions overtook me. I was filled with eager anticipation for what was yet to come. What did I do to deserve such a great merit?

As we approached 770, my excitement grew, and I struggled to contain myself, attempting to have my “mind control the heart.” Finally, around 12:00 pm, we arrived. The taxi stopped in front of the magnificent edifice of 770.

Despite my excitement, I did not have the chutzpah to enter the Rebbe’s Beis Midrash without first going to Mikvah.

Finally, after this important step, I entered the “chambers of the king” with due reverence. My friend pointed out the Rebbe’s antechamber to my left, from which an eternal light shines upon the entire world.

From there, we entered the *zal*, where all the seats were filled with *bochurim* learning Torah. I squeezed into a spot in the eastern corner of the room and began to learn.

At 2:15 pm, there was a short break for lunch, and the Rebbe’s chief secretary, Rabbi Hodakov, greeted me warmly.

As 3:00 approached, the hallway between the *zal* and the Rebbe’s room cleared out, and the front door to 770 remained closed in anticipation of the Rebbe’s arrival for Mincha. Half of the *zal* emptied to make space for the Rebbe, and his table in the northeastern corner of the room near the entrance was cleared of any *seforim*.

Utter silence filled the building for a few minutes as the clock ticked away the seconds. Suddenly, we heard the door to the Rebbe’s room close, prompting everyone to rise. A palpable sense of awe filled the room as the Rebbe walked towards the entrance of the *zal*. There, I saw the Rebbe for the first time.

As much as I’ve heard from those who have been by the Rebbe, and as much as I learned the Rebbe’s Torah, nothing compares to the indescribable experience of seeing the Rebbe in all of his glory right in front of me. It was a fulfillment of the words “והיו עיניך רואות את מוריק” – And your eyes will see your teacher” in real life.

The Rebbe entered the room holding a Siddur Torah Ohr, walked to his table, and put the siddur down. Rabbi Hodakov, who was standing nearby, closed the door. The Rebbe then adjusted his *gartel*, ensuring both sides were even, and glanced at everyone present, his face glowing



RABBI NAFTALI ROTH AS A BOCHUR.

like an angel from above.

The Rebbe opened his siddur and began davening quietly, leaning with his two hands on the table, facing south. For *Shemoneh Esrei*, the Rebbe picked up his siddur, turned east, and took the three steps back.

The Rebbe stood still and davened, not *ba’arichus*. When the Rebbe took three steps back at the end of *Shemoneh Esrei*, the Chazzan began *Chazaras Hashatz*. The Rebbe took three steps forward at the word “*V’ne’eman*”, and remained standing until “*HaKeil Hakadosh*.”

The Rebbe sat down, his head resting on his arm, looking inside the siddur throughout *Chazaras Hashatz*. The Rebbe stood up and bowed during Modim, only sitting down for *Nefilas Apayim* in Tachanun. By “*Mah naaseh*,” the Rebbe stood up for the rest of davening, and I was able to hear a bit of the Rebbe’s holy voice for the first time.

After the final *kaddish*, the Rebbe took his siddur and opened the door, glancing at the clock as he returned to his room.

The Temimim, having spent time with the Rebbe, returned to their studies with increased vigor and enthusiasm for the rest of the afternoon. As the time for Maariv approached, a hush fell upon the room. Everyone stood up, half the room emptied out, the Rebbe’s table was cleared, and we heard the door to the Rebbe’s room close.

Not wasting a second, the Rebbe walked briskly towards the *zal*. Just like he did for Mincha, the Rebbe walked into the room holding his Siddur Torah Ohr and

put on his *gartel*, ensuring that both sides were even. The Rebbe then looked around the room at everybody present.

The Rebbe's face had an amazing glow and appeared different from Mincha to Maariv, something I can't adequately describe or put into words.

The Rebbe remained standing until after Barchu, then he sat down, resting his head on his right hand as he looked inside the siddur. It was wonderful to witness the Rebbe cover his eyes and say Shema, and my heart was bursting with joy at having merited this experience.

The Rebbe stood up at "Amein Yehei Shmei Rabah" before *Shemoneh Esrei*, faced east, and davened without any noticeable movement. The Rebbe completed *Shemoneh Esrei* relatively quickly and took three steps back, returning to his place at "Yehei Shmei Rabbah." The Rebbe then stood facing the crowd with his two arms leaning on the table until after the final *kaddish*.

After davening, the Rebbe opened the door, glanced at the clock, and returned to his room.

Subsequently, Rabbi Hodakov informed me that tomorrow night, I could enter the Rebbe's room for *yechidus*. Fear and trepidation overcame me, and intense emotions took hold as I began to prepare myself for *yechidus*, although no preparation in the world would be sufficient to properly enter the Kodesh Hakodoshim.

Over a sleepless night and into the following day, I thought about my past and contemplated ways to improve in the future. I counted down the minutes until Thursday night, writing down my thoughts and what I wanted to tell the Rebbe.

Before my first *yechidus*, I had the merit of seeing the Rebbe three more times that day: for Krias HaTorah, Mincha, and Maariv.

Thursday, 14 Elul

The Rebbe comes to the *zal* for *Kriah* on Mondays and Thursdays. As the time approached, the hallway between the Rebbe's room and the *zal* emptied. At 10:05 am, the Rebbe walked out of his room, glanced into the Merkos office, and entered the Beis Midrash when the minyan was up to *Kriah*.

There was a Tehillim and Chumash on the Rebbe's table. The Rebbe put on his *gartel* and opened the Chumash.

I was called up for an *aliya* to *bentch Gomet*. It is difficult to describe what it feels like to stand in the spotlight with the Rebbe's eyes on you. The Rebbe was called up for *Shlishi*, and the *brachos* were the first time I heard the Rebbe's holy voice so clearly.

The Rebbe lifted the Torah slightly as he said "*Borchu*," and again three times during the *bracha*. The Rebbe then read along quietly with the *Baal Koreh*. After the *aliya*, the Rebbe closed the Torah, turned to his right, and said the *bracha*, lifting the Torah three more times.

The Rebbe remained standing until after *Hagba*. As he returned to his seat, the Rebbe passed the *Aron Kodesh* and touched the *paroches*. The Rebbe said Tehillim at his place until the Torah was returned to the *Aron*. Then he looked at the clock, touched the Mezuzah with his left hand, and returned to his room.

The rest of the day passed in a blur as the hours and minutes slowly ticked by, drawing closer to 8:00 pm, the time of my first *yechidus*.

Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim-Vayeilech, 23 Elul

The Rebbe was called up for Maftir. It was a wonderful sight to see the Rebbe reading the Haftorah intently, seriously and slowly, in a low voice that pierces the heart. In middle of the Haftorah, the Rebbe burst out crying and continued reading while trying to hold back tears.

About an hour after davening, the Rebbe came out for the *farbrenge*, walking briskly through the crowd. The Rebbe sat down in his place, and the *farbrenge* began with several *niggunim*. Then the Rebbe leaned forward



slightly and began the first *sicha*.

After the first *sicha*, people said *Lchaim* to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe responded. The Rebbe looked around the crowded room, saying *Lchaim V'livracha* to each one. His lips moved quietly, "*Lchaim V'livracha*."

The son of Reb Berel Gansburg approached the Rebbe to say *Lchaim*, the Rebbe extended his hand in "Sholom Aleichem" and his face lit up as he smiled.

In general, the *bittul* shown to the Rebbe is immense; when the Rebbe passes, everyone trembles. During davening, when the *bochurim* look at the Rebbe for a while, the Rebbe looks back, and also at farbrengens.

Later, the Rebbe said the *maamar* for over an hour. At the end of the *maamar* and also during the *sicha* that followed, the Rebbe cried a lot.

During the farbrengen, Sheva Brachos were also held for two *chassanim*. After the farbrengen, there was *chaz-zara* on the *maamar* until close to *shkiah*, and then those involved quickly ate Seudas Shabbos. On Shabbos and on Monday, the Rebbe said *kaddish* with the accompanying Mishnayos and *Kaddish d'Rabbanan*.

Tuesday, 26 Elul, 3rd Day of Selichos

Today, the Rebbe went to the Ohel.

Thursday 28 Elul, Eve of Erev Rosh Hashanah

Tonight, after Maariv, Rabbi Hodakov summoned a group of *bochurim* to the Rebbe's room. A few *rabbonim* also accompanied us: Rabbis Binyomin Gorodetzky, Shmuel Levitin, Yisroel Jacobson, and Sholom Morozov.

We entered the Rebbe's room, and he looked around at everyone present. Then the Rebbe closed his eyes and began by saying that much time had already elapsed since the start of the "*Ufaratzta*" campaign, yet nothing had really been done about it. "I have already done all that I can. I have spoken about it, screamed about it, once, even ten times."

The Rebbe continued, explaining that like Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur is connected to the previous year. Additionally, Yom Kippur serves as the day of atonement for that year's failings.

To bring down the missing *hashpa'aos* from the past Shemitta and leap year of 5719, which could have been achieved through *Ufaratzta*, a group of at least two or three people should say Tehillim or daven around the clock until after Yom Kippur. This will fill the breach,



THE REBBE IS MESADER KIDDUSHIN, 21 ELUL 5719.

leading to a *ksiva v'chasima tova* for a year of revealed good.

Throughout the *sicha*, the Rebbe's eyes remained closed. Toward the end, the Rebbe began to cry softly. With tears streaming down his face, the Rebbe occasionally rested his head in his hands, wiping his eyes with a cloth.

After giving the *bracha*, the Rebbe cried even more strongly, and rested his head in his hands. Everyone left the room deeply moved and shaken. Rabbi Hodakov promptly repeated the Rebbe's words to everyone present and established a committee to ensure the Rebbe's directives were fulfilled.

Friday, Erev Rosh Hashanah

Today, the Rebbe joined the minyan for Shacharis.

After davening, we all prepared to submit a *pan* to the Rebbe.

When the time arrived, the Rebbe opened the door to his room, and the first group entered to each deliver their pan. About fifteen minutes later, the Rebbe's door reopened for the second group. Following this, the *Pan Klali* was presented to the Rebbe.

COMPILED BY:
RABBI LEVI GREENBERG

WRITTEN BY:
RABBI MENDY GREENBERG

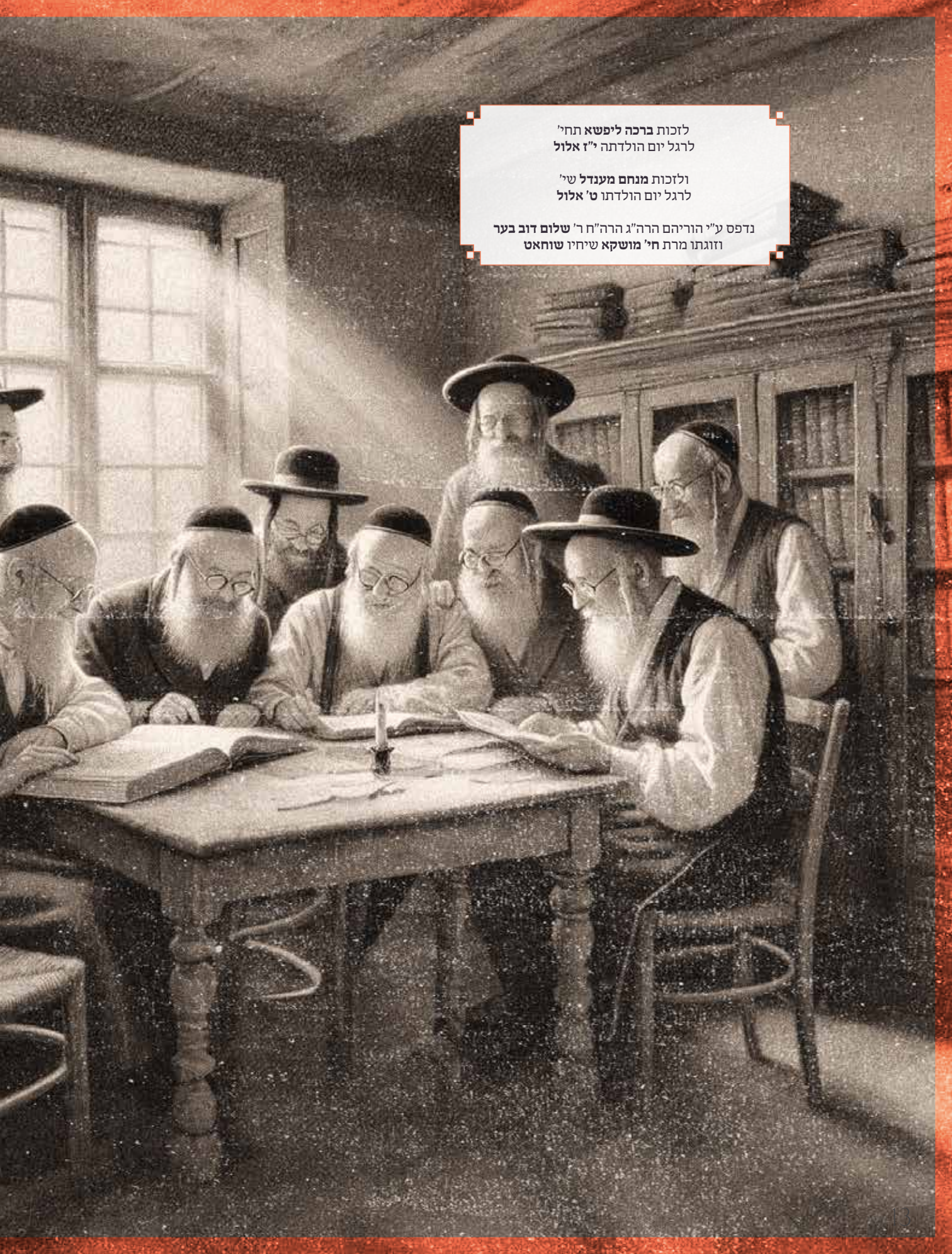
PUBLIC TORAH LEARNING

A CALL THROUGHOUT
THE GENERATIONS

לזכות ברכה ליפשא תחי'
לרגל יום הולדתה י"ז אלול

ולזכות מגחם מענדל שי'
לרגל יום הולדתו ט' אלול

נדפס ע"י הוריהם הרה"ג הרה"ח ר' שלום דוב בער
וזוגתו מרת חי' מושקא שיחיו שוחאט



THE MESSAGE FROM LUBAVITCH

“To the Anash of the city of Haditch...”

Thus begins an undated letter from the Tzemach Tzedek to the Chassidim of the town of Haditch in Ukraine.

A message had reached the Tzemach Tzedek from the distant town, saying that the conduct of Anash in the local shul did not meet the expectations of a Chabad shul. People were speaking *devarim biteilim* as minyanim were in progress, and walking around during davening.

This was unacceptable. Not only because more was expected of Chassidei Chabad, but also because of the significance of their location. “Your community,” the Tzemach Tzedek points out, “is home to the resting place of the *Aron Elokim*, my grandfather the [Alter] Rebbe!” The letters of the Alter Rebbe speak with great emphasis about the appropriate conduct expected in a chassidishe shul during davening; it was unthinkable that right near his resting place, his instructions wouldn’t be heeded.

The Tzemach Tzedek gave several instructions to rectify the situation. One of them—the topic of this article—concerns public Torah study:

“Learning with a minyan is something that needs to be strengthened as much as possible, because it is the foundation and source of everything.”¹

Shiurei Torah B’Rabim, learning with a minyan, was the subject of numerous directives of the Rabbeim throughout the generations. In fact, this is the topic of the oldest surviving *nichtav klali* from the Alter Rebbe.

IGGERES HAKODESH SIMAN CHOF-GIMMEL

The earliest letters from the Alter Rebbe are short ones, usually pertaining to *tzedaka*. The first known long letter is a letter dated circa 5545, the early years of his *nesius*.

The Alter Rebbe cites the Mishnah, “עשרה שיושבין ועוסקין” (ten people sitting and engaging in Torah study have the *Shechinah* resting among them),² and dwells at length on the virtues of learning Torah in a public setting.

He explains that there is a key distinction between a person who learns Torah alone, and one who learns in a minyan. While Torah learning alone is obviously worthy of reward,

the reward is personalized and limited to the capacity of the individual. But the presence of the *Shechinah* mentioned in the Mishna is far greater—it means that a revelation of Hashem’s infinite light, without regard for the individual’s capacity, rests on those who learn in a minyan. A person who learns Torah alone certainly receives reward, but a minyan of Torah learners is graced by an incredibly powerful *Giluy Elokus*.

The letter, later published as *Iggeres Hakodesh Siman 23*, includes very practical *horaos*: The Alter Rebbe says that every day, between Mincha and Maariv, a shiur should be held in Ein Yaakov. Another daily shiur should be held in Shulchan Aruch—Orach Chayim, and—on Shabbos toward Mincha time—a shiur in Hilchos Shabbos.

The letter continues with a sharp reprimand for one who separates himself to study other topics, or—worse—leaves the room without ensuring the presence of a minyan in his absence. “And he who listens to me,” the Alter Rebbe concludes, “in his days and in our days, the Jewish people will be redeemed.”



OPENING PAGE OF THE MITTELER REBBE’S INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST EDITION OF THE ALTER REBBE’S SHULCHAN ARUCH IN 5574.

THE CAUSE FOR PUBLICATION

In the years following the Alter Rebbe's *histalkus*, the Mitteler Rebbe repeated the Alter Rebbe's call for public shiurei Torah in his letters to Chassidim. In several letters, the Mitteler Rebbe emphasized the importance of a *kvius ittim l'Torah* in a public setting—three times a week for learning Chassidus, and daily for learning *nigleh*.

Which area in *nigleh* should one focus on?

In those years, the Mitteler Rebbe published the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch, and in his letters—including the introduction to the Shulchan Aruch itself—he places a big emphasis on *halachos b'taameihen*, learning Halachah with an understanding of the reasoning behind the law (the goal of the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch).

“More than once or twice, I heard from his holy mouth that if Hashem would agree with him, he would decree that all Anash, from great to small, in every city and shul, establish groups to learn *halachos* with their reasonings... I, therefore, decree upon them to establish set shiurim in these *halachos* in every shul...”



PHOTO OF THE IMREI EMES AROUND THE TIME OF HIS MEETING WITH THE REBBE RASHAB.

The Mitteler Rebbe instructs that the entire Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim be divided among the members of a shul to be studied every day and night, concluding the study of all its *halachos* once or twice a year.

In the above-mentioned introduction, the Mitteler Rebbe lays out a learning plan for his Chassidim to follow: For those who are very preoccupied with their work and have little time on their hands, the Mitteler Rebbe recommends Mishnayos, Rif and the Shulchan Aruch of the Mechaber along with the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch; for full-time learners, he lays out a detailed plan, the *sefer* that the Mitteler Rebbe received from the Alter Rebbe on how to know *halachos b'taameihen*.

One should first learn a Masechta, the Mitteler Rebbe says, with the Tosfos that have halachic ramifications, and focus on the Rosh, reviewing the *halachos* that derive from it, followed by the Tur (without Beis Yosef), reviewing the material several times. One should then proceed to Beis Yosef, reviewing each *siman* two or three times, and continue with the rulings of the Shulchan Aruch and the Rema, here too, reviewing the material several times. A separate time should be set aside to learn the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch along with Kuntres Acharon, reviewing the text proper several times until one is fluent in the *halachos* and their rationale. This is all in addition to set Shiurim in Tanach, Midrash, Zohar and Sifrei Musar.³

WHEN THE GERRER REBBE WANTED PERSPECTIVE

In the years of the Rebbe Maharash's *nesius*, new winds began to blow in Russia. Secular movements began to sweep through the Jewish community, taking many of the youth away from Torah and Mitzvos.

In addition to founding Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim, the Rebbe Rashab began numerous initiatives in the early years of his *nesius* to combat this phenomenon. By the year 5667, some ten years after Tomchei Temimim had been established, the Rebbe Rashab's name had spread far and wide as a champion of authentic Yiddishkeit throughout the Russian Empire.

That year, when the Rebbe Rashab visited Würzburg in Germany, he received notice that the Imrei Emes, who had only recently assumed leadership of Ger, wanted to visit. The visit didn't materialize, but the following year, when the Rebbe Rashab visited Königsberg, the Gerrer Rebbe reached out again. A meeting was arranged at a middle point between the two Rebbes, in the private study of Reb Shmuel

of Sochatchov, son of the Avnei Nezer.

The Gerrer Rebbe wanted to hear about the challenges to Yiddishkeit in Russia and the Rebbe Rashab's strategy to combat them. The conversation was recorded by the Rebbe Rashab in a letter to the Frierdiker Rebbe, and sheds light on the Rebbe Rashab's perspective about the importance of public Torah study.

"His first question," wrote the Rebbe Rashab, "was about the state of Yiddishkeit in our regions. I answered that the environment is generally a Jewish one, but there are many worrying aspects. Many of the youth are behaving in unacceptable ways. The reason is that in recent years, there has been a different spirit spreading throughout the *klal*, and it has negative consequences in a variety of ways."

At the time of this meeting, the Rebbe Rashab was 47 years old, and he pointed out that just a few decades earlier, in his own youth, things looked very different.

"I briefly explained that I personally recall earlier years in which you could find *balebatim* in the Beis Midrash who, after closing their businesses, would come to the Beis Midrash to learn—one Mishnayos, another Gemara, another Poskim, each one on his own level. But it was specifically in the Beis Midrash, and not at home—and that sustained the learning. Most importantly, it gave prominence to Torah study in one's heart; one's son would pay attention and wouldn't drift too far, and the father would pay attention to ensure his son learned as well.

"This is no longer the case even among *balebatim yirei shomayim*. Instead of going to the Beis Midrash, each person

thinks he will learn at home. When he arrives home—his wife and children are more dear to him...and he spends time with them instead of learning. Most critically, when the son sees that his father doesn't learn, the Torah becomes entirely superfluous to him."⁴

CHEVRE MACHZIKEI HADAS

The context of the above-mentioned meeting was an initiative that had taken place several years earlier, the establishment of "Chevre Machzikei Hadas," which was founded as an antidote to the efforts of the "Chevre Mefitzei Haskalah" to establish secular Jewish schools throughout Russia. The initiative was the brainchild of the Slonimer Rebbe; he corresponded with the Rebbe Rashab and even paid a visit to Lubavitch, in the hope that the Rebbe Rashab would join and promote the initiative.⁵

In 5662, the Rebbe Rashab wrote several letters about the organization, which had the stated goal of bringing from Jewry into organized groups to help them establish traditional *chadorim* and *yeshivos*. But in one letter, the Rebbe Rashab adds another important area that needed to be strengthened: Public Torah learning.

"It is of utmost importance to reinstate what was done in times of old, when everyone was obligated to come to the



Beis Midrash at a specific time... If one desires to learn on his own, he may do so, but specifically in the Beis Midrash; and in all aspects of Yiddishkeit—*be a Jew on the outside, publicly!*"

The Rebbe Rashab continues to explain that at the core of the struggle for Yiddishkeit was the shame and embarrassment that Yidden felt for being “old-fashioned.” It was common for those who loved to learn Torah to do so privately, while portraying themselves as “modern” in public. Those who were *yirei shomayim* in their personal lives would find ways to position themselves on the side of the *maskilim*. There were three common examples which the Rebbe Rashab pointed to: paying homage to the great *maskilic* writers for revitalizing the Hebrew language, approving of their commitment to education, and generally trying to portray oneself as an intellectual.

Each one of these was antithetical to true Yiddishkeit, the Rebbe Rashab pointed out. Using *lashon hakodesh* for common speech and even *apikorsus* is utterly contemptible and may even be forbidden; education was not valuable if it weakened one’s Torah observance; and when the Torah says that we are the *am chacham v’navon*, it didn’t mean that we should be up-to-date with the latest intellectual trends. Yet, people were terrified of being labeled *batlanim* (idlers) or *chashuchim* (primitive), two of the favorite insults of the *maskilim*.

An antidote to this shameful reality was public Torah learning. It was critical for there to be a space where Yidden gather and strengthen their commitment to Torah and mitzvos together; anchored in the timeless truth of the Torah, the Beis Midrash gives a Jew a sense of pride and belonging. He would no longer feel alone.⁶

SUPPORTING THE TEACHERS

In the early years of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *nesius*, the Yevsektzia was doing everything possible to destroy Yiddishkeit. They expropriated shuls for “cultural centers,” closed down Mikvaos on grounds of public health, and attempted to enroll all Jewish children in state-run Yiddish schools, where they were taught to reject the beliefs of their parents.

Although Yiddishkeit was still legal and there were many functioning shuls and active *rabbanim*, public Jewish life took a massive hit. If, in the Rebbe Rashab’s times, many were uncomfortable demonstrating their Yiddishkeit publicly, the situation had now taken a drastic turn for the worse.

In addition to establishing underground *chadorim*, the Frierdiker Rebbe worked to strengthen public learning of

Torah among adults. If people were going to survive the terrible trials and tribulations of Communist Russia, they would need to associate with one another, giving each other mutual strength and *chizuk*. A Jew on his own would find it much more difficult to survive.

In letters and *farbrenge*s, the Frierdiker Rebbe told stories about the suffering of the Jewish people in ancient times, during the Crusades and the Inquisition, when they remained steadfast in their commitment to Torah and mitzvos.

“In many cities,” the Frierdiker Rebbe writes in one letter about the state of affairs, “people find solace in studying the words of Hashem in the shuls and *batei midrash*; like in medieval times, when the ‘burning tails barged into the vineyards’ of the Jewish people—they were all, as one, committed to Toras Hashem and His mitzvos.”⁷

In another letter, the Frierdiker Rebbe writes about the *sichos* he delivered during that period. “I related stories about Yidden under the Inquisition, and similar stories about the suffering of the Jewish people throughout *galus*, and I cannot deny that, with Hashem’s kindness, the words made a deep impact, not only on Anash and *yirei shomayim* but also on simple Jews, and in some instances, on intellectuals and secular Jews; over the years 5685 and 5686, many were *niskarev*.”⁸

Through letters and *shluchim*, the Frierdiker Rebbe would arrange public *shiurei Torah* in cities throughout the Soviet Union. To ensure consistency, the Frierdiker Rebbe often personally covered the bill, supporting the *maggidei shiurim*—who mostly lived in dire poverty—to enable them to continue teaching. In Leningrad, for example, there was a shul called Tzemach Tzedek which was used as a front for the payments; numerous *melamdin* and Torah teachers in the city were paid salaries by the shul, with money funneled to them by the Frierdiker Rebbe.

In a letter to a supporter in Germany, the Frierdiker Rebbe explains that a *maggid shiur* could be supported with around 75 kopeks or a single ruble per week, but he was supporting some 175 different people in that position (the Frierdiker Rebbe writes in code that the number of shuls that have such *shiurim* are “approximately the sum of Avraham Avinu’s years”), with a sum total of \$350 a month—equal to over six thousand dollars in our day.⁹ Reb Shlomo Yosef Zevin was involved in the Frierdiker Rebbe’s efforts, and in a letter to the Joint Distribution Committee, he mentions a number of cities specifically: “Nikolaev, Minsk, Mohilev, Babroisk, Vyetka, Moscow, Leningrad, Samarkand, Kulash, and more.”¹⁰

THE FIRST TIFERES BACHURIM

Aside from regular shiurei Torah, the Frierdiker Rebbe established an organization for young working men called Tiferes Bachurim. In the evenings, young men, both in university and in the workforce, would gather to learn and spend time together.

Rabbi Zevin describes these programs in glowing terms. “We thought that the youth were lost from traditional Judaism, aside from the few learning in Yeshivos. Who would have believed that many young men, in the workplaces and in the universities, would gather for organized evenings of Torah study? But facts are facts: in Vitebsk, in Moscow, in Leningrad, in Minsk, in Nevel, and in Samarkand, and more, they gather to learn Gemara, Mishnayos, Ein Yaakov, Midrash, Shulchan Aruch, and so on. One cannot overestimate the impact these groups have on the bochurim, and on their entire cities.”¹¹

One of the earliest shluchim to strengthen Torah learning was Reb Bentzion Shemtov, who was sent—as a *bochur* of 22 years old—to the region of Vohlin.¹² “For two-and-a-half years,” the Frierdiker Rebbe wrote to Reb Menachem Zemba, “he worked with diligence, establishing dozens of *chadorim*. He gave fiery speeches about Torah learning, about the necessity to have groups for Gemara, Mishnayos, Halachah and Agadah, Tiferes Bachurim and *taharas hamishpacha*, and a new spirit enveloped the entire Vohlin...”¹³

After Reb Bentche was arrested, Reb Yankel Zhuravitzter took his place, traveling extensively to establish Torah classes and *chadorim*.¹⁴ Many of these groups were sustained throughout the 5690s, until the outbreak of World War II. In a letter from Cherson in 5694, a *chossid* reports to the Frierdiker Rebbe that the *shiurim* are going strong. “Every day after Mincha we learn Ein Yaakov, and sometimes the Alter Rebbe’s Shulchan Aruch, taught by Reb Moshe Charitonov. After Maariv, a *perek* Tanya. Before Kabbolas Shabbos, Likkutei Torah is taught by Reb Yedidya Pesach Frenkel, and before Shacharis and Mincha by Reb Moshe Charitonov.”¹⁵

THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

As the Frierdiker Rebbe worked tirelessly to sustain Yiddishkeit in the Soviet Union, he was also in contact with Chassidim throughout the world, encouraging them to strengthen Yiddishkeit and Chassidus in their own surroundings.

For Chassidim in America, the Frierdiker Rebbe established Agudas Hatemimim, with one of the purposes of the society being to arrange public Torah classes.¹⁶ For Chassidim in London, the Frierdiker Rebbe sent a special *shadar*, Reb Ezriel Zelig Slonim, with the goal of reviewing Chassidus and likewise establishing *shiurim*.¹⁷

Reb Ezriel Zelig found the task very difficult; the descendants of chassidim living in London were simple Jews, who didn’t understand much of what he said and didn’t appreciate what he wanted to accomplish. He told the Frierdiker Rebbe



A GROUP PHOTO
OF MEMBERS OF
TIFERES BACHURIM
IN RUSSIA, 5689.

that London needed a full-time Chabad Rov to elevate the community, and the Frierdiker Rebbe chose Reb Mordechai Zev Gutnik (father of Rabbi Chaim Gutnick of Australia).

Convincing the community to hire Rabbi Gutnick was a challenge. The *gabbaim* of the community said that they wanted a modern rabbi, not one of the “*chashuchim*” of the old country. Still, Reb Ezriel Zelig persevered, and Rabbi Gutnick was appointed to the position. When Reb Ezriel Zelig left England, the Frierdiker Rebbe commented to Reb Chatche Feigin that “*Zelig ken durchbrechen a zach*, Zelig is able to break through obstacles.”¹⁸



REB MORDECHAI ZEV GUTNIK. HE SERVED IN HIS POSITION AS ROV IN LONDON FOR ONLY 3 YEARS UNTIL HIS UNTIMELY PASSING IN 5692, AT THE AGE OF 35.

THE FIRST PERSON TO CARE

During the Alter Rebbe’s early years, the small town of Lulyekvina stood on the border between the Polish commonwealth and the Russian empire. At a time when Poland was teeming with Jewish life and economic activity, the border at Lulyekvina signified the end of both; Russia was a massive rural area, without a sophisticated economy and devoid of Jews. Officially, the Russian Czars forbade Jews from entering their empire. As the years progressed, Jews began to trickle in. Tailors, shoemakers, agricultural workers, and others would bribe border officials and cross the border into the Russian interior.

The new Russian Jews earned a comfortable living, but their spiritual life was extremely lacking. In Poland, every Jew belonged to a shul which doubled as a social society; there was the shoemakers’ shul, the bakers’ shul, and so on. They gathered each morning and night to daven and host Torah classes in Aggada. But in Russia, they were bereft. Aside from the big cities, a town would be served by a single person, who served as *chazan*, *shochet* and *melamed*. The villages didn’t even have that.

Reb Yochanan Zev of Horodok was a learned and wealthy chossid of the Alter Rebbe who made his living by trading in materials throughout the countryside. One year, when he visited the Alter Rebbe, the Alter Rebbe gave him a new mission: instead of selling his wares in the Polish countryside, he was to sell them in the Russian countryside, using the opportunity to visit local Jews on the way.

The next few months were very difficult for Reb

Yochanan Zev. In Poland, he was surrounded by Jews; he would often meet *b’nei Torah* or even fellow Chassidim in the local inns, and he would often return home for Shabbos. But in the Smolensk region of Russia, he was surrounded by non-Jews. Even Shavuos was spent among boorish and uneducated Jews. By the end of his trip, in Elul, he came back to the Alter Rebbe, begging to be relieved of his mission.

The Alter Rebbe responded strongly. “The Torah says *Mei’Hashem mitz’adei gever konanu, v’darko yechpatz*,” the Alter Rebbe said. “Hashem directs the steps of a person because He wants *darko*, His will, to be fulfilled. How can a person say which mission he wants to or doesn’t want to fulfill?”

Reb Yochanan Zev headed back to Russia after Sukkos, and this time, he saw different results. During the weeks of heavy snowfall, he would spend many days with the local Jewish families. There wasn’t much work to do, so he was able to speak to them about Torah and mitzvos and *middos tovos*. He emerged from the winter with several *baalei teshuvah*. The Alter Rebbe began sending melamdim to locations determined by Reb Yochanan Zev, all with the goal of establishing public Torah classes in Chumash, Mishnah, Gemara, Midrash, and Aggada, and creating *chadorim* for children.

The efforts were met with incredible success. In the decades that followed, when Russia annexed large segments of Poland, and Jews suddenly had access to those regions, newcomers were shocked by the high level of the small, local Jewish communities—replete with shuls, *rabbanim* and competent *melamdim*.

(*Divrei Yimei Chayei Admur Hazaken* pg. 15-17)

In the 5690s, the Friediker Rebbe's health began to suffer, and he spent an increasing amount of time consulting with doctors and resting in convalescent towns. But a glimpse into his Igros Kodesh reveals what to him was the real cure—news of Chassidim establishing shiurei Torah.

In a letter to Reb Yisrael Jacobson in America, the Friediker Rebbe thanks him for informing him about the establishment of new shiurei Torah, sharing that “news about public Torah learning in general, and of Chassidus in particular, especially among the youth—such news is literally a cure for me, and strengthens my physical abilities.”¹⁹

This theme is repeated several times, and is evident in letters of Chassidim as well. For example, there was one special shiur personally established by the Friediker Rebbe during his visit to Chicago in 5690. This Gemara shiur was led by Reb Moshe Shayevitch, one of the local activists who was in contact with the Friediker Rebbe throughout the following years. Once, when the Friediker Rebbe was living in Poland, Reb Chatche Feigin received news that the shiur was going strong—and rushed to inform the Friediker Rebbe about it. As Reb Chatche later wrote to Reb Moshe, “When I received news that the shiur established by the Rebbe is still in effect, and they are currently studying Maseches Beitzah, I immediately wrote about it to the Rebbe *Shlita*, because I know that these matters are *mamash* a cure for his ailments...”

News about this shiur continued to come to the Friediker Rebbe's desk. When he arrived in Chicago for the second time, in 5702, plans were made to pay the shiur a personal visit, but the Friediker Rebbe's time in Chicago was cut short by the sudden passing of Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah; the Friediker Rebbe compensated them with a letter instead.²⁰

ESHEL HATORAH

In 5701, the Rebbe came to America and took the helm of the three newly formed institutions of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, Machne Yisroel and Kehos. In those days, Merkos was dedicated solely to children's education, while Machne was the division that strengthened Yiddishkeit among adults. In his message to the Tomchei Temimim dinner in 5705, the Friediker Rebbe announced the opening of a special division of Machne Yisroel called Eshel HaTorah (“Eshel” an acronym for “Irguni Shiurei Limud (HaTorah)”) to encourage the establishment of shiurei Torah among *balebatim*.²¹

Not much is known about the work of this division, but in Kovetz Lubavitch of the following months, there are reports of new shiurim established in numerous locations. A new group for Torah study was established in Ahavas Achim Tzemach Tzedek of Boro Park, the shul of Reb Elye Simpson, led by his son Reb Shimon Aharon. A Gemara class was established



in Nusach Ari of Dorchester, where they learned Maseches Kiddushin under the leadership of Reb Avraham Dov Hecht. Several new study groups were established in Montreal, where they learned Chumash-Rashi, Shulchan Aruch, Tanach, and Pirush Hamilos.

The final mention of Eshel HaTorah is found in the end of 5706, in a letter on Erev Rosh Hashanah from the Friediker Rebbe to the bochorim, encouraging them to speak in local shuls over Yom Tov about the importance of a public *kvius itim l'Torah*.²²

WHEN TEN SIT TOGETHER

When the Friediker Rebbe was released from prison on Yud-Beis—Yud-Gimmel Tammuz, the celebration was muted. Although the immediate danger had passed, the authorities were still intent on causing harm. When the news arrived in Leningrad, a small, quiet farbrengen was held in the Friediker Rebbe's home; Chassidim danced in their socks to avoid attracting attention.

The real celebration took place the next year. By Yud-Beis Tammuz 5688, the Friediker Rebbe was living in Riga, far from the hands of the Communists, and the celebration took a public form. That year, the Friediker Rebbe released a special Maamar in honor of the day, with the *dibbur hamaschil* “*Asarah Sheyoshvin*,” the same teaching of Chazal which is the topic of the Alter Rebbe's letter in Iggeres Hakodesh, a *maamar* which likewise expounds on the incredible power of learning Torah in public.

In the attached letter, the Friediker Rebbe noted that the



THE REBBE
DISTRIBUTING THE
KUNTRES "12-13
TAMMUZ 5688".

redemption was one that belonged to the entire Jewish people; it was especially important for those who spread Yiddishkeit in the Soviet Union, because their work was vindicated; the government had conceded that teaching Torah was not illegal. Therefore, the Friediker Rebbe noted, this was a special occasion for all lovers of Torah and those who study it, as well as *maggidei shiurim*, those who teach Torah in public, and concluded with a special *bracha* for their work.²³

This topic was a recurring theme in the Rebbe's Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengens throughout the years. Many of the Rebbe's calls for public Torah learning were discussed on Yud-Beis Tammuz or during the farbrengens around that time, such as Tes-Vov Tammuz or the Shabbosim of Chukas and Balak. One year, there was a special farbrengen on the Shabbos before Yud Beis Tammuz dedicated specifically to fulfilling the *hora'os* of this letter.²⁴

In the days surrounding Yud-Beis Tammuz 5742, the Rebbe's Maamarim began with "Asarah Sheyoshvin,"²⁵ and eight years later, around Yud-Beis Tammuz 5750, the Rebbe released a *mugedike* edition of some of the maamarim, and also personally distributed a *kuntres* containing the Friediker Rebbe's maamar and letter to thousands of Chassidim.²⁶

The Rebbe's call for public Torah study was repeated in numerous iterations. It was part of the *mitvza* of *Yavneh V'Chachameha*; it was included in the Rebbe's call to "take over the world with *Limmud Hatorah*" in 5731, and in the Rebbe's call for *Hakholas Kehilos* (gathering Yidden on Shabbos for Torah study) in 5750. It was a central aspect of any initiative that included Torah learning — the *mitvza* to print Tanyas included having a local Tanya class with the new *seforim*; the *takanah* to learn Rambam included a call for

public study; and the Rebbe's call to learn *Inyonei Moshiach U'Ge'ulah* was also meant to be done as a community.

More than anything else, the Rebbe taught by example. In previous generations, the Rabbeim would sometimes write *maamarim* on paper or deliver them to select audiences, but we merited the gift of the Rebbe utilizing every available opportunity to teach Torah in public—and, as the years progressed, with ever-increasing frequency.



During a *Sicha* on Shabbos Parshas Naso 5750 on the topic of *Limmud HaTorah*, the Rebbe smiled and announced "a new *gezeirah*": that every single man, woman and child establish a new public shiur in Torah, preferably with ten people in attendance.²⁷

In addition to the obligation of men to learn Torah, the Rebbe pointed out that women have obligations to learn the parts of Torah which are necessary for practical behavior (and even with regard to learning together with ten people, the Rebbe said, "there is reason to say that the special power of ten Jews gathering together applies to women as well"), and children too, can teach Torah — they can even teach Aleph-Beis and *nekudos* to their friends.

The main thing, the Rebbe concluded, was that the world should be inundated with endless public shiurei Torah, reflecting the words of the Shavuot Haftarah, "כקול מים רבים, כקול ש-ד-י, like the sound of many waters, like the sound of Hashem; with thousands and thousands of Yiddishe voices declaring, as the Haftarah concludes: "קול רעש גדול, ברוך כבוד, in a great roaring sound, "Boruch Kevod Hashem Mimkomo."

SOME OF THE REBBE'S DIRECTIVES FOR PUBLIC TORAH STUDY

KEEPING SHULS OPEN:

“The Rebbe *der Shver* wanted that Shuls should be open during all hours of day and night” (Shabbos Parshas Bamidbar 5736, Sichos Kodesh v. 2 p. 232). For more on this topic, see “Keeping Shuls Open At Night” - Derher Shevat 5783.

MAKE IT PROFITABLE:

“*Asarah Sheyoshvin V'Oskin Batorah* teaches that the shiurim must be in public, they must be *yoshvin*, i.e., carried out in a calm and focused manner—not rushing through to *chap* a shiur quickly, and *oskin*—it should be like a business, which must bring results and turn a profit (i.e. tangible results).” (Shabbos Parshas Shelach 5743, Toras Menachem v. 3 p. 1658).

RAMBAM:

“...The daily shiur of Rambam in a way of *sheves achim gam yachad*, through learning it in a public setting (and preferably, with the cycle of three perokim a day)...” (Shabbos Parshas Bechukosai 5749, Sefer Hasichos v. 2 p. 478).

BETTER BUSINESS:

“A businessman should devote a fixed amount of time to Torah study...preferably, one should study in a place of Torah, a synagogue or a *yeshivah*... The

more a person studies, the more will he be successful because he will...make decisions much faster than one who has not studied Torah.” (Machne Yisroel Yechidus 4 Tishrei 5751, Sichos In English-Mugah).

CHASSIDUS CLASSES FOR YOUNG WOMEN:

“If several days will pass between classes, it is preferable for each class to be on a topic of its own... In my opinion, you should also use every class to speak about the *arum* of Chassidus or stories of Tzaddikim” (Letter to Reb Yochanan Gordon, Igros Kodesh v. 12 p. 136).

WEEKLY GEMARA SHIUR:

“If it is only one hour per week, it would be appropriate to learn a *mesechta* whose *sugyos* aren't very long, and a short *masechta* which they could finish over several months... Maseches Megillah is a good suggestion...especially in light of the interesting Aggadah material it contains” (Letter to Reb Moshe Yitzchak Hecht, Igros Kodesh v. 16 p. 19).

A SHUL IN ERETZ YISROEL:

“Every shul, especially one in Eretz Yisroel, must have a daily shiur, and a shul connected to *Rabboseinu Nesieinu* should have a daily shiur in Chassidus as well” (Yechidus to Reb Tuvye Blau, Heichal Menachem v. 1 p. 221).

1. Igros Kodesh Tzemach Tzedek pg. 166.
2. Avos 3:7.
3. Igros Kodesh Admur Ha'Emtzai pg. 126-7, 176, 196-8.
4. Igros Kodesh Admur Rashab #1018, vol. 4 pg. 305-6.
5. See Toldos Chabad b'Rusia HaTzaris, pg. 267-8.
6. Igros Kodesh Admur Rashab #117**, vol. 1 pg. 277-9.
7. Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz #3773, vol. 11 pg. 38.
8. Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz #340, vol. 1 pg. 627.
9. Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz #151, vol. 1 pg. 322.
10. Toldos Chabad B'Rusia HaSovietis pg. 52.
11. Ibid.
12. See “The Staunch Soldier,” *Derher* Adar I 5782.
13. Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz #423, vol. 2 pg. 149.
14. See “If I Had Twenty Yankelach” - *Derher* Tammuz 5784.
15. Toldos Chabad B'Rusia HaSovietis pg. 157.
16. Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz #291, vol. 1 pg. 517; #3799, vol. 11 pg. 69.
17. Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz #303, vol. 1 pg. 542-3.
18. *Eved Melech*, pg. 107-117.
19. *Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz* #758, vol. 3 pg. 296.
20. *Toldos Chabad B'Artzos Habris* pg. 70.
21. *Likkutei Dibburim* (new edition) vol. 3 pg. 914-5.
22. Toldos Chabad B'Artzos Habris pg. 314-5.
23. Sefer Hamaamarim 5688 pg. 146ff.
24. Shabbos Chukas 5737, Sichos Kodesh vol. 2 pg. 167.
25. Sefer Hamaamarim 5742 pg. 206-9, Sefer Hamaamarim Melukot (new edition) vol. 4 pg. 73-93.
26. For more about this distribution, see “Eternal Momentos” - *Derher* Tammuz 5783.
27. *Sefer Hasichos* 5750 v. 2 pg. 501. See also the *hanacha bilti mugah*.



Not Forgotten

By: Rabbi Mottel Slonim

Reb Shlomo Vishedzky was born in the Soviet Union in the year 5710, while his father was in prison for his activities in spreading Yiddishkeit. When his father was finally released, the family moved to Eretz Yisroel. The first time Shlomo came to the Rebbe was as part of the “Kvutza” program for the year 5729.

Towards the end of the year, during Elul, the famous Mashpia, Reb Mendel Futerfas, had come to 770. Shlomo knew Reb Mendel well, as he was a very close friend of his father, Reb Moshe.

When Reb Mendel came, he farbrenged with the *bochurim*, and when the *mashke* ran out, he turned to Shlomo and said, “I’m appointing you to be the ‘*Sar Hamashkin*’; your job is to make sure there is always *mashke* available for a farbrengen.”

Shlomo took his job seriously. With absolutely no money of his own, he started collecting money to purchase *mashke*, eventually acquiring two big bottles.

On 26 Elul, the Rebbe notified that there would be a surprise farbrengen. It was the third night of Selichos, which was a special night for the Rabbeim. This was unprecedented; the Rebbe had never farbrenged on *Leil Gimmel D’Selichos* before. Some people speculated that it was in honor of the many Chassidim who had recently left the Soviet Union and were spending Tishrei with the Rebbe for the first time.

The Rebbe began with a *maamar*, followed by a *sicha* in which he spoke about the Yidden who had recently left Russia and come to New York. The Rebbe also spoke of the importance of saying L’chaim, and instructed all those who had come out of Russia to say L’chaim for those who were still in the “*meitzar*” (in the narrow straits, i.e. in Russia) and that they, together with their families, should be able to leave, “*el hamerchav*” (to freedom).

After the *sicha*, the Rebbe began giving out L’chaim to many of the recent immigrants. It was a very special moment;

for half an hour the Rebbe was giving them L’chaim, asking many of them about their names and which cities they were from. The Rebbe also gave bottles of *mashke* to be distributed to others at the Farbrengen. After the next *sicha*, the Rebbe continued distributing *mashke*, and at a certain point, the *mashke* ran out.

The Rebbe asked for more *mashke*, to continue giving L’chaim, but there was none to be found. The Rebbe asked a few times, “Are there no more bottles of *mashke*?” but no one seemed able to procure any.

At that moment, Shlomo remembered that he had two bottles. He ran to his room to get the *mashke*, elated at the *zechus* to be able to provide something important for the Rebbe. He ran back to 770 with the *mashke* in hand. Seeing what he was carrying, people made space for Shlomo as he went up to the platform where the Rebbe was. But, as he got closer, an elder chossid grabbed the bottles from him, motioning that he should return to his place. The elder chossid brought the *mashke* to the Rebbe himself. Shlomo was devastated; he had been so excited to have his special moment with the Rebbe, and it was taken from him.

As the farbrengen drew to a close, the Rebbe began singing “*Ki v’simcha*”; an indication that it was the end of the farbrengen. But the Rebbe continued dancing with this *niggun*, then asked that some other *niggunim* be sung. Then suddenly the Rebbe said, “וואו איז דער וואס האט געבראכט די משקה—Where is the individual who brought the *mashke*?”

People near Shlomo began motioning to him, telling him to go up to the Rebbe. Shlomo approached the Rebbe with great emotion, and the Rebbe poured him L’chaim and said, “*Yasher koach, L’chaim!*”

The Rebbe made sure that Shlomo would have his moment after all.

מבית הגזרים
TREASURES
FROM THE REBBE'S LIBRARY

THE FIRST SHTENDERS USED BY THE REBBE

In the early years of the Rebbe's *nesius*, the Rebbe davened at an ordinary table in the small *zal* and generally did not use a *shtender*. During the week, the Rebbe sat in the northeastern corner of the *zal* (near the door that opens to the lobby). On Shabbos, the Rebbe davened at the southeastern corner, sitting on an ordinary bench next to the table. For Shemoneh Esrei, however, the Rebbe used a *shtender* to hold his siddur.

This low *shtender* opened from the top, where there was a compartment to hold things. Reb Meir Harlig related that on Yom Kippur 5712 (the first year after the Rebbe officially accepted the *nesius*), the Rebbe brought piles of *pidyonos* with him to davening, and placed them in this compartment in the *shtender*. When the Rebbe left the shul for the break between Mussaf and Mincha, the Rebbe asked Reb Meir to keep an eye on the *pidyonos*.

A few years later, a taller *shtender* was acquired for the Rebbe, and then a third one. The third *shtender* had a compartment with two doors on the side, and a board that could be pulled out at the bottom upon which the Rebbe could place his siddur while seated.

Some time later, the students at Beis Sefer Lemelacha—the trade school in Kfar Chabad—built a fourth *shtender* for the Rebbe, similar in style to the third one that the Rebbe was using at the time.

WRITTEN BY:
RABBI MENDEL JACOBS

לעילוי נשמת
 ר' מנחם זאב בן ר' פנחס ע"ה הרמון
 נלב"ע כ"ה אלול ה'תשנ"ט

ולעילוי נשמת זוגתו
 מרת ח'ל' ריטא בת ר' מרדכי ע"ה
 נלב"ע יום א' דחג הסוכות ה'תשפ"ב

תנ"צ'ב'ה'

נדפס ע"י
 משפחתם שיחיו



THE SHTENDER BUILT BY STUDENTS OF BEIS SEFER LEMELACHA IS PRESENTED TO THE REBBE AT THE FARBRENGEN OF EREV ROSH HASHANAH 5723.

They sent the *shtender* as a gift to the Rebbe on the chartered flight to New York in Elul 5722, with Reb Berel Lipsker, who was a *talmid-shliach* in Tomchei Temimim of Lod at the time. Reb Berel brought the *shtender* up to the Rebbe during the Erev Rosh Hashanah farbrengen, and the Rebbe dedicated an entire *sicha* explaining the spiritual significance of a *shtender*.¹

For a while, this *shtender* stayed in the Rebbe's room. In those years, the Rebbe would daven Kabbalas Shabbos, Shacharis, and Mussaf of Shabbos in the newly built shul downstairs, and Mincha Erev Shabbos and Shabbos in the small *zal*. Each week, the one *shtender* in use was transported up and down the stairs for the Rebbe. About half a year after receiving the gift, on Pesach 5723, the Rebbe instructed that the new *shtender* be brought from his room and kept permanently in the small *zal*, while the old *shtender* would remain downstairs.

1. Toras Menachem vol. 34, p. 325

THE REBBE'S SHTENDERS DISPLAYED IN THE EXHIBITION ROOM OF THE LIBRARY.





FROM
Manuscript
TO
Masterpiece



**MAARECHES OTZAR
HACHASSIDIM**

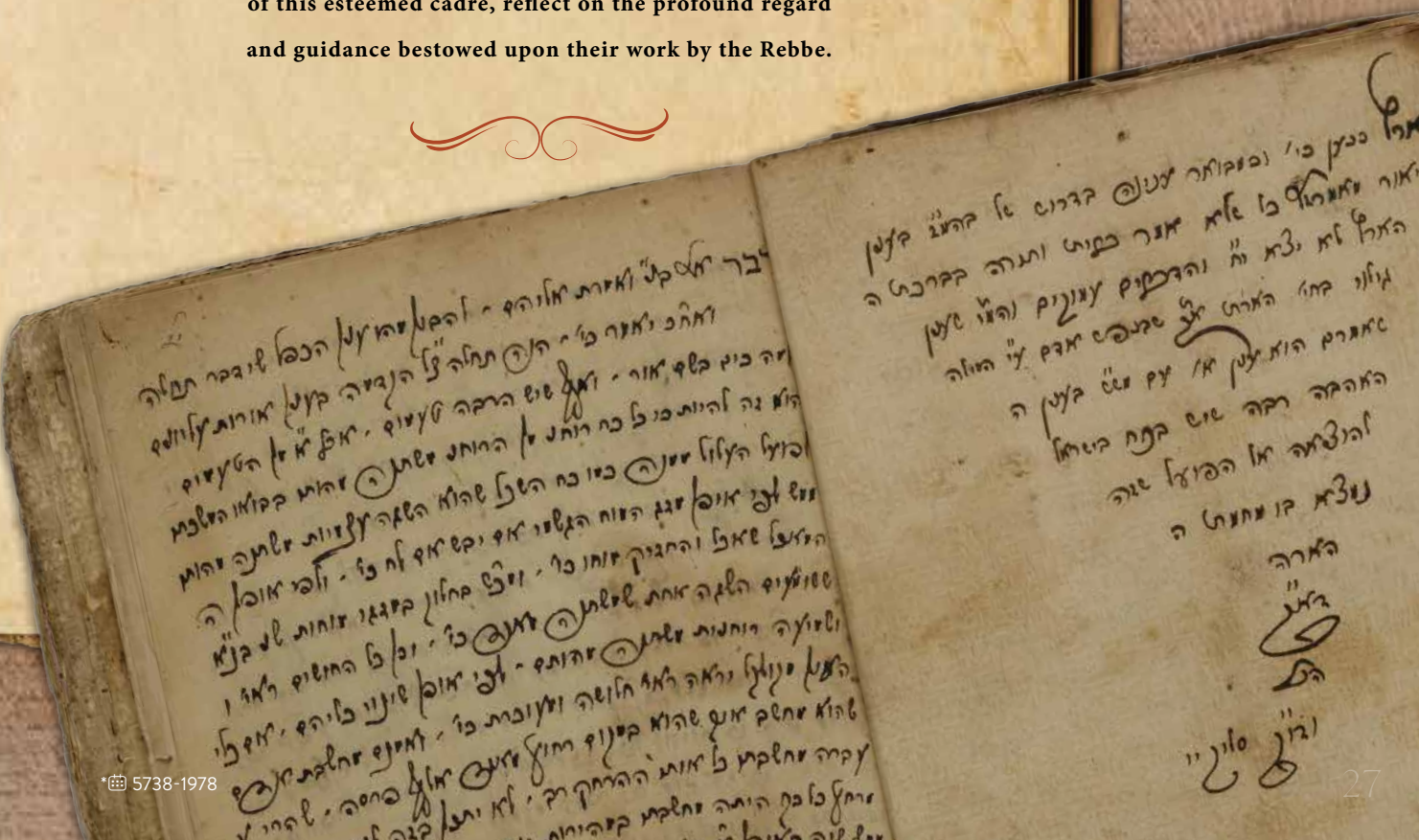


Compiled By: Rabbis Levi Greenberg and Yossi Katz

Written By: Rabbi Bentzion Schtroks



Publishing the sacred teachings of Chassidus from *Rabboseinu Nisieinu* in official printed editions for public consumption is an effort in which the Rebbe was deeply immersed from shortly after arriving in America and throughout the years. In 5738, a trove of *seforim* and *kesovim*, previously inaccessible, were rescued from Poland and arrived at 770, prompting the Rebbe to assemble a new team of experts to identify each item and prepare them for print. Here, in an exclusive interview with A Chassidisher Derher Magazine, Rabbi Gavriel Schapiro and Rabbi Eliyahu Matusof, members of this esteemed cadre, reflect on the profound regard and guidance bestowed upon their work by the Rebbe.



Shortly after arriving in America in 5701, the Rebbe was appointed by the Frierdiker Rebbe (in 5702) to oversee Kehot Publication Society, the publishing arm of Lubavitch, along with Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch and Machne Israel.

In 5703, Maareches Otzar HaChassidim—an editorial board—was founded, focusing on editing and preparing the teachings of *Rabboseinu Nisieinu* for publication by Kehot.

The Rebbe played a central role in this initiative, tirelessly searching for *kesovim* of Chassidus from previous Rabbeim, meticulously preparing them for publication, and expanding the dissemination of Chassidus. The Rebbe personally carried through every aspect of the process, from inception to completion, often signing his name in the introductions of the publications.

As time went on and the workload increased, additional manpower was needed. The Rebbe recruited Reb Yehuda Leib Groner (still a *bochur* at the time) who assisted the Rebbe with this work and continued to do so for many years into the Rebbe's *nesius*.

In 5722, with ever-increasing demands on the Rebbe's time, Reb Aharon Chitrik was appointed to work part-time and gradually began to take over many of the projects. One of his earliest projects was collecting, organizing and preparing the *kesovim* of the Tzemach Tzedek to be published as Ohr Hatorah.

The Rebbe provided thorough guidance to Reb Aharon, instructing and teaching him how to sort through and edit the raw texts. The Rebbe mentioned Reb Aharon at farbrengens, expressing gratitude for recently published *seforim* or referring to works that Reb Aharon had submitted for review, often conversing with him in-between the *sichos* and saying *l'chaim*. The Rebbe also held Reb Aharon accountable, inquiring on numerous occasions why certain publications had not been released sooner, something which the Rebbe demanded regularly in relation to the printing of *seforim*.

A NEW ERA

In 5738, following an extensive organized effort, a portion of the Agudas Chassidei Chabad Library, which had been held captive in Poland, was finally released and brought to 770.¹ The shipment contained a substantial collection of *seforim* and *kesovim* featuring many previously unavailable *maamarim*, and new versions, including some original *kesovim* penned by the Rabbeim themselves.

At the farbrengen on Shavuos 5738, the Rebbe mentioned a newly released *maamar*, explaining that there are many more *maamarim* and *kesovim* of the Rabbeim and made the following announcement:

“...Because there are those who are experts in *kisvei yad*, in finding *marei mekomos*, and in comparing various versions etc. (unfortunately, for several reasons,

ONE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATIONS OF MAARECHES OTZAR HACHASSIDIM WAS THE KUNTRES 'CHANOCH LANAAR'. IN THE INTRODUCTION, THE REBBE WRITES THAT THE GOAL IS TO PUBLISH A COLLECTION OF BOOKLETS, EACH ONE DEVOTED TO ONE OF THE RABBEIM, BEGINNING WITH THIS KUNTRES OF THE REBBE RASHAB. THE REBBE CONCLUDES WITH THE HOPE THAT THEY WILL SOON OBTAIN THE MEANS NECESSARY TO PUBLISH THE FAMOUS HEMSHECHIM OF 5666 AND 5672. IN ITS FIRST FEW YEARS, ONLY KUNTREISIM OF THE RABBEIM WERE PUBLISHED, BUT SOON FULL SEFORIM OF THE RABBEIM WERE PRINTED AS WELL. IT WAS THREE DECADES BEFORE THE HEMSHECHIM OF 5666 AND 5672 WERE PUBLISHED.



there are few such people), those who have experience in this field should reach out to the *Mazkirus*, and, *bézaras Hashem*, as soon as possible a staff will be formed who will engage in publishing the Torah of *Rabboseinu Nesieinu*, and the sooner the better.”²

Shortly after the Rebbe delivered this *sicha*, Reb Gavriel Schapiro was called to a meeting with Rabbi Hodakov and Reb Aharon Chitrik, and was asked to join the *maareches*. Assuming that the request came from the Rebbe, Reb Gavriel readily agreed.

Up to this point, aside from Torah Ohr and Likkutei Torah, only four volumes of the Alter Rebbe’s *maamarim* had been published. When Reb Gavriel joined the team, he began to work on the rest of the Alter Rebbe’s *maamarim*, preparing them for print and publishing them on a regular basis. This was the first time that the *maareches* had full-time staff.

Two years later, in 5740, after his engagement, Reb Eliyahu Matusof was hired to join the team, followed by Reb Zisel Piekarski.

In a recent conversation with A Chassidisher Derher Magazine, Rabbis Gavriel Schapiro and Eliyahu Matusof graciously shared the following recollections:

The three of us worked full-time under the leadership of Reb Aharon Chitrik. Additionally, a few part-time staff were hired to identify and organize the *kesovim*.

The Rebbe provided us with several of his own extra *seforim* that were duplicates, such as Torah Ohr, *Es’halech Liozna* (a collection of the Alter Rebbe’s *maamarim* delivered in Liozna, beginning with a *maamar* on the *possuk* “*Es’halech lifnei Hashem*”), and Hanochos HaRa”P (transcriptions of the Alter Rebbe’s *maamarim* by Reb Pinchas Reizes), to use for reference as we worked. The *seforim* contained the Rebbe’s handwritten corrections and notes in the margins. We felt deeply honored and privileged that the Rebbe entrusted these to us, underscoring the Rebbe’s profound care for our efforts.

Working full-time in *Maareches Otzar HaChassidim*, we struggled to provide for our families, earning only half of what the average school teacher made at the time. At one point we asked the Rebbe if we should consider teaching part-time in local institutions to ease our financial burden. The Rebbe instructed us not to take additional positions and to continue dedicating all of our time to publishing *Chassidus*, adding that we should request a raise from Rabbi Hodakov.

A STRUCTURED APPROACH

The Rebbe had specific plans for the sequence in which *maamarim* should be published, how each *sefer* should be structured, and who should be assigned which responsibilities. The first thing with which the Rebbe tasked us was preparing and publishing the *maamarim* of the Alter Rebbe. Apart from those previously published, the Rebbe possessed numerous unpublished *maamarim* of the Alter Rebbe in the library.

The Rebbe organized the publishing efforts with precision, meticulously planning who should work on what and efficiently dividing all tasks. The Rebbe entrusted us with the responsibility of working on much of the *Chassidus* of the Alter Rebbe, the *Mitteler Rebbe*, the *Tzemach Tzedek* and the *Rebbe Maharash*. Reb Aharon Chitrik was working on the *Ohr Hatorah* of the *Tzemach Tzedek* before we were hired, but when we joined the team the Rebbe told him to leave the rest of *Ohr Hatorah* to us under his supervision, and he should focus on the *Likkutei Biurim* on *Tanya*. The *Chassidus* of the Rebbe *Rashab* and the *Frierdiker Rebbe* was entrusted to others under the supervision of Reb Leibel Groner.

We worked under the directorship of Reb Aharon,

and all our correspondence with the Rebbe would always be through him. We would write a *tzetel* with our questions, and he would bring it to *Mazkirus*.

DIRECTION AND DELEGATION

We faced numerous challenges regarding how to publish the *maamarim*. For example, we encountered many *kesovim* that might have been Chassidus from the Alter Rebbe or from Chassidim of that era who wrote Chassidus as well, such as Reb Zalman Zezmer, Reb Aizik Homiler, Reb Hillel Paritcher, in later generations Reb Shmuel Ber Barrisover and others. We needed to learn how to differentiate between them.

We had hundreds of *kisvei yad* without any markings of what they were and who wrote them. For instance, we could have a paper that was possibly a *maamar* of the Alter Rebbe, or one of the sons of the Tzemach Tzedek – we had no way to know. Some *maamarim* also existed in multiple versions recorded by different people, and we needed to choose which versions to prioritize. Additionally, we were uncertain whether to organize the *seforim* by year or by topic. We presented these dilemmas, along with many others, to the Rebbe, and we were fortunate to receive precise instructions.

The Rebbe guided us throughout the years, sharing general principles on how to carry out the work while also entrusting us with the liberty to make our own decisions.

Often, when the Rebbe received a newly discovered “*bichel*”³ of Chassidus from someone, the Rebbe would send it to us for verification. We still have a *maamar* “*Shuva Yisroel*” with the Rebbe’s holy handwriting on it. At the top of the page, the Rebbe wrote, “*שובה וירא - תקס"ו*”, and on the side of the page, the Rebbe wrote, “*מהיר. לברר הנדפס בס' תקס"ו*” – Urgent. [This should be] clarified, was this printed in *Sefer [Hamaamarim] 5566?*”

There were instances in earlier years, when *maamarim* were being prepared before the Rebbe had the original *Ksav Yad Kodesh* of the Rabbeim, where the Rebbe made certain suggestions to the text, e.g. if a certain word in the *bichel* seemed out of place, the Rebbe would make a footnote suggesting another possible version. Now that we had the original *ksav yad*,

we could see the original precise wording written by the Rabbeim, allowing us to verify whether the exact wording was the same or different from the Rebbe’s suggestions.

We asked the Rebbe how to proceed, and the Rebbe explained that he did not have the *ksav yad* in front of him when writing those parts. Therefore, the Rebbe instructed us to align the text with the original *Ksav Yad Kodesh* now that we had it. However, we only made changes after consulting the Rebbe directly; we did not take the liberty to alter anything independently. The Rebbe’s humility was profound, allowing us to make decisions and giving us significant freedom to carry out our work as we saw fit.

DEDICATION AND AFFECTION

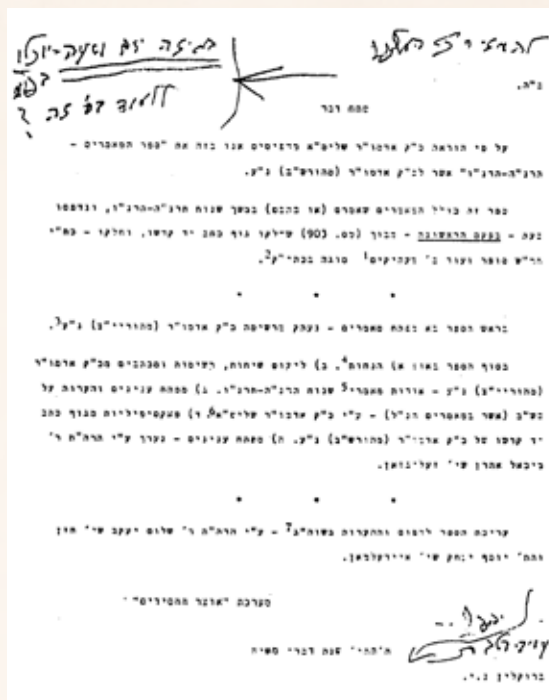
During our work, we realized that many of the indexes for *bichelach* of Chassidus that were previously published were handwritten by the Rebbe. Seemingly this task could have been accomplished by someone else, but the Rebbe was so deeply involved in the effort that he invested his own time in even the smallest details.

Among the *seforim* that we published, there were specific *seforim* in particular that the Rebbe showed



RABBI GAVRIEL SHAPIRO (LEFT) AND RABBI ELIYAHU MATUSOF (RIGHT) EXAMINING *KISVEI YAD* AS THEY WORK ON PUBLISHING THE *MAAMARIM* OF THE MITTELER REBBE, CHESHVAN 5752.

“Often, the Rebbe would respond with, “*Mosai yilmedu zeh bepoel.*” In other words, the Rebbe was eager to know when the *sefer* would be available to the public.”



THE PESACH DOVOR TO ONE OF THE SIFREI HAMAAMARIM OF THE REBBE RASHAB. THE REBBE WROTE IN A DATE OF PUBLICATION: **יהפך לשמחה** - עשירי בטבת - **באיזה יום ושעה - יוכלו בפומ"מ** [בפועל ממש] ללמוד בס' [ספר] זה? "ON WHICH DAY AND HOUR WILL [PEOPLE] BE ABLE TO ACTUALLY LEARN FROM THIS SEFER?"

special appreciation for. One example was *Sefer Hamamarim 5570* of the Alter Rebbe; at the end of the *sefer* we included a list detailing the city where each *maamar* was delivered. For example, *Yisro* was delivered in Rotchov, *Veyikchu Li Teruma* in Berditchev, and so forth, along with references to the *kisvei yad* from which we gathered this information. The Rebbe expressed great satisfaction about this, and requested that we do the same in future *seforim*.

Shortly after the *sefer* of the Alter Rebbe's *maamarim* on *Kesuvim* was published, the Rebbe spoke at a *farbngen*⁴ with great enthusiasm about the new *sefer*, recalling how in the time of the Alter Rebbe the merit of receiving just one *maamar*, no matter how brief, would produce great joy and be cause for a *farbngen*. How much more so now the Rebbe continued, when Chassidus flows like water, the release of an entire *sefer* printed in *lashon harav* (the original words) of the Alter Rebbe

should evoke immense joy. In previous generations, this occasion would call for its own dedicated *farbngen* with words of Chassidus flowing like water. The Rebbe went on to expound on the first *maamar* of the *sefer*, on the *possuk* "*Toras Hashem Temima.*" The Rebbe's enthusiasm for the new *sefer* was evident and palpable.

The Rebbe frequently inquired why our work was not ready yet, prompting us to hastily submit a printed draft or a specially bound *sefer* to the Rebbe for review. Often, the Rebbe would respond with, "*Mosai yilmedu zeh bepoel?*" (When will this actually be [available to be] learned?) In other words, the Rebbe was eager to know when the *sefer* would be available to the public.

On numerous occasions, as the Rebbe entered shul on Friday night, the long yellow galleys—drafts we had submitted to the Rebbe for review—could be seen protruding from the Rebbe's *siddur*. We often received our submitted drafts back from the Rebbe with revisions

and notes.

Before any *sefer* was released, the Rebbe would edit the *pesach dovor*, and would inscribe the date.

QUALITY FIRST

After we finished publishing the set encompassing about ten years of the Alter Rebbe's *maamarim*, the Rebbe instructed us to begin working on the *maamarim* of the Mitteler Rebbe. The Rebbe wrote a *tzetel* saying that the Mitteler Rebbe made a bigger effort than other Rabbeim, that his Chassidus should actually be learned, and the Rebbe finished the *tzetel* with the word "*vedal*" (this is sufficient for the wise)—a term that the Mitteler Rebbe often uses.

We found ourselves facing a dilemma. The Mitteler Rebbe frequently mentions writings from Kabbalah, and many of the ideas that he discusses are elaborated on in other places, such as Hemshech Ayin Beis, and the Rebbe's *maamarim*. Accordingly, to do a complete job, we would have to diligently prepare footnotes to reference these sources. Moreover, the Mitteler Rebbe personally transcribed all of his *maamarim*, but not all of the original *kesovim* were available to us. For some *maamarim*, we relied on alternative versions, necessitating footnotes to indicate discrepancies in wording between the two versions.

We estimated that completing each *sefer* would require between six months and a year, while the Rebbe wished for *seforim* to be ready more rapidly.

Another factor that we took into account was that as the production time per *sefer* would be significantly longer than average, the production cost per *sefer* would also increase several times over, and we knew that Kehot had very limited financial resources at the time. Unsure of how to proceed, we wrote a *tzetel* outlining our concerns and asked whether we should proceed without preparing footnotes for the Mitteler Rebbe's *maamarim*, and without an index at the end of each *sefer*, to reduce the time it would take to prepare.

The Rebbe wrote back that "כפשוטו" (obviously) we should continue with all of the footnotes and indexes as was done in the Alter Rebbe's *maamarim*, and the Rebbe crossed out the words "או לא" (or not) in our letter, emphasizing that the *seforim* should be published in full. Upon receiving this instruction, we promptly

began our work and eventually published the complete set of Maamarei Admur Ha'emtzoi.

A COMPREHENSIVE INDEX

On Sunday, Rosh Chodesh Kislev 5741, we were summoned together with Reb Aharon Chitrik to Rabbi Hodakov's office. Rabbi Hodakov said that the Rebbe wanted an index prepared for all of the Alter Rebbe's *maamarim*. We were told (as per the Rebbe's instruction) to recruit additional staff for this project and submit a daily report to the Rebbe. Rabbi Hodakov added that the Rebbe instructed that the *sefer* should be printed by Yud Tes Kislev!

Rabbi Hodakov also conveyed that the Rebbe

THE MAAMARIM MUST BE LEARNED!

During a *yechidus* with Reb Nissan Nemanow in 5741, the Rebbe said:

"The Gemara relates that there was a king that made obstacles, to prevent the Yidden from [going up to the Beis Hamikdash for] *aliya l'regel*. Later, another king, Hoshea Ben Eilah, annulled the decree, but the people still didn't go up, and for this they were punished; this had demonstrated that the real reason why the Yidden didn't go up was due to a lack of interest.

"Similarly, we printed so much Chassidus from the Alter Rebbe, the Mitteler Rebbe [the Rebbe named all the Rabbeim]; now there are no more excuses for not learning Chassidus. I can be slighted for this ("כאפין א שועל")—but I will continue to do it anyways..."

insisted the work not be done for free and that we would be paid from a fund established by the Friederiker Rebbe.

We worked tirelessly beyond our regular hours to complete the task. We recruited additional staff, and began working. The Rebbe wanted this *mafteiach* to encompass all of the Alter Rebbe's Chassidus, so that when someone wanted to look up what the Alter Rebbe says on any given topic, he could have everything in front of him. Although the Rebbe had already compiled a *mafteiach* for Tanya, Torah Ohr and Likkutei Torah, we included those entries in this *sefer* as well, copying them word for word and inserting them in the appropriate places.

As we got closer to finishing the project, we printed our completed work on long yellow galleys and submitted it to the Rebbe. The Rebbe reviewed it, and returned it with corrections and additions (including some on what we quoted from the Rebbe's *mafteiach* on Torah Ohr and Likkutei Torah). With many people working on the project, inconsistencies were common, and the Rebbe diligently pointed them out to ensure the work was streamlined and uniform. At one point, the Rebbe asked that all the galleys for the entire *sefer* be given to him by 11:00 p.m. that day, and the Rebbe took home a paper bag full of the galleys, returning them the next

morning with many additions and corrections.

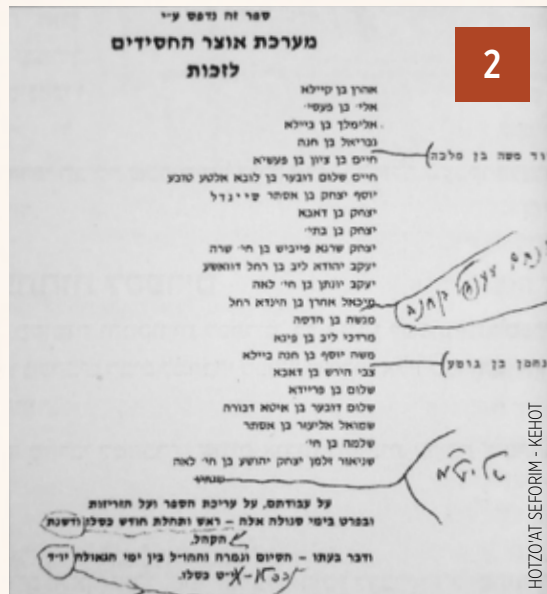
When the *mafteiach* was nearly ready for print, the Rebbe prepared a page of credits to be included in the *sefer*, listing everyone who participated in the preparation of the *sefer*. The Rebbe included his own name alongside everyone else's in alphabetical order, refusing to allow any extra-special mention with his name.

Shortly after the project was completed, during Chanukah, the Rebbe sent a dollar to each person whose name was printed in the back of the *sefer*, including the printer. The Rebbe remarked, "For a *sefer*, one must pay."

REWARDING EFFORTS

Originally, Derech Mitzvosecha was a *sefer* with small Rashi letters. The Rebbe instructed us to rework it in a larger version with block letters. We redesigned the typesetting and added numerous footnotes with sources, as each *perek* is based on *derushim* from the Alter Rebbe.

Regarding the index, we mentioned to the Rebbe that there was already a small index in the old Derech Mitzvosecha that the Rebbe had published, and expressed our reluctance to change it. However, the



1. THE FIRST EDITION OF MAFT EichOS OF THE ALTER REBBE'S MAAMARIM.
2. THE REBBE ADDS HIS NAME ALONGSIDE THE NAMES OF ALL WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE PREPARATION OF THE SEFER.

Rebbe insisted that we create a more detailed index. We complied and created a more comprehensive one.

The *sefer* reached the Rebbe before Pesach 5751, fully bound and ready to go on the shelves. Upon receiving it, the Rebbe expressed tremendous satisfaction and approval. We received an answer from the Rebbe on Erev Pesach⁵, and we were overjoyed to receive it. The Rebbe sent a long and elaborate bracha addressed to all who worked on the new Derech Mitzvosecha. We could clearly sense the Rebbe's great pleasure in our efforts to make Chassidus more accessible. This made all the pressure and hard work worthwhile.

AFTER HOURS

Rabbi Eliyahu Matusof relates:

Occasionally, on Erev Shabbos, I would head home 15-30 minutes before *licht bentchen*. Once, I was carrying a big paper bag because I knew I would need to stay home on Motzei Shabbos, but I still wanted to be able to work. The Rebbe rode by in the car and looked toward me intently.

The Rebbe pushed us to work to the best of our abilities and even what we thought was beyond our abilities. However, on the rare occasion when someone went overboard, the Rebbe would remind them to stay within reason as well. Reb Aharon Chitrik often worked on Motzei Shabbos, which he once mentioned in a letter to the Rebbe. The Rebbe responded, saying that Motzei Shabbos is a time to be spent with family.

“We could clearly sense the Rebbe’s great pleasure in our efforts to make Chassidus more accessible. This made all the pressure and hard work worthwhile.”

RESOLVING CONFLICT WITH JOY

In 5744 we published a new version of Likkutei Torah in a fresh and cleaner format, and with many new *marei mekomos*, which the Rebbe encouraged us to do. Shortly after it was released, the Rebbe spoke about the new *sefer* at a *farbrengen*⁶, expressing great satisfaction. The Rebbe made a big deal about the *sefer*, saying that a special *farbrengen* should be held in its honor, with those who worked on it encouraging everyone to learn in general, and especially from the new *sefer*.

As the Rebbe instructed, we held a *farbrengen* in honor of the new *sefer*. At this event, we organized a special *chaluka*. We printed cards for people to fill out, committing to learn one *parsha* from the *sefer*, and then submitted the cards to the Rebbe.

At that time, a dispute arose between the printer and Kehot regarding the printing costs. As we were rushing to have the *sefer* printed as soon as possible, we submitted it quickly and then had to return to the printer to make certain changes while he was already preparing it for print. This added more work for the printer and required additional time on his part.

That night, the dispute with the printer was resolved,

as the printer agreed to forgo the additional payment he had requested. It seemed to us that the Rebbe had resolved the entire issue through positive influence.

When the first copies of this edition of Likkutei Torah came from the printer, we realized that the designer who did the typesetting had made a mistake in the page numbers, and the error was corrected in subsequent copies. The Rebbe stated that this correction should be noted in the back of all future copies that are printed, and the printer should be paid an additional amount for this correction.

RACING AGAINST TIME

Once, we wrote to the Rebbe informing him of our plans to print the *maamarim* from the Tzemach Tzedek on Gemaras and topics, such as *Adam, Ohr Ein Sof, Heichal Kodosh Kodoshim, Hilula Derashbi*, and we titled it *Ohr Hatorah Al Maamarei Razal V'Inyonim*.

We had a question: many of these *maamarim* had already been published in previously released *seforim* of the Tzemach Tzedek, Derech Mitzvosecha, and *Ohr Hatorah*, such as "Lehovin Mitzvas Ahavah," "Inyan Tekias Shofar," and "Lehovin Inyan Habrachos." We wrote a letter to the Rebbe and attached a list of all the *maamarim* from the Tzemach Tzedek on Maamarei Chazal and Inyonim, detailing which were new and which had already been printed. We concluded our letter by asking if we should include every *maamar*, including those already printed, in order to provide a comprehensive collection. The Rebbe responded:

"הרי רבים הם - ולכן רק לציין בכרך הבע"ל [הבא עלינו לטובה] שמאמר פ' [לוני] נדפס בס' פ' [בספר פלוני] (אולי בהוספת מספר הפרקים וכיו"ב)

(They are many - and therefore it only should be noted in the upcoming volume that such-and-such *maamar* was printed in such-and-such *sefer* (perhaps [also] adding the number of chapters and the like.)

The Rebbe added:

"ובודאי ליום הולדת [אדמו"ר הצ"צ] יוכלו רבים וגם באה"ק ללמוד בהספר"

"**Certainly**, many will be able to study in the *sefer* - including in Eretz Hakodesh - by the birthday [of the Tzemach Tzedek]."

UNTIL MOSHIACH AND BEYOND

Rabbi Eliyahu Matusof relates:

My father, Reb Shlomo Matusof, was a shliach in Morocco, and the Rebbe took a keen interest in every detail of my father's children. For my older brother Yossel, the Rebbe was directly involved in every aspect of his shlichus. At first, the Rebbe wanted him to go to Iran, but ultimately the Rebbe instructed him to move to France. The same level of involvement was true for my second brother.

When I got married, Reb Binyomin Gorodetsky, who often spoke with the Rebbe about the shlichim in Europe, told my father about a conversation he had with the Rebbe regarding my employment.

Reb Binyomin said to the Rebbe that he estimated that my job working in the *seforim* was likely temporary, to which the Rebbe responded, "There is enough work to do until Moshiach and after Moshiach."



We still had a lot of work ahead of us, including creating all the *marei mekomos* and ensuring everything was correct and properly edited. It was Tammuz, and the Rebbe wanted the *sefer* to be studied in Eretz Yisroel by the Tzemach Tzedek's birthday on Erev Rosh Hashanah, not only printed but also distributed.

UP TO CAPACITY

Reb Aharon Chitrik shared in an interview with Kfar Chabad Magazine (#500):

The Rebbe expected each of us to invest the utmost energy in our work. When the Rebbe saw that we were truly giving it our all, he allowed us the time we needed. There was a period when every Erev Shabbos, I submitted all the work I had accomplished that week to the Rebbe. Each week, I would submit more or less the same number of pages, and the Rebbe did not inquire why the work was not completed sooner. Only when we fell behind and were not putting in our maximum effort did the Rebbe push us to work faster.

In general, the Rebbe wanted our work to be done swiftly, for *seforim* to be published as soon as possible, often specifying dates when a *sefer* should be available to the public, such as for an upcoming Yom Tov. Likewise, the Rebbe always responded to our letters the same day or the next day, almost always marking his response with "*mohir*," meaning it should be relayed immediately.

Often, when the Rebbe set a finishing time, we would submit the *sefer* to the Rebbe by that date, but before it was bound. Here, the Rebbe was instructing us that it should be distributed to everyone before Erev Rosh Hashanah! It was a tremendous task, but the Rebbe gave a due date, and we worked extremely hard, with more people getting involved, and we got the job done in time for distribution.

A day before Erev Rosh Hashanah or so, we rushed to the printer, waited for one bound copy, and then sped to the airport. Unfortunately, the car delivering the *sefer* to the airport was involved in an accident with a truck. When we arrived at the airport, the door to the airplane had been closed, and most likely the *sefer* only arrived after Rosh Hashanah.

WORKING AMIDST SACRED TREASURES

Around the year 5741, since our work required constant access to *kisvei yad* in the library, we set up our office in the library's *kisvei yad* room. (Prior to this, we had been working for a period of time in Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah's room on the second floor of 770, and then in an office next door, at 788 Eastern Parkway.) We would work there during the week and, before Shabbos, we cleared out in preparation for the Rebbe and Rebbetzin to stay there over Shabbos.

Upon returning Sunday morning, we often found the Rebbe's *gartel* and *seforim* on the table. Ordinarily, the Rebbe would return *seforim* to their places after use, but here the space was tight, and there wasn't a proper place for the *seforim* to be put back. We used to reach out to Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky, who attended to the items the Rebbe had left behind.

ENCOURAGING INDEPENDENCE

The Rebbe was deeply involved in every detail of our work, overseeing everything, and we learned a great deal from the manner in which the Rebbe directed us and the operation at large. The *seforim* brought the Rebbe profound joy and satisfaction. It felt like the Rebbe had entrusted us with his personal life's passion and work, something the Rebbe would have continued



ON THE SAME PAGE?

When Reb Aharon Chitrik published the first installment of *Likut Pirushim* on Tanya Perek Aleph, he sent a draft of the booklet to the Rebbe. On the top of the *shaar blatt*, it said *Likkutei Amarim Tanya* with references, *Likut Pirushim*, and other versions, and then it stated that it was edited by Reb Aharon Chitrik. The Rebbe circled (to remove) the section where he wrote his name, and wrote, "למה לו האחריות - כשבע' [על השער] באותיות גדולות תניא - Why is he taking the responsibility [of adding his name] when on the [same] page in big letters is printed Tanya?"

to do himself if not for time constraints.

In the final years before Gimmel Tammuz, the Rebbe's direct involvement in the detailed aspects of our work was much less frequent. Instead, the Rebbe's instructions became more general, while continuing to encourage quicker progress. For example, upon submitting a specific question, the Rebbe once wrote, "Was such done in the past?" This indicated that we should derive instruction and principles from the guidance we had received previously.

When we printed the *Drushei Chasunah* from the Mitteler Rebbe, it spanned two volumes. We considered including the *nusach* of the *birchos nisuin* either at the beginning or end; as all the *maamarim* were based on these words, it would have been beneficial for the reader to have it easily accessible. The Rebbe responded, "*Halo lo naasoh al derech zeh be'ovar*," meaning, "Hasn't this never been done in the past?" The Rebbe was teaching us to refrain from introducing new elements and

encouraging us to begin operating independently, without needing to seek direction each time.

It is our heartfelt wish that we should continue to learn and internalize the Chassidus of our Rabbeim as the Rebbe so deeply wished, revealing our individual *Moshiach haproti* (the spark of *Moshiach* within each one) and hastening the coming of *Moshiach hakloli* and the revelation of תורה חדשה מאתי תצא—the new Torah of *Moshiach*, may it be speedily in our days.

1. See "Rescue of the Library", *Derher Adar II* 5776 p. 10.
2. *Sichos Kodesh* 5738 vol. 2, p. 466.
3. Binder of handwritten copies of Chassidus that were copied and collected by Chassidim.
4. *Hisvaaduyos* 5745 vol. 2, p. 1163f.
5. Printed in later prints of *Derech Mitzvosecha* p. 4.
6. *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 26, p. 384-5.

PRACTICAL HORA'OS

A CLOSER
LOOK AT
SOME OF
THE REBBE'S
HORA'OS

KEEPING IN TOUCH DURING VACATION

THE REBBE'S HORA'OS FOR
TEACHERS TO REMAIN IN TOUCH WITH
THEIR STUDENTS DURING VACATION

Compiled By: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG

Written By: RABBI TZEMACH FELLER

לעילוי נשמת
מרת לאה בת הרה"ח ר' אליהו נחום ע"ה בלאק
נלב"ע שבת קודש כ"ה אלול ה'תשע"ג
ת'נצ"ב'ה'
נדפס ע"י
משפחתה שיחיו

MUCH MORE THAN DURING YESHIVA

I am interested in knowing about the *seder hayeshiva* now, during vacation. Certainly, you'll share good news about this—that you have found a way to influence the students during vacation as well. As I've already said, in certain ways, you can influence the students much more during vacation than when *yeshiva* is in session, for many reasons.¹

ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT IN SUMMERTIME

In a letter addressed to the "administration and teachers of Yeshivos Achei Temimim Lubavitch" and sent to a number of branches of that yeshiva, the Rebbe writes:

In keeping with the change in schedules at some of the *yeshivos* during the summer months, I want to bring your attention to the following matters:

Even during the time when the students are found in *yeshiva* and are diligently laboring over their studies, the responsibility is incumbent on their educators not to divert their attention from their students even during the hours that they are outside the confines of the *yeshiva*. They must try with all their might [to ensure] that their conduct and way of life should be proper at all times and in every moment.

This is all the more important during the days of summer vacation, when extra attention must be paid to the students, to know about each and every one of them, where they're located and what they're busy with, and to help them in all types of ways to go on the proper and straight path. As our Sages taught, even when [the teacher] is not seen by the students, he oversees them and sees to it that his attention be focused on them (Bava Basra 8b, see Maharsha).²

"FOOD FOR THE WAY"

If the *talmidim* must go home for Tishrei, you must give them spiritual "provisions for the way," i.e. directives on how they should behave, and easily-understandable *maamarim*

that they can learn on their own where they are, and especially that they'll be able to repeat or teach in public.

This is only if it is an absolute necessity [to send them home]. However, effort must be made in the opposite direction, that during the *Yomim Noraim*, *Aseres Yemei Teshuva*, and *Yom Kippur*, they remain in the same *yeshiva* through which they are receiving guidance in *Yiras Shamayim*. The great benefit and the publicizing of this will have an inestimable impact on the students and, even more so, on the surroundings.³

GET TOGETHER DURING VACATION

It would be best if they could gather their students a few times during the weeks of vacation. This will create an opportunity to remind them about timely matters like the Three Weeks, preparation for Elul, and so on. You should also remind them of the *dinim* and *minhagim* that are at their level.⁴

I haven't heard from you yet about your plans for how to use the vacation, setting up at least several get-togethers with the students during these weeks, or staying in touch in the proper way.⁵

INFORMAL EDUCATION

It's certainly unnecessary to encourage you about what I have written to the *mosdos chinuch* under my influence: that while there is time, they should prepare "provisions for the way" for the students for vacation. It's best if you find a way to ensure that the connection with them is not completely severed during these weeks. In fact, during vacation, when they don't have to learn secular studies, there is room for additional influence in *kodesh*. We see clearly that things that are taught in an informal way—not in a formal class, but during a conversation or a walk—are absorbed and accepted better and more easily.⁶

STAY IN TOUCH OVER SHABBOS AND YOM TOV AS WELL

It's unfortunately clear from your letter that the teachers did not remain in touch with the students throughout the vacation. While we don't complain about the past, *yehi ratzon* that in a timely fashion they will determine together how to remain in touch with the students during future vacations.

This doesn't apply only to the long summer vacation, but rather how to influence the students during the breaks while school is in session, i.e. on Shabbos, *Yom Tov*, and the like.⁷

Judging by your silence on this topic, the vacation was not utilized properly, and it's possible that you didn't stay in touch with the students. It's a shame that specifically during the time that the students are exempt from secular education, they aren't being given a broad measure of *limmudei kodesh*—even if it wouldn't be by way of formal lessons and *shiurim*, but rather in a way that is befitting vacation.

Yehi ratzon that at least in the future you will put in effort to do this, for, contrary to the prevailing opinion, [influencing students during vacation] is not an unimportant part of school activities—quite the opposite. There is nothing that can stand in the way of willpower, even if there are difficulties in bringing this into actuality.

When I say "vacation," I'm also referring to Shabbos, *Yom Tov*, and the *Tishrei Yomim Tovim*, as [Tishrei] is a "general month" that [has relevance] to the entire year.⁸

1. Igros Kodesh vol. 4 p. 357.

2. Ibid p. 371f. (Translation based on "I Will Write It In Their Hearts" vol. 8, letter no. 1090.)

3. Ibid vol. 7 p. 347.

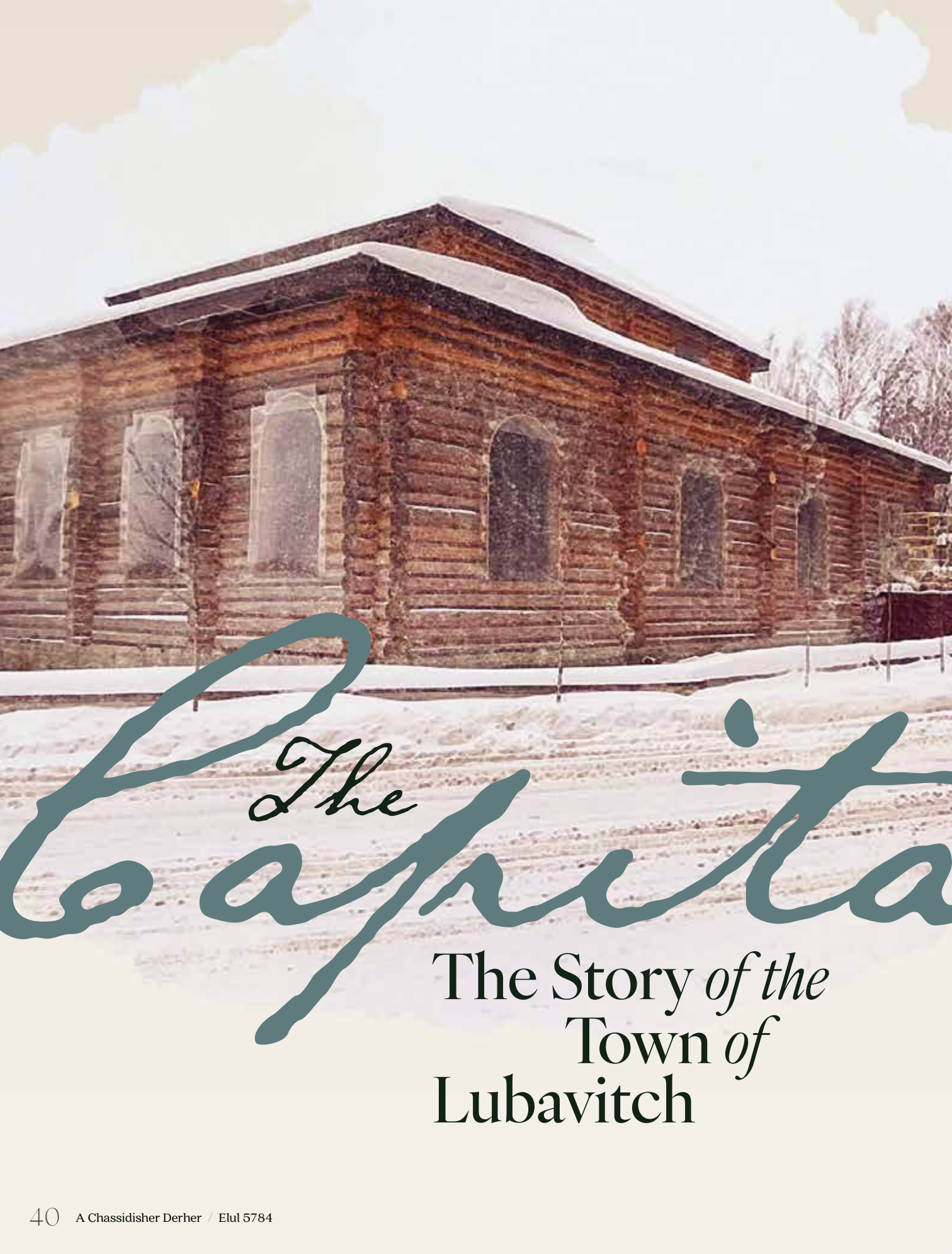
4. Ibid vol. 11 p. 150.

5. Ibid vol. 13 p. 347f.

6. Ibid vol. 11 p. 225f.

7. Ibid vol. 15 p. 373.

8. Ibid p. 374.



The *Lubavitcher*

*The Story of the
Town of
Lubavitch*



לעילוי נשמת
שיינא גאלדא ע"ה
בת יבלחט"א ר' מיכאל הלוי שיחי'
גוטלייזער
גלב"ע כ"ח אלול ה'תשע"ו
ת"נ צ"ב ה'

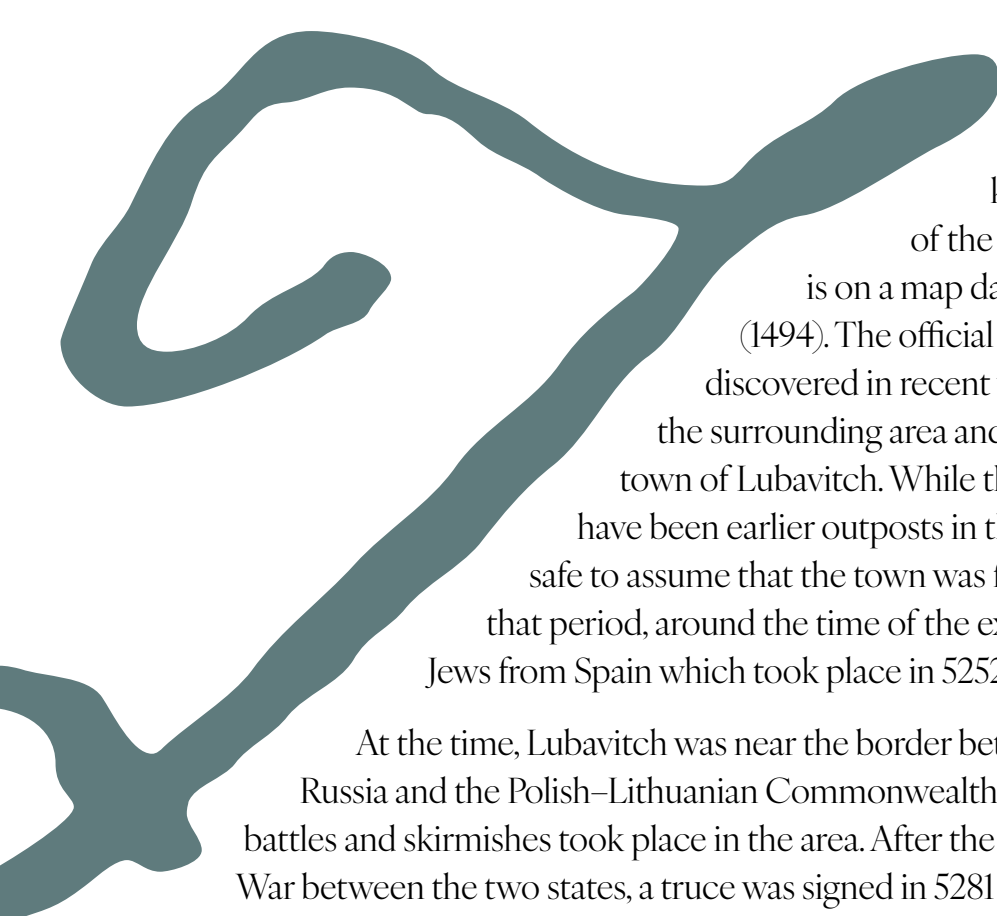
נדפס ע"י זקניה
הרה"ת ר' יצחק מאיר וזוגתו מרת לאה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
שפאלטר

By: Motti Wilhelm

“There were good reasons that Lubavitch was destined to play such an important role, first of all in the lives of the secret tzaddikim and mystics, and later in the lives of the Chabad Rebbes and Chassidim,” the Friediker Rebbe writes in *Sefer Hazichronos*.¹

Geographically, the town of Lubavitch is far from remarkable, covering less than one square mile. In the annals of Jewish history, however, the small town holds a most prominent place, having served as the seat of Chabad Chassidus for more than a century and as home to five of the seven Rabbeim.

In the following lines, we will attempt to give a brief overview of the town’s illustrious history, and to take an ink-and-paper pilgrimage to Lubavitch, through the *zichronos* of Chassidim and others who experienced it firsthand.



he earliest known mention of the name ‘Lubavitch’ is on a map dated circa 5254 (1494). The official document, discovered in recent years², shows the surrounding area and marks the town of Lubavitch. While there may have been earlier outposts in the area, it is safe to assume that the town was founded in that period, around the time of the expulsion of Jews from Spain which took place in 5252 (1492).

At the time, Lubavitch was near the border between Russia and the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth; frequent battles and skirmishes took place in the area. After the Ten Years’ War between the two states, a truce was signed in 5281 (1521) that assigned the town to the Commonwealth. Over the following years, in addition to the Spanish Expulsion, Jews were expelled from Austria, Hungary, and Germany. Poland, which was becoming more tolerant of Jews, was increasingly chosen by Yidden as a haven. Some of those refugees were among the early residents of Lubavitch.

In *Sefer Hazichronos*, the Frierdiker Rebbe writes that the earliest settlers of the town, when it was still a colony, were a group of *tzadikim nistarim*. He tells the story of a Reb Binyomin who saved the town from bandits, and then built a shul, called “Binyomin’s Shtibel,” that survived as the oldest shul in the town.³

More Than Just a Name

In a *teshuva* by the Maharil⁴, brother of the Alter Rebbe, to the Tzemach Tzedek, he writes that the town was built by a minister named “Lubiyetski,” who named it for himself. In the *teshuva*, which discusses the proper way to spell “Lubavitch” in a *get*, the Maharil writes that the minister’s name, and thus the town’s, comes from the Russian word for “love.”

In the Frierdiker Rebbe’s account of the town’s early history, he describes the small Jewish colony built by a *tzadik nistar* named Reb Meir. This hidden *tzadik* was known for his “boundless” *ahavas Yisroel*, as well as his love for non-Jews and even animals and fowl. It was no wonder, the Frierdiker Rebbe writes, that the town was given the name “Luba,” which means “love” in both Russian and Polish, with the suffix “vitch” added later. “The name “Lubavitch” which this colony that Meir founded was later given, very well describes and characterizes its founder,” he writes.⁵

The Alter Rebbe in Lubavitch

While Lubavitch would become the seat of Chabad Chassidus only in the second generation, during the *nesius* of the Mittlerer Rebbe, it played a vital role in the life of the Alter Rebbe as well.

When the Alter Rebbe was a young boy⁶, his father, Harav Boruch, brought him from their home in Liozna to Lubavitch. Already recognized as an *iluy*, the boy would now be able to study under Harav Yissochor Ber, the *magid* of Lubavitch.

For two years, the Alter Rebbe studied with Harav Yissochor Ber, and would learn Torah in the *cheder sheni* of the *beis midrash* 'Poalei Tzedek – Mashkimei Kum'. Locals spoke in wonder about the young *iluy* and even the *gedolei haTorah* honored him after finding a handwritten booklet of his *chiddushei Torah*.⁷

"In Lubavitch, I learned *Ahavas Yisroel*, and especially how to honor another Yid in an exemplary way," the Alter Rebbe later recalled, as related by the Frierdiker Rebbe. "I saw the respect accorded by the *gaon* Rebbi Yosef *mochiach* ("the rebuker") to Reb Yitzchok the cobbler, Reb Shlomo the tailor and Reb Avraham the baker, who were *amei ha'aretz* and didn't even understand the words of Torah and davening, but were genuine *yirei shomayim*."⁸

The Alter Rebbe visited Lubavitch on at least two other occasions. The first was in 5525 (1765) when the Mezeritcher Maggid instructed him to stop in Lubavitch on his journey home from Mezeritch. During this visit, he was to visit his former teacher, Harav Yissocher Ber, whom the Alter Rebbe had since learned was a *mekushar* of the Mezeritcher Maggid.

"During my visit to Lubavitch... I took pleasure in the change and transformation that had taken place over the years since I was there. I found several outstanding young Torah scholars engaged in *Toras Hachassidus* according to the instruction of my teachers, the *gaon* Rebbi Yissachar Dov and the *gaon* Rebbi Ze'ev, and I delighted in discussing words of Torah with them. I stayed in Lubavitch for a week. I reviewed several ideas of our teacher, the Maggid, and we gathered several times in affectionate assemblies."⁹

This visit turned out to be pivotal. A number of *yungeleit* followed the Alter Rebbe to Liozna, and upon their return spread the *shita* of Chassidus Chabad. This led to the elderly chassidim, including Harav Yissocher Ber himself, becoming *mekusharim* of the Alter Rebbe.

Another visit took place after the Alter Rebbe's second arrest in 5561 (1800). Following his exoneration, he decided to move his residence from Liozna to Liadi, and on his way, he stopped in Lubavitch for three days. At the time, the town boasted four shuls, all of which davened in the Alter Rebbe's *nusach hatefillah*, as the town residents were now Chabad Chassidim.

"There was great joy in the city for all three days that the Alter Rebbe and his family stayed in Lubavitch. They declared that *tachanun* should not be recited and to light the lamps in the shuls. Whoever could should refrain from working. Shabbos clothing should be worn, and guests who came in honor of the Alter Rebbe should be welcomed and fed at no cost," the Frierdiker Rebbe records in his *Reshimos*.¹⁰

During these years, the number of Yidden in the town grew slowly but steadily. A government census from 5544 (1784) records fifty families¹¹, and at the time of the Alter Rebbe's *histalkus* in 5573 (1813), there were approximately double that number.¹²

Chabad - Lubavitch

Following the passing of the Alter Rebbe and the destruction of Liadi at the hands of Napoleon's troops, a new location had to be found for the remaining family members, including the Mittlerer Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek, and their families, numbering nearly 200 individuals.

A RECENTLY DISCOVERED PAINTING OF THE VILLAGE OF LUBAVITCH IN THE YEAR 5572, DURING THE LIFETIME OF THE ALTER REBBE. THE IMAGE SHOWS NAPOLEONIC TROOPS STANDING NEAR THE AREA LATER TO BECOME THE 'CHOTZER' WHEN THE MITTELER REBBE SETTLED THERE TWO YEARS LATER.



The family members were then divided between Haditch, where the Alter Rebbe was buried, Romny, and Kremenchug. Jewish communities across Little Russia (today's Ukraine) sent messengers to the Mittlerer Rebbe, each requesting that he choose their city as his new home. The Mittlerer Rebbe refused their requests, saying that he would return to White Russia. He did not yet know which town he would choose, but he desired to settle in Lubavitch, where the Alter Rebbe had studied. First, however, he wanted to travel and view other potential locations to establish his *chotzer*.¹³

After traveling from Adar to Elul in 5573 (1813), a decision was reached. On Monday of Parshas Nitzovim, Chai Elul, 5573, the family arrived in Lubavitch.

The arrival of the Mittlerer Rebbe and his family generated much excitement among the local Yidden and even the *poritzim* (non-Jewish landowners) of Lubavitch and nearby areas. The local *poritz* gifted the Mittlerer Rebbe a plot of land at no cost, and exempted the land from all future taxes. Nearby *poritzim* who owned forests sent wooden beams as gifts for the construction of homes and a shul.

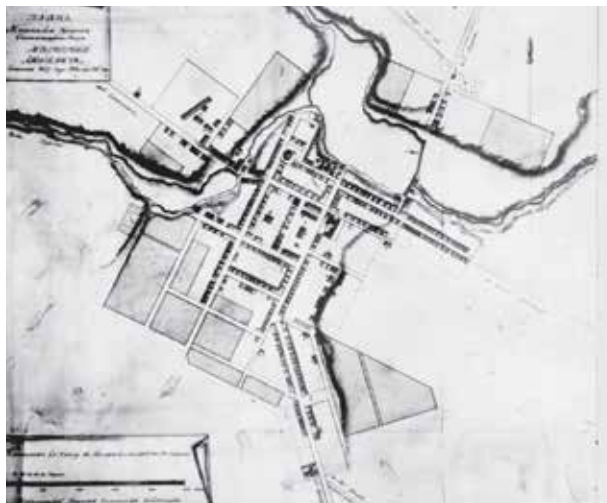
"The area given by the *poritz* Shankovsky to the Rebbe with all the families was divided into several locations in the town of Lubavitch. The Rebbe's area was on a street that had no name. Legally, presumably, in the books it did have a name, but now they called it "The *Chotzer*." This was a large area with large wooden homes," the Frierdiker Rebbe writes.¹⁴

After purchasing a wooden house for his family, the Mittlerer Rebbe built a large wooden *shul*. Construction began in 5574 (1814), and continued for a year or two. The shul and homes were built on the very plot of land where, decades earlier, the Alter Rebbe had studied Torah with Harav Yissocher Ber.¹⁵

In a report filed by an officer in 5586 (1825), following the arrest of the Mittlerer Rebbe, the shul is described in detail. "[The shul] is built in the form of a residential building. It consists of one small room that has an entrance from both sides, and is built in such a way that you can see all of it, and that it should be spacious.¹⁶" The report goes on to describe the *Sifrei Torah*, the bronze lanterns, tin candlesticks, tablecloths, curtains, the *bima* and other details of the shul.

In the Frierdiker Rebbe's *Reshimos*,¹⁷ the size of the shul is recorded as approximately 138 feet by 92 feet, which would make the floor space about 15% longer and over 50% wider than 770's main shul. Chassidim would remark that "In the Rebbe's *zal*, one can begin *Hodu* on one side, and by the time he reaches the second side, be at *Aleinu*."¹⁸

Around the same time, a *mikvah* was built in Lubavitch, based on the directives of the Alter Rebbe in his *Shulchan Aruch*. The Tzemach Tzedek describes this *mikvah* and the exact way it was built, in a *teshuva* printed in *Sha'alos Uteshuvos Tzemach Tzedek*.¹⁹



AN OFFICIAL MAP OF LUBAVITCH FROM THE YEAR 5577, SHOWING THE BLOCKS AND THE NEARBY RIVER.

Immediately after the Mittlerer Rebbe settled in Lubavitch, Chassidim from across the region began arriving in droves to hear *maamarim* and to ask the Rebbe for blessings and advice in *yechidus*.

As the influx of visitors intensified, the Mittlerer Rebbe established *takanos Lubavitch*, a set of criteria for Chassidim who wished to visit Lubavitch, specifying and limiting when and for how long they could do so.

The Mittlerer Rebbe did not remain only in Lubavitch, however; he would travel to cities and villages where Chassidim lived to recite *maamarim* and accept them for *yechidus*. During his final days in this world, he was likewise not in Lubavitch, having traveled to visit the Alter Rebbe's *tziyun* in Haditch. On the return journey, on Tes Kislev, 5588 (1827), the Mittlerer Rebbe was *nistalek* in the city of Niezhin, and was laid to rest there.

The First Yeshiva in Lubavitch

Following the *histalkus* of the Mittlerer Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek accepted the *nesius* of Chassidus Chabad. For nearly 40 years, the Tzemach Tzedek led the Chassidim from Lubavitch, which became the focal point to which tens of thousands of Chassidim and Yidden turned to.

At first, the Tzemach Tzedek continued living in the home he had lived in since the move to Lubavitch some 14 years earlier. Then, in approximately 5592 (1832), a fire destroyed the Mittlerer Rebbe's home and the homes of *Beis Harav*. The Tzemach Tzedek – not wanting to take a gift from the *poritz* – purchased a plot of land to construct a new home and shul.²⁰ Additional space would serve as a garden to grow

various vegetables, as was customary at the time.²¹ The plot was located where the large *zal* of Tomchei Tmimim would later be built.

The house was finished circa 5594, and shortly afterward, the Tzemach Tzedek and his family moved in. The home was situated at the northwestern corner of the *chotzer*, and to the east of it was a small shul.

In 5601, the Tzemach Tzedek established a yeshiva in Lubavitch, appointing his son Harav Yisroel Noach as *rosh yeshiva*. For twenty-six years, “the holy yeshiva produced students of great talent, with extensive and broad knowledge in the revealed Torah. Along with this, they were also firmly grounded in the teachings of Chassidus and in *avoda shebilev*, and they spread throughout all regions of the country to radiate light.”²²

Over the coming years, a number of fires broke out in Lubavitch, several of which destroyed parts of, or the entire, *chotzer*. The Tzemach Tzedek rebuilt his homes and shul after each fire, and also purchased additional land near the *chotzer* to allow it to expand. In 5609 (1849), after yet another fire in the previous year, the Tzemach Tzedek rebuilt the *chotzer* once again, and at that time also purchased plots around Lubavitch for five of his sons and two of his sons-in-law. For the Rebbe Maharash, however, he did not purchase a plot, as he wished for him to live near him, in the *chotzer*.²³

“This time they built the house in a more beautiful manner than in previous times; it was done under the guidance of [my] grandfather, the Rebbe Maharash. The size of the area was the same, but instead of the vegetable garden, Grandfather arranged a garden for strolling,” the Friediker Rebbe writes.²⁴

Sometime between the years 5616-5618 (1856-1858), another fire broke out. The cause of the fire was the carelessness of a visiting wagon driver, who lit a pipe and threw the match into a pile of hay.²⁵ The fire spread rapidly due to strong winds, and destroyed almost the entire city. The entire *chotzer*, along with many *seforim* and priceless *kisvei yad* were destroyed in what became known among Chassidim as “the great fire.”

Over the next eighteen months, as construction was ongoing to rebuild the *chotzer*, the Tzemach Tzedek lived in the *poritz’s* courtyard, which was a short distance outside

Lubavitch.

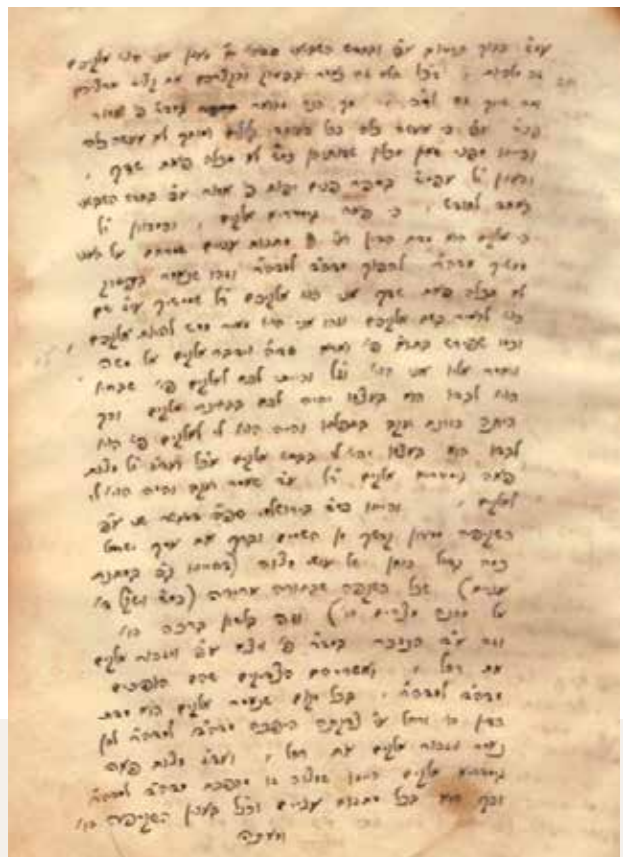
The Tzemach Tzedek’s new home was much larger than the previous ones, and covered the space where the previous house and shul had been situated. Two rooms, built on the site of the previous shul, were set aside for davening, and it was there that the *minyán* davened during the year. A separate, much larger, shul was also built in the *chotzer*, for use when there were large numbers of visitors.

The Tzemach Tzedek’s sons sent letters to *anash* asking them to participate in the costs of the constructions, writing that “everything needed to be rebuilt anew,” and that the situation was “very pressing.”²⁶

The *chotzer* also had sheds for firewood and hay for the animals. Later, a well was dug, and on one of the Rebbe Maharash’s trips abroad, he brought back a small pump to fight fires – a huge innovation at the time. The pump generated much excitement in Lubavitch, and the locals dubbed it “the iron witch.”²⁷

A non-Jewish (and antisemitic) Russian writer who visited Lubavitch in 5622 (1862) and even met the Tzemach Tzedek described the *chotzer* in an article published in a Russian newspaper in 1905²⁸:

“The house of the *tzaddik* stood in the town’s market square. It was a large two-story house. His married sons and even grandchildren lived with him, and the entire extended



ONE OF THE BOOKLETS OF THE TZEMACH TZEDEK'S KISVEI YAD THAT WERE RESCUED FROM A FIRE IN LUBAVITCH.

family gathered around him, and he – the head of the family – supported them. At times it seemed that the entire town was the private property of the *tzadik*, and its residents were his royal guards, his court staff. The local policeman was also at his disposal to a certain extent. The Jews had great influence with the district authorities, and it was worthwhile for the policeman to live in peace with them.”

Another description of Lubavitch at the time, written by a *chossid* who visited in 5625 (1865), was published in his autobiography several decades later.²⁹

He describes how locals would rush after davening on Shabbos from the shuls across the town to go and listen to the Tzemach Tzedek’s *maamar*, which was delivered in a “large, empty hall, with no furniture besides a *bima* surrounded by benches.”

“The Rebbe’s five sons, who were *gedolei hador*, who lived [in Lubavitch], each had his own *beis medrash* where Chasidim would daven. After davening they also came to the Rebbe’s *zal*.”

He describes how Lubavitch locals helped visiting Chasidim by giving those who needed it a daily allowance to purchase food and lodgings. Locals also hosted the guests, some of whom ate at the homes of the Tzemach Tzedek’s sons.

The Tzemach Tzedek was the first of the Chabad Rabbeim who was *nistalek* in Lubavitch – on Yud Gimmel Nissan, 5626 (1866), and was the first Rebbe laid to rest there. In his will, he wrote that no *Ohel* or structure should be built on his *kever*. However, concerns arose that non-Jews might dig up the grave searching for gold, leading to the construction of walls around the *kever*. These walls were later expanded, creating an *Ohel*. A shul was also built adjacent to the *Ohel* by some locals.³⁰

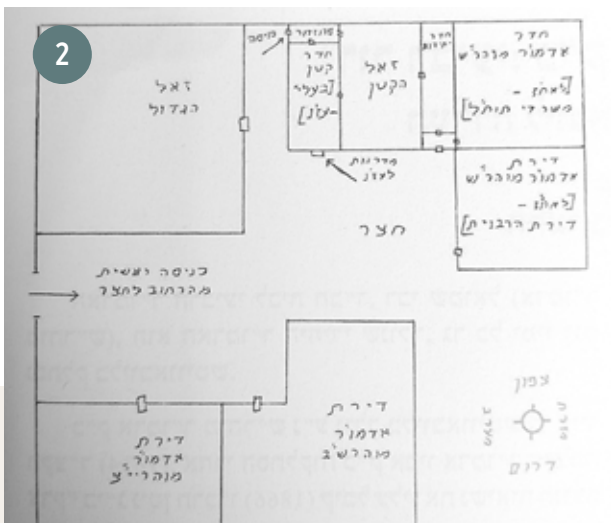
The “Chotzer” Rebuilt

Over the next few years, Lubavitch underwent a series of radical changes. Four of the Tzemach Tzedek’s holy sons established *chateziros* of their own, in Kopust, Liadi, Niezhin, and Ovruch, and the majority of the Chasidim followed them to those places.

In addition, in 5628 (1868), another fire reduced the *chotzer* and all its structures to ashes. Aside from the challenge of rebuilding the *chotzer*, the Rebbe Maharash was faced with another question: The Tzemach Tzedek had written in his will that none of his sons should live in his house; it should be used only as a shul or a place for children to learn. But, now that the house has burned down, could the Rebbe Maharash live in a new house built on the same site, or did the prohibition still apply?

The Rebbe Maharash discussed the issue in a *teshuva*³¹, and ultimately built the large *zal* on that spot. The *zal*, which was used as a shul whenever there was a large crowd, is described by a number of Chasidim of the next generation in their memoirs.

“[The *zal*] was a large building in length, width and height. There were large, tall, windows on three sides. We passed through almost the entire Lubavitch until we reached the



1. A MODEL OF THE CHOTZER IN LUBAVITCH AFTER IT WAS REBUILT BY THE REBBE MAHARASH. THE LARGE ZAL IS TOP LEFT.
2. DIAGRAM OF THE CHOTZER CREATED BY RABBI SHOLOM BER LEVINE.

Rebbe's *chotzer*, and we did not see any building as big and beautiful,³² wrote Rabbi Nochum Shmaryahu Sassonkin, known as 'Reb Shmerel Batumer.'

Now, with the large *zal* built in the location of the Tzemach Tzedek's home, the Rebbe Maharash was faced with another dilemma: Could he build a home where a shul had once stood?

The Rebbe Maharash wrote a *teshuva* regarding this as well, detailing the question³³: The Tzemach Tzedek had built a large shul for times when there were large crowds. In practice, it was only used on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. It was also used as a *beis medrash* – but not for davening – during the summer. Now, after the shul had been destroyed by fire *r"l*, and rebuilt in another location, could a home be built in this location, given that there was no other place to build it?

In the end, the Rebbe Maharash was *machmir* in this regard as well, and purchased additional land to build his home. On the former location of the Tzemach Tzedek's large shul, he built a small *zal*. The *zal* and the home were connected by the Rebbe Maharash's *yechidus* room.

This small *zal* was built with a '*chabadnitzé*' - a *cheder sheni* for those who davened *ba'arichus*, a necessity in a Chabad shul. It also had an *Ezras Noshim* on the second floor, accessed by a staircase in the *chotzer*.

In the following years, the Rebbe Maharash built several additional buildings in the *chotzer*: Homes for his children the Raza, Mrs. Devorah Leah Ginsburg (this later became the Frierdiker Rebbe's house), and the Rebbe Rashab.

On Yud-Gimmel Tishrei, 5643 (1882), the Rebbe Maharash was *nistalek*; he was laid to rest in the Ohel of his father, the Tzemach Tzedek. The Rebbe Maharash was the only Rebbe who was born, lived his entire life, and was *nistalek* in Lubavitch.

Tomchei Tmimim – Lubavitch!

Arguably the most notable event in the Rebbe Rashab's generation of Chabad Chassidus was the establishment of Yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim in Lubavitch. The yeshiva was founded by the Rebbe Rashab in 5657

(1897), fourteen years after the *histalkus* of the Rebbe Maharash, and four years after he formally accepted the *nesius* in 5654 (1893).

Up to this point, descriptions of Lubavitch rely on a limited number of sources, many hard to access. But from then on, detailed and fascinating descriptions were authored and published by some of the hundreds of *temimim* who studied in Lubavitch as bochurim.

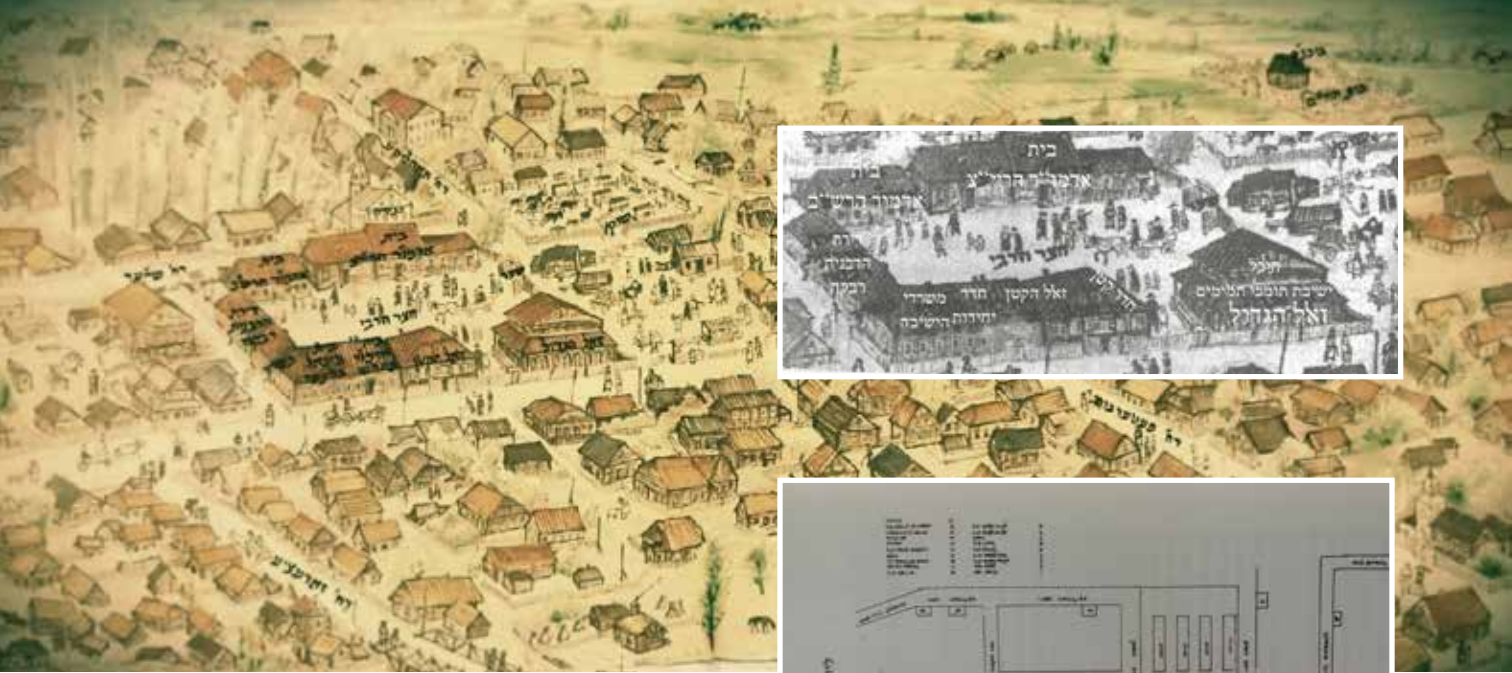
Among them was Reb Refoel Nachman 'Foleh' Kahn, who wrote a book titled *Lubavitch V'Chayoleha* – an album and autobiographical-historical work which contains a description of the town of Lubavitch, Yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim, and short biographies of many of the *temimim* who studied there.

Reb Foleh describes not only the *chotzer* in Lubavitch, but also general Jewish life in the town. He briefly describes the streets, the marketplace, the post office and other notable features.

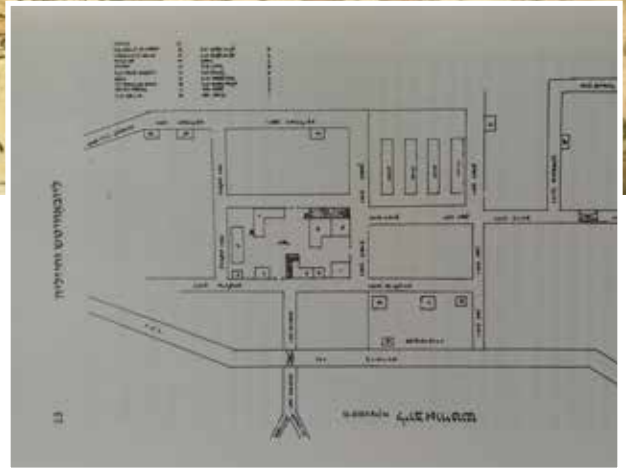
"On every Sunday, there was a market for the non-Jews from the hamlets around Lubavitch. They would bring their produce to sell, and buy what they needed in the shops. There was a post office with a telegraph on Chachluka Street. The shuls were Binyomin's Shtibel, Golda's Minyan, Tomsker Minyan, the shul in the Rebbe's *chotzer*, the shul near the Ohel, and the Chachluka Minyan. The Rav was Harav Dovid Yakuvson – 'Dovid der *moreh tzedek*' – son-in-law of the previous *moreh tzedek* of Lubavitch, Reb Avrohom Seligson, who served during the time of the Tzemach Tzedek and the Rebbe Maharash. The shochet was Reb Shlomo Chaim Kutain, who was also the *mohel*. There were a number of *melamdin* for the local children, teaching young children until they were old enough to learn Gemara. The locals were mostly simple

EFFORTS ARE CURRENTLY UNDERWAY TO RECONSTRUCT ALL THE BUILDINGS OF THE CHOTZER ON THEIR FORMER SITES. HERE IS THE COMPLETED ZAL OF TOMCHEI TMIMIM.





A MAP AND PAINTING OF LUBAVITCH AS IT APPEARED DURING THE YESHIVAS TOMCHEI TEMIMIM YEARS, CREATED BY REB HENDEL LIEBERMAN WITH THE HELP OF REB ZALMAN SHIMON DVORKIN WHO HAD STUDIED IN LUBAVITCH. THE MAP IS PRINTED IN THE SEFER "LUBAVITCH V'CHAYOLEHA".



folk. The city also had a doctor and a pharmacy. There was a *chevra kadisha* and the Rebbe Rashab was their *gabbai*.”³⁴

He then offers a detailed description of the *chotzer*:

“The Rebbe’s *chotzer* was at the corner of Shilevo Street and the market street. The *chotzer* had three entrances: One was on Shilevo Street – one would ascend several steps to the northern part of the *chotzer*. The second was on the western side of the *chotzer* through the large entrance. The third was on the *chotzer*’s southern end, behind the Rebbe Rashab’s home, from the alley that separated between the *chotzer* and, *l’havdil*, the nonsense...”

He goes on to describe the placement of the homes of the Rebbe Rashab, the Frierdiker Rebbe, and Rebbetzin Rivkah, the *groiseh* (large) *zal* where the bochurim learned, the *kleineh* (small) *zal*, the yeshiva offices, a well and a garden. (See attached illustration). He also describes two brick buildings – the rest were wood – that had been built by a philanthropist from Moscow, and were named “Batei Avraham v’Rocheh” after them. One of these houses was where the Rebbe Rashab baked *matzos* for Pesach, and the second was a tea house, which always had hot water for the bochurim to drink. There were also horse stables and outhouses in the *chotzer*.

The bochurim began studying in the *groiseh zal* in 5661 (1901), four years after the establishment of Tomchei Temimim, when the increasing number of bochurim required it. But before it could be used, it had to be renovated, as it had been built without heating and with simple wooden walls that were already in disrepair. For two years, the *zal* was under renovation; new heating stoves were added, the foundations

and floor were redone, new windows were installed, and other necessary changes were made.

Eighteen tables stood in the *zal* for the bochurim, with up to ten bochurim per table. In middle of the *zal* stood a wide *bima* with two tables for the *meshgichim*.

The Rebbe Rashab began building a *mikvah* in the *chotzer*, but after a host of challenges, the project was stopped, and the previous *mikvah* was renovated.

In his memoirs, Reb Yisroel Jacobson describes how on the second night of Rosh Hashanah, 5670 (1909), after the Rebbe Rashab delivered a *ma’amar* in the *groiseh zal*, the chassidim began dancing, and the roof of the *zal* became unstable. The *zal* was then closed until after Sukkos, and all *tefilos* were held in the small *zal*.³⁵

In 5674 (1914), World War I broke out, and a year and a half later, in 5676 (1915), the German army neared Lubavitch. The Rebbe Rashab decided to leave Lubavitch, saying that he did not want to live under German rule for even one day.

Preparations for the move began after Sukkos. On Shabbos Parshas Vayera, the Rebbe Rashab said the last *ma’amar* in Lubavitch, and on Sunday, 16 Cheshvan, the Rebbe and his family left Lubavitch on their way to Rostov.

When he was leaving, the chossid Reb Moshe Rosenblum said to him, “Rebbe, we should be *zoche* to see you [back in

Lubavitch] speedily!” The Rebbe Rashab responded, “I hope [I will return] for Pesach, *im yirtzeh Hashem*.” Ultimately, the Rebbe Rashab remained in Rostov, where he was *nistalek* four years later. Thus ended 102 years of Lubavitch as the capital of Chassidus Chabad...

In 5678 (1917), two years after the Rebbe Rashab left, the Russian Revolution erupted, causing even more turmoil in a country already embroiled in a world war. The rising prices and diminishing donations caused food shortages and a host of other issues for the Yeshiva, which had remained in Lubavitch. With no other choice, the Yeshiva relocated to Kremenchug, where it continued functioning for a short time, before the Communist persecution forced it underground.

Before the final group left Lubavitch, they gathered all the items that had remained – cutlery, glassware, tableware, and other items – and buried them in the cellar. They also held a *farbrengen* on Shabbos Mevorchim Elul, their last Shabbos there.

“There are no words to describe the feeling at the *farbrengen* and that entire period of time. We comforted ourselves that it was only temporary, and we would soon return to Lubavitch, because we couldn’t even imagine differently³⁶.”

After all the *temimim* had departed, the village took over the *chotzer*. The *groiseh zal* was turned into a theater, the Rebbe Rashab’s house into a courthouse, and the homes of the Rebbe Maharash and Frierdiker Rebbe into other municipal offices.

This sad state of affairs continued until Nissan of 5681 (1921), when “Hashem sent a fire from above, and within a

half hour, all the homes were destroyed.”³⁷ There were still a number of Chassidim living there, and they began davening in another location. At some point, the mikvah of Lubavitch was damaged, and in 5682 (1921) the Frierdiker Rebbe sent money for it to be repaired.

On Erev Rosh Chodesh Elul of that year, the Frierdiker Rebbe traveled to Lubavitch to visit the holy Ohel. He later wrote that he was “shocked at the desolation *rachmana l’tzlan*.” Even the Ohel had been destroyed, as the non-Jews had stolen the walls. During his visit, the only one during his *nesius*, the Frierdiker Rebbe recited a *maamar, dibur hamashchil Ani El Elokim Ekra*.³⁸

Nineteen years later, in the summer of 5701 (1941) the Nazis *yemach shemom* entered Lubavitch. On 3 Cheshvan 5702 (1941), they murdered the 483 Yidden who lived there, *Hashem Yikom Damam*.

Over the coming decades, efforts were made to restore the Ohel in Lubavitch, an effort that started during the Frierdiker Rebbe’s 5682 visit, continued in New York in 5709 (1949) and during the years of the Communist regime. It wasn’t until 5749 (1989), however, that the Ohel was rebuilt. That same year, a group of bochorim bought a house for the Rebbe in Lubavitch, with the Rebbe’s approval, with the Rebbe even including the house in his *mechiras chometz*. In more recent years, the *chotzer* was repurchased, the shul at the Ohel and the *groiseh zal* rebuilt, and the *beis hachaim* was restored, discovering *kevorim* of members of *beis harav* and *gedolei hachassidim*.

1. *Lubavitcher Rebbe’s Zichronos*, vol. 1, p. 16.

2. Printed in “Любавичи. История, тайны, реальность” (*Luubavichi: History, Secrets, Reality*), Smolensk, 2012.

3. *Zichronos*, ch. 1.

4. *Sheeiris Yehuda, Even Ha’ezer* 52.

5. *Zichronos* vol 1, p. 16.

6. In *Beis Rebbi*, the author writes that the Alter Rebbe was 12 years old when he traveled to Lubavitch, and the Frierdiker Rebbe writes similarly in *Sefer Hasichos 5691*. In other *sichos* and *reshimos*, the Frierdiker Rebbe records other traditions regarding the Alter Rebbe’s age, ranging from six years old to ten years old.

7. *Reshimas Ofen HaHishtalshelus BeHisyasdas Chasidus Chabad Dor Rishon, Dor Sheini* (Kehos, 5769), 11. Hereafter *Reshimas Hisyasdas Chabad*.

8. *Reshimas Hisyasdas Chabad*, 11.

9. *Ibid*, 14.

10. *Ibid*, 16.

11. Rabbi Berel Levine, *Lubavitch*, (Agudas Chassidei Chabad of the CIS, 5771).

Subsequently published in *Toldos Chabad BeRusia HaTzaaris* (Kehos, 5770).

12. In *Zichronos*, the number of families in Lubavitch during the years of 5516-5517 (1756-1757) is given as “between 75 and 80.”

13. *Reshimas Lubavitch*, authored by the Frierdiker Rebbe in the 5690s (1930s), and first published in 5759 (1999) by Rabbi Shmuel Kraus.

14. *Reshimas Lubavitch*.

15. *Sefer Hasichos Kayitz Tof Shin*, 95.

16. *Maasar Ugeulas Admur Ha’emtzo*, 63.

17. *Reshimas Lubavitch*.

18. *Reshima* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, titled ‘*Divrei Yimei Harabanis Rivkah*’ by the Rebbe (Kehos, 5774). Hereafter *Reshimas Harabanis Rivkah*.

19. *Shaalos Uteshuvos Tzemach Tzedek, Yoreh Deah, Siman 102*.

20. *Reshimas Harabanis Rivkah*.

21. *Reshimas Lubavitch*.

22. *Igros Kodesh Admur Harayatz*, vol. 2, 107.

23. *Reshimas Lubavitch*.

24. *Ibid*.

25. *Reshimas Harabanis Rivkah*.

26. *Toldos Chabad BeRusia HaTzaaris*, 108.

27. *Reshimas Lubavitch*.

28. Translated into Hebrew and published in *Kerem Chabad* vol 2, 80.

29. *Goldenshteyn, Pinchos Dov, Mein Lebens Geschichte* (Petach Tikvah, 5688). Translated into English and published as *The Shochet* (2024).

30. *Igros Kodesh Admur Maharash*, 38.

31. *Ibid*, 39.

32. *Zichronosai* (New edition - Kfar Chabad), 36.

33. *Igros Kodesh Admur Maharash*, 40.

34. *Lubavitch V’chayoleha*, 11.

35. *Zikaron L’bnei Yisroel*, 21.

36. *Ibid*, 73.

37. *Igros Kodesh Admur Harayatz*, vol 1, 326.

38. Printed in *Sefer Hamaamarim 5682*, 447.

LUMINARIES

Personalities
in the
Rebbe's Torah

By:
Rabbi Levik Gourarie

לזכות
החתן התמים ר' מנחם מענדל שיחי' גאלדמאן
והכלה המהוללה מרת חי' איידל שתחי' טענענהויז
לרגל נישואיהם בשעתומ"צ ח' אלול ה'תשפ"ד

נדפס ע"י הוריהם
הרה"ת ר' יוחנן וזוגתו
מרת לאה ומשפחתם שיחי' גאלדמאן
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל וזוגתו
מרת נחמה דינה ומשפחתם שיחי' טענענהויז

Master of Pnimityus HaTorah

The Ramban

In the year 4976 (1216), designated by the Rambam as a “Ketz” for the return of *nevuah*, the revelation of Kabbalah reached its peak during the era of the Rishonim.

The Rebbe identifies key Rishonim who were foundational *mekubalim*, who spread and taught the wisdom of *pnimityus haTorah* in their time. The Rebbe lists these Gedolei Yisroel and their revelation of *nevuah* and Kabbalah as a necessary precursor to the coming of Moshiach.

Among the Rishonim of Germany, particularly from among the Chassidei Ashkenaz, the Rebbe mentions Rabbi Yehuda Hachossid and his father Rabbi Shmuel Hanavi, as well as Rabbi Elazar of Germaiza (Worms), the Baal HaRokeiach.

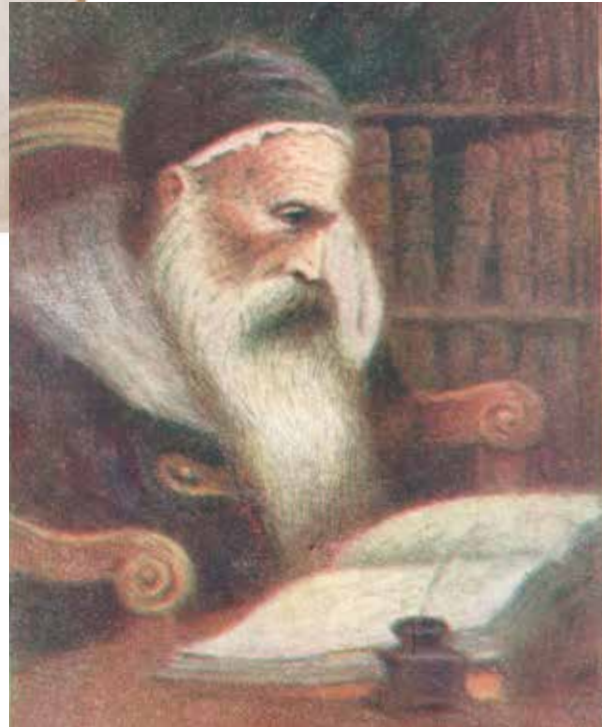
From the Rishonim of southern France (Provence), the Rebbe lists the Raavad and Rabbi Ezra Hanavi. However, the Rishon we discuss in this article, whose impact may be greatest, is the Ramban – Rabbi Moshe Ben Nachman of Girona, in northern Spain. The Rebbe notes that he “wrote a number of books in Kabbalah, and it is mentioned in the Kisvei HaArizal that he is one of the few *mekubalim* upon whom we rely.”¹

The Ramban is a figure revered not only in the Jewish world but also beyond. He is considered one of the greatest and most outstanding Rishonim, with an incredible impact on both the scholarly and practical aspects of Torah to this day. In addition to his monumental achievements and enduring influence, we will focus on the aspect of the Ramban that is emphasized in the Rebbe's Torah and Chassidus, namely his significant place in the *mesorah* of *pnimityus haTorah*.



AN EARLY
HANDWRITTEN
EDITION OF THE
PIRUSH HA'RAMBAN.

A PORTRAIT THAT HAS COME TO BE
ASSOCIATED WITH THE RAMBAN.



Rabbeinu Moshe Ben Nachman of Girona

Rebbi Moshe Ben Nachman of Girona, also known as the Ramban, was born in the town of Girona (Girona), part of the Kingdom of Catalonia, in the year 4954 (1194). He lived through the turn of the millennium, at the height of the *Tekufas Harishonim*.

The Ramban studied in the Yeshivos at Barcelona and Girona in northern Spain, and also seems to have studied in Yeshivos in southern France. There, he not only inherited the *mesorah* of the Geonim of Sefarad, like the Rif and Rambam, but also learned the Torah of the Baalei Hatosfos from northern Tzorfas and Ashkenaz. This broadened the horizons of Torah study for the young Ramban and - through him - for later generations.

In addition to his study of Nigleh from his teachers Rebbi Yehuda Ben Yakar and Rebbi Meir Ben Nossan, he also learned Kabbalah from teachers who passed to him the Toras Hakabbalah of the Raavad.

The Ramban's greatness in Torah was evident in his youth. By the age of twenty, he had already written supplements to the Rif and a sharp and critical work called *Milchamos Hashem*, which defended the Rif from the criticisms of Rebbi Zerachia Halevi, the Baal Hamaor from Provence.

The Ramban grew to be one of the greatest Rishonim of his times, with his influence reaching across the borders of the medieval world to all the Rishonim of his era, both in Ashkenaz and Sefarad.

In addition to his leadership, the Ramban's vast Torah works range from *Hasagos* on the Baal Hamaor to *seforim* on Kabbalah, including the *Chiddushei HaRamban* on Shas, the *Pirush HaRamban* on Chumash, *Hasagos* on the *Sefer Hamitzvos* of the Rambam, collections of *Drashos*, *Shailos u'Teshuvos*, and several other smaller works, including *Sefer Hageuleh* about Moshiach and *Shaar Haggmul* about *schar v'onesh*.

The Ramban's Torah places him in the ranks of the foremost Poskim, Mechadshim, Baalei Hashkafa, and Baalei Kabbalah of all Jewish history.

To explain the great impact that the Ramban's Torah had on all of Jewish learning, let us turn to an explanation by Rabbi Chaim Dov Shevel, the *Mahadir* [editor and publisher] of as well as commentator on, the works of the Ramban, in an article in the *Yiddishe Heim*.

Before the Ramban's time, there were two different *darkei hamilmud* [schools of thought]: First, there were the



LOCATION OF THE DEBATE IN WHICH THE RAMBAN PARTICIPATED.

Chachmei Tzorfas and Ashkenaz, most notably Rashi, Rabbeinu Tam, and the Baalei Tosfos, whose learning was focused around the Gemara. They would discuss and contrast various *sugyos*, and work to reconcile apparent contradictions. While this all had an impact on practical Halacha, it didn't begin with Halacha, it ended there.

Second, you had the Torah of the Chachmei Sefarad, such as the Rif, and most famously the Rambam, whose emphasis wasn't on the Gemara and the *sugyos* as they are in Shas, but the clarification of Halachos and creating structure in new forms outside of Shas. In addition, in Sefarad, there was a lot more emphasis on Chakira (philosophy) and Piyut (as in the works of the Ibn Ezra and Rebbe Yehuda Halevi) which was not the case among the Rishonei Ashkenaz.

In the period of the early Rishonim, there was little to no interaction between the two *darkei halimud* and their Rishonim. [An exception was found in Provence, which was nestled geographically, as well as ideologically and stylistically, between the Sefardim in Spain and the Baalei Hatosfos in France.]

The Ramban changed this. He studied and incorporated the Torah of Ashkenaz, fusing it with his Sefardi *mesorah*. This is seen clearly in the Chiddushei HaRamban on Shas – an entirely new style of Torah writing – *Chiddushim*, which doesn't just reconcile conflicting *sugyos* (as Tosfos do), and doesn't just explain Torah in the conceptual wide range view as the Sefardi *mesorah* does, but rather merges the two in a unique style — *Chiddushim*.

This synthesis of the two *darkei halimud*, was then continued by the Ramban's star pupil the Rashba, and then the Ritva, and so on, through the generations.

Ramban's Leadership

The Frierdiker Rebbe shared in a *sicha* on Chai Elul 5701: "The Baal Shem Tov was the spiritual *yoiresh* (inheritor) of the famous Ayin Tov (positively disposed) and Ohev Yisrael – the Ramban, Rebbe Moshe Ben Nachman – who found words of comfort for the suffering Jews of his times when the *gezeiras hashmad* surfaced, and extended a comforting hand to the *Anusim* [forced converts], welcoming them back into the Yiddishe camp."

While it is common to think of the period in which the Ramban lived as "the golden age" of Spanish Jewry, it must be noted that this is relative to other locations at that time and in comparison with later periods in Spain. However "golden" the situation for the Jews in Catalonia compared to those in France and Germany at the time, trouble was already brewing in Spain.

Unlike his fellow Baalei Hatosfos who were being attacked, banished, and even murdered in the northern Christian lands, the Ramban was an honored citizen of the Aragonian crown. He was the official Rav of Girona, and later all of Catalonia, worked as a physician, and even served as advisor to Jaime the First, King of Aragon. Documents have been discovered that refer to the Ramban as "Bonastruc ca Porta" [Good luck at the gate], as he was said to have lived near the city gates.

During this time, the power of the church was growing, while secular royal power was diminishing. What had started in Italy, Germany, France, and England eventually reached Spain, as rabid and official Jew-hatred, brought upon by the Christian monastic orders began to show itself in the Ramban's times.

In 5023, the king pressured the Ramban into a debate against Pablo Christiani (a *Meshumad*), who claimed to bring evidence for Christianity from the Gemara. The Ramban agreed as long as the king granted him protection and allowed him to respond freely. After four non-consecutive days of debate, the king cut it short, as the Ramban obliterated his opponents's arguments and derided the entire Christian belief. The king was impressed and granted the Ramban a prize of three hundred gold coins.

The story didn't end there. The following Shabbos, the king himself came to lecture the Jews about Christianity, and the Ramban bravely stood up and rebutted the king's attempts. To disprove the claims of the church, the Ramban published an account of the *Vikuach* so people could see the arguments and that he had clearly won. This enraged the monks, and they sought revenge against the Ramban. As the situation worsened and even the king could not intervene on his behalf, the Ramban left Spain for Eretz Yisroel.

[In another example of Christian persecution during the times of the Ramban, the Rebbe shared a story from the Seder Hadoros about the Ramban's Talmid, Reb Avner, who had converted to Christianity and forced the Ramban to come to his house on Yom Kippur, and ate Chazzir in front of his former Rebbe. He explained that he left Yiddishkeit because it cannot be that everything is in Haazinu as the Ramban had taught. The Ramban showed him that even his name is hinted in a Possuk in Haazinu. He had a change of heart, and the Ramban sent him on a journey of Teshuva.^{2]}

Eretz Yisroel

The Ramban spent his final years in Eretz Yisroel, after arriving in the year 5027 (1267). After traveling from the port city to Yerushalayim, the Ramban described the desolate state in which he found the holy city. For years, the Jewish community and the general population of Eretz Yisroel had been going through numerous upheavals.

Wars had been ongoing for decades between the Crusader states and various Muslim rulers. In the few decades before the Ramban's arrival, the city of Yerushalayim changed hands several times, from the Crusaders to the Khwarzamid Persians, and then - after several Mongol raids - the Egyptian Mamluks. When the Ramban arrived, he writes, there were hardly any people living in Yerushalayim. The Jewish population was down to just two Yidden.

The Ramban turned one of the abandoned structures into a Shul, gathering a few Jews from around the region to form the nucleus of a community. Since the Ramban's time, there has never ceased to be a community of Yidden in Yerushalayim. The Ramban continued to teach and write Torah in Akko until his passing in the year 5030 (1270). He is buried

in Eretz Yisroel, although the exact location is not fully clear.

Halacha like the Ramban in Pnimiyyus HaTorah

In the conventional Torah world, the Ramban is known for his innovative Torah interpretations, his approach to Halacha, and his clear Hashkafa. However, in the realm of Chassidus, as demonstrated in the aforementioned *sicha*, the Ramban is celebrated as one of the great Mekubalim in history, with a significant role in transmitting the sacred secrets of Kabbalah.

The Ramban's approach to Kabbalah is distinct from earlier Gedolei Yisroel such as Rashi and the Rambam, who, despite possessing deep Kabbalistic knowledge, kept its teachings concealed in their works. The Ramban is among the first, if not *the* first, to clearly incorporate ideas from Kabbalah into his *Pirush*. While there may have been previous works of Kabbalah disseminated among *talmidei chachamim*, this is the first work where Kabbalah and *Peshat* merge, blending the revealed and hidden aspects of the Torah.³

Following a Kabbalistic tradition passed down from his



THE RAMBAN'S SHUL DURING ITS INITIAL RENOVATION IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE SIX DAY WAR.



A DIAGRAM OF THE RAMBAN'S SHUL IN ERETZ YISROEL DRAWN 500 YEARS AGO BY A VISITOR TO ERETZ YISROEL.

Rebbeim, the Ramban pioneered a new path in Kabbalistic teaching. He can be seen as one of the first public disseminators of *pnimiyus haTorah*, whose teachings reached a wide audience. From his time until today, people from all walks of life (on both sides of the debate over studying *pnimiyus haTorah*) learn "Ramban on Chumash," incorporating *pnimiyus haTorah* ideas into simple *peshat* and *hashkafa*, thanks to the Ramban's remarkable work. He was a true trailblazer in revealing the hidden aspects of Torah.⁴

The Ramban's Kabbalistic tradition is mentioned in the *Hakdama* of Rabbeinu Chaim Vital to the *Kisvei HaArizal*,⁵ referenced by the Rebbe. Reb Chaim writes that the Ramban's tradition originated from the Raavad, who learned the secrets of Torah from Eliyahu Hanavi. This knowledge was passed down through generations (the Raavad's son – Rabbi Yitzchok Sagi-Nahor, Rabbi Ezra⁶ and Rabbi Ezrial of Girona, the latter two being the Ramban's Rebbeim in Kabbalah) until it reached the Ramban, who was considered the last of the true Mekubalim before the Arizal's time.⁷

The Ramban's involvement in Kabbalah extended beyond his commentary on Chumash and his works on Kabbalah. He had a *pnimiyus haTorah* perspective on everything, evident throughout his works, from interpretations of *pessukim* to opinions on Halacha. The Rebbe explains that one of the reasons that Chassidus follows the Ramban's opinion over the Rambam's regarding the times of Moshiach is because of the Ramban's focus on *pnimiyus haTorah*. Unlike the Rambam, who focused primarily on the revealed parts of Torah, the bulk of the Ramban's attention and immersion was in *pnimiyus haTorah*. Just as we follow Rav's opinion in *Issur V'heter* and Shmuel's opinion in legal matters based on their areas of expertise, in a dispute in the realm of *pnimiyus haTorah*, the Halacha aligns with the Ramban.⁸

Pirush Haramban Al Hatorah

One of the most famous and oft-quoted works of the Ramban is his Pirush on Chumash. Throughout the world of Torah scholarship, and specifically in the Rebbe's teachings, we find numerous references to the Ramban's commentary, which the Rebbe referred to as "one of the most accepted and relied upon *pirushim*."⁹

The Ramban's goal in his commentary is not just to explain the simple *peshat* as Rashi does; therefore, the rules and parameters of the Ramban's *pirush* differ as well. Besides bringing ideas from *Sod* and *Drush*, the Rebbe points out that the Ramban may not explain certain things if they have already been explained by others.¹⁰

Following Rashi, the Ramban often quotes him and has certain similarities to him.¹¹ Like Rashi, the Ramban does not make Halachic rulings in his *pirush*,¹² though he will at times



AN INSIGNIA BELONGING TO THE RAMBAN DISCOVERED APPROXIMATELY 50 YEARS AGO. CURRENTLY HELD IN THE ISRAEL MUSEUM.

mention ideas of Halacha.¹³ While his commentary contains *Remez* and Kabbalah, he is primarily a *Pashtan*, focused on the simple meaning, similar to Rashi but not quite on the same level.¹⁴

It is interesting to note that many ideas in the Rebbe's teachings, as found in Chassidus, Likkutei Sichos, and Igros Kodesh, are based on - or extensively explained in - the Ramban's writings. Examples include the impact of our Avos on today's world [*Maaseh Avos Siman Lebonim*], the Mitzvah to be holy in all aspects of life [*Kadesh Atzmecha Bemutar Lach*], and the concept of the Beis Hamikdash as primarily a place for Hashem's presence rather than just for Korbanos. The list goes on and on.

Numerous ideas and *pirushim* of the Ramban form the basis of core concepts in the Rebbe's Torah. Perhaps it was the Ramban's background in Kabbalah and his efforts to integrate the revealed and hidden aspects of Torah that provided the background, context, and framing of *pnimiyus haTorah* even in his *pirushim* in *peshat*, making the Ramban's Torah not only a prominent work in the revealed part of Torah, but also foundational in the realm of *pnimiyus haTorah*.

Along these lines, there is fascinating *sicha* of the Frieddiker Rebbe, where he says that "People who come with 'complaints' to Chassidim, can have bigger 'complaints' about the Ramban. Often, before the Ramban would bring something from *pnimiyus haTorah* he would write "V'al Derech Ha'emes" [and according to the truth...], and this would be even after bringing a *drush* from Chazal. This is because in Nigleh it is possible to veer off from the real meaning of the study and falsehood might be hard to discern. Chassidus does not allow for any falsehood, if one deviates in *pnimiyus haTorah*, it is immediately clear."¹⁵

IN HIS TORAH

הכל מודים בתחיית המתים ובקיום הזמן ההוא בכלליו ופרטיו כמו שפירשתי זולתי דעת הרב רבי משה זכרונו לברכה שנותנת קצבה לזמן התחיה ומחזיר הכל לעולם הנשמות כמו שנזכר למעלה ואנחנו מקיימין אנשי התחיה לעדי עד מימות תחיית המתים לעולם הבא שהוא עולם שכולו ארוך ואדון הרחמים יזכנו לטוב אשר צפון ליראיו ופעל לעבדיו למען רחמי וחסדיו ואמן.

(רמב"ן שער הגמול בסופו)

Everyone agrees and believes in the concept of *Techiyas Hameisim* (resurrection of the dead) and the existence of that time in all its general aspects and specific details, as I have previously explained, aside from the differing opinion of the Rav, Rabbi Moshe (the Rambam) of blessed memory, who sets a limit to the duration of the *techiya* and suggests that everything ultimately returns to the world of *Neshamos*, as mentioned earlier. Yet, we keep the people who experience the *techiya* alive forever, from the time of *Techiyas Hameisim* in the World to Come, a world that is long and everlasting. May the Master of Mercies grant us the merit to partake in the goodness that He has reserved for those who fear Him, and may He act on behalf of His servants out of His boundless mercy and kindness, *Amen Ve'Amen*.

Regarding the time after Moshiach comes and *Techiyas HaMeisim* begins, there is a Machlokes between the Rambam and the Ramban. The Rambam holds that following *Techiyas HaMeisim*, bodies will cease to live and only *Neshamos* will live on, in complete unity with Hashem. The Ramban, on the other hand, disagrees and explains that at the time of *Techiyas HaMeisim*, the physical body will be refined, and as *Neshamos in bodies*, they will have the utmost *Giluy Elokus* (revelation of G-dliness), living in the physical reality of *dirah betachtonim*.

Chassidus follows the opinion of the Arizal, and that of the Ramban before him, that the ultimate goal of *dirah betachtonim* will be reached at *Techiyas HaMeisim*, with *Neshamos* in physical bodies in this world.

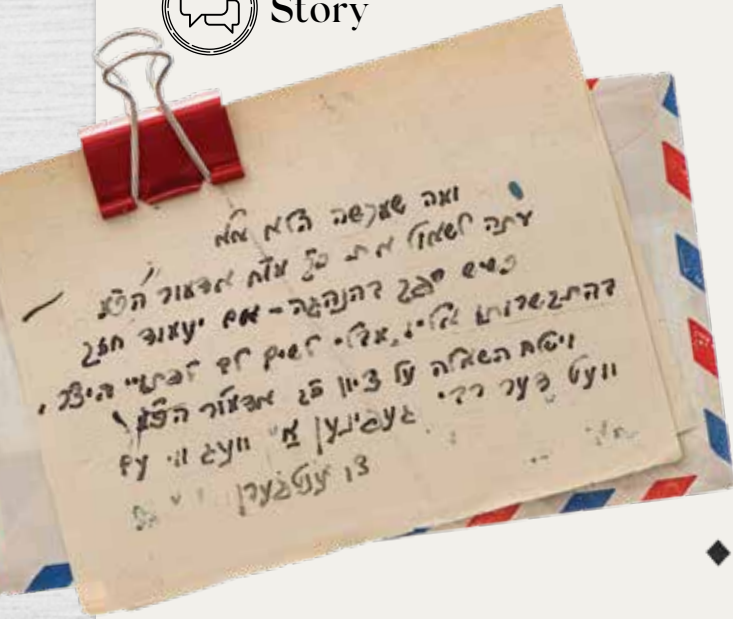
1. Likkutei Sichos, vol. 2, p. 588.
2. Shabbos Parshas Haazinu 5742; Hisvaaduyos 5742 vol. 1, p. 109.
3. Igros Kodesh vol. 18, p. 101.
4. Igros Kodesh vol. 22, p. 94.
5. Shaar Hahakdamos, Hakdamos ch. 1.
6. The Chida says that this Rebbi Ezra was known as Ezra Hanavi, which was brought in the sicha as one of the examples for the generation of Nevuah.
7. Reb Chaim Vital explains that after the Ramban all the works in Kabbalah were basically reframing previous concepts of pnimiyus haTorah; there is no real development of this Torah in their works.
8. Shavuos 5727; Toras Menachem vol. 50, p. 57. An explanation

mentioned elsewhere is that the Ramban was later than the Rambam and knew his opinion while ruling differently. In cases such as this, halacha kabasrai [Halacha follows the later opinion].

9. Shabbos Parshas Vayikra 5732; Toras Menachem vol. 67, p. 418.
10. Shabbos Parshas Shelach 5734, Sichos Kodesh 5734 vol. 2, p. 218.
11. Shabbos Parshas Balak 5737; Sichos Kodesh 5737 vol. 2, p. 247.
12. Sichos Kodesh 5727 vol. 1, p. 35.
13. Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim 5737; Sichos Kodesh 5737 vol. 1, p. 503.
14. Sichos Kodesh 5740 vol. 1, p. 855.
15. Sefer Hashichos 5704, p. 54.



Story



לזכות
 החייל בצבאות ה' השליח
 מנחם מענדל שיחי'
 לרגל יום הולדתו י"ד מנחם אב

נדפס ע"י הוריו
 הרה"ת ר' דוד וזוגתו מרת פערל גאלדא
 ומשפחתם שיחיו
 טייכטל

דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

WRITTEN BY: RABBI LEVI GREENBERG

בפריים לתושי'



AS TOLD BY
**RABBI BORUCH SHOLOM DAVIDSON
 AND NESANEL ZHIVALYUK**

(Bala Cynwyd, PA)

Rabbi Boruch Sholom Davidson: In the summer of 5782 we arranged a community trip to the Ohel as one of our *peulos* at Chabad of the Main Line. Baruch Hashem, a nice group joined us for the three-hour trip by coach bus; I had prepared a program for the ride, including videos of the Rebbe, stories, and some learning content. This was on Sunday, 25 Tammuz. After the Ohel, we had a program nearby, and the entire project was a beautiful success.

On a personal note, during that trip I was focused on an important juncture in our Shlichus. Approximately two years earlier, during Covid, we started a minyan in our backyard for the Yidden living in our neighborhood, and by now we were ready to officially open a satellite of

Chabad of the Main Line in Bala Cynwyd, called "Bala Chabad." We needed to move out of our backyard tent to a proper space before Tishrei, but nothing was available in the neighborhood where we had seen our success. In my *tzetel* I asked the Rebbe for a bracha that we should succeed in setting up a proper Chabad House before Tishrei.

There was a building near our home that seemed a perfect fit but when I had researched the matter some months earlier, the management said they were not interested in renting the space.

On the morning of 19 Av, I walked into the building's management office to explore the matter further and met the company's Chief Financial Officer who was happy to

chat. During our conversation, I mentioned the idea of using the space for services during the High Holidays. Though not Jewish, as a religious person, he found the idea very meaningful and said he would ask the owners on my behalf.

I continued visiting him over the next few days and eventually I was introduced to one of the property owners. On 28 Menachem Av, they agreed to allow me to use the space, not just for Rosh Hashanah, but on Friday nights as well, and any other time I wanted for the next six months.

Throughout this time, I updated the Rebbe on our progress. On Tuesday, 3 Elul, I notified the Rebbe that I would receive the key to the building that day. Immediately, I placed a Tzedaka Pushka, a Tanya, and several other *seforim* in the space to dedicate it as a Chabad House.

Since the building had not been used for a long time, it needed a new AC system and other updates, so I reached out to Nesanel Zhivalyuk, a Lubavitcher chossid in our community who works in real estate, to get his professional assistance in preparing the room for use on Rosh Hashanah.

On Thursday night, Nesanel came over with his HVAC technician and at one point I left them there so I could lead the minyan for Mincha, as I was still in *aveilus* for my father. Afterward, I went to the supermarket and bought Nesanel and his technician something to eat in appreciation for the time they were investing in our new Chabad House. When Nesanel offered me some cash as payment for the food I refused to accept it. Instead, he placed the pile of single dollar bills from his pocket next to the Pushka for the first ten visitors to use for Tzedaka.

On Sunday morning, 8 Elul, while walking with my children in the neighborhood I decided to show them the new space. Once inside, as I was fiddling

around with the alarms, my son Mendel found the pile of dollars Nesanel had placed next to the Pushka three days earlier and called out to me, “Tatty! Is this a dollar from the Rebbe?”

I rushed over and sure enough, the dollar he was holding had the following words written on the top edge:

נתקבל מכ"ק אד"ש ט' שבט בביקורי עם חבר כנסת ...

“Received from the Rebbe 9 Shevat during my visit with the member of Knesset ... “ [the name was smudged out and I could not decipher it.]

On the middle of the dollar bill was written: כפליים לתוש"י - a double portion of blessing.

Clearly, a dollar someone had received from the Rebbe had been discovered in the brand new Chabad House about which I had written to the Rebbe during my last visit to the Ohel and had materialized so miraculously over the last few weeks! I cannot describe the feelings I felt... The power of the moment was so intense I started dancing with my children out of sheer joy. The Rebbe had just sent me such a clear sign of his *brachos* for our new Chabad House, and my excitement was boundless!

I realized the dollar had come from Nesanel's pocket. He had not been to the Rebbe before Gimmel Tammuz and certainly did not receive any dollars from the Rebbe. I assumed he was unaware of the precious treasure he had in his possession until the past Thursday evening, so I immediately called him with the news.

Nesanel Zhivalyuk: When Rabbi Davidson called me that Sunday morning I put him on speaker so my wife could hear about it directly from him. The news was exhilarating for us for several reasons.

The community trip to the Ohel we had joined a month earlier was unique for me. While I have been to the Ohel many times before, this was the first time we had joined an organized trip. Traveling by coach





bus, together with the community, with Rabbi Davidson sharing inspiration for hours, was the perfect way to prepare for being at the Ohel.

Also, whereas in the past everything in my life had been going well, and I usually wrote to the Rebbe about general things and requested general *brachos*, this was the first time that I had some pressing issues on my mind which I shared with the Rebbe and for which I requested specific *brachos*. Some family members were seriously ill, and my business had taken a drastic turn for the worse. Most importantly, my wife was pregnant with twins after two recent miscarriages. The circumstances of her pregnancy made the doctors extra cautious, and they were giving her a hard time regarding her preferences, which was causing her much stress.

Now, several weeks later, a dollar from the Rebbe with the words 'כפליים לתושי' written on it (double = twins) was in our hands! I don't think I had ever held a dollar from the Rebbe or even seen one until then. At that moment I felt as if the whole world was lifted off my shoulders, and I was certain all the problems would work out for the best. With the dollar in our possession, we felt that we received a direct *bracha* from the Rebbe and all of our worries and anxieties just melted away. Baruch Hashem, during Sukkos

my wife gave birth to beautiful, healthy, twin girls.

While we were gratified to have this special dollar, clearly it belonged to someone else and we wished to return it to its original owner. In fact, the week we discovered it, my wife was listening to a parsha class by Rabbi YY Jacobson which was all about the mitzvah of Hashovas Aveida. He even mentioned specific examples of when one is obligated to return a lost object. If one finds a dollar bill in Times Square, there is no need to return it, but if there are significant markings on it, one is obligated to try to find the owner. With the encouragement and recommendation of friends, I contacted JEM with a photo of the dollar, but after some research, they were unsuccessful in tracking down the owner.

In the meantime, we framed the dollar and placed it prominently in our home.

To be continued...

YOUR STORY

Share your story with A Chassidisher Derher by emailing stories@derher.org.



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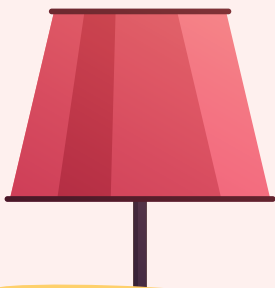
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Erev Rosh Hashanah

- 5737 -



Compiled By:
Rabbi Shabi Soffer



Early in the morning, the Rebbe arrives at 770.

Soon thereafter, the Rebbe enters the main shul for Selichos.





After Shacharis, the Rebbe performs Hataras Nedarim.



The Rebbe stands at the entrance of his room receiving *panim* from thousands.



The Rebbe responds to the *Pan Kloli*, presented by a delegation of elder Chassidim, with a *bracha* for the New Year.



JEM 114305



The Rebbe visits the Ohel.

Letters

A forum for readers to send their feedback, add to, or ask any questions about articles. Submit your letter to feedback@derher.org.

Submissions may be slightly modified by our editorial staff before publishing.

Thank You For The Book The Rebbe Will Find A Way.

I want to thank Chassidisher Derher for your amazing magazine and tell you that we truly love every page each month!

A while back we bought the book “The Rebbe Will Find a Way” containing stories of answers and *brachos* that people received from the Rebbe after going to the Ohel. We’ve been reading a story from it at every Shabbos meal.

There are many stories of the Rebbe that we have enjoyed reading over the years but these stories make the Rebbe so much more accessible today and are especially meaningful for our children who were born after Gimmel Tammuz.

The book has caused our family to grow in our *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe and we’ve actually taken on some new *hachlatos* as a direct result of those stories; for this we want to thank you very much!

When’s the next volume coming out?

Nechama Dina Korf
THORNHILL, ONTARIO, CANADA

Lecha Dodi 5714

Thank you so much for your amazing magazine! I especially enjoyed the interview with Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook about the Rebbe’s *maamarim* in the recent Nissan magazine (Issue 142).

I would like to make a correction: The *maamar* Lecha Dodi 5714 was not said at the surprise farbrengen held for the Rebbe’s twenty-fifth anniversary on Shabbos Parshas Vayishlach, 14 Kislev but rather on Shabbos Parshas Teitzei, 13 Elul 5714. 13 Elul is the wedding anniversary of the Friediker Rebbe.

As mentioned in a letter written by Reb Mordechai Groner, after Shacharis on that Shabbos, he approached the Rebbe together with Rabbi Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky and asked the Rebbe if he would farbreng in honor of the *chassanim* (Reb Mordechai’s son, Reb Leibel Groner, Reb Yoel Kahn, and Reb Zelig Sharfstein).

Upon hearing this, the Rebbe answered that they should give him another reason to farbreng, to which Rabbi Kazarnovsky said that that day was the wedding anniversary of the Friediker Rebbe.

The Rebbe then agreed, and farbrenged for two hours. He spoke a lot about the idea of a *chasunah*, especially the *chasunah* of a *Nossi*, and recited the *maamar* of Lecha Dodi which seemed to be based on the *maamar* that the Friediker Rebbe said at the Rebbe’s *chasunah*.

This *maamar* was edited and put out by the Rebbe in honor of 14 Kislev 5739 – *Chamishim Shana*. It should be noted that in the *pesach davar* when it says that it was said on 13 Elul 5714, it says in the *he'arah* that that year marked twenty-five years from the *chasunah* of the Rebbe.

Levi Hertz
BRUNOY, FRANCE.

Mr. Yitzchak Damiel

In the recent *Derher* magazine of Iyar (Issue 220), Stories of the Rebbe section, the story was told of a secular Jew who asked to learn Chassidus with Reb Meir Blizinsky. The Rebbe instructed Reb Meir to learn with him but not to mention anything about *shmiras hamitzvos*. In the end, this Jew became a *shomer Torah umitzvos*. This story was published in the Living Torah video program 989 told over by Reb Meir Blizinsky's son, Reb Shmuel Blizinsky. As recounted there, the Jew that his father learned with was Mr. Yitzchak Damiel, an important figure in Mapai – the Israeli Workers Party – and was from those who created the philosophy of the secular Socialists who ruled Israel in the early years of the State.

After learning Chassidus for a while, Mr. Damiel wrote an article in the newspaper of Hashomer Hatzair entitled “Ad Matai?!” in which he called out the secular education system in Israel which would lead the public to be totally removed from Torah and Mitzvos and called for efforts to be made to connect the Israeli youth to their roots and traditions. This article made great waves in the higher echelons of Israeli society, and even David Ben-Gurion, the prime minister, issued a response to the matter.

In connection with the article, the Rebbe sent him a lengthy letter¹ for the first time in which the Rebbe encouraged him not to be deterred by the backlash he received to his article and to continue to arouse the

public on this matter, which led to a lengthy correspondence he merited to have with the Rebbe for years to come.

Enjoying strong connections with many in the Kibbutz system, Damiel was instrumental in organizing the “*Erev im Chabad*” (an evening with Chabad) events at Kibbutzim which were organized by Reb Shmuel Blizinsky following the Rebbe's instructions in Tishrei 5717 for Chabad to go out in a “*milchemes tenufah*” – all out ‘attack’ – to bring Yidden closer to Yiddishkeit.

Shneur Gordon
MIAMI, FL

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1. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 13 pg. 479.

