

CHANGES IN CONDUCT AFTER CHOF BEIS SHEVAT



THE REBBE'S HOME

Following the *Shiva*, the Rebbe continued to stay at his home and *daven* at the Amud there. As a matter of fact, for all practical purposes, the Rebbe relocated Lubavitch World Headquarters to 1304 President St. The *sichos* that were said during the weekdays, the distribution of dollars on Sunday afternoons, and the frequent trips to the Ohel – they were all based out of the Rebbe's home.

Being that the Rebbe's house was relatively small, only guests and individ-

ual Chassidim were allowed to be present. For the vast majority of Chassidim who wished to hear the Rebbe's *tefillos* and *sichos*, a live hookup was always connected to 770. In the early stages, there was only an audio connection, and eventually incorporated video as well.

This continued all through the Year of *Aveilus*, except for the *Shabbosim* and *Yomim Tovim*, when the Rebbe would stay in his room at 770. Beginning from 24 of Elul 5748, through *Rosh Chodesh* Kislev 5749,

the Rebbe stayed at 770 (for the festive month of *Tishrei*, and remaining there through the *Kinus Hashluchim*).

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After the year of mourning concluded, the Rebbe remained at his home until the passing of the Rashag, which occurred on 6 Adar I, 5749. From that period onward, the Rebbe generally stayed in 770 and returned home only periodically for short stays at a time (each for a few weeks). As the years went on, the Rebbe frequented his home less and less, until 5752, when the Rebbe did not go home at all.

For the first three *Shabbosim* following the Shabbos of the Shiva, the Rebbe did not leave his house. Only married chassidim and *Chassanim* were permitted to join there; the bochorim who remained in 770 were broken, as

770 was left deserted... the Rebbe did not farbreng.

Finally, after Purim, on *Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel-Pekudei*, the Rebbe stayed in his room at 770. It has been told that the Rebbe said to one of his secretaries that from now on, there will be a *Farbrengen* every *Shabbos* without exception – “*Ad bias goiel...*” (“Until the coming of *Moshiach*”). From then on, the Rebbe stayed in 770 every *Shabbos*, and for the next four years the Rebbe would *farbreng* every week until *Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel*, 5752.

WEEKDAY FARBRENGENS

Another very drastic change which followed the passing of the Rebbetzin was the end of the weekday *Farbrengens*. The first time that this was noticeable was on *Purim*, for the Rebbe consistently held a *Farbrengen* on *Purim* every year, but in 5748, *Purim* was during the *Shloshim*. The Rebbe instructed the *Chassidim* (by way of his secretaries), to hold a *Farbrengen* in 770 at 9:30 p.m., the exact time at which the Rebbe would usually begin his *Farbrengen*.

When the staff of Jewish Educational Media, the organization that was responsible for televising the Rebbe's major weekday *Farbrengens*, asked the Rebbe for the exact date of the *Farbrengen* of Yud Aleph Nissan, 5748, the Rebbe responded, “As it seems, matters will be as they were on *Purim*,” (meaning, that there would not be a *Farbrengen* at all).

Chassidim hoped that this was only due to the fact that the Rebbe was in a year of mourning. They entertained the notion that perhaps this is akin to the period following the passing of the Rebbe's mother in 5725, when the Rebbe did not want to hold *Farbrengens* during the week either. But before *Yud Tes Kislev* that year,

Reb Shmuel Levitin requested of the Rebbe on behalf of all the *Chassidim* that he reconsider and *farbreng* nonetheless. The Rebbe agreed, and continued to *farbreng* during the week, but was always sure to conduct a *Siyum* each time, to avoid any *halachic* issues.

Now as well, the *Chassidim* presumed that with the completion of the year of mourning, the Rebbe would once again hold *Farbrengens* during the week. To our great disappointment, the custom of *farbrenging* during the week on special days was totally suspended (The last time that the Rebbe held a *Farbrengen* during the week, as of now, was on *Tu B'Shvat*, 5748).

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On the other hand, there were new changes to the *chassidim's* advantage as well: The Rebbe began to *daven* with the *minyán* three times a day, every single day. Whereas, up until the Rebbetzin's passing, the *Rebbe* only davened *Mincha* and *Maariv* with the *minyán* in the small *zal* each day, and *Shacharis* on *Shabbos* and *Yomim Tovim*.

INDIVIDUAL GUIDANCE

During the *Sichos* prior to Chof Beis Shevat 5748, the Rebbe seemed to continually make mention of several unusual expressions and statements. It was apparent from the Rebbe's words that he wished to minimize the reliance that the *Chassidim* had on the direct answers that they were accustomed to receive from him, and that they should each attempt to find the proper means to settle their doubts

and difficulties, based on what the Torah teaches. Namely, one is to refer all medical issues and concerns of health to doctors, all *Halachic* matters to a *Rav*, concerns of spiritual growth to one's [*Asei l'cho*] *Rav*, and so on. The Rebbe also mentioned that all requests for *Brochos*, without exception, are taken [by the Rebbe] directly to the *Ohel* of the *Friediker* Rebbe, and therefore there is no reason each one to wait for a personal response, as the *Brocha* is given regardless.

Yud Shevat in 5748 fell out to be on a Friday, so the *Farbrengen* in commemoration of the *Friediker* Rebbe's *Hilula* was held on *Shabbos Parshas*

Beshalach, 11 Shevat. During the *Farbrengen*, the Rebbe again spoke about the above-mentioned topics, adding that the most efficient way of finding guidance is by studying the Torah of the [*Friediker*] Rebbe, diligently and in depth.

On *Tu B'Shevat* again, the Rebbe reiterated these words, prefacing that the [*Friediker*] Rebbe provided us with all the guidance that we need throughout his lifetime, and he continues to do so in an ever-greater measure, today, after his passing. One can find answers to all difficulties by studying *Chassidus*, and if there still remains a doubt, one should consult his *Rav*.

On 21 Shevat, the Rebbe held *Yechidus Klolis* for the guests who had arrived for *Yud Shevat*. During his talk then, the Rebbe spoke yet again about how to resolve the various issues that seem to arise. ■