





# CHILDREN at the FOREFRONT

”והשיב לב אבות על (ידי) בנים”

In the spring of 5740, in a sweeping campaign, the Rebbe not only called upon Chassidim to intensify their activities for Jewish children, but radically redefined what it meant that every child counts.

In a whirlwind of unexpected farbrengens and children’s-rallies, the Rebbe laid the roots for what would eventually become the flagship organization for Jewish children.

Today it is common practice for mothers to come to shul on the first day of Shavuos with toddlers who are perhaps just days old,

but there was a time when this was all but standard.

Through the following pages you will journey through the moments and stories behind this landmark takono, and even earlier than that...

לזכות

החיל בצבאות ה' מנחם מענדל בן מנוחה רחל  
לרפואה שלימה בקרוב ברמ"ח איבריו ושס"ה גידיו

CREDITS: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE

**T**he date is 29 Iyar, erev Rosh Chodesh Sivan 5740. Chassidim, as well as tens of thousands of other Jews, are fasting following a call issued some time earlier by the Agudas HaRabbonim of the United States and Canada, advising all the Jewish communities to partake in a taanis shaos, a half-day fast, due to the sensitive situation in Eretz Yisroel. On the preceding Shabbos, the Rebbe announced his compliance with this kol kore, and instructed Chassidim to go along with it.<sup>1</sup>

After mincha, the Rebbe delivers a sicha, explaining the uniqueness of the day as a fast day on the threshold of Rosh Chodesh. Soon, the topic of the sicha turns to children and to the major role they've played in Jewish life since time immemorial. The Rebbe quotes the midrash which describes how Jewish children served as guarantors that the yidden will keep the Torah, and how that was the only proposition accepted by Hashem after refusing several previous ones. The Rebbe then urges that children rallies be held wherever it is that children learn, so that they may be taught and declare their bond and commitment to Torah just as they had done so long, long ago. The Rebbe further suggests that for those in Eretz Yisroel, the rallies should be held at the Kosel and in other mekomos hakedoshim, and if a necessary permit must be issued to reach those places (such as Chevron, and Kever Rochel), they will be surely obtained. The climax of the call to gather Jewish children seems to come when the Rebbe petitions parents to take all their children to shul on Shavuos so that they may be present for the reading of the Asseres Hadibros, even the very young – less than one month of age.

Asserting that his call is universal, and that it applies even to children who are

behind the Iron Curtain, the Rebbe suddenly begins addressing the crowd...in Russian!<sup>2</sup>

The days leading up to Shavuos are duly utilized by Chassidim to host children's-rallies and to publicize the Rebbe's call for bringing even little children to shul on Shavuos morning, for the read-

**The unexpected  
announcement spread  
like wildfire, and at  
9:30 p.m. everyone  
gathered in 770 for  
the surprise  
farbrenge**

ing of the Asseres Hadibros.

A special rally was held on Gimmel Sivan during which the Rebbe spoke directly to the children, encouraging them to come hear the Asseres Hadibros. Addressing the children behind the Iron Curtain, the Rebbe spoke again a full sicha in Russian!

**THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY**

The roots for this surprise campaign actually began earlier than that Erev Rosh Chodesh.

For several weeks before this date the Rebbe led a comprehensive and exhaustive campaign addressing the Jewish

child.

But let us go back two months earlier....

*Ed Note: In order to adequately realize the rarity of these events, it should be made clear, that although throughout the years the Rebbe's public behavior changed several times, nonetheless it could be said there was an 'unofficial' pattern to specific occurrences, such as which dates would be marked with a farbrenge, when would sichos be muga for publication and so on in many other elements. Therefore a break in any which way of a particular pattern, was translated as a message to indicate either emphasis or triviality of a given point. As we will see, this will have significant value throughout the course of our article.*

On Erev Rosh Chodesh Nissan 5740, upon returning from the Ohel, after Davening Mincha-Ma'ariv the Rebbe informed the mazkirus, that there would be a farbrenge that very evening.

Usually, the Rebbe farbrenge every Shabbos Mevorchim and on yomei depagra, whether on weekdays or Shabbos. A farbrenge on Rosh Chodesh, however, was highly unusual, and it had not entered anyone's mind that there may be a farbrenge. To the extent that a full bus of bochorim had traveled to Montreal for a friend's chasuna confident that there would be no farbrenge during their absence. In fact, even the Rebbe's mazkir, Rabbi Groner, was instructed to go to the wedding and given a shlichus mitzvah by the Rebbe for the trip, further confirming that no farbrenge would take place.

The unexpected announcement spread like wildfire, and at 9:30 p.m. everyone gathered in 770 for the surprise farbrenge. The Rebbe spoke on a wide range of topics, and deep into the farbrenge the Rebbe announced that the time had come to embark on a new ave-

nue: to prepare for Pesach beginning with the participation of children.

The Rebbe laid out his plan: children should be spoken to in the next two weeks, (although, in truth, preparations for Yom Tov should really have begun two weeks earlier – shloshim yom lifnei hachag) and should be encouraged to ask their parents to give them an active part in getting the family and the house ready for Pesach. The Rebbe explained: The Rambam teaches that the way to stimulate a child into action is through competition and games, so too we should give the children the feeling that they matter, and that, in fact, the child's entire home could be ready and clean for Pesach and clear of chometz – entirely in their merit! The Rebbe stressed that when a child is spoken to, in an honest, direct and genuine manner, -- they respond accordingly.

The Rebbe left no doubt about whom he was asking to participate in this campaign. The Rebbe asked that everyone submit a duch – a report to him, listing what they've done in this regard, and

how they've contributed to the campaign. Failure to sending a report will mean nothing less than one has clearly nothing to write for he has done as much...

Referring to the posuk in Malaachi describing Eliyohu Hanovi's arrival heralding the geula, the Rebbe said that the time had come for the fulfillment of "Vehayshiv lev avos al bonim- al yedei bonim"; to reach the parents by means of their children's encouragement, much as mitvza neshek had achieved, and was still achieving.<sup>3</sup>

### THE MATZAH BALL CONTEST

The following day,

**HEY, KIDS!**  
**ENTER THE MATZAH BALL CONTEST!**  
**AND WIN THESE GREAT PRIZES!**

- ★ **GRAND PRIZE: A Round Trip Ticket To ISRAEL**
- ★ **FIRST PRIZE: (16 HITS) 10 Speed Bicycle**
- ★ **2 SECOND PRIZES: (10-15 HITS) 35mm Camera**
- ★ **4 THIRD PRIZES: (5-9 HITS) 4 Sets of Jewish Holy Books**

These prizes will be selected in a drawing and the winner will be notified immediately.

**EVERYONE WINS:**  
 A prize for just entering the contest. In addition you may qualify (if score is more than 5), to enter in the grand lottery (according to category) and be eligible to win one of the above mentioned prizes.

**OFFICIAL RULES:** 1. Forms must have signature of parent or guardian.  
 2. All forms must be submitted before or on April 36th.

MAIL ENTRY TO: THE MATZAH BALL CONTEST  
 824 Eastern Parkway  
 Brooklyn, N.Y. 11213

**CHECK THE BOXES AND SCORE YOUR HITS!**

- Study about the Passover Holiday
- Help clean my house for Passover
- Take part in the search for Chametz, Sunday evening, March 30th after nightfall
- Help burn my family's Chametz, before Monday morning, March 31st, before 10:54 AM (in New York City)
- Help sell the Chametz, before Monday morning, March 31st
- See that the women and girls in my home light the Shabbos and Yom Tov candles at the proper time
- Help prepare the Seder Plate
- Ask the four questions.
- Eat Matzah
- Eat Hand Baked (Shmush) Matzah
- Eat the Bitter Herbs (Maror)
- Drink the four cups of wine or grape-juice
- Sing the traditional Passover songs
- Celebrate all eight days of Passover
- Eat only Kosher for Passover foods throughout the holidays

PRINT CLEARLY  
 AT BAT \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_  
 Parents Signature \_\_\_\_\_

DO NOT FILL OUT THIS FORM ON EISHBA OR YOM TOV

**NOW IT'S TIME TO ENTER THE MATZAH BALL CONTEST!**

**STEP UP AND WIN FABULOUS PRIZES!**

Q: Why is this Passover contest different than all other contests?  
 A: Because in this contest nobody loses, everybody wins!

**The Finestones**

How is this contest different than all other contests?  
 Because in this contest nobody loses, everybody wins!

That's right! Nobody loses, everybody wins!

THE ORIGINAL BROCHURES ADVERTISING THE MATZAH BALL CONTEST AND THE COMIC THAT WAS SENT ALONG WITH IT.



CREDITS: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE

צוזאמען מיט א גאנצער פאלק אין ארץ מצרים, וואס דארט איז דער פאלק געווען א מיעוט, און ארום זיי זיינען געווען קינדער פון מצרים, און אעפ"כ האט ער דער אויבערשטער געמאכט פאר א "מעסענדזשער", און האט עם אריינגעשיקט פון "דעזערט" אין עיר הבירה - די גרעסטע שטאט, און האט עם דארט געהייסן אז ער זאל גיין מיט'ן גאנצ'ן שטארקייט און זאגן "שלח עמי ויעבדוני!" גייט ארויס אין מדבר און דינט דעם אויבערשטען!

און זעלבערפארשטענדליך אז דער "סופאר-פאווער" איז ניט נתפעל געווארן, און אעפ"כ האט געטאן זיך די אלע סיפורים וואס מ'דערציילט עם שוין אין "קינגער גארטן", לפי הבנתו והשגתו.

און דערנאך זאגט מען עם, אז דאס וואס וועט זיין אין פערצן טעג ארום אדער אין דרייצן טעג ארום, וועט זיין חמשה עשר בניסן, זאלסטו וויסן זיין אז די נאכט פאר דערויף ביזטו אט דער וואס אויף דיר וועט זיך האלטן דער גאנצער סדר, ווארום דו וועסט דארפן פרעגן די פיר קשיות, און דער טאטע וועט זיך צוהערן, און דערנאך וועט ער דיר ענטפערן אויף די קשיות, און וועט דיר געבן פון די ד' כוסות וכו', דו דארפט נאר זען אז מ'זאל זיין אלץ צוגעגרייט ווי ס'דארף צו זיין, און אז קיינער זאל ניט אנשלאפן ווערן.

וועט דאס אויפטאן און מאכן א מהפכה לטובה אין צענדליקער טויזנטער אידישע הייזער!

(ליל ר"ח ניסן תש"מ)

בשעת ס'וועט קומען צוגיין זיינער אן אייניקל, אדער זיינער א קינד פון קינדער-גארטן, און וועט עם דערציילן אז היינט האט ער געהערט א מעשה נפלא, אז ס'איז געווען א פאלק און דאס איז דער פאלק פון וואנעט ער שטאמט וואס זיינען געווען הונדערטער יאר אין א "סופער-פאווער", און דערנאך איז געקומען צוגיין א איד וואס האט געהייסן משה רבינו, וואס דאס איז אלץ ביי עם א חידוש גדול, ער האט ניט געוואוסט פון דעם גאנצן ענין, ער האט געוואוסט אז ס'איז דא א "מאזעס", ער האט געוואוסט אז ס'איז דא א "בייבל", ער האט אבער ניט געוואוסט וואס האט דאס פאר א קשר מיט עם.

דאס איז א "סאבדזשעקט" וואס ער דארף לערנען, דערפאר וועט מען עם געבן די ציונים טובים - אז דאס האט א שייכות מיט עם, מיט זיין גוף, מיט זיין נשמה און זיין טאג טעגליכן אויפפירן, אט דאס האט מען עם פארגעסן דערציילן! אדער מ'האט ניט געוואוסט אז מ'דארף עם דאס דערציילן, אדער מ'האט אויך גארניט געוואוסט אז דאס האט טאקע א קשר!

במילא אז מ'דערציילט דאס א קינד - א קינד פארשטייט ניט קיין שפיצלאך, און פארשטייט ניט קיין וויצן, ער נעמט ענינים כפשוטם, בפרט נאך אז די פשטות הענינים דאס איז אמיתית הענינים.

און קומט דערנאך צוגיין אהיים און דערציילט מיט התפעלות אז היינט האט ער זיך דערוואוסט אז "מאזעס" האט א שייכות צו עם, און אז דער "מאזעס" וואס ער הייסט אויף לשון הקודש "משה", איז ער געווען

protocol is broken again<sup>4</sup> when the Rebbe participates in a children's rally, arranged in haste following the previous' day sicha.

In a rare display of personal involvement, the Rebbe instructs Rabbi Groner to bring coins, which he will distribute to each and every child. In a short while a hanocho of the sichos delivered by the rally is produced, and the Rebbe in an unusual fashion, is magiah the sicha.

The ensuing weeks are ones of great enthusiasm: the Rebbe just proclaimed a new initiative demanding everyone's involvement, and there are less than two weeks to implement it! Under the guidance of Reb Dovid Raskin, of the Lubavitch Youth Organization (Tzach), and working with Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda Hecht of NCFJE, bochurim and yungeleit alike brainstorm for an adequate response to the Rebbe's call. Shortly thereafter "The Matzah Ball Contest" is created (see pictures), inviting children to participate by helping out with Pesach preparations and sending in their accomplishments to enter a raffle and win prizes.<sup>5</sup>

Together with the contest, a comic book is commissioned from artist Michel Schwartz (see picture) and distributed with the manual for the contest.

The clock is ticking, and things quickly develop in astronomical proportions; a quarter of a million brochures (!)<sup>6</sup> are printed to hand out in the tri-state area. Nearly every major Jewish newspaper sports a full-page ad of the new initiative.<sup>7</sup> Lubavitcher Chassidim are seen in every supermarket setting up stands and doing just about anything possible to promulgate their message as much as possible!!

The "march of time" must have slowed for the Rebbe's Chassidim, for in barely two weeks, there is hardly a Jewish child who wasn't exposed to the campaign. The Rebbe takes personal involvement throughout, giving written and oral



CREDITS: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE

**The clock is ticking,  
and things quickly  
develop in  
astronomical  
proportions; a  
quarter of a million  
brochures are  
printed to hand out  
in the tri-state area**

horaos.

#### **"SHTUREM UN BREN"**

Not long after the first two instances addressing this new initiative, the Rebbe began the farbrengen, "we find ourselves in the midst of the shturem and the enthusiasm ("ברעון") in connection with the activities with children". The Rebbe continued to emphasize how the children hold the key to bring the geula, much as it was in the story of Purim, when Mordechai gathered the children of Shushan to study Torah.

#### **A SPECIAL THANK YOU**

Children are the foremost topic, once again. On this holy and special day, the Rebbe requests that more children get involved in the preparations for Pesach, if they have not yet done so, and underlines the crucial role they play in bringing about the geula ho'amitis ve'hashleimo. Most strikingly the Rebbe thanks the children, in addition to the gratitude directed toward the adults, for the brochos and good wishes they sent the Rebbe in honor of the Rebbe's birthday!



CREDITS: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE

terminated position in ahavas yisroel and in all matters of Torah and mitzvos, specifically, through the actions of children.

In an extraordinary display of affection, the Rebbe thanked the children for their efforts in assisting with Pesach preparations. Furthermore, the Rebbe underscored the importance for the leadership of children to be firm in their commitment and observance, since the message they impart to their following is crucial.

Later the Rebbe instructed his mazkirus to forward the points mentioned in the sicha to the Prime Minister of Israel, Mr. Menachem Begin, and to inform him that the sicha was delivered at a time when there was an obligation upon the Rebbe, al pi Shluchan Aruch, to perform bedikas chometz, and that the Rebbe nevertheless used the time to speak the sicha! Once again, the Rebbe is magiah the sicha for publication.

It was already late at night but nevertheless, after such a strong message from the Rebbe in such an unexpected time, bochurim took to the streets once again, searching even in the New York City Kosher pizza shops, to find more children to be included in the new campaign.

As mentioned, every day saw increased activity in publicizing the Rebbe's message. No stone was left unturned and no avenue of outreach was dismissed as too large or too small. Rabbi Yehuda Weg, Shliach to Tulsa, Oklahoma, recalls how one morning shortly before Pesach, as the Rebbe was being driven from the mikvah, the car stopped on Kingston Avenue near Eastern Parkway, where a line of vans were parked and bochurim were hard at work strapping down bicycles to the top of the vans. These were for publicizing the campaign and the raffle in the Matzah-Ball contest. The bochurim, many not even in hat or jacket, were totally engrossed in what they were doing, and didn't notice the Rebbe observing everything from his window. The nachas ruach radiating from the Rebbe's

#### “ES SHOKELT ZICH”

Upon his return from the Ohel, Rabbi Zalmon Shimon Dworkin went in to the Rebbe's room and the Rebbe sold his Chometz. The Rebbe then davened mincha, after which it became known that the Rebbe will deliver a sicha following maariv. A microphone was hastily set up in the upstairs shul, at the Rebbe's table.<sup>8</sup> After maariv, the Rebbe sat down, placed his hand on his forehead, and while looking downward began speaking about “Vehayshiv lev avos al bonim,” the theme of the ongoing children's campaign.

Then the Rebbe's voice took on a very serious tone, and with closed eyes and employing very intense and extraordinary expressions began to talk about the security of Eretz Yisroel. “אלע ענינים” “שאקלען זיך” “Things are shaking, especially in Eretz Yisroel” – the Rebbe said, and if Eretz Yisroel is trembling in matters pertaining to security and livelihood, it is a direct consequence of a spiritual quiver -- of a wavering and unsure stance in matters of Torah and mitzvos. The Rebbe declared that the defeat of our enemies would come by assuming a de-

**In the days following Pesach (and earlier as well) responses are flooding into the “Matzah Ball Contest” office with an overwhelming 50,000 children participating!**



RABBI DOVID RASKIN AND RABBI SHMUEL BUTMAN ARE JOINED BY MAYOR ED KOCH IN ADVERTISING THE MATZAH BALL CONTEST IN WALDBAUM'S SUPERMARKET. CREDITS: RASKIN FAMILY ARCHIVES



HORAV MOSHE FEINSTEIN'S LETTER ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION IN THE LAG B'OMER PARADES.

face was truly remarkable.

Rabbi Weg recalls another interesting account:

"I remember it was the first night of Pesach, and the Rebbe was making his yearly visit to the sedorim of the bochurim and girls. On his way from F.R.E.E. to Machon Chana, Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda Hecht told the Rebbe that 22,000 children participated in the Hachanos for Pesach in Eretz Yisroel, as the Rebbe requested, to which the Rebbe answered:

"פאר מרדכי צוויי און צוואנציק טויזינט קינדער איז געווען גענוג. איך דארף האבן אסאך מער!"

"For Mordechai 22,000 kids was enough, I need to have much more!"

Throughout the next days and weeks, every occasion brings along new expressions of the Rebbe's intimate involvement and care for the activities related to children. Some stand out for their unusual character and rarity:

- On the final morning of Chol Hamoed Pesach, the Rebbe (still wearing his Talis) spoke a sicha after

Shacharis, calling for kinusim of children to be held on shvi'i shel Pesach.

Every effort was made for Musaf to conclude leaving enough time for the Rebbe to deliver the sicha before Yom Tov would begin in Eretz Yisroel, which is seven hours ahead. The Rebbe made a specific mention to the audience listening half a world away, and said that since in Eretz Yisroel, Shevi'i and Acharon Shel Pesach coincide, the theme of the kinusim should involve a Seudas Moshiach as well.

In New York, a gathering is indeed scheduled to take place on the next day in the upstairs shul in 770. On his way to his office, the Rebbe walks over to the door of zal and looks in on the rally, while vigorously clapping his hands and encouraging the singing.

- At the farbrengen of Acharon Shel Pesach, the Rebbe asks the children to sing a lively niggun, and claps his hands spiritedly while facing the

children. The farbrengen is replete with references to children, their uniqueness and importance.

- Another striking event is a fascinating sicha the Rebbe spoke on Shabbos Parshas Shmini<sup>9</sup>, the Shabbos after Pesach, where, addressing the needs and behaviors of young children, the Rebbe parallels playing ball with serving Hashem:

*"When a Jewish child plays ball with a non-Jewish child, the non-Jewish child seeks a personal victory. In contrast, the Jewish child seeks the victory of Yiddishkeit. He wears Tzitzis, eats Kosher, and prays before he plays ball. This makes him play better. If he wins, he thanks Hashem for his victory."*

In the days following Pesach (and earlier as well) responses are flooding into the "Matzah Ball Contest" office with an overwhelming 50,000 children participating!

Rabbi Yosef Katzman relates: In those days, not a single computer existed in Crown Heights. Nevertheless it was clear





CREDITS: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE

that with such a large number of children, a sufficient database needed to be made. All this was done in a very short amount of time. We came across the 'dynatron' company and within no time the database was put together. The Bo-churim literally didn't let the workers sleep until it was ready. Now, prizes were sent to thousands of kids who participated and the obvious continuation to the campaign would be to utilize this incredible resource to reach more children and bring them to the Lag B'omer parade. Brochures were printed and sent to all of them, and advertising efforts increased exponentially.

If opposition is said to be a measuring stick to one's success, it can be safely stated that the parade was making waves around the world. So when someone spoke out against attending the parade, leading figures of worldwide Jewry, such as Rabbi Moshe Feinstein and the Lev Simcha of Ger came out in support of the event, giving their full support and encouraging one and all to attend.

#### **LAG B'OMER PARADES WORLDWIDE**

On Sunday Daled Iyar, the Rebbe issued a call for 120 parades to be organized across the United States and 30 parades to be held in the rest of the world.<sup>10</sup>

Meanwhile, in Eretz Yisroel preparations are under way for a large parade, and one Chossid, the late Rabbi Nochum Cohen of Tzach, coins the slogan "Yachad Kol Yaldei Yisroel," which becomes the official motto of the parade. This would be the first time parades would be held in Eretz Yisroel, and the instruction came on very short notice. Preparations had to be completed in great haste.

There were individual instances in the following days when the Rebbe asked people, whether they were involved in making a parade in their city. For instance, the Rebbe instructed his mazkirus

to call Chicago and inquire as to the latest developments.

#### THE SHABBOS BEFORE

On the Shabbos before Lag Bomer, upon arriving in 770, the Rebbe let it be known, through his mazkirus, that he would hold a farbrengen.

At the farbrengen, the Rebbe repeatedly spoke about the upcoming parade, and instructed Rabbis Yaakov Yehudah Hecht and Shmuel Butman to say L'chaim.

The Rebbe requested that following the parade a book be published containing essays by the children describing the event and what they thought of it. The best essays should be selected, and printed alongside pictures of the children marching at the Parade<sup>11</sup>.

Furthermore, the Rebbe said that the said book should be published in many languages, starting with Loshon Hakodesh, Russian, English, Farsi and more. The book was later published following the Rebbe's request (see picture).

On Motzei Shabbos, the Rebbe arrived relatively early for Maariv, which many interpreted as being an encouragement of the parade efforts, and leaving more time for them to prepare.

The Rebbe's inlaid wood table in the upstairs shul, was customarily covered with a clear plastic table cloth, and removed a few minutes before the Rebbe's expected entrance. Now, with the Rebbe's unexpected arrival some 15 minutes early, the Rebbe simply placed his siddur on the plastic as the bochurim scrambled in all directions!

#### A PHENOMENAL TURNOUT!

Increased efforts were made to bring as many children as possible to the grand parade in Crown Heights. With the help of the database prepared from the Matzah-ball contest, scores of children were now reachable and invited to join.

Ahead of the parade, a special agreement had been reached with the MTA and subway trains were running directly



CREDITS: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE



CREDITS: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE

SCENES FROM THE LAG B'OMER PARADE IN 5740. BEHIND THE REBBE HANGS A BANNER DISPLAYING THE POSSUK VEHEISHIV LEV AVOS.

from Brighton Beach, a heavily Jewish neighborhood, to Crown Heights to facilitate the way for thousands of Russian kids. In addition to that, hundreds of buses were arriving non-stop, delivering thousands of children and adults.

An unprecedented 20,000 people from all neighborhoods and backgrounds were in attendance

Despite the burning sun, the Rebbe spoke to the children for a total of almost two hours, a very long time for parade-sichos, even delivering an entire sicha in Russian! The Rebbe also spoke strong words about the situation in Eretz Yisroel (one day earlier, a terrorist shot and killed a Yeshivah bochur in Chevron.)

The international campaign turned out to be a superb success with scores of numbers of children gathering at parades across the globe, and especially in Eretz Yisroel.

The hundreds of bochurim and yungeleit who worked tirelessly for days and nights before Lag B'omer, finally slipped away for some well-earned rest... but not for long because upon returning from the Ohel, the Rebbe announced that

**From every street corner, one could see parents with strollers and children following along, all making their way to 770; a beautiful sight to behold!**

there would be a farbrengen that very night!!

At the farbrengen the Rebbe expounded upon the new motto – Yachad Kol Yaldei Yisroel, and brought it in to the theme of the latest campaign of Vehayshiv Lev Avos al Bonim.

On a different note, The Rebbe spoke again about the dire situation in Eretz Yisroel, and warned against giving away Jewish land, chas vesholom, in exchange for “peace.” – Painfully reflecting upon the most recent act of terror.

If people were satisfied with what had been achieved thus far in reaching tens of thousands of Jewish children, the Rebbe insisted on more; more rallies, more activities and more children.

The Rebbe asked that a meeting be held immediately following this farbrengen where plans would be discussed as how to keep the enthusiasm of Lag B'omer going with programs for Jewish children in the days that follow.

At the end of the Farbrengen, the Rebbe gave the leftover Mezonos to Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda Hecht as a participation in the upcoming activities.

Immediately, a children’s rally with the Rebbe’s taking part is called for Chof Iyar, a mere two days later. By now there are no surprises anymore, since each passing day shattered the expectations of common practice.

Between this day and Shavuos more farbrengens and rallies took place, each containing extraordinary references to the power of children, and their ability to defeat the enemy that threatens us.

In particular, on Erev Shavuos, the Rebbe fiercely defended the opposition to the parade coming from a certain individual in Bnei Brak, and said that upon seeing the great success, one can only wonder what possible argument can be made against it.

There is no explanation to such a phenomenon; hence the name ‘sinna chinnom’ – it has no reason whatsoever!” the Rebbe said. “Thousands of children gath-



A NEWSPAPER CLIPPING DESCRIBING THE ENORMOUS LAG B'OMER PARADE IN ERETZ YISROEL IN 5740.



CREDITS: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE

ered together and pronounced ‘Shma Yisroel’. How can a Yid oppose such a thing?!”

#### PREPARATIONS FOR SHAVUOS

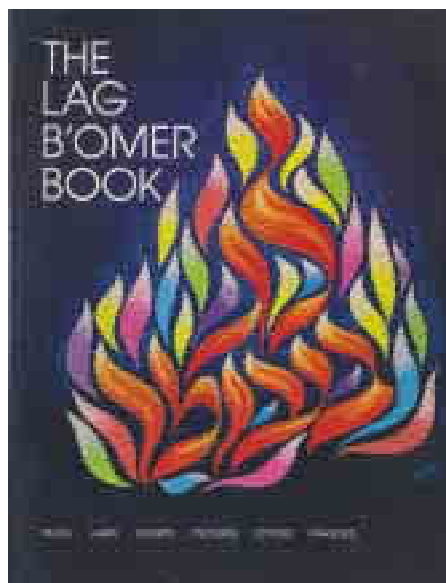
Shortly after the Sicha of erev Rosh Chodesh Sivan, Chassidim got to work in publicizing the Rebbe’s call (as mentioned earlier). Once again, a full page ad was put in to “The Jewish Press” stating:

“Coming soon, a synagogue near you, Aseres Hadibros, Children bring your parents, parents bring your children.”

The text of the ad was based on the posuk the Rebbe mentioned frequently during this period; “v’heishiv leiv avos al (yidei) bonim.”

Rabbi Raphael Tennenhaus relates:

“In order to publicize the Rebbe’s message, we got a van with flashing lights and words on it, which stated that chil-

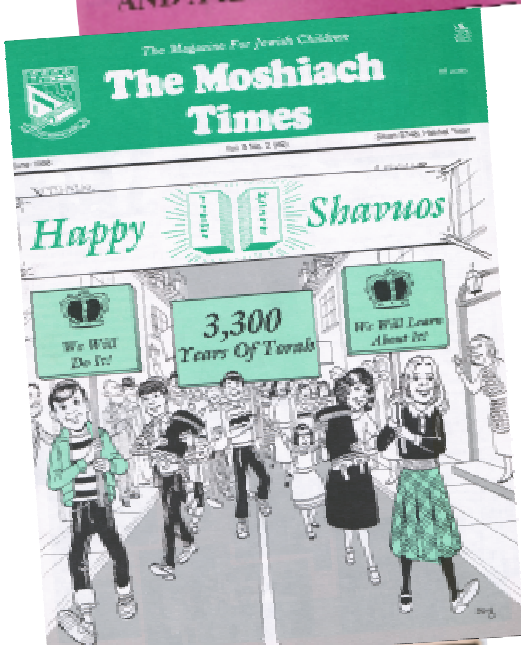


THE BOOK PUBLISHED FOLLOWING THE LAG B'OMER PARADE 5740 AS PER THE REBBE'S HORA'A.

dren should come to Shul on Shavuos, to hear the Aseres Hadibros. We drove the van all around New York, and it attracted a lot of attention.

One night the van was parked in front of 770, just at the time when the Rebbe was going to be leaving towards his home. Unsure of what the Rebbe’s reaction would be, a number of Bochorim stood around in anticipation of the Rebbe’s exit. When the Rebbe came out, he spent a fair amount of time examining the words on top and with a big smile encouraged the singing of those who stood around.

On the first day of Shavuos, notwithstanding the heavy downpour, every Crown Heights family made sure their child was present in shul at the reading of the Aseres Hadibros, in compliance with the Rebbe’s historic call.



The bima for Krias Hatorah was moved slightly towards the back of the shul, and throughout the entire front area, benches were designated for the many children who would come to listen to Asseres Hadibros.

From every street corner, one could see parents with strollers and children following along, all making their way to 770; a beautiful sight to behold!

By the farbrengen the following day the Rebbe again spoke about Vehayshiv Lev Avos Al (yedei) Bonim.

A week later at the Yud Beis Sivan Farbrengen the Rebbe asked that more children's gatherings be held in continuation to Shavuos. Once again the Rebbe said that in addition to the many gatherings taking place, a special one should be held near the Kosel and by the other mekomos hakdoshim in Eretz Yisroel. When a duch was sent in informing the Rebbe that preparations were underway for a rally that Wednesday, the Rebbe answered in writing:

“בודאי יעשה גם עתה באופן שיעשה רושם בכל העולם כולו מיט א קנאק גדול כפשוט”  
 “Now as well, they will most certainly do it in a manner that will have an effect on the entire world with a large ‘bang’; obviously”.

In addition to the regular crowd of children in attendance at this rally, many Public School children also came, filling up 770 from wall to wall with thousands of Yiddishe children. Once reaching his place the Rebbe turned around and encouraged the singing of the children vigorously.

The Rebbe's Asseres Hadibros campaign continued and grew throughout the years, with newspaper advertisements and signs (see pictures) touting its significance especially for children.

Interestingly, when the Rebbe recited a surprise ma'amor on Erev Shavuos, 5749, the Rebbe made mention of the importance for everyone to be in shul and hear the Asseres Hadibros; especially the

children.

#### THE FINISH OF A LONG START

Throughout the summer months, the Rebbe shows more outstanding and rare displays of fondness to children, with numerous rallies and gatherings punctuating the hot summer, leading to a climax of this unprecedented campaign.

Even during the “nine days”<sup>12</sup> the Rebbe held two children's rallies and distributed dimes for the children to give to tzedoka.

A half a year after the onset of this sweeping call and extraordinary efforts, it becomes obvious that in addition to spiritually securing the situation in Eretz Yisroel and the world at large, the Rebbe had also prepared us for the dawn of a new era in outreach to Jewish children of every background – with the founding of Tzivos Hashem on Sukkos-Simchas Torah 5741.

After announcing the need to organize Jewish children in Tzivos hashem, that year on both Shmini Atzeres and Simchas Torah, the Rebbe danced a special Hakofa with the children in the middle of 770. As it turned out, this huge campaign was actually the commencement of a new initiative in the realm of education for Jewish children, with many more years of rallies and sichos geared directly to them. Every Jewish child is to be enlisted in the new army, fighting off the last moments of golus and paving the way to bring Moshiah Now! ■

1. The Rebbe initiated the coordination of this fast, although it was publicized in the name of Agudas Horabonim.
2. The Rebbe later edited this sicha for publication. See Likutei Sichos vol 23, pages 245-255.
3. The Rebbe told a story of how one little girl's Shabbos candle affected a slow, yet meaningful revolution in her home. Bit by bit her parents began feeling how the atmosphere in the home must be made to match the spiritual aura of the Shabbos candles. See Sichos Kodesh 5740 Vol.2 p. 498.
4. In those years, children's rallies were generally held twice a year: on Chol Hamoed Sukkos and Chanukah.
5. The original raffle didn't contain any 'holy'



# BRING *it* HOME!

**A CHASSIDISHER DERHER**  
*available in stores, or delivered to your door!*



» [www.Derher.org/subscribe](http://www.Derher.org/subscribe)