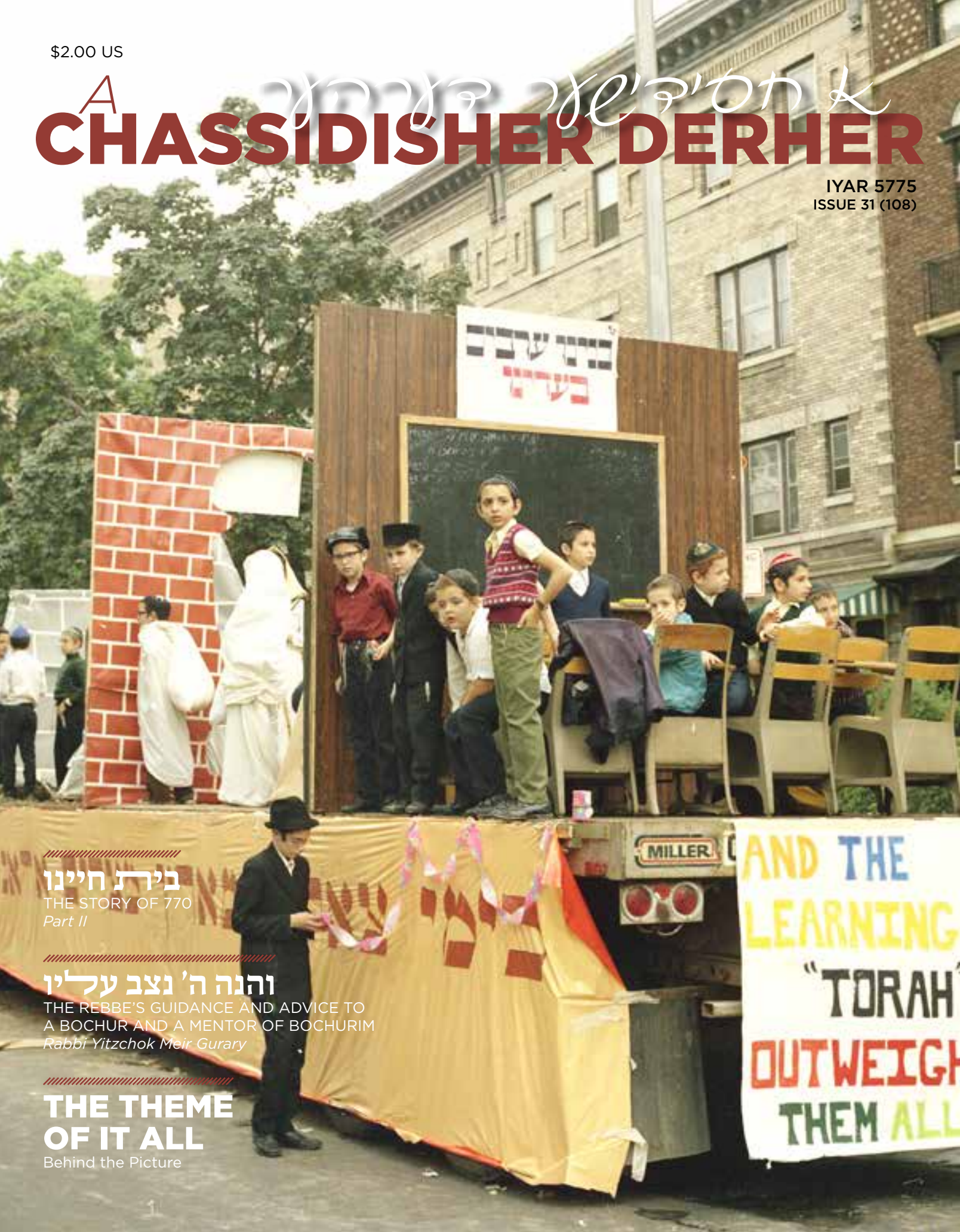


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A CHASSIDISHER DERHER

IYAR 5775
ISSUE 31 (108)



בית חיינו

THE STORY OF 770
Part II

והנה ה' נצב עליו

THE REBBE'S GUIDANCE AND ADVICE TO
A BOCHUR AND A MENTOR OF BOCHURIM
Rabbi Yitzchok Meir Gurary

THE THEME OF IT ALL

Behind the Picture

AND THE
LEARNING
"TORAH"
OUTWEIGH
THEM ALL

A חסידישער פארקאך CHASSIDISHER DERHER

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Behind the Picture



A Chassidisher Derher magazine is geared towards Yeshiva Bochorim published and copyrighted by Vaad Talmidei Hatmimim Haolomi.

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Editorial

This month's edition of A Chassidisher Derher presents with it a most anticipated component our readership eagerly awaited by our readership: the second installment of the story of Beis Chayeinu – 770.

We turn our attention to the main shul; the place where Chassidim merited experiencing the most precious moments of their entire lives. The place where *elokus* could be felt in the most tangible manner each and every day. The Rebbe entering and exiting the shul; the Rebbe leading the observances of each yom tov throughout the year; the Rebbe's farbrengens uplifting the participants to higher spheres...

All this and much more are told together with the story of the place we, as Chassidim call home.

Shifting to the more practical, we were fortunate to have spoken with a prominent *mashpia*, Rabbi Yitzchok Meir Gurary of Montreal, who was *zoche* to have been guided by the Rebbe through every stage of his *avodas Hashem* as a bochur, and later, on how to guide the *bochurim* under his care. His treasure-trove of practical advice from the Rebbe has been published in various venues in the past, and we are privileged to present much of it in this magazine as well.

We are certain that all of the above, along with all the usual rich chassidishe content that comes along with each Derher magazine, will be well received, and produce the desired results with all of our readers.

And from our בית רבינו שבבבל - מקדש מעט, we will merit to see the *Beis Hamikdosh Hashlishi*, which, as the Rebbe says, יתגלה תחילה בבית רבינו שבבבל, שגם הוא בית משולש. . תיכף ומיד ממש!

A gutten choidesh,

The Editors

28 Nissan, 5775



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 104489

Two Names are One

*Selections of a sicha the Rebbe said in connection with the yahrtzeit of his brother, Reb Yisroel Arye Leib, on **Yud Gimmel Iyar**. The Rebbe derives a lesson in avodas Hashem from each name individually, and also their being together, forming one name.*

This week's *parsha* itself does not necessarily warrant a farbrengen. However, there is an additional and an essential significance to this farbrengen, in connection with the yahrtzeit [of Reb Yisroel Arye Leib, the Rebbe's brother].

Although this is a personal matter, it has already been publicized, thereby warranting that a lesson be learned from it in *avodas Hashem*.

...A lesson can be learned from the name of the *baal ha'yartzeit*, as is understood from the explanation at the beginning of *Sha'ar Hayichud Ve'haemunah* about the significance of a Hebrew name.

The first name of the *baal Ha'yartzeit* is Yisroel and his second name is Arye. Additionally, he had the name Leib, a nickname of Arye, which is also a part of his name.

...The names Arye and Leib and the names of the *parshiyos Achrei* and *Kedoshim* have similar meaning. When one person carries both names, the meaning will be similar to that of the joint *parsha Achrei-Kedoshim*.

We should preface with discussing the differences between the *avoda* of *tzaddikim* and that of *ba'alei teshuvah*:

The *avoda* of *tzaddikim*, being an orderly fashion in line with Torah's instructions, does not include descending to a lower level in order to refine it. This descent, however, is the basis of the *avoda* of a *ba'al teshuvah*. Through his *avoda*, evil doings are literally transformed into merits. The nature of such merit is beyond limitation, and is available specifically to the *ba'al teshuvah* and not to the *tzaddik*. This is because a *ba'al teshuvah* was previously in a place of darkness, so he can attain "*ahava rabba*"—the *ahava* of "*be'chol me'odecha*"—an *avoda* beyond limitation, which has the ability to refine and transform evil.

This is the difference between the name Yisroel and the name Arye Leib.

The word Yisroel refers to an *avoda* that does not entail descending to a lower level to refine it. *Chazal* say "ישראל; אע"פ" שחטא ישראל הוא "Yisroel" remains *Yisroel*, referring to

the inner dimension and essence of the soul. Not merely "Ya'akov" which is from the root-word "Ekev"—heel. "Yisroel" retains its faith in sin and cannot descend to a lower level, even to refine it. This is similar to the *avoda* of *tzaddikim*.

The word Arye refers to an *avoda* that entails refining evil; the work of *ba'alei teshuvah*. A lion is an impure animal. In fact, it is the king of impure animals, a metaphor for the strength of evil. Even so, the lion is transformed to *kedusha* to the point that it becomes the lion of the *merkava*.

...This is even more so regarding the name "Leib," which is in Yiddish. Yiddish is an intermediary between *Loshon Kodesh* and the languages of the seventy nations of the world. This alludes to the refinement of evil. The transformation of the world's nations by speaking to them in their own language—"Am Ve'am Kilshonoi"—is similar to Yosef having the letter "Hei" of Hashem's name added to his own, and through that being able to speak seventy languages, thus being able to transform them.

The names Yisroel and Arye are then similar in meaning to the *parshiyos* of *Achrei* and *Kedoshim*; both representing the respective *avodos* of *tzaddikim* and *ba'alei teshuvah*.

Merging these two names into one is similar to merging the *parshiyos* *Achrei* and *Kedoshim* into one.

Avodas tzaddikim alone, without the *avoda* of *teshuvah* is insufficient and lacking. *Chazal* say regarding the *avoda* of *tzaddikim* that “אעפ”פ שחטא ישראל הוא”—alluding to the disadvantage of missing the *teshuvah* element; the word *חטא* means “missing.” Although he is on the level of “*Yisroel*,” a *tzaddik*, he still has a disadvantage in comparison to the *ba'al teshuvah*.

The disadvantage of a *tzaddik* in comparison to a *ba'al teshuvah* is of great significance. The *geulah* is associated with *teshuvah*, for Moshiach is said to “לאתבא”—“צדיקייא בתיובתא”—to bring *tzaddikim* to *teshuvah*. This means that *tzaddikim* doing *teshuvah* brings about *geulah*, as in the well-known saying, “Should even one *tzaddik* do *teshuvah* Moshiach will arrive in his generation”.

Consider the fact that dependent on *tzaddikim's teshuvah* is the redemption of all Jews, the redemption of the “*Shechina* that resides in *galus*,” the building of the Beis Hamikdash, and the revelation of G-dliness in the entire world! Hence, the fact that *tzaddikim* lack of the *avoda* of a *ba'al teshuvah* is a most terrible deficiency, being that as result of this disadvantage the arrival of the complete and true *geulah* with Moshiach is withheld!

It is therefore understood that the *avoda* of a *tzaddik* must include also the *avoda* of a *ba'al teshuvah*; the descent in order to refine a lower level, even evil. Simply speaking, this means to go out into the streets to bring close those that are far from Yiddishkeit and to make them *ba'alei teshuvah*.

Through *tzaddikim* engaging in the *avoda* of *ba'alei teshuvah* they acquire the advantage of “*Kedoshim*,” that their *avoda* not be limited but it will transcend limitation, an *avoda* of *kabolas ol* and *mesiras nefesh*. The *tzaddik* further combines the two *avodos* together. This means, that the systematic *avoda* of Torah and Mitzvos is imbued with *kabolas ol*

and *mesiras nefesh*, which transcend limitation.

This is also the lesson to be learned from the merger of the names Yisroel and Arye Leib:

Although they are two distinct names and have different meanings, together they become the name of one individual. According to Torah, should this name be transcribed upon a document, the two names are to be written on the same line, albeit with a space in between.

The practical implication of this in our *avoda* is that these two forms of serving Hashem need not be placed on separate lines, in different times and circumstances, a time for *kabolas ol* and *mesiras nefesh* and a time for *ahava beta'anugim*. Rather, they both appear on one line, in one time and circumstance, so that also the *avoda* of *ahava beta'anugim* is imbued with *kabolas ol* and *mesiras nefesh*. D

(Based on *sichas Shabbos parshas Acharei-Kedoshim*, 13 Iyar, 5745)





The Heartbeat of Lubavitch Part II בית חיינו

We continue the story of Beis Chayeinu, 770, shifting our focus to the Rebbe's shul and its surrounding areas, and all the heavenly events that transpired within its confines. Discover the various stages of expansion this iconic building underwent, and enjoy the depiction of these various events in the beautiful pictures below.

Special thanks to Rabbi Yossi Lew and Rabbi Shimmy Weinbaum.

In researching this article we were largely assisted by the "770" photo album published by Tzivos Hashem, and the book "בית חיינו" by Heichel Menachem, Yerushalayim.



תרצ"ג

The "770" building is built for use as a clinic

י"ט אלול ת"ש

The Friediker Rebbe moves in

תש"כ

Shalash becomes an indoor Shul

תשכ"ז

Second expansion begins, preparing to combine 770 with 784 Eastern Parkway

תשל"ג

Third expansion begins, combining 784 and 788

ט"ו תמוז תשמ"ה

Upon the Rebbe's request, lettering is added over the main door

אדר תנש"א

Construction begins to extend 770 to Eastern Parkway

י"ב אב ת"ש

Chabad-Lubavitch buys the building

תשרי תש"ב

A porch is built outside the Friediker Rebbe's room

תשכ"ו

The Library building is purchased

תשרי תשכ"ח

Bochurim complete the last phase of the expansion

ערב ר"ה תשל"ד

Third expansion is complete

י"ז אלול תשמ"ח

Hanochas Even Hapino by the Rebbe for the fourth expansion

כ' חשוון תשנ"ב

The Rebbe publishes "Kuntres Beis Rabeinu Sheb'Bavel"

”...על אחת כמה וכמה בנוגע לד' הכתלים וקורות ביתו של הרבי, שבו התפלל שבו התפלל ולמד ועסק בענייניו וקיבל אנשים ל'יחידות' בהתייחדו עם בחי' היחידה שלהם, הרי בודאי שקורות בית זה - שבו נמצאים אנו - 'האבן זיך אנגעזאפט' בכל העניינים הקשורים עם מהותו של הרבי!”



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 110872

The Shawash

At the time that 770 was purchased, there was a large courtyard situated to the left of the basement, at the same level. A sloping pathway (the same ramp used for the Rebbe's car in the later years) led from the ground-level sidewalk on Eastern Parkway, opening up to the courtyard below. At the base of the pathway was a small parking lot large enough for three vehicles. The courtyard itself measured about 240 square feet.

The courtyard served a number of functions. On Sukkos, the main sukka was built here, along with the Rebbe's private sukka in front of it. Various gatherings for children, Lag B'omer parades and *mesibos Shabbos* groups were organized there as well. The Rebbe participated in a number of these gatherings, addressing the children while standing on a chair.

From the year 5714, the small *zal* did not have enough capacity to hold the chassidim during farbrengens, so the courtyard was used instead. But it was not until 5720 that the courtyard—nicknamed the “*shalash*” (“tent” in Yiddish) because of its temporary walls and roof—was turned into a permanent structure, with real walls and a roof. This the first stage of the “big shul.”

Until then, between the years 5714 and 5720, some fifty chuppahs took place in the courtyard, with the Rebbe serving as *mesader kiddushin*. The stories and pictures depicting these chuppahs can be found in the album *Mekadesh Yisroel*.

Prior to the expansion of 770, there was an additional side entrance on the left, facing the courtyard. A short staircase from Eastern Parkway led to a small balcony, from which one could access “*gan eden hatachaton*.” On occasion, during gatherings for children taking place in the courtyard, the Rebbe would address them while standing on this balcony.

Sitting next to the door of this balcony (on the inside), were a number of mailboxes. One mailbox had the Frierdiker Rebbe's name written on it, while on the others were written *Igud Yeshivos Lubavitch* and *Hakriah V'hakdusha*. Later on, the names on the mailboxes were changed to the Rebbe's name, as well as *Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch* and *Machne Yisroel*.

A stone, bearing the year in which the building was constructed - 1933, was set in on one of the walls of this side entrance.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 112593

A rally in the shalash. The podium stands where the Rebbe sat at farbrengens held in the shalash. The homes in the background are on Union Street. The far left corner served as the Rebbe's davening place when crowds were too big for the small *zal*.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 105541

Children at a rally in the front half of the shalash. Behind them is the ramp leading to Eastern Parkway (later transformed into the driveway for the Rebbe's car).





Farbrengens

When 770 was purchased, it was assumed that this structure would suffice for all the needs of the Rebbe, *bais harav*, and the chassidim (with some minor changes possible along the way).

However, already during the early years of the Rebbe's *nesius*, with the crowd of chassidim growing, 770 became increasingly unaccommodating during *tefillos*, and especially during farbrengens. Because of this, starting 5714, large farbrengens—such as on Yud-Tes Kislev, Yud Shevat, and Purim—were held in various rented halls in the surrounding area, while smaller farbrengens were still held in 770.

During a farbrengen on Shabbos, 12 Shevat 5714, the Rebbe referenced that situation.

“I would like to add to a number of subjects discussed during the previous farbrengen, on Yud Shevat.

“These subjects,” continued the Rebbe, “were left unfinished due to the conditions of the place used for the farbrengen. The hall where the farbrengen was organized was spacious; all who attended sat comfortably, to the point that there were those who even fell asleep... However here (in 770), even if someone falls asleep, at least he is sitting cramped and uncomfortable.”

At times, the shalash next to 770 was used. Farbrengens would be held there, as well as some *tefillos*, as necessary. To set up a farbrengen, chassidim would remove benches from the *zal* and transfer them to the courtyard; returning them when the farbrengen concluded. In addition, a canvas would be spread above, serving as a roof; it would also be taken down at the conclusion. As its use became more frequent, the canvas remained in place permanently.

Although the courtyard not especially large, it was still considerably larger than the *zal*. Surrounding it were three walls, while on the northern side—facing Eastern Parkway—a fence was constructed. At first, only a small portion of the courtyard was used. Over time, the entire area was needed; from Eastern Parkway all the way until Union Street.

During farbrengens, the women would gather on a balcony of the adjacent building, 784. There was also an area for women near Union Street, behind the courtyard. The residents of 784 would at times

participate in the *tefillos* or farbrengens from the windows of their apartments.

Large farbrengens during the weekdays continued to be held in rented halls, but the *shalash* had officially become an onsite, non confined, multi-purpose area for the Rebbe and chassidim to use. The summer farbrengens – yomim tovim of Pesach and Shavuot, Tishrei, of course, as well as Yud Beis Tammuz and Chof Av farbrengens, all took place here.

It goes without saying, that the conditions of the *shalash* were not very exquisite and did not afford much protection from the elements. During the winter months—essentially sitting outdoors—chassidim suffered from the immense cold; a small heater positioned under the table offered minimal heating to those gathered. The Rebbe would sit at the farbrengen with a coat draped on his shoulders. At the beginning a *maamar* though, the Rebbe would remove it, and at the conclusion, one of the elder chassidim would replace the coat back on the Rebbe's shoulders.

Due to the *shalash* being below street level, when it would rain, the courtyard would flood, sometimes up to a few feet high! At times, when the water hadn't dried up yet, chassidim would set up a walkway consisting of benches for the Rebbe to cross to reach his place in the tent! Reb Meir Harlig relates that it happened once that after it had rained, there were still puddles of water. One of the chassidim turned the Rebbe's attention to the puddles, commenting on how they had not dried up yet. The Rebbe turned with a smile and said “I'm also capable of walking through the water...”

Needless to say, the cramped state of 770, the difficult conditions of the *shalash*, as well as the need to rent other locations a few times a year, were not at all ideal for the Lubavitch movement's world headquarters.



The Rebbe assists the Frierdiker Rebbe into a car parked in the shalash.

Mesibos Shabbos

On the afternoon of Rosh Hashana 5702, Reb Yaakov Yehudah Hecht went out to the street and gathered a group of children together. He brought them to the “shalash” (courtyard) of 770 where he began speaking to them and daven and sing with them.

The Friediker Rebbe was watching from his window while the Rebbe looked from the porch overlooking the courtyard. After the rally ended, the Rebbe called Reb Yaakov Yehudah and brought him upstairs where the Friediker Rebbe blessed him for his efforts.

The very first official “Mesibos Shabbos” group was brought together on Sukkos 5702. From then on, groups of children would gather together on Shabbosim where they would receive light refreshments and hear *divrei hisorerus* on the *parsha*, on the importance of keeping Torah and mitzvos in general and most especially, on attending Jewish schools.



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 103274

The Rebbe walking into the shalash holding his siddur and gartel.



The Rebbe stands at his davening place while children pass by after returning from a summer in camp; 17 Elul, 5717.



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 104847

The Rebbe sits at his davening place in southeast corner of the shalash, facing *mizrach*. (The southeast corner would be the Rebbe's davening place throughout the years, through all the expansions of the shul).

The Shalash

The Expansions

The Shul

The Chozter



The Rebbe stands on the porch overlooking the shalash, waving down to the children at a parade.

Accompanying Watch

At times, the porch overlooking the shalash was used as a women's section, where the women were able to take part in the *tefillos* and *farbrengens* from above. Often times, especially on yom tov mornings, the Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Chana joined the *minyan* during shacharis. After davening, she would see the Rebbe in his room for a few minutes, after which the Rebbe would see her off as she left to return home on President Street. As she walked, the Rebbe stood in his *tallis* on the steps at the main entrance of 770, keeping his gaze on her until she turned the corner on Kingston Avenue and was no longer in sight.



This porch was also used as a women's section while davening took place in the shalash.



Notice the canvas serving as a makeshift roof.



The Rebbe leaves 770 on his way to a chuppa from the door which led to the shalash.

PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 105546

PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 109648

105495



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 102964

A chol hamoed Sukkos farbrengen with the Rebbe in the shalash.

Why the Gold?

On Shabbos Bereishis 5718, the Rebbe asked that the davening should take place in the '*shalash*.' During the farbrengen which followed, the Rebbe explained the reason for this request:

"Since Shabbos Berieshis has an effect on the entire year, the davening should therefore take place in an profuse manner and spacious area, so that the year should be one of abundance.

"In the end, when I was asked where the davening should take place, and I said that they should daven in the courtyard (*shalash*), I was told that it is 'cold and dirty' and the davening took place in the regular shul."

The Rebbe went on to derive the lesson to be learnt from this. Although the entire month of Tishrei had come and gone together with the *avoda* each moment and yom tov carried with it, it was still "cold and dirty..."

The Rebbe explained that coldness is the antithesis to *kedusha* for *kedusha* represents life and warmth. Even more so dirtiness, which certainly represents impurity and spiritual uncleanness.

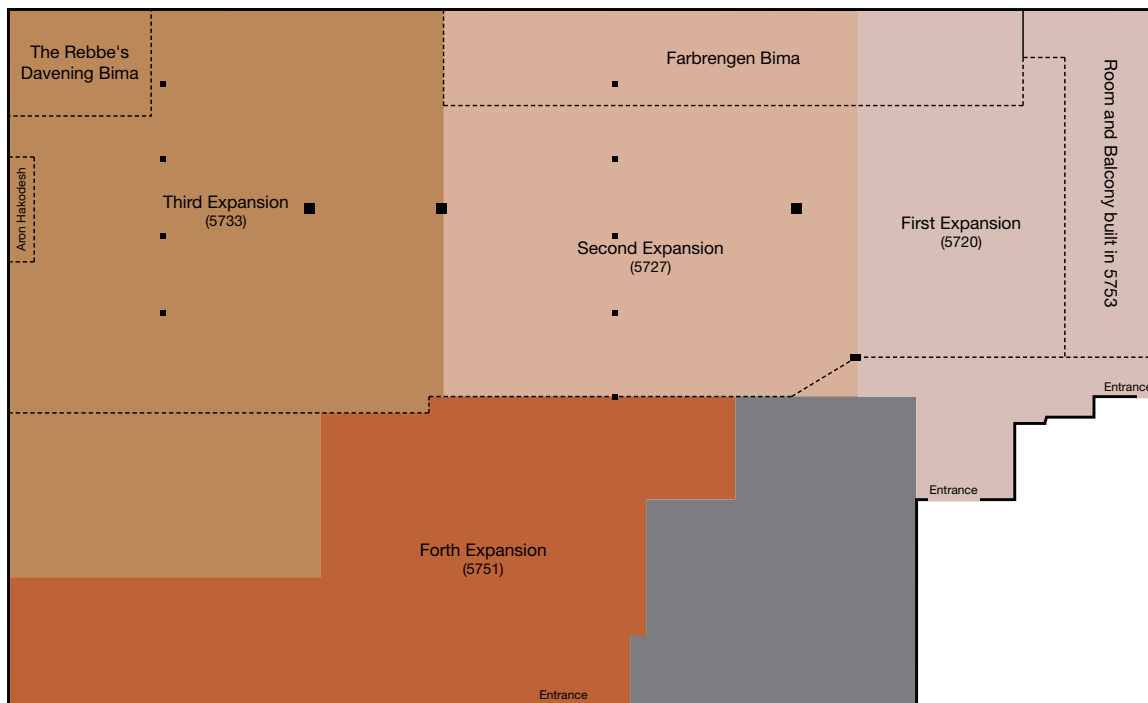
As the Rebbe spoke, he leaned his head on his hands and wept profusely.



The Rebbe is *mesader kiddushin* at the chuppa of Rabbi Gershon Mendel Garelik. Notice the women standing behind the fence; one of the places where women could participate in farbrengens.



The *Expansions*



The
Shalash

The Expansions

First Expansion
(5720)

The
Shul

The
Chozter



First Expansion

The temporary use of the *shalash* continued until the year 5720, at which time it was decided to expand 770. The time had come for *tefillos* and farbrengens to take place in a proper venue.

In the farbrengen on Yud-Beis Tammuz that year, the Rebbe spoke about the need for 770 to be expanded so that it may hold larger crowds. Speaking of the shluchim that had initiated large centers, the Rebbe stated that he hoped the locals will follow suit. The fact that farbrengens occur in other locations, the Rebbe explained—not in the place in which the Frierdiker Rebbe spent 10 years with *mesiras nefesh*—causes more than “*tzaar*”! The Rebbe concluded with a wish that 770 should be built with enough space to hold 5,000 people, and ultimately even 10,000 people!

After that Yud-Beis Tammuz, the Rebbe announced that from then on, farbrengens would no longer be held in halls outside 770. This decision was the catalyst to begin transforming the *shalash* into a permanent structure.

And so it was, that at the end of that year, construction began in the *shalash*, soon to be permanent and protected against the wind, rain and cold. The entire area of the *shalash* was closed off and used for building. Construction was completed in time for Rosh Hashanah of 5721. Following the expansion, there was no longer a need to use other halls for farbrengens, and all subsequent farbrengens, including the larger ones, took place in the new *shalash-turned-beis-medrash*. The last farbrengen to take place in the small *zal* was on the second night of Pesach, 5721 (being that the crowd was smaller, as a result of the time and the day).

The Rebbe’s place at farbrengens in the new *beis-medrash* was, as usual, in the southeast corner. At first, the Rebbe farbrenged sitting at the same level as everyone present. Later on, a makeshift platform was built out of tables and planks of wood, creating a platform for the Rebbe to sit on.

Of the current form of 770, only the rear area was built during the first expansion; the area from the west wall of the main shul until the first pillar supporting the *eZRas nashim*—less than a quarter of the size of the present main shul.

The
Shalash

The Expansions

First Expansion
(5720)

The
Shul

The
Chozter



The setup of the shul after it was built into a proper structure for the first time. To the far right are the chazan's shtender and the aron kodesh. The *bima* is in the center with benches and tables all around. The exit on the side leads to the driveway as it appears till today.



The Rebbe stands at his davening place.



The Rebbe davens at the amud.



The Rebbe reads the haftorah at the bima in the center of the shul.



A farbrengen in the newly constructed shul. Notice how construction endured for a while, and renovations are still underway. The farbrengen place was always on the south side of the shul while the Rebbe faced north. As 770 expanded, the Rebbe's place moved more towards the center of the shul and the farbrengen bima got wider.

Care

The cleanliness and orderliness of 770 was very important to the Rebbe. Sometimes the Rebbe would actually bend over to pick up scraps of garbage from the floor of the upstairs hallway or small *zal*.

One time, something in the electricity system had to be repaired and an electrician was called in. After finishing his work, the electrician forgot to return the cover to the electricity box in the upstairs hallway which he had removed. Nobody paid too much attention to the uncovered compartment and the cover was never replaced. A year (!) later the Rebbe mentioned this by a farbrengen, saying: "A full year I waited to see if anyone would notice, but until now, nobody bothered to put a cover on the box."



Tishrei guests participate in a shiur by Reb Michael Lipskier in the Shul.

The
Shalash

*The
Expansions*
Second Expansion
(5727)

The
Shul

The
Chozter



Second Expansion

Several years following the expansion of 770 in 5720, the need arose for an additional expansion. In the year 5725, the Rebbe instructed his *mazkir* Rabbi Krinsky to make an effort in purchasing the buildings adjacent to 770. There were two buildings to the left of 770—784 and 788 Eastern Parkway, situated on the corner of Eastern Parkway and Kingston Avenue—that were of interest to be acquired. The owner of the two buildings was a Yid named Spiegel, who also lived in one of the apartments.

Involved in the purchase was a chosid by the name of Reb Aharon Moshe Klein, who had become close with Lubavitch in his youth, during the time of the Frierdiker Rebbe. Reb Aharon Moshe was a devoted chossid, and a confidant and diligent activist, who without an official position, accomplished a great deal on behalf of *beis chayenu*. He merited a special relationship with the Frierdiker Rebbe and the Rebbe.

When Reb Aharon presented the idea of purchasing the two buildings to the Rebbe, the Rebbe asked

him: “Are you sure that we will need such a large building?” Reb Aharon responded: “We will need one even larger than this.”

After all the occupants of the 784 building (closer to 770) had moved out, and following the renovation of its first floor, Reb Aharon began seeking contractors who would take upon themselves the project of expanding the shul. The plan for this stage of the expansion called for construction only under the building immediately next-door to 770 (784), while in the meantime, the building at 788 would be inhabited by *bochurim* learning in 770, as well as a few *anash* families.

The expansion process took place in a few stages. The first phase consisted of creating a large room with a tall ceiling. This was done by removing the first floor of 784, with the basement now becoming the ground floor. In the second stage, the brick wall dividing the *shalash* and 784 had to be demolished, connecting the two areas. The final stage called for renovating the abovementioned basement of 784, and making it into a suitable shul.

A partial removal of the brick wall between the *shalash* and 784 was completed in time for Rosh Hashanah, 5728. Access from one room to the other was via small passages of makeshift support-beams (parts of the wall still remained), allowing for *anash*



The Rebbe gives the brocha to *anash* on Erev Yom Kippur, 5728 while the expansion is still in its final phase.

to daven in both rooms. With the arrival of Sukkos, beams holding the ceiling were put in place and the temporary ones were removed.

All that was left to be done was the removal of the remainder of the brick wall. The head builder, a *frummer* Yid, determined that although the removal was not that great of a task, nevertheless it could not be completed before Simchas Torah.

To the *bochurim*, who understood that this delay meant that there would not be a large enough shul for Simchas Torah, this did not sit well. On the night of Hoshana Rabba, after completing *Tehillim*, a number of *bochurim* took the initiative and removed the remaining wall. Using iron rods, they struck at the wall with all their might until it was completely removed.

The next day, when the workers arrived, they could not believe their eyes. The brick wall that only yesterday stood strong, had simply disappeared. There was not much left for the workers to do. They built a ramp to allow passage between the shalash and 784, and cleared away any leftover building materials.

There is no doubt that had the *bochurim* not taken the initiative to break down the wall, the remaining preparation to transform the room into the new shul would have extended over a longer period of time. Rabbi Leibel Shapiro relates that when a picture of the *bochurim* breaking down the wall was shown to the Rebbetzin, she expressed great satisfaction.

As yom tov set in, the chassidim excitedly anticipated the Rebbe's arrival to the new *beis-medrash*; this was to be the first time the Rebbe would make an entrance. A few minutes before davening began, a hush fell upon the crowds gathered. The Rebbe descended from his room and entered into the new shul. The Rebbe hastily strode to his new place, all the while scanning the area from side to side, and a great joy could be seen on his holy face.

Large amounts of dust still remained from the construction, causing the clothing of all those present by *hakafos* to be covered in it. On Simchas Torah day, the Rebbe came to 770 wearing a new hat; the hat from the night before had accumulated that much dust...

Two years later, in preparation for Yud Shevat 5730, known as Yud Shevat Hagadol, bleachers were installed by the western wall of the shul, creating standing space for many more people.



Bochurim tear down partition between the old and new shul on Hoshana Rabba, 5728, expanding the shul in time for Simchas Torah

Proper Referral

Once, the *gabbai* in 770 announced that the annual farbrengen marking the initiation of Tzach on Beis Iyar would take place downstairs, using the Yiddish term "*untan*". Afterwards the Rebbe asked one of the *mazkirim* what the *gabbai* was referring to with "downstairs" to which the *mazkir* replied that he had meant the shul downstairs. The Rebbe said "*Oif a shul zogt men nit 'untan'.*"



The Rebbe carries in a Sefer Torah sent by the shluchim in Tunisia, Erev Shabbos Slichos, 5729 (see Derher Magazine Teves-5774).

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Third Expansion
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Third Expansion

The previous expansions (fully completed during Tishrei 5728) were in fact only the first stage of the planned grand enlargement of 770, stretching all the way until Kingston Avenue.

It wasn't until the summer of 5733 that the third expansion began. It included extending 770 through the area between 784 and 788, as well as renovating the basement of 788. As was the case with 784, the first floor of 788 was removed, creating a larger room from the basement, up to the second floor. The few stores in 788, facing Kingston Avenue, were removed as well.

On 2 Elul, those who were involved in the building process notified the Rebbe that as things stood, the current expansion will not be completed in time for Rosh Hashanah. The Rebbe responded that if this was the case, he would not daven in the main shul for Rosh Hashanah.

In the end, the expansion was completed on erev Rosh Hashanah of 5734. With the completion of this expansion, 770 was now in full form, as can be seen today.

Until the wee hours of the morning of Erev Rosh Hashanah, a few of the *gabboim* remained in the shul putting the finishing touches of the expansion. When the Rebbe entered the shul for *slichos* in the middle of the night (after *yechidus*)—not in the morning as usual—the work was still not complete, and *slichos* had to be said in the small *zal*.

As mentioned, this expansion marked the final format of 770. However, a few matters remained unfinished; the floor of the newly expanded shul sat on a slight curve - the building as a whole sloped (it was leveled out a number of years later), and the women's section on the side of Eastern Parkway was a mere concrete surface.

Responsibility

On a number of occasions, various methods to remove the support beams holding the ceiling of the newly renovated main shul were presented to the Rebbe. Rabbi Krinsky approached the Rebbe with a proper plan created by an engineer and an architect to remove the beams without risking the safety of the building. Reb Avraham Parshan presented this to the Rebbe as well, but the Rebbe adamantly refused any such idea.

The Rebbe addressed this issue at a farbrengen and said, "Who would accept responsibility of such an act upon themselves? It will surely fall on my shoulders, and I am not prepared to take upon myself such a responsibility."





PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 142056





Fourth Expansion

As the crowds of chassidim grew and more and more Yidden from around the world traveled to 770 to be with the Rebbe, there was again a need for more room. In 5748, members of Agudas Chabad, along with a few others, drew up plans for huge expansions and renovations that would cost a total of 10 million dollars. When the idea was brought to the Rebbe, he did not agree with it for several reasons. One of them being that this was an enormous amount of money and התורה חסה על ממונם של ישראל (this response was written in 5749). Hence, they took on a lesser

approach and decided to expand only to the north of 770.

On 17 Elul 5748 a unique and historic event took place outside 770, when the Rebbe came out and joined a groundbreaking ceremony for the new expansion. (See Derher Magazine, Elul 5774.)

The actual construction began on Yud-Aleph Nissan 5751, and a written response with a *brocha* came from the Rebbe "זייהא בשעטומ"צ בכל והזמן גרמא והענין".

A few times during the month of Iyar, when leaving 770 for the Ohel, the Rebbe turned to observe the workers and waved at them.

As it turned out, much of these plans did not materialize and only a small portion of the expansion was actually implemented.

Yom Tov

By the *hanochas even hapinah* on 17 Elul, 5748 the Rebbe wore a silk *kapote*, traditionally worn on Shabbos and yom tov. In a *sicha* two days later, the Rebbe explained that the Rabbeim would don a silk garment on *yom-tov'dike* occasions as well. In this way the Rebbe was telling the chassidim how important he regarded this event to be.



The Rebbe smiles as Mr. David Chase speaks at the *hanochas even hapina* ceremony.

PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 157572



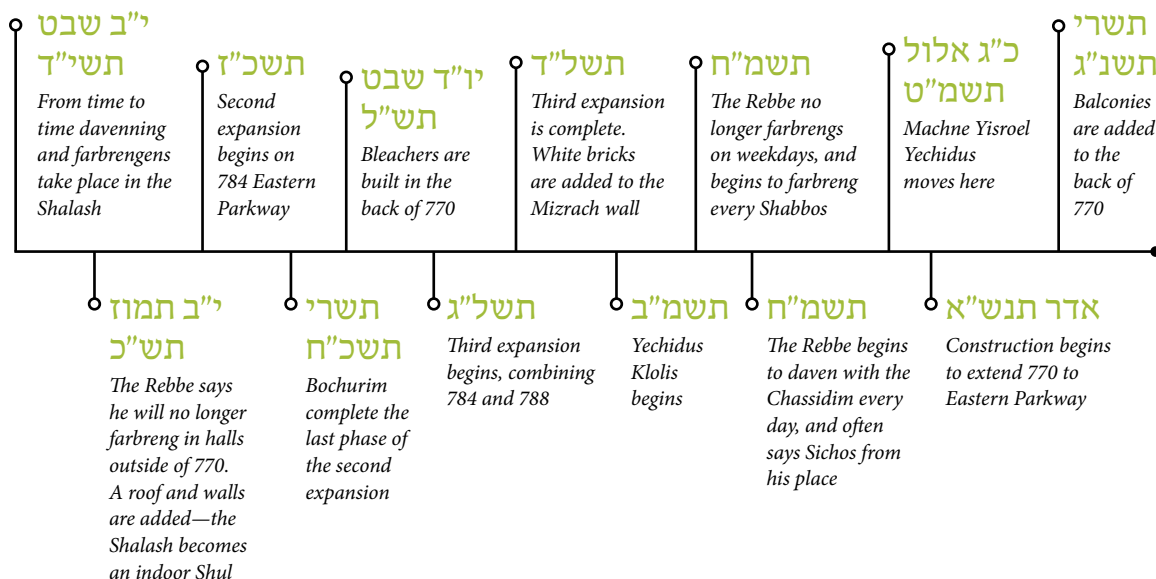
Chassidim wait on line to pass by the Rebbe while construction takes place, Elul, 5751.

PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 157923



PHOTO: JEM THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 146437

The Shul



Davening

Shacharis: Until Chof-Beis Shevat 5748, the Rebbe davened shacharis with the *minyán* in the main shul only four times a year (in addition to the days he davened at the *amud*): Erev Rosh Hashanah, Erev Yom Kippur, Purim, and Tishah B'Av. Following the Rebbetzin's *histalkus*, the Rebbe davened shacharis every day at 10:00 a.m. with chassidim (for the first year in the Rebbe's home and then) downstairs in the main shul.

Mincha and Maariv: The Rebbe davened mincha with chassidim every day at 3:15 p.m., with the exception of days he went to the Ohel, in which case the Rebbe davened following his return. Until Chof-Beis Shevat, the Rebbe davened mincha and maariv upstairs, in the small *zal*. Following the year of *aveilus* (during which the Rebbe davened in his home on President Street), the Rebbe davened mincha and maariv in the main shul.

Shliach Tzibbur: Chassidim had the *zechus* of hearing the Rebbe lead the *tefillos* as *shliach tzibbur* on four days each year: Vov Tishrei, yahrtzeit of Rebbetzin Chana, the Rebbe's mother; Chof Av, yahrtzeit of HoRav Levi Yitzchok, the Rebbe's father; Yud Shevat, yahrtzeit of the Frieddiker Rebbe; and Chof-Beis Shevat, following the Rebbetzin's *histalkus* in 5748.

Additionally, there were days when the Rebbe would say *kaddish*:

- Second day of Rosh Hashanah for Rebbetzin Sheina, the Rebbetzin's sister
- 24 Tishrei for the Rebbe's maternal grandmother, Rebbetzin Rochel Yanovsky
- 10 Kislev for the Rebbe's uncle HaRav Shmuel Schneerson (brother of HoRav Levi Yitzchok)
- 19 Kislev for the Rebbe's aunt, Rebbetzin Gittel Schneerson
- 13 Iyar for the Rebbes brother, Reb Yisroel Arye Leib
- 23 Elul for the Rebbe's maternal grandfather, HaRav Meir Shlomo Yanovsky
- 25 Elul, reason unknown. Some suggest it was for the Rebbe's middle brother, Reb Dovber

Kriah: The Rebbe displayed a particular reverence for *sifrei Torah*, even more than the *halacha* mandates. Each time the Rebbe passed the *aron kodesh*, going to and from davening, he would pause and gently grasp the *paroches* as a sign of respect. When the *sifrei Torah* were taken out for *kriah*, the Rebbe would follow them with his gaze until they were placed on the *bima* and the *mantel* was removed; only then would he turn to his *shtender* to look in the siddur or Chumash for *kriah*. Until 5738, the Rebbe would remain standing for the duration of *kriah*, even on Shabbos and Yom Tov. During the weekdays, Reb Dovid Raskin served as the *baal koreh*, while Reb Mordechai Shusterman leined on Shabbos and Yom Tov.



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 166316

The Rebbe enters the shul for shacharis.



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 4413

The Rebbe gives a coin to a child for tzedakka.



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 9410

The Rebbe touches the *paroiches* upon entering and leaving the shul, as a sign of respect.



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 166225

On his way in and out of davening, the Rebbe often encourages the singing.



The Rebbe straightens his *retzuos* during davening after finishing *shmone esreh*, waiting to return to his place for *kedusha*.

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PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 146427

The Rebbe davens at the amud.



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 153046

The Rebbe walks through the Simchas Torah shvil to his aliya on Hoshaanah Rabba.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 165001

When a day on which the Rebbe was chazzan fell out on a day of *kriah*, the Torah taken out from the *aron* and handed to the Rebbe would be the Rebbe's sefer Torah.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 165880

Occasionally, the Rebbe was handed a different sefer Torah.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 12903

The Rebbe reads the haftarah on a *taanis tzibbur*.



The Rebbe receives an aliya.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 22333



Sichos

The Rebbe spoke many *sichos* from his place of davening. These *sichos* were usually delivered on special days; often spontaneously. The Rebbe would turn around, and facing the crowd, lean with his right arm on the *shtender* and begin to speak. From Adar 5746, a special *shtender* was erected on the opposite end of the Rebbe's *bima* (across the davening *shtender*), serving as the "*sicha shtender*." Additionally, there were two instances —Yud-Gimmel Nissan and Erev Shavuos 5749—when the Rebbe recited *maamotrim* from the "*sicha shtender*." On 13 Nissan, the Rebbe even requested the crowd to sing the *niggun hachana* before the *maamor*. It took chassidim a few seconds to realize what the Rebbe meant, being that there hadn't been a *maamar* with a *niggun* since 5746! Incidentally, these were the last instances the Rebbe said a *maamar* using the traditional tune.



From 5746, another *shtender* was prepared on the other side for *sichos*, occasionally used for dollars distribution as well.



The Rebbe says a *sicha* from the davening *shtender*.



28 sivan 5751, 50 years since the Rebbe and Rebbetzin arrived in the US, Rabbi Zalman Gurary gives the Rebbe a brocha on behalf of all chassidim, and the Rebbe responds with a lengthy brocha, also expounding on the special qualities of 770. (Much of this *sicha* was later published in *kuntres beis rabeinu shebbovel*).



Chassidim dance after having the zechus of hearing a surprise *sicha* from the Rebbe, followed by dollars; 24 Shevat, 5752.

PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 164973

PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 168996

PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 165801

Tzivos Hashem Rallies

Occasionally throughout the year, Tzivos Hashem rallies for children were held in 770. During many of these rallies, no one else was allowed in the main shul other than the children and their *madrichim*.

The event would begin with the Rebbe davening *mincha* with the children; they would sing *Ashrei* and other songs, with the Rebbe often encouraging the singing along.

Following *mincha*, selected children would lead in the recital of the 12 *Pesukim* (the Rebbe had introduced these *pesukim* during the month of Iyar in “*shnas hachinuch*”—5736). The Rebbe would gaze attentively at each child as they recited a *possuk*, often repeating after them, word-for-word.

With the conclusion of the *pesukim*, the Rebbe would then deliver a few *sichos*, with breaks throughout, allowing Rabbi

Y. Y. Hecht to translate the Rebbe’s words into English for the children. (Many of these *sichos* have been published by Tzivos Hashem in דער רבי רעדט צו קינדער).

The *sichos* would be followed by singing *niggunim*, with the Rebbe encouraging strongly as the children sang. Overall, the Rebbe could be seen in high spirits when with the Tzivos Hashem children; it was a time of much *nachas-ruach* for the Rebbe.

At the conclusion of the event, the Rebbe would distribute coins to the *madrichim* to be handed out to all the children, encouraging them to give *tzedakka*.

Thus, the rally would include Torah—the *sichos* and the *pesukim*, *avoda*—davening *mincha* and the *tefillos* for the *geula*, and *tzedaka* (*gemilus chasodim*)—the coins distributed.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 146639

Children and *madrichim* listen attentively to the Rebbe’s *sicha* at a rally. Bochorim who didn’t serve as *madrichim* were not allowed in the shul during the rally, and many of them stood in the women’s section to see and hear the Rebbe.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 23236

As always, the Rebbe gave extra special attention to children, encouraging their singing very strongly.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 164931

The Rebbe gives coins to *madrichim* to distribute to the children. Typically, the Rebbe gave each child one coin for *tzedakka* and one for their personal use.

Chalukos

Dollars At every opportunity, the Rebbe would encourage the giving of *tzedakka* and speak of its importance; often stressing that “*Gedoila tzedaka shemkareves es ha’geula.*”

In addition to the famous Sunday dollars (see previous installment), the Rebbe would constantly look for opportunities to give *tzedaka*; on his way to davening, he would hand out coins to children, encouraging them to give *tzedakka*. At times, on the way to the *bima* the Rebbe himself would place a few coins into the pushkas he passed by.

During the later years, after *mincha* or *maariv*, particularly when the *sichos* near the *shtender* became more common, the Rebbe would often give out 1, 2, or even 3 dollars to the crowd, for *tzedakka*. The Rebbe would signal to the *mazkirim* by placing one or more fingers (depending how many dollars the Rebbe wanted to give out) from his right hand across his left hand, indicating that dollars would be distributed. At first, the *gabboim* would take one of the *shtenders* on the Rebbe’s *bima* and place it next to the Rebbe to give the dollars from. Later on, an “L” shaped green *shtender* was built for the Rebbe to lean on while distributing dollars.

Kuntreisim During the later years, the Rebbe began—and over time, more often—distributing *kuntreisim*. The *kuntreisim* were usually recently published *maamorim*, primarily from the Rebbe Rashab, the Friediker Rebbe, and the Rebbe. To receive a *kuntres* from the Rebbe was considered a special *zechus*; usually included was a dollar or more (on Chof-Beis Shevat 5752 it included a \$5 bill). Chassidim would gather from all over to take part in these special occasions.

The Rebbe was very involved in the printing of these *kuntreisim*. For the *kuntres* of Chof-Beis Shevat 5752, the Rebbe even chose the color of the cover (pink). Chassidim cherish these *kuntreisim* and from time to time learn from them, strengthening their *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe.

Tanyas There were three times that the Rebbe personally distributed Tanyas to each and every chossid.

The first time was in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5742, which marked the Rebbe’s eightieth birthday. Towards the end of the farbrengen the Rebbe announced that at the conclusion of the farbrengen he will personally distribute a Tanya to all those assembled. The Rebbe explained that in addition to



strengthening the learning of Tanya, it also serves as a token of appreciation for all those that had travelled from far and near to participate in this special occasion. (See Derher Magazine, Nissan-5774.)

The second time this took place was eight years later, in honor of Yud Shevat 5750, which marked forty years of the Rebbe's *nesius*.

On the day of Yud Shevat, the Rebbe visited the Ohel. After returning to 770 for *mincha*, *maariv*, and a *sicha*, the Rebbe descended the *bima* and began distributing the Tanyas, standing for over five hours!

The third time the Rebbe distributed Tanyas was in honor of Yud Tes Kislev 5751.

On Yud-Aleph Nissan, 5744, the Rebbe distributed Tanyas through the Kollel *yungeleit* to all the participants in the *farbrengen*.





Farbrengens

Perhaps the most notable occurrence in the big shul at 770 throughout the years was the Rebbe's farbrengens. The following is a description about the Rebbe's farbrengens in general, as told by the Rebbe's choizer, Reb Yoel Kahn:

To describe the atmosphere around the Rebbe, the best place to begin would be the Rebbe's farbrengens.

The farbrengen was the primary opportunity given to the broader public to see and hear the Rebbe, as he communicated with his chassidim; to listen to the Torah he taught in both *nigleh* and *nistar*, and to be elevated to higher realms, where these topics he spoke of were alive.

The Rebbe's farbrengens could be divided into several aspects:

Firstly, there is the Torah taught by the Rebbe during the farbrengen. The Rebbe would elucidate the deepest concepts in every area of Torah, connecting them each with one-another, and illuminating them with utmost clarity. One single farbrengen was able to contain a profound, innovative "*hadran*" on one of the *mesichtos* in *Shas*, a deep and lengthy *ma'amor*

Chassidus, an in-depth discussion on a few words of *Rashi* on *Chumash*, and much, much more.

But above the "academic" side of the farbrengens, there was something about them that went far beyond ordinary Torah-teaching and innovative "*lomdus*."

The farbrengen was not a *shiur*. It was an experience that emanated a sense of inspiration, elevating the participants to "live higher" for the moment.

In his words, the Rebbe used unique expressions in naming the special qualities of the Jewish people, the Torah, and their inseparable bond with Hashem.

The Rebbe's exceptional style, his tone of voice, his facial expressions, the *niggunim* in between the *sichos*, and everything else about the farbrengen simply brought us up to another world entirely.

This aspect of the farbrengen is much more difficult to properly describe. The prevailing feeling among the participants during those precious hours just cannot be put into words.

There were also times when we unmistakably witnessed the Rebbe conducting "heavenly affairs;"



Chassidim await the Rebbe's arrival for a farbrengen

PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 5718

where it was clear to us that supernatural events were unfolding before our eyes.

Another point, no less important, that stood out at the Rebbe's farbrengens, was the observable care and concern the Rebbe held for *Klal Yisroel* as a whole, and each and every *Yid* individually. The Rebbe dedicated many of his *sichos* to discuss current events relating to the global Jewish community, always voicing his strong stand on שלימות התורה, העם, והארץ. Additionally, it was at the farbrengens where the Rebbe relentlessly called upon his chassidim to go out into the world and take posts on *shlichus*, reaching their furthest fellow *Yidden*, in every corner of the world.

All of these incredible components and much, much more, made up the Rebbe's farbrengens.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 140825

Chassidim stand as the Rebbe recites a maamor in the special traditional tone. The Rebbe holds a handkerchief wrapped around his hand under the table as was the practice of the Rabbeim.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 20597

The Rebbe dances and vigorously encourages the Chassidim's singing at farbrengen, Chai Elul, 5737.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 143119

From 5735, the Rebbe often concluded many weekday farbrengens by distributing dollars for tzedakka to the assembled, through the "tankistin".

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PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 5696

On his way out of a farbrengen, the Rebbe carries the names and donations of Chassidim who participated in the “magbis” - appeal conducted for various causes at weekday farbrengens.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 14091

Chassidim gather around the Chozrim, led by Reb Yoel Kahan to review the most recent Farbrengen.

Desired Effect

A grandchild of a very distinguished rov spent Tishrei 5726 in 770. Following Simchas Torah, he wrote a letter to his grandfather describing his experience and also made mention of the tremendous pushing that was so common to 770. His grandfather would often write to the Rebbe and in one of his letters, he mentioned this detail.

The Rebbe answered: “*Yehi ratzon* that the pressing and pushing here on Simchas Torah should have the desired effect as the words of Reb Yochanan: ‘Just as an olive etc.’” The Rebbe was referring to the comparison made in the Medrash between the olive and the Jewish people. Just as when an olive is squeezed, the oil comes out, so too when they are pressured, it brings them to *teshuvah*.

Kos Shel Brocha

Every Motzoei Yom Tov—Rosh Hashanah, Simchas Torah, Acharon Shel Pesach and Shavuos (in the earlier years, after the second day of Sukkos as well)—the Rebbe would stand hours upon hours distributing wine from his very own cup to all those gathered. This special wine was leftover from *bentching* and *havdallah*, which the Rebbe would make himself after the Yom Tov farbrengen, before all the Chassidim.

A line consisting of people from all walks of life would pass in front of the Rebbe, who, with a glowing expression, would pour a little wine into their cup. In addition, shluchim and important dignitaries would receive a bottle of *mashke* (on Acharon Shel Pesach it was bottles of wine) from the Rebbe in order to distribute in their communities.

During the entire distribution, everyone present would sing lively *niggunim*, which were often strongly encouraged by the Rebbe.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 140982

Havdalah at the conclusion of a yom tov.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 140985

Notice the two lines on either side of the table; the Rebbe rotated from one to the other throughout the distribution.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 132155

At the conclusion of the hours-long distribution, the Rebbe recites the brocha-acharona after havdalah.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 142612

Throughout the distribution, Chassidim sing joyous niggunim.



The Rebbe leaving the Farbrengen Bimah at the end of Kos Shel Brochoh on Motzei Ahcharon Shel Pesach holding the becher covered by the silver plate.



Yechidus Klolis

Beginning with the year of 5742, private *yechidus* was discontinued. Nevertheless, chassidim were able to speak with the Rebbe in groups. This was called “*yechidus klolis*.” At first, the *yechidus kloyiyos* would take place in the Rebbe’s room. Over time, as the groups got larger, it was moved to the small *zal*, and eventually to the big shul downstairs. The Rebbe held *yechidus klolis* during and around the following seven times of the year: Tishrei, Yud-Tes Kislev, Yud Shevat, Purim, Nissan, Shavuos, and Yud-Beis/Yud-Gimmel Tammuz.

The Rebbe received three categorized groups for *yechidus klolis*. First were the guests that had come to the Rebbe for one of the abovementioned dates. Following them were boys and girls who were either about to celebrate or had recently celebrated their bar and bas mitzvahs, together with their parents and families. The third group were *chassanim* and *kallos* and their families. During the *yechidus*, the men would stand on the right and the women on the left, with two tables separating between them. The Rebbe would deliver a *sicha* (to each of the three groups), following which, every attendee would hand a letter to the Rebbe and the Rebbe would give them a dollar.

Although the format of the *yechidus klolis* may have resembled a farbrengen setting, the Rebbe would often explain that *yechidus klolis* was not inferior to

a one-on-one *yechidus*. On the contrary, being that it takes place in a *makom kadosh*, a *beis hakneses* and *beis hamedresh*, and with many more Yidden present, therefore the *brachos* are greater and more powerful. A strong similarity between the previous format of *yechidus* and *yechidus klolis*—illustrating the Rebbe’s abovementioned sentiment—was the fact that during *yechidus klolis* the Rebbe would rest his holy hands on the table as opposed to under the table. This was a practice the Rebbe specifically had done during *yechidus*, whereas by farbrengens, his hands were under the table. The Rebbe also sat below the regular farbrengen *bima*, closer to the crowd.



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 155094



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 163746

The Rebbe addresses the bochurim at *yechidus klolis*.

Kinus N'shei Chabad

Twice a year, in the weeks leading up to Rosh Hashanah and Shavuot, the Rebbe would address a gathering of the N'shei Chabad. (The Rebbe would also separately address the graduates of Beis Rivkah high school and counselors of camps). The Rebbe would sit at his regular farbrengen place, usually delivering a *sicha* pertaining to the importance of women and their role in Yiddishkeit in general, as well as their role in fulfilling our mission to make a *dira betachtonim*.

As the Rebbe sat down, he would request that the women be seated as well. The organizers would present the Rebbe with the program of the gathering, followed by the Rebbe's address to them. After the *sicha*, the Rebbe would hand stacks of dollars to the organizers for them to distribute to the assembled women. A small presentation of Jewish themes would be displayed, with the Rebbe paying special attention to them. (See "Behind the Picture" in this issue.) In the earlier years, many of the women and young ladies would have an opportunity to meet with the Rebbe personally while still seated, one on one.



The Rebbe addresses N'shei Chabad.



Women approach the Rebbe after the *sicha* for a brocha.



At the conclusion of a N'shei Chabad Convention.



Machne Yisroel Development Fund

Twice a year, between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur and before Yud-Aleph Nissan, a special event took place for the members of the Machne Yisroel Development Fund. The supporters had the discretion to choose on which of the two occasions they wanted to have their *yechidus*. During the first years of this program, the event took place in the entryway of 770. Over time it was moved to the small *zal*, and from Adar 5749, when it outgrew the *zal*, it was transferred to the big shul downstairs. The Rebbe would address the supporters, following which each of them had a few minutes to speak with the Rebbe in private. It was virtually considered to be a *yechidus*. The event concluded with the Rebbe giving a *brocha* to the shluchim who had brought the supporters.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 144970

The Rebbe greets Mr. David Chase, chairman of the Machne Yisroel Development Fund.



The Rebbe speaks to the donors of Machne Yisroel Development Fund.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 144754

The Rebbe greets each of the donors in a secluded area for a few words in private.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 144809

On the way out of a Machne Yisroel meeting, the Rebbe carries panim for brochos given by the donors.

In the Rebbe's Presence

Reb Meir Harlig relates a story about a *bochur* who spent some time in 770, but didn't learn much. At one point he left 770, and after some time he became engaged. He decided that he wanted to spend the time before his wedding in 770, but the *hanhala* of the yeshiva refused to accept him. The *bochur* promptly wrote a letter to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe turned to the *hanhala* and said that although he understands why they do not want to accept this *bochur* back to 770, nevertheless it would still be worthwhile to take him back, for "one can receive much from the walls of 770."



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 159896

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Around the Year



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 1500

Hatoras Nedarim: Erev Rosh Hashanah, elder chassidim sit in a semicircle while Rebbe recites *hatoras nedarim*.



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 108994

Erev Yom Kippur: On Erev Yom Kippur, the Rebbe would proceed to the main shul, carrying a bag of coins for *tzedakka*. The Rebbe made a point to place at least one coin in every single *pushka*.



Sukkos: The Rebbe holds the lulav and esrog on chol hamoied Sukkos observing the crowd circling the bima during hoshaanos.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 147534

Chanukah: On each day of Chanuka after *mincha* the Rebbe would attentively observe the lighting of the menorah in the main shul.



Purim: The Rebbe with his *megillah* on Purim morning during shacharis.



Tisha B'Av: The Rebbe recites *Megillas Eich*a and *Kinos* on Tisha B'Av.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 105418

The Ghotzer

תשרי תש"כ

Sukkah moves from Shalash to Chotzer

סוכות תש"ל

The last farbrengen in the Sukkah

תשרי תשכ"ח

Tashlich begins at 770

סוכות תשל"ד

A new Sukkah is built for the Rebbe

Affixed on the outside wall, to the right of the main door, are the well-known numbers “770”. For many years, the Rebbe would primarily access to 770 via the main entrance.

On yomim tovim, when chassidim would set out on *tahalucha*—at the Rebbe’s behest to bring joy to the Jewish community at large—the Rebbe would stand on the threshold of the main entrance to 770, accompanying the multitudes of chassidim with his holy gaze, and encourage their singing with his holy hands.

Many a time, the Rebbe would stand near the main entrance as he bid farewell to the groups of guests who had come to spend the month of Tishrei with the Rebbe. In the earlier years, the Rebbe would also occasionally bid farewell from this threshold to a shliach embarking on his shlichus, as well as children leaving for camp.

Similarly, the Rebbe would use this entrance through which to accompany certain people who had visited for *yechidus*. Among those who were honored in such fashion: Various distinguished rabbonim and rebbes, such as the Rebbes of Gur, the “Lev Simcha”, the “P’nei Menachem,” as well as the current Gerrer Rebbe; the chief rabbis of Israel, Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu and Rabbi Avraham Shapiro; as well as public figures such as President of Israel Zalman Shazar, Prime Minister Menachem Begin, and others.

After Yud-Beis Tammuz 5745—when the Rebbe spoke about the theft of seforim from the library for the first time—the Rebbe instructed that the words “Bais Agudas Chasidei Chabad Ohel Yosef Yitzchak Lubavitch” be displayed on the front of 770, above the main door. The exact wording, as well as the size of the words and the font, were all determined by the Rebbe himself.

As mentioned, the Rebbe would usually use the main entrance to access 770. From 25 Adar I 5746—when the Rebbe had difficulty walking—he would access 770 through the side entrance instead (to the left of the main entrance). This entrance provided a shorter distance of walking, as the Rebbe’s car would be pulled right up to the door.



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 20744

The Rebbe leaves from the front door of 770.



The Rebbe coming out of the side entrance en route to kiddush levana.

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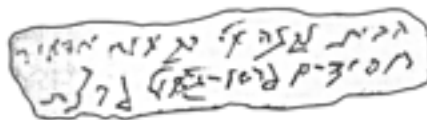
The
Chozter



The Rebbe heading from the car to 770; mitzva tanks can be seen in the background.

Poratz'ta

The Rebbe wrote this note to the members of the committee involved in expanding 770, in 5749:



"הבית נקנה ע"י כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר, חסידים פרשו - גימט' פרצת"

"The house [building] was bought by the [Frierdiker] Rebbe, Chassidim offered the explanation [allusion] – [the number 770] amounts to the *gematriya* of *poratz'ta*."



The Rebbe walks to 770 from his home on President Street.



The Rebbe walks to the library through the courtyard on the right side of 770.

PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 2022



The Rebbe sees off guests who came to be in his presence.



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 143272

Chassidim dance while the Rebbe encourages them as they embark on their journey.

Around the Year



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 109109

Tashlich

In the earlier years, the Rebbe would walk on Rosh Hashanah about half-an-hour to the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens for *tashlich*. In 5728, the Rebbe suggested that in order to avoid the long trek to the Gardens, a source of water could be found right outside 770. Indeed, after digging some 150 feet underground, well water was found in the courtyard and used for *tashlich* each year since.

Initially, the *tashlich* structure was built behind the library. When the library building was expanded, it was relocated to the left, where it stands today.

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Kaparos

On Erev Yom Kippur, the Rebbe would perform *kaparos* in his room with no one present. At around 7:00-8:00 in the morning, the Rebbe would emerge from his room holding the chicken, and hand it to the *shochet*, Rabbi Yisroel Shimon Kalmenson, to *shecht*. Following the *shechitah*, the *shochet* would take a few feathers from the chicken's wing and hand them to the Rebbe to use for the mitzvah of *kisuy hadam*. The Rebbe would brush the sand (with the feathers) in a back and forth motion, ensuring that the blood was covered well. This took place, at first, under the porch in the Chotzer. In later years, it was moved to the front entrance.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 123961

Shaking the Rebbe's Lulav

Every year on Sukkos, chassidim had the *zechus* to *bentch* on the Rebbe's *lulav* and *esrog*. During the morning hours, the Rebbe would come to the *sukka* with his *lulav* and *esrog* and *bentch* with them. After that the Rebbe would open the *sukka's* door allowing all the chassidim to file by, say the *brocha* and shake the Rebbe's *daled-minim*. From around the year 5722, the Rebbe appointed Reb Meir Harlig as a shliach to give the chassidim his *lulav* and *esrog*. On the first day of Sukkos 5752, the Rebbe himself stood and watched as every chossid shook his *lulav* and *esrog*. It was not until 3:00 p.m., when all the chassidim had finished, that the Rebbe went in to 770 to daven *shacharis*.



The Rebbe carries his lulav and esrog into his sukka, chol hamoed Sukkos morning.

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 9897



Chassidim wait on line to bentch on the Rebbe's lulav and esrog; Chol Hamoed Sukkos morning.

Lekach

For the guests who had arrived for Tishrei after Yom Kippur, the Rebbe distributed *lekach* on Hoshana Rabba (and in the later years, earlier on *chol hamoed* as well), from the entrance of the Rebbe's private sukka (in the later years, near the Rebbe's room).



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 103086

The Sukkas



The Rebbe's sukka on the front lawn of 770.

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PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 108755

Main sukkah of 770 after the shalash was transformed to the shul.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 110619

A farbrengen in the shalash, used as a sukkah on Sukkos.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 115165

An additional sukkah on the driveway, used by the Rebbe in the later years.

Mayim Shelanu

In the days leading up to Pesach, the Rebbe would come outside to the front of 770 to draw *mayim shelonu*. While the Rebbe cleaned the jugs and filled them up with water, the chassidim sang *Keili Atah*. (See Derher Magazine, Nissan-5774.)



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 43645

Lag B'omer Parades

One of the most famous events to take place outside 770 were the Lag B'omer parades. The first parade was in 5703 and took place in the *shalash*. Parades took place in the *shalash* in 5713 and 5716, and then they were relocated to the front of 770 in 5717. For an extensive article on the Lag B'omer parades, see Derher Magazine, Iyar-5774.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 23099

Kiddush Ledona

The first Motzoei Shabbos of each month, following the seventh day, the Rebbe would proceed outside after *maariv* to recite *kiddush levona*.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 14691



Chupa

During the earlier years of the Rebbe's *nesius*, and occasionally before the *nesius* as well, the Rebbe served as *mesader kiddushin* at weddings. During the early 5710s, the Rebbe attended the *kabolas ponim* at times as well. The Rebbe would intone the *brocha* of *eirusin* in a special tune and then follow with the recital of the *sheva brochos*. Following the breaking of the glass cup by the *chosson*, the Rebbe would proceed to wish the *chosson* and *kalla* "mazel tov."

To have the Rebbe as *mesader kiddushin* at a wedding was obviously considered an exceptional *zechus*, and it was not merited by all. There were a number of conditions to be met by the couple for the Rebbe's agreement to attend: The *chosson* had to grow a beard, the *kalla* must wear a sheitel, and from 5720 on, the couple would agree to move out on *shlichus*. After the "*shalash*" was transformed to a permanent building, the chupas were moved to the courtyard on the right side of 770.



The Rebbe is *mesader kiddushin* at a chuppa in the *shalash*.

Birkas Hachama

"*Birkas hachama*" occurred twice during the Rebbe's *nesius*; after Pesach 5713 and on 4 Nissan 5741. For the *birkas hachama* of 5741, large crowds of chassidim gathered outside 770. A very lively atmosphere prevailed as *niggunim* were sung, while the Rebbe encouraged the singing with both his hands, turning to all four sides. The Rebbe said three *sichos* in honor of the occasion, and then requested to have children say the Twelve *Pessukim*.





PHOTO: ARCHIVES OF MYENCOUNTER.COM

On 16 Sivan 5735, a unique event took place here, near the main entrance. The Rebbe stood on the threshold, a shtender and microphone placed before him, and he said a *sicha* in honor of the return of a group from England. They had come to New York for Shavuot and brought with them the newly printed bi-lingual Tanya. They were now travelling back. Following the *sicha*, the Rebbe distributed those Tanyas with English translation to these guests, as well as to anyone else who would be travelling out of town to English-speaking countries. To those from non-English speaking countries, and to the children, the Rebbe gave a pocket-size Tanya.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 105417

There was a unique custom in 770 that took place throughout the years. During the farbrengen on *Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim* (when the weekly *parsha* discusses the *mitzvah* of lending money to a fellow Jew in need) the Rebbe would give a bottle of *mashke* for the *melave malka* benefitting the Crown Heights *gemach Shomrei Shabbos* (taking place that evening).

When Reb Yochanan Gordon of the *gemach* would approach to receive the *mashke*, he would put on a *striemel* and deliver a short *vort*, reminding the crowd of the importance of giving *tzedakka* and appealing that they attend the *melave malka* and donate to the *gemach*. After his passing in 5729, his son-in-law, Reb Shimon Goldman filled this role.

Here is an interesting story he told in 5747 and the Rebbe's comments on it that followed.

The *tzaddik* Reb Nochum of Chernobyl would periodically visit a certain town, where he would always stay at the home of a particular chossid.

One year, as Reb Nochum prepared for his annual trip he sent a message to his chossid, saying that if he will not come up with two thousand ruble (an enormous sum of money), the *tzaddik* will not stay with him this time. Additionally, he will be forbidden from coming to visit his Rebbe altogether throughout the entire trip, both for *tefillos*, and for the *tish* that he will conduct.

One can only imagine how broken-hearted the chossid was. All of his possessions did not even total anywhere near **one** thousand ruble. Suddenly coming up with double that amount was simply unthinkable!

Reb Nochum arrived in the town and he indeed stayed elsewhere, while throughout the entire visit the devastated chossid was unable to see his beloved Rebbe.

A short while after Reb Nochum left the town, a passing nobleman stopped in with his entire entourage. And a wonder of wonders occurred! Some of the soldiers chanced upon the chossid's home, and the accidentally left behind an immense treasure. Miraculously, when they returned to the town to search for the missing treasure, they skipped over the home of this chossid.

When he opened the chest, the first sum the chossid managed to lay his hands upon was exactly two-thousand ruble! Excitedly,

the chossid carried the money over to his Rebbe, Reb Nochum. It was then that the Rebbe explained to him what the meaning of the entire affair was.

"In heaven," Reb Nochum began, "it was decided that you should be blessed with riches, but only after you would pray for it. In order to make you to ask for riches, I needed to cause you the temporary pain."

~

The Rebbe listened to Reb Shimon as he told his tale through the end, and then he commented:

There is a question on this story (a "*klutz kashe*"), which makes me presume that the version as it was now told is inaccurate.

If the only reason why the pain was needed was in order to

arouse a desire for riches in the heart of the chossid, why then did the pain need to endure for such a long time?

Being a true chossid of Reb Nochum, even missing **just one** *davening* with his Rebbe should have been enough to bring about the deepest pain and cause him to cry bitterly, with heartfelt "chassidishe tears!"

Even if he was not the biggest chossid but merely a simple Jew, even if he was a "*grubber yung*," nevertheless, seeing that everyone else in the town is allowed into the *tzaddik's* residence and enjoying his holy presence, should have been enough to break his heart.

Therefore it would make sense to say that although the

general content of the story is accurate, some of the details were confused.

The nobleman's appearance in the town took place much earlier in the story, immediately after Reb Nochum reached the town and did not stay in the chossid's home (or possibly after one *davening* in which he was not allowed to participate, but no more). This would have already caused him enough pain to storm the heavens in prayer for riches.

As is often the case, we can assume that when the story was passed down from hand to hand, it was altered a bit by some of the transmitters in order to make the story sound better and more exciting. They obviously did not realize that in the process, they not only failed to enhance the story, but they actually only made it harder to believe! **D**

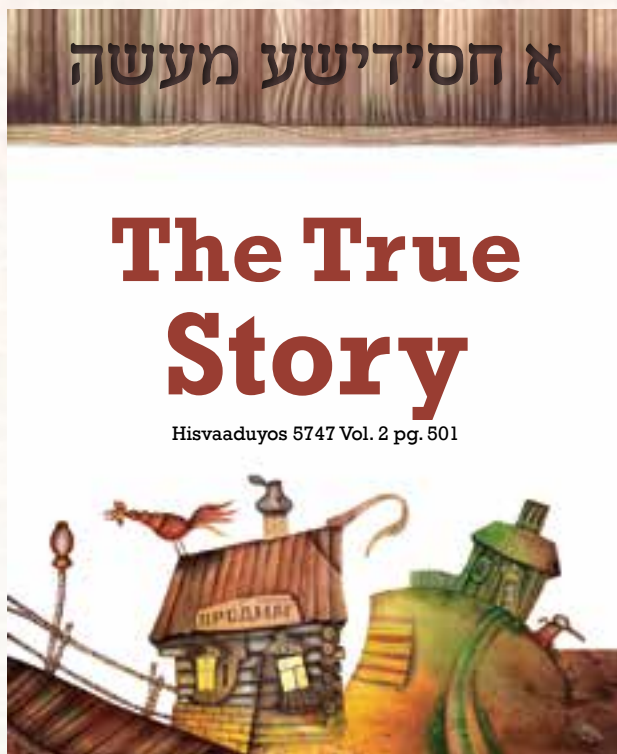




PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 23380

לעבן מיט'ן רבי'ן

Lag B'omer
5744

Lag B'omer 5744. A magnificent experience for all those who participated then; as it will be for those who relive it by viewing the event as it was captured on video.

Lag B'omer festivities with the Rebbe, especially the grand parades that marched along Eastern Parkway, were indeed most unforgettable moments. One need not observe very intensely to note the undeniable pleasure the Rebbe enjoyed from the sight of the children, as he smiled towards them passing by ever so affectionately.

The awe-inspiring scene of the Rebbe's appearance at the main entrance of 770 as he made his way up to the podium, beginning the day's program, left an unwavering impression upon all. The Rebbe's words echoing throughout the streets of Crown Heights as he delivered his timeless message to the children can still be heard piercingly in our hearts, and remain treasured forever.

Such were the Lag B'omer parades. The

culmination of months of hard labor, when Chassidim worked tirelessly to ensure that the parade would indeed behold the success anticipated. Bochorim of all the Lubavitcher Yeshivos toiled endlessly to produce "floats" displaying Jewish themes, collecting their reward in the Rebbe's graceful smile, which they were privileged to witness upon the presentation at the parade.

In 5744, with Lag B'omer falling out to be on a Sunday, the Rebbe would participate in the parade. And so, as the big day was approaching, preparations were well underway.

Preparations

No sooner than the end of *Pesach*, the bochorim were called to a meeting where they discussed the plans for the upcoming parade, as well as the great fair on Empire Boulevard that was to follow it. Having each received their specific instructions, everyone took up their tasks and began bringing their original ideas into action; erecting beautiful floats to

inspire increased enthusiasm in the fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos, and *hafotzas ham'yonos*.

On Friday, 16 Iyar, the flatbeds arrived in Crown Heights ready to carry the exhibits of live themes of Yiddishkeit.

On *Motzoei Shabbos*, Lag B'omer night, the streets of Crown Heights were hustling about with non-stop activity. Many people were occupied with the final touches to their floats and loading them upon the trucks. Others were busy erecting the podium in front of 770 for the Rebbe. At the same time, members of the Sanitation Department meticulously cleaned the streets to befit the coming



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 23364

day's affairs. As morning neared, city police officers blocked the entrances to Eastern Parkway, and thousands of chairs were arranged in rows all along the street.

When the sun finally rose at what was the conclusion of a night of exceedingly hard work, it shined upon a most incredible scene: The two buildings adjacent to 770 (784–788 Eastern Parkway) were beautifully adorned with signs bearing the Twelve *pesukim*, as well as a quote from the Rebbe's *kapittel*, "*Veyeid'u ki ata...*" Two large banners displayed the phrases of "*Hareini mekabel*" and "*Ach tzaddikim*" (in accordance with the Rebbe's request earlier this year that they be recited before and after davening in all Jewish congregations).

The podium in front of 770 stood wrapped with solid-colored drapery, ready for the Rebbe to stand upon it throughout the parade. On its exterior stood an inscription of letters in the form of a crown, which read (in Hebrew) "34

Years of the Rebbe's leadership." At the bottom of the podium to the side stood several benches reserved for the elder Chassidim, and all across the Parkway thousands of chairs were situated to hold the participating children, who would soon arrive. The area to the Rebbe's right was set aside for the girls, while the boys would sit on the left.

The Children's Rally

It was a cloudy Sunday morning in Crown Heights and the meteorologists predicted a rainy day, but evidently, Hashem had other plans.

The streets filled quickly with thousands of children, bused in from around the neighborhood and many other cities in the New York metropolitan area. As the children found their seats, they were each handed packets containing some refreshments and coins for *tzedakka*.

At 10:30, Rabbi Yosef Goldstein ("Uncle Yossi") began the festivities, singing

popular Jewish classics with the children and explaining to them the significance of their gathering on this auspicious day.

The Rebbe Arrives

The long-awaited moment finally arrived. With the band playing the famous "*Ani Maamin*," the main door of 770 opened and the Rebbe made his way out to join the event. The Rashag and Rabbi Hodakov stood closely behind the Rebbe, and at his side stood Rabbi J. J. Hecht, the legendary emcee and coordinator of the Lag B'omer parades.

As usual, the rally began with the recitation of the Twelve *pesukim*. Before calling upon each of the children to lead in the recitation, Rabbi Hecht translated the meaning of the forthcoming *possuk* into English for the children.

At the conclusion, the children sang the customary "We Want Moshiach Now," and then Chazzan Moshe Teleshevsky was summoned to lead the singing of

“*Sheyibone*,” preceded by the traditional “*Yehi Rotzon*.”

The Rebbe's Address

Rabbi Hecht then requested absolute silence and the Rebbe delivered his address to the children.

In the first *sicha*, the Rebbe discussed the significance of a gathering of Jewish children on Lag B'omer, which emphasizes the idea of *ahavas Yisroel*, a central theme of the day (see synopsis below). When the Rebbe concluded with a blessing that in the merit of Jewish unity we will bring about the final *geulah*, he went on describing in great detail how Hashem will gather in the exiles taking each and every Jew individually. And as Rashi comments, He'll hold us each by hand and lead us to redemption. While saying these words, the Rebbe's voice displayed a sudden burst of emotion and it sounded as though he was suppressing a cry.

Upon the conclusion of the *sicha*, Rabbi Hecht offered a brief translation while the Rebbe listened.

The second *sicha* was relatively long, deriving many lessons pertaining to our service of Hashem from the life and teachings of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai. A most exceptional moment was when the Rebbe quoted his famous saying, that wherever the Jews have been exiled, Hashem's presence went along with them. One should not despair and think that he stands in his troubles alone. “No,” says Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai. “That is not at all the case. Hashem is with you every moment and through every hardship of this *golus*; he will not take leave of it until all the Jewish people have been redeemed, not even one minute earlier.” Again, the Rebbe cried while saying these words, as his voice slightly choked up.

At the conclusion of this *sicha*, which lasted almost an hour, Rabbi Hecht approached the Rebbe and noted that a full translation of the Rebbe's words would be very time-consuming and infringe on the remainder of the



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 23569



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 23499



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 24123



program. The Rebbe suggested to suffice with the final point (that increasing in performance of Torah and mitzvos, and especially davening fervently, will bring about the imminent *geulah*), and add that a full transcript of the *sicha* will soon be available in English.

After Rabbi Hecht carried out these instructions, the Rebbe concluded with a closing wish, that the acts of Torah (recitation of *pesukim*), *avodah* (prayer of *Sheyibone*), and *gemilus chassodim* (giving *tzedakka* from the coins that the children received) performed at this gathering will hasten the coming of Moshiach; *bekarov mamosh!*

The Grand Parade

The raffles were then drawn and the three winners were announced. They won—respectively—a free trip to *Eretz Yisroel*, a set of *Shas* and a set of *Rambam*, and a bicycle.

Before setting off the parade, Rabbi Hecht seized the opportunity to wish the Rebbe a blessing on behalf of all those present

that he should be well and speedily lead us to the final *geulah*. With that, the parade was ready to begin.

The parade started with a local police vehicle leading the way, followed by three children carrying the American flag, the Tzivos Hashem flag, and the Merkos flag.

Then, the representatives of the US military showed their presence, led by the US Marine Corps; they saluted the Rebbe.

Because of the Rebbe's involvement with the armed forces in the United States, the members of the New York National Guard paid special tribute to the Rebbe, the leader of world Jewry. It was in recognition of his tremendous contribution to the betterment of the world, and of his great and inspirational leadership and guidance to bring peace and stabilization to the world in which we live. They conducted a salute, firing into the air in front of the Rebbe. Rabbi Hecht thanked Col. Rabbi Yaakov Goldstein for arranging this tribute.

The parade went on, as all the children in attendance marched by the Rebbe. Dispersed between their groups, the floats were presented as well.

A total of eleven exhibits were presented, and from each of them the Rebbe seemed quite pleased. But one particular float seemed to capture the Rebbe's added attention. It was sponsored by Bris Avrohom and constructed by the students of the "Kevutza" from *Eretz Yisroel*, displaying the imminent emergence from exile to redemption. Placing emphasis on the Jews still stranded behind the Iron Curtain, it displayed their release, and carried a large banner proclaiming "We Want Moshiah now" in Russian. The Rebbe gazed at it for quite a while.

After all the floats had passed, the children resumed parading through the street and the Rebbe continuously waved towards them with a broad, warm smile.

At the conclusion of the parade, when the Rebbe turned to leave, Rabbi Hecht approached and asked the Rebbe if he was satisfied with the parade. "Very!" the Rebbe responded.

The Fair

The children then headed for the great fair on Empire Boulevard. When the Rebbe left for the Ohel at 5:00 p.m., his car passed through the site of the fair as well.

At 7:00 p.m., as the fair was shutting down, the skies opened up with a heavy downpour. This successfully concluded the festivities of Lag B'omer 5744.



In order to assist our readers in comprehending the Rebbe's words spoken at this parade, we offer here a brief synopsis of the main points of each of the sichos. Please bear in mind that this is not a full transcription and it only contains a small portion of the entire address. For a better and all-encompassing understanding of the sichos, it is recommended to read them as they have been published in their entirety.

Sicha 1

Rebbi Akiva's Students

• Lesson from the episode of Rebbi Akiva's students: Ahavas Yisroel

When gathering to commemorate Lag B'omer, we are reminded of the two causes for this day's celebration:

- a) It was on this day that the students of Rebbi Akiva stopped dying.
- b) Rebbi Shimon Bar Yochai passed away on this day and he instructed that we rejoice on his yahrtzeit, and he referred to it as his "day of celebration."

The lesson we derive in our service of Hashem from the first point:

We are taught that what caused the epidemic to spread amongst the students was their lack of respect for one another. Needless to say, Rebbi Akiva's students were of extremely refined character, especially given that it was their very teacher who was the author of the phrase, "The mitzvah to love your fellow Jew is the basis of the entire Torah." Certainly, then, they treated one another with respect. Their misdeed was only that they failed to do so in the highest standard possible, the quality of which would befit a student of Rebbi Akiva, with the respect a fellow student of Rebbi Akiva would deserve.

This was true only up until the day of Lag B'omer, but from this day onward the students bettered their actions and restored their conduct to the level expected of them.

The lesson is clear: We must fulfill the mitzvah of *ahavas Yisroel* and love every single Jew, treating them with utmost respect. One may not suffice with anything less than what a Jew truly deserves, considering the prominence of each Jew individually. As is known—and as was repeated in the recitation of the *possuk* of "Ve'hinei"—in Hashem's eyes each one is significant as an entire world!

• Ahavas Yisroel as displayed in today's gathering

The abovementioned idea of Jewish unity displays itself very much in our gathering here today.

The thousands of children here have gathered from a variety of homes and backgrounds. Yet despite our differences, as no two are the same, we've managed to come all together with dignity and respect for one another. Furthermore, we have all gathered for the same purpose and with a common goal, to strengthen our commitment to fulfill Torah as well as its dissemination to our surroundings.

Only the Torah possesses that unique power to unite us all equally, for the Torah was given from One G-d to all the Jewish people, even to the small children.

Our display of a tremendous sense of *Ahavas Yisroel*, with the intention to

renew our commitment to Torah and mitzvos, will bring about Hashem's infinite blessings, as described in the *Parsha* we read last week (*Bechukosai*). Hopefully, this will bring about the ultimate Jewish unity, when Hashem will collect the exiles by taking hold of each Jew individually by the hand, and leading us all together to Eretz Yisroel, with the coming of Moshiach speedily.



Sicha 2

Rebbi Shimon Bar Yochai

• Rashbi's life: The ultimate bond with Hashem

Focusing on the second reason for rejoicing on Lag B'omer, Rebbi Shimon Bar Yochai's day of celebration:

[The truth is that this may be associated with the first point (*Ahavas Yisroel*) as well, for Rashbi was connected with every Jew, to the extent



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / Z3099

that he pledged to exempt them all from severity of Heavenly judgment. He also requested that **all** the Jewish people rejoice in his celebration.]

The reason for Rashbi's request that we rejoice on the day of his passing, was due to the intense union with Hashem that he reached on this day, as recorded in his *sefer*, the *Zohar*. It is true that throughout his entire life he worked at being closer to Hashem, but on his final day he reached levels superior to any of those he previously attained.

The lesson:

It is imperative that we do all in our ability to obtain a stronger connection with Hashem, even as young children. Immediately upon entering this world a Jewish child is to be surrounded with holy sights so that he or she is only exposed to that which is pure. After growing up a bit, the child must be taught to recite the "*Modeh Ani*" and other words of Torah, and to live according to them.

When a young girl reaches the age where she can appreciate the superiority of light over darkness she must be taught to kindle the Shabbos candles, bringing a physically visible light to her home and benefiting all of its inhabitants.

In this manner we must constantly strive to grow in our observance of Torah and mitzvos, just as Rashbi was never complacent with his past achievements, always reaching ever higher.

• **Rashbi's life: Torah study as a primary occupation**

Another important lesson from Rashbi:

We are told that Torah study was his primary occupation (*torasoi um'nusoi*). Similarly, we must also make Torah study our foremost priority.

A craftsman who excels in one particular profession may be found engaging in other activities as well,

but his essential being will always remain engrossed in his field; whether while eating, strolling, or even while dreaming in his sleep! A Jew's "craft" is Torah study, and that should forever be his primary focus. This is especially applicable to children, as they bear no worldly responsibilities, they must certainly devote all their time to Torah study, thereby serving as an example for their parents, too.

• **Rashbi's teaching: Hashem is at our side**

Rashbi taught us an idea most vital to our endurance of the hardships we encounter in *golus*. We find ourselves surrounded by a society where the dollar is king, and yet at the same time we attempt to encourage our children to stay true to the Torah; an ancient Torah which was given, in the words of our scoffers, thousands of years ago in a desert. This leads to a rather challenging task; where do we gather the courage to keep up at it?

Says Rashbi: Wherever the Jews have gone into exile, the Divine Presence has come along with them. We have never been left alone; Hashem is always at our side suffering, so to speak, from our hardships.

Furthermore, when the time will come to leave the exile, He will not leave even one moment sooner than we. In other words, Rashbi tells each and every Jew: You can be at peace; Hashem is always with you, and He'll remain with you until the final moment of *golus*!

• **Rebbi Elazar adds: His boundless love for us**

The son of Rashbi, Rebbi Elazar, takes the matter one step further.

He uses an analogy of a bride stranded in a tannery filled with a terrible odor. Her bridegroom, in his love for her, is not merely oblivious to the unpleasant smells, but they appear to him as a

delightful fragrance. Hashem, in his love for the Jewish people, remains close to them even while they're in *golus*, notwithstanding all the evil so prevalent there. And more, the evil influences (which are likened to an unpleasant smell because of their lack of true substance) come across to Hashem as a beautiful fragrance. For regardless of it all, the Jewish people persist in observing Torah and mitzvos with sincere *mesirus nefesh*. This is very precious in the eyes of Hashem, and He, in turn increases our abilities to strengthen our adherence to His Torah, rendering us ever more deserving of the imminent *geulah*.

• **In today's portion of daily Chumash...**

Today's portion of Chumash (the beginning of *Parshas Bamidbar*) discusses the counting of the Jewish people in the desert. This stresses yet again how cherished we are in the eyes of Hashem, which is the motive for him counting us time and again.

• **In today's portion of daily Rambam...**

In the daily study of Rambam today we learn the laws of *tefillah*. This is a way to manifest the idea of connecting oneself with the A-lmighty, a concept very much related to Lag B'omer and the life of Rashbi, as mentioned earlier.

Additionally, the Rambam speaks of the original text of the *Amidah*, which contained only eighteen blessings, and that later another blessing was inserted due to the increasing hardships in *golus*. This exemplifies our devotion to Hashem even in the worst phases of our suffering. Indeed, a tannery of horribly-smelling hides, yet at the same time we pray for our imminent deliverance, "תחזינה עינינו בשוכך לציון", "ברחמים...".

a chossid's connection

A chossid's connection with the Rebbe is the most private, intimate part of the chossid's life. For this reason, Chassidim were often reluctant to share anything more than a tidbit from their *yeichiduyos* and letters, and it is therefore difficult to get real insight into their personal connection with the Rebbe.

However, in many instances, especially in recent years, those privileged enough to have had personal interaction and correspondence with the Rebbe have been gracious to share their experiences with the younger generation. Especially considering the fact that all of the Rebbe's words are *divrei elokim chayim*, and are important for each and every chossid in his *avodas Hashem*.

From the time he was a young child, Rabbi **Yitzchok Meir Gurary**, *mashpia* of Tomchei Tmimim, Montreal, merited to have very personal guidance from the Rebbe. Through his years as a bochur and later as a member of *hanhala*, the Rebbe advised him, step-by-step, on how to live life as a chossid. Much of this wealth of guidance is especially pertinent to lives of yeshivah bochurim, their strengths, struggles, and endless capabilities.

The staff of the Chassidisher Derher extends most heartfelt thanks to Rabbi Gurary for sharing so much with us, availing these treasures to all our readers. Many of the letters and points of these *yeichiduyos* were published in a family teshurah¹.

The Rebbe's advice to a bochur, והנה ה' נצב עליו... and a mentor to bochurim

An interview
with Rabbi
**Yitzchok
Meir Gurary**,
mashpia,
Tomchei
Tmimim,
Montreal





GROWING UP

When Rabbi Gurary was growing up, in the early 5700s, it was normal for women and children not to be very involved in chassidic life. The conventional mindset in that era was that *darkei hachasidus* was principally for men, whereas women and children were perceived to occupy a lesser role.

Although he grew up in Crown Heights, young Yitzchok Meir only saw the Frierdiker Rebbe a handful of times; while giving *panim* on Erev Rosh Hashanah, and possibly a few times during davening. He never once witnessed a farbrengen of the Frierdiker Rebbe. This was because the Frierdiker Rebbe was not well at the time, and only select people were given access to the farbrengens; his father, the famed chossid Rabbi Zalman Gurary, managed to get in, but he never brought Yitzchok Meir along.

He seldom went into *yechidus* with the Frierdiker Rebbe. In fact, he only went in to *yechidus* when his grandfather, the Kupishnitzer Rebbe, went in to *yechidus*

and took family members along with him.

Aside from the fact that he wasn't active in 770 life, the atmosphere in the yeshiva (Tomchei Tmimim on Bedford Avenue and Dean Street) wasn't the most chassidish either (many children from modern families attended the school at the time), and overall, the children in Crown Heights weren't involved in chassidishkeit.

"The Rebbe pioneered the idea that the entire family has a place in Chassidus," Rabbi Gurary says. "I felt this on a personal level, as the Rebbe was *mikarev* me from when I was a young child.

"When I was a child, the Frierdiker Rebbe told Rabbi Hodakov to spend time with me, and every so often to instruct me on the importance of *midos tovos* and the like. He would talk to me in his office for about half an hour, and then we would proceed to the Rebbe's room. The Rebbe would test me on the material we discussed, and he would give me a copy of the 'Talks and Tales' as a prize for knowing the information."

On Shabbos, Yitzchok Meir would daven with the main minyan at 770, and he sat directly across from the Rebbe. To get a picture of what 770 looked like in those years, one must realize that most Chassidim did not live in Crown Heights; they lived in Brownsville and other neighborhoods, and, until 5707, there were a grand total of three Lubavitcher children his age in all of Crown Heights!

Therefore, the minyan at 770 was small, and the shul was nearly empty of people, with the exception of *yomim tovim*, when Chassidim would walk in from other neighborhoods.

The Rebbe would enter the shul at around *borchu*, sitting in the seat that would later become his place for *mincha*. The Rebbe listened to *chazaras hashatz* and *krias hatorah*, and davened in his room afterwards.

In general, young Yitzchok Meir was more drawn to his grandfather the,

Kupishnitzer Rebbe. He wasn't overly involved in 770 life, whereas in the Kupishnitzer court he was the Rebbe's oldest grandchild, and they would spend much time together.

Rabbi Gurary explains:

"Every so often the Rebbe would ask me in a 'playful' way, '*Bistu a Lubavitcher Chossid, tzi a Kupishnitzer?*'—'Are you a Lubavitcher Chossid or a Kupishnitzer Chossid?' My standard reply was that 'I'm not sure.' (Keep in mind, that I was a child under nine.)

"This would happen every so often.

"Then, shortly after Yud Shevat 5710—before the Rebbe officially accepted the *nesius*—the Rebbe offered me his hand to say "good Shabbos." As you know, in Lubavitch, the Chassidim never shake the Rebbe's hand, so the Rebbe's offer to shake my hand connoted that he didn't consider himself Rebbe.

"Naturally, I refused. The Rebbe asked me, '*Bistu shoin a Lubavitcher Chossid?*' 'Are you a Lubavitcher Chossid by now?'

"This time, I replied, 'Yes!'"

NOT TOO YOUNG

After he grew up, Rabbi Gurary continued to visit his grandfather, the Kupishnitzer Rebbe, who would ask him to repeat something from the Rebbe's farbrengen. The Kupishnitzer was quite close to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe would send him *mishloach manos* every year. (The Rebbe would send *mishloach manos* to three Polish Rebbes: the Kupishnitzer, the Boyaner, and the Amshinover.)

"Although my father had a very close connection with the Rebbe," Rabbi Gurary says, "and he was privy to everything that was going on in *Beis Harav*, he felt that these were private matters, and he would never discuss them at home.

"One day, my friend told me that he had a secret to tell me. In order to ensure that no-one could possibly overhear us, we walked a block away from the yeshiva and hid behind some bushes. There he

told me the big secret, that the Rebbe's brother had passed away, and that the Rebbe was hiding it from his mother.

"That night, each of our parents received a phone call from Rabbi Hodakov. He warned them that their children were whispering about the story, and he cautioned them to ensure that we would cease gossiping about it.

"The phone call came as a shock. There was absolutely no natural way that the Rebbe could have found out about it; no-one had overheard us talking, and we hadn't mentioned it to a soul. It was clear *ruach hakodesh*.

"Interestingly enough, what amazed my father about this episode wasn't the *ruach hakodesh*—it didn't come as a surprise that the Rebbe had *ruach hakodesh*. What did shock him was that keeping this story secret was so critical to the Rebbe, that he was ready to demonstrate clear *ruach hakodesh* in order to ensure that the story not get out."

The Rebbe also took interest in Yitzchok Meir's progress in learning. The Rebbe was once giving a silver dollar as Chanukah gelt to bochurim who learned Chassidus, and he called in Reb Zalman to give him Chanukah gelt for his son. The Rebbe asked Reb Zalman whether his son was learning Chassidus, too. Reb Zalman replied that Yitzchok Meir was too young to learn Chassidus; that he was "*a kleine yingel*." The Rebbe answered that he should begin learning Chassidus with the boy, and that they should start with the *maamar* "*Adam Ki Yakriv*" in Likutei Torah. After they learn the *maamar*, he should give him the Chanukah gelt.

At one point, Yitzchok Meir was having a hard time finding a *chavrusa*. Since he was in a class with older boys, most boys weren't interested in learning with him, and the only person who *was* willing to learn with him wasn't the best *chavrusa*.

Around that time, the Rebbe asked Reb Zalman how his son's learning was going, and his father replied that Yitzchok Meir was having difficulties because he didn't have a *chavrusa*. The Rebbe said,

"ט'איז א מאדנע קראנקשאפט אין אמעריקע, אז אן א חבורתא קען מען נישט לערנען—It's a strange illness in America that [people think that] it's impossible to learn without a *chavrusa*." The Rebbe added, "I always learned without a *chavrusa*, and he can do it too."

One story, which illustrates the Rebbe's emphasis on *chinuch*, happened with Rabbi Gurary's father. There was once a situation when he had the opportunity to ask the Rebbe for a *brocha* for anything he wanted. At that time, he had lost a huge sum of money, so he asked the

During Yitzchok Meir's *yechidus* for his twelfth birthday, the Rebbe said that when a person turns twelve they become obligated to keep their vows, which signifies that he now takes responsibility for his actions. The Rebbe was emphasizing to him that he was becoming an independent person, and that it was time to start taking responsibility for himself.

Then, when he became bar mitzvah, he had a fascinating *yechidus*.

The Rebbe first instructed him to say over the beginning of the *maamar* that he was



Rebbe for a *brocha* that he should make the money back.

The Rebbe answered, "I'm surprised, because I thought that a *kluge* (wise) person like you would realize that when you have the opportunity to request anything you want, you should request that your offspring should be Chassidim, *yirei Shamayim*, and that they should grow up in the path of *rabboseinu nesieinu*."

to deliver at the bar mitzvah celebration. So he said the *maamar* "*Isa bemedrash Tehillim*" up to the words "*hapirush ma shehu oisse*." Then the Rebbe told him to say some of his *pilpul*, which he did. Most bar mitzva boys would say *pilpulim* from *seforim* like the Sha'agas Aryeh, whereas he said a *pilpul* based on the Tzemach Tzedek. The Rebbe said that it's "א גלייכע"—an appropriate thing," and that other people should learn from this to say *pilpulim* from the Tzemach Tzedek.

Then the Rebbe began encouraging him to learn Chassidus. The Rebbe said, that on ואלה שמות בני ישראל—the *parsha* of the week—the Midrash says that the Yidden didn't change their names nor their clothing throughout their time in Mitzrayim. "Reuvein and Shimon [were their names when they] came down to Mitzrayim, [and] Reuvein and Shimon [were their names when they] went up from Mitzrayim."

Chassidus explains that Reuvain—ראה—refers to seeing *elokus*; and Shimon—שמיעה—refers to understanding *elokus*. How does a Yid ensure that even though he is in *galus*, he won't change his name? Through seeing and understanding *elokus*—by learning Chassidus.

INDIVIDUAL GUIDANCE

The following year, on his fourteenth birthday, Yitzchok Meir went into *yechidus* with his father, as he had in previous years. The Rebbe asked why he had come in with his father? Considering that he was after bar mitzva, he should have come in himself! The Rebbe was telling him, in a powerful way, that he wasn't a child anymore; he was now a chossid in his own right.

Later, as a *bochur*, the Rebbe gave him much guidance in all areas of *avodas Hashem*. The Rebbe once told him that he should never daven without learning Chassidus; it doesn't have to be a lot, but it's important to always learn some Chassidus before davening.

"I wasn't a unique case," Rabbi Gurary says. "All of us *bochurim* were personally advised by the Rebbe in every aspect of our lives. In our *milchemes hayetzer*, in *avodas hatefilla*; in every issue that came up, the Rebbe would guide us. We wouldn't only ask the Rebbe about 'major' issues—we wouldn't only go to the Rebbe if we robbed a bank—rather, we would speak about all the ups and downs of *avodas Hashem*.

"We would speak about the areas in *avodas Hashem* where we felt we should

be better. We asked for *hora'os* about how to work on them, how to approach dealing with them, and so on. If we fell down, and needed help getting back up, the Rebbe was the one who would help us.

"This guidance came in many forms. We would often write questions to the Rebbe, and we would receive *tzetelach* with detailed responses to our questions. We also went into *yechidus* twice a year. We would have *yechidus* on our birthday, and at another point during year, which we would have after giving in a note from the *hanhala*. The Rebbe would also send us personal letters.

"The Rebbe showed a very personalized interest in us and in our struggles. Sometimes, the Rebbe would even refer to something he had told a *bochur* years earlier—'as I told you before'—demonstrating that the Rebbe remembered even minute details in the *avodas Hashem* of a *bochur*. The Rebbe was personally working with each of us and he expected good reports.

"One theme which the Rebbe constantly stressed to me in *yechidus* and letters was *shmiras hasdorim*. This was true with all the *bochurim*; the Rebbe was extremely *makpid* about *shmiras hasdorim*.

"Now, there are really two themes in *shmiras hasdorim*. First is utilizing your time during *seider*, and second is getting to *seider* exactly on time. Besides for the

emphasis on learning during *seider*, the Rebbe was very *makpid* that *bochurim* should arrive exactly on time.

"The Rebbe made no exceptions. In Lubavitch, *bochurim* who davened at length were given the leeway to come to *seider* a bit late. However, when *bochurim* asked the Rebbe if they could be late to *seider* because they were davening, the Rebbe said no. They had to come to *seider* on time. In fact, I've only heard of one exception to this rule; a *bochur* in Eretz Yisroel got permission from the Rebbe to come ten minutes late to *seider*. But otherwise, I have never heard of any other exceptions.

"Overall, this emphasis on *seider* is not a new thing: It's known that the *mashgiach* in Lubavitch would give a *k'nas* if you came איינץ אורף איינץ—one minute after twelve. The Rebbe explained in *sichos* that the reason for this emphasis is that *seider* is a הגבלה עצמית. Just like mitzvos must be performed in an exact way, and otherwise the השפעה does not come down, so too the Rabbeim's השפעה comes through *sidrei hayeshiva*, and they have to be kept in a precise manner.

"The Rebbe wrote about *seider* to *bochurim* again and again; the Rebbe always reminded my friends and me to come to *seider* on time. At one point, I had a *k'vius* to learn Chassidus with people in the evenings. The Rebbe told me that I was using too much of my time learning with other people, and I had to



THE REBBE'S APPROACH WAS THAT ONE SHOULD DAVEN TO THE UTMOST OF HIS ABILITY, BUT FOR THE REST OF THE DAY, THE EMPHASIS SHOULD BE ON REMEMBERING THAT HASHEM STANDS OVER YOU; BASED ON THE PREMISES LAID OUT IN TANYA PEREK MEM-ALEPH.

spend more time learning on my own.

Rabbi Gurary was once very sick with hay fever when he was in camp, and his father asked the Rebbe for a *brocha*. The Rebbe said to check two things: 1) Did he leave yeshiva without *reshus*? 2) Had he given the money that he had pledged for the *magbis* at the Yud Beis Tammuz farbrengen? He had indeed received *reshus* from the *hanhala* to go to camp, but he had not yet given to the *magbis*. He immediately gave the money to the *magbis*, and got better soon after.

"All of us *bochurim* felt," Rabbi Gurary continues, "that the Rebbe appreciated and cared about our *avodas hatefilla* and *milchemes hayetzer*, and I would constantly talk to the Rebbe about my challenges in *avodas Hashem*.

"One theme that the Rebbe always *kochil* in was *Perek Mem-Aleph* of Tanya. The Alter Rebbe speaks about contemplating the fact that הנה השם נצב עליי, Hashem constantly stands over the person watching what he does. The Rebbe said that always keeping this in mind would be a tremendous help to a person's *avodas Hashem*.

"The Rebbe told this to me many times, and also to many other people who were in *yechidus*. It was a *seder avoda* the Rebbe always emphasized over and over, both to me and my friends. The Rebbe told me that this was also a way to deal with melancholy, since remembering that Hashem is always with you is a sure way to feel happiness.

"This is most definitely a *chiddush* of the Rebbe. In Lubavitch, the emphasis was on

davening for hours, and the influence of davening would last throughout the day.

"The Rebbe's approach, on the other hand, was that one should daven to the utmost of his ability, but for the rest of the day, the emphasis was on remembering that Hashem stands over you; based on the premises laid out in *Tanya Perek Mem-Aleph*."

In a letter to the Rebbe, Rabbi Gurary wrote that it seemed that the *hisboninus* in *Perek Mem-Aleph* was not affecting him. The Rebbe answered: "It is impossible that it doesn't affect you. If afterwards the *le'umas zeh (klipa)* returns, this is already explained in Tanya, and in Torah Or *dibur hamaschil* "*Hayinu Kecholmim*," and in several places."

[In that *maamar*, the Alter Rebbe explains that *golus* is like a dream. In a dream, opposites come together; similarly in *golus*, at one moment a person can be at the ultimate level of *kedusha*, and immediately afterwards his *yetzer hara* can flare up with the greatest intensity. The fact that his *yetzer hara* was awakened is not due to a lack in his *avoda*—his *avoda* was real, his inspiration was authentic—but *golus* is a place where opposites come together.

Similarly, the Rebbe was telling him, *Perek Mem-Aleph will always have an effect*. If the effect abates afterwards, there is no reason to be discouraged, since that is not due to a lack in the *avoda*, rather to the nature of *golus*.]

Another issue that the Rebbe repeatedly stressed to Rabbi Gurary throughout the years was the importance of taking care

of his health. One has to understand the *seder* that the *bochurim* kept in those days. On a regular day Yitzchok Meir would daven somewhat *ba'arichus*, and coming late to *seder* was out of the question. So right before *seder*, he would take off his tefillin, rush to breakfast for a quick bite, then run back upstairs for *seder*. He therefore didn't end up eating very well. On Thursday night, they would stay up all night learning. But one can't miss Chassidus, so they would sleep very little. Friday night was also hectic; they would take a nap for a few hours, wake up very early Shabbos morning, and learn Chassidus until davening.

Overall, he wasn't careful with his health, and the Rebbe would constantly stress the importance of correcting this.

When he was learning in Eretz Yisroel, one random day he received a letter from the Rebbe; someone had told the Rebbe that they had seen him and that he didn't look healthy. The Rebbe wrote that it's a "*pelel*" (wonder) that something like this could happen, being that the Rabbeim always insisted that the Chassidim take care of their health. It is clearly apparent that, as the Maggid of Mezritch said, א לעכעל בגוף איז א גרויסע לאך בנשמה—A small hole in the body is a big hole in the *neshama*." The Rebbe added that there was no need for expounding on such an obvious matter, and that he was awaiting an answer in the mail.

Another time, when Yitzchok Meir was in Montreal, the Rebbe wrote to him: "You will surely fulfill, and in actuality, the command of all of the Rabbeim,

beginning with the Baal Shem Tov, until the Rebbe my father-in-law, about watching over [the Rebbe made an arrow to the words in his letter] health of the body. And it's poshut, that my words about this are not 'biderech tzachus' [jokingly], rather in actuality—eating and drinking at the right times, sleeping, etc.”

He once asked the Rebbe about a conflict he was having due to his health. On the one hand, he wanted to join the farbrengens in the Yeshiva; but, on the other hand, the sleep that he would be missing would take a toll on his health. He asked the Rebbe whether he should avoid participating in these farbrengens. The Rebbe answered that since the farbrengens are important, but, at the same time, taking care of health is part of *avodas Hashem* (as the Rambam writes), surely there is no real conflict, and there must be a way that he could fulfill both at the same time.

Throughout the letters and *yechidus* with Rabbi Gurary, the Rebbe always stressed that if he was having trouble in learning, he should remember that יעֶתָּה וּמִצָּאתָ, if one toils, one will get there. In one letter the Rebbe told him that, “Also on you it says that if יעֶתָּה you do not toil, then לא מִצָּאתָ you will not find, and why are you surprised [by the lack of success]? But [at the same time] it is self-understood, that also you were guaranteed that if יעֶתָּה, you do indeed toil, then וּמִצָּאתָ, you will find.”

On another occasion, Rabbi Gurary came to the Rebbe with a dilemma which is probably familiar to many. He would get inspired by farbrengens, taking upon himself good *hachlotos*, but the inspiration wouldn't last, and he wouldn't end up keeping his *hachlotos*. He asked the Rebbe what to do.

The Rebbe said that, generally, *hachlotos* don't last for one of two reasons. Either the problem is that the inspiration isn't immediately brought into something tangible; or the *hachlata* is simply too big of a step. One has to be sure to, 1) immediately do something tangible and

2) to take smaller, more manageable *hachlotos*—מעט מעט אגרשנו.

REPORT TO THE REBBE

During his first year of kollel, Rabbi Gurary got an offer to work in the yeshiva of Montreal. He would be a *mashpia* in the morning and evening, and during the day he would learn on his own. However, he was hesitant to leave the kollel in Crown Heights, since it is under the auspices of the Rebbe's *mazkirus*, and he wanted to learn in the Rebbe's kollel. So the *hanhala* at Montreal offered to arrange that his learning in Montreal would be under the *mazkirus* like the kollel in Crown Heights; just like the *yungelait* in kollel reported to the *mazkirus*, he would write a report to *mazkirus* from Montreal.

He wrote all of this in a letter to the Rebbe. He also wrote that, since he would be learning alone, he wanted his learning to be supervised by someone—i.e. that he would have someone to report to — which would better guarantee that he'll learn well.

On the general idea of going to Montreal, the Rebbe answered that he should take the offer. About being supervised by “someone”, the Rebbe made an arrow to the word “someone,” and wrote “[someone] in Montreal (Rabbi Greenglass), in order that he should send

a report here [to the Rebbe] every two weeks.”

In effect, the Rebbe himself was offering to supervise his learning!

Later on, Rabbi Greenglass asked him to start getting more involved in the yeshiva; to help him out with talking to *bochurim*, offering guidance, etc.

Still, Rabbi Gurary deliberated accepting this offer. First of all, the *bochurim* were only a few years younger than him, and he felt a bit uncomfortable being their *mashpia*. Second, he was concerned that if he would assist the *bochurim* instead of Rabbi Greenglass, it could possibly result in situations that would be disrespectful to Rabbi Greenglass. Third, he was nervous that he wouldn't always give the *bochurim* the right advice, fitting with the Rebbe's *kavana*.

Rabbi Gurary received an amazing answer. First, the Rebbe told him to do a certain thing every day which would serve as a *segula* to stay true to the Rebbe's *kavana*. [Due to the private nature of this *hora'a*, Rabbi Gurary has never shared it with anyone to this very day.] The Rebbe added that, in general, mistakes can always be fixed, so he shouldn't be overly anxious about not getting everything right the first time. Third, in order to avoid any disrespect to Rabbi Greenglass, he should always send





THE REBBE EXAMINES A LULAV ON EREV SUKKOS AS REB MORDECHAI ALTEIN STANDS BY.

bochurim to Rabbi Greenglass first; if it didn't work out with Rabbi Greenglass, then he should speak to the *bochur* himself.

"I would write to the Rebbe very often informing him about status of the *bochurim*," Rabbi Gurary says, "telling the Rebbe what advice I was giving them, and so forth. I would constantly write to the Rebbe about everything happening in the yeshiva. Once, I asked the Rebbe in *yechidus* whether he was satisfied with my work in yeshiva.

"The Rebbe replied, 'Yes, I am happy; but I want more.' Then, with a small smile, the Rebbe added, 'I have a strange *teva* (nature) that I always want more. And I hold that this is a *teva* that one need not want to change.'

LULAVIM FOR THE REBBE

Rabbi Gurary's father-in-law, Rabbi Mordechai Altein, used to bring *lulavim* and *esrogim* to the Rebbe. This custom started when his father-in-law, Rabbi Yisroel Jacobson, brought *lulavim* and

esrogim to the Friediker Rebbe, and Rabbi Altein later took him over. Because of that, the Rebbe bought specifically from Rabbi Altein. Other people used to bring as well, but Rabbi Altein was the main supplier.

For many years, Rabbi Altein would bring the *esrogim* to the Rebbe, and Rabbi Gurary would bring the *lulavim*. Since he was bringing the Rebbe's *lulav*, he wanted to ensure that he was getting the highest quality around.

The first thing he did was to go through the entire shipment of *lulavim* that his father-in-law received—several hundred *lulavim*—and took out the best twenty or thirty to be found. The big spenders who were interested in the top quality *lulavim* knew they couldn't come to him, because the best *lulavim* were reserved for the Rebbe.

However, Rabbi Altein's operation was relatively small, and he only had a few hundred *lulavim* to choose from. So Rabbi Gurary would arrange with other *lulav* distributors for him to check out

their inventory and pick the best ones he could find. The entire *aseres yemei teshuva* he was busy running around from distributor to distributor trying to find the best *lulavim* that they had.

Rabbi Gurary relates:

"Every year, I would present the Rebbe with the *lulavim*, and one year, I got permission to ask the Rebbe a few questions.

"In that time period, *yechidus* for *bochurim* had discontinued. *Yechidus* was a tremendous benefit for the *avodas Hashem* of the *bochurim*, both because they would prepare themselves in the time period before the *yechidus*, and, more broadly, because the *bochurim* knew that they would have to give a report to the Rebbe when they went in for *yechidus*.

"Now that *yechidus* had stopped, they would lose this aid. I asked the Rebbe if I could tell the *bochurim* to write a detailed report to the Rebbe from time to time as a substitute for *yechidus*, and this would be of great assistance in their *yiras shamayim*.

THE TALMIDIM THAT LEARN HERE, IN 770, AT LEAST THEY HEAR THE [THE REBBE'S] FARBRENGEN, AND GET HISORIRUS FROM THE FARBRENGEN ...

“The Rebbe spoke at length about the fact that I was putting the responsibility for the *yiras shamayim* of the bochurim on the Rebbe. The Rebbe said that this wasn't his responsibility, instilling *yiras shamayim* in the bochurim is what the yeshiva is there for!”

RESPONSIBILITY

The following is based on a transcript of the yechidus that Rabbi Gurary wrote at the time:

Yechidus to talmidim is something that I established. Have you heard that bochurim used to go in to yechidus so often to the Rebbe Rashab? I was the one that established yechidus for talmidim, but it wasn't utilized as it should have been. I spoke about this issue many times at farbrengens, and it didn't help, so I was forced to stop yechidus.

Because what happened? Bochurim began asking me about every little thing, the types of things they should have asked hanhalas hayeshiva. They stopped getting a seder in learning from the hanhala, and instead asked me; every little issue that they had, from birchos hashachar until krias shema she'al hamita, they asked me.

The hanhalos don't do anything with the talmidim... An entire day can go

by without the hanhala knowing what's going on with the talmid! Many times, I have received letters from bochurim saying that they had asked a question to the hanhala, and the hanhala had said to ask me; regarding questions which the hanhala should have taken care of themselves!

A talmid has to know that he must receive everything from the hanhala of the yeshiva. If not, he has no connection to the yeshiva!

[A few days earlier, one of the mashpi'im wrote to the Rebbe the following suggestion:

Since Bochurim come from many places around the world to spend Tishrei in 770, and many of them don't have a seder and are just wandering around, he suggested that mazkirus should give out a directive to the bochurim that they should set up sedorim in learning for themselves.

He received the following answer: “אין מתפקיד המזכירות כלל - לנהל ישיבות—It is not the job of mazkirus at all, to operate Yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim, nor to be a replacement for their hanhala.”

The Rebbe spoke about this issue at length.]

I'll give you an example:

I recently received a letter from a mashpia in one of the yeshivos, and he writes to me, that since talmidim from all of the yeshivos come here for Tishrei, and they “drei” around and don't learn, he therefore suggests that mazkirus should give out a command that they should sit down and learn.

When I read the letter I was shocked. I didn't know what to think; this is unheard of!! He is part of the hanhala, and he has the responsibility for the talmidim, and instead of taking care of them himself, he wants to put the responsibility on mazkirus!

Additionally, it seems from his letter that he supposes that mazkirus has no idea what's going on, and he has to reveal

the reality to mazkirus. Does he really imagine that I don't see what's happening outside my window?!

For example, what does a mashpia think when his talmidim come to New York for a month? Does he really think that he is relieved of his responsibility, and mazkirus will take care of them?

(In regards to the person who wrote me the letter, it shows on an eidelkait in him, because at least he thinks about this issue, others don't even think about it.)

[The Rebbe spoke at length with deep frustration about the fact the bochurim don't learn during Tishrei, and, above all, that the hanhala doesn't do anything about it.

I tried justifying the talmidim, saying that although the learning isn't so strong, the talmidim are “surrounded with mitzvos,” go on mivtzoim in the tanks, and so on.

[The Rebbe responded:]

Is that the hanhala's accomplishment?! The only reason they are doing mivtzoim is because I speak about it during the farbrengen. And this itself—that bochurim are going on mivtzoim—was not my intention. I'm not completely excluding them, but I really meant the baalibatishe yungeleit. In regards to the talmidim, I have said many times, in writing and orally, that they have to ask the hanhala for reshus, and the hanhala should explain to the talmidim that their main objective is lig'n in lernen—to be engrossed in learning.

[In regards to my original question, that bochurim should write reports to the Rebbe, the Rebbe said that it will turn into the same problem that has happened with yechidus; the bochurim will ask every little thing, inyonim that they should be getting from the hanhala.

The Rebbe continued, that people profess it as an issue of yiras shamayaim, that if someone doesn't ask the Rebbe every little thing, they are not a mekushar!

I tried to say that writing to the Rebbe is a big assistance to the bochurim.

[The Rebbe replied:]

Of course it helps, and if I tell people to say *birchos hashachar* it will also help. But is that the normal thing to do?! These are things that *bochurim* should get from the *hanhala* of the yeshiva!

[The Rebbe added:]

The *talmidim* that learn here, in 770, at least they hear the *farbrengen* [referring to the Rebbe's *farbrengen*], and get *hisorirus* from the *farbrengen*, and even they should not receive *hisorirus* **only** from the *farbrengen*. But those who are far from here and don't hear the *farbrengen*, what is the *hanhala* giving them?

"Throughout all my years," Rabbi Gurary says, "I personally saw the Rebbe's care and interest for the *yiras shamayim* and

kabolas ol of the *bochurim*. This is true with me personally, as well. From my first letter, where the Rebbe gave me a *brocha* for *talmud Torah biyiras Shamayim*; through my *yechiduyos*, where the Rebbe emphasized the importance of *ve'hinei Hashem nitzov olov*. As you see in the *yechidus* above, the Rebbe viewed this as the paramount duty of the *hanhala*: to instill *yiras Shamayim* and *kabolas ol* in the *bochurim*."

The following is a *maane* Rabbi Gurary received during his first year as *mashpia*:

"If it is impossible (for whatever reason) to bring about *kabolas ol* in all areas, it is obvious that this doesn't release one from the responsibility of doing as much as possible. It is shocking that you would connect the two, especially since in the vast majority of cases, the correct path

is *מעט מעט אגרשנו*, working slowly but surely. And another point is that the *avoda* should be *מון הקל אל הכבד*, starting from the easier areas and continuing with the more difficult aspects."



HAPPINESS

In Tammuz 5718 Rabbi Gurary received the following letter from the Rebbe with advice in avodas Hashem:

The path to this—and this is the true path—is that you should engrave in your memory the words of the Alter Rebbe in the beginning of *Perek Mem-Aleph* of Tanya: And behold, Hashem stands over him [...and searches his reins and heart to see if he is serving him as fitting], etc., and it would be best if you would study by heart from the beginning of *Perek Mem-Aleph* until the word '*hamelech*' (which is on the next page).

This naturally brings a person happiness, as Tanya explains with the *moshol* of a great king who is a guest in the home of a common and lowly person (*Perek Lamed-Gimmel*). [The Alter Rebbe explains that just like a lowly person would feel unimaginable joy when brought close to a great king, so too, and much more so, a person feels great happiness when he realizes that Hashem is close to him.]

It is self-understood, that the mere fact that Hashem is a 'guest' and 'lives' with the person, gives him the strength to behave according to Hashem's will, which is fully spelled out in *Shulchan Aruch*...²

IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU!

After receiving the above letter, Rabbi Gurary asked questions, on the letter, and other issues, and he had a yechidus, which the Rebbe was magiah.

The highlighted words are the Rebbe's additions in his holy handwriting:

About the issue of *yeshus* and *chitzoniyyus*, there are two **paths inyonim** [to deal with it].

1) To utilize this negative character trait



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A GOOD SHPRACH

Mrs. Esther Sternberg relates:

Every day, Rebbetzin Chana A"H would spend a while standing on the street corner near her house to get fresh air and some sunlight. As she stood there, she would watch the people going by, studying their movements, manner of speech, and so on.

My husband, Rabbi Nochum Sternberg, and my brother, Rabbi Yitzchok Meir Gurary, would pass by her every day when they were walking home from kollel to eat lunch, and the Rebbetzin saw how they were always talking together. One time, she telephoned my mother, telling her that, "I am happy to see that your son-in-law has a good '*shprach*' (rapport) with his brother-in-law."

for the good: [Meaning, he should think to himself, that] **since he is a 'metzius' etc., he therefore has to be a chossid, a lamdan, a sharp individual, a boki etc.** (And over time, the negative traits of *yeshus* and *chitzoniyus* will disappear on their own **because light dispels darkness.**)

2) In a direct fashion: To memorize the first half-page of Perek Mem-Aleph, and to constantly remind yourself about what is written there – that Hashem stands over him and searches his reins and heart.

About learning well **and with diligence:** You simply have to learn more, and you should review your learning several times, and in this way you will learn the material in more depth. **You will also become accustomed to this** [diligent learning] – **and slowly but surely, habit becomes etc.** [nature].

And you should know – that sometimes since after learning **one subject** in depth, a person's mind can get fatigued. **And then** you should switch the subject you are learning **with** something else: from one *mesechte* to another *mesechte*; from learning *ligirsa* to learning *bi'iyun*, **or vice-versa or the like.**

[The Rebbe had written in a letter that it would make it easier for me to learn if I studied from inside a *sefer*, and that I should also learn out loud, as *Chazal* say למוציאיהם בפה, that Torah is life to those who speak its words with their mouth. The Rebbe follows up on this point:]

When I wrote about למוציאיהם בפה, I was referring to the simple meaning of the *gemara* in Eiruvim, to say the words aloud when learning—**and the intention is not to scream out loud, rather to “hear with your ears what you say with your mouth.”**

About [help with] *hiskashrus*: when I stop thinking [i.e. when you stop] **about what is not good, constantly about yourself, and [instead] involve yourself in Torah and mitzvos, and this will help with hishashrus as well.**

On the issue that you feel that you speak

more than is needed, you should review the abovementioned, and it will help for that as well.

Regarding a specific *seder* in learning: for a *bochur* at your age it is impossible to set a specific *seder*, since **every few months from time to time** he changes. [On the other hand] it wouldn't make sense to give him a *seder* for only a few weeks. Instead, you should speak to the *mashpia* and *mashgichim* in the yeshiva where you are learning, and they will advise you based on your **ability situation at the time.**

This is about a very specific *seder*. But overall, you should keep the *sidrei hayeshiva*, and in your free time you

should study subjects that you enjoy. If basic *halachos* are not learned in *seder*, then first and foremost **in your free time** you should learn basic *halachos*, so that you will know the *halachos* of what to do day-to-day: The *halachos* of yomim tovim, *hilchos birchas hanehenin*, the *halachos* of interruption during davening, *hilchos tefillin* etc.

[The Rebbe then gave the following *brocha*:]

You should have a healthy summer, and afterwards a healthy winter. You should have success in learning and in davening as you should, and you should have success in fulfilling mitzvos *bihidur*.³

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 3296





DESIRED EFFECT

After this, Rabbi Gurary wrote a letter to the Rebbe, asking for further clarification on some points from the yechidus, and the Rebbe answered on each point.

Today I am turning eighteen, and I ask the *brocha* of the Rebbe for success in everything, and for health.

On this occasion, I would like to resolve a few questions I had on several things that the Rebbe told me; and it seems to me that they are all connected to one another.

What can I do that I should feel that “*Hashem nitzav olov*,” that Hashem stands over me?

Regarding what the Rebbe said, not to think about myself, to what extent should I cease thinking about myself?

What is the *hisboninus* that I should think about, both before davening and during davening?

“The way I understood the Rebbe’s words to me was that I should completely cease thinking about myself, because it brings melancholy and bitterness. Instead, I should work on engraving in my mind that Hashem stands over me. Through this, I will automatically be how I should be, and this would also bring to happiness.

I had assumed that the way to accomplish this was by thinking before davening

about the themes written in *Perek Mem-Aleph* of Tanya, and during davening, to think about the *pessukim* that bring a person to fear of Hashem. I surmised that the rest of the day, the influence of davening would last, and I would feel that Hashem stands over me.

But all of this didn’t affect me at all, because I don’t understand the true *hisboninus*, which brings to *yirah*. And because of this, I am not in a good situation; on the one hand, I have ceased thinking about myself, and on the other hand, I still don’t feel that Hashem stands over me, and it’s not good from both directions [i.e. I don’t control myself through thinking about Hashem, and I also don’t control myself by focusing on myself].

The Rebbe instructed me that every time I realize that I’m doing something not good, I should repeat in my mind the idea that Hashem is standing over me. If I were to remember this throughout the day, it would be perfect. However, to my sorrow, I do not remember this throughout the day. Therefore I do not stop myself from doing what is not good.

I ask the Rebbe to explain to me these three things. If I understood the Rebbe’s intention correctly, I ask that the Rebbe instruct me in more detail. If I was mistaken in the Rebbe’s intention, I ask that the Rebbe tell me what to do instead.

The Rebbe’s Response:

On the general letter, the Rebbe wrote: **In all the above, the main point is missing: That a *talmid* in *Tomchei Tmimim* must keep *sidrei hayeshiva*, learn with dedication and diligence, etc.**

Next, replying to the first question, the Rebbe made an arrow to—and underlined—the part of the letter where I had written “**about the themes brought in *Perek Mem-Aleph* of Tanya, and during davening to think about the *pessukim* which bring a person to fear of Hashem.**”

In response to the second question, the Rebbe wrote “**until he ceases to bring**

“...ALSO YOU WERE GUARANTEED THAT IF **יָגַעְתָּ**, YOU DO INDEED TOIL, THEN **וּמָצָאתָ**, YOU WILL FIND...”

upon himself melancholy and *mara shechora*.”

For the third question, the Rebbe replied, **“It is explained in Tanya, in Kuntres Hatfila, and in several other places.”**

Later in the letter, he had written that it felt like all of the *hisboninus* about *Perek Mem-Aleph* in Tanya had no effect—“But all of this didn’t affect me at all”. On this the Rebbe wrote, **“It is impossible that it doesn’t affect you. If afterwards the *le’umas zeh* [*klipe*] returns—this is already explained in Tanya, and in Torah Or *dibur hamaschil* “*Hayinu kicholmim*,” and in several places.”** (See the main article for explanation).

Later in the letter he had written that “The Rebbe instructed me that every time I realize that I’m doing something not good, I should repeat in my mind the idea that Hashem is standing over me. Now, if I were to remember this throughout the day, it would be perfect. However, to my sorrow, I do not remember this throughout the day.” On this the Rebbe wrote, **“The more you become accustomed to this *hisboninus*—the more you will remember this throughout the day.”**⁴



IMPORTANCE IN THE DETAIL

After Rabbi Gurary had taken the post as *mashpia* in Montreal, he asked the Rebbe whether he should involve himself in *hafatzos hamaayanos* in addition to his work in the yeshiva. The Rebbe answered:

“In regards to getting involved in other activities other than the yeshiva, to be involved in only one *kav* is a conduct that we have never seen; you should be involved in other things. The only

question is how much to be involved in it, and in regards to this it is impossible to set hard rules, and [especially since] the situation changes from month to month and from day to day. Therefore, you have to assess to what extent your involvement in *hafatzas hamayanos* should be.

“Since Torah wasn’t given to *malachei hashares* [angels], rather to people who are liable to commit mistakes, your mistakes are also “part of the *cheshbon*,” and will not have any [longstanding negative] effect.”

He asked for advice on how to instill derech eretz in the talmidim. The Rebbe said:

In regards to advice about how to ensure that the *talmidim* have *derech eretz* for the *hanhala*, there are no hard rules regarding this either. Sometimes *kiruv* [a gentle approach] is necessary. On the other hand, it is written that one should “throw fear in the *talmidim*.” There are no set rules; each class and each individual is different. Rather, you have to evaluate this yourself.

In the letter he had written that although farbrengens are generally utilized to inspire chassidische hergeshim, and to tell stories of older Chassidim from generations before, there was also a clear need to address simple issues of yiras shamayim and minhagei Chabad. Rabbi Gurary asked the Rebbe how to go about talking about it, since a farbrengen, where one traditionally speaks about the highest issues, felt like the wrong venue to speak about such basic things. Additionally, he asked the Rebbe what words he should use to speak about this.

The Rebbe answered:

In regards to this that you write, that it is difficult to find the right words to explain

the necessity of simple issues in *mitzvos maasiyos* and *minhagei Chabad*: We spoke about this [at farbrengens] many times. It says in the Gemara in Kiddushin that a person should always view himself like his judgement is balanced on equal scales, and the entire world’s judgement is balanced on equal scales, and through one action he can tip the scales for himself and the entire world.

Or you can speak about what it says in Gemora: “In what [mitzvah of Torah] was your father especially careful in.”

You should also speak about the idea that due to the fact that the world, and a person as well, are constantly changing, sometimes there can be one simple issue that will affect his entire life, or a great portion of his life. Even though it is a very basic thing, his entire life, or a major portion of his life, is dependent on whether he accomplishes it or not.

For example, during times of persecution, there were times when a Yid had to give up his life not to wear red shoelaces, and it was *avoda zara* for him to wear red shoelaces—something that in regular circumstances is completely permitted! These are polar opposites: fully permitted vs. strictly prohibited.

This shows that it is possible that a seemingly basic issue can be extremely critical in certain times.

Regarding the question of how to speak about such basic issues in the venue of a farbrengen, the Rebbe answered:

Begin with more lofty areas, and bring it down into actuality.

[I.e. that I should start off the farbrengen talking about more lofty issues, and later on in the farbrengen, I should bring it down into the more simple, basic issues that needed to be addressed.]⁵ **D**

1. Gurary-Matusof-5772.
2. Igros Kodesh vol. 17 p. 227
3. Teshurah Gurary-Matusof p. 41
4. Ibid. p. 15
5. Ibid. p. 45

NO NEED TO WORRY

The Rebbe's advice for quelling concerns and worries

WRITING ABOUT CONCERNS

You informed [me] that there are several negative things and you aren't sure whether or not to include them in your letter. Obviously, neglecting to inform [me] about your situation will result in the situation worsening, as the saying goes "knowing [what] the illness [is] is half the cure." I am surprised that there was any doubt in this matter.

Even taking into account the losses and the deficit caused by the lack of *pe'ulos* and the like, we know that the Rebbe, my father-in-law, would say that our *ziburis* (worst) is better than their *iddis* (best). This should encourage all of *anash*, that although yesterday and today the situation isn't as it should be, we can rely on this *pisgom*, which emphasizes that each of us is given enormous potential, and we've been assured that "none shall be left behind." Even the briefest moment (בשעתא חדא וברגעא חדא) is enough for each of us to change completely, and in doing so, to transform the situation for the better; a complete turnaround.

JOY IN DOING MY SHLICHUS

3 Cheshvan, 5724

In yechidus with Reb Reuven Dunin, the Rebbe said:

What about joy? Why are you depressed? What is the cause? I tell you to be joyous and if you don't implement this, you won't be fulfilling my request. So it would turn out that you're not involved, in your way, in matters important to me.

Since I can't be everywhere (I can't be in Cholon, Kfar Chabad, Tel Aviv, Yerushalayim, Eilat, Paris, Melbourne, and also [simultaneously] in Brooklyn) I send shlichim, and [I appointed] you over Haifa. I want to make you a high-ranking officer—a general—and you need to be joyous because of it, since a command must be done according to [the specifications of] the commander.

(*Mikdash Melech* vol. 2 p. 401)

Obviously, it is not enough to merely think about this; action is the main thing, and in our time [action] is as important as everything else combined (see *Iggeres HaKodesh* letter 9). However, a thought alone is sufficient to avoid even the possibility of depression.¹

CONCERNS OF SPIRITUAL WELLBEING

Thank you for the good news regarding the improved health of [...]. Regarding what you wrote about his spiritual situation, that you're concerned and worried about him:

You should derive a *kal vachomer* from the above. One's physical wellbeing isn't up to the person, but rather [it's in the hands of] Hashem, and yet we must make an effort [to remain healthy] in the natural way, and also exert spiritual efforts. Hence, you must certainly [make an effort] in regard to his spiritual wellbeing, which is dependent entirely upon the person. As *Chazal* say, "Everything is in the hands of Heaven besides for the fear of Heaven," and "According to the [strength of the] camel is the load." Hashem does not request of a person anything beyond his capabilities; "I am Hashem your G-d" was said to everyone, and so was the entire Torah and all its mitzvos [so it must be within everyone's capabilities]. From this it is clear that it is dependent solely on him; if he exerts the necessary effort, he will find goodness, and there is no greater good than Torah and mitzvos.²

HEALTH CONCERNS

I have written to you many times stating that it is necessary to be joyous. Yet letter after letter from you begins and ends in your old style of writing. [Every letter] highlights that nothing is as it should be; not your health and that of your family, not your livelihood, your anxiety, etc. This is despite your clearly seeing revealed miracles. (Apparently you don't want to recall the doctors' original prognosis, and how the pregnancy and birth eventually proceeded, entirely contrary to their predictions). We are used to *golus* being concealment—a doubled and redoubled darkness—but even to this darkness

there must be a limit. In your case, it seems that any amount of good that you experience has no effect.

Although this is your own business, it is still painful [for me] to see a Jew cause himself to suffer from baseless concerns. In so doing, you damage your health, and [you will] certainly also affect the health of your family, since—as you always write—you are in much pain and very worried.

Regarding your request for a *brocha*: It is impossible to remove a Jew's free choice (since it is rooted in the fact that the *nefesh elokis* is literally a part of Hashem from above, and only there [Above] does unforced free choice truly exist, so this [free choice] applies to a Jew as well). If you illogically insist on specifically seeing the negative in each situation, and to entirely ignore all the good that is shown to you from Above, then who can tell you otherwise?

With blessing that ultimately you will devote yourself to the *hora'ah* of the Baal Shem Tov and of the *nesi'im* who followed him, to serve Hashem with joy; may you and your family [be blessed with] good health.³

CONCERNS OF LIVELIHOOD

I received your letter, in which you describe the condition of your business; that you're heavily in debt, etc. You write that there is an option to sell some of your properties but you can't decide what to do. What stands out from your letter is that your spirits have fallen and therefore your *bitachon* is faltering...

Since you ask my advice, so—after prefacing that, as requested, I mentioned you for a *brocha* at the *tziyun* of the Rebbe, my father-in-law—my opinion is that you need to work on yourself, *האדמו"ר אורי*, to strengthen your *bitachon* in Hashem as much as possible. The true characteristic of *bitachon* is that even if we don't see any natural way [for things will turn out well], we [trust] beyond a doubt that everything will certainly be good, and that it is visible and revealed to physical eyes. This means livelihood in abundance, good health, etc. From the perspective of Above, concerns of nature are not significant at all. So when a person places himself above and elevates himself from the earth, even in the slightest bit, awakening his belief as a Jew—trusting entirely that he has no master besides Hashem—he can cause that even down here, nature will not be able to negatively affect him. My trust in Hashem is strong, that if you will but strengthen your *bitachon* in an absolute way, you will very quickly see a change in your situation with regards to physical lack, and your situation will begin to improve, going from good to even better.⁴

CONCERNS FOR THE FUTURE

In response to your letter in which you write about your

son, claiming that he should study to take matriculation examinations [to receive the equivalent of a high school diploma]; as if that is the only way for him to be established in his future life.

This is surprising. Since you are in Eretz Yisroel you are certainly aware that thousands of young men—*כן ירבו*—the same age as your son, are in yeshivos in Eretz Yisroel, learning our holy Torah, also called “the Torah of Life,” referring to life in this world and the next. They learn with perseverance and diligence, with self-confidence, joy, and good-heartedness. My astonishment becomes greater, as you've certainly been informed of what was printed in many periodicals in Eretz Yisroel about the condition of soul of the [Israeli] youth and their behavior, and that the strongest immunization against the foreign “winds” [i.e. bad influences] blowing in the street can only be received in these yeshivos; to the extent that among the thousands of youth who are criminals, there is not one full-time yeshiva student. Of all the responsibilities parents have to their children, the primary responsibility is to position their child stably in life; without torn emotions or inner conflict and complications. After much recent experimentation with various methods of education, the dry statistics, as mentioned above—which have been publicized everywhere [in Eretz Yisroel], as well as in other countries—illustrate the clear, unambiguous and obvious results.

In other words, if your son did not lean towards this form of education on his own, it would have been your responsibility to influence him to agree to it at least for a few years. But with Hashem's kindness, you have been graced with a son who has good *midos* and virtues, who did choose—on his own—the correct and holy abovementioned path, to follow it and the appropriate form of study. You must thank Hashem for this blessing; strengthen and encourage your son in his decision, and always be increasing.

I am absolutely certain that the One about whom we say “He who in his goodness sustains the entire world, with grace, with kindness, and with mercy,” who feeds two-and-a-half billion people, will provide livelihood for your son as well, in its proper time. He should learn the Torah of the Creator and Leader of the World, with warmth and enthusiasm. This will increase the blessings from Hashem, as it says, “If you will follow my statutes” (and as *Chazal* explain it to mean “You should toil in Torah”), [then] “I will give you your rain,” and [you will also receive] all the blessings that are mentioned in that *parsha*.⁵ **D**

1. Igros Kodesh vol. 14 p. 284

2. Ibid. vol. 12 p. 243

3. Ibid. vol. 10 p. 89

4. Ibid. vol. 6 p. 147

5. Ibid. vol. 19 p. 306



BEHIND THE PICTURE

Special thanks to Mrs. Brocha Friedman
and Mrs. Feigel Jacobson.

THE THEME OF IT ALL

N'shei Chabad Centerpieces

Much as the Rebbe spoke innumerable *sichos* before a shul filled with men and boys, special gatherings were also held in honor of women and girls, whereupon the Rebbe would address them, with concepts that are relevant to them in particular.

The central Lubavitch organization for women—N'shei Ub'nos Chabad—always held its annual gathering sometime in the end of the month of Iyar. The gathering focused on a specific theme, each year a different one; the choice of the year's theme was hardly random. The organizers always ensured to pick a topic or *hora'ah* that the Rebbe was passionately calling for at the time, and they made that their theme.

The gathering took place in New York, with a rich program, culminating with a banquet where the theme of the year's convention was addressed, as well as illustrated with a handsome centerpiece.

Following the banquet, the women would gather in 770 to hear a *sicha* from the Rebbe in honor of the occasion, and

they would bring along the centerpiece, which was placed on the Rebbe's dais. The Rebbe often paid close attention to it, examining it on his way in or out of the *beis hamidrash*.

From the many conventions, two stand out in particular, 5747 and 5751, when the Rebbe paid singular attention to

the centerpiece, showing discernible satisfaction with it.

To understand the centerpiece let us backtrack to theme of those years' conventions, which itself is contingent upon a topic the Rebbe focused on at the time.





25 Iyar 5747

In 5747, the Rebbe spoke time and again about the need to establish Chabad Houses, both in the conventional sense of the word, as beacons of Yiddishkeit for others, but also in the sense of transforming our own homes and living quarters into *Botei Chabad*, homes of Torah, *tefillah* and *tzedakka*.¹

The organizers of the women's convention thus decided to have "ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בו" as the year's theme, and illustrated this concept by means of a little house erected on three pillars, referring to "תורה, עבודה, וגמול".

The little centerpiece stood prominently on a table near the Rebbe's, and when the Rebbe walked in he stopped to study the item. Upon his departure from the room too, the Rebbe stopped, pointed at it, exchanging some words with Rabbi

Groner, and then lifted the object. The crowd erupted in joyous applause, which the Rebbe joined and maintained throughout his walk to the back door of the *beis hamidrash*!

28 Iyar 5751

During that year, the Rebbe made mention of the fact that the year's numerical combination (תש"א), lent itself as a *roshei teivos* for the words "תהא שנת אראנו נפלאות". The Rebbe drew upon this, explaining that the year promised to be filled with miracles²—miracles heralding the arrival of Moshiach, in comparison to which even the wonders that occurred at the time of *yetzias Mitzrayim*, would pale, as the *navi* says כימי צאתך מארץ מצרים אראנו נפלאות.³

Naturally, the theme of that year's convention revolved around Moshiach.

The organizers decided that as a centerpiece they would craft what looks like a flowerpot with fruit-bearing branches sprouting from it, and a bird eating from the fruit. On the bird's wing, the words "Moshiach is on his way" could be read, and a tambourine was nearby as well.

All these items reference to *krias yam suf*, when the birds sang *shira*, and fruit trees grew alongside the Yidden, from which the children fed the birds⁴, after which Miriam went out in song with tambourines, followed by all the women.

This entire contraption stood on a table not far from the Rebbe's seat. Upon his exit from *shul*, the Rebbe examined the item, exchanged a few words with Rabbi Groner about it, and then, very much to everyone's surprise the Rebbe picked it up, and carried it himself! This notwithstanding, that the Rebbe was



already holding a folder containing the convention's program, and an apparently loaded box containing *tzetlach* from the ladies. Along the way, some *mazkirim* offered to carry the centerpiece for the Rebbe, but the Rebbe refused, holding on to it all the way out of shul! **D**

1. On Shabbos 15 Shevat 5747, the Rebbe even demanded that this become the central focus of the year to come. See *Hisvaaduyos* 5747 Vol. 2 p. 447.

2. And miracles it was. See "A Chassidisher Derher" Issue 16 (93) pp. 10 for a detailed account of the Rebbe's sichos and the events that followed.

3. This concept is brought down in chassidus, drawing upon the wording of the possuk, which can indicate that the *niflaos* of *Yemos Hamoshiach* will indeed be akin to those of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, albeit far greater. See Maamor Kimei Tzeischa 5742, et al.

4. Sefer Hasichos 5702 p. 73, see also Shmos Rabo Perek 21,10.



מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לנשיא דורנו
כ"ק אדמו"ר זצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע
ולזכרון הרבנית הצדקנית מרת חי' מושקא נ"ע

לזכות

הרה"ת ר' דוד יוסף וזוגתו מרת מלכה שרה
וילדיהם

עמלי' חוה, לוי יצחק, רבקה לאה, ומנחם מענדל
לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע

לעילוי נשמת

הרה"ח הרה"ת עוסק בצ"צ וכו' ר' יהודא ליב ז"ל
בהרה"ח הרה"ת ר' יעקב יוסף שו"ב ז"ל

רסקין

שליח כ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע במדינת מרוקו
למעלה מארבעים וארבע שנים
נפטר אור ליום ב'

לסדר "ושמרו את משמרת גו' אני ה' מקדשם"
י"ב אייר, ה'תשס"ד

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.



נדפס על ידי ולזכות משפחתו שיחיו לאורך ימים ושנים טובות

Dedicated by

Doron & Devorie Slutzkin
and Family

Dedicated by

Rabbi Eliezer Kornhauser
and Family

לזכות

הרה"ת ר' לייביש משה וזוגתו מרת רינה

וילדיהם

קיילא באשא, בנציון דוד, אליהו איסר, רבקה שיינדל אלתא

שיחיו

גולדהירש

לזכות ידידנו

חבר המערכת הת' הנעלה לוי יצחק שי' דובאוו וב"ג תחי'

לרגל בואם בשרי השידוכין למז"ט ביום כ"ו ניסן תשע"ה

שיבנו בית בישראל בנין עדי עד על יסוד התומ"צ וכו'

כרצו"ק ולנח"ר כ"ק אדמו"ר



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