

שנת  
הקהל את העם

A Chassidisher

# Derher

א חסידישער דערהער

פרסומי ניסא

## TOWERS of LIGHT

The story of the  
Public Menorah  
Lightings

**Tanya on  
the Radio**

CHASSIDUS ON  
THE FRONT LINES

**Celebrate  
Together**

YUD DALED KISLEV



KISLEV 5776  
ISSUE 38 (115)

# Derher**Contents**

KISLEV 5776 ISSUE 38 (115)



## About the Cover:

This month's issue highlights the Rebbe's call for *mitvza* Chanukah and the Chassidim's effort in response, leading up to the birth of the now widely-acclaimed public Menorahs. The front cover features a photograph of the world's largest Menorah in Midtown Manhattan, circa mid-1970s.

Chabad.org / Martin Schneider

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# Derher**Editorial**

Kislev is referred to by the Rebbe as the “*Chassidishe Chodesh*,” as it contains many special dates on the Chabad calendar; most notably Yud-Tes Kislev, *Rosh Hashanah L'Chassidus*.

Especially for us, as Chassidim of *dor hashvi'i*, the month bears the significance of marking Yud-Daled Kislev, about which the Rebbe said, “דער טאג וואס האט פארבונדן מיר מיט אייך און אייך מיט מיר”.

These two dates are very much connected. The Rebbe once quoted the Frierdiker Rebbe's explanation as to why the *chassuna* took place in the month of Kislev, saying: “My *mechutan* [the Rebbe's father, HaRav Levi Yitzchok] is a *mekubal*; he explains it according to Kabbala. But I say, it's because the month of Kislev is חודש השלישי—the third month; the month of *mattan Torah* for *primum haTorah*...” (Sichas Shabbos parshas Vayeshev 5714).

On another occasion (Shabbos parshas Vayetzei 5752), the Rebbe connected this *vort* with Chanukah as well, the *yom tov* that concludes the month of Kislev:

אין דעם חודש זיינען פאראן כמה ימים מיוחדים אין דברי ימי החסידות... און אויך חנוכה בסוף חודש כסלו האט א שייכות מיט גילוי פנימיות התורה בחוצה, ווייל עיקר נס חנוכה איז דער נס פון פך השמן, וואס שמן איז רזין דרזין דאורייתא, און מ'דארף דאס אנצינדן “על פתח ביתו מבחוץ”, באופן אז דער גילוי פון רזין דרזין אין “ביתו” זאל באלייכטן (דורך “פתח ביתו”) אויך “בחוץ”...

Chanukah comes in continuation to the theme of these *chassidishe yomim tovim* earlier in the month. The “oil” of the miracle of Chanukah represents the secrets of *toras haChassidus*. This light is carried through the doorways of our homes and into the street, illuminating the outside world.

There is no better way to mark this time of year than with two major featured articles in this month's magazine: **Chassidus On the Front Lines** tells the story of how the words of Chassidus permeated literally every corner of the world—as the Rebbe explains the nature of radio-waves—with the weekly shiurim of Tanya on the radio, and the Rebbe's involvement and guidance through every step. **Towers of Light** recounts how the Rebbe's mission

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to bring the light of Chanukah to the furthest part of חוצה actually revolutionized the way Chanukah is perceived everywhere around the world.

We hope that these accounts will also inspire action in these areas, in addition to the usual month's worth of content, including a special column dedicated to the *siyum haRambam* being celebrated this month around the world.

With the hope that we will ultimately merit the time when—as the Rambam concludes his *sefer*—מלאה הארץ דעה את ה' כמים לים מכסים—with the coming of Moshiach, *teikef umiyad mammosh!*

### The Editors

כף מ"ח, ה'תשע"ו, שנת הקהל (ופרצת)



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A Chassidisher Derher is honored to feature unique and historic photos from Jewish Educational Media's Living Archive photo collection. The Living Archive is a project to preserve, and provide access to the video, audio, and photographic recordings of the Rebbe. These photos are copyright by JEM and are available at [TheLivingArchive.org](http://TheLivingArchive.org)







# CELEBRATE TOGETHER

## *Yud-Daled Kislev*

*In honor of Yud-Daled Kislev, the 87th anniversary of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's chassunah, we present an excerpt of the farbrengen the Rebbe held on this day in 5739, marking fifty years since the chassunah in 5689.*

*The Rebbe posed a series of questions as to the nature of the farbrengen:*

---

Indeed it is great for Yidden to gather together, and more-so in a shul, but why particularly on this night?

At this point the Rebbe gave mention to the nature of the day:

*"We must find a source in Torah for the idea that on the anniversary of one's wedding, friends and relatives gather and hold joyous farbrengens.*

*"It is difficult to know how the Rebbeim behaved in regard to a jubilee celebration, because not all of them reached 50 years of marriage, and of those that did, we don't know what their personal behavior was. As we know, there are many personal customs of the Rabbeim that were never publicized...*

*"The minhag of Yidden in this country (and in other countries) is that when the day of one's anniversary arrives, and especially when one reaches a 'milestone' anniversary, it is*

*celebrated with increased enthusiasm. One gathers with his friends, family, and loved ones (אוהבים וידידים ובני משפחה) and all rejoice together. As Yidden, every activity must be utilized for the sake of avodas Hashem...*

Later on at the farbrengen, the Rebbe continued:

*"One of the Rebbeim who marked 50 years of marriage was the [Friediker] Rebbe, from 5657 to 5707.*

*"At the time of his fiftieth anniversary, many sefarim, which had been newly printed in Shanghai, China<sup>1</sup>, were arriving in New York.*

*"A new sefer had been brought to the Rebbe each day of the "sheva brachos" following his anniversary. The fact something was being done to mark his fiftieth anniversary brought tremendous nachas and koach to the Rebbe."*



During the Farbrengen the Rebbe spoke at length on matters relating to *chassuna* in Torah, and instituted a new initiative—that each *chossan* should be given, in addition to a *Shas*, also a *tzedaka pushka*. Two *sheva brachos* ceremonies were also held at the farbrengen for two respective *chassanim* and *kallots*! **T**

(Based on Sichos Kodesh 5739 vol. 1 p. 349)



THE ENTRY CARD GRANTING ENTRY TO THE HALL FOR THE REBBE AND REBBETZIN'S CHASSUNA, YUD DALED KISLEV 5689.

1. Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim was forced to flee Europe through China during WWII. For a number of years the yeshiva operated out of Shanghai and many *sifrei Chassidus* were printed there.





# Illumination

MIVTZA CHANUKAH – CHANUKAH 5734



*In preparing this article we were assisted by Rabbi Shlomo Friedman, Rabbi Yosef Gopin (Kfar Chabad),  
Rabbi Shmuel Greisman, Rabbi Shraga Feivel Zalmanov, Rabbi Yosef Katzman,  
Rabbi Yosef Levertov, Rabbi Michael Seligson.*

Yom Kippur, 5734. The Arab countries surrounding Eretz Yisrael attacked from all directions, with the goal of destroying Eretz Yisroel. Soldiers were drafted directly from shul to the frontlines of the war, fighting for their country's very survival.

Through tremendous miracles Eretz Yisrael survived, but at a heavy cost. More than two-thousand soldiers were killed, and thousands more wounded.

During the months before, during and following the war, the Rebbe constantly spoke about the situation in Eretz Yisroel. On Yud Tes Kislev, 5734,

the Rebbe launched the international mivtza Chanukah campaign, later connecting it with the war and putting an emphasis on visiting the Israeli soldiers, and the widows and orphans from the war.

At the farbrengen of Shabbos Vayeshev, 20 Kislev<sup>1</sup>, the Rebbe went into detail, giving clear guidelines as to what the mivtza would include:



*His factory began churning out menorahs 24 hours a day, completely stopping any work he had been doing for the army.*

“On Chanukah one has to ensure that Chanukah candles will be lit in every place where Jewish people live, both in public areas for *pirsumei nissa*, and in private homes, at least one menorah per house. If you meet anyone who doesn’t have a menorah, you should give one to them, and it would also be fitting that every child light their own menorah.”

The Rebbe said that the Israeli soldiers “serve as shluchim of Klal Yisrael and have the zechus to shield Yidden with their body and soul”, and as such, it is our duty to ensure that there be a Chanukah Menorah on every base and that each day it be lit by someone else. Additionally, the Rebbe said that special emphasis should be placed on visiting the homes of those who were widowed, orphaned or injured during the war so that they too can fulfil the mitzvah and benefit from the light of chanukah. The Rebbe also spoke about



MR. TIBOR KUPFERSTEIN (R) MANUFACTURED THE TIN MENORAH USED FOR DISTRIBUTION ON MIVTZOIM TILL TODAY. HE IS JOINED BY RABBI DOVID RASKIN AT HIS FACTORY.

the importance of giving Chanukah gelt and that each army base should have a *tzedaka pushka* so that the soldiers would be able to give some of the Chanukah gelt to tzedaka.

If a person does not have a menorah, a menorah should either be sold to them or given to them for free, depending on the situation. The Rebbe said that the cost of the menorahs would be covered by the magbis (*tzedaka* appeal), which was given in connection to Yud Tes Kislev.<sup>2</sup>

The Rebbe ended off the Farbrengen suggesting that a meeting be held right after Havdala to make the necessary plans for Chanukah.<sup>3</sup>

The mivtza was launched on Yud Tes Kislev, a mere six days (!) before Chanukah, so there was no time to spare. Working under the auspices of Tzach (Lubavitch Youth Organization), a group of bochurim in 770, led by Rabbi Dovid Raskin and Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda Hecht, immediately threw themselves into arranging the mivtzoim.

The first step, of course, was to obtain menorahs for distribution. But where could they get so many menorahs in such a short time? They tried getting from various stores and distributors, but no-one had the sheer volume they needed, and it was impossible for them to manufacture so many on such short notice. To add to their woes, there was a shortage of metal at the time, so factories could hardly manufacture menorahs even if they wanted to.

Eventually, the chassidim approached an individual by the name of Tibor Kupferstein<sup>4</sup>, who had a factory that produced supplies for the US military. Mr. Kupferstein initially took upon himself

## KOIACH FOR THE MIVTZA

At the end of the farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev, the Rebbe called the name of Rabbi Avrohom Yitzchak Glick, a known askan from London who would often do various *peulos* around Europe. Some people at the farbrengen were a bit puzzled, as he was not in America at the time and they didn’t understand why the Rebbe would mention him if he was not there. After Shabbos, when one of the chassidim from London was speaking to the *mazkirus*, he was told that the reason the Rebbe had mentioned him by name, even though he was not present, was in order to infuse spiritual “*koiach*” for mivtza Chanukah in Europe!



RABBI AVROHOM YITZCHAK GLICK DOES “MIVTZOIM” IN THE STREETS OF LONDON. RABBI MENDEL FUTERFAS CAN BE SEEN AT THE DOORWAY OF THE MITZVAH TANK.

PINNY LEW



THE FIRST EVER CAR-MENORAH, CHANUKAH 5734.



THE CAR-MENORAH STATIONED ON FIFTH AVENUE IN NEW YORK CITY.

to quickly manufacture ten thousand menorahs that would be light and easy to distribute.

His factory began churning out menorahs 24 hours a day, completely stopping any work he had been doing for the army. [Throughout the days of Chanukah, there was a constant demand for more menorahs, and they kept on replenishing their supply from Mr. Kupferstein's factory.]



FOLLOWING THE REBBE'S CALL, BOCHURIM HIT THE BUSY NEW YORK CITY STREETS, BRINGING THE LIGHT OF CHANUKAH TO FELLOW JEWS.

When the administration of Tzach reported this to the Rebbe, the Rebbe responded in pleasant surprise, "Ten thousand?!!" On the *duch*, the Rebbe wrote (in reference to Mr. Kupferstein):

"ויאיר מזלו, ודבני ביתו שי' כמו שע"י יאירו ריבוי בתי ישראל".

"May his mazal shine, and the mazal of his family, just like through him many many Jewish homes will be lit up".

[Mr. Kupferstein's son had been murdered in a hold-up only a few weeks earlier, and this *brocha* from the Rebbe - which was also a *nichum* of sorts - completely lifted his spirits.]

Responding to the general report on the preparations, the Rebbe wrote:

תודה רבה על הבשורות טובות, ואשרי חלקו וחלק כל אחד ואחד מהמתעסקים, וכל כיוצא בזה, ובמיוחד בימי חנוכה, המאירים בבית, ובחוץ, והמאיר הוא מלמעלה כביכול מה' כמ"ש והו"י יג' וגו', כמו שנת' בתורה אור, ובשערי אורה, ובאור התורה.

"Thank you very much for the good news, and fortunate is his lot and the lot of each and every one of those involved in this and in similar [initiatives]. And especially during Chanukah, which illuminates the home and the outside.

And the One Who illuminates is from on high, from Hashem *kevayachol*, as it says "And Hashem will illuminate [my darkness]" etc., as is explained in Torah Or ["Torah of light", by the Alter Rebbe], and explained in Shaarei Orah ["Gates of light", by the Mittler Rebbe], and in Or Hatorah ["Light of the Torah" by the Tzemach Tzedek]."

By the end of Chanukah, the chassidim had successfully distributed some 60,000 (sixty thousand!) menorahs that Mr. Kupferstein's factory had managed to make!





LUBAVITCHER CHASSIDIM BRING THE MESSAGE OF LIGHT TO THE SOLDIERS IN THE IDF, CHANUKAH 5748

*Busloads of bochorim and baalei-batim poured out of 770 and swept across New York to spread the light of Chanukah.*

A few days before Chanukah, the Rebbe saw Rabbi Shlomo Cunin on the way out of 770 and asked him if he would be taking menorahs with him to California. Rabbi Cunin answered that he would be taking five hundred.

The Rebbe asked, “Will that be enough for the entire California?!”

Rabbi Cunin answered that for the time being he would be taking five hundred, and later he would ship in more menorahs. He added that until now they had only distributed candles, instructing people to melt them onto a plate and light them that way. Smiling, the Rebbe said that the parents would be upset that the plates are getting dirty. The Rebbe added that by sending the menorahs in the mail they would spread the word of Chanukah also to the mailmen.

The Rebbe then blessed him with, “*hatzlacha bechol hainyanim*”.

When Chanukah came around, Lubavitch went into high gear. Busloads of bochorim and baalei-

*batim* poured out of 770 and swept across New York to spread the light of Chanukah. They visited people in their homes and lit candles with them, went to businesses to give out menorahs, and distributed menorahs in the streets.

Menorahs were distributed right and left. Thousands upon thousands of menorahs were given out in New York alone. One must bear in mind that this all occurred before the advent of Friday mivtzoim, so knocking on private doors and doing mivtzoim on the street for hours was a fresh and daring concept.

On one of the first nights of Chanukah, someone came up with the novel idea of putting a menorah on top of a car, and so the first car menorah in history was built. After it was built, the bochorim parked it in front of 770.



A NOTE DISTRIBUTED TO PARTICIPANTS IN MIVTZA CHANUKAH, ATTESTING TO THEIR PARTICIPATION, 5734.

RASKIN FAMILY ARCHIVES



The Rebbe saw the car menorah, and said that they should light the menorah, so, they got a hold of some flares, and lit the menorah on top of the car.

The car menorah was later stationed on Fifth avenue in Manhattan, and on one of the nights of Chanukah the mayor of New York City, Mr. John Lindsay, came by. He shook hands with each bochur, while the newspaper cameras flashed. It was a huge *kiddush Hashem*.

On the sixth night of Chanukah an astonishing message came from

the Rebbe. The next day, the Rebbe would be distributing Chanukah gelt, but strictly to those who went on *mivtzoim*. (In 5721, the Rebbe had stopped giving Chanukah gelt to the *bochurim*, and the Rebbe had distributed Chanukah gelt only once since then. Additionally, it was a rarity in those years to receive a dollar or coin from the Rebbe, only adding to the significance of the event.)

The Rebbe also gave Chanukah gelt for the women who went on *mivtzoim*, and sent Chanukah gelt to Eretz

Yisroel for those who had participated in *mivtzoim* there.

Those who wanted Chanukah gelt were required to submit a note, signed by one of those in charge of the *mivtzoim*; stating that they had indeed participated in the *mivtzoim* (for at least two of the days of Chanukah). As each person stood in line for Chanukah gelt, they would first submit the note to the *mazkir* who was standing next to the Rebbe, and then they received Chanukah gelt from the Rebbe. Even the *mazkirim* had to



An astonishing message came from the Rebbe. The next day, the Rebbe would be distributing Chanukah gelt, but strictly to those who went on *mitvzoim*.

why he hadn't been present during the distribution of Chanukah gelt, and he answered that he had been out of town for business. The Rebbe told him that he is certain, that the single dollar of Chanukah gelt would have been worth more than the entire business trip!]

In a special *farbrengen* that took place on the last night of Chanukah<sup>5</sup>, the Rebbe said:

We spoke and asked that men, women and children should make the biggest *shturem* to ignite their own selves, and through that illuminate the world...

Those who were involved in these activities (which even on the spot had tremendous success, and it's impossible to estimate the effects of these activities throughout the year, and throughout the years to come), should say *L'chaim* with a *freilichen niggun*, being that we are continuing the *shturem* of Chanukah in this *farbrengen*. And this should be a good beginning for *גיל' חשכי* - the darkness [of galus] will be illuminated...

The Rebbe continued that since women were also involved, they should also partake from the wine and *mezonos* of the *farbrengen*.

The *shturem* of *mitvza* Chanukah continued in even greater measures in the following years, garnering massive media coverage, and spreading the message of Chanukah to even wider circles. Every year the Rebbe would *shturem* in the weeks before Chanukah that every person should get involved in the *mitvzoim*.

The Rebbe's unique affection for this *mitvza* is evident in an addition the Rebbe made to the "שלשלת היחס" printed in the front of *Hayom Yom* (which includes a list of the various *peulos* and *mitvzoim* that the Rabbeim initiated over the years). Among the *peulos* of 5742, the Rebbe wrote: "מעורר על דבר השתדלות יוצאה מן הכלל לגמרי ב"הפצת המעיינות חוצה" ובמבצע "חנוכה". [The Rebbe] encourages extraordinary effort in "*hafotzas hamayonos chutzah*" and in *mitvza* Chanukah." **T**

THE REBBE'S HANDWRITTEN ADDITION TO THE SHALSHELES HAYACHAS IN HAYOM YOM, MENTIONING THE REBBE'S CALL FOR MITVZA CHANUKAH.

submit their own notes in order to get Chanukah gelt.

When Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda Hecht, (who was very involved in arranging the *mitvzoim*), came by to receive his dollar the Rebbe said, "Really you deserve more than one dollar, but when a mother gives to her children, she gives all of them the same amount."

[Later on while in *yechidus*, the Rebbe asked Mr. Yaakov Reider

1. Sichos Kodesh 5734, Vol 1, pages 195-197
2. Another point mentioned by the Rebbe at these *farbrengens* in connection with *mitvza* Chanukah was the special focus on arranging rallies for children in honor of Chanukah.
3. In a yoman of a bochur at the time, he remembers the Rebbe saying that the bochorim should close their *gemoros*, and go do *mitvza* Chanukah!
4. A year later, Mr. Kupferstein's factory manufactured the candlesticks for *mitvza* neshek, producing some two million of them at no added cost. For an extended review of *mitvza* neshek, see *A Chassidisher Derher Magazine* Tishrei 5775.
5. Sichos Kodesh 5734, vol. 1 p. 236
6. See "The Chossid's Calendar," *Derher Magazine* - Cheshvan, 5776





## כתב יד קודש

# Secure The Youth

A RESPONSE FROM THE REBBE  
HANDWRITTEN ON THE ORIGINAL LETTER SENT TO HIM.

*Courtesy of Vaad Hanochos B'lahak*

A woman wrote to the Rebbe about her nephew, who is becoming more observant, despite his father's wishes, causing some tension and conflict at home. The nephew claims to have received a response from the Rebbe stating that he should nevertheless still continue growing in his Yiddishkeit. She asks the Rebbe to confirm this response, and also asks for guidance on what else she can do to better the situation.

The first line of the Rebbe's response is written to the *mazkir*, telling him to relay to the woman the Rebbe's original response to her nephew.

In response to her question of what else she can do, the Rebbe gives her a message to pass on to the boy's parents.

What can we do?

[illegible]

להודיע המענה לב"א [=לבן אחותה] שי'

בהוספה ]- לשאלתה מה יכולה היא לעשות  
בזה - [ להסביר בלבביות ובחום להוריו שי פלא  
גדול - שבדואי יודעים מצב הפרוע דהנוער  
עתה בענייני צניעות, אמונה, יחס להורים  
וכו' - ושמרגישים עצמם אבודים ונבוכים  
בתכלית מבלי מטרת חיים קבועה וכו' וכו'  
השם ברכם בכך שמרגיש עצמו מבוסס

**בחיים ובדרכו בחיים מבלי ספקות וכו'**

- האומנם, אפילו לשיטתם, תפקידם לערער ח"ו אמונתו, להטיל ספקות וכו' (ובודאי מבינים שכשמטילים ספק - ה"ז פתיחת דלת לספקות בה

וכ"ז מפני שרוצה לעשות דברים,  
שלעצתם, מוזרים הם היינו: לא לאכול טריפה,  
לא לעבוד בשבת, להניח תפילין וכו'  
ובכדי לבטל זה, ח"ו - כדאי  
להעמיד בספק את הכל?

להעמיד בספק את הכל?

[ח' מנחם-אב תשל"ה]

.....  
THE STORY OF A MILESTONE ACHIEVEMENT IN “יפוצו מעיינותיך חוצה”.

PRESENTED IN HONOR OF YUD-TES KISLEV, CHAG HAGEULAH OF  
THE ALTER REBBE AND ROSH HASHANAH L'CHASSIDUS.  
.....

# Tany Rac

CHASSIDUS  
ON THE  
FRONT LINES



For a frum Jew living in the 21st century, it is taken for granted that technology can and should be utilized for Jewish causes. Of course Jewish events should be broadcast on television—how else would the larger community be informed? Of course there should be Jewish websites—how else can millions of Jews be reached?

This concept is so baked into our identity that it's difficult to imagine otherwise. But if you turn the clock of history back a mere few decades, the idea of using technology—for any purpose whatsoever—was far from accepted. And, when you think about it, it isn't too difficult to understand why.

# a on the dio



## The Dilemma

The War had just ended. Millions of Yidden had been murdered in the Holocaust, and hundreds of *frum* communities had been decimated. In the place of flourishing yeshivos and thriving *shtibelach*, there were now ghost towns. In the place of booming communities with hundreds of thousands of Chassidim, there were now a few stray survivors. The Yidden of the U.S.S.R. were hardly spared, as Jewish life was quickly being destroyed by the terrors of communism.

Those who were able fled to the welcoming shores of America, the land of freedom; but when they arrived, they found themselves in a strange country, hostile to everything religious and G-dly.

The contrast between life in the *alte heim* (old home) and America could hardly have been starker. Take Lubavitch as an example: forty years earlier there had been tens of thousands of Lubavitcher Chassidim spread throughout Russia and Ukraine, and a flourishing yeshiva with hundreds of students. Now there was hardly a minyan on Shabbos.

Whereas the Yidden had previously lived in close-knit *frum* communities surrounded by like-minded brethren, they were now vastly outnumbered in this new country. Although it was nominally a country of religious freedom, the American culture despised anyone who was different; *frum* Yidden often lost their jobs for not working on Shabbos, and they

couldn't even get one if they wore a beard.

When you look back at it today, it seems inevitable that the Jewish community would eventually get back on its feet and flourish in the new world. But at the time, this was far from assured. Judaism was hanging on by a thread, and the future was precarious.

What does one do in such a situation? How do you deal with this vast new world that despises everything you stand for? How do you create a Jewish, *chassidishe* home in such an inhospitable environment?

There were two major approaches to this issue. The first was to compromise where you must, and keep what you can. This meant that many *frum* Yidden were sending their kids to public school, and almost everyone was sending them to college. Growing a beard was almost unheard of. You did what you needed in order to blend into the secular world.

The other approach was to try re-creating the experience of a *shtetel*—to retreat to insular communities where the secular world was kept at arm's length, shying away from any contact with the outside world. In order to keep them in the fold, children were often taught that those outside their



JEWISH IMMIGRANTS FROM EUROPE DISEMBARK ON THE SHORES OF THE UNITED STATES FOR A LIFE IN THE "NEW WORLD"



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community were abhorrent human beings, deserving of only disgust and contempt.

And then the Rebbe demonstrated that there was a third way—a truly revolutionary approach that demanded unfathomable courage, but that ultimately paved the way for a flourishing Judaism in the 20th century and beyond.

On the one hand, the Rebbe fought tirelessly to remove the influences and *hanachos* of the outside world from the Jewish home. In an era when Chassidishe communities from other *krayzen* were teaching their children *limudei chol*—how could you not?!—the Rebbe was pushing to have it removed from schools. At a time when many *frum* women did not wear head-coverings, the Rebbe was persuading one person after another to wear a *shaitel*.

Yet, at the same time, the Rebbe didn't shy away from the outside world—he showed the Chasidim how to transform it. He trained generations of Chassidim that instead of fearing the outside world, they should conquer it. He sent young *bochurim* all over America to bring their Jewish brothers closer, confident that the *bochurim* would be the ones doing the influencing and not the other way around. Instead of building a moat around his Chassidim, hoping the secular influences won't seep in, the Rebbe sent his Chassidim out to the world to make it a holier place.

These issues were especially evident when it came to dealing with technology, the symbol of the new world. With the advent of television and radio, outside influences were sneaking into the *frum* home like never before; and these new technologies were on the rise, becoming ever more prevalent. Indeed, having a television was almost an American emblem, and those that didn't have one were looked at as relics



FRIEDMAN FAMILY

THE REBBE TAUGHT TO EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY AS A MEANS OF SPREADING YIDDISHKEIT AND CHASSIDUS

of the distant past. And if you didn't listen to the radio, you belonged in a different century.

Again, there seemed to be two approaches. Some people—many of them *frum*, G-d fearing Yidden—compromised. Others rejected technology completely, outlawing the use of radio and television altogether.

Here, too, the Rebbe showed a third approach. In a time when many, many *chassidishe* homes had televisions, when it seemed inevitable that this was the new normal, the Rebbe rallied against it. *When the worst things in the world are but a click away, who's to guarantee that you'll keep to the better channels?!* *"How can you bring the galach into your own home?!"* Slowly but surely, the Rebbe ripped this mindset out of the Lubavitch mind; today, the ultimate symbol of a Lubavitch home is that it has no television.

But this was only with regards to Chassidim using these technologies for their own entertainment. When an opportunity arose to utilize them for Yiddishkeit, the Rebbe didn't hesitate. Lubavitchers who had never watched television in their lives found themselves under the hot glare of camera lights explaining the message of Chanukah. *Bochurim*, who wouldn't dream of listening to the radio, found

themselves giving long interviews about their Merkos Shlichus at local radio stations.

The Rebbe's way was met with fierce opposition, both from the left—for casually shrugging off the conventions of the new world, and from the right—for openly engaging with it. Ultimately, though, the Rebbe's path proved to be the only correct one, and slowly but surely the Jewish world caught on. A college education—which once seemed so absolutely critical for a Jewish boy—is now off the table for a *chareidishe bochur*. Wearing a beard—which was once out of the question for a non-radical—has become normal. The *kiruv* movement—which was once so vehemently criticized—is now emulated across the spectrum of the Jewish world.

And the use of technology for holiness has become so commonplace that no-one can remember when it wasn't.

The *shiurei Tanya* on the radio were from the first entryways of *hafaztas hamaayanos* through technology, and were a symbol of the Rebbe's revolutionary outlook.

## In the Beginning

As early as 5712, the Rebbe was encouraging the use of modern





RABBI YOSEF WINEBERG IN HIS YOUTH

technology and radio broadcasting for spreading Chassidus; in a letter that year, the Rebbe wrote to a Chabad *askan* in Eretz Yisroel commending him on the use of radio broadcasting for *hafotza*. But it would take several years until there would be a systematic, weekly *shiur* on the radio.

As with many of the ideas of *hafatza* in *dor hashvi'i*, the Rebbe left room for the Chassidim to initiate them. This is true of the systematic *shiurim* on the radio as well which the Rebbe agreed to when it was proven that there was someone ready to dedicate himself to the idea.

In the summer of 5718, Rabbi Yosef Wineberg, a prominent activist for the central Yeshiva Tomchei Temimim, began a weekly *shiur* on the radio. It was a way of drumming up support for the yeshiva, and while speaking about various topics of Torah and Chassidus, he would mention the importance of supporting the yeshiva.

Giving this *shiur* made him realize the potential of the radio, and—encouraged by all the feedback he was receiving—he got the idea to start a Tanya *shiur* on the radio. The next time he had *yechidus* with the Rebbe, in Cheshvan 5719 (in proximity to his birthday), Rabbi Wineberg brought it

up to the Rebbe. “Rabbi Teitz<sup>2</sup> has a *shiur* in Gemara. Why don’t we make a *shiur* in Tanya?”

The Rebbe thought for a second. Then he answered, “The time has not yet arrived.”

Rabbi Wineberg’s first thought was that the Rebbe had rejected the idea because of the serious responsibility involved in giving such a *shiur*; a responsibility that a single person couldn’t possibly shoulder alone. He quickly said that he did indeed recognize the responsibility involved and had never considered preparing the *shiurim* all on his own. Maybe, he proposed to the Rebbe, he could prepare the *shiurim*, and the Rebbe could review them.

But the Rebbe’s answer remained. “The time has not yet arrived.”

A year passed. Rabbi Wineberg found out that Rabbi Nochum Goldshmidt had started a Tanya *shiur* on the radio in Israel. So, when he went into *yechidus* for his birthday, he asked again for permission,

considering that Eretz Yisrael had already established one.

Again, the Rebbe did not agree.

After a few weeks had passed, Rabbi Wineberg decided that he had to try actually doing something. And so, he compiled a sample *shiur* to give in to the Rebbe, together with a letter in which he explained why he thought he was capable of shouldering such a weighty task; namely, that he was relying on the *shiurim* he had heard in Otwock from the legendary *mashpia* Rabbi Boruch Friedman *hy”d*.

Suddenly, everything changed. Shortly afterwards, he received the *shiur* back from the Rebbe, and it was full of the Rebbe’s *ha’aros* and corrections. Together with the *shiur* was a hundred dollar bill for the expenses of the *shiur*, and the Rebbe’s *brocha* for success.

## Bringing it Together

Now that the *shiur* finally had the Rebbe’s blessing, the real challenges began.

Some people weren’t ready to accept the idea of Tanya *shiurim* on the radio; one of them, a prominent Chassid, took Rabbi Wineberg to task about it. “How do you have the *chutzpah* to take upon yourself such a responsibility!?” he demanded.

“If I don’t do it, no-one else will,” Rabbi Wineberg replied.

But this was from the smaller issues. Arranging a *shiur* on the radio took much effort and there were many technical details involved; it was a big workload for one person. Rabbi Wineberg called a meeting with a few of his friends and asked them to become part of a *vaad* which would assist in making the technical arrangements. Several of them agreed to get involved, taking upon themselves the various responsibilities of putting the *shiur* together. In the end, though, Rabbi Wineberg found himself working pretty much alone.



THE REBBE SHOWED THAT THERE WAS A THIRD WAY - AN APPROACH THAT DEMANDED UNFATHOMABLE COURAGE, BUT ULTIMATELY SHOWED THE WAY FOR JUDAISM IN THE 20TH CENTURY.

Although Rabbi Wineberg was only just beginning to scramble the *shiur* together and figure out what he was doing, the Rebbe already had plans for far in the future. In a *biur* on the second *perek* of Tanya, the Rebbe commented, “For the first time—this will suffice,” i.e. the next time this *perek* will be covered it will be with more explanation. Not only did the Rebbe expect the *shiur* to complete the entire Tanya—itself a task that spanned decades—he was already planning for the second time around!

During a *yechidus* shortly afterwards, Rabbi Wineberg spoke to the Rebbe of the difficult time he was having arranging the *shiur* all on his own, especially since he had to juggle it with his responsibilities as a

fundraiser for Tomchei Temimim and his duties to his family.

The Rebbe smiled, and said, “Nu... You can call another meeting!” On a serious note, the Rebbe told him, “You must take upon yourself an absolute *hachlata* to learn through the entire Tanya at least once.”

The *shiur* was ultimately arranged through the *Vaad Lehafatzas Chassidus*, of which Rabbi Wineberg was chairman. Preparing the *shiur* was a long and involved process: First, Rabbi Wineberg would prepare a draft. This draft was given for editing to Rabbi Mendel Tenenbaum, a friend of his from Otwock, who was also a member of the *Vaad*. Once a final draft was completed, it was given to the Rebbe. The Rebbe would add edits,

comments, notes, and sometimes even lengthy explanations. These were incorporated into the *shiur* by Rabbi Wineberg, who would retype the entire *shiur* again with the Rebbe's additions.

Although the actual *shiur* was only fifteen minutes long, it occupied much more time in Rabbi Wineberg's schedule. First he had to prepare the material, and then he had to give the *shiur* itself, which included making the trip to the studio, recording the *shiur*, and making the return trip home. The short, fifteen minute *shiur* took up sixteen or seventeen hours a week!

[Later on, recording the *shiur* itself became much easier, since he began recording in the WLCC broadcasting office. In the last few years, he delivered the *shiur* over the phone.]

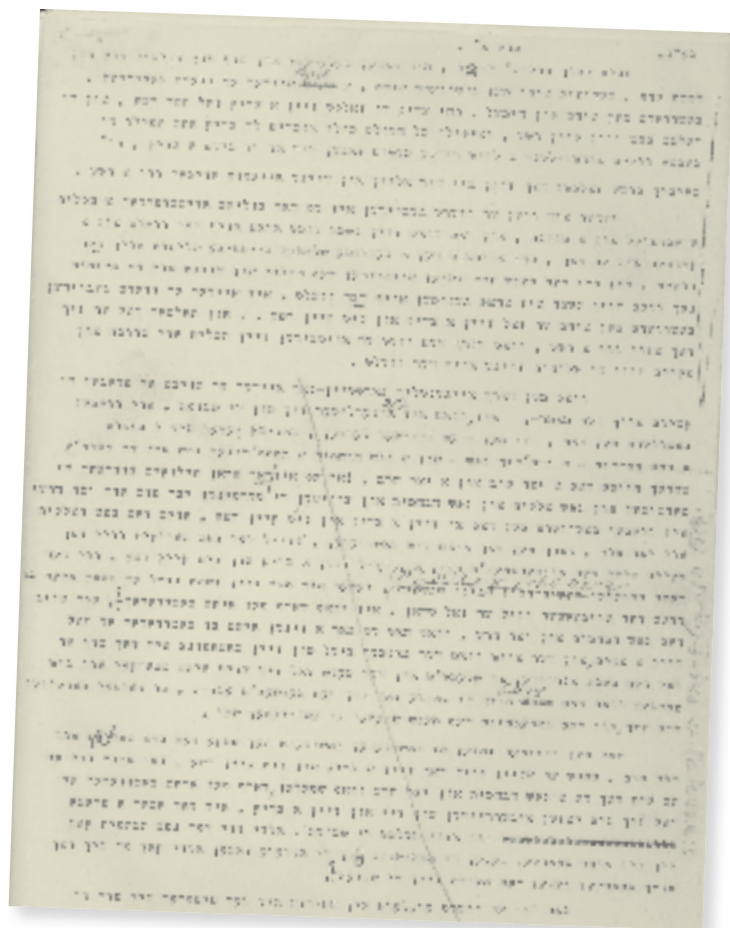
## Keeping Focussed

From the outset, Rabbi Wineberg's plan was to focus the *shiur* solely on the simple meaning of the Tanya, only explaining the concepts of Chassidus that were crucial for understanding the text, without elaborating on the concepts of Chassidus that came up on the way. And that is what he did for the first few *shiurim*.

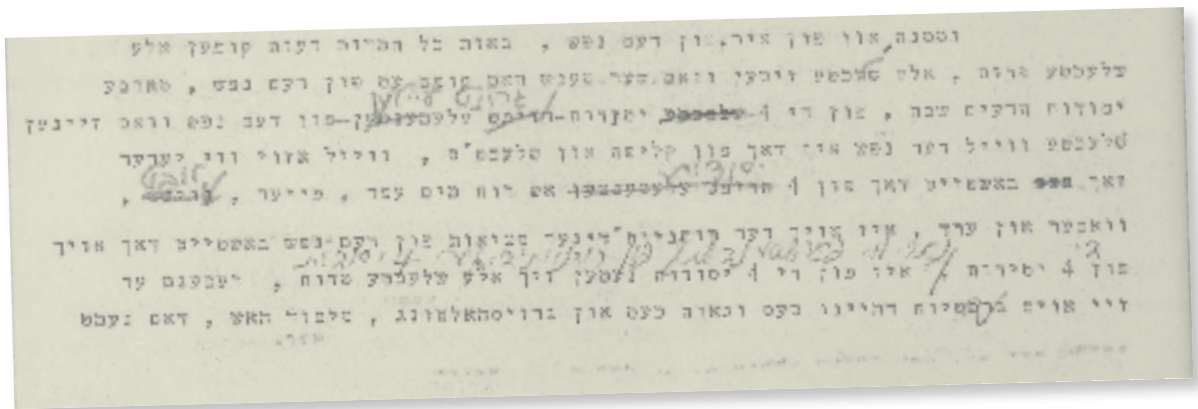
And yet - he wondered if he was doing the right thing. In the *shiurim* in Israel, Rabbi Goldshmidt would elaborate at length on the themes of Chassidus that came up in Tanya, even ones that had no direct relation to the text at hand, and his *shiur* was very successful. Maybe that was the right way to go?

He wrote his question to the Rebbe: Should he continue with a *shiur* focussed on the simple *pshat*, or should he switch to a *shiur* only loosely based on the text, mostly centered on explaining concepts of Chassidus?

The Rebbe's answer was definitive. The *shiur* should be simple and to the point, and—to the extent possible—it



THE REBBE CROSSED OUT A LENGTHY EXPLANATION ON THE FIRST PEREK OF TANYA, EXPLAINING THAT IT WOULD CONFUSE THE BEGINNERS JOINING THE SHIUR, AS THEY ARE THE PRIORITY – “יבלבל המתחילים” – שהם העיקר דהשיור



THE REBBE CORRECTS RABBI WINEBERG'S TRANSLATION OF THE WORD רוח AS ווינט - TO לופט IN HIS HOLY HANDWRITING

should be accessible to every single person tuning in, even beginners. When Rabbi Wineberg noted that Rabbi Goldshmidt was teaching differently, the Rebbe replied, "There, in Eretz Yisroel, it's different."

According to Rabbi Wineberg's understanding at the time, the Rebbe wanted the *shiur* to serve as a vehicle to bring all types of people closer to learning Chassidus, even beginners. So it was crucial that they be easy to understand.

This style was kept throughout the lifetime of the *shiur*, and at times it was the Rebbe himself who ensured

this. For example: in the first *perek* of Tanya, the Alter Rebbe writes that משיבתי אותו תהי צדיק—the *neshama* is sworn that he will be a *tzaddik*. The Tzemach Tzedek explains that the word משיבתי, sworn, also hints to שובע, satisfied; meaning that the *neshama* is satiated with the *kochos* to do its *avoda*. This is a famous *biur*, one that the Rebbe mentioned in *sichos* and *maamarim* many times, and Rabbi Wineberg included it in the *shiur*. However, when it was edited by the Rebbe, he crossed it out, explaining that "it will confuse the beginners, who are the priority in the *shiur*."

On Motzei Shabbos parshas Yisro, 5720 - the two hundredth year since the Histalkus of the Baal Shem Tov - the first Tanya *shiur* on the radio began.

### The Rebbe's Biurim

The *shiurim* clearly had a very important standing by the Rebbe, and this is seen first and foremost in the fact that the Rebbe reviewed them and added his notes and explanations. To put this into perspective, in those years, in the 5720s, the Rebbe rarely edited anything—even his own Torah. It was a rarity for a *muga'dike maamar* to come out from the Rebbe. (When the *chozrim* asked for more *maamarim* to be edited, the Rebbe answered that he didn't have time for it.) The same was true with *sichos*; there were very few *muga'dike sichos* at that time. Even

in the later years, only a handful of publications merited such personal editing from the Rebbe. Thus, the fact that the Rebbe edited the *shiurim* is the biggest testament to their unique prominence by the Rebbe.

Although the Rebbe's *biurim* are quoted as such in *Shiurim B'Sefer Hatanya*, a lot of the Rebbe's input is not visible to the eye, since much of it consists of small, yet significant edits that are incorporated into the explanations: a corrected word, a deleted line, an edited paragraph, etc. When seeing the original documents of the Rebbe's *hagahos*, one is amazed by the sheer volume of *hagahos* and *biurim*, ranging from simple tweaks to the translation, to long, profound explanations; from basic clarifications in *pshat* to groundbreaking commentaries.

The Rebbe paid close attention to every detail, even changing individual words. For example, in the first *perek* of Tanya, the Alter Rebbe mentions the four *yesodos* that make up the world: *aish*, *ruach*, *mayim*, and *afar*. Rabbi Wineberg translated them into Yiddish as *faiyer*, *vint*, *vasser*, *un erd*—fire, wind, water and earth.

Stop for a moment and look at the translation.

See anything wrong?

The Rebbe crossed out the word *vint* [wind] and replaced it with *luft* [air]!



THE REBBE SHOWED THAT THERE WAS A THIRD WAY - AN APPROACH THAT DEMANDED UNFATHOMABLE COURAGE, BUT ULTIMATELY SHOWED THE WAY FOR JUDAISM IN THE 20TH CENTURY.





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FARBRENGEN MOTZOEI SHABBOS CHANUKAH 5738, THE REBBE'S SECOND PUBLIC APPEARANCE SINCE THE HEART ATTACK SOME TWO MONTHS PRIOR.

A subtle change - yet significant.

Sometimes it wasn't about the content as much as the delivery; the Rebbe would cross out material that wasn't crucial for understanding the *perek*, or add a couple of words that framed the following few lines.

For example: In the first page of Tanya, as part of a litany of questions on the conventional understanding of the *beinoni*, the Alter Rebbe brings down a certain *maamar Razal* describing the persona of the *beinoni*. In the original draft, Rabbi Wineberg wrote a full paragraph explaining how this *maamar razal* would be explained later on in Tanya, in *perek yud gimmel*. Crossing it out, the Rebbe wrote, *shayach l'perek yud gimmel*, it belongs in *perek yud gimmel*. [It seems that the Rebbe saw it unnecessary, or even confusing, to answer the Alter Rebbe's questions before he did so himself.]

And then there were the actual *biurim*. Focussing almost solely on the simple meaning of the *perek*, these explanations clarified difficult passages, explained confusing language, resolved contradictory texts, and answered questions that no-

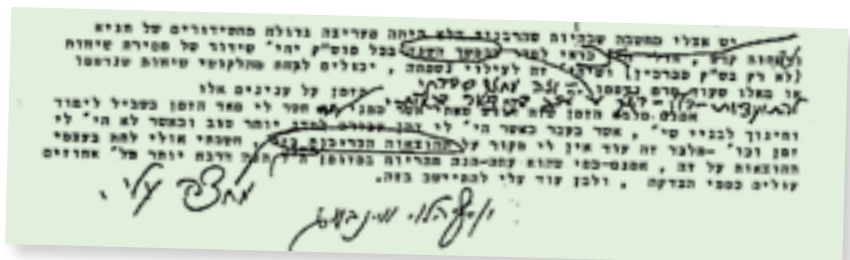
one had even thought to ask before. Though most of these are short *biurim* sprinkled throughout the *prakim*, some of them are quite lengthy. One of the longest is a *biur* on *perek mem tes*, and it has a fascinating backstory.

On Motzei Shabbos Chanukah 5738, the *shiur* was up to *perek mem tes*; since it was shortly after the Rebbe's heart-attack, the Shabbos farbrengen was scheduled for later that night. [From after the heart attack until the winter of 5740, the Rebbe would hold the regular Shabbos farbrengens on motzei Shabbos instead of shabbos afternoon]. Although the Rebbe had already finished editing the *perek*, he wrote another long *biur*—which took three hours (!) to complete. Seeing that it

was getting late and Rabbi Wineberg wouldn't have time to incorporate it into that night's *shiur*, the Rebbe called Rabbi Binyomin Klein and told him, "*Git dus Vainberg'in, zol er tun mit dem vos er vil*—Give this to Wineberg, let him do with it what he wants." [Due to its length and profundity, Rabbi Wineberg spent the next three weeks explaining it to his listeners.]

This was only one *biur* on one *perek*. It's impossible to estimate how many hours the Rebbe poured into these *hagahos* and *biurim* throughout the years.

These *biurim* and *hagahos* forge a fundamental commentary on the Tanya, navigating a reader through difficult concepts and complicated language, and revealing entirely



RABBI WINEBERG'S LETTER WHERE HE NOTIFIES THE REBBE OF HIS IDEA TO TEACH A PART OF THAT WEEK'S RASHI SICHA ON THE RADIO. THE REBBE'S RESPONSE, ENCOURAGING RABBI WINEBERG AND UNDERTAKING HALF OF THE COSTS, CAN BE SEEN IN THE REBBE'S HOLY HANDWRITING.

Throughout the *hagahos* and *biurim*, the Rebbe shows how every single word of Tanya is precise and exact. The following is one small example.

In *perek lamed beis* the Alter Rebbe explains that when a person makes his *neshama* primary, he will be able to truly fulfill the mitzvah of *ahavas Yisroel*. One of the reasons for this is that the *neshamos* of all Yidden come from the same father, Hashem; as such, all Yidden are “*achim mamash*—literally brothers.” When a person focusses on his *neshama*, loving a fellow Yid becomes as natural as loving a brother.

Why does the Alter Rebbe write that Yidden are *achim mamash* [literally brothers]?

Reading it superficially, it seems that the Alter Rebbe is simply emphasizing his point.

#### THE REBBE'S HA'ORA ON TANYA PEREK 32 “ולכן נקראו בני ישראל אחים ממש”

In a short *hagaha*, the Rebbe explains that this innocent looking word is actually crucial to the text. In other places in Torah, the word *achim* doesn't necessarily mean brothers. For example, in parshas Lech Lecha, when Avraham Avinu tells his nephew Lot that they are “*achim*,” he means to say that they are relatives (or, according to another *pirush*, that they looked alike). The Alter Rebbe therefore emphasizes that when we say that Yidden are *achim*, we don't mean *achim* as in relatives, or *achim* as in look-alikes, rather *achim mamash*, literally brothers.

In the Rebbe's words: (כהפ"ל לך יג', ח). ולא קרובים או דומין (כחפ"ל לך יג', ח). And not relatives or look-alikes (as in Lech Lecha *perek yud gimmel*, *passuk ches*.)



A FARBRENGEN IN THE EARLY 1970S. RABBI WINEBERG CAN BE SEEN STANDING TO THE REBBE'S LEFT.

new depths in the Alter Rebbe's words. They are a critical tool for understanding the Tanya, and it would be foolhardy for anyone approaching the Tanya to miss them. And, in truth, almost anyone who learns Tanya is benefiting from the Rebbe's explanations—whether he knows it or not—since they are baked into most major commentaries on the Tanya.

### Sichos

On the weeks of Motzei Shabbos Mivarchim, Rabbi Wineberg would take some time from the *shiur* to deliver a selection of the *sichos* from the Rebbe's farbrengen. In 1975, after Rebbetzin Chana passed away, Rabbi Wineberg wrote to the Rebbe that, in memory of the Rebbetzin who had

been a “great admirer of the *shiurim* on Tanya and *sichos*” (see below for further details on this point), he was thinking that it might be *kidai* [a good idea] to buy another fifteen minutes of airtime and begin delivering the Rebbe's *sichos* every week, not only on Shabbos Mivarchim. Since these were weeks without a farbrengen, he would take *sichos* either from the Likutei Sichos or from the unpublished *sichos*.

He wasn't sure if the idea was practical, though, since he didn't have a source of funding to buy the extra airtime, and it would be difficult to fund it himself.

Regarding the general proposal, the Rebbe circled the word *kidai*—meaning that he should go ahead with it. Then the Rebbe wrote:

“זוהו מחזק סברתי להתועדות - בל"נ [=בלי נדר]- בש"ק [=בשבת קדש] במשך השנה עכ"פ [=על כל פנים] בקיצור בכמות

- This supports my thought to farbreng, *bli neder*, [every] Shabbos during the entire year; at least short ones - time-wise.”

In other words, the Rebbe was considering the idea of beginning to farbreng every Shabbos, and Rabbi Wineberg's proposal to deliver the





A LETTER FROM RABBI WEINBERG TO THE REBBE FROM 5725, ASKING THE REBBE'S ADVICE HOW TO DELIVER THE *SICHA* ON THE RADIO. THE REBBE'S COMMENTS ARE WRITTEN IN HIS HOLY HANDWRITING.

*sichos* on the radio was supporting that decision! [Ultimately, as we all know, the Rebbe did indeed farbreng every week of 5725.]

In regards to funding, the Rebbe answered, “מחצה עלי—half is on me(!)”<sup>3</sup>

Once the Rebbe undertook half of the costs, Rabbi Wineberg decided that, instead of looking for other people to sponsor the second half, he would pay for it himself, and he hastened to inform the Rebbe. Shortly afterwards, in a *yechidus* with Rabbi Wineberg's son, Rabbi Avraham Weinberg, the Rebbe said: “Tell your father that he should let me know how much my share in the partnership is. Your father knows which partnership [I am referring to]...” When he got the message, Rabbi Wineberg hurried to update the Rebbe on the amount.

Thus, in addition to the regular Tanya shiur, Rabbi Wineberg began *chazzering* the Rebbe's *sichos* every week, garnering enthusiastic feedback from the public. During the first year, 5725, the Rebbe farbrenged every week (as mentioned, the Rebbe said that these *shiurim* played a part in his decision to do so), and it was during these farbrengens that the

Rebbe introduced the revolutionary Rashi *sichos*. When Rabbi Wineberg *chazzered* these *sichos* on the radio, the public's reaction was one of pure amazement.

For the first few years, the *sicha* would be given in to the Rebbe for *hagaha* (together with the Tanya *shiur*), and this continued until 5727. During that year, Rabbi Wineberg had a wedding to attend in Eretz Yisroel, and he prepared a recording of his *shiurim* before the trip. As always, he submitted the *sicha* for *hagaha* before he recorded the *shiur*, but he noted that there may not be enough time for the Rebbe to edit it and for him to record it before the trip.

The Rebbe answered that it is not necessary for the *shiur* to be *muga* this time, being that all past *shiurim* have been perfect, and the future ones will surely continue to be as well. Better that there be more time to prepare the *shiur*.

This answer, which was a powerful vote of confidence in the way the *sichos* were being delivered, made Rabbi Wineberg realize that the Rebbe didn't find it necessary to be *magiha* the *sichos*—which meant that sending them in for *hagaha* would put an unnecessary inconvenience on the Rebbe's time. So from then on, he stopped submitting them for *hagaha*.

In truth, there had been another vote of confidence a few years prior.

The Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Chana, once said to the Rebbe: When it comes to *chazzering* the *sichos*, there are a few types of people. There are those who deliver it in a manner which easy to understand, but lacks in the depth. There are others who deliver it in a manner that retains the depth, but is impossible to understand. Then there is the way it is said on the radio, the Rebbetzin concluded, which is both easy to understand and retains the profundity. She asked the Rebbe if he agreed with her assessment. “*Oifin veg*,” the Rebbe answered. (“In the right direction...”)

## Surprise Listener

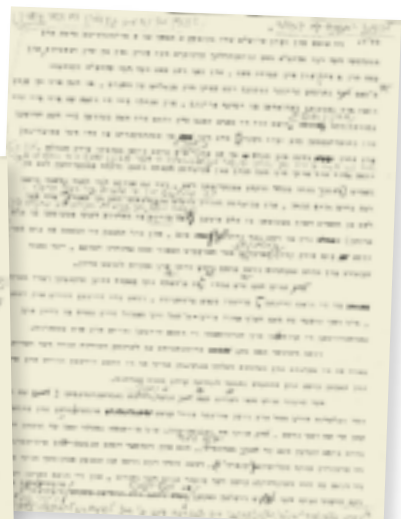
Then it was discovered that the Rebbe himself listened to the *shiurim*.

One week Rabbi Wineberg was out of town, and realizing that he wouldn't be able to give the *shiur*, he called Rabbi Hodakov and asked him what to do. Rabbi Hodakov quickly relayed the question to the Rebbe, who instructed that Rabbi Moshe Pinchas Katz should substitute for him. In a subsequent *yechidus*, the Rebbe told Rabbi Katz, “I closed the door to my room and listened to the *shiur*, and it was good.”

The Rebbe encouraged Rabbi Wineberg along every step of the way,



THE *SICHA* OF 15 SHEVAT 5723 WITH THE REBBE'S HANDWRITTEN HAGOHOES, WHERE THE REBBE SPOKE AT LENGTH ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TANYA *SHIURIM* ON THE RADIO.





THE REBBE HANDS RABBI WINEBERG A STACK OF SINGLE DOLLAR BILLS FOR THE WOMEN AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE EREV ROSH HASHANA FARBRENGEN, 5742

THE *SHIUR* FOLLOWING THE *HISTALKUS* OF THE Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Chana, was dedicated in her honor, but Rabbi Wineberg didn't consider it important enough to inform the Rebbe during *shiva*, and only wrote about it after Yom Kippur. The Rebbe answered, "Thank you for informing [me] about this. At any time, a person constantly awaits good news, and especially in such a time, etc." [I.e. during a time of *aveilus*.]

FOLLOWING THE HEART ATTACK ON SIMCHAS TORAH 5738, in a bid to minimize the Rebbe's workload, Rabbi Wineberg decided that, for the next while, he wouldn't give any new *shiurim* to the Rebbe for review. Instead, he would take the *shiurim* that had already been prepared and stretch them out for an extra few weeks. After a single week passed, the Rebbe asked Rabbi Groner, "Why aren't the *shiurim* coming?"





and helped him through some of the challenging moments. Often Rabbi Wineberg would pre-record the Tanya *shiur* on Friday and deliver it to the radio station in Manhattan. That way he would only have to *chazzer* the *sicha* live on-air. One Friday, after he had returned from the studio late in the afternoon, he received a call from Rabbi Hodakov: The Rebbe had made some changes in the *shiur*—there was a *mahadura basra* - a second edition.

There was no time to re-record another *shiur* before Shabbos, so it would have to be delivered live.

Here came the problem. Usually, Rabbi Wineberg would have the Tanya *shiur* completely ready by Motzei Shabbos, and he would spend the drive to Manhattan preparing his *chazzara* of the farbrengen. But now he had to spend the entire drive to Manhattan preparing the *shiur* with

the Rebbe's new *hagahos*, and he didn't have time to review the farbrengen.

After the *shiur* he wrote the whole story to the Rebbe, admitting that he was afraid that the *sichos* נמסרו "לא כראוי"—had not been given over correctly. Crossing out the word לא, the Rebbe left the words נמסרו כראוי—"were given over correctly"—and added, "וזכות הרבים מסעייתו"—the merit of the public aids him."

Every year, on the anniversary of the *shiurei Tanya* (usually on Shabbos parshas Yisro), the Rebbe would make special mention of the occasion, and on significant ones (like the first, second, seventh, tenth, etc.) he would expound on the meaning of that specific anniversary.

When the *shiur* concluded the entire Tanya for the first time, a task that took twenty two years (!), the Rebbe marked the momentous occasion, speaking about the importance of the *shiurim* and instructing that the Alter Rebbe's *niggun*, which is only reserved for special occasions, be sung three times.<sup>4</sup>

There were even times that the Rebbe publicly praised Rabbi Wineberg personally for his initiative, a rare phenomenon at the Rebbe's farbrengens. At one farbrengen, the Rebbe said: "Some people do not involve themselves in *hafatzas hamaayanos*, with the excuse that 'I can't do it alone, and no-one else will help me!' They have a living example from the *shiurei Tanya* on the radio: They were arranged by one man alone, without any assistance from others, yet they have continued for seven years!"<sup>5</sup>

In addition, the Rebbe would occasionally take time at a farbrengen to explain the Tanya being learned on the radio at that time. [One classic example is the farbrengen parshas noach 5725, when the Rebbe gave a lengthy *biur* on *perek mem alef*, later printed in *Shiurim B'sefer Hatanya*, and in *Lekutei Sichos*.]



THEN THERE IS THE WAY IT'S SAID ON THE RADIO, THE REBBETZIN CONCLUDED, WHICH IS BOTH EASY TO UNDERSTAND AND RETAINS THE PROFUNDITY. SHE ASKED THE REBBE IF HE AGREED WITH HER ASSESSMENT. "OIFIN VEG," THE REBBE ANSWERED.

It was during these farbrengens that the Rebbe gave us a glimpse into why he considered the *shiurei Tanya* so significant. On one occasion the Rebbe explained: In general, when Chassidus is publicized to the world—when the *ma'ayanos* are spread to the *chutza*—it can only reach so far. When *sifrei Chassidus* and *kuntreisim* are printed and distributed, it can go only as far as the physical paper; when *shiurei Chassidus* are taught, they can only reach as far as the words can be heard. There always remains a part of the world—a *chutza*—where Chassidus has not yet touched.

However, when *shiurei Chassidus* are given on the radio, the words of Chassidus spread throughout the entire world simultaneously, to every *chutza* there may be. Thus, the radio is the ultimate tool for *hafatzas hamaayanos chutza*.<sup>6</sup>

The Rebbe also taught fascinating lessons in *avodas Hashem* from the radio itself—for example, from the on-and-off button. You always have the choice to turn it on, and hear what's going on in the world, or turn it off, and shut the world out. The same choice faces every Yid, the Rebbe said. If he "turns the button on" he will hear the words of Hashem; but he also has

the ability to "turn the button off" and go against Hashem's will, *r*".<sup>7</sup>

### Into a Sefer

As time went on, many people began asking Rabbi Wineberg for recordings of previous *shiurim*, which they wished to review. Thus, Rabbi Wineberg began recording the *shiurim* and making them available for the public, a project that merited the Rebbe's personal involvement in the smallest details. (The Rebbe was even involved in the lettering on the envelope containing the *shiurim*.)

In the end, the project fizzled out, and only a few *shiurim* were recorded.

Then, Rabbi Moshe Leib Rodshtein, one of the Rebbe's secretaries, came up with the idea of turning the *shiurim* into a sefer. At first, Rabbi Wineberg found the idea strange; but, nevertheless, he wrote the new proposal to the Rebbe—who turned it down.

The next morning, Rabbi Wineberg was in for a surprise: the Rebbe had decided that the *sefer* should be published. Thus, the work on *Shiurim B'sefer Hatanya* began.

All the *shiurim* had to be re-edited and adapted to a written format, but since they had been edited by the

Rebbe, Rabbi Weinberg was careful not to make any real changes. The work took quite a while, but once the *sefer* was published, it became a best-selling *pirush* on *Tanya*, translated in many languages and published in countless editions.

### Controversy

From the very beginning, there were always people who complained about the idea of giving *shiurim* on the radio, their argument being "how can you use such an impure object for such a holy goal?"

Addressing these arguments on numerous occasions throughout the years, the Rebbe often quoted a famous Midrash: "The world itself was unworthy of using gold. Why was it created? For the *Beis Hamikdash*." Seemingly, the Rebbe said, this Midrash applies to every single creation in the world, for everything was created for Hashem's glory. Why is gold singled out? Because gold is a unique creation, and it is therefore more obvious that it was created solely for the direct use of the *Beis Hamikdash*. Similarly, the Rebbe explained, the radio is a unique creation: it transcends the regular limitations of time and space, reaching the entire world in miniscule amounts of time. Such an extraordinary creation was surely created in order to be used for *kedusha*.<sup>8</sup>

The Rebbe illustrated this point with the oft-repeated story of his grandfather, Reb Meir Shlomo Yanovsky, and the Rebbe Maharash.<sup>9</sup> Shortly after his wedding, Reb Meir Shlomo traveled to the Rebbe Maharash's court to be a *zitzer*, to *zitz* (sit) and learn for a few months, a common practice in those days.

Now, the Rebbe Maharash lived in great luxury, and all his personal items were made of gold: a gold cigarette holder; a gold snuffbox; two gold watches, each with gold chains; a cane



with a gold handle; and gold cutlery. His clothing and carriage were covered in gold.

When Reb Meir Shlomo returned to his hometown, he told them about it, and a certain Chassid—a *baalibatishe* Chassid—criticized this behavior. “What kind of *seider* is this? Is having everything made of gold really such a necessity? The Rebbe should give that money to *tzedaka* and survive on bare essentials!”

Reb Meir Shlomo answered: “*Petach, petach!* Fool, fool! For whom do you think gold was created for? For me and for you? Or for the *goyim*, *l’havdil?* It was created for him!”

The same is true in regards to the radio, the Rebbe said. The sole reason it was created was for *shiurei Chassidus!*

Many years later, in the 5740s, the controversy again erupted about the fact that Lubavitch was using the radio for *shiurei Chassidus*. Using sharp terms, the Rebbe strongly defended the practice and admonished those acting in an hypocritical manner to impede *hafatzas hamaayanos*: campaigning against the use of technology for Chassidus while using it for their own business. The Rebbe reiterated his explanation from the previous years, that everything in the world must be used for *kedusha*, and pointed to the Midrash that “gold was created for the *Beis Hamikdash*,” even though it was used for idols for thousands of years before and after the *Beis hamikdash* was built.<sup>10</sup>

This time, though, the Rebbe went one step further. He didn’t suffice with addressing the question of why the radio may be utilized for *kedusha*; he addressed a different, more interesting question, the type of question which doesn’t usually get asked, much less answered. Why did Hashem create radio waves in the first place?

The Rebbe went on to give a long, in depth explanation according to

Chassidus, which, briefly, goes as follows: Superficially, the world looks and feels like a physical, limited world. The purpose of a Yid is to reveal that there is more to the world than it seems—it is a manifestation of *Elokus*. This is accomplished by following Torah and mitzvos, thereby revealing the *Elokus* hidden within the world.

However, Yidden need something to remind them that the world isn’t just how it seems. Therefore, Hashem put something in the world that defies its limitations, a limitless creation in a limited world—namely, radio waves. Radio waves are not bound by the regular rules of time and space, reaching across the world in miniscule amounts of time.

And this is why Hashem created the radio (and telegrams, etc.)—to show a Yid that he, too, is not bound by the constraints and concealments of the world; he has the power to reveal the *Elokus* hidden deep inside. (The radio *does* have some limitations, and it does take some amount of time for the radio waves to travel—after all it does exist in our physical, limited world. Nevertheless, it defies the regular, normal limitations of the world, thus demonstrating that there is something beyond the limitations.)<sup>11</sup>

This is how the Rebbe explained the existence of the radio, and this was but one reflection of the Rebbe’s general attitude

towards technology, modernity, and the world in general. The universe is *dira betachtonim* waiting to be made—we just have to go out and make it. **T**

1. See Likutei Sichos vol. 18 p. 459.
2. Rabbi Pinchas Mordechai Teitz was a prominent Rav in Elizabeth, New Jersey. Rabbi Teitz knew the Rebbe from Riga, where the Frieddiker Rebbe told him that he could take questions to the Rebbe, and he received much kiruv from the Rebbe, especially with regard to his traveling to the former Soviet Union to strengthen the Jewish communities there. During a yechidus in 5714, the Rebbe encouraged Rabbi Teitz to give a weekly Gemara shiur on the radio, and he later hosted a weekly radio program called “Daf HaSHavua - Talmudic Seminar of the Air”. See Igros Kodesh vol. 8 p. קל"ו.
3. See ksav yad kodesh in Derher supplement, Vov Tishrei 5775, p. 19.
4. Farbrengen Shabbos Parshas Tazria-Metzora 5742.
5. Shabbos Parshas Mishpotim, 5725.
6. 12 Sivan 5720.
7. Purim 5721.
8. Shabbos Parshas Mishpotim, 5722.
9. 12 Sivan, 5720, Purim, 5728.
10. Lekutei Sichos vol. 26 p. 359 and on.
11. Ibid.



A RECORD OF RABBI WINEBERG’S RECORDED SHIURIM ON THE RADIO



## A Call to Joy

The Rebbe would often emphasize the connection between joy and the *geulah*. A precedent for this is found in the last of the four “*kol koreis*” that the Frieddiker Rebbe issued: “Rejoice and be happy in the joy of the redemption,” it began. Why all the joy? The darkness of *golus* still surrounds us, and its length is taking its toll. How can one be joyful while in the darkness of *golus*?

In many places in Chassidus (based on the words of the Rashba) Hashem is described as “*nimna hanimna'os*,” which translates literally as “He to whom impossibility is impossible.” This means that there is nothing beyond Hashem’s capability and even two opposing forces can exist within Him at once. For example, Hashem can create water that is flowing and

stagnant at the same time. A Jew, who is created in the image of Hashem, is sometimes expected to be a model of “*nimna hanimna'os*.” There are times when we are supposed to harbor conflicting emotions.

This, explains the Rebbe, is the key to our question about joy in *golus*. Yes, on the one hand we are saddened by the difficulties of *golus*, but at the same time we know that *geulah* is near and there is reason to be joyous. Even more than that, we need to be happy in order to bring Moshiach.

### שמח - משיח

What is so special about joy that makes it the method of bringing about the redemption? The time of *geulah* is characterized by intense *simcha*. Then, all things negative will disappear and be transformed

## HOW CAN ONE BE JOYFUL WHILE IN THE DARKNESS OF GOLUS?

into good. Interestingly, the words שמח and משיח share the same letters, hinting to the relationship between the two. Chassidus explains that in order to elicit such a level of joy from Hashem with the coming of Moshiach, we must add in *simcha shel mitzvah*. In addition, it is well known that joy breaks all boundaries, and this includes those of *golus*.

The Rebbe sheds new light on this concept in a revolutionary *sicha* said on Shabbos *Parshas Ki Seitzei* 5748. First, the Rebbe asks a question: What remains to be accomplished for Moshiach to come? After all, since Moshiach's response to the Baal Shem Tov, "I'll come when your wellsprings spread forth," over 300 years of spreading the *maayonos* have passed. In 5701 (1941) the Frierdiker Rebbe

printed a *kol koreh* (announcement) in the publication *Hakriah Vehakedusha* that read, "*Le'alter liteshuva le'alter ligeulah*. Moshiach is very near," starting a new mode of spreading the wellsprings with an emphasis on doing so in order to bring Moshiach. Seventy years have since passed. What's left? Even if we were to say that it's all about *simcha shel mitzvah*, this too is something that Jews have been doing for years!

It is all about *simcha*. It remains the only way to finally break through the confines of *golus*. So we must say that until now, the *simcha* was there to enhance the mitzvah. Instead of davening dryly, for example, daven with joy; instead of giving tzedaka without enthusiasm, give it with delight. But now, in addition to that,

our task is to be happy for the sake of bringing Moshiach; the joy in and of itself is the key. This is joy in its purest form - שמחה בטרהתה.

What we can conclude is, although it is hard to be happy in *golus*, yet, because it is now the final step to be accomplished before Moshiach comes, we must continue being joyous even while feeling the despair of exile. *Nimna hanimna'os*.

May it be Hashem's will that with this *simcha* we merit to greet Moshiach very soon and usher in the day when joy will know no boundaries. **1**



# the Momentous Gathering

and its  
message today,

Insights into the  
mitzvah of Hakhel  
and its relevance today,  
collected from the Rebbe's  
sichos and letters

מקץ שבע שנים במעד שנת השמיטה  
בחג הסוכות; בבוא כל ישראל...

הקהל את העם  
האנשים והנשים  
והטף

וגרד אשר בשעריך למען ישמעו  
ולמען ילמדו ויראו את ה' אלקיכם  
ושמרו לעשות את כל דברי התורה הזאת  
(וי"ד לא, י"ב).

## HAKHEL INSIGHT IMPRESSIONS

A person's experiences as a child can impact his entire life. That's why the Rebbe insisted we surround our young ones with only holy, positive influences. When the *Beis Hamikdash* stood, *Hakhel* was one such influential event. "Gather... the children in order that they learn." Learn? They are but infants, their minds not yet developed enough to comprehend the events surrounding them! But they too have so much to gain: impressions. The Alter Rebbe demonstrates<sup>1</sup> this by describing the man who watches a *tzadik* daven, pouring his heart out to Hashem. He doesn't have to do anything to get inspired; observing it alone can impact a person. There is much to benefit metaphysically too, as wherever there are ten Yidden, the *Shechina* rests. Hashem's presence affects a child positively, especially considering the amount of Jews there and what they're involved in.

(Adapted from *Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos* 5713, vol. 1, pgs. 66-67)

1. Torah Ohr, Miketz, 33, 4



## A TIMELY CONNECTION

### THE ETERNAL COMMUNITY

“Death doesn’t befall the public.” The Gemara rules thus in regards to a *korban chatas* that belongs to the community. In the case of a personal *korban chatas*, if the owner meets his demise, his offering dies as well, but when the animal is owned by the congregation, even were that entire generation to pass away, the sacrifice is still brought by their children. A community isn’t affected by death. On a deeper level, this statement means that our nation will exist forever; that the Jewish nation is immortal. So *Hakhel*, an event that gathers the nation, touches that eternity. That’s how Kislev and *Hakhel* connect. The conclusion, and therefore most integral part of this month, is Chanukah. The story it relates is one of the triumph of light over dark, and how because of the struggle and ensuing victory *כיתרון האור מתוך החושך*, the menorah became eternal. They defiled the oil of superior spiritual quality in the holiest of places, bringing impurity into Hashem’s home. Then, after finding a surviving jug and lighting it, defying their machinations, the festival of Chanukah came into being, a holiday which we will celebrate forever. “These Chanukah candles will never cease to be.” So Chanukah, like *Hakhel*, points us in the direction of the eternal. Just as *Hakhel* gathers a community that will last forever, Chanukah is also an everlasting *yom tov*. The idea of eternity will reach a whole new dimension when Moshiach arrives, when again, through trial and its subsequent ascent, timelessness will be attained.

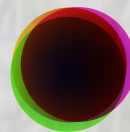
(Adapted from the *Farbrengen* of Shabbos parshas Toldos 5741)

## WHAT CAN I DO?

### UNITED IN STUDY

On 6 Kislev we celebrate the completion of the 34th cycle of daily Rambam study and begin learning it anew. 5748 was a year of *Hakhel*. In a *hadran* on Rambam the Rebbe delivered that year in honor of the *siyum*, he emphasized the connection between *Hakhel* and studying Rambam. The Rambam writes in his introduction to *Mishneh Torah* that it is “the Oral Torah organized so that all can learn it... people old and young”—a theme shared by *Hakhel*, where all were united in Torah study. The Rebbe encouraged the assembled to arrange *siyumei hoRambam* with grandeur, befitting the honor that Torah deserves, and wished that their study not end in Rambam but continue to the Beis Yosef’s Shulchan Aruch and that of the Alter Rebbe; Chassidus and then ultimately the *Torah Chadasha* that Moshiach will soon teach.

(Adapted from *Sefer Hasichos* 5748, vol. 1, pg. 251)





# How to Learn

*The Rebbe Teaches Us the Proper Path in Limmud HaTorah.*



## The Third Method

There are numerous methods of Torah-study; there is the “*Litvishe*” style of learning, which employs logic and elucidation, and there is the “*Poishish*” method, which employs mental acuity and sharp analysis. However, [the method that emphasizes] precise analysis of the wording and phrasing isn’t very popular.

The reason for this is presumably [that people] don’t have enough time [to engage in this method]. Another reason is the difference between the Written Torah, in which the **words**<sup>1</sup> are essential (there is an entire chapter of *Shas* based on a single letter of the Torah) and the Oral Torah, in which the **concept**<sup>1</sup> is most important, as explained in *Lekutei Torah*.

Nevertheless, it’s obvious that the wording of the Oral Torah is precise

as well, to the point that one can extrapolate heaps of information from the exact wording and phrasing.

Reb Nechemya of Dubrowna, who was one of the great *Chassidim* of the Alter Rebbe, would analyze the wording of the Taz and the Magen Avraham, and would learn concepts in *halacha* from [their wording]. All the more so, we should analyze the wording and phrasing of *Shas*.<sup>2</sup>

## How Much to Learn

You wrote that you have little interest and effort invested in studying Gemara. This is certainly one of the tricks of the *Yetzer Hara*—to blame your decreased interest in learning on your taking on extra responsibilities in holy duties. “A mitzvah leads to another mitzvah” and not, Heaven forbid, to the opposite. When the opposing forces realize that [their

plot] isn’t causing any weakening in your dedication to Chassidus, its ways and its customs, they will weaken.

With regards to your question whether it’s appropriate to establish a daily study program of learning and reviewing several pages of Gemara with commentaries; this, of course, depends on the skill level of the one studying, as well as the atmosphere he finds himself in. Therefore, you should consult with close friends who know you well.

The following can and should be done by everyone: Studying *iyun* [in depth] as well as *girsas* [at a faster pace], both *nigleh* [the revealed Torah] and Chassidus; in addition to reviewing the laws that pertain to day-to-day life as well as to Shabbos and Yom Tov. The in-depth study should be in whatever subject your heart desires, as *Chazal* instruct.<sup>3</sup>



# LEARNING L'IYUN MEANS THAT WHEREVER THE GEMARA, RASHI, OR TOSFOS QUOTE ANOTHER PART OF SHAS OR THE LIKE, YOU SHOULD OPEN THAT SEFER AND READ WHAT IT SAYS.

## What is Iyun

*Question: The Rebbe expects that daily studies include iyun as well as girsa, in both nigleh and Chassidus. What is the definition of "learning l'iyun"?*

*The Rebbe replies: "Learning l'iyun" regarding nigleh means that wherever the Gemara, Rashi, or Tosfos quote another part of Shas or the like, you should open that [other] sefer and read what it says. This way, you will better understand the piece of Gemara that you are learning. [The study of iyun should take place] in this same way for Chassidus.<sup>4</sup>*

## L'iyun or L'girsa?

You write that your learning is being disrupted.

It will help you to study l'iyun during seder and l'girsa outside seder.

The same applies to the contemplation of Chassidus. You write that you're unsuccessful in doing so. You should choose a *maamar* or *kuntres* and study it from the printed words. Doing so will help you avoid daydreaming.

The same applies to davening; concentrate on the printed words.

Hashem will give you success in all the matters that you write about, [and] may you be a Chossid, *yarei Shamayim*,

and *lamdan*, and may you go from strength to strength in all matters.<sup>5</sup>

## Improving Your Memory

Regarding what you wrote about your *koach hazikaron* [memory]; obviously the first thing to do is review your studies many times, including from the printed words. [You should also] act in a *tzniusdike* way. For additional *siyata dishmaya* [help from Above] in this regard, you should give several coins to *tzedakah* before *shacharis* each day, and keep the three known *shiurim* of *Chitas*.<sup>6</sup>

## How to Reconcile Meshalim in Chassidus

You ask that in Chassidus numerous *meshalim* [parables] are often brought to explain one concept. Being that everything in Torah is precise, this must mean that one *meshal* explains something that the other does not.

First of all, in this area of study it's incorrect to precisely analyze the details and minutia, rather you should understand that just as there are many explanations in every part of

Torah, so too one can find numerous *meshalim* for each concept in Torah, or at least for many of them.

In general, in the vein of the *passuk* מִבְּשָׂרִי אֵחָזֶה אֱלֹהִים – "From my flesh I see G-d," Chassidus usually brings a *meshal* from the faculties of the *nefesh*. In many cases, where preexisting *seforim* bring other *meshalim* for whatever reason, these *meshalim* are used as well.

Additionally, it is clear that numerous *maamarim* speak about the broad distinctions between various levels, without going into detail; as a result the *meshal* used is about the general concept. Once the details within a specific level are being characterized, the *meshal* used is one that fits with only one of the details and not the others.<sup>7</sup> ①

1. Emphases are in the original.
2. Toras Menachem vol. 1 p. 153
3. Igros Kodesh vol. 14 p. 232
4. Yechidus, published in Heichal Menachem 5755 p. 210
5. Ibid p. 211
6. Igros Kodesh, vol. 16 p. 272
7. Ibid vol. 18 p. 376



BOCHURIM LEARN IN THE SMALL ZAL, UPSTAIRS 770. 21 ELUL 5737.

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# TOWERS

of

# LIGHT



## Public Menorah Lightings

From the time Chazal instituted the mitzvah of kindling the Menorah, the objective has been to publicize the nes of Chanukah to the outside, illuminating the world around us.

על פתח ביתו מבחוץ - The Menorah is expected to be placed in the open.

Chassidus explains that the light of the Chanukah Menorah is even stronger than that of the Beis Hamikdash, possessing the unique power to overcome and ultimately transform the darkness of galus with Hashem's infinite light - והו' יג' חשכי.

But it would take more than two thousand years for this goal to be truly realized, when the Rebbe's mitvza Chanukah actually brought the light of the Menorah to the public domain.

IN PREPARING THIS ARTICLE WE WERE ASSISTED BY RABBI MENDEL ALPEROWITZ,  
RABBI YISROEL BROD, RABBI SHMUEL BUTMAN, RABBI SHLOMO CUNIN,  
RABBI CHAIM I. DRIZIN, RABBI MENDY HERSON, RABBI ELIEZER ZAKLIKOVSKY,  
RABBI YOSEF LANDA, RABBI SHOLOM B. SHUCHAT. WE WERE ALSO ASSISTED BY  
MATERIAL FROM CHABAD.ORG, AUTHORED BY RABBI MENACHEM POSNER.



In 5734 the Rebbe launched *mitvza* Chanukah.<sup>1</sup> The objective: that every Jewish person be given the opportunity to light a Menorah. The Rebbe explained that a Menorah is unique in that it brings light to everyone who sees it, including non-Jews, and emphasized that the Chanukah initiatives should be done with the fullest *shturem*. At least one Menorah should be kindled in each home, the Rebbe said, and children, too, should light one on their own.

As a result of the Rebbe's "*mitvza* Chanukah," Chanukah itself, and the way it is perceived by millions of Jews and non-Jews, has been totally transformed. Today there is hardly a person who is unfamiliar with Chanukah, and millions of people participate in thousands of public Menorah lightings across the globe.

One of the unique aspects of *mitvza* Chanukah is the public Menorah lightings. From the Kremlin, to Manhattan, to the White House lawn, public Menorahs are a symbol of Jewish pride the world over. In cities and towns on all corners of the globe, Jews gather every year to celebrate Chanukah with the lighting of a large Menorah towering above the celebrants.

These giant Menorah lightings have come to symbolize Lubavitch's fearless mode of *hafatza*, featured in magazines and newspapers worldwide, and memorialized in countless Chabad logos and signs. However, this global phenomenon didn't start all at once; it began with a few small Menorah lightings arranged by *shluchim* for their local communities, and they hardly could have imagined what it would turn into.

One of the first Menorah lightings was in front of Independence Hall in Philadelphia, in 5735 (תשל"ה), arranged by Rabbi Avrohom Shemtov. That first year, he lit a small, crudely built Menorah that he managed to



RABBI AVRAHAM SHEMTOV (R) IN FRONT OF THE INDEPENDENCE HALL IN PHILADELPHIA AT THE LIGHTING OF THE VERY FIRST PUBLIC MENORAH IN 5735. WITH HIM ARE BOCHURIM WHO HELPED BUILD IT FROM SCRATCH.

put together with a few *bochurim*. By the following year, a bigger event was prepared with a larger Menorah.

As Rabbi Shemtov was beginning to light up the East Coast, Rabbi Chaim Drizin of S. Francisco had a similar idea: to light a huge wooden Menorah, 22 ft. tall, in the city's Union Square. It was on the first night of Chanukah, 5736, when Chabad's first large public Menorah was kindled on the West Coast. S. Francisco was home to many Jews of German descent where Reform dominated and traditional Yiddishkeit was foreign to most, so Rabbi Drizin wasn't expecting much of a crowd for such a public celebration of the miracle of Chanukah. To his utter amazement, over one thousand people came to watch the Menorah being lit in S. Francisco's downtown.

## THE WORLD'S LARGEST MENORAH

Perhaps one of the most famous Menorahs in the world is the Menorah in Manhattan on Fifth Avenue, and it is definitely one of the tallest, towering at thirty-two feet. Rabbi Shmuel Butman relates: "It was shortly after the Rebbe's heart attack on Shemini Atzeres 5738 (תשל"ח), and I was thinking to myself, 'what can I do to give the Rebbe *nachas*?' After much deliberation, I had an idea: I would build the biggest Menorah in the world - and put it up right in the middle of Manhattan."

Although it was shortly after Shemini Atzeres and the Rebbe was still in his room, Rabbi Butman

CHABADORG / LUBAVITCH CENTER

## INFORM OTHERS!

In 5739 (תשל"ט) the administration of Tzach wrote a detailed report to the Rebbe about the great success of that years mivtza Chanukah and mentioned the great publicity and media attention the Manhattan Menorah received, as well as their successful efforts in erecting Menorahs at many of New York City's bridges and tunnels (despite some initial opposition and disapproval).

On their mention of the *hatzlacha* they had with placing the public Menorahs, the Rebbe responded:

ההודיעו עדכ"ז [=על דבר כל זה] לשאר ערי ארצה"ב [=ארצות הברית]  
שאולי לא קבלו לע"ע [לעת עתה] רשיון למען יביאו לראי' שמוחר וכו' הנ"ל?  
Have they informed others about this in cities in the  
rest of the United States, who may have not yet received  
permission, so that they bring [this] as evidence that  
it is allowed etc.?

received many answers from the Rebbe encouraging this initiative.

Working with the local officials, Rabbi Butman obtained special permission to erect the Menorah at the extremely central location of Manhattan's Fifth Avenue. The Mayor of New York at the time was Ed Koch, and Rabbi Butman arranged that Koch himself would participate in the event and light the Menorah. Every year since, tens of thousands of people join the Menorah lighting in Manhattan, and it is renowned as the biggest Menorah in the world.

Interestingly, one occasion, the Rebbetzin made a special trip to Manhattan to see the Menorah.

The Rebbe always emphasized that the Menorah must be lit in its proper time, and in order to light the Menorah on Friday afternoon and still make it home on time for Shabbos, Rabbi Butman would take a helicopter from Manhattan to Crown Heights (a tradition that continues to this day).

However, the story of the Menorah in Manhattan doesn't stop there.

In 5747 (תשמ"ז), a few years after the Rebbe had explained that the accurate design of the branches of

the Menorah in the Bais Hamikdash were diagonal, and not circular, as depicted clearly by the Rambam, Rabbi Butman decided to build a new Menorah according to its original and accurate design. He recruited world famous artist Mr. Yaakov Agam to design it. Rabbi Butman had Mr. Agam prepare a three foot model which he brought to the Rebbe to get the Rebbe's input and approval, and it stayed on the Rebbe's desk for a full three days afterward!

When Mr. Agam went by the Rebbe for dollars on the second day of Chanukah, the Rebbe thanked him for designing the Menorah according to the *shita* of the Rambam, and spoke with him warmly about his work.

## JOINED BY THE PRESIDENT

Another major development in the public Menorahs campaign was in 5740 (תשמ"ו), when Rabbi Avrohom



US PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER JOINS RABBI AVRAHAM SHEMTOV IN LIGHTING THE MENORAH ON THE WHITE HOUSE LAWN, CHANUKAH 5740.



Shemtov collaborated with Mr. Stuart Eizenstat, President Jimmy Carter's chief domestic-policy adviser, to arrange that a massive Menorah be built and erected on the White House Lawn. To add even more to the *pirumei nissa*, they invited President Jimmy Carter to join the event.

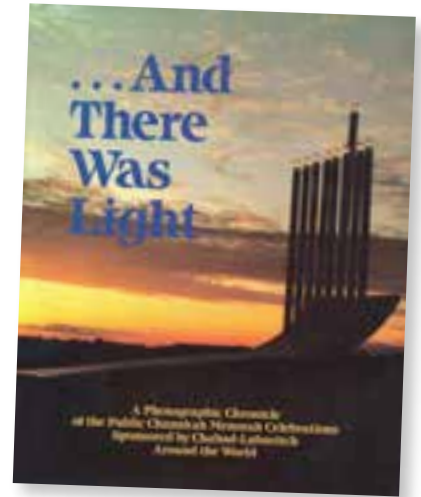
Many doubted that the president would actually show up because, at the time, due to the Iranian Hostage Crisis, Carter was in the midst of a self-imposed seclusion and had not left the White House for more than three months. Up until the last minute his participation wasn't confirmed. Yet, to the shock of all, the President

left the White House for the first time after 100 days to participate in the Menorah lighting ceremony. Carter spent much time at the event, where he addressed the assembled crowd and lit the shamash of a small Menorah. (The small Menorah had been given to Carter as a present.

The Rebbe subsequently wrote a warm letter of thanks to Carter, expressing "genuine gratification at your personal participation in the ceremony of lighting the Chanukah Candelabra in front of the White House."

The tradition of lighting the Menorah on the Ellipse near the White House lawn continues to this day and is watched by millions of people across the globe.

Almost every year, beginning in 5745 (תשמ"ה), a delegation from American Friends of Lubavitch travels to Washington and meets with the president in the Oval Office in honor of Chanukah. The Rebbe received great satisfaction when Rabbi Krinsky relayed that a picture of one of these



meetings had been released, in which one can see the Lubavitch delegation presenting a silver Menorah to President Reagan.

In the ensuing years, many shluchim have held their own similar events together with their state governors, mayors and local dignitaries.

At the Rebbe's behest, following Chanukah 5746 (תשמ"ו), a book was compiled chronicling Menorah-lightings arranged by shluchim across the globe, titled *Let There Be Light*.

FARBRENGEN YUD-TES KISLEV 5747.  
JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE ID: 119412



זה, ומתוך שמחה וטוב לבב, ומתוך עידוד, אז זיי זאלן האבן הצלחה יעדערע בענינו, און אט די וואס דער אויבערשטער האט זיי געגעבן בהשגחה פרטית א כח אויף זיין א מורה דרך, אדער האבן א השפעה אין א גאנצער סטייט, אדער אין א גאנצע שטאט, אדער אין א גאנצע שוונה, זאל ער דאס אויכעט טאן באופן דמוסיף והולך ואור,

און וויסן אז דורך דערויף ווערט כליא ריגלא תתרמודאי אויכעט כפשוטו, אז אויב מ'ויל האבן די אמת'ר עצה, אז ס'זאל ניט זיין קיין מורדים אין חוקי המדינה, איז ניטא קיין אנדער עצה, ניט עס וועט העלפן כל ענינים שבעולם, ניט קיין געלט, ניט קיין גוטע טיטשער'ס, וכיו"ב, די זאך וואס וועט דערצו העלפן איז דאס, אז דאס וועט זיין מיוסד אויף דער אמונה אין בורא עולם ומנהיגו, וואס ער איז אויכעט משגיח בהשגחה פרטית בכל עת ובכל מקום. (משיחת י"ט כסלו תשמ"ז)



The following year, in 5747 (תשמ"ז), on the third day of Chanukah, the Rebbe handed the album to Rabbi Krinsky and instructed that a sequel should be published with photographs of that year's activities. Throughout the following few days the Rebbe constantly urged Rabbi Krinsky to telephone all the shluchim and encourage them to hold events, bearing in mind that the photos will be published. Indeed, a sequel called "... And There Was Light" beautifully depicted how much more extensive the celebrations were during Chanukah of 5747 (תשמ"ז).<sup>2</sup>

## GE'ON YAAKOV

Casting a whole new light on the importance of the public Menorah lightings are the Rebbe's letters written in response to the opposition they faced.

Although today it is an ubiquitous symbol of Chanukah, public Menorahs were initially met with some opposition; often by secular

Jewish organizations who were not comfortable with the public display of Jewish pride.

The argument these groups often cited against public Menorahs was the flawed understanding that placing a religious symbol on public grounds constituted a violation of the First Amendment. Another argument they sometimes cited was that expressing Judaism in the public domain could lead to non-Jews to express their religion in public, and thereby imposing it on others as well.

But underlying these arguments was a more fundamental issue. Many Jews were simply embarrassed by such a public unabashed display of Yiddishkeit.

The Rebbe emphasized that this itself was one of the key messages in the public Menorah lightings, to evoke "a sense of pride in [their] Yiddishkeit and the realization that there is no reason really in this free country to hide one's Jewishness," that Yiddishkeit is nothing to be embarrassed of.



LUBAVITCH YOUTH ORGANIZATION ARCHIVES

WORLD FAMOUS ARTIST YAAKOV AGAM PRESENTS THE REBBE WITH A MODEL OF THE MENORAH HE DESIGNED FOR THE MANHATTAN LIGHTING, BASED ON THE RAMBAM'S SHITA OF THE SHAPE OF THE MENORAH IN THE BEIS HAMIKDOSH, 26 KISLEV 5747.

## FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE

In 5741 (תשמ"א), Rabbi Yisroel Brod, then a shliach in Bergen County, N.J., arranged that a large Menorah be set in front of the Bergen

*In this sicha, the Rebbe thanks the President for marking Chanukah in the White House and speaks of the need to litigate erecting Menorahs in the public:*

וואס נאר ס'דא א איד און ער וויל אנצינדן א  
מנורה, ואדרבה, מ'וועט עס מסייע זיין אז דאס  
זאל זיין אין אן אופן פון פירסומי ניסא...  
און ויהי רצון אז די הכנות לזה זאל זיין  
בהצלחה רבה ומופלגה, ובפרט נאך אז זיי וועלן  
זיך אנהויבן אויך בנוגע די עמי הארץ, פון דעם  
בית מרכזי פון דער מדינה, וואס דארטן גופא  
וועט דאס זיין בפירסומי של עשרה מישראל  
וכו', ומתוך סבר פנים יפות, ומתוך מנוחה,  
שמחה וטוב לבב,  
און ס'איז א זיכערע זאך, אז הקב"ה גיט  
שכרו ובמדתו של הקב"ה וואס זי איז כמה  
פעמים ככה, אויכעט דער ענין פון ליכטיקייט  
און געזונטקייט און יכולת, אויף נאכמערער  
מוסיף זיין בכל עניני טוב וקדושה,  
ואשרי חלקם של כל אלו, סיי אידן, סיי  
ניט אידן, וואס זיי וועלן עס מסייע זיין בכל

וואס דאס איז דאך דער יסוד פון דער מדינה  
אויף מציל זיין צדיקים מיד רשעים, אע"פ וואס  
די זיינען גבורים בגשמיות און די זיינען חלשים  
בגשמיות,  
ועד כדי כך ובמכ"ש וק"ו, אז דער  
אויבערשטער בחסדו הכי גדול מאכט לייכטער  
די נסיונות און גיט אריין גבורה כפשוטה, און  
הצלחה כפשוטה בגשמיות, אויכעט בחומרינות,  
צו כל פעולה של צדק ויושר,  
איז דאך א זיכערע זאך, אז ער וועט  
נאכמערער מוסיף זיין בכל ענינים אלו, כולל  
אויכעט די הכרזה גלויה, אז ער אליין באווייזט  
א ביישפיל בביתו אויף אנגעמנדיק דארט די  
מנורה, און צוזאמען מיט אט די וואס שטעלן  
עס צו די מנורה בסבר פנים יפות, ע"מ אז ממנו  
יראו וכן יעשו, בכל קצוי מדינה זו, וממדינה זו  
יראו וכן יעשו בכל המדינות, אז מ'וועט לאזן

אז בפשטות, זאל ער מתוך גוף בריא  
נאכמערער מוסיף זיין אין הפצת הטוב והצדק  
והיושר, אנהובנדיק, פון מכריז זיין בגלוי, אז  
וואס נאר א איד וויל אוועקשטעלן א מנורה,  
און פארבינדן דאס און אנצינדן דאס, און באופן  
דמוסיף והולך ואור מדי לילה בלילה, אין די  
אלע שמונה לילות בזמן המתאים,  
איז מען עס מסייע, ואדרבה, אויב מ'טוט  
דאס אין א מקום של פירסומי ניסא, איז דאס  
נאכמערער פארבונדן מיט דעם רוח און מיט  
דעם יסוד פון אט די אלע וואס האבן אנגעהויבן  
זייער זיין במדינה זו דורך דאנקן דעם  
אויבערשטן,  
וואס דאס איז דאך אויכעט דער ענין  
בפנימיות ובפשטות פון הדלקת נרות המנורה,  
איז דאך דאס אדאנק דעם אויבערשטן אויף  
וואס ער האט מציל געווען צדיקים מיד רשעים,



RABBI MOSHE HERSON STANDS WITH SUPPORTERS PRIOR TO THE LIGHTING OF THE MENORAH AT THE NEW JERSEY STATE CAPITAL.

THE REBBE'S LENGTHY LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE JCC IN TEANECK, NJ ABOUT THE PUBLIC MENORAH DISPLAY.

County Court House in Hackensack, N.J.

"It was beautiful," recalls Rabbi Brod. "It was an ideal location. Every night we would get hoisted up by a cherry picker to light the Menorah. We had people from the Federation there, and everyone had a wonderful time."

"I was so naïve; I had no idea that people would have an issue with it," he relates. "So I was shocked when during the following summer, I got a call from a high up in the Jewish Federation of Teaneck asking that we refrain from setting up such a Menorah in Teaneck, where I was based."

They explained that they had their own way of doing things, and were not interested in a public Menorah. When they heard that he was intending on putting one up anyway, they decided to write a letter to the Rebbe to express their opinion. The Rebbe replied to

them by writing two letters on the topic in which the Rebbe strongly defended the concept of public Menorah lightings. In the following paragraphs we will bring excerpts from the Rebbe's letters.

It should be noted, that the Rebbe wrote and sent the second, lengthy letter at the end of Chanukah, and apparently wasn't written with the intent of convincing them to put up a Menorah, since the Town Council had already rejected it that year regardless. Rather, as the Rebbe wrote in the beginning of the letter, "it touches upon a fundamental principle which has its ramifications beyond the immediate issue."

Concerning the legality of placing a religious symbol on public grounds, the Rebbe cited precedence from the Menorahs in major cities, as well as the Menorah on the White House lawn. "That it was also constitutional,

legal, and proper goes without saying since the President of the U.S. personally participated in it"... "In New York City, the Attorney General of the State of New York personally participated in the ceremony<sup>3</sup>, and elsewhere public officials and dignitaries were on hand at this public event..."

The Rebbe explained that failing to express Judaism in public life could backfire with negative results. "If the minority voluntarily gives up certain privileges which it once enjoyed, not to mention if it voluntarily forgoes a certain right which the same minority enjoys elsewhere [like lighting a Menorah on public property] - it is bound to be regarded as a sign of weakness and an admission that it is not really entitled to it at all." And if Jews refrained from putting a Menorah in public, it could hardly deter the general *goyishe* population from expressing their religion in public.

In an addendum, the Rebbe added, "It is difficult to imagine that after what had happened in Hitler Germany," where Jews were murdered despite their complete assimilation in German culture, "some Jews would still entertain the idea that by making themselves as inconspicuous as possible, concealing their Jewishness, they would gain favor with their gentile neighbors."

**THAT IT WAS ALSO CONSTITUTIONAL, LEGAL, AND PROPER GOES WITHOUT SAYING SINCE THE PRESIDENT OF THE U.S. PERSONALLY PARTICIPATED IN IT" .... "IN NEW YORK CITY, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK PERSONALLY PARTICIPATED IN THE CEREMONY**



**RABBI YOSEF LANDA LIGHTS THE LARGE MENORAH NEAR THE S. LOUIS GOVERNMENT CENTER.**

Regarding the importance of displaying a Menorah, the Rebbe wrote, "Now to come to the essential point. Why is it so important for Jews to have a Chanukah Menorah displayed publicly? Experience has shown that the Chanukah Menorah displayed publicly during the eight days of Chanukah has been an inspiration to many, many Jews, and evoked in them a spirit of identity with their Jewish people and the Jewish way of life. To many others it has brought a sense of pride in their Yiddishkeit and the realization that there is no reason really in this free country to hide one's Jewishness, as if it were contrary or inimical to American life and culture. On the contrary, it is fully in keeping with the American national slogan 'e pluribus unum'<sup>4</sup> and the fact that American culture has been enriched by the thriving ethnic cultures which contributed very much, each in its own way, to American life both materially and spiritually."

"Certainly, Jews are not in the proselytizing business. The Chanukah Menorah is not intended to, and can in no way, bring us converts to Judaism.

But it can, and does, bring many Jews back to their Jewish roots. I personally know of scores of such Jewish returnees, and I have good reason to believe that in recent years, hundreds, even thousands, of Jews experience a kindling of their inner Jewish spark by the public kindling of the Chanukah Menorah in their particular city and in the Nation's capital etc. as publicised by the media."

These powerful letters were used by many shluchim throughout the years to formulate the Lubavitch position on public Menorahs.<sup>5</sup>

Getting back to the Menorah in Teaneck: Although Rabbi Brod's bid for a public Menorah in Teaneck was rejected by the local council, he successfully arranged that Menorahs be lit in many other locations in New Jersey, including the State Capital in Trenton.

The following summer, Rabbi Brod met with Rabbi Moshe Herson to discuss the plans for the upcoming Chanukah. There were two options: Either they could continue pursuing the Menorah in Teaneck (despite the opposition at the local town hall), or perhaps it would be better to concentrate their efforts on having a Menorah put up in Trenton.

Rabbi Herson wrote to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe disregarded the option about Teaneck and agreed that they move forward with their efforts in Trenton, also instructing how to proceed with placing Menorahs in other cities: לאחר שיגישו באופן המתאים ויבררו שיש סכומים להצלחה. After they feel them out in a discerning fashion, and determine that there is a chance of success".

At the time, they understood the *maane* as follows: every time a fight was lost over a public Menorah, it strengthened the opposing side. The Rebbe was telling them to be careful and attempt to put up Menorahs only in places where they knew they had a fair chance of success.

Afterwards, Rabbi Brod arranged for Menorahs to be displayed in other locations around New Jersey, and by 5744 (תשד"ו) his empire of Menorahs expanded to 15 stately structures standing proudly in front of town halls all across Bergen County (three municipalities - Fort Lee, Oakland and Hillside - put up their own).

Over the ensuing years, many other shluchim had to deal with similar controversies within their communities regarding public Menorahs. In Teaneck, due to the



**NEW YORK CITY MAYOR ED KOCH JOINS RABBI SHMUEL BUTMAN IN LIGHTING THE WORLD'S LARGEST MENORAH IN MANHATTAN.**



## REMINDFUL OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

In Sivan, 5749, Rabbi Krinsky reported to the Rebbe that a verdict was expected from the Supreme Court regarding the right to display menorahs on public property, and the estimation was that the anticipated ruling would be positive.

He asked the Rebbe if he should prepare a statement for the press, and the Rebbe noted that it should be done in a manner שלא אריינגעשלעפט ווערן לויכוחים וכיו"ב – that would not drag us into any [further] disputes.

On the actual statement prepared, the Rebbe noted his comments and corrections:

The Rebbe crossed a line through “the framers of the Constitution of the United States never intended to separate government from religion” and left only “the founders of this country believed in G-d”.

Where it said, “They came here to escape the religious persecution of governments that coerced its citizens to abide by an established religion to the exclusion of all others” the Rebbe replaced it with “a religion accepted by the government”.

Where it said that “They hoped to establish on these shores a life where people would enjoy religious freedom, and worship G-d freely, each in accordance with his or her beliefs”, the Rebbe crossed a line through those last few words and noted:

נצרות היא ע"ז [=עבודה זרה] - היפך של ז"מ דב"ן [שבע-מצוות דבני-נח] משא"כ איסלם (1)

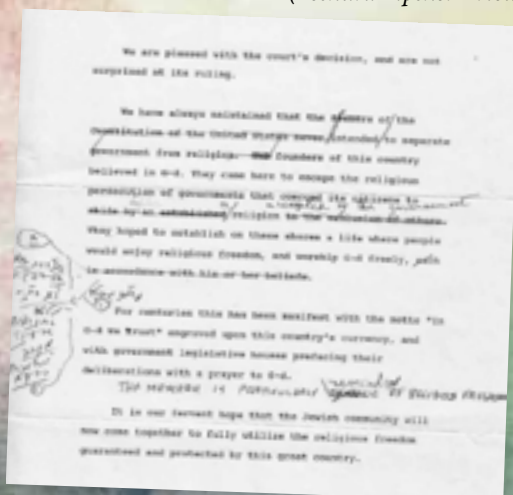
- אלא שהנוצרים שבימינו מעשה אבותיהם בידיהם (2)

“[The Rebbe instructed to delete the line that each can serve G-d in accordance with his or her beliefs, reasoning that] Christianity is [rendered as] *avoda zora*, contrary to the observance of *sheva mitzvos b'nei noach*; as opposed to Islam”.

It is only that the Christians of today are merely practicing what their fathers have taught them.

Where it said that the menorah is particularly “symbolic” of religious freedom, the Rebbe replaced it with “remindful”.

(Teshura Lipsker-Friedman, 5773)



opposition of the community, the Township council decided not to put up a Menorah until the court ruled that doing so did not violate the constitution.

This occurred in the landmark case of *County of Allegheny v. American Civil Liberties Union* in 5749 (תשמ"ט), when the Supreme Court issued a 6:3 ruling that the city of Pittsburgh was permitted to place a huge Menorah lent to them by Chabad on government property. (See sidebar with the Rebbe's edits on a press release prepared by Lubavitch News Service at the time).

## NO NEED TO BE ASHAMED

In 5742 (תשמ"ב), Rabbi Yosef Landa, who was sent on shlichus to St. Louis the year before, decided to build a Menorah on the large plaza adjacent to the St. Louis County Government Center. Working with a local fabricator, he built a beautiful 15-foot structure.

He got a permit from the county, but as he was standing in the plaza about to erect the Menorah, an official came down from the Government Center, telling him that although they had previously agreed on the Menorah, the county wanted to check first with their lawyers - and he was prohibited to put it up until they did.

Rabbi Landa was shocked. They had been about to put up the Menorah, and now this. He immediately called *mazkirus* and asked for a *brocha* from the Rebbe that everything should work out. Within an hour he received the news that the Menorah could go up as planned.

A County executive attended the lighting ceremony, and Rabbi Landa was gratified with the positive feedback he received. However, towards the end of Chanukah, he began hearing grumblings from



some of the members of the Jewish community. Someone wrote a letter to the editor of one of the local Jewish newspapers claiming that the public display of a Menorah violated the separation between religion and state, and he responded with a letter to the editor of his own.

As far as he was concerned, the entire episode, both the event and the controversy that followed it, was a minor one.

Soon after Chanukah, Rabbi Landa traveled to New York for a wedding. When he came to 770, he was

surprised to hear that Rabbi Groner was looking for him. Not sure what to expect, Rabbi Landa was amazed when he was told that the Rebbe had written a *maane* for him, מה הי' סוף דבר, במיזורי? What ended up happening in Missouri? [This was a tremendous *kiruv*, especially for a young shliach.]

Of course, he immediately sat down and wrote a detailed report to the Rebbe of all that had happened, and also mentioned the complaints of the community.

Shortly afterwards, Rabbi Landa received a lengthy response from the

Rebbe with a general *horov* that had implications for other Shluchim as well:

יתדברו השלוחים שי' במצב כהנ"ל ביניהם  
בהשתתפות היודע המצב בוואשינגטון הררא"י  
ש"ט [שם-טוב] - למנוע סתירות מזל"ז [מזה  
לזה] ואדרבה לסייע זל"ז [זה לזה] וכו'

“The shluchim *shyichyu* who are in a similar situation to the above should coordinate among themselves (with the participation of the one who knows the situation in Washington; Rabbi Avraham Shemtov) in order to avoid contradictions [in their position about public Menorahs] from another, and on the contrary, to help one another etc.”

In response to what Rabbi Landa had written in his report regarding his communication with the newspapers, the Rebbe wrote:

אשרי חלקו וגדול זכותו שקידש ש"ש [שם  
שמים] וכו', ולא התבייש מפני המלעיגים,  
והפיץ יהדות בפועל בתוך רבבות מאחבני"י  
[מאחינו בני ישראל] שליט"א וכו'

“Fortunate is his lot and great is his merit that he was *mikadesh shem shamayim* etc., and wasn't embarrassed from the scoffers, and actually spread Yiddishkeit among tens of thousands of Yidden *shlita*.”

The Rebbe's response amazed him. First of all, he didn't understand why he had merited such a powerful *maane* on what seemed to him as a minor event. Additionally, he didn't understand why the Rebbe put so much focus on his Menorah situation which also seemed to him to be inconsequential.

By the next year however, Rabbi Landa began to understand. As Chanukah was nearing and Rabbi Landa was planning to once again erect a public Menorah things suddenly took a turn for the worse. The Jewish establishment of the city, over forty organizations, joined forces to fight against him, a young shliach who had only arrived a few years earlier. They viciously campaigned



THE 22-FOOT MAHOGANY MENORAH IN S. FRANCISCO'S UNION SQUARE, PLACED BY RABBI CHAIM DRIZIN IN 5736.

against him, sending flurries of letters about him to all the local newspapers, and setting meetings with the county to convince them out of allowing the Menorah.

"The entire community was abuzz over this controversy," Rabbi Landa says. "The local Jewish newspaper made it front-page news and editorialized against us, and word of the discord within the Jewish community even reached the general media."

"Their argument was ostensibly that they considered the placement of the Menorah on public property to be in violation of the constitutional

separation of religion and state. It was evident however, that there was also an underlying unease with the forthright, unabashed, public display of Jewishness which the Menorah represented.

"These were well-intentioned people who were firmly attached to what they perceived to be the Jewish community's sacred opposition to such displays. Some saw us as foreigners, 'imports from Brooklyn' (that's how one writer referred to us in an op-ed), who had come to town to overturn long-standing, hallowed community norms."

Understandably, the controversy was very hard on him. He finally understood why he had merited such a tremendously encouraging response from the Rebbe the year before, it had been a preparation to the controversy which engulfed him the year after.

When he was fending for himself in the newspapers and around the city, he used the letters the Rebbe had written to the community in Teaneck to help formulate his position.

Although so many people stood up against him, the decision eventually came down from the county that - "didan notzach!" - the Menorah would go up, albeit for only a few days!

After the decision, those who had fought it were very upset: They had been in town for so many years, they considered themselves the Jewish establishment, and now some young Rabbi shows up and changes the way things were done.

**WHEN ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF MAZKIRUS MENTIONED TO THE REBBE WHAT KOCH HAD SAID, THE REBBE SMILED BROADLY.**



But the story didn't end there. Rabbi Landa relates:

"It was the last day of Chanukah that year, and the iconic big-city Mayor Ed Koch happened to be in St. Louis to address the annual meeting of the local Jewish Federation which was held over a Sunday brunch at an upscale St. Louis hotel. Several hundred supporters were in attendance, including many of the professionals and lay leaders who were heading the opposition to the Menorah.

"Koch gave his speech, which of course had nothing to do with the Menorah, and then proceeded to take questions from the audience. That's when one questioner took to the floor and asked Koch to explain how, as a Jewish Mayor, he dealt with the issue of religious symbols on public property and, specifically, would the Mayor be kind enough to share his own view about the placement of Menorahs on public property.

"An audible gasp went up from the audience. Someone had dared to bring up the embarrassing, unmentionable topic of the Menorah display in the presence of this important guest. Then there was utter silence as the straight-

shooting Koch responded in his typical direct and outspoken manner. "I have no problem whatsoever with having a privately-funded Menorah on public property", he said. "I think it's absolutely wonderful. I'm proud to say that we have one in New York City at Fifth Avenue and Central Park."

"As if he hadn't said enough on the subject, the Mayor continued further. "Let me tell you what else we do in New York," he said. "The Menorah is in Manhattan. The people who light the Menorah are the Lubavitchers. They live in Brooklyn, so when they light the Menorah in Manhattan late on Friday afternoon when it's getting close to Shabbos, we provide them with a helicopter and we fly them back to Brooklyn, so they can get home in time for Shabbos!"

Needless to say the controversy quieted down after that.

When one of the members of *mazkirus* mentioned to the Rebbe what Koch had said, the Rebbe smiled broadly.

The unending results of public Menorahs around the world will perhaps never be adequately assessed. The timeless flames of the Chanukah

Menorah speaking into the hearts and souls of millions of Jews, igniting a sometimes sleeping spark and reawakening the ever-present connection to the source, in a true manner of קירוב המאור אל הניצוץ.

Suffice it to say that the Rebbe himself attested to this very fact in the abovementioned letter, saying that "I personally know of scores of such Jewish returnees, and I have good reason to believe that in recent years, hundreds, even thousands, of Jews experience a kindling of their inner Jewish spark by the public kindling of the Chanukah Menorah..." <sup>1</sup>

1. See the Leben Mitten Rebbe'n column in this publication.

2. See Teshurah - Krinsky-Shmukler 5770 (תש"ע)

3. It is interesting to note that in 5739 (תשל"ט) Rabbi Shmuel Butman was specifically instructed to invite Mr. Robert Abrams, the newly elected Attorney General of New York, to the Menorah lighting in Manhattan.

4. *E pluribus unum* is Latin for "Out of many, one" (alternatively translated as "One out of many" or "One from many") — a phrase that is on the Seal of the United States.

5. It should be noted that although he Rebbe was at the forefront of efforts ensuring the Menorah would be successful in Teaneck, the Rebbe was unhappy about the unnecessary tension this caused within the community. When Rabbi Brod had initially told *mazkirus* that the Jewish Federation was against the Menorah, Rabbi Hodakov made it clear that the Rebbe did not want the issue of the public Menorah to be a cause for *machlokes* in the Teaneck Jewish community.

Later on, when the opposition grew strong, the Rebbe reiterated that it is a shame the situation had to come to where it is, when they could have pursued the Menorah without causing *machlokes* to begin with. The Rebbe pointed out, that if the community would have been informed about the Menorah in Washington with the President himself taking part in the lighting ceremony, and the Menorah in New York City where the Attorney General took part, it is very doubtful that the opposition would have been the way it was.

6. Following this maane, the shluchim set up a meeting with Rabbi Shemtov at the first kinnus hashluchim in 5744 (תשמ"ד).



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A DELEGATION OF SHLUCHIM PRESENT US PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN WITH A MENORAH.



# דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

## Medical Mystery

AS TOLD BY MOSHE GROSSMAN (PHILADELPHIA, PA)

I would like to share with you a story which, had it not happened to me, I would have never believed it took place. This story transpired in two segments and by the end I was a changed man.

It all began in the summer of 2014 (5774). My then twenty-eight year old daughter took a trip to Israel with an extended stopover in Spain. Arriving in Israel, she noticed swelling in her right arm which she attributed to a bug bite or something she ate, so naturally, she didn't give it much more thought.

The swelling persisted and on the Sunday she returned to the US she called my cousin, a pediatric oncologist, who, after hearing the symptoms came to the conclusion that it must be a blood clot and advised her to go immediately to the hospital.

Living in Manhattan, she made her way to the New York University Hospital emergency room, where an ultrasound scan confirmed the blood clot. Strangely enough, her condition was one that usually appears as a result of activities that demand intensive straining of the arm, such as baseball pitching or weight-lifting, neither of which my daughter had ever attempted.

When my daughter notified me she was on her way to the hospital, I immediately dropped everything to join her in NYU Hospital. The doctors decided on a rather simple operation, which would entail inserting a tube directly into the clot through which a dissolvent medicine would be injected. This would be followed by a CT scan to determine if the blood clot had indeed dissipated. It all sounded rather simple.

The procedure took place on Tuesday. When I went to visit her in the recovery room following the operation, she was suddenly overcome with an intense, excruciating pain in her abdomen and back, causing her body to spasm uncontrollably. The doctors injected her with painkillers and after the pain subsided, she was transferred to the ICU. The tube that was inserted during the procedure needed to be re-opened, as the short passage of time already caused the opening for the dissolvent medicine to close up.

I slept in the hospital that night, and the next morning we were notified that the treatment for the blood clot would be put on hold because, for no apparent reason, my daughter's kidneys abruptly stopped functioning. The doctors were baffled as to what had caused the kidney failure and very soon every department became involved in her case. She underwent numerous tests but none of the results pointed to anything that could be deemed the source for her kidney failure. In the meantime the doctors began to drip liquids into her body to entice the kidneys to begin working again, and over time her body became bloated from the accumulation of liquids.

At the end of the week they began dialysis in the hope of at least cleaning out the poisons out of her blood stream.

A week and a half on dialysis brought no improvement in my daughter's condition and her situation began to seem hopeless and never-ending.

That was when I received a call from Rabbi Yitzchak Weber, the Chabad shliach in my area. He had heard of our situation and he offered to go with me to the Ohel where I could write to the Rebbe for a blessing for my daughter's recovery. I wasn't the biggest believer but I figured it wouldn't hurt.

Rabbi Weber came to NYU Hospital on Thursday at ten o'clock in the evening, and we drove together to the Ohel. We arrived after midnight. I wrote my request and upon the advice of Rabbi Weber I resolved to begin laying tefillin twice a week.

That Shabbos it was decided that instead of bringing the dialysis machine to her room in the ICU, my daughter would be transferred to the dialysis department where, in addition to convenience, she would also avoid the risk of contracting any of the diseases that might have been more prevalent in the ICU.

On Sunday morning, after two weeks of endless tests, dialysis and IV drips my daughter began showing signs of recovery when she went to the bathroom for the first time in weeks, a clear indication that her kidneys had begun functioning once again just as suddenly as they had collapsed two and a half weeks before.

Over the course of the following week she released twenty eights liters of fluid which her body had



accumulated from two weeks of the kidneys not functioning.

She was soon back to normal, and upon being released from the hospital the doctors prescribed oral blood thinners and after nine months the blood clot disappeared.

There is no evident medical explanation, not for her kidney failure nor for her sudden recovery. Although the doctors remain mystified by this medical mystery, I am certainly not, considering the fact that her recovery took place just two days following my visit to the Ohel.

In January 2015 (5775) I was sitting in my office when I suddenly sneezed very hard. I felt a sharp pain on my left side but I attributed it to a pulled muscle and although I was in a lot of pain, I felt better after a few days.

Several days later I was sitting in my office again, when strangely enough the scene repeated itself. The pain I felt wasn't as intense as in the first instance but lo and behold the next morning I noticed a huge bruise on my left side. I visited my doctor who sent me straight to the hospital on suspicion of internal bleeding.

After running some scans and tests the doctors determined that the bruising was a result of an artery I tore when I sneezed.





Alarmingly, the scans pointed to something much greater that had no connection to the bruising. There was an 8.7 centimeter growth on my left kidney, which was releasing blood as well.

In retrospect, the sneezing and bruising was actually an act of divine providence, as it prompted me to have myself examined and thereby uncovering the much greater issue.

After three days in the hospital the doctors informed me that the bleeding had stopped and although I was being released, they advised me to consult with a nephrologist immediately. Upon consulting with one doctor I was told that no biopsy was necessary as there was little chance that the growth was not cancerous and an operation was necessary to remove most, if not all, of the kidney. I asked

the doctor if the surgery can wait until after my vacation scheduled a couple months later and he assured me it was okay.

Still, I sought out the opinions of two more specialists, one from the University of Pennsylvania and the other from the Fox Chase Cancer Center, and both concurred that the procedure should take place as soon as possible. I decided to undergo the operation with the Fox Chase medical team and we scheduled for February 12 (Chof-Aleph Teves).

Rabbi Weber, with whom I had grown much closer since the story with my daughter, suggested we go visit the Ohel once more and ask for a *brocha* that all should go well.

Visiting the Ohel, I wrote my note in which I asked the Rebbe for a *brocha* for a complete recovery. In the days

leading up to my operation I underwent various tests to monitor the growth in my kidney and it was quickly decided that a full removal of the kidney would be fine as my other kidney was in full working order.

At one point, in addition to running tests on my abdomen, the doctor administered a chest scan as well. The results proved to be terrifying. Two lymph nodes, the size of 3 ½ centimeters & 3 centimeters, were detected behind my trachea. This looked very suspicious as it was the exact area to where the cancer from the kidney was most expected to spread. If this was the case then the disease was already in stage four.

At first the doctor was hesitant to specify the implication of this, but upon my insistence to hear a clear prognosis, he informed me that the average life expectancy of a stage four patient was two-and-a-half years...

That night Rabbi Weber called, as he often did, to hear an update of my situation, and when I shared with him the grim prognosis from earlier that day he had one question for me: What exactly had I written in my letter to the Rebbe. When I told him I had simply asked for a complete recovery he was surprised. "You should have asked for a miracle," he gently chided me. He suggested that I write another note with a request for a miracle, which he then sent with an acquaintance of his to be placed by the Ohel.

The day of my operation arrived. The surgery stretched on for over six hours, much longer than expected. Following the operation, the doctor spoke to my family and explained that everything about the kidney they had extracted screamed cancer, and it was sent for further testing to confirm the expected and seemingly obvious diagnosis. If confirmed, I would have to undergo intensive and lengthy treatment to battle the disease and we could only hope for the best.

After five days of anxious waiting for the lab results, my doctor came back with unbelievable news. The growth was benign! He had made sure the head pathologist himself thoroughly examined the kidney and lo and behold, not one cancer cell was detected.

I must tell you that when I chose my doctor for this procedure, I made certain to choose from all my options the most experienced and acclaimed. My doctor had personally performed six thousand similar procedures and his medical group at Fox Chase had completed over fifteen thousand such operations. From all these cases he had never seen an instance similar to mine. The size, texture, look and make-up of the growth shouted cancer, but the tests have proven it to be completely clean!

That Thursday I underwent a biopsy to determine whether the lymph nodes detected in my chest scan were infected. Following the test I went home to await the results

and I was feeling quite optimistic. I had recovered very well from the surgery the week before and I felt strong and healthy.

The next day a friend came to visit me at home and as I put up the tea kettle to boil I was suddenly attacked by tremendous pain. All at once my hearing dulled, my speech became slurred and I couldn't stand on my feet. I was rushed to the nearest hospital where it was determined that I had suffered three successive mini-strokes.

Astonishingly, I recovered quickly from this as well, and within a week I was back home.

Soon thereafter the results of my biopsy came back clean. The only possible explanation my doctor managed to come up with was that I had truly contracted the disease and in some inexplicable way, my body had absorbed it, a medical phenomenon that defies comprehension.

At that point I was not even surprised as it was evident that I was the beneficiary of extraordinary blessings. Every detail from start to finish was truly a part of this miraculous tapestry of events, beginning with the sneezing and bruising which, having no connection to my kidney disease, merely served as a warning signal for me to have myself examined, and ending with a clean bill of health despite the grim prognosis of the doctors.

Contemplating all this I was suddenly stunned by a recollection that still makes my hair stand on end every time I think about it. When I had asked the Rebbe for a blessing for my daughter half a year earlier, following her kidney failure, I had written that if necessary, I was ready to sacrifice myself and take her place!

Today I know that one must not ask for such things....

Soon after, I made a dinner to give thanks and celebrate my miracle. At the dinner I announced that I will be travelling to the Ohel to give thanks and express my gratitude to the Rebbe, and I urged that anybody in need of a blessing should join me. I rented a limo bus and we filled it with people.

Since then I have arranged regular trips to the Ohel, accompanying and assisting my acquaintances visiting for the first time.

My parents are holocaust survivors and my father was very anti-religious as a result of his experiences. This is the type of home that I was raised in and without a doubt the episode recounted above has completely changed my outlook on life, imbuing me with an entirely new appreciation and sense for true fulfillment. I now lay tefillin every day, attend *shul* on Shabbos and have wholly dedicated myself to assist Rabbi Weber in building Chabad in our community. **T**



# A Chassidishe Village

## LIFE IN SHTZEDRIN

(Based on the Friediker Rebbe's sicha - Shabbos parshas Shemos, 5702)

The Tzemach Tzedek cared deeply for the financial well being of Russian Jewry, and encouraged many people to take up agricultural and other groundwork on the Russian countryside.

To better assist them, the Tzemach Tzedek purchased 3,500 "desiate" of country land in the Minsk region, which included open space, forest, and rivers. The land was bought from Count Shtzedinov and the village was named after him.

More than three hundred Jewish families soon settled in Shtzedrin where the Tzemach Tzedek distributed the land to them free of charge. There they enjoyed a steady income, and for part of the year they were free to learn Torah.

Each family was given a piece of land to build a house, breed animals and build farming structures.

Shtzedrin residents enjoyed government privileges including a 200 ruble loan to be repaid over time.

The Tzemach Tzedek split the 3,500 desiate into two. All open space and part of the forest—a total of 1,700 diaste—were designated for settlement. The rest of the forest—1,800 diaste—was sold to a wealthy Chossid from Bobroisk, Reb Efrayim Yosef Golodetz. The Tzemach Tzedek sent part of the profits to Colel Chabad in Eretz Yisroel and kept part for his tzedaka fund.

Some of Reb Efrayim Yosef's family moved to Shtzedrin to run his lumber business.

Aside for the rov, the *shochet*, and the *melamed*, Shtzedrin also had a *mashpia*, Reb Yerucham Fishel Yanovitcher. He was later replaced by another *mashpia*, Reb Yisroel Moshe.

Reb Yisroel Moshe was a wise and beloved man, a *lamdan* and a *baal middos tovos*, and he was deeply *mekushar* to the Tzemach Tzedek.

For a few decades after his marriage his father-in-law supported him while he learned. He then became a *melamed* until, about ten years after founding Shtzedrin, the Tzemach Tzedek appointed him *mashpia* of the colony.

At farbrengens, there was always one *vort* from the *mashpia* that was the pillar around which all the talk and stories revolved. This *vort* was eternally etched in the hearts of everyone there.

Reb Yisroel Moshe was a well thought-out individual, and a very punctual person. He expected everyone to attend the fixed learning sessions on time, and would reprimand anyone who wouldn't show up.

He also had a way with words. When he would discuss with people the purpose of life, they would leave broken and downtrodden, foolish and worthless in their own eyes.

He could describe people or stories so clearly it was as if he drew a painting.

He was mild tempered, didn't speak harshly or shout, and spoke to every person on his level. He would speak to people of their weaknesses in a way that every word would strike a deep chord in their hearts and bring tears to their eyes.

A Chossid by the name of Reb Avrohom Dov ben Reb Yermiyah told me about his uncle, Reb Leib Yitzchok. He was a Chossid of the Alter Rebbe and was well versed in Nigle and Chassidus. He was a businessman, working first in a big store in Hommel and later as senior manager of Reb Efrayim Yosef's estate in Shtzedrin.



## AT FARBRENGENS, THERE WAS ALWAYS ONE VORT FROM THE MASHPIA THAT WAS THE PILLAR AROUND WHICH ALL THE TALK AND STORIES REVOLVED. THIS VORT WAS ETERNALLY ETCHED IN THE HEARTS OF EVERYONE THERE.

While living in Hommel he was a student of Reb Aizik Hommler. He was one of the first to come hear Chassidus from Reb Aizik and would speak with him in learning, both *nigle* and Chassidus. Reb Aizik said: “You can speak with Reb Leib Yitzchok. He has both an “*ozen shoma’as*—a listening ear” and an “*ozen milin tibachen*—an ear that can judge words.”

Reb Avrohom Dov learned in Lubavitch from his bar mitzvah until age seventeen, and whenever he had free time he would go to his uncle Reb Leib Yitzchok.

Reb Leib Yitzchok would be *mekarev* his nephew, telling him of his childhood years, his teachers, and what and how he would learn.

Reb Leib Yitzchok’s father, Avrohom Dov’s grandfather R’ Elya Shaul, was *baki* in sedarim Nashim and Nezikin of Gemara with Tosfos—he knew it almost by heart. He was a tailor—his worker would sow and he would sit in the corner of his store learning.

He was a *misnaged* but mixed out of *machlokes* and didn’t take any sides. He had a childhood friend called Reb Tanchum Shlomo, the Maggid of Beli, who hated Chassidim. He was on the Vilna *Beis Din* of Reb Shmuel that put the Mezritcher Maggid in *cherem*.

Reb Leib Yitzchok learned for years by this Reb Tanchum Shlomo and was affected by his hate. *Be’hashgacha pratis*, his two best friends—

brothers—became Chassidim and he followed them.

Reb Leib Yitzchok was very fond of the *mashpia* Reb Yisroel Moshe who in turn treated him with great respect.

He would come to all farbrengens. He would tell of his days before he became a Chossid, his early days as one, his first *yechidus* and stories of the Mittlerer Rebbe’s times. He had a strong impact on his listeners.

Reb Avrohom Dov said that Reb Leib Yitzchok gave rich explanations of Chassidus, in a clear, concise manner. His explanations were accompanied by stories that not only added clarity but etched his teachings into the the minds and hearts of his listeners.

Reb Avrohom Dov also described the Mashpia Reb Yisroel Moshe’s farbrengens: “When the *mashpia* spoke, you could close your eyes and you forget where you were. You could imagine that you could see or have been transported to the place the *mashpia* described. His words made a great impact.” ❶





# תקנות הרבי

## ***In honor of the Siyum HoRambam***

As Chassidim, one of the most basic ways of connecting with our Rabbeim is by following the *takanos* they instituted.

In honor of our celebrating the Siyum HoRambam this month, we bring this collection of *divrei hisorerus* and stories highlighting the importance of fulfilling the Rebbe's *takanos*.

### **Chitas**

From the beginning of the Rebbe's *nesius*, the Rebbe often spoke of how vital it is for every Chossid, and for that matter every Yid, to study the daily *shiurim* of Chitas. In addition to this being a basic part of our *hiskashrus*, the Rebbe emphasized this as a source for blessings in one's life.

At several of the major farbrengens each year, the Rebbe consistently mentioned the study of Chitas and encouraged everyone to adhere to this *takana* of the Friediker Rebbe.

On Yud Shevat and Yud-Beis Tammuz, the Rebbe would discuss Chitas as a *takana* of the "baal hahilula" or "baal hageulah." On Simchas Torah and Shavuot the Rebbe would also speak of Chitas, drawing on its connection to these special days. On Simchas Torah we begin the study cycle of Torah anew. On Shavuot we received the Torah from Moshe Rabbeinu (Chumash), we mark the *yahrtzeit* of Dovid Hamelech (Tehillim), and the *yahrtzeit* of the Baal Shem Tov, who revealed Chassidus to the world (Tanya).

Reading the Rebbe's letters printed in Igros Kodesh, one notices that often the Rebbe concludes a letter by instructing the recipient to keep the daily *shiurim* of Chitas. The words בטח שומר שלשת השיעורים השונים לכל נפש מתקנת כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר—are found literally hundreds of times throughout the Igros Kodesh.

## DON'T BE FREE

In response to your letter from 12/16 in which you write that due to your preoccupation with your studies you only study Chumash with Rashi, but do not keep the monthly *shiur* Tehillim or the *shiur* Tanya. You ask that you should be freed from the obligation of these two *shiurim*.

I am surprised at your [train of thought]. Keeping these *shiurim* is not for the benefit of someone else other than yourself. Just like all of Torah and mitzvos which are for the benefit of the one fulfilling them.

Thus, if you were freed of the obligation to keep these *shiurim*, you are also “freeing” yourself of the good results that come from keeping these *shiurim*...

(Igros Kodesh vol. 14 p. 288)

## Hiskashrus

Less than one month after Yud Shevat 5710, the Rebbe wrote in an introduction to one of the *kuntreisim* he printed about the importance of keeping the [Frierdiker] Rebbe's *takanos*, quoting a letter from the Frierdiker Rebbe in this regard:

“השוואל במה היא ההתקשרות שלו אלי מאחר שאין

אני מכיר פנים... ומקיים בקשתי באמידת תהלים...”

The Rebbe makes sure to add a footnote that at the time when this letter was written, the *takana* of Chitas was not yet publicized in its entirety; only Tehillim.<sup>1</sup>

In another letter to an individual, the Rebbe wishes him well in honor of his birthday, and adds that as a Chossid, he must influence others to follow in the Rebbe's ways as well:

...A Chassid is engaged in strengthening his *hiskashrus*, through learning Chassidus of the *nossi* and especially through holding strong on to the three daily *shiurim* of Chumash, Tehillim and Tanya.

But the job of the Chossid is not to suffice with working on himself. He must also influence his surroundings—be *mekarev* them, to awaken them, and enlighten them with

the light of Torah and mitzvos, permeated with the luminary; *toras haChassidus*...<sup>2</sup>

Also, in his famous letter in preparation for Yud Shevat, 5711, the Rebbe writes:

During the period [of the *yahrtzeit*] people (who are fit for this task) should visit the local shuls and botei medroshim to convey a thought or *pisgam* from the [Frierdiker] Rebbe's Torah; elaborate about his *ahavas Yisroel* for every single Jew; and inform them and explain his *takana* of reciting Tehillim, studying Chumash with Rashi, and, where appropriate, also the daily study of Tanya that he divided...<sup>3</sup>

In a similar vein, the Rebbe once spoke at a farbrengen of each Chossid's responsibility to influence other Yidden in the study of Chitas:

When Moshiach comes, he won't want to hear of any excuses (“*kuntz'n*”). He will demand of everyone: List for me on a piece of paper how many people you transformed into Chassidim of the Rebbe. How many Yidden did you influence to study the *shiurim* of Chitas? How many Yidden did you influence to come and recite the entire Tehillim on *Shabbos mevorchim*?<sup>4</sup>

## This is the Takana!

At one particular farbrengen, the Rebbe admonished those who do not fulfill the Frierdiker Rebbe's *takana* of reciting Tehillim on *Shabbos mevorchim* in the proper manner:

Being that *Shabbos Bereishis* influences all the *shabbosos mevorchim* throughout the entire year, it is appropriate to urge [everyone] regarding the [Frierdiker] Rebbe's *takanos* for *Shabbos mevorchim*: Reciting the entire Tehillim before davening and holding a farbrengen after davening.

The recital of Tehillim was instituted to be done specifically *be'tzibur*—with the minyan... Not like those of “*shpitz Chabad*” who think they are exempt from coming to recite Tehillim because they are busy learning Chassidus, or being “*meyached yichudim*,” or not even knowing themselves what they are doing... They therefore say Tehillim on their own, for [they think] they are better than the rest.

This was not the *takana*! The Tehillim must be recited with the minyan, together with all the Yidden.





THE REBBE HOLDS A RAMBAM DURING A CAR RIDE THROUGH THE LAG B'OMER STREET FAIR, 5744

Then there is also the second *takana*: the farbrengen after davening. The idea of a farbrengen is based on *ahavas Yisroel* (in addition to other special qualities of a farbrengen); when we come together at a farbrengen we say *I'chaim* and bless one another...<sup>5</sup>

### Remedy for Our Time

The Rebbe often explained that the daily study of Chitas serves as a channel to bring countless *brachos* in our lives. In scores of letters, the Rebbe advises people who seek his blessing to be more careful in keeping the daily *shiurim*.

At one farbrengen, the Rebbe explains this concept:

Being that we are now in a new time-period, where together with all the new blessings and remedies that come to being, there are also new

undesirable things. Therefore, in order to combat this new issue, we must have a new remedy...

...One of the new things revealed in our generation is the [Frieddiker] Rebbe's *takana* of studying one portion of Chumash each day with Rashi's commentary. On the first day of the week; from the beginning of the sidra until sheni, on the second day of the week; from sheni until shlishi, and so on. In previous generations, only select individuals followed this custom. But in our time, the [Frieddiker] Rebbe publicized it for everyone.<sup>6</sup>

Furthermore, the Rebbe once said that the *shiurim* are actually a source of life for each and every Jew in this generation:

...The *shiurim* of Chitas were instituted by the *nossi hador* for each and every member of the generation, stressing that these *shiurim* are שווים לכל

נפש - equally applicable to everyone - including a simple person who does not know what he is saying.

The reason is: these shiurim are not (only) in the category of the general mitzvah of studying Torah (which one can only fulfill if he understands what he is saying). These shiurim are a separate thing, connected with the very life of the soul, and the essence of the soul (פנימיות הנפש) - of each and every one in the generation...<sup>7</sup>

## TAKANOS OF MOSHE

The [Frierdiker] Rebbe's *horaos* are like the *takanos* that Moshe Rabbeinu made for the Yidden... They are called "*takanos*," as opposed to "*mitzvos*," because *mitzvos* are *m'doraysa* and are given from above, whereas "*takanos*" are *m'dirabbonan*; and are given down here, in order to be מתקן—to rectify and perfect the lower realms...

...Just like Moshe made *takanos*, the heads of *Klal Yisroel*—the "extensions" of Moshe Rabbeinu in each generation—also made *takanos*, which serve as a *tikun* for the *nefesh*. The same applies to the *takanos* of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe, the "extension of Moshe Rabbeinu of our generation" (אתפשטותא), like the *takana* to study Chitas... (דמשה שבדורנו)

(Sichas Pesach Sheini 5710; Toras Menachem vol. 1 p. 54)

## הוא בחיים

Perhaps more powerful than anything else, are the Rebbe's words about the [Frierdiker] Rebbe's *takanos* during the *yechidus k'lolis* on 15 Tammuz 5745:

There are a number of *takanos* that the *baal hageulah* instructed be printed and publicized for all Yidden. Like the *takana* of learning Chitas—Chumash, Tehillim, and Tanya—and other *takanos*, including the main *takana*: to spread *ahavas Yisroel*...

...When we learn his Torah and follow in his ways, by fulfilling his *takanos*, fulfilling his *shlichus* etc., then the activity of the *baal hageula* is emphasized publicly and as we said just as his children are alive, so too he is alive—זה זרעו בחיים—אף הוא בחיים. Meaning, the *baal hageula* lives within

our midst and more so, he lives within each one of us, to such an extent that our entire being is no more than being *shluchim* and fulfilling *shlichus* of the *baal hageula*, since *shlucho shel odom k'mosoi*!<sup>8</sup>

## Rambam

From the time the Rebbe instituted the daily study of Rambam, he never ceased to speak of this important initiative and to create the greatest tumult around its every detail.

During almost every farbrengen or *sicha* spoken (including *divrei kivushin* on fast-days, *yechidus k'lolis*, children's rallies, etc.), the Rebbe would dedicate part of the time to discuss the daily *shiur* of three perokim in Rambam; much as he had always done with the daily *shiur* of Chitas.

More than a month before the first *siyum hoRambam*, on Zayin Adar 5745, the Rebbe began encouraging everyone to arrange *siyumim* in the greatest and most productive manner. From then on, the Rebbe continued speaking about the importance of arranging *siyumim* everywhere, even after the actual date of the *siyum* passed! In fact, the Rebbe used the expression: even if there are 999 reasons for not holding a *siyum* in a specific place, and only one reason to do it, the *siyum* must take place!<sup>9</sup>

At one farbrengen, the Rebbe explained why studying Rambam is for each and every Jew:

Obviously, this is not limited to one circle exclusively. The study of Rambam is applicable to each and every Jew until the end of time, much as the study of *Torah Shebiksav*, the Torah of Moshe Rabbeinu, is applicable to each and every Jew through all generation. This is emphasized by the statement of *gedolei Yisroel* that משה עד משה לא קם כמושה. And as the Rambam writes in his introduction, his *sefer* is accessible לקטן ולגדול—i.e. each and every person - from the greatest to the smallest- has the ability to benefit from it; until this affects the entire world...<sup>10</sup>

Later on at that farbrengen, the Rebbe used exceptional terms about the proportions and reach of this *takana*:

אופנים: א) להשתדל ללמוד בכל יום שלשה פרקים כדי לסיים במשך השנה הבעל"ט,

N A HAGOHA TO THE SHALSHELES HAYACHAS PREPARED FOR PRINT IN HAYOM YOM, THE REBBE CROSSES OUT THE WORD להשתדל IN THE ENTRY ABOUT LEARNING THREE PEROKIM RAMBAM.





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This idea is worthy of reaching and encompassing the entire Jewish nation. In fact, it should reach and encompass the entire world! As stated, the non-Jews have already expressed their willingness to make a *shturem* about the Rambam...<sup>11</sup>

בימים כתיקונן - היו צריכים ה"משפיעים" להשתדל ולעורר ע"ד ענין הנ"ל, וכיו"ב בשאר הענינים "אין וועלכע מ'קאכט זיך און מ'רײסט זיך אויס די הארץ"...  
(ש"פ תצוה תשמ"ה; אודות לימוד הרמב"ם)

## Living with Rambam

Starting in 5741 (תשמ"א) on each night of Sukkos, the Rebbe would say a *sicha* and speak of the *ushpizin* of that night, as well as the *shiur* of Chitas and, later, Rambam.

Once, the Rebbe explained:

The Alter Rebbe says, "One must live with the times," which means with the *parsha* of the week, and the *shiur* of each specific day. In addition, one must live with the daily *shiur* Rambam as well, for as the Rambam writes in his introduction, his *sefer* comes in sequence to *Torah Shebiksav*...<sup>12</sup>

## Be a Mentch!

In conclusion, we bring a fascinating story told by Reb Aharon Dalfin, who studied as a *bochur* in 770, in the 5710s:

When I was younger, I was always very careful to learn Chitas. Then, when I got older and busy with work, I began to slack off.

One day, I wrote a long letter to the Rebbe enumerating many issues I had at the time, and I hoped to receive the Rebbe's answer and guidance.

Generally, the Rebbe always answered my questions. But this time, the only reply I got was one word: "**Chitas?**"

I thought to myself: "This is the Rebbe's answer to all my ten questions?"

Then I realized that as a Chossid, I need to be connected to the Rebbe. The Rebbe is already feeling that our connection has weakened by my failure to say Chitas!

Whatever the case is, life went on and I didn't make any drastic changes. Maybe I started to say Chitas a little bit, but for whatever reason, I didn't take the matter too seriously.

A few months went by and again I wrote to the Rebbe a long list of questions. Again, instead of addressing any of my questions, the Rebbe replied with one word: "**Chitas.**"

By now I understood: the Rebbe will not answer any of my questions until I become somewhat of a *mentch*. As if he was saying, "First learn Chitas, then I'll answer you!"

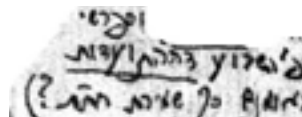
So this time, I started saying Chitas meticulously each and every day.

Then, a few months later, I again wrote a list of questions to the Rebbe, and this time the Rebbe answered every single question, one by one.<sup>13</sup> **7**

## IS THIS CALLED LEARNING?

This *ksav yad kodesh* was written by the Rebbe in response to a question asked on one of the *sichos* of the previous week's *farbrengen*.

The Rebbe cites one of Rashi's *pirushim* on that week's *parsha* as a proof that the way he asserted in the *sicha* was correct, and then noted:



וכפרש"י בפ' השבוע **זההתעדות** (האומנם כך שמירת חת"ת?)

...As Rashi explains in the *parsha* of the week of this *farbrengen* (is this [considered] keeping [the *shiurim* of] Chitas?)

In other words: if there is a Rashi in this week's *parsha* that implies this concept, one should be familiar with it by having learned Chitas.

(Teshura Rimler-Schneider 5765)

1. Igros Kodesh vol. 3 p. 242
2. Igros Kodesh vol. 5 p. 193
3. Ibid. vol. 4 p. 144
4. Shabbos parshas Pekudei 5727; Toras Menachem vol. 49 p. 157
5. Shabbos Bereishis 5721; Toras Menachem vol. 29 p.115
6. Yud-Aleph Nissan 5742; Hisvaaduyos 5742 vol. 3 p. 1224
7. Shabbos parshas Mattos-Maasei 5746; Hisvaaduyos 5746 vol. 4 p. 144
8. Hisvaaduyos 5745 vol. 4 p. 2487
9. Ibid. vol. 3 p. 2070
10. Ibid. vol. 2 p. 1306
11. Ibid. p. 1308
12. Hisvaaduyos 5746 vol. 1 p. 207
13. Based on Reb Aharon's "My Encounter" interview with JEM; published on Living Torah disc 102 program 407.



# Siyum HaShas

CHOF DALED TEVES 5712

Presented here is a picture of a rather singular occurrence. We see the Rebbe's farbrengen taking place in the small upstairs *zal*, and a man standing holding a *sefer*, and reading out of it.

What is highly uncommon about this, is the fact that someone other than the Rebbe is addressing the crowd in the Rebbe's presence.<sup>1</sup> The man speaking is Rabbi Meir Ashkenazi<sup>2</sup>, a distinguished Chossid. He is delivering a *siyum haShas* on the occasion of the conclusion of the communal *chalukas haShas* from the year before (as will be

described shortly). This is likely the only occasion during the *nesius* that another person made the *siyum* in front of the Rebbe.

Furthermore, unlike the other instances when the Rebbe delivered a *hadran* at a farbrengen in honor of the *siyum*, on this occasion Rabbi Ashkenazi recited the long "Gemara-Kaddish" which is printed immediately following the *text*, and which is generally not recited according to our *minhag*.<sup>3</sup> ▶▶▶







### CHALUKAS HASHAS - A SYNOPSIS

Of the most ancient *minhagim* in Chabad as instituted by the Alter Rebbe, is that the entire *Shas* be split up among community members, *mesechta* by *mesechta*, so as to have it summarily learnt in its entirety over the period of one year. Even before the onset of the *nesius*, the Rebbe would hold *siyumim* on behalf of Machne Israel, which organized the annual *chalukah*, and whose participants included people from all origins.

We find the basis for this *minhag* in the last section of Tanya<sup>4</sup>, where the Alter Rebbe encourages members of *anash* to organize *chalukos* of *Shas*.

### WHEN?

What the Alter Rebbe does not mention, though, is when this *chalukah* should take place, or when the cycle starts and ends.

In Likutei Diburim<sup>5</sup>, in a brief timeline of the Alter Rebbe's life and *takanos*, it is mentioned plainly that in light of the Alter Rebbe's wish for every community to organize an annual *chalukas haShas*, it was accepted that the *chaluka* take place on Yud-Tes Kislev every year.

While the Friediker Rebbe did not offer a formal reason for the *chalukah* to occur specifically on Yud-Tes Kislev, the Rebbe once explained it<sup>6</sup>;

The Torah—although comprised of several seemingly disparate parts—is ultimately one entity.

The real wholesomeness of Torah is only achieved in the presence of both *nigleh* and *nistar*, the revealed and hidden elements of Torah, which mutually contribute to one another. Thus it is natural that the *chalukas haShas*—*nigleh*—was

established to take place on the day that is deemed the “*Matan Torah* of *penimiyus haTorah*.”

Soon however, in 5663, the tradition was moved to another significant date, over a month later: Chof daled Teves.

The reason for the change, as recorded by the Rebbe in Hayom Yom<sup>7</sup> was the lack of time on Yud-Tes Kislev to attend to this.

Chof-Daled Teves remained the official date for the *chalukah* for a half a century (save some exceptions), until 5713. That year the Rebbe explained<sup>8</sup> that the difficulties that caused the change in the first place no longer apply, and suggested that it be moved back to its original date of Yud-Tes Kislev.

The Rebbe's *sichos* about the connection between the *chalukah* and Yud-Tes Kislev were eventually compiled into one single publication, which the Rebbe was *magiah* in 5752, and published under the name *Kuntres Al Dvar Chalukas Hashas*. T

1. There were a few rare instances when something of this nature occurred. See for example, the story of Rabbi Chaim Yehuda Paldi - Behind The Picture, Derher Magazine-Adar I, 5774.

2. 5652- 5714. Rabbi Ashkenazi served as a rof in Shanghai to the local community of European refugees during 5686-5709. In 5709 he moved to New York in 5709, and was instrumental in effort for the Rebbe's acceptance of the *nesius*.

3. In private conversation with someone a number of years after this occurrence, the Rebbe expressed surprise that this *kaddish* was recited, explaining he had never seen it done before.

4. Kuntres Acharon § 9

5. Vol. 4 p. ח"קצ"ח.

6. Toras Menachem - Hadranim Al haRambam veShas p. 464

7. 19 Kislev

8. See Likutei Sichos vol. 20, p. 468, footnote 5.

# Derher**Letters**

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



## Kiddush Levana (cont.)

Firstly: Thank you very much for the beautiful magazine. I must say that the difficult part in reading the various articles, especially the ones that retell the occurrences with the Rebbe in *Beis Chayeinu*, is the tremendous *ga'aguim* it awakens. *S'vilt zich veinen*. Not only when longing for those moments that we don't have now *b'gashmiyus*, but also for the fact that we (or at least I) didn't know to appreciate every moment to its fullest. May we merit to see the Rebbe once again very soon with the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu. I wish to comment on the letter from Rabbi MC Dubrawsky ["*Derher Letters*" Issue 36, Tishrei 5776] about whether to repeat "*aleichem Sholom*" during Kiddush Levana: As far back as I can remember as a young child—outside of 770—there was always a person or two who would say it as they greeted others, but they were the odd ones out. As noted, there were many elderly Chassidim there (including, Reb Zalman Shimon Dworkin, Reb Eli Chaim Roitblat, and others) and I do not recall any of them doing that. Obviously, what most importantly for us is the fact that the Rebbe himself would not say it, as you quoted from Rabbi Harlig. However, I was thinking that perhaps this custom may be a result of the difficult years so many Chassidim endured in Russia. Many lived alone or worse—in hiding, and spent (perhaps) many years doing Kiddush Levana alone. Not wanting to omit words that were written in the *siddur*, they just said it back to themselves.

(On this note: Question for senior shluchim: Any advice for shluchim who recite Kiddush Levana alone for most of the year—should we say "*sholom aleichem*" and "*aleichem sholom*?"")

**Avrohom Brashevitzky**  
Shliach - Doral, Florida



## Invigorating Moment

I read the interview with Rabbi Shimon Druk in the *Derher Magazine* ["*B'chatzrois Kodsheinu*" Issue 36, Tishrei 5776] about the occurrences of Simchas Torah 5734, and the Rebbe's encouragement to my father, Reb Shlomo Matusof a"h, shliach in Morocco. There seems to have been some inaccuracies in the story that my nephew repeated and I would like to clarify a few points: Firstly, this story took place in 5735, not 5734 (when the Rebbe taught *Ho'aderes V'ho'emunah*). To the best of my knowledge my father wasn't in New York during Tishrei 5734. Additionally, those who knew my father will recall that he was not one who would feel dejected for lack of *kiruvim* from the Rebbe, or that he deserves the same or more than others. As a Chossid, he did all he could to give the Rebbe *nachas ruach* and that was his entire objective. However, due to the fierce pushing during *hakafos*, he endured much discomfort and felt as if he was going to faint. Suddenly, as he was holding on to his last ounce of strength, the Rebbe walked to the edge of the *bima*,

leaned over towards him and looked in his direction, and began clapping and waving his hands in an exceptional manner to the tune of *U'foratzta*. I never saw anything like it throughout all the years I spent by the Rebbe; it was absolutely amazing! Of course my father regained his *kochos* and completely forgot about all the pushing around him.

**Reuven Matusof**

*Shliach - Lishkas Lubavitch,  
Paris, France*



## Precision in HaYom Yom

I find the Chassidisher Derher to be a necessity for young *bochurim* as well as for Anash. The Derher sheds light and information on numerous basic concepts in the relationship between Rebbe and Chossid; in the teachings of the Rebbe, in the campaigns of the Rebbe and so on. This serves as a guide and *ruach chaim* for chassidim all over the world.



I appreciate very much that you published an article about the research on the Hayom Yom in the Cheshvan issue [“*The Chossid’s Calendar*” Issue 37, Cheshvan 5776]. I want to point out for the readers a key

concept in my research into Hayom Yom that was not mentioned in the article.

The *pisgomin* (quotes) in the Hayom Yom reflect the contents of the daily *shiurim*—Chumash, etc.

I will cite only two examples amongst a great number of the quotes.

On 21 of Teves, the Rebbe writes:

“The Rebbe, R. Yosef Yitzchak, once met a water carrier carrying full buckets and remarked: *When one encounters water there is an appropriate maxim of the Baal Shem Tov that he should say, namely: “When encountering water one should say that the Baal Shem says that it is a sign of blessing.”* The Chumash portion of this day (*Shemos shlishi*) speaks about Moshe **drawing water** for the daughters of Yisro.



On 24 of Teves, the Rebbe cites:

“My grandfather (R. Shmuel) asked the Tzemach Tzedek: What did Grandfather (the Alter Rebbe) intend with the “ways of Chassidus?” The Tzemach Tzedek answered: The “ways of Chassidus” are that all Chassidim are to be like one family...” The Chumash portion of this day (*Shemos shishi*) tells us about Moshe saying to Yisro, I am returning to [see] the condition of my brethren in Egypt.

**Michael A Seligson**

*Mashpia - Oholei Torah, New York*

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## CORRECTION

It was brought to our attention that in the article “The Momentous Gathering” about Hakhel in our Tishrei Magazine [Issue 36], the photo on page 24 was erroneously captioned. It stated that this is a picture of the yard of the yeshiva in Otwock, Poland. In fact, it is the yard of the Gelbfish Hotel in Otwock, which was a distance from the Yeshiva and closer to the home of the Frierdiker Rebbe. Some of the *bochurim* stayed there as the yeshiva dorm was full. The photo was sent by a friend to Reb Moshe Pinchas Katz on 10 Av 5699, who had set out to the US shortly before then, five weeks before World War II broke out. See Toldos Chabad Poland, page 174, for more information on this.

—The Editors



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לזכות  
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אברהם גבריאל נח, וחנה שיחיו  
נדפס ע"י הוריהם  
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ראזענשטיין

CELEBRATING THE BIRTHDAY OF  
MRS. RUTH BELL  
WISHING HER HEALTH, HAPPINESS AND NACHAS FROM HER FAMILY  
DEDICATED BY HER HUSBAND RABBI CHAIM BELL AND THEIR FAMILY:  
RABBI AND MRS. YANKY AND SHTERNIE, SHMUELI AND MOSHE  
BELL

מוקדש ע"י ולזכות  
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גראנער  
ולזכות משפחתם  
לחיזוק התקשרותם לכ"ק אדמו"ר

לע"נ  
הו"ח אי"א ארבע פעלים תמים  
ואיש אמת עבד ה' בקבלת עול והצנע לכת  
ר' ישעי' ארי' ב"ר מנשה ע"ה  
טרייטעל  
בקשר עם יום היאהרצייט י"ג כסלו  
ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

לזכות  
הרה"ת ר' לייביש משה  
וזוגתו מרת רינה  
וילדיהם  
קיילא באשא, בנציון דוד,  
אליהו איסר, רבקה שיינדל אלתא  
שיחיו  
גולדהירש

לע"נ  
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