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# A CHASSIDISHER DERHER

NISSAN 5775  
ISSUE 30 (107)

י"א ניסן

100 Years since the  
Rebbe's bar mitzvah

בית חיינו

The Story of 770

**SEDER NIGHT  
VISITS**

The Rebbe Visits the Sedorim  
at the Mosdos

"היתה  
יהודה  
לקדשו  
ישראל  
ממשלותיו"

# A CHASSIDISHER DERHER

ISSUE 30 (107) • NISSAN 5775

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# Editorial

ווען ס'קלייבן זיך צוזאמען אידן, ובתוך כל הכוונות וואס זיי האבן דערביי, איז אויך דא די כוונה (און א כוונה עיקרית) בכדי צו באגריסן איינעם וואס האט זוכה געווען בזכות אבותיו צו האבן אן איינטייל אין הפצת התורה והמצוה וואס ווערט געטאן דורך די מסובים כאן, און דורך כ"כ וואס הערן זיך צו די רייד, און דורך כ"כ וואס טוען דאס ניט וויסנדיק אדער יא וויסנדיק וכו' - דורך די התעוררות וואס קומט פון די ד' אמות וואו כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו האט געדאווענט און געלערנט און מקיים געווען מצוות במשך עשר שנים;

איז דעמאלט דא א חיוב עיקרי וואס קומט לכל לראש... אויף אויסדריקן הכרת טובה פאר די אלע וואס האבן זיך צוזאמען געקליבן אין די ד' אמות פון כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר און האבן דאס פארבונדן מיט אויסדריקן די השתתפות און עידוד וחיזוק אין הפצת התורה והיהדות... און האבן דאס פארבונדן מיט א טאג וואס איז פארבונדן מיט פלוני בן פלוני, וואס ער איז צווישן די וואס האבן דעם זכות ממשיך זיין אין דער פעולה נמשכת פון כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר... (י"א ניסן תשל"ח).

Often, the Rebbe thanked the all those who came to spend Yud-Aleph Nissan in his holy presence and join the farbrengen. In fact, in two instances the Rebbe actually gave a present to each of the participants as an expression of his gratitude. Nevertheless, the above words from the Rebbe in 5738 stand out as extraordinary. The Rebbe thanks those who have come to the *daled-amos* of the *nessi doreinu* and have taken the initiative to join in the celebration of Yud-Aleph Nissan, as well as those who have gathered in other places to mark this occasion.

As Chassidim, we celebrate the birthday of our *nossi* naturally, but having the Rebbe himself encourage and explain the significance of the celebration is truly incredible and increases our appreciation the real meaning this day bears.

In this spirit, we present this special Yud-Aleph Nissan edition of the Derher magazine.

In order to properly realize and internalize the value of this special day, we have included an exclusive interview with two noted *mashpi'im* in the form of a chassidishe farbrengen, speaking of our approach to Yud-Aleph Nissan as Chassidim, peppered with stories and recollections of Yud-Aleph Nissan as it was celebrated with the Rebbe.

Also of note, as this year marks 100 years since the Rebbe's bar mitzvah in 5675, we have included an interesting compilation highlighting this point.

This, in addition to the usual repertoire of *geshmake*, chassidishe content, as one would regularly find in the monthly magazine.

We conclude with the hope that this month of Nissan, "*chodesh hageulah*", the month of **בצאת** כימי צאתך we will be *zoche* to **ישראל ממצרים** – מארץ מצרים אראנו נפלאות may it be *teikef umiyad Mamosh!*

**The Editors**  
Chof-Hei Adar, 5775





PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 104489

# Height at Eleventh

## Yud-Aleph Nissan

*The following is based on a sicha the Rebbe said on Shabbos HaGadol, erev Yud-Aleph Nissan, 5749. The Rebbe explains how the unique quality of Pesach, bringing out a Yid's essential connection with Hashem beyond the natural order, actually begins on Yud Aleph Nissan.*

Pesach is the birth of the Jewish nation. As the *posuk* states regarding *yetzias Mitzraim* גוי מקרב לו גוי מלכות—“to take Him a nation from within a[nother] nation.” *Yetzias Mitzraim* was the beginning of the preparation for *matan Torah*, at which time Hashem chose the Jewish people as His nation; “*Ata vechartanu mikal ha’amim.*”

Before *yetzias Mitzraim* the Yidden were “*bekerev goy*,” within (and almost part) of *Mitzraim*, meaning that they and the Egyptians were—figuratively—considered one nation. Hence, the miracle that occurred on *Shabbos Hagadol* [before *yetzias Mitzraim*] showed that the Jews were deserving of the miracle of *למכה מצרים בכוריהם* even while they were similar to the Egyptians.

To explain:

In addition to the exodus of Yidden from *Mitzraim*, there had to be the

annihilation and nullification of *Mitzraim* itself, to the point that “the darkness itself is transformed to light.” This is what the miracle of *למכה מצרים בכוריהם* accomplished; that the Egyptian firstborns—representing the strength of the *kelipah* of Egypt—used their very own might to strike Egypt itself.

This was a “great miracle.” More than a regular miracle, which normally exceeds nature, as was the miracle of the Egyptians remaining silent [at the sight of the Yidden slaughtering their god]. A “great miracle” means nature itself changed and transformed. The miracle of the Egyptians not responding to the Yidden’s slaughtering their god pales in comparison to the miraculous battle of the firstborn sons against *Mitzraim*.

Based on the above explanation, that the miracle of the battle of the firstborn Egyptians was a transformation of

darkness into light, we can understand why this was brought about through the actions of the the Yidden. Despite their similarities to the Egyptians, they rose above them; they left behind *avoda zara* to take for themselves a sheep for the mitzvah of *korban Pesach*. This was in full sight of the Egyptians; and the Yidden informed them of their intentions when they asked why they were doing so. This resulted in the nullification and annihilation of Egypt to the extent that the darkness was transformed to light, and the Egyptians were struck by their firstborns.

...Now that we can also understand how the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nissan is a preparation for the following days, beginning with the 11<sup>th</sup> of Nissan until Pesach.

The difference between *Shabbos* and *Pesach* is that *Shabbos* indicates the completeness of creation. As *Chazal*



state, “What was the world missing? It was missing rest. When Shabbos arrived, rest arrived.” However, Shabbos, being the completeness of creation, still has some limitation; whereas Pesach—which means “skipping”—represents a level beyond the world’s limitations. *Yetzias Mitzraim* represents exodus from all “*meitzarim*,” including limitations of the highest spiritual levels. Being that they are somewhat limited, one must rise beyond them as well.

This also explains the difference between the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nissan (which, in the year of *yetzias Mitzraim*, fell out on Shabbos) and the 11<sup>th</sup> (the day the preparations for Pesach begin in earnest).

The number 10 also symbolizes the completeness of creation, and this includes the higher worlds whose completeness is associated with the number ten, as in the ten *sefiros*, which are specifically limited to this number.

The number 11, however, represents a level beyond the ten *sefiros*...

...The number 11 is beyond all limitation. It signifies the level of Oneness, the essence of Hashem which is greater than being defined or described; greater even than (ten or even infinite) *sefiros*. This level is greater than the simple meaning of “one” (as opposed to it being two or more) and even the description “single” (which ordinarily excludes other entities). The labels “essence” and “His true existence” are also limiting. For all these descriptions intend to define, but Hashem is beyond description and definition. Even this expression, that Hashem is beyond description and definition, ultimately is an expression that can be put into words and is somewhat of a limitation...

...The difference between these two levels in *avodas Hashem*:

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, *Shabbos Hagadol*, the service of the Jew is within the limitations of his existence. He must create completeness in the world, changing and transforming nature itself

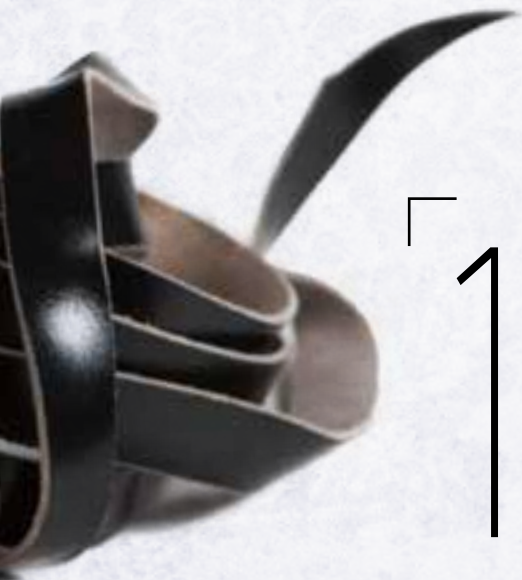
(as was the case in the “great miracle” of *למכה מצרים בכוריהם*). This means that we are required to draw the holiness of Shabbos, the holiness of the 10<sup>th</sup>, into the world...

The 11<sup>th</sup> day is the beginning of the service of the Jew as he is at his core, greater than any association with the limitations of creation. At his core the Yid is connected with the Essence of Hashem; “You are One and incalculable,” “Yisrael, Torah, and Hashem are all one.” This is the essential connection between Hashem and Yidden, which is infinitely greater than the completeness of creation. In light of the above, it follows that the birth of the Jewish people which occurred on Pesach, actually began on the 11<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, a day on which the essential connection between Yidden and the essence of Hashem—the 11<sup>th</sup>, “You are One”—is emphasized, and we will see that “Yisroel, Torah, and Hashem are all one.” **D**



YUD-ALEPH NISSAN CELEBRATION IN KFAR CHABAD, ISRAEL, 5737





ת ר ע " ה – ת ש ע " ה

# 100

## THE REBBE'S BAR MITZVAH

*On Yud-Aleph Nissan this year, Chassidim mark 100 years since the Rebbe's bar mitzvah, in 5675.*

*The Rebbe once said about the Frierdiker Rebbe's bar mitzvah that on this day he became a fully-grown Yid, and it served as a preparation for all his accomplishments later on in his life, including his leadership as nossi.<sup>1</sup>*

*Needless to say, the Rebbe's bar mitzvah is a most important event in the Rebbe's life, and consequently, in our lives as Chassidim as well.*

*In this spirit, we present the following compilation of stories and anecdotes about the Rebbe's bar mitzvah, as well as the Rebbe's activities marking the date of the Frierdiker Rebbe's bar mitzvah.*

### WEeping TURNED TO JOY

*From the Memoirs of Rebbetzin Chana<sup>2</sup>*

*Following Shabbos, Rosh Chodesh Adar I, 5719*

At a time when we look forward to a good week, and it's also *Rosh Chodesh*, particularly of the month of Adar, when "we increase joy," I should write in a cheerful mood.

However, I'm sitting alone at home, not so upbeat. On the 28th of Tevet, I became 79 years old. Thank Gd that I've been able to keep going until now in my present condition, emotional and physical, but it gets more difficult every day.

This week was the bar-mitzvah celebration of a friend's son. It reminded me of the *bar-mitzvah* of my

older son, long may he live in good health and with success. All the *bar-mitzvahs* of our sons were celebrated by us in a fine manner. But my older son's was something special, extraordinary, on a highly sublime level. It was our family's first personal celebration.

My husband, of blessed memory, was held in high regard. This was despite the initial "birth pangs" of his rabbinic position due to opposition by non-Chasidim and Zionists against Lubavitch, which they considered him to personify and which is why they didn't want to accept his appointment. But now it was already seven years that we had lived in the city, and our supporters were proud of my husband's accomplishments, while those opposing had often expressed their remorse. Now both sides had an

opportunity to express their feelings.

For our good friends, it was a genuine celebration, expressed in a delightfully friendly closeness which had a delectable feeling, as I remind myself now.

It was held on a Shabbos, and many guests attended. At that time we had a large home, and all its rooms were packed. Because it was so crowded, there was a constant interchange of guests, with some leaving while new ones came to take their place. I had many female guests, and there were also many young people. All these groups included guests from all sorts of backgrounds.

I don't remember exactly when it started, probably around 12:00 noon, after the conclusion of prayers at *shul*. The men sat in the large hall, while we women were



in the large dining room. Of course, the tables were beautifully set with abundant food, for both the men and the women.

Around 3:00-4:00 p.m. we saw some of the male guests, both old and young, emerging with weeping faces. I tried looking inside the main hall to discover the reason for their tears, but it was

so crowded in there that I couldn't see through all the heads.

When I asked those who had been inside, they told me that the father—my husband—had requested our son (long may he live) to promise him something. I wasn't inside, so I don't know the actual course of events. But our son's reply,

apparently, wasn't immediate. Everyone was amazed by the great character of such a young boy, that he was so guarded and cautious about giving his reply.

I don't know the details of what actually happened there, but around 6:00-7:00 p.m.—I remember it wasn't so light any more—the weeping faces I had previously

## REPEAT FOR THE SHLUCHIM

*In an interview with A Chassidisher Derher (Tammuz 5773), Rabbi Moshe Feller related a fascinating story about the farbrengen of Yud-Tes Tammuz, 5728:*

As a result of my activities with B'nei Brith, I was subsequently invited to be a scholar-in-residence at the International B'nei Brith ten-day retreat that summer, near New York.

After receiving the Rebbe's *brocha* I agreed to join. Over my time there, I developed a core group of guys who endeavored to learn with me at every free moment. Half way through the retreat I made arrangements to leave one evening in order to attend the Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen that night.

When my "*talmidim*" found out my plans, they pestered me for explanations. What is a farbrengen? Why must you travel? Can't you farbreng here?

I found myself in a challenging predicament. How could I justify visiting the Rebbe when it would entail leaving behind these youngsters thirsting for Chassidus?

I had no choice but to stay, and, in fact, we farbrenged late into the night, discussing fundamentals of Chassidus and the *geulah* of Yud-Beis Tammuz.

The retreat continued until the nineteenth of Tammuz whereupon I traveled to New York. I entered 770 only to be notified by Rabbi Binyomin Klein that the Rebbe wanted to see Rabbi Shlomo Cunin, Rabbi Yitzchok Dovid Groner and myself! I hurried off to get my *kapota* and returned to the Rebbe's room.

Rabbi Klein was waiting for me and informed me that we would have to wait to see the Rebbe because the Rebbe had decided to hold a surprise farbrengen at one in the afternoon!

Due to the short notice, 770 was quite empty when the Rebbe strode in a short while later for the farbrengen. The small group of shluchim, chassidim, and bochurim who had gathered listened closely as the Rebbe spoke of that year being 75 years from the Frierdiker Rebbe's bar mitzvah.

The Rebbe explained that when the Frierdiker Rebbe had his bar mitzvah, seven days of festivities ensued, similar to *sheva brochos*. But because the fast of 17 Tammuz interrupted the celebrations, and 18 Tammuz was Shabbos, the Rebbe Rashab said a *maamor* on Sunday.

In that spirit the Rebbe recited a *maamor*, with the same *dibur hamaschil* as the one the Rebbe Rashab had recited that same day 75 years prior—"Vechozakta ve'hayisa le'ish."

The farbrengen lasted just over an hour, and the Rebbe then returned to his room. I then entered for my *yechidus*.

Although I had not had any *tzetel* prepared to give the Rebbe, and I hadn't written to the Rebbe the entire time I was at the retreat, the Rebbe exclaimed:

היות דו האסט זיך איינגעהאלטען פון קומען דא "ב תמוז האב איך פאר  
דיר פארענדעקט דעם מאמר...

*Because you restrained yourself from coming here for Yud-Beis Tammuz I completed the maamor [today] especially for you...*

Wow. I was simply blown away. I hadn't even informed the Rebbe about my decision not to come, and yet the Rebbe had transformed the challenge into an opportunity!







THE SHUL IN YEKATRINOSLAV WHERE THE REBBE'S FATHER, RAV LEVI YITZCHOK, SERVED AS RAV

seen became very happy. Now from inside we heard the sound of such joyous dancing and singing, and the joy became so intense that it affected those outside, too. One sensed that the enthusiastic rejoicing held some deep significance, and that both the nature of the request and the one who gave his reply would remain memorable for a long time.



## AFTERNOON FARBRENGEN

75 Years - 5728

On Yud-Beis Tammuz 5728, the Rebbe marked 75 years since the Frierdiker Rebbe's bar mitzvah. In honor of the occasion, the Rebbe published a *kuntres* called "קונטרס תפילין דמארי עלמא - תרנ"ג", containing the *maamorim* recited at the Frierdiker Rebbe's bar mitzvah.

At the farbrengen on Yud-Beis Tammuz, the Rebbe urged the shlichim and Merkos shlichim to increase in *mitvza tefillin* (launched by the Rebbe around one year earlier), explaining that the prevailing *minhag Yisrael* is to connect a bar mitzvah with *tefillin*.

At the conclusion of the farbrengen, the Rebbe requested that additional farbrengens be arranged throughout the coming week, similar to the week of the Frierdiker Rebbe's actual bar mitzvah, when the celebration continued with nightly farbrengens for seven days, including Shabbos, 17 Tammuz (*Shiv'ah Asar B'Tammuz - nidcheh*).<sup>3</sup>

On Monday, 19 Tammuz, the Rebbe held a short surprise farbrengen right before mincha (see sidebar) and delivered a *maamor* with the *dibur hamaschil* "*Vechozakta ve'hayisa le'ish*" (subsequently *mugah* by the Rebbe in 5749).

Later that day, the Rebbe wrote an interesting letter to the president of Israel, Zalman Shazar, notifying him of the surprise farbrengen:

ב"ה, י"ט תמוז, ה'תשכ"ח

ברוקלין, נ.י.

לכבוד הו"ח א"א נר"נ בחור מעם ומורם מעם  
ודורש טוב לעמו בעל מדות תרומיות ענף עץ אבות  
מו"ה שניאור זלמן שליט"א

שלום וברכה!

הנני לאשר קבלת מכתבו מיום סגולה י"ג תמוז,  
וכנהוג אצל אחב"י למצוא רמזים ולקשר ענין  
בענין הרי סימן טוב הוא שנתקבל מכתבו אחרי  
ההתוועדות של היום.

שאף על פי שלכאורה תמוה הוא מהו ענין  
התוועדות בימי בין המצרים, הרי ב"ב-י"ג תמוז  
דהאי שתא מלאו 75 שנה מיום הבר מצוה של כ"ק  
מו"ח אדמו"ר, ובקשר עם זה נדפסו המאמרים אשר  
אביו כ"ק אדמו"ר נ"ע אמרם בחגיגת הבר-מצוה  
ובמשך כל השבוע שלאחר זה ובלשון כ"ק מו"ח  
אדמו"ר - "שבעת ימי המשתה", שנסיימו ביום  
א' ח"י תמוז, תענית נדחה, ולכן היתה ההתוועדות  
והסעודה של יום השביעי ביום ב' י"ט תמוז,  
וכמבואר ברשימה שם בסוף החוברת.

וזוהו הטעם להתוועדות של היום, אף כי בקיצור  
(בכמות) בזמן, כדי לחזור התוכן דסיום מאמרי הבר  
מצוה מענינא דידיא.

ובחזרי מן ההתוועדות האמורה - מצאתי מכתב  
כ' בתאריך י"ג תמוז, עם שני קוים מתוחים מתחת  
ל"ג תמוז.

משום כך הנני מזדרז לענות לכ' וגם לצרף בזה  
המאמר תפילין דמארי עלמא - תרנ"ג, ששם ג"כ  
קטעי הרשימה בנוגע להבר מצוה...

I hereby acknowledge the receipt of your letter from the auspicious day of Yud-Gimmel Tammuz, and as is the custom amongst Jews, we find hints interconnecting one point with another, [likewise] it is noteworthy that I received your letter after today's farbrengen.

Although holding a farbrengen during the "three weeks of mourning" may seem puzzling, [we have nevertheless done so] being that this year, we mark 75 years since the [Frierdiker] Rebbe's bar mitzvah. In this spirit, we have published the *maamorim* that his father, the Rebbe [Rashab], recited at the bar mitzvah celebration and during the following week—as my father-in-law put it, the "*shivas yemei hamishte*"—which concluded on Sunday, 18 Tammuz. [That year] it was a fast day, so the festive meal and farbrengen of the seventh day were postponed to Monday, 19 Tammuz, as is explained in the diary published at the end of this pamphlet.

This was the reason for holding a farbrengen today, although it was a short one (time-wise), so that we could review the content of the last of this series of timely *maamorim*.

When I returned from this farbrengen, I found your letter dated Yud-Gimmel Tammuz, with the date underlined twice.

I therefore hurried to reply to you, as well as to enclose [a copy of] the *maamor* which also includes selections of the diary about the bar mitzvah...<sup>4</sup> **D**

1. Likutei Sichos vol. 2 p. 597
2. Part 39; translation copyright by Kehos
3. See Kuntres Bar Mitzvah 5653 (Kehos 5760) p. 61
4. Igros Kodesh vol. 25 p. 193



# לעבן מיט'ן רבי'ן

11 Nissan  
5738

## "אתה הא-ל עושה פלא" YUD-ALEPH NISSAN WITH THE REBBE

As Purim passed, the spirit of Yud-Alef Nissan is palpable in the atmosphere at 770.

On Motzei Shabbos Parshas Shemini, 23 Adar II, the Rebbe held a farbrengen in honor of Shabbos *mevorchim* Nissan.

At the conclusion of the farbrengen, the Rebbe gave out *kos shel brocha*. Before the distribution began, the Rebbe gave Rabbi Moshe Yeruslavsky the leftover *challah* and water from the farbrengen, to be given to the guests that were already in town, as well as for those who would still come for Yud-Alef Nissan.

[Reb Moshe would oversee the *hachnosas orchim* for the guests that would come to spend yomim tovim with the Rebbe.

When he entered *yechidus* after spending Purim in 770, the Rebbe inquired as to when he plans to travel back to his home in Eretz Yisrael; he replied "Gimmel Nissan." The Rebbe then asked him what will be with the guests that come for Yud-Alef Nissan...? He obviously decided to stay through Yud Alef Nissan.]

### Tuesday, 4 Nissan

Before *mincha*, the Rebbe went to the library to see off the matzos being sent for *anash* of Eretz Yisrael. The Rebbe removed a few pieces of matzah from each box, performing *hafroshas challah*, and then turned to the messengers who were transporting the matzah, telling them:

"I am making you *shluchim* to give over the matzah in Eretz Yisrael. It should be distributed in the same manner as last year, through the *Vaad Haruchni* of Kfar Chabad. May you have a kosher and *freilechen* Pesach."

The Rebbe turned to Reb Zushe Rivkin, one of the *shluchim*, and said:

"You probably received my answer to your letter."

[Reb Zushe was the *gabbai* of the newly constructed Beis Menachem shul in Kfar Chabad, which was to be inaugurated on that very Yud-Alef Nissan. Anash in Eretz Yisrael decided to invite the Rebbe to the celebration, sending Reb

Zushe with a letter signed by over four thousand people, asking the Rebbe to come to Eretz Yisrael to attend the celebration.

The Rebbe answered that he would not come, but sent \$60 to be changed into *lirot* and distributed among all that signed.]

The Rebbe now told him that there will probably be more signatures added in the near future, so he will give a few more dollars for them as well, adding that the leftover money should be used for "*guttes zachen*."

Rabbi M. M. G. expressed his wish that they should merit to spend the next



RABBI MORDECHAI MENTLIK TEACHES A NEW MIGHTAV-KLOLI TO THE BOCHURIM IN THE UPSTAIRS ZAL AT 770

Pesach together with the Rebbe in Eretz Yisrael, to which the Rebbe replied “ותחזינה עינינו בשוכר לציון”. Reb Zushe then added, “Der Rebbe zol zein gezunt.” The Rebbe answered, “*Gam atem.*”

Before leaving to *daven mincha*, the Rebbe gave Reb Zushe a crown for the Sefer Torah of Beis Menachem, saying, “May this be a Kesser Torah for all Yidden.”

## Monday, 10 Nissan

Today, many *orchim* have arrived from throughout the United States and beyond, as well as many *shluchim* and *bochurim* that were on Merkos Shlichus in many different areas. An entire group of guests arrived from England, including Rabbi Nachman Sudak and Rabbi Chaim Farro, as well as an individual by the name of Mr. Greenberg. (After *mincha* on Yud-Alef Nissan, Rabbi Hodakov gave them matzah—in the Rebbe’s name—to distribute in their respective cites in the United Kingdom.)

As the Rebbe exited the *shul* after *maariv*, the crowd began to quietly sing the *nigun* on the Rebbe’s new *kapittel* for this year—“*Atah hokail oiseh felle*”—but the Rebbe did not react to the song. Later, when the Rebbe left for home, those present began to sing again, and this time the

Rebbe encouraged the singing vigorously. Throughout the remaining hours of Yud-Alef Nissan, the Rebbe’s countenance shone with a special happiness, which of course spread to the Chassidim that had come to 770 in honor of the special occasion.

A short while later, all of the *anash* and *bochurim* sat down to hear a *shiur* from Rabbi Mentlik on the *michtav kloli* that the Rebbe had issued this past Erev Rosh Chodesh. When he concluded, Reb Yoel Kahan led a joyous *farbrengen* during which he expounded upon the different levels of *hiskashrus*, explaining that while simple *anash* can be *mekushar* to the Rebbe though merely learning *Chitas* and writing a *pan* once a year, *bochurim* merit to have a much higher level of *hiskashrus*, which requires them to do much more.

## Tuesday, Yud-Alef Nissan

Today’s date was declared by the United States Government as “Education Day USA.” A resolution was signed by over three hundred senators and congressmen honoring the Rebbe’s efforts to promote a proper education for people of all walks of life. Vice President Walter Mondale participated in a special gathering which took place in Washington DC in honor of the monumental occasion.

Rabbi Paldi from Eretz Yisrael (a well-known activist involved in “*mihu yehudi*”) published the following *gimatriya’s* in honor of Yud Alef Nissan:

י"א ניסן תשל"ח - ע"ז = 996

רבינו יחזור לאיתנו = 996

ויאיר נרו עד יבא ינון בקרוב = 996

מטה ע"ז ישלח ה'

After *mincha*, a group of elder chassidim entered *Gan Eden Hatachton* to bless the Rebbe in honor of the auspicious day.

When the Rebbe arrived, Reb Moshe Pinchas HaKohen Katz *benched* the Rebbe, in the name of all the Chassidim, with a *shnas hatzlocha*. He emphasized that the Rebbe should experience a quick and speedy recovery from the heart attack on Shemini Atzeres; and that he should have much success in his holy work in ‘turning over the world,’ for many long and healthy years, together with the Rebbetzin; and to lead us towards the *geulah ha’amitis v’hashleima*.

When he concluded, the Rebbe responded with a short *sicha*, saying that one who blesses another Jew is blessed by the *Aibershter*, concluding with a wish that we merit partake in the *korban Pesach* this year in Yerushalayim.

*Maariv* took place in the small *zal* at 9:00 with a small *minyan*, as most of the crowd was occupied with reserving a seat for the grand *farbrengen*, set to take place at 9:30.

## Farbrengen

At the set time, the Rebbe entered the overly-crowded *shul*. The *farbrengen* began immediately with the first *sicha*, during which the Rebbe spoke of the personal element felt in this *farbrengen*, as it is being held in honor of his *yom huledes*.

“When many Yidden gather together, with the intent to bring their wishes to an individual who has merited—in the merit of his ancestors—to take part in the spreading of Yiddishkeit—which is a result of the inspiration coming from



the *daled amos* of the my father-in-law, the Rebbe, the *nossi hador*—there lies an obligation to show *hakoras hatov* towards all those who have assembled. To connect it with a participation in the spreading of Torah and Yiddishkeit as it was started by my father-in-law, the Rebbe, and continues till this day, and will surely continue onward.

“It is therefore a pleasant *z’chus* to thank all those who have gathered here, as well as all those who are listening from other locations, and those that will later find out what had been said at this farbrengen. May they all be blessed with many long and good years, and be able to increase in their efforts of spreading Yiddishkeit, as a continuation of the efforts of the my father-in-law, the Rebbe, going back all the way to the Alter Rebbe, the Maggid, and the Baal Shem Tov.”

The farbrengen was markedly *freilech*, with the Rebbe clapping and encouraging the singing throughout all of the *niggunim* between the *sichos*. He also smilingly directed different people to say *l’chaim*, including Dr. Larry Resnick (who had been at the Rebbe’s side for much of the time since Shemini Atzeres). Rabbi Efraim Yolles from Philadelphia and Rabbi Simcha Elberg of Agudas Harabonim were also present, both conversing with the Rebbe between *sichos*.

During the course of the farbrengen, the Rebbe discussed a wide range of topics, most notably concerning the president’s monumental declaration proclaiming “Education Day USA.” The Rebbe called for the country to utilize its powerful influence over other nations to promote the ideals of education mentioned in the declaration.

“Along with the thanks owed to the House of Representatives, the government, and the president, for having declared publicly regarding the uniqueness of education, through setting aside a day devoted entirely towards education; we also suggest that they do not suffice with a one-day proclamation;

rather it should continue with activities throughout the entire year.”

The Rebbe also encouraged the Administration to assist the Israeli Army by providing them with arms and ammunition so that they can adequately protect the Yidden living in Eretz Yisrael. At the same time they should block all such aid to Egypt, so that they will not be able to accomplish their obviously malicious intentions.

Before the *maamar*, the Rebbe spoke about the new shul that had been dedicated in Kfar Chabad. He also encouraged all shuls to remain open during the evening hours, so that *baalei batim* can learn Torah there in their spare time.

As the farbrengen came to a close, the Rebbe instructed the crowd to sing “*Hoshia es amecha*,” “*Prazos teshev Yerushalayim*,” “*Ufaratzta*,” “*V’hi she’amda*,” and “*Nyet, nyet nikavo*,” clapping and encouraging the singing throughout.

When the *niggunim* were completed, the Rebbe stood up and announced (with a special tune) “*L’shana Haba’ah B’yirushalayim*,” to which the entire 770 responded with a resounding “amen,” continuing straight in to “*ki vesimcha*,” accompanying the Rebbe out of the remarkable farbrengen.

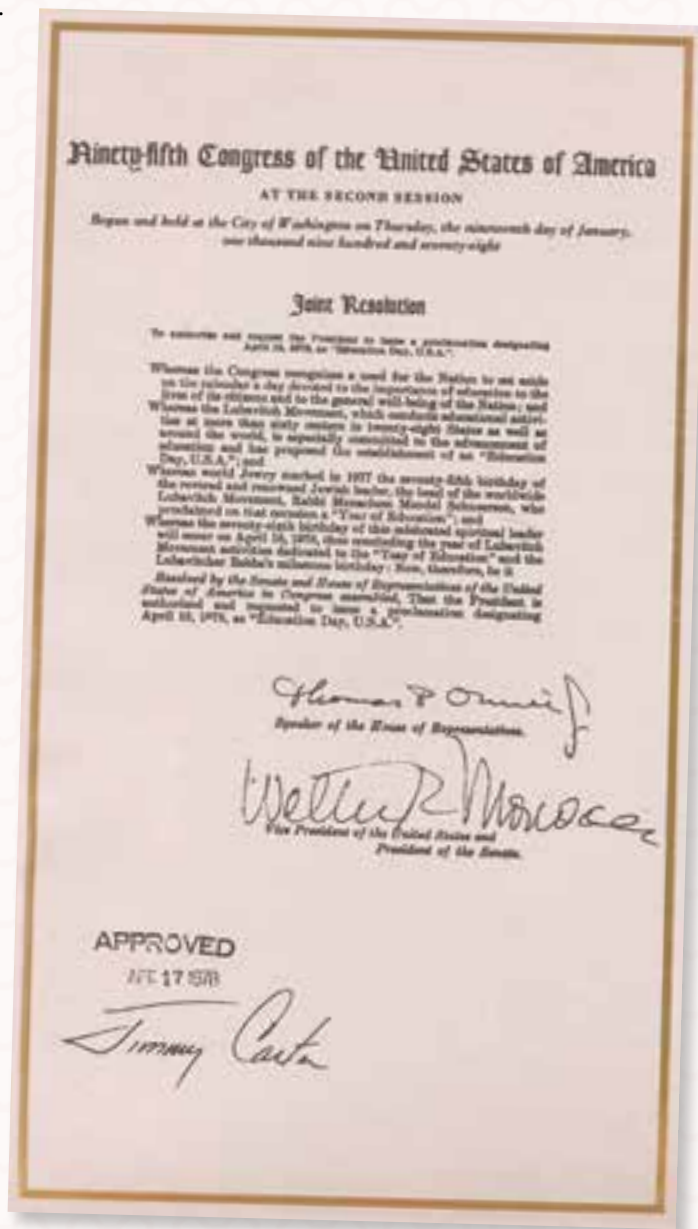
As the Rebbe left 770 for home, he distributed dollars to

RESOLUTION OF CONGRESS,  
SIGNED BY PRESIDENT JIMMY  
CARTER, ANNOUNCING THE  
FIRST EDUCATION DAY U.S.A.

the students of *Beis Sefer L’milcha*, who were returning to Israel the next day, as well as to many of the *shluchim* and guests who had come from afar, all the while encouraging the joyous singing.



VICE PRESIDENT WALTER F. MONDALE ADDRESSES THE INAUGURATION EVENT OF EDUCATION DAY U.S.A., IN THE WHITE HOUSE, 11 NISSAN 5738





RABBI Y. Y. HECHT HOSTS THE BROADCAST OF THE REBBE'S FARBRENGEN ON LIVE RADIO, AS RABBI CHAIM BORUCH HALBERSTAM SITS AT THE CONTROLS IN THE WLCC OFFICE AT 770

## Wednesday, 12 Nissan

As the Rebbe walked towards his room after *mincha*, he passed by a number of guests who were returning home for Pesach, wishing them a safe trip and a kosher and *freilechen* Pesach.

In response to a report about *mitvtzoim* in the *Merkaz Hayahalomim*, the Rebbe wrote:

נת' ות"ח [נתקבל ותשואות חן]. ודבר בעתו - בי"א  
ניסן בחדש הגאולה בגו"ר [בגשמיות וברוחניות]  
ובסמיכות לחה"פ [חג הפסח] זמן חרותנו.

The members also sent the Rebbe their blessings in honor of Yud-Alef Nissan. In response, the Rebbe wrote:

ת"ח [תשואות חן] על הברכות וכל המברך מתברך  
בברכתו של הקב"ה שתוספתו מרובה על העיקר.  
חה"פ כו"ש [חג הפסח כשר ושמן]. אזכיר עה"צ  
[על הציון].

"Thank you for the blessings. Those who bless others are blessed with the blessing of Hashem, in which the supplement is more than the main portion.

"May you have a kosher and happy Pesach. I will mention them at the Ohel."

At the conclusion of *maariv*, the Rebbe once again bade farewell to a group of Chassidim traveling back to Eretz Yisrael

for Pesach, and then he motioned to Rabbi Hodakov to enter his room.

A few moments later, Rabbi Hodakov left the Rebbe's room with an exciting announcement. The Rebbe had informed him that at 8:30 he will hold a short farbrengen, a continuation of the Yud-Alef Nissan farbrengen held yesterday.

The downstairs shul was locked and in complete disarray, as the Pesach cleaning had already begun. The *bochurim* hastily organized the benches and set up the room, and within a few minutes the place was ready for the Rebbe to enter.

The guests scheduled to travel back to Eretz Yisrael were faced with a dilemma. While they didn't want to miss the farbrengen, their flight was scheduled to take off within the next few hours. In the end, they drove to the airport, where they listened in to the farbrengen via live hookup.

At the start of the farbrengen, the Rebbe instructed the crowd to sing the *nigun hachona* for a *maamar*, and then said a *maamar* (*B'chol dor v'dor*) which lasted for about a half-hour.

Afterwards, the Rebbe continued to expound in length upon the *hadran*

he had begun at the Yud-Alef Nissan farbrengen. He also spoke of the importance of learning Chassidus in our generation, even though in previous times, such learning was reserved for the select few who were on a higher level of *avodas Hashem*.

Throughout the farbrengen, the Rebbe encouraged the singing, clapping and moving his head to the beat of the *niggunim*. Before concluding, the Rebbe asked that everyone sing "*Yemin Hashem*" and "*Uforatzta*," and then ended by wishing everyone a kosher and *freilechen* Pesach, expressing hope that we merit to spend this Pesach in Yerushalayim together with Moshiach.

As the Rebbe stood up to leave, he began singing "*Ki vesimcha*," and with a swing of his arm, encouraged everyone present to join in.

As the Rebbe entered his room, he asked Rabbi Groner to bring in a list of the locations that had participated in the live hookup.

A few minutes later the Rebbe left for home. While exiting 770, he met Dr. Resnick and Dr. Lev and exchanged a few words with them, encouraging the *bochurim's* singing as well. D



# י"א ניסן

## התוועדות חסידיים

*As we approach Yud-Aleph Nissan, a day that each and every one of us Chassidim seeks to enhance our connection with the Rebbe and draw upon the special qualities of the day, we spoke with two mashpi'im, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Itkin of Pittsburgh and Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Gourarie of Detroit, to record words of inspiration in honor of this great day.*

This "chassidishe farbrengen" on paper, filled with inspirational stories and first-hand memories of encounters with the Rebbe, will surely arouse our readership with a very timely message.





## A DAY FOR EVERY YID

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Itkin



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 102843

THE REBBE ESCORTS A GROUP OF GUESTS WHO CAME TO JOIN THE REBBE FOR HIS SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY – YUD-ALEPH NISSAN AND PESACH 5732

When talking about Yud-Aleph Nissan, there's an important point to remember: On one hand, this day is the Rebbe's very personal time; the Rebbe's birthday. We all know what the Rebbe wrote in Hayom Yom for Yud-Aleph Nissan; that on one's birthday he should spend time alone and contemplate the occurrences of the past year, rectifying those things that need to be tended to, and so on. In other words, a birthday is a personal day.

Yet on the other hand, the Rebbe is our *nossi*, and the birthday of a *nossi* is a cause for celebration for his entire generation. In an interesting *sicha* said by the Rebbe on Yud-Beis Tammuz 5722, the Friediker Rebbe's birthday, the Rebbe explains that the when a *nossi* is born, the seeds that carry all the *avoda* he will do throughout his lifetime, including the spiritual *koach* he will give to each and every Jew of his generation, are brought into being and begin spreading their light in the world. Hence, concludes the Rebbe, the *nossi's* birthday each and every year is a most joyous day for all the Jewish people!<sup>1</sup>

In our generation, especially as the years progressed, the Rebbe went out of this way to share this day with us, his Chassidim. He allowed us to celebrate and mark the date in various ways.

In the very early years, not many Chassidim knew what the date of the

Rebbe's birthday was. But in 5707, when the Rebbe was in Paris to bring his mother, Rebbetzin Chana, to the United States, she revealed to the small group of *anash* there that Yud-Aleph Nissan is the Rebbe's birthday. Still, the date was largely unknown to most Chassidim.

On Yud-Aleph Nissan 5712, the Rebbe's fiftieth birthday, he delivered a *maamor* in his room in front of a small audience of carefully selected individuals. Ten years later, in 5722, the Rebbe held a special farbrengen in honor of Yud Aleph Nissan—*shnas hashishim*. Later on, starting in 5731, the Rebbe held a farbrengen on almost every Yud-Aleph Nissan.

### Each to their Own

What is possibly more interesting is the fact that the Rebbe allowed, and even appreciated, for Yud-Aleph Nissan to be celebrated by everyone according to their individual levels.

From a *tomim* learning in Tomchei Tmimim, the Rebbe accepted gifts of increasing in *limud haTorah*, showing his appreciation for the extra effort done in honor of the day.

I'll give you an example:

In 5732, when we celebrated the Rebbe's *shnas hashiv'im*, special *matonos* were presented to the Rebbe in honor of this

momentous occasion. In fact, the Rebbe himself explained in a sicha on Purim, a month before his seventieth birthday, that although it is seemingly unfitting for one to request a gift, he is nevertheless letting everyone know that the main focus of the *matonos* should be on increasing in *limud haTorah*.

I was then a young *bochur* studying in Oholei Torah. A few months before Yud-Aleph Nissan, our class held a meeting along with our *mashpia*, Reb Pinye Korf, to determine what we should do in honor of the upcoming milestone. Together we decided that we would learn 70 *blatt* of *Gemora* by heart, as well as 70 *sichos*. In those years, every *bochur* had the opportunity to go to the Rebbe for *yeichidus* around his birthday, so we resolved that the next member of the class that will be by the Rebbe would write about our new undertaking. As it happened, I was the next one to go in for *yeichidus*. Reading that section of my *tzet'l*, the Rebbe responded: "דאס וואס דו שרייבסט וועגן י"א ניסן, ס'איז א גלייכע זאך, און —גורם נחת-רוח, וממנו יראו וכן יעשו..." "What you write about Yud Aleph Nissan, it is an appropriate thing and it causes [me] *nachas-ruach*. Others should see and emulate your actions..."

I recall how I came out of the *yeichidus* and recounted what the Rebbe had told me to the older *bochurim* standing outside. The Rebbe's words made a strong impact on them, boosting the already prevalent "Yud-Aleph Nissan spirit" in the air, and encouraging everyone to step-up their efforts.

That was all for *bochurim*.

On the other hand, the Rebbe also welcomed more simple gestures as presents for Yud-Aleph Nissan, coming from less learned, but equally sincere individuals.

Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky relates that he attended a wedding of an acquaintance which happened to take place on the night of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5748, just a few weeks after the Rebbe launched the *mitvza yom huledes*.

In the midst of the celebration, the *chosson's* family presented a magnificent birthday cake holding 86 candles and an inscription reading "Happy Birthday Lubavitcher Rebbe."

When noting this in his *duch* to the Rebbe, the Rebbe commented in his holy handwriting:

"הערה כללית בזה, אומרים שבקצתם חשש של "כלל—חלב וק"ל—"A general note: they say that some of them [birthday candles] may contain *cheilev*..."<sup>2</sup>

In other words, the Rebbe accepted their gesture, even commenting on the type of candles they placed in the cake to be sure they were not problematic!

But the Rebbe took it even further, as we shall see in this next story.

In 5733 there was a young man hanging around in Crown Heights who had a strange obsession for certain elements of Christianity. After spending quite some time with the Jewish community and in the Rebbe's presence his Yiddishkeit began strengthening a bit; but then one day he decided to leave. From the letter he wrote to the Rebbe, we get an idea of the low spiritual level he had stooped to; he thanks the Rebbe for all that he had while in Crown Heights, but he apologizes and says that he cannot stay anymore, because of the disrespect for *oisoi ho'ish* that he senses in the community!

In response, the Rebbe encourages him to stay in Crown Heights at least for another few months, until after Tishrei, and, in the Rebbe's words: "באופן שנוכל לחוג ביחד"—"So that we will be able to celebrate all three *regolim* together (as well as my birthday)..."<sup>3</sup>

Imagine! This Yid had fallen so low that he felt emotionally attached to *oisoi ho'ish*, and the Rebbe still invited him to celebrate Yud-Aleph Nissan together, in the hope that he would reconsider his decision and eventually lead a Torah-true life!

Yet again, we observe how the Rebbe allows for his special personal day to be shared with every Yid, each according to their level.

And if the Rebbe maintained that even a Yid on that level could change just from a Yud-Aleph Nissan experience, all the more so us, Chassidim, who can better relate to and appreciate the significance of the day. If we only tap in to what's available on this day, we can surely be changed for the better.

In fact, the Rebbe encouraged his own *bochurim* to be with him on this special day as well.

In 5733, the *mazkir* Rabbi Binyomin Klein wrote to the Rebbe that the group of *talmidim-shluchim* leaving to Australia for a two-year *shlichus* would be departing New York in the beginning



RABBI ITKIN AS A BOCHUR WALKS ON EASTERN PARKWAY

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 142027

of Nissan, and he asked if the Rebbe was happy with this plan. The Rebbe commented on his note: “מהו הטעם והגעשמאק שיסעו מכאן ימים אחדים לפני יא ניסן?” — “What is the reason and pleasure to leave here a few days before Yud-Aleph Nissan?”

We know that traveling to Australia is more than a 24-hour journey from New York, and that Yud-Aleph Nissan is only a few days before Pesach. These *bochurim* were embarking on the Rebbe’s *shlichus*, no less, yet still the Rebbe insisted that they stay, in order to be in his presence for Yud-Aleph Nissan.

From this we discern with even more certainty how important this day is to each and every one of us, and the importance of being in the Rebbe’s presence on his special day.

Even today, when we don’t see the Rebbe physically, we have no doubt that the Rebbe’s bright light shines and affects everyone, especially on the Rebbe’s day of Yud-Aleph Nissan.

### More B’ruchniyus

I’m reminded of a story:

Reb Shmuel Zalmanov, the legendary author of *Sefer HaNigunim* and coordinator of the *Nichoach* music series, one of the editors of “HaTomim” and much more, once asked the Rebbe if it would be possible to edit something he had prepared. The Rebbe explained that he did not have time at the moment, for there would be a wedding that night and he was preoccupied. Reb Shmuel was puzzled; the Rebbe had already officially stopped being *mesader kiddushin* and

would surely not be attending the wedding! But then the Rebbe explained: “Being there *b’ruchniyus* is more work than actually attending *b’gashmiyus*!”

In other words, the fact that the Rebbe’s presence is not seen in a physical sense in no way negates the *brachos* and *hashpa’os* that the Rebbe provides us with. On the contrary; the Rebbe is with us even more and our connection with him is even stronger!

Let us utilize this powerful day of Yud-Aleph Nissan to strengthen our own connection with the Rebbe, each in our own way, but guided by the Rebbe’s teachings, and with Hashem’s help this year, we will be *zoche* to be with the Rebbe for Yud-Aleph Nissan, with the *geulah teikef umiyad Mammosh!*



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 23282

THE REBBE DELIVERS A MAAMOR AT THE YUD-ALEPH NISSAN FARBRENGEN, 5737.





## WITH THE REBBE HIMSELF

*Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Gourarie*

In 5732, the Rebbe's *shnas hashivi'im*, I was learning in Oholei Torah. From the beginning of the winter, there was a sense of elation in the air; one could feel that it was a special time, a period of preparation for Yud-Aleph Nissan.

We all felt a deep joy that the Rebbe was reaching this landmark day, and that we had the great *zechus* to be the Rebbe's Chassidim and *talmidim*. When we would farbreng together—a common occurrence—our feelings frequently brimmed over with the song of “*Ashreinu ma tov chelkeinu*,” which we would sing with great passion and excitement.

We wanted to give the Rebbe a gift in honor of this momentous occasion; and the gift of a yeshiva bochur, especially a bochur in the Rebbe's yeshiva, is learning Torah. So all the bochurim got together, and we each took upon ourselves to add *inyonim* in learning, both *b'iyun* and *baal peh*.

And the *hachlatos* were substantial.

Some bochurim took upon themselves to learn 70 *sichos* in *Lekutei Sichos* by heart; others decided to learn 70 *blatt* of Bava Kama—the *mesechta* learned in yeshivos that year—by heart; others would learn the first “*hemshech*” of Ranat (which is eight, long *maamorim*) by heart. The other *hachlatos* were on a similar scale.

That winter we had the custom that on Friday night we would go to sleep very

early, at about 9:00 p.m. At 2:00 a.m. we would wake up, go to our *zal*, and, for the next few hours every bochur would learn what he took upon himself for Yud-Aleph Nissan.

It was a beautiful sight. 3 o'clock in the morning, 4 o'clock in the morning, and bochurim were sitting and learning with enthusiasm and gusto; the *zal* was filled with words of *Likutei Sichos*, *Gemora*, and Chassidus. Every once in a while the *niggun* of “*Ashreinu ma tov chelkeinu*” could be heard in the *zal*.

This was how the weeks and months passed by. The joy grew stronger and stronger, and the sense of elation was felt more and more. We were farbrenging more, learning better and better, davening with more concentration, strengthening our *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe; a complete and utter involvement in *ruchniyus*.

Truth to be told, we felt pretty good about ourselves. We felt that we had done pretty well.

And then, on *Shabbos Hagadol*, Yud Nissan, the day before Yud-Aleph Nissan, something occurred which completely changed our perspective; then and forever after. This has a lesson for all of us, and especially for bochurim.

During the farbrengen on Shabbos there wasn't a big crowd. It was only a short few days before Pesach and people were



CHASSIDIM SING AS THE REBBE ENTERS THE CAR ON HIS WAY HOME FOLLOWING THE YUD-ALEPH NISSAN FARBRENGEN, 5744

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 139920

busy with yom tov preparations, so most of the guests were only coming to New York on Sunday, for the big Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen. It seemed that the majority of the crowd was bochurim, and we felt that the Rebbe was speaking directly to us.

A novelty at this farbrengen was that there were two *maamotrim*; one on *kapitel ayin* (the kapitel of the Rebbe's outgoing year), *dibur hamaschil* להזכיר לדוד; and the second *maamar* with the *dibur hamaschil* בעשור לחודש הזה.

In the first *maamar*, the Rebbe explained the Midrash on the *possuk* להזכיר לדוד. The Midrash explains that Dovid was asking "to be remembered." Why?

In order to explain, the Midrash offers a *moshol*: This is similar to a king who had sheep, and he got upset at them, so he let the sheep out, dismantled their stalls, and sent the shepherd away. A while later he gathered the sheep and rebuilt their stalls, but he forgot the shepherd. Said the shepherd, "The sheep are gathered, and the stalls are rebuilt, yet I am not remembered?!" Similarly, at the conclusion of the last *kapitel*, Dovid said, כי אלקים יושיע ציון; Hashem rebuilt Yerushalayim and restored the Yidden in it, but I am not remembered?

It's a famous *maamar*, so I'll only repeat the central theme which is relevant to our topic: When talking about a "shepherd" of the Jewish people, a *nossi*, the Rebbe, there are two levels; the *chitzoniyyus* of the רועה and the *pnimiyus* of the רועה. A person can be in a situation where everything seems to be beautiful; in the words of the Midrash, "the sheep are gathered and the stall is built"—the *avoda* of making a *dira bitachtonim* seems successful.

Yet, "the shepherd is not remembered." All of this only reaches the *chitzoniyyus* of the shepherd, not the *pnimiyus*. To reach the *pnimiyus* of the shepherd, a much deeper *avoda* is required, the *avoda* of ישראל וקוב"ה, total *bittul*, ועמך לא חפצתי כולא חד.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 110462

THE REBBE WISHES L'CHAIM TO THE ASSEMBLED AT THE YUD-ALEPH NISSAN FARBRENGEN, 5732

That is the point of the *maamar* in short.

It's impossible to know whether this was what the Rebbe meant, but we took this as a personal message. True, you accomplished much. You learned a lot, you were involved in *ruchniyyus*, your *avoda* is going great. But the true *hiskashrus*, the *hiskashrus* to the *pnimiyus* of the רועה—that is a whole other story. For that, one needs a much more profound, true *hiskashrus*.

This is how we understood the *maamar*.

At first, we felt dejected, as is quite understandable. However, we immediately caught ourselves and realized that to the contrary, we were lucky that the Rebbe had revealed this to us. The fact that the Rebbe had told this to us showed that we were in fact capable of reaching this deep level of *hiskashrus*.

The next day, at the big Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen, the Rebbe looked upon us with a shining face, and we gazed at the

Rebbe. As we sang the new *niggun* בך חסיתי אל אבושה לעולם (which was sung for over a half hour), we resolved deep inside ourselves to connect to the Rebbe with a true and *pnimiyus'dike hiskashrus*.

We said *l'chaim*, and the Rebbe answered *l'chaim v'livracha*. We felt a deep and sincere experience of אשרינו מה טוב חלקינו that we merited to be the Rebbe's Chassidim.

May Hashem help us that this year as well, as we prepare for Yud-Aleph Nissan, we should understand and feel this—to bring it down to action, and המעשה הוא העיקר.

And most importantly, we should be with the Rebbe here in *olam hazeh*, with the coming of *Moshiach tzidkeinu*. D

1. Toras Menachem vol. 34 p. 110

2. Ksav yad kodosh appears in the teshura, Kotlarsky-Hertz; Cheshvan 5774

3. Igros Kodesh vol. 28 p. 18

## MAZAL TOV ON YOUR BAR MITZVAH

*As we mark 100 years since the Rebbe's bar mitzvah, we present a collection of letters from the Rebbe with special hora'os regarding a bar mitzvah.*

### TANYA PEREK MEM-ALEF

In response to your letter, in which you write that you have started putting on Tefillin, as your Bar Mitzvah is in two months:

It would be proper that you learn—either on your own or with someone else—what is written in Shulchan Aruch [siman 25, se'if 5 (in the Shulchan Aruch of the Beis Yosef) and se'if 11 (in the Shulchan Aruch of the Alter Rebbe)], and is also included at the beginning of Tanya *perek* 41, regarding the התבוננות (contemplation) associated with the mitzvah of tefillin. [Do this] until the words are engraved in your memory, and certainly then they will have their desired effect on your Torah study, observance of mitzvos, and your overall conduct. This also includes influencing your friends to do the same. And being that the above-mentioned conduct enhances your spiritual wellbeing, it will certainly help your physical wellbeing as well.<sup>1</sup>

### CHOL HAMOED IN PREPARATORY MONTHS

In response to the question of when to begin putting on tefillin if *chol hamoed* is between the *hanochas* tefillin and the bar mitzvah, reducing the amount of days to practice putting on tefillin, the Rebbe writes:

The beginning of putting on tefillin can begin a week earlier than usual; may it be in a good and auspicious time.<sup>2</sup>

### PREPARING KRIAS HATORAH

Regarding that which you wrote that the [bochur Ha]bar mitzvah is preparing to *lein* the entire *parsha*:

My opinion in this regard has been known for some time.

Unfortunately, in our generation the main component [of becoming bar mitzvah] has become secondary, and vice versa. Additionally, as they prepare to accept the yoke of Torah and mitzvos, they decrease the study of fundamentals and essentials—*halachos* needed for day-to-day life—and substitute it with studies that are certainly not fundamental. More importantly, this was never the *minhag*. Although Chazal say that “When one comes to a city, one should follow its customs,” there are many customs in each city, and [the proper thing to do] is self-understood.

Obviously the above is merely a suggestion and an observation. You should look into it again, and determine whether this is the right course for you. Whatever you decide, may it be for the best.<sup>3</sup>

### TO BE “AL HATZIYUN”

Regarding your second question, about the bar mitzvah of your son, which will take place on Shabbos *parshas Beshalach* of this year:

In general, I'm puzzled by your uncertainty, and that you aren't trying to come up with reasons to be at the *tziyun* of the Rebbe, of sacred memory. Since [the date of] your son's bar mitzvah is in proximity to Yud Shevat, it would seem to be an indication that you should seize this opportunity to be at the *tziyun*; to relive the many celebratory occasions that you merited to be present [with the Rebbe], while you were in yeshiva, and with *anash*. If you don't take advantage of this opportunity, when will you? If, for whatever reason, it is not possible—or at least it seems impossible [to come to the Ohel]—then the bar mitzvah should take place at your current location. May it be in a good and auspicious time. May you, your wife, and your family celebrate together with true joy—*simcha shel mitzvah*.<sup>4</sup>



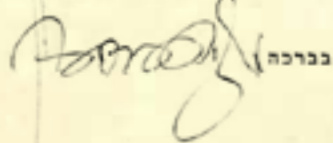
REBBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON  
Lubavitch  
770 Eastern Parkway  
Brooklyn, N. Y. 11213  
Hydcofth 3-9250

מוחם מנדל שניאורסאן  
ליובאוויטש  
770 איסטערן פארקוויי  
ברוקלין, נ.י.  
ב"ה,  
ברוקלין, נ.י.

שלום וברכה!

במענה על ההודעה ע"ר הכנסו בקרוב  
לגיל מצות,

הנה יה"ר מחשי"ת אשר סבן שלש עשרה  
למצות יגדל לבן חמש עשרה וכו' כספך המסנה  
(אבות פרק ה') ויוסיף התפדה ושקידה בלימודו  
בחורה, בחורה הנבלה וכן בחורה החסידות ויהדר  
בקיט המצות. וחשי"ת יצליחו להיות חסיד ירא  
שמים ולמדן.

בברכה  


## TRAVELLING TO ERETZ YISRAEL

Your trip to Eretz Yisrael [to celebrate the bar mitzvah] will cost, round trip, (even if it's **only** yourselves and the [bochur ha]bar mitzvah traveling) a minimum of \$1,500. It will certainly be a **great zechus** for the [bochur ha]bar mitzvah to **not allow** all this waste of money on the trip. The bar mitzvah should take place **specifically here**. That way **all his friends, with whom he learns Torah**, will be able to participate in the *simcha*. **On the actual** day [of the bar mitzvah] he should visit the *tziyun* of the Rebbe, etc. May it be in a good and auspicious time.<sup>5</sup>

## TACHANUN ON THE DAY OF THE BAR MITZVAH

*The following is a letter written by the Rebbe to his Cousin, Reb Menachem Mendel ben Reb Shmuel Schneerson.*

My dear cousin Menachem,

For your 13<sup>th</sup> birthday, your bar mitzvah, it is my wish to speak with you a bit, as if we were sitting next to each other, conversing face to face. Until we see each other [again], I am forced to express my words in writing, and I hope that in a short while, after reading through my letter, you will answer me—in writing or by word of mouth—your feelings about what I've written, and all your thoughts and ideas on this [subject].

Ostensibly, the day of the bar mitzvah—when a Jewish boy becomes obligated to keep the mitzvos like an adult, and

from then on is considered a man—should be a day on which *tachanun* is not recited, *melacha* should be forbidden, and so on, just like a Yom Tov. Because from this point on the *Yetzer Tov* enters into him, and the boy becomes part of *Klal Yisroel*. However, Actually, the fact is that it is not so! *Tachanun* is recited, and learning takes place like every other day, etc.

The reason for this is that we were not created to celebrate Yom Tov every day. Rather we are obligated to work and toil [as the *possuk* says] “Man is born to toil” (“אדם לעמל יולד”). The world isn't a ballroom; a person is not a guest, who puts on Shabbos clothing and comes to a feast, and [man's] days are not [all] Yom Tov and Shabbos. This world is a place of action and work; the days [of our lives] exist for action (היום לעשותם), and there is much work to be done. Man was not created for any purpose other than to serve, guard, and work; he is not free to idle around. When a person becomes obligated to keep Torah and mitzvos, it doesn't become a Yom Tov. Instead it is a day of action and accomplishments.<sup>6</sup>

## FARBRENGEN

In response to your letter of Erev Sukkos: I was pleased to read in it that you made a farbrengen in connection with the bar mitzvah of your son, and that it was a *chassidisher farbrengen*. May the affect of the spiritual awakening continue in the coming weeks and months. This will also add in Divine assistance (סייעתא דשמיא) for your son, the [bochur ha]bar mitzvah, who was the cause for this [farbrengen].<sup>7</sup>

## SEVERAL HORA'OS ABOUT A BAR MITZVAH

In general, I am displeased with the way bar mitzvahs take place, because of several issues:

- [1] That the [bochur ha]bar mitzvah davens at the *amud*.
- [2] That he *leins* the Torah.
- [3] The waste of money on a hall, etc.
- [4] It is proper for a *dvar Torah* be said, not just a speech etc.<sup>8</sup>

1. Igros Kodesh vol. 14 p. 533
2. Likkutei Sichos vol. 21 p. 357
3. Igros Kodesh vol. 20 p. 118
4. Ibid. vol. 5 p. 95
5. Ibid. vol. 26 p. 20. Emphases are in the original.
6. Reshimos 59.
7. Igros Kodesh vol. 12 p. 49.
8. Shevach Yekar p. 197.

# THE PROPER DECISION

*In an interview with A Chassidisher Derher,  
Rabbi Levi Klein, Shliach in Memphis, TN, related the following story.*

**W**e moved on shlichus to Memphis, Tennessee, in 5754. After spending two years in an apartment we purchased a house with an extended garage, which provided us with extra space that we converted into a functional shul and Chabad House. Our plan was that after a few years, we would move the Chabad House to a bigger, better and more permanent location.

We ended up staying in the house for close to twelve years. Much money and effort was exhausted in trying to obtain various properties, but every time we got close, it didn't materialize for reasons beyond our control. It was ten years of disappointment and lost opportunities.

Finally, in 5767, after eight failed attempted projects, something new came up. There was a six-acre property for sale, with a large building and a parking lot, and it seemed to suit our needs perfectly. The building belonged to a non-Jewish

religious establishment that had run into major financial difficulties. They were desperate to sell the property to pay off their debts, which meant that they would give us a great price.

There was just one issue: The location was a bit out of our area.

Every Jewish center or institution in the city is either on the main street of the



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 145006



city or just north of it. This property was a full mile south of the main road. My supporters were split, and, of course, I was torn. Everything about it—the property, the building, and the price—was perfect, except for location.

In the midst of all this, I traveled to New York for the Kinus Hashluchim. As I usually do, I planned to take a taxi straight from the airport to the Ohel. Being that the flight would take a few hours, I decided to write my letter to the Rebbe on the plane. I wrote everything that was weighing on my heart and quite uncharacteristically, I poured my heart into the letter.

I began “בקרוב יתמלאו י”ג שנה”—It would soon be thirteen years since our arrival in Memphis and we still have not found a permanent location suitable for our needs. I described everything that had transpired in the previous twelve years, and I added the present opportunity, with all its pros and cons. I was willing to invest all the time, effort, and money necessary for this project, but I first needed to be certain that this was the right course. Too many times I had chased after what seemed like a great opportunity, spending large amounts of money and effort on projects that eventually fell through, and I didn’t want to repeat that process.

I asked for a *brocha* that whatever happens, it should be with *hatzlocha*, and then I concluded the letter in a very unusual fashion. In the past, whenever I wrote about such matters, I had always requested a *brocha* at the end of my letter to the Rebbe. But now, for the first time since Gimmel Tammuz, I finished the letter by asking the Rebbe to show me “a sign” as to whether we should go ahead with this project or not. I ended off the letter with the questioning words: “באם” —Is this the correct thing?”

After visiting the Ohel, I made my way to Crown Heights.

I was in my parents’ home that evening when my father, Rabbi Binyomin Klein, long-time *mazkir* of the Rebbe, suddenly remembered something. He had a *tzetel* containing a handwritten *maane* from the Rebbe that he wanted to present me with. I was surprised because although my father had served as the Rebbe’s personal *mazkir*, it was highly unusual for him to give me something from the Rebbe, even something that pertained to me.

I waited as he went upstairs and after a minute he came down with the *tzetel* and he proceeded to tell me the story behind it.

I was born on Yud-Gimmel Tammuz, the *chag hageula* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, which the Rebbe marked every year with a farbrengen. The farbrengen usually took place on the night in between Yud-Beis and Yud-Gimmel. My bar-mitzvah took place in 5740, and that year Yud-Gimmel

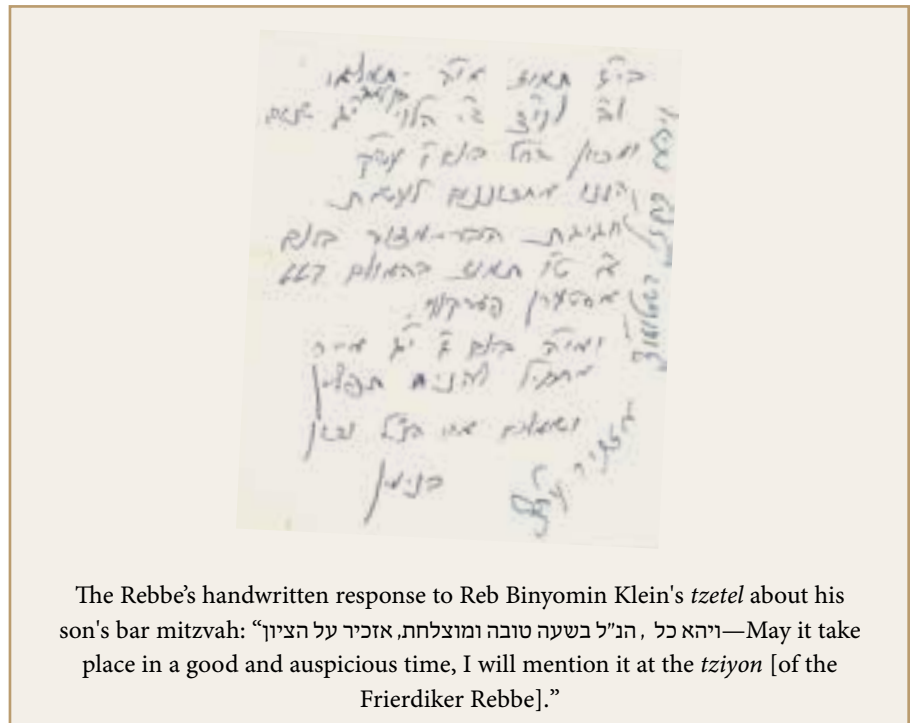
Tammuz fell out on Friday, which meant that the Rebbe was going to hold a farbrengen Thursday night.

Although the Rebbe always encouraged that the bar-mitzvah celebration should take place as close to the actual birthday as possible, my parents decided that because of the farbrengen, my celebration would be postponed to Sunday. My father wrote a *tzetel* to the Rebbe asking if we should go ahead as planned, ending with the words: “ושוואלים אם הנ”ל נכון” —Is this the correct thing?”

The Rebbe’s handwritten answer was on the *tzetel*: The Rebbe added in his holy handwriting “ויהא כל, הנ”ל בשעה טובה” —May it take place in a good and auspicious time, I will mention it at the *tziyon* [of the Frierdiker Rebbe].”

My father handed me the *tzetel* and told me to keep it.

With a pounding heart, I looked closer at the *tzetel*. It struck me immediately that







the wording in the beginning and end of the *tzetel* was practically identical to the letter I had written to the Rebbe earlier that day; opening with the words “יתמלאו” – לבני לוי יצחק ש”י יג שנה reach the thirteen years,” and closing with those questioning words “באם הנ”ל נכון.”

I was stunned. It became instantly clear to me that this was the answer to the question I had written the Rebbe earlier that day.


“זיהא כהנ”ל בשעה טובה ומוצלחת, אזכיר על הציון...”

I now felt that I had received a clear *brocha* and *haskama* from the Rebbe to go ahead with the purchase, and I was confident that the process would be smooth and successful.

When I returned home after the *kinus* we began negotiations with the sellers, and thanks to the Rebbe’s *brochos*, everything fell into place. The building was successfully bought and renovated.

Many times during the entire process, I was astonished at the *hashgacha protis* taking place. Here is one more example:

Several weeks after we purchased the property I received a call from a local attorney, who informed me of something amazing. A 101-year-old woman had just passed away and she bequeathed five million dollars to the establishment we had just bought the building from. If she would have passed just a few weeks earlier, they would never have needed to sell the building and we would have been back to square one!

We have been in the building for eight years to date and all the concerns regarding the location were unfounded. As the city is expanding to the suburbs, this location is better than we were ever able to imagine in the first place. 



RABBI LEVI KLEIN, HIS FATHER, REB BINYOMIN, AND RABBI MOSHE KOTLARSKY WITH DONORS AT THE OPENING OF THE CHABAD CENTER IN MEMPHIS, TN







# The Heartbeat of Lubavitch

Part I

## בית חיינו

*The* epicenter of Lubavitcher Chassidim during the last seven decades is found in this three-story Brooklyn building. A luminary providing light throughout the whole of the world, brightening the path to the geulah, that has become an iconic symbol replicated in many other locations across the globe. Discover the ins and outs of the home we, as Chassidim hold so dear and learn its beautiful story told over the following pages.



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

*Special thanks to Rabbi Yossi Lew and Rabbi Shimmy Weinbaum.*

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





## 770

Three numbers that say so much to the Chossid of *dor hashvi'i*.

From the time the Friediker Rebbe permanently came to the United States, this building has been part and parcel of all the occurrences of Chabad. The epicenter where hundreds of thousands of *Yiddishe kinder* flocked to for guidance in every area of life, for inspiration in *avodas Hashem*, for a comforting word in times of distress, and to share the most precious moments of their lives. It is a place towards which every single major issue facing the Jewish people at every corner of the globe was directed, and a charging station where true *giluy elokus* is generated throughout the world.

From here, the Rebbe directed Chabad's activities, reaching out to *Yiddishe neshamos* in the most distant locations, physically and spiritually.

Throughout the years, the Rebbe would extol the special qualities of 770 in many of his sichos, calling it "*Beis Rabeinu She'beBovel*", the *beis hamikdash* of the time of *golus*. When plans for a major expansion of 770 were underway in 5752, the Rebbe was *magiha* a special *kuntres* about 770, collected from various *sichos*.<sup>1</sup>

## Spiritual Joy

In a letter written by Reb Avrohom Pariz at the end of the year 5700, shortly after the building was purchased and the Friediker Rebbe moved in, he described the feelings of *anash* that accompanied this milestone:

"I cannot express in words the light, the joy, and the satisfaction on the faces of each of the participants [in the *chanukas habayis* ceremony]; it was noticeable on everyone's faces that this is a spiritual and holy joy..."

One can sense in his words that the celebration was more than that of merely finding permanent residence for the Friediker Rebbe and a headquarters for his movement and *mosdos*. It was clear that this day marked a major milestone and was prelude to a whole new page in the history of Chabad.

The building itself was originally built as a private hospital that was later closed by the government due to illegal activity. Lubavitch bought the building later on, as it was the most suited in the area for the Friediker Rebbe's needs. It had an elevator, enabling the Friediker Rebbe easy access to the upper floors.

When the Rebbe and Rebbetzin arrived in the United States around one year later, they originally moved into 770 as well (residing in the room that would later be "The Rebbe's room"), before moving into an apartment on New York Avenue, corner President Street later on.





In those years, the Rebbe held a farbrengen every Shabbos *mevorchim* after davening. Interestingly, in one such farbrengen, the Rebbe expounded on the significance of the building of 770, the three floors symbolizing *chochma*, *bina*, and *daas*, and explaining why the Friediker Rebbe chose specifically the second floor to reside on.

Throughout the years, the Rebbe showed tremendous affection for the building of 770, the place he rarely left for more than 50 years.

Reb Yoel Kahn records in a letter during Tishrei 5712, that the Rebbe was asked if a larger hall could be rented elsewhere for the *yomim tovim*, to hold the growing crowds during davening and farbrengens of the *yomim nora'im*. The Rebbe responded: “The [Friediker] Rebbe ‘soaked’ these walls for the last ten years with tears and with his last remaining strength. Can I leave here?!”

But perhaps above all stands the Rebbe’s response to Israeli President Zalman Shazar, when asked if the Rebbe would go visit him in his hotel room in Manhattan, or if he would have to come to 770 to see the Rebbe. The Rebbe was adamant about not leaving 770, and when Shazar finally came, the Rebbe took him for a “tour” of 770’s first floor. The Rebbe showed him where the Friediker Rebbe davened in the small *zal*, and then showed him into his room, saying, “In this room, so many tears were shed, and from this room the Jews of Russia were saved.” Then the

Rebbe concluded: “Could I have brought all this along with me to your hotel in Manhattan?”

To us as Chassidim as well, every corner of 770 is layered with meaning. Every room has a story to tell, and every doorway has volumes to recount.

Presented here is the first of a two-part series telling a picture-based story of

some of the goings-on in 770, relating some of the fondest moments Chassidim enjoyed in the Rebbe’s presence. The first installment will cover the main building of 770 and the library building next-door. The second installment will include the big shul “downstairs” and the surrounding areas.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 143042

*Due to length constraints, the information here is based on what usually happened or what happened for a long time period; obviously, there may have been changes and differences throughout the years.*

*The pictures and captions are for illustration purposes, hence the captions may not describe precisely what is happening in the pictures.*

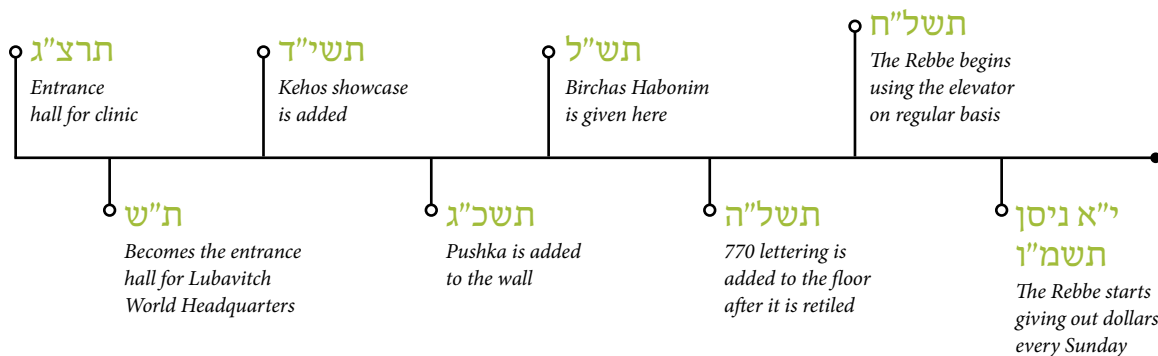


PHOTO: BARUCH EZAGUI

# The Entrance







**The** entryway itself served as a central and important location. The famed distribution of dollars, during which thousands of people passed by the Rebbe every Sunday, receiving the Rebbe's *brocha*, and experiencing miracles and salvation in their lives, occurred at this "entrance." The Rebbe would stand with his back to the elevator as Yidden of all walks of life would pass before him.

The first time the distribution of dollars took place in this foyer was Tuesday, 11 Shevat 5746. Beginning 11 Nissan 5746, the Rebbe began distributing dollar-bills for *tzedaka* every Sunday.

Many a time, here, on the way to davening, the Rebbe would distribute coins to children to give to *tzedaka*. This came with the Rebbe's initiation of *mitvza tzedaka* in 5734.

The *pushka* was installed in 5723, "Shnak HaKan" - 150 years since the Alter Rebbe's histalkus, and was designated for "Keren Schneur" - a fund to print the Alter Rebbe's seforim.

Often, this entranceway was a most opportune place to approach the Rebbe and ask for a *brocha*; either on the Rebbe's way to and from shul or when the Rebbe arrived at 770. Guests would also stand here before leaving for home to receive the Rebbe's blessing for a safe trip.

As you enter the room, you can see an elevator. This elevator was used by the Frierdiker Rebbe to go up and down between his apartment on the second floor and the shul on the main floor. Up until the year 5738, the Rebbe almost never used the elevator except on rare occasions. One such time was on purim 5731, during the visit of President Shazar, when the Rebbe went down with him to the big shul to hear the *megilla*.

Following the Rebbe's heart attack on Shmini Atzeres 5738, the Rebbe began using the elevator on a regular basis on weekdays so going downstairs should be less strenuous.



**Entrance** The Rebbe enters 770 through the main door.



**Elevator** The Rebbe exits the elevator into the entryway, returning from the main shul downstairs.

## The Entrance

Gan Eden  
Hatachton

The  
Rebbe's Room

The  
Small Zal

The  
Offices

The  
Second Floor

The  
Basement

The  
Library



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 108464

## The Entrance

Gan Eden  
Hatachton

The  
Rebbe's Room

The  
Small Zal

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Offices

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The  
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The  
Library



**Dollars** The Rebbe giving dollars to young students of Bais Rivkah. We can see here the general setup of the Sunday dollars. Where the Rebbe stood; where the line would enter and exit from; where the Rebbe's secretaries (Rabbi Klein and Rabbi Groner) would stand, as well as the videographer, Reb Chaim Boruch Halbertsam.

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 21778



**Tzedaka for Children** The Rebbe distributes coins for tzedaka to children standing in the entryway (on his way to daven).

On the eastern wall of the entrance—between the door that leads to *gan eden hatachton* and the northern wall—sits a handsome wooden frame for the purpose of showcasing *seforim* published by Kehos. This occupied the space of a window originally used by a receptionist to greet patients. This showcase was built at the Rebbe's instruction in year 5714, to encourage the purchase of Kehos's *seforim*.



## Tzedaka to Children

During the later years of the *nesius*, the Rebbe would distribute coins for *tzedaka* to children standing around upstairs, encouraging them to place the coins in the pushka on the wall. It happened once<sup>2</sup> that a small child attempted to drop a coin in the pushka, but he could not reach the slot being that it was too high for him. The Rebbe approached the child and lifted him up so that he could reach it. After some time, a second slot was carved at a lower level, allowing for the small children to place their coins in the pushka as well.



**Machne Yisrael** The Rebbe greets members of the Machne Yisroel fund in the entryway.

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 14917





1) Stairwell to Friedliker Rebbe's floor 2) Door to stairwell leading to the big shul downstairs which the Rebbe used going downstairs to shul on Shabbos and yom tov. 3) Door to Rabbi Groner's office and stairs leading to the side entrance of 770, used by the Rebbe from Adar 5746 and on. 4) Door to the Rebbe's room

# Sam Edén Hattachton



The  
Entrance

**Gan Eden  
Hatachton**

The  
Rebbe's Room

The  
Small Zal

The  
Offices

The  
Second Floor

The  
Basement

The  
Library



## תשי"א

The Rebbe starts  
accepting Panim and  
giving out Lekach

## תשכ"ב

Bochurim receive Birchas  
Habonim here as the Rebbe  
stands in his room

## כ"ו חשוון, תשנ"ב

The Rebbe davens Minchah here  
every Sunday before dollars

## תשי"א

The Rebbe begins  
distributing Matzo

## תשל"ח

The room is locked, and a  
mini-kitchen is added

**Leading** to the Rebbe's room—"gan eden haelyon"—is a corridor/antechamber that chassidim refer to as "gan eden hatchaton" (a term used by chassidim in the Alter Rebbe's times). This area itself carries much meaning, with many special events taking place there. It was here that the Rebbe received *panim* and the *pan kholi* on erev Rosh Hashanah, distributed *lekach* on erev Yom Kippur, *arba minim* on erev Sukkos, *shmurah matzah* on erev Pesach, and more.

During the years in which the Rebbe received people for *yechidus* in his room, Chassidim would wait in the *gan eden hatachton* until it was their turn to enter for *yechidus*. On occasion, when the *yechidus* would finish in the wee hours of the morning, it was in this corridor, on *yimei krias*, that a *minyan* would be arranged for the Rebbe to hear *krias haTorah*. The *brocha* to the bochurim on erev Yom Kippur also took place here in the earlier years.

At the conclusion of the *BaHa"B* fasts—which the Rebbe would fast unbeknownst to most people—a *minyan* for *maariv* would be arranged in *gan eden hatachton*, as the Rebbe did not want to disrupt the bochurim's *seider* taking place in the *zal* at that time. (The same applied when the Rebbe returned from the Ohel in the earlier years).

On some occasions, the Rebbe would receive distinguished guests for *yechidus* in *gan eden hatachton* itself, as well as some in groups. Many of the *talmidim-hashluchim* received a *brocha* from the Rebbe here before embarking on their *shlichus*.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 122771

**Panim** Every year on erev Rosh Hashanah (in the later years - it began a few days earlier), the Rebbe stood at the door of his room and received *panim* from thousands of Chassidim and guests, blessing each of them with a "Ksiva vachasima tova, le'shana tova umesuka."



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 140958

**Pan kholi** After receiving personal *panim*, the Rebbe would be presented with the *pan kholi* by the elder Chassidim. The Rebbe would read it and afterwards give a short *brocho* for the new year.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 165061



**Lekach** The Rebbe would hand out *lekach* in the *gan eden hatachton* on erev Yom Kippur (in the later years - it began a few days earlier) to all those who requested, wishing them a *chasima ugmar chasima toiva*. For those guests who came later for Sukkos and Simchas Torah, the Rebbe would hand out *lekach* on Hoshana Rabba, as he stood outside at the door of the *sukka* wishing each a *shona tova umesuka*.



**Daled Minim** On erev Sukkos, the Rebbe would distribute sets or (partial sets) of *daled minim* to select rabbonim and shluchim, as well as to members of *mazkirus*.

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 44273



**Matzah** With the approach of Pesach, *shmurah matzos* would be baked especially for the Rebbe. The Rebbe would personally separate *challah* from the matzos and hand them out to rabbonim, shluchim, and *askonim*, for them and their respective communities. On erev Pesach, after mincha, the Rebbe personally distributed *matzos* to all. Beginning from 5738 and on, the Rebbe distributed matzos through the members of the *Kolel*.



**Preparation for yechidus** As chasidim waited their turn for yechidus, they would utilize every moment to recite Tehillim or reflect silently.



**Mincha** Beginning from the 26 Cheshvan 5752, the Rebbe would daven mincha here each Sunday before distributing dollars.<sup>3</sup>

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 20642



**Krias HaTorah** Occasionally, the Rebbe would hear *kriah* in this room.



The doctor of “*bais harav*”, Dr. Avrohom Aba Seligson, would keep his medical equipment in a closet in *gan eden hatachton*; at times he would even examine patients there.

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PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 102889

**Motzoei Yom Kippur** Following the singing of “Napoleon’s March” and maariv, the Rebbe would return to his room, wishing “gut yom tov” to individuals on his way.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 91486

**Kuntres** On rare occasions, the Rebbe gave out dollars, *kuntreisim*, and even Chanuka gelt from the door of his room.



**Yechidus** As mentioned, on rare occasions, the rebbe would have *yechidus* in *gan eden hatachton* with important people. Pictured here is R’ Yaakov Alter, then the son of the Gerer Rebbe, today the current Gerer Rebbe, Vov Adar II 5749.





1) The two chairs facing the Rebbe were used by visitors during yechidus. In a longstanding minhag for generations, Chassidim always remained standing during yechidus.

# The Rebbe's Room



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**The** front left corner of 770 is home to the Rebbe's holy room, referred to by chassidim as "*gan eden haelyon*." It was in this room that the Rebbe conducted his *avodas hakodesh* for more than 50 years. Thousands of letters, containing plea-requests, tidings, inquiries, and more, were sent here, each one responded to by the Rebbe, one by one. It was here, that the Rebbe received thousands of Yidden for *yechidus*. From this modest room, countless instructions and words of guidance were directed to individuals and communities, and to the Jewish people as a whole, and to non-Jews as well.

## קדושה לא זזה ממקומה

The Friediker Rebbe writes in his first *maamor*, *Reishis Goyim*, 5680:

"I once witnessed as my father [the Rebbe Rashab] entered his father's [the Rebbe Maharash] room. The setup of the room was exactly as it were during the lifetime [of his father]. This was approximately during the years of 5645 or 5656 [the Rebbe Maharash was *nistalek* in 5643]. He entered wearing his *gartel* and stood near the table opposite [his father's] holy chair; his lips moved as if he was speaking and he cried profusely..."

The Rebbe once expounded upon this story at the farbrengen of Shabbos parshas Vayikra, 5747. Those present recall how the Rebbe's voice choked with tears when repeating this story. (See the Rebbe's explanation in *Likutei Sichos* vol. 32 p. 24).

**Prior** to the Rebbe's arrival in the United States, the Rebbe's room was used as the Friediker Rebbe's *yechidus* room. For a period of time during the winter of 5701, the room was also used by the Friediker Rebbe to say *maamorim* while the Chassidim listened through the intercom in the small *zal*. The Friediker Rebbe would say these *maamorim* every Tuesday, being that many Chassidim lived in Brownsville and other neighborhoods, and were not able to attend on Shabbos.

Upon the Rebbe's arrival, the Rebbe and Rebbetzin temporarily used this room as living quarters for two weeks, until they moved to an apartment on New York Avenue.

After some time, the room became the office for Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch. Working in the office, the Rebbe would sit at the middle of the table (the table is still there today), while Rabbi Hodakov sat on the left and Reb Nissan Mindel on the right. The Rebbe's *mazkir*, Reb Eliyahu Kwint, would work there as well. The office was also used by Reb Mordechai Shusterman and Reb Avrohom Pariz to type up the Friediker Rebbe's *sichos* and *maamorim*. The room was small, with too many people working there for its size; as a result, all who worked there were in close quarters with the Rebbe.

In 5707, it formally became the Rebbe's room, where he studied and worked for the next 47 years.

During the year of 5738, from Motzoei Simchas Torah (after the Rebbe had a heart attack on Shmini Atzeres) until Motzoei Shabbos *parshas* Mishpatim the Rebbe said a *maamor* and a *sicha* on occasion Motzoei Shabbos from his room. Members of *mazkirus* were there with the Rebbe and there would





PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 103426

From the window of his room, the Rebbe looks on as Chassidim dance with one of the Rebbe's shlichim as he embarks on shlichus.

be a live hookup broadcasting downstairs to the main shul, and all over the world.

After the year following the Rebbetzin's *histalkus*, the Rebbe made this room his permanent living quarters.

During the early years of the Rebbe's *nesius*, on erev Yom Kippur, the *bochurim* would gather in the Rebbe's room where the Rebbe would bless them with the traditional "*Birkas Habonim*." For many years, *anash* would also be blessed by the Rebbe in his room. There were even times when the *bochurim* were invited into the Rebbe's room to receive Chanukah *gelt*. And of course, there are the multitudes of people who merited to have *yechidus* in this room with the Rebbe, illuminating their lives forever.

During the period of time after Yud Shevat 5710, Reb Avrohom Pariz was very much involved in campaigning that the Rebbe accept the *nesius*. It happened once, that Reb Avrohom was talking to a group of Chassidim, when he mentioned how he had worked in the Rebbe's room while it was still the Merkos office. Said Reb Avrohom: "My friends, I know the Rebbe; I worked together with him in one room for about ten years, my table next to his. I would never work; I would always be staring at him to see what he was doing. And I tell you: he is hiding himself! He wishes that we should not know his true greatness; but he really *is* our Rebbe!"



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 22546

**Daled-Minim** For many years, the Rebbe distributed *daled minim* here, until this was moved to *gan eden hatachton*.



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 23710

The Rebbe meets with the chief rabbis of Israel, Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu and Rabbi Avrohom Shapiro; 1 Kislev 5749. Notice the brown paper cover (to the Rebbe's right) on top of piles of *seforim*.

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PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 103224



The Rebbe's many thousands of letters were penned in this room



The Rebbe meets with Israeli President Zalman Shazar; Yud-Beis Tammuz, 5733

## Early Morning Maamor

During the 5710s and early 5720s, the Rebbe would occasionally arrive early at 770 on Shabbos morning, and say a *maamar* for the *bochurim* and *anash* who were learning in the small *zal* at the time. The last time this rare occurrence took place was In the year 5721, on Shabbos *parshas* Acharei-Kedoshim.

Chassidim would say that the reason for the Rebbe 'surprising' the crowd on occasion with a *maamor* on Shabbos morning was in order to encourage them to consistently come to learn Chassidus on Shabbos morning.



Governor of New York W. Averell Harriman in *yechidus* with the Rebbe in the late 5710s



The Rebbe speaks with Rabbi Binyomin Gorodetzky, the Rebbe's representative to Europe and North Africa

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 108186





PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 108522

Prime Minister of Israel Menachem Begin and dignitaries before his *yechidus* with the Rebbe; 2 Av, 5737



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 108228

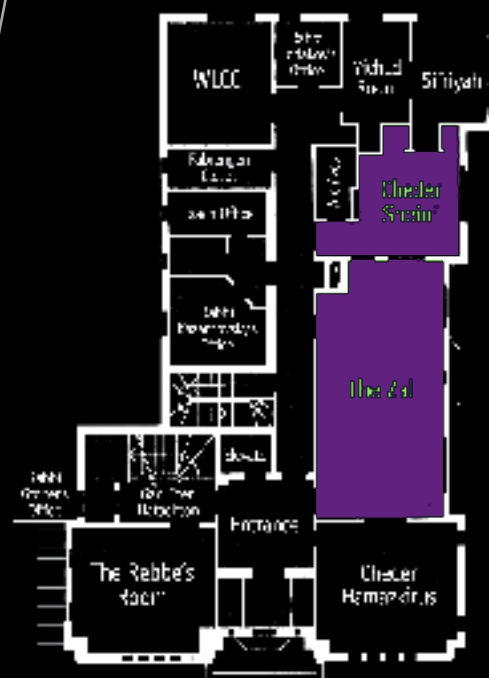
The Rebbe stands amongst the many piles of *seforim*, piled all the way from the floor, with which he learned on a regular basis



A delegation of Ethiopians (their Jewish status halachically undetermined) once came to the United States, visiting different Jewish organizations, leaders, and rabbis. They also paid a visit to the Frieddiker Rebbe, who spoke some words of encouragement and blessing to them. He then told them to converse with his son-in-law (the Rebbe) as well. Following their encounter in the Rebbe's room, they requested a picture be taken. The Rebbe did not participate, but the secretaries, Rabbis Rodshtein and Hodakov, who had been present at the meeting, did join in the picture.



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**Throughout** the earlier years of the Rebbe's *nesius*, the small *zal* functioned as the central location of 770. It was in this very room in which the Rebbe officially accepted the *nesius*. Here, in close proximity to all those present, is where the Rebbe would daven and farbreng. The main purpose of the room was to serve as the *zal* for yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim, while at the same time many special events took place here.

These events included:

When the Frierdiker Rebbe first established himself in 770, he would daven in this *zal* on the *yomim noraim* and hold farbrengens there. (After some time, the Frierdiker Rebbe davened and farbrenged upstairs.)

Starting in the summer of 5701, the Rebbe would farbreng every Shabbos *mevorchim*. Following *musaf*, the members of the shul would sit down to make *kiddush*. The Rebbe wouldn't make *kiddush*, but would sit in his *talis*, instructing the assembled to sing a *niggun*. He would then speak, usually for about 40 minutes.

As was mentioned, the historic farbrengen of Yud Shevat 5711, when the Rebbe said the first *maamor* and accepted the *nesius*, took place in this room. Up until the second night of Pesach of 5721, the Rebbe would farbreng here

on Shabbos, *yom tov* and *yomei depagra* (with the exception of the larger farbrengens on Yud-Tes Kislev, Yud Shevat, and Purim, which would take place in rented halls around Crown Heights - 5714-5720). When the farbrengens were relocated to the big shul downstairs, the Rebbe would still daven and listen to *krias haTorah* here during the week.

Also, often times the Rebbe would pass by in the morning, or another time of day, just to observe how the *bochurim* were learning.

Up until 5744, *yechidus klolis* for the guests was held here as well.



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 143636

**Machne Yisroel Development Fund** Twice a year, the Rebbe would address the supporters of Machne Yisroel, speaking for a few minutes to each individual privately as well. Following this, the Rebbe would give a special blessing to the *shluchim* who had brought the supporters. Originally, this took place in the entrance room of 770, then it was moved for a few years to the small *zal* and then eventually when that space was insufficient, it was relocated to the big shul.

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PHOTO: ARCHIVES OF MYENCOUNTER.COM



**Entrance** During the earlier years, this was where the Rebbe davened on Shabbos and *mincha-maariv* on the weekdays. Once the main shul downstairs was opened, the Rebbe would still continue davening here on weekdays, *mincha* of Shabbos, and *chol hamoed*.

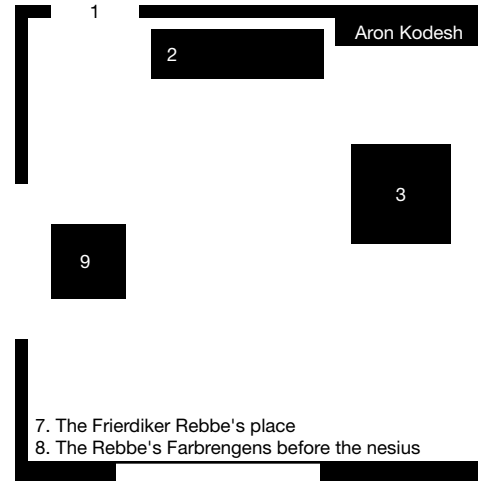
PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 20560



**Krias HaTorah** In the later years a small half *shtender* would be placed on top of the table facing the *aron kodesh* for the Rebbe to stand at. While the *minyan* would be saying *ashrei* and *uva letzion*, the Rebbe would say his own and the Rebbetzin's *kapitel*. This presented an opportunity for one to place a personal *chumash* and *tehilim*, having the *zechus* of the Rebbe reading from them.



**Farbrengen** During the earlier years when the Rebbe farbrenged here, he would sit on a platform at his Shabbos place. The elder Chassidim would sit behind the Rebbe. There were a few tables set up in "*ches*" formation for older people to sit down while all the *bochurim* and *yungeleit* would stand in the back.



7. The Frieddiker Rebbe's place  
8. The Rebbe's Farbrengens before the nesius

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 110793



**At the Amud** For the duration of the year following Rebbetzin Chana's *histalkus*, the Rebbe davened at the *amud* for *shacharis*, *mincha*, and *maariv*. This is a rare picture of the Rebbe davening at the *amud* in the zal.



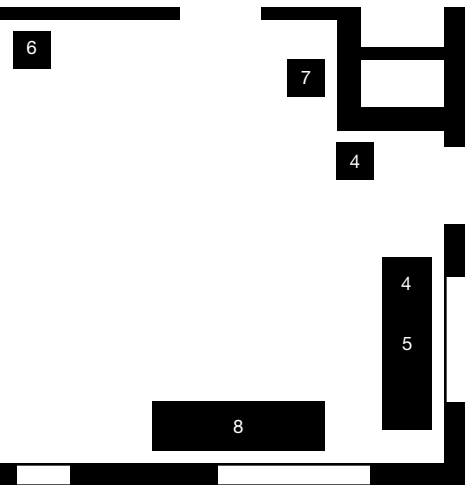




**Aliyah** Every Monday and Thursday the Rebbe received *shlishi*. On Shabbos, the Rebbe received *maftir* and read the *haftorah*. In many instances, the Rebbe cried while reading the *haftorah*. The Rebbe recited the *haftorah* softly. In order to better hear, there was always much pushing to be close to the Rebbe and observe this event well.



**Mincha and Maariv** A few minutes before *mincha* and *maariv*, the *bochurim* would quickly remove a plastic cover—which was on the table to protect it from getting ruined while they learned—in preparation for the Rebbe's arrival. Until the mid 5740s the Rebbe would enter *holding* his gartel and while saying *korbonos*. He would then put on the *gartel*, carefully examining that both sides were equally placed.



**Weekday Davening** Following the *kedusha* of *mincha* and *borchu* of *maariv*, the Rebbe would sit on a cushioned bench with his back to *mizrach*, facing the crowd, usually with his hand on his forehead.

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 164894

**Shabbos and Yom Tov** This was the Rebbe's place on Shabbos. The Rebbe once explained that the reason why he does not sit there during the week was so as not to walk through the whole shul everyday and disturb the whole crowd—*tircha d'tzibura*, adding that his real *makom kavua* was his Shabbos place. The same table which was used for weekday with the zigzag-wooden design, was moved here for Shabbos. A red chair would sit facing the table on the far southern side; while a full size *shtender* would stand by the *mizrach* wall near the door to the "*cheder sheini*." During later years, the Rebbe's chair was placed by the *shtender* and a special board was attached, which could be pulled out for the Rebbe to rest his siddur.



**Shmoneh Esrei** While davening *shemoneh esreh*, the Rebbe would stand at the table, facing *mizrach*.

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 108467

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**Birkas Hatmimim** The Friediker Rebbe once said on Erev Yom Kippur that the time right before *kol nidrei* is a time for *mishpocha*.<sup>4</sup> The Rebbe chose to spend these precious moments together with his children, the *bochurim*, giving them the *birkas habonim*. This custom originally started in the Rebbe's room with six *bochurim*. Gradually over the years, as the crowd of *bochurim* swelled, it was moved to *gan eden hatchton*, then to the lobby of 770, and ultimately taking place in the small *zal*.

## Melech Boretz Beder

For the historic *farbrengen* in which the Rebbe accepted the *nesius*, on Yud Shevat 5711, he entered using the main, middle door (to the right of the *aron kodesh*). There was already a great amount of tight squeeze taking place in the *zal*. The room was packed with *bochurim* and *yungeleit* who had climbed up onto the benches and tables; nevertheless the Rebbe preferred to use this door. It seems that this was the only time the Rebbe used this door throughout the *nesius*.

Earlier on, Reb Ephraim Eliezer Yolles was with the Rebbe in *yechidus*. As the Rebbe was leaving, he asked the Rebbe how he should enter the *farbrengen*, considering the immense pushing going on. The Rebbe answered him: "*Ven ir vet zich onhalten in mayn gartel, vet ir adurchgein*"—"If you will hold on to my *gartel*, you will be able to get through."



During the year following the *histalkus* of the Rebbe's father, HoRav Levi Yitzchok, in addition to davening at the *amud*, the Rebbe also read *krias haTorah* in this room on Mondays and Thursdays for a short period.

## Cheder Sheini

Adjacent to the *zal* is another room. The Friediker Rebbe requested that it be used as a *cheder sheini* where *bochurim* would be able to daven and learn. On Shabbos and yom tov, it was used as the *ezras noshim*.



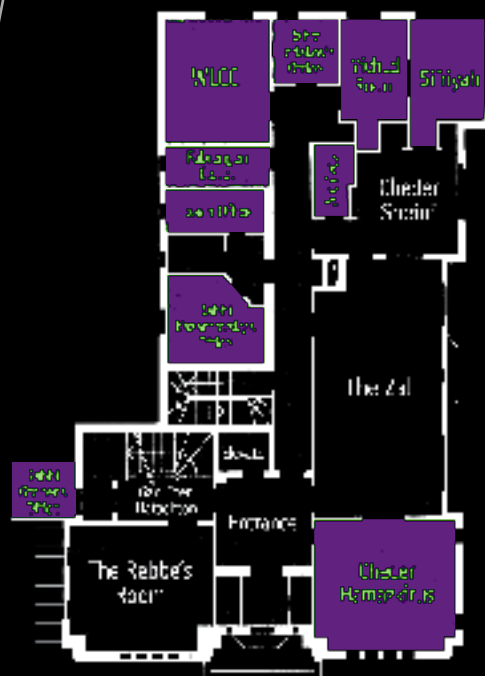
PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 143038





PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 141559

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The Rebbe walks through the hallway on Motzoei Yom Kippur, returning from maariv in the main shul downstairs.

## Bein Kodesh & Kodesh

During the 5710s a short wooden partition was built in the *mazkirus* office, its purpose was to separate between the secretaries and visitors. It happened once that the Rebbe entered the office and asked the secretary, Rabbi Kwint, what the reason for the partition was. Rabbi Kwint responded that the partition was designed “*l’havdil bein kodesh l’chol*.” The Rebbe smiled and corrected him: “*l’havdil bein kodesh l’kodesh hakodoshim*.”

This wooden partition was in fact built so that people visiting the office shouldn’t interrupt the secretaries’ work. Later on, the Rebbe instructed that a surface for writing be built on top of the partition, explaining: “When someone comes in, he should have a place to write a note.”

## Mazkirus



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 141559

This is where the Rebbe’s *mazkirim* answered phone calls and prepared letters for the Rebbe, as well as many other tasks.

## Rabbi Hodakov’s office



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 20699

At first it was used by Reb Eliyahu Simpson, the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *gabbai*, as well as the office for Gan Yisroel.



## Rabbi Groner’s Office

This office was originally the porch overlooking the *shalash* (courtyard). For a short period—a year or two—the space was used for a *sukkah*. After the first expansion of 770 it became part of the *ezras noshim*. In the late 5740s it became Rabbi Groner’s office.



## Rabbi Kazarnovsky's Office

He served as a *shadar* (*SHlucha DeRabonon*), raising funds for the Rebbe's *mosdos*.



It once happened that the Rebbe's room was being painted, and as such the Rebbe could not work there. In the meantime, the Rebbe used this room and a sign was posted on the wall with the words "please be quiet as the Rebbe is working nearby" written on it.

## Farbrengen Closet

Here is where Reb Meir Harlig would store basic needs for farbrengens.

## WLLC



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 22566

Originally this room served as an office used by Reb Moshe Leib Rodshtein, who was the *mazkir* for both the Frierdiker Rebbe and the Rebbe. Later on, it was where all the hookups of the farbrengens, sichos, and tefilos were broadcast around the world.

## Library/Yichud Room



PHOTOS: BARUCH EZAGUI

The inner room is used as a library for the yeshiva, while the outer room serves as a *yichud* room during weddings. In the early years, when Lubavitch first moved in, Reb Shmuel Levitin lived and worked in this room. It was thus called "Reb Shmuel's *tzimmer*."

From the time Moshiach's Sefer Torah was written and almost completed in 5708, it was held in this room as well. After it was completed in 5730, it was still held in this room, along with the Rebbe's sefer Torah, in a special aron kodesh.

## Tzach Office



PHOTO: BARUCH EZAGUI

Originally, during the Frierdiker Rebbe's *nesius*, a bochur—who would attend to the Frierdiker Rebbe when necessary—would sleep in this room. Later on it served as an office for Tzach.

## The Archive Room

Every time that the Rebbe signed a letter, it would subsequently be copied and Rabbi Sholom Mendel Simpson would store it in the archive room.

## Aron Kodesh

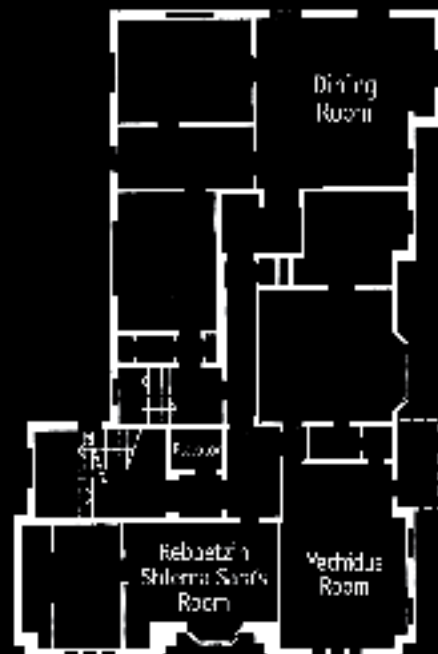
Rabbi Aharon Blesofsky relates: In the early 5730s, Rabbi Eliyohu Simpson asked him to build an *aron kodesh* for "Moshiach's Sefer Torah" to be placed in this room. When the job was complete, the Rebbe said he would come have a look at it at a quiet time around *mincha* time on erev Shabbos (while the bochurim are out on *mitzvot* and others are preparing for Shabbos). Before *mincha* instead of going to shul the Rebbe first went to the room to see the *aron* and then told Rabbi Simpson to give the key of the *aron* to *mazkir*. When Rabbi Simpson told the Rebbe that the bochur Aharon hakohen built it, the Rebbe asked "Nit Reb Zalman Blesofsky's a *zun*?" When he told the Rebbe that Aharon doesn't wish to get paid, the Rebbe replied that since it's a *zechus derabim* he must be given something and he should be paid from the fund for Moshiach's Sefer Torah.



PHOTO: BARUCH EZAGUI

The Friediker Rebbe's dining room. This is where the meals on the yomim tovim and sederim on Pesach occurred until 5731.

# The Second Floor





The second floor of 770 housed the Frierdiker Rebbe and his family. It includes his personal *yechidus* room, the dining room, and other rooms for his immediate family's needs.

## The Yechidus Room

The first room on the right (on top of the *mazkirus* office) served as the Frierdiker Rebbe's *yechidus* room. It includes shelves full of *seforim* and a large table where the Frierdiker Rebbe learned and wrote. When the Frierdiker Rebbe observed *aveilus* for his mother, Rebbetzin Shterna Sara, in 5702, he davened at the *amud* in this room, and for *krias haTorah*, his table was used as a *bima*.

It was here that the Frierdiker Rebbe received many people for *yechidus*, blessing them with all they needed.

After Lubavitch purchased the building, a porch was added with access from this room, so that the Frierdiker Rebbe would be able to go out for fresh air. The Frierdiker Rebbe's *sukka* was also built on this porch, and until 5731 the Rebbe ate all the Yom Tov meals here on Sukkos.

After the Frierdiker Rebbe's *histalkus*, the Rebbe davened at the *amud* there throughout the ensuing year.

Many years later, the Rebbe told Rabbi Berel Levin of the Agudas Chabad Library that the room should be opened for recital of Tehillim and reading of a *pan* on special occasions.

## Dining Room

In the middle of the Frierdiker Rebbe's apartment was the dining room where Shabbos and *yom tov* meals took place, as well as the Frierdiker Rebbe's

farbrengens. During the farbrengens only the elder Chassidim and select individuals were allowed to enter into the room, while the others would stand in the *zal* downstairs, listening to the farbrengen via a microphone placed on the Frierdiker Rebbe's table. Towards the end of the farbrengen, all those present had the opportunity to walk by the Frierdiker Rebbe, say *l'chaim*, and gaze at his holy face (which was rarely seen due to his state of health at the time).

Even after the Frierdiker Rebbe's *histalkus*, the Rebbe continued eating all the *yom tov* meals in this room, along with some of the elder Chassidim and distinguished guests. The Rebbe never sat at the head of the table, the Frierdiker Rebbe's seat; this place remained empty and the table set as if he was there. The Rebbe sat in the same place he would during the Frierdiker Rebbe's lifetime, to the left of the head.

These meals continued until after Tishrei, 5731.



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 2753

**Seuda** A *seuda* takes place in the dining room of the Frierdiker Rebbe's apartment, with the Rebbe and a few older chassidim present. This picture was taken on motzoei Yom Kippur, when a festive *seuda* took place.

## From the Walls

During one farbrengen the crowd of Chassidim was so immense, to the point that for hours, many people stood on the main staircase waiting to be allowed in to join the farbrengen. In the meantime, out of frustration, shouting could be heard from those waiting.

The Frierdiker Rebbe was in the midst of saying a *sicha*, and he heard the shouting and banging could be heard. Pausing, the Frierdiker Rebbe said: "*M'klapt mit an emes*"—the banging is genuine.

Hearing this, the Rebbe (our Rebbe) proceeded to open the door to allow for some to enter. Even so, the Chassidim, hearing what the Rebbe had said and realizing that their shouting and banging was assisting them in gaining entrance, increased the loud knocking and banging. Hearing this, the Frierdiker Rebbe turned to one of the Chassidim standing near him and said: "Tell them that the time has come that they may already 'receive' [i.e. be positively affected] from the walls."

The  
Entrance

Gan Eden  
Hatachton

The  
Rebbe's Room

The  
Small Zal

The  
Offices

The  
Second Floor

The  
Basement

The  
Library



The  
Entrance

Gan Eden  
Hatachton

The  
Rebbe's Room

The  
Small Zal

The  
Offices

## The Second Floor

The  
Basement

The  
Library



**Citizenship** The famous event when the Frierdiker Rebbe received US citizenship in 5709 in his *yechidus* room, as the Rebbe stands at his side.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 2903

**Office** As he often would, the Frierdiker Rebbe writes a letter sitting at the desk in his *Yechidus* Room.



**Balcony** The Frierdiker Rebbe also had a small desk outside on the balcony of his apartment where he would sometimes work from.





# *The Basement*

The  
Entrance

Gan Eden  
Hatachton

The  
Rebbe's Room

The  
Small Zal

The  
Offices

The  
Second Floor

## The Basement

The  
Library



**A**t the time that 770 was purchased, the basement level contained only a few rooms, while the rest of the area underground served as a parking lot with several spaces. One of the rooms served as storage space for members of *mazkirus*, as well as storage, packaging, and shipping space for Kehos.

The room directly below the *mazkirus* office, functioned as the kitchen and dining room for the yeshiva bochurim. The parking lot was eventually transformed into the area that housed the large library of the Frierdiker Rebbe. Over time, the walls of the other rooms throughout the basement were removed, and the library was expanded. Today, the basement is connected to the official library building, next door.

The basement also contains the building's boiler room. A pilot fire would constantly be burning there, providing heat and hot water throughout 770. The Rebbe would use this fire to burn the *chometz* each year on erev Pesach. The Rebbe would descend together with *mazkirus*. They would throw "packages" (of what seemed to be of sensitive material—private letters and the like) into the fire, while the Rebbe would follow with a small bag—sometimes two—of *chometz*.

PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 44263



**Biur Chometz** The Rebbe tossing *chometz* into the fire.



**Moshiach's Sefer Torah** The Rebbe holding the crown of Moshiach's Sefer Torah in a box, following Rabbi Eliyahu Simpson, who is holding the Sefer Torah, on the steps leading downstairs on the way to the main shul; erev Yud Shevat, 5730.



**Tefillah Entrance** The Rebbe emerges from the elevator downstairs on the way to shul



**Kol Chamira** The Rebbe recites "*Kol chamira*."

PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 44269





PHOTO: BARUCHEZAG

# *The Library*

The  
Entrance

Gan Eden  
Hatachton

The  
Rebbe's Room

The  
Small Zal

The  
Offices

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Second Floor

The  
Basement

## The Library



### תשכ"ו

*The building is bought.  
It houses the Library*

### תשמ"ג

*The Rebbe and Rebbetzin move  
in for Shabbos and Yom Tov*

### תש"נ

*A full floor is added to the building, and a bridge  
connects it to the 2nd and 3rd floor of 770. It is also  
connected to the basement of 770*

### תשל"ז

*The Mazkirim move out.  
Only the Library remains*

### תשד"מ

*An apartment is added at the  
back for the Rebbe and Rebbetzin*

**The** seforim library was very dear to our Rabbeim and very much part of Chabad's heritage. When leaving Russia, the Frieddiker Rebbe insisted that as many seforim as possible be taken with him, despite the grave danger involved. The Rebbe himself worked tirelessly to ensure that the seforim remaining in Russia remain in the custody of Chabad.

The Rebbe spent many hours in the library perusing through the seforim kept there. From 5742 on Shabbos and yom tov, that the Rebbe, along with the Rebbetzin, would stay in the library in a special apartment which prepared for them. One Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe became so engrossed in the seforim, that he made kiddush for the Rebbetzin much later than usual. The Rebbetzin later said that the Rebbe enjoys seforim as a child enjoys toys!

A day before the Rebbe was to go home following his heart attack, on Rosh Chodesh Kislev 5738, the Rebbe went to visit the library to see the seforim that had recently been brought from Poland.

From 5738 until 5745, the Rebbe sent matzos to anash communities overseas (particularly Eretz Yisroel) from the library, early on in Nissan. In 5741, the Rebbe held an interesting distribution ceremony and said a sicha on the steps of the library (see Likutei Sichos vol. 22 p. 184).

When the Rebbe stayed in the library for Shavuot, he would greet the chassidim on their way back from tahalucha on the second night of yom tov on the porch outside the library.



**Library** The Rebbe leaving from the front entrance of the library.



Seforim are returned to 770 after the trial; 2 Kislev, 5748

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 2027





PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 165627

The dining room in the Rebbe's and Rebbetzin's apartment where they stayed for Shabbos during most of the 5740s. Pictured here, the Rebbe meets with Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu, Sephardic chief rabbi of Israel; 6 Cheshvan, 5752. This was the only time this room was used for a purpose of this sort.



The Rebbe receives an *aliya* in the Rashag's apartment.

## Third Floor

The third floor housed the apartment of Rashag, as well as the office of Tomchei Tmimim. Following Rashag's passing, the Rebbe davened in this apartment throughout the *shloshim*.

Later, it was transformed into the exhibition for the library which exists to this day.

1. Kuntres Beis Rabeinu She'beBovel, Sefer Hasichos 5752 vol. 2 p. 465
2. Taynis ester 5741 - Yoman Shnas Hakhel
3. See Derher magazine, Shevat-5775
4. Sefer Hasichos 5705 p. 20

# להביא לימות המשיח

## NEW WORLD

*Current Events Indicate Moshiach's Imminent Arrival*

**The year was 5750. The Iron Curtain had fallen. The world watched wide-mouthed as the walls that had oppressed millions of people for seventy years came crumbling down; giving way to a mass-exodus of Yidden thirsting for meaning and bringing an amazing revival of Yiddishkeit, which had been almost nonexistent beforehand.**

**In numerous *sichos* during that period, the Rebbe explained that these occurrences are not coincidental. The world has clearly begun to show the effect caused by the *avoda* of Klal Yisroel over thousands of years; the refinement of the nations around us is actually the prelude to the times of *geulah*.**

**But this did not start suddenly; so let us go a bit back in time...**

### **DARKNESS**

Looking back at the many years that have passed since the creation of the world, one comes to the realization that overall they have been far from calm or peaceful. While there have been pockets of times of peace and prosperity, they are definitely few and far between. This planet's history seems to be replete with war and bloodshed, animosity between nations and discord among mankind.

Jewish history is even more painful to view. Many of the outstanding events in our history are related to unfortunate occurrences. The *churban habayis*, the

Spanish expulsion, and the tragedies of *tach v'tat*, are only a partial list of the horrific events associated with major turning points in *divrei yemei Yisrael*. It seems that Yidden have spent the generations being expelled from one country to another on good days, suffering pogroms and being murdered on worse ones. These were not isolated events; Yidden have been consistently treated as second-class citizens wherever they found themselves throughout their long history of wandering.

The last century has been no different. We experienced two world wars, which

wrought destruction unparalleled in history, with the Jewish nation going through the Holocaust, suffering a blow it had not underwent since the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdosh* many generations earlier.

In recent times, however, we have been witness to drastic change. Countries seek peace and prosperity for themselves as well as for the world in general, and ethics and morals have become part and parcel of the lives of millions of people. Instead of showing force to attain goals, governments recognize the value of joining forces to tackle issues that they cannot fix on their own.

The Jewish nation has been a part of this turn-around as well. Yidden today live prosperous lives in an unprecedented manner, taking leading positions in all of the major fields of government and commerce in the modern world.

The Rebbe taught us that these wonderful changes that are taking place are not coincidental. Every such event that occurs is in actuality an expression of the world's transformation in preparation for the ultimate redemption.

### **CHASSIDUS IN THE HEADLINES**

Torah explains that Moshiach is not just a personal savior of the Jewish nation; rather he will affect the entire



world, bringing it to a whole different level of consciousness. In the Rambam's words<sup>1</sup>, Moshiach will "improve the entire world, motivating all the nations to serve Hashem together," after which "the occupation of the entire world will be solely to know Hashem." During that time all of the peoples of the world will recognize the true faith, I.e. the Torah and the *Sheva Mitzvos*, with atheists and people of all religions serving Hashem.

The feeling in the world then will be that our entire existence is to serve our Creator, and physical matters will be considered insignificant. As the Rambam writes "all the delights will be available like dust" (meaning that people will consider them as unimportant as dust), and the world will be filled with knowledge of the *Aibershter* הארץ "ומלאה הארץ לים מכסים" דעה את ה' כמים לים מכסים.

[The Rebbe once told Reb Shmuel Levitin that when he calls for *hafotzas hama'ayanos* he means that Chassidus should spread so far that the headlines of the newspapers should announce a new *shiur* in Chassidus was founded in this shul. That in such-and-such place there will be a *shiur* at such-and-such time. This is similar to what will be considered meaningful news in Moshiach's times; not empty and vain occurrences, rather *shiurei* Chassidus which bring the world to "know Hashem."] ]

This universal belief in Hashem will lead to another change, namely that all people, as well as all creations, will live together in peace and harmony. There will no longer be a need to feel superior to

others, and to destroy those they feel negate their existence.

When this will take place, it will not come as a shock to the world. Humankind will already be heading somewhat in that direction and will therefore be prepared for the drastic event that will come upon it.

This trend was already felt almost one thousand years ago. The Rambam writes that "the deeds of *Yeshu Hanotzri* and the *Yishme'ali* [i.e. Mohammed] who arose after him will only serve to prepare the way for Moshiach's coming, and for the improvement of the entire world, motivating the nations to serve Hashem together."

The world's preparation for the *geulah* is accomplished by Yidden learning Torah and doing mitzvos, through which they slowly gather the lost sparks of *kedusha* and return them to their proper source. By doing so they gradually prepare the world to be befitting of a higher revelation of *Elokus*, which will take



A GROUP OF RUSSIAN CHILDREN PASS BY THE REBBE DURING THE LAG B'OMER PARADE, 5747.

place with the coming of Moshiach. It is therefore seemingly inevitable, that after many generations of work, that we have begun to gradually have an effect on the world around us. The changes are strikingly similar, and actually the prelude to, the ultimate change that will transpire when the efforts are finally concluded.



U.S. PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN AND SOVIET GENERAL SECRETARY MIKHAIL GORBACHEV SIGNING THE INF TREATY TO ELIMINATE THEIR NUCLEAR MISSILES



OPERATION PROVIDE COMFORT: AIRMEN AND KURDISH REFUGEES UNLOAD FOOD SUPPLIES FROM A US ARMY HELICOPTER DURING OPERATION PROVIDE COMFORT, AN EFFORT TO AID THE REFUGEES WHO FLED THE FORCES OF SADDAM HUSSEIN IN NORTHERN IRAQ

### THE BEGINNING OF THE END

Since we live in a time that most of the efforts have been completed, we are able to see with our own eyes how the world has begun a trend towards unity and belief in Hashem.

In the 5743, the Rebbe began promoting an innovative idea designed to engage a specific group of people in a way that had never been done before. While all the previous *mitvzoim* were directed towards Yidden, the Rebbe now urged that we teach the world in general about the code of ethics and morals designated by the Torah: namely the *Sheva Mitzvos B'nei Noach*.

The world accepted the urging in a wondrous way; until our times, the Jews were viewed as a 'second-class' nation, and Yidden themselves preferred to keep their religious practice at home. Suddenly, everyone acknowledged the value of the Jewish nation and their religion. This was to the point that the proclamation of President Ronald Reagan in honor of the Rebbe's eightieth birthday read as follows:

"The Lubavitcher Rebbe . . . has provided a vivid example of the eternal validity of the Seven Noahide Laws, a moral code for all of us regardless of religious faith. May he go from strength to strength."

On Purim 5747, the Rebbe himself explained that this *mitvza* is in fact more suitable for our times than for the past:

"The reason that Yidden didn't try to affect the nations in previous generations, is simply because it would endanger their lives. Today however, speaking to a non-Jew regarding the *Sheva Mitzvos* is not a danger; rather it is something that he will appreciate and respect. This proves that there has been a clear change in the world, and it is a change for the good."

On the following Shabbos Hagadol, the Rebbe continued on the same topic:

"The President of the country has spoken publicly about the importance of the *Sheva Mitzvos* for every individual, and he has repeated this idea several times. It has indeed been accepted, not only in this country, but in many others as well; including those that are still not ready to accept them as a commandment of the Creator of the world, instead they do so only as rational a moral value.

"The very fact that the president has spoken about this concept is a clear sign from on High that this is an important and vital task. We find ourselves at the 'end of days,' and we have therefore begun working with the non-Jews, in order to prepare the world for the time when we will all serve Hashem together.

"However, apparently we have not done enough, so we have been shown a clear signal by the fact that the President has spoken in this regard, that we must add to our efforts; for 'the hearts of kings and ministers are in the hands of Hashem.'"

### OPERATION PROVIDE COMFORT

Several years later, another event occurred, which strengthened the view that countries are slowly getting closer to an era of goodness and kindness.

In the end of Nissan 5751, a revolt took place in northern Iraq, with thousands



of Kurds protesting the oppression they were subjected to be under the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein.

Iraqi forces had brutally suppressed earlier Kurdish revolts and had even used chemical weapons in doing so. When Iraqi forces subdued this uprising, more than one million Kurdish refugees fled to Iran and Turkey. Hundreds of thousands of additional Kurds remained along the border of Iraq and Turkey, where thousands died due to a lack of food, water, clothing, blankets, shelter, and medical supplies.

In response, the United States organized a task force and launched Operation Provide Comfort, delivering as many as 600 pallets of supplies per day. In addition to the airdrops, US Air Force aircraft flew thousands of tons of cargo from the United States to Turkey.

During a sicha<sup>2</sup>, the Rebbe explained the uniqueness of the occurrence:

“It is well known that this country has recently used its might to help and save people in a distant place, sending vast amounts of soldiers from its army, together with food, clothing, and medication. Instead of using the food and clothing for the citizens of this country, they are using it to save an unfortunate people, especially small children, from the cold, and even from the opposite of life.

“When they heard that people are suffering—although they are not their relatives, and they never had a connection to them—they immediately rushed to help them.

“We see how the nations are performing acts of goodness and kindness, which reveals furthermore that ‘there is a master to this palace.’ It is a preparation to the time when “והיתה לה' המלוכה” with the true and complete redemption.”

## “STUBBORN-HEARTED NATIONS”

While the United States embraced the *Sheva Mitzvos*, deep changes were affecting other parts of the world. As mentioned, the citizens of the Soviet Union began to feel waves of openness and liberty flowing subtly through government circles. During the years 5750 and 5751, which the Rebbe coined as ‘*shnas nissim*’ and ‘*shnas ar'enu nifla'os*,’ the waves exploded into a rushing current of freedom that shockingly swept away the Communist entity, which had for so many decades ruthlessly crushed any semblance of religion.

During the previous seventy years, people living in the USSR had been dictated to live a life according to the Communist ideals. Concepts such as G-d, religion, and Judaism were considered

contraband, and woe to the parent that tried to “indoctrinate” his or her children with such fallacies.

Now, however, there was a total turn-around; Yiddishkeit was not only permitted, but the government endeavored to support it and to help spread its influence.

The similarities to Moshiach's times are quite obvious. The very fact that the non-Jewish government tried to be of assistance to the Yidden in their country, especially in the spreading of the belief in one G-d, is an expression of their ‘readiness’ for the *geulah*.

Moreover, on Shabbos Bereishis 5751, the Rebbe demonstrated how we can see the advent of the *geulah* in three additional factors of these wondrous events.

Firstly, Moshiach's coming will be a miraculous occurrence; the turnover

## ACHDUS HASHEM

The Rebbe explained on different occasions<sup>6</sup> that many of the things we take for granted in today's day and age are really forerunners for Moshiach. For example, just as Moshiach will bring wealth and prosperity to the world, so too we in our generation are privileged to live with economic standards that our ancestors could only dream of.

Another aspect of the upcoming era is world harmony, in which all will realize that the only true existence is that of the *Aibershter*, and that all other existences come from him. In other words, they will feel that all of the many elements of the creation—people, animals, ideas, etc.—are all really one, Hashem himself. The Rebbe noted during a farbrengen in 5738 that we see this materializing; there is a tendency to create a general unity to reach common universal goals, and this it is not limited to the political sphere:

“We find a wondrous thing: In previous generations, the style of business was ‘each to his own.’ However, as business and economics progress, there is a constant search to find ways to join together with others, and to connect different branches of commerce together.

“...This is the case even more in regards to science. As the generations pass, there is a growing thought process that does not view ideas as independent concepts, rather seeks to find the common denominator between many different theories, and even to unify many different and wide ranging parts of *chochmos chitzoiniyos*.”

in Russia was undoubtedly a wondrous event which was not possible within the limits of natural occurrence. Additionally, the revolution had brought a government that strove to exist by principals of *tzedek* and *yosher*, as the entire world will do when we arrive at the “end of time.” And third was the mass exodus of Russian Jews to freedom, which the Rebbe compared to the *kibbutz galuyos* (ingathering of the exiles), which Moshiach will carry out at the beginning of his reign.

### MIRACLES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

On another occasion the Rebbe continued to expound on the same topic, connecting it with occurrences taking place in other areas, pointing out an additional underlying factor.

The Rebbe said<sup>3</sup>:

“There are those who are surprised by the claim that we are standing at the end of the *golus*; they ask, ‘Where do we see this? It seems that the world, year by year, is running its normal course!’ It is very surprising that they don’t pay attention to the well-known and widely publicized

events that are taking place in the world.

“In the recent years, extreme revolutions have taken place throughout the world, completely changing the face of governments. And in Hashem’s kindness, they take place quietly, without war and bloodshed *rachmana litzlan*; to the point that day-to-day life, business etc., continues to take place normally, as if nothing has changed, even though there has been a complete turnaround in the leadership of the country.

“First and foremost in Russia, where—after a period of seventy years of a strict and fearful regime who terrified the entire country, to the point that one would be exiled to Siberia for stating a critical comment regarding the administration—there has suddenly been, in a short period of time, a radical change in the government. And this has spread to other places as well.

“A similar event has taken place in China. In recent times there has been a revolution within the inner circle of the leadership, which also affected their relationship with other countries. And likewise in India, where within a short

period of time, the long-standing regime was replaced. And the same is occurring in many other countries, even in distant islands, as is well known.

“Revolutions within governments and administrations were once automatically accompanied by blood-soaked wars dragging on for long periods of time, disrupting lives, and leaving destruction and devastation in its wake.

“There is no need to search in the distant past; we have seen this clearly in the terrible destruction during World War II, *lo takum pa’amayim tzara*.

“Yet in our times, even larger revolutions have taken place, and they have occurred without bloodshed, but in silence and serenity. One of the reasons for this is, that after so much work has been done, the nations have almost been completely “*nisbarer*,” and all we have left is *פכים קטנים*, “small vessels.”

### SWORDS BEATEN INTO PLOWSHARES

The changes in the USSR affected people on an international scale, for it also brought about the end of the Cold War which had dragged on for the previous forty years.

The stalemate that the eastern and western hemispheres had been holding for all those decades had led to an unimaginable amount of spending on weapons, ammunition, and especially nuclear warfare; as each side felt that it had to be ready for an all-out war against the other.

The current new reality, however, led to a conference under the auspices of the United Nations during which the United States as well as Russia undertook a resolution to drastically decrease spending on weapons, directing funds instead towards bolstering the economy and to assisting in humanitarian aid.



RUSSIAN CHILDREN SAY SHEMA IN A NEWLY FOUNDED RUSSIAN CAMP, CIRCA 1991





PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 146591

During the Shabbos farbrengen a short while later<sup>4</sup>, the Rebbe explained the lesson we can learn from the recent events:

“One of the promises of the *geulah* in regards to the actions of the nations, is וכתתו חרבותם לאיתים...לא ישא גוי אל גוי חרב ולא ילמדו עוד מלחמה (They will beat their swords into plowshares...nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore).

“In recent days heads of states have been announcing their reduction of weaponry, enhancing instead their commitment to the economy of the country and of the entire world. This is a clear indication of the beginning of the fulfillment of this promise.

“די העכסטע צייט” “Since we find ourselves in the highest time, we can already see a beginning of the effect of Melech Hamoshiach on the nations. Hashem has affected the hearts of the kings of the nations to announce together that וכתתו חרבותם לאיתים.

“Additionally, the fact that the conference took place in the city of the *nossi hador* suggests that this is all a result of the spreading of Torah and Yiddishkeit throughout the world, which was done—and continues being done—by the *nossi* of our generation, the Moshiach of the generation; to the point that the world is not worthy for the beginning of the effect of Moshiach<sup>5</sup>.

### HAMAASE HU HA'IKAR

As always, everything we learn and see must have an effect on our daily lives. In one of the *sichos* we brought above, the Rebbe concluded:

“Any event that takes place in the world is in reality an outcome of the work of *B'nei Yisrael*. Therefore, when Yidden add in their efforts, it automatically creates a change in the state of the entire universe.

“Our mission should therefore be to add in our activities, which will in turn affect the world around us, strengthening the true reign of the Creator of the world. This will ultimately cause the revelation

of Hashem's kingship, and the entire world will be filled with knowledge of Hashem, לים מכסים.” **D**

1. הל' מלכים פי"א הלכה ד'
2. Hisva'aduyos 5751 Vol. 3 Pg. 187
3. Sefer Hasichos 5750 Vol. 1 Pg. 159
4. Shabbos Parshas Mishpotim 5752
5. It is worthy to note, that the United Nations, which was created to promote unity and peace between nations, was formed in the “lower hemisphere” soon after the arrival of the *nossi hador* to this very area (beginning with the decision that was undertaken in the middle of the war, around 5702, and mainly at the end of the war, approximately in 5705), and it chose its dwelling place in the city of the *nossi*, and then built their unique building (around 5711). This all emphasizes the idea that the peace and unity between countries is an outcome of the actions of the *nossi* in being “*mivarer*” the world (through spreading Torah and Yiddishkeit, as well as justice and morality throughout the world). And as the effect of the *nossi* grows, so too does the effect of the organization created to add in world peace, including the fulfillment of the promise “They will beat their swords into plowshares” which is the foundation of this union. (Sefer Hasichos 5752 Pg. 365 Ft. 26).
6. Hisva'aduyos 5751 Vol. 4 Pg. 50

The preparations were in full swing. The *chevraya kadisha* were all gathered in Mezibuzh, getting ready to spend Pesach with their holy master, the Baal Shem Tov. As with all mitzvos, this too was done with great joy; joy in fulfilling the mitzvah, and joy that they were in the presence of their teacher and master. The Baal Shem Tov too, was conducting himself with joy and happiness.

During *bedikas chometz*, the *chevraya kadisha* noticed a change in the Baal Shem Tov. Gone were his joyful face and the uplifted mood, replaced instead by a pensive and withdrawn demeanor.

*Bedikas chometz* was done quickly and quietly, and immediately afterwards the Baal Shem Tov secluded himself in his room.

The *talmidim* knew that something was amiss. What could have caused the Baal Shem Tov to stray from his usual way of happiness and good spirits, especially at a time like this, *erev Yom Tov*? Something terrible must be happening; trouble must be approaching.

Hours go by and the Baal Shem Tov is still alone in his room. Late at night, the Baal Shem Tov emerged, and selected a minyan of *talmidim*. They were to stand next to his room and say *tikkun chatzos* with the special *kavonos* that he taught them. The Baal Shem Tov left them with these unusual instructions: He too, will be saying *tikkun chatzos* in his room. If at any time during the night, they stop hearing his voice, it is a sign that they must put all their concentration and *kavono* in saying a few specific *kapitlach* of Tehillim, until they hear him again.

The *talmidim*, fearful and trembling, did as they were told. They went to the mikveh, and then gathered next to the Baal Shem Tov's door to say *tikkun* and daven. From the other side of the wall they heard the voice of the Baal Shem Tov, joining them in reciting *tikkun chatzos*.

Suddenly, the Baal Shem Tov was silent. They understood that the situation on High was not good, and they began saying the Tehillim. A few minutes later one of the *talmidim* ran in to the room where the *talmidim* sat, and informed them that the Baal Shem Tov was now lying on the floor, completely lifeless.

The situation must be even more serious than they thought; frightened, they increased their intensity in saying Tehillim.

Early the next morning, the rest of the *talmidim* arrived and quickly learned about the situation. The Baal Shem Tov is on the floor, without a breath of life or any sign of movement. A great outcry arose, and the *talmidim*, each one a great tzaddik in his own right, began crying begging for mercy from Above. Finally, the Baal Shem Tov opened his eyes.

Still weak from the ordeal, he was carried to the mikveh. For shacharis, the Baal Shem Tov himself davened at the *omud*, and he gave the members of *chevraya* the *kavonos* of Rosh Hashono to daven with.

After davening, the Baal Shem Tov said a Torah on the idea of *bitachon*. As long as there exists a possibility of salvation, he said, one's *bitachon* is not fully utilized. Only when all is seemingly lost, when even the *teffilos* and greatest *kavonnos* of all the tzaddikim cannot help, only then is there true *bitachon* that Hashem will help.

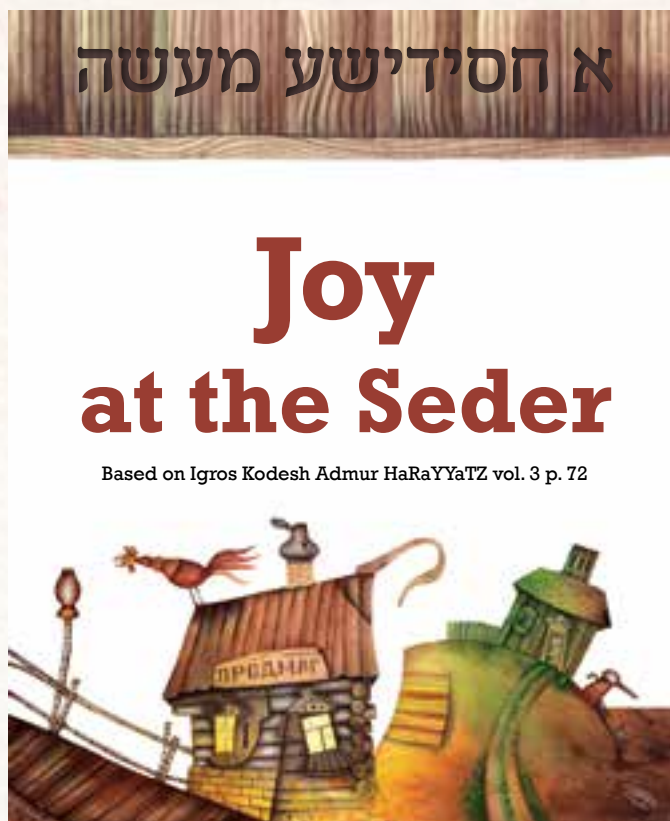
Upon hearing these words, the *talmidim* were even more saddened. Was it that bad? Is the situation so hopeless that even the Baal Shem Tov himself can't help?

The rest of the day was spent in davening and preparing for Yom Tov. The Baal Shem Tov encouraged his *talmidim* to be joyful, and he himself behaved in a joyful manner, although still serious and worried.

The seder, which was usually accompanied by stories and Torah, was conducted quietly. The *chevraya kadisha* were all gathered around the table, each one immersed in his own thoughts. Suddenly, a powerful exuberant laugh was heard. Startled, they looked up, and the Baal Shem Tov was sitting up, his eyes burning with a holy fervor, and laughing without letup.

With the *talmidim* looking on expectantly, the Baal Shem Tov began to speak:

Mazal Tov, Mazal Tov! Even the *poshute* Yidden are Hashem's people Yisroel. They can accomplish what even Yisroel Baal Shem Tov cannot.







Know my *talmidim*, that *lima'ala* there was a terrible *gezeira* on an entire village of four hundred Jewish families. I tried everything but nothing could prevent it, their fate was sealed.

Inw a small village, there lives a simple unlearned Jew. He lives alone with his wife, and Hashem never blessed them with children. Tonight, they sat down for the seder, just this Yid and his wife.

After kiddush, they began to say the Haggadah. He started to tell her about the *tzaros* and hardships that the Yidden had in in *Mitzrayim*. When he came to the *gezeira* that all newborn boys must be thrown into the Nile, the wife burst out crying. Don't cry, he told her, everything works out in the end; Hashem saved the Yidden and brought them out of *Mitzrayim*.

How can Hashem treat his children that way? She cried. If I had a child, I wouldn't behave like Hashem does with his people. How does Hashem let His children suffer in *golus* until today? Why does He let the *goyim* cause them so many problems? Does He like the *goyim* more? Why don't Yidden have *parnossoh*? Are they not Hashem's chosen people, His children? Who treats their children like that?

Don't speak that way, her husband answered. Hashem's ways are hidden from us, we can't understand everything He does. Who are we to question? Hashem is righteous in all His actions.

What does that matter, she cried. Nothing can justify acting with your own children like that! Hashem must put an end to all the *tzaros* that Yidden experience immediately!

The pure women's words caused a big commotion *lima'ala*. The good *malochim* seized her words and lined up excitedly, clamoring for salvation for *Klal Yisroel*. Opposite them lined up the prosecuting *malochim*, and a great battle ensued. The intensity increased, both sides were using all their strength to argue their side.

I became very afraid, said the Baal Shem Tov, as it was unclear which side would prevail.

Meanwhile, in the village, the husband and wife were finishing up their seder. They were tired out from the long discussion, and under the influence of four cups of wine. They were so caught up in discussing the miracles that Hashem performed for the Yidden, that at the end of the seder they jumped up and started dancing. They danced with pure simple joy, happy that the Yidden were saved and released from *Mitzrayim*.

At that moment, there was a wave of *simcha* on high. The opposing *malochim* were silenced, and all the decrees against the Jewish community were abolished.

When I saw the affect that this dancing had, I couldn't contain myself, and I burst out laughing.

Saying this, the Baal Shem Tov put his handkerchief on the table, and told the *talmidim* to put their hands on it. They held on and closed their eyes, and saw the simple couple dancing in their home. **D**

How did the Rebbe react  
upon seeing a bochur  
who was wearing an  
apron in the kitchen?

# ליל שימורים

## The Rebbe's Visits at the Sedorim of Mosdos in the Neighborhood

*A very select group of Chassidim gathered in the Rebbe's room waiting for the moment when the 'tatte' of klal Yisroel would bless his children.*

*It was Erev Yom Kippur of 5712 and the Rebbe had indicated that he wanted to give birkas habonim to the bochurim. This closeness he showed to the tmimim became an annual highlight, one that no bochur wanted to ever miss. But it would be exhibited more than just once a year. On Pesach of that same year, 5712, the Rebbe again made it clear how dear the bochurim are to him, and began the practice of visiting them as they prepared to conduct their own Pesach seder. The care and concern of the Rebbe to each and every detail struck a deep chord within the hearts of all those who merited to be present at these visits. We have attempted, for the first time ever, to paint a picture of this annual event so that we can all appreciate the specialty of the occasion. Each year and every visit can fill an article for itself. However, for now we have focused on giving a general overview.*



Why was there a red  
carpet rolled out over  
President Street?

As most people rushed home  
to begin their sedorim, the  
Rebbe would purposely go in  
the opposite direction to visit  
some very special locations.

לע"נ  
הרה"ח התמים המשפיע ר' אברהם בן ר' דובער ע"ה דריזין ('מאיר')  
לרגל יום ה'ארציט' - י' ניסן  
ולע"נ בתו מרת רחל בת ר' אברהם ע"ה  
נדפס ע"י משפחתם שי'

Special thanks to Rabbi Mendel Feller for his assistance.

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 108723

Feverish activity took over the dining hall of Beis Rivkah at 723 Eastern parkway.

The night of the seder is a busy one and the *bochurim*, who then ate at this location, were getting ready to begin *Kadeish*. As the final preparations were being completed and the *ka'aros* were set up, the main door swung open and the Rebbe strode inside. Great joy swelled in their hearts as they realized that the Rebbe's visit to their seder last year, 5712, was not a once off event but rather they would have the *zechus* of receiving the Rebbe's *brocha* this year as well.

The *bochurim* gathered around the Rebbe to catch every word. The Rebbe gazed over at the *ka'aros* and noticed that the *maror* was placed in paper plates. After being asked the reason for this, the *bochurim* replied that this was done so that the *maror* doesn't make the matza wet. Hearing their answer, the Rebbe said, "This *minhag* was not seen by the Friediker Rebbe and we need not innovate things. To prevent wetting the matza, the Friediker Rebbe would shake it off. You can put it on two or three napkins instead."

Observing the room, the Rebbe noticed that a basic seder staple was missing; the wine had still not been brought out, and they could obviously not begin without it. Turning to the *bochurim* he said, "I am sure you will not be conducting the seder with milk... Nu, you should have a kosher and *freilichen* Pesach. You should be joyous and this should continue throughout the year."

## The First Stop

Perhaps in the years 5712 and 5713 these special visits caught the *bochurim* by surprise, but this quickly turned into an annual highlight.

Following *maariv* on the first night of Pesach, when Jews all over rush home to begin their seder, the Rebbe began his rounds of visiting the *sedorim*. At first only the *bochurim* were visited, but as the years passed, other *mosdos* added,



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 146435

BOCHURIM PREPARE FOOD FOR YOM TOV IN THE YESHIVA KITCHEN

including, Hadar Hatorah, Machon Chana, FREE and more. For the Rebbe to begin his seder, he simply had to go up to the second floor of 770, and after 5730 it was a brief walk to President Street, yet he went well out of the way to express his deep care for those not celebrating with family.

It is beyond the scope of this article to highlight every incident, and no doubt every *bochur* or *chossid* that merited being at one of these visits has his own cherished memories, yet we will highlight several of those moments to try and describe the uniqueness of the occasion.

During every visit, the Rebbe inspected many of the rooms and areas of the yeshiva kitchen, including the washing area and pantry. He would also look at the tables and observe the way things were set up for the seder. When the visit came to an end, the Rebbe would give a beautiful *brocha*. The length and content of this *brocha* varied from year to year and sometimes the Rebbe would include a *possuk* from his new *kapitel* that was just started on Yud-Aleph Nissan. In the later years, the Rebbe would be *magia* these *brochos* after yom tov.

As the years went on, it became increasingly clear that although the Rebbe's visits to the different *mosdos* were centered around Pesach and the seder, he also paid close attention to many other

details throughout the building.

## The Filter

In 5737, after inspecting the dining room and glancing at every plate, and at the bags in the kitchen, the Rebbe stopped at the sink and touched the rubber filter covering the faucet. Turning to Reb Dovid Raskin, he said, "There is an empty space in there, and undesirable things can get caught there, so it should be checked every once in a while."

Bochurim who were present then, fondly recall how Reb Dovid Raskin farbrengened late into the night with the words the Rebbe told him, translating them into practical guidance in *avodas Hashem*.

## True Comfort

In 5712, after observing all that had been done to prepare for Pesach, and the seder, with great satisfaction, the Rebbe noticed something missing and brought this to the attention of the *bochurim*. "There should be additional pillows and blankets to make the leaning more comfortable."

That same year, the Rebbe noticed that the wine was not being stored in a good place and he commented that it shouldn't be left near the oven because there is the possibility of it becoming vinegary. The



Rebbe also pointed out that the *mezuza* on the door leading outside was not positioned at the correct angle.

In 5714 the Rebbe asked if everyone had taken *challah* from the matzos (the matzos were handbaked by the *bochurim*) and if the *marror* had been prepared with a *shinui* (a change from the normal way), as it may not be done on Yom Tov.<sup>1</sup>

In 5741, after walking through the dining room and pantry, the Rebbe paused before giving the usual *brocha* and asked if the candles had been lit by a woman that had recited “*Shehechiyonu*.” The *bochurim* replied in the negative. The Rebbe then went into the kitchen, blessed the cook and asked her to ‘lend’ one of her candles to the *bochurim* so that they can look at it during *kiddush*. The Rebbe then instructed that the candle be placed on a tall chair so it can be seen by all.

## “Next Year in...”

In 5734 Machon Chana was opened. It was named after the Rebbe’s mother and served as a seminary for young women that hadn’t received a frum education.

From that year on Machon Chana became a regular stop of the Rebbe as he visited the various *sedorim*. But in fact, that year, the night of Pesach was the second time the Rebbe would visit that location.

Earlier in the year, while the building was still being renovated, the Rebbe toured the site with Rabbi Yaakov Yehudah Hecht with the aid of a flashlight, as the electricity was still not up and running. The Rebbe went through each of its three floors and before leaving, he placed a Siddur, Tehillim, Tanya, Kesser Shem Tov, Magid Devorov L’yaakov, and a *tzedaka* pushka in the building.

One can just imagine how much these Pesach visits meant to the girls, and the Rebbe reserved a very special *brocha* for them; “Next year you should merit celebrating yourselves [in your own homes].”

Throughout the years, the Rebbe observed many of the finer details and brought it to the attention of those in charge. One more famous incident took place during the visit of 5737, when the Rebbe noticed and commented that the mirrors were not sufficient for the girls’ needs and this should be corrected.

## A Shabbos’dike Exhibit

In 5738, after observing and going through each floor of the building, the Rebbe continued into the kitchen and then the dining room, glancing at the way each *ka’aroh* was set up.

When the Rebbe finished inside Machon Chana, he started walking towards the home of the dorm mother, the Ganzburgs.

Reb Itchke Ganzburg had established a museum of sorts in which he displayed various exhibits depicting different items and concepts of Yiddishkeit, such as a Beis Hamikdosh model. He would travel around with his displays, giving children

the opportunity to learn something about their heritage.

Before Pesach that year, Reb Itchke had asked the Rebbe in a letter if he can set up the exhibits in Machon Chana so that the Rebbe can view them when he comes to visit the seder. The Rebbe responded, “תערוכה בשבת?”—“An exhibit on Shabbos?!”

When the Rebbe arrived at the Ganzburg home, however, he expressed interest in seeing the exhibits. This request came to Reb Itchke as a complete surprise because of the response he had received, and as a result the exhibit was not setup. When he mentioned this, the Rebbe replied that nevertheless he would like to see it.

The visit to Machon Chana in 5739 was truly a lesson for everyone. As the Rebbe went from floor to floor and room to room he attempted to open one door which proved to be locked. Mrs. Ganzburg explained, “[It’s closed because] there is *chometz* inside.” The Rebbe immediately replied, “It is not appropriate to mention that word on Pesach.” He then gave the Ganzburgs a special *brocha*.



THE DORMITORY OF MACHON CHANA

# F.R.E.E.

The Rebbe was no stranger to the F.R.E.E. building on 1383 President, which sits just a few short houses away from the corner of Kingston Avenue. He had been there many times before Yud Shevat 5710. The building had belonged to the Kozlover Rebbe, who owned a large library with many precious and rare *seforim*. From time to time the Rebbe would stop in there to look something up or to research a certain *inyan*. In 5732, the building was purchased by F.R.E.E., they very much wanted the Rebbe to visit their first seder in the new building.

In 5729 the Rebbe had established this *mosad* and named it Friends of Refugees of Eastern Europe. Later, the staff began to use the name F.R.E.E. as an acronym. The goal of this organization was to care for the needs of the many Russian Jews

arriving on the shores of America with nothing more than the clothing on their backs. The staff working for F.R.E.E were determined to nourish these people in both body and soul.

As Pesach 5733 approached, Rabbi Abba Pliskin, who was the senior member in the Vaad of F.R.E.E., reported to the Rebbe that F.R.E.E. will conduct sederim for Russian Jews, and requested that the Rebbe visit the seder. A short while before Pesach the response came that the Rebbe would indeed attend.

The Rebbe's affection for Soviet Jewry is well known, and as the *possuk* says, כמים הפנים לפנים, they too felt a strong and close connection with the Rebbe.

When word came to F.R.E.E about the Rebbe's impending visit to their humble quarters, they went into a frenzy, and feverish preparations began for this momentous occasion.



FRIENDS OF REFUGES OF EASTERN EUROPE  
HEADQUARTERS ON PRESIDENT STREET

## The Royal Carpet

Rabbi Okunov described what went on during the days preceding Pesach and the visit itself:

Anyone who was able to help was quickly mobilized. A red carpet was laid along President Street from the corner of Kingston all the way into the building and across the staircase. Flanking the carpet on both sides were lights set up to illuminate the path.

## Visiting Spots

A) 770. The Rebbe held his seder in the Friediker Rebbe's apartment on 770's second floor until 5730.

B) 723 Eastern Parkway, the original building of Beis Rivkah. The bochurim conducted their seder here from 5712 through the mid 5720s.

C) 676 Eastern Parkway; the Yeshiva kitchen was based at this location in the mid 5720s. This is where the seder took place after moving from Beis Rivkah.

D) 749 Eastern Parkway; the Yeshiva dormitory. The bochurim had their seder here beginning from 5727. That year, when the Rebbe visited the building on Pesach night, he commented "וקרא זה אל"ז - it is opposite 770!

E) The building on the corner of Union and Eastern Parkway which currently

houses the *Kolel*. The bochurim's seder later moved to this location. The building was known as "*U'foratzta*". In 5739, the Persian children had their seder here.

F) 1414 President Street. In 5738, the bochurim's seder moved to the new kitchen at this location. When the Rebbe passed by "*U'foratzta*" on his way to 1414, the Rebbe smiled and told Reb Yankel Katz "They've locked the doors (here) and now we need to go to a new location". When in the building the Rebbe commented a few times, stating that it is "ברהרחה" – wide and spacious, and blessed Rashag that from this הרחה they should reach גדולה יותר (roughly translated: even more prosperity).

G) The building that belongs to F.R.E.E. This is where the Russian refugees had their seder. Beginning with the mid-

5730s, the Rebbe would visit their seder.

H) Hadar Hatorah. The Rebbe visited the seder of the bochurim who studied there a number of times. In 5740, the Rebbe visited the seder of the Persian children, held here.

I) Machon Chana. This house was purchased in 5734. The Rebbe paid a visit to the newly purchased edifice on 15 Shevat that year (see inside the article), and again on Pesach for the girls' seder. In subsequent years, the Rebbe would visit here on Pesach night.

J) The Rebbe's house. In 5741 (the final year), as the Rebbe reached his house after visiting all the *sedorim*, he turned to the crowd and blessed them with a "*Pesach kosher v'someach*", and Reb Yankel Katz delivered *birkas kohanim*; see inside the article.

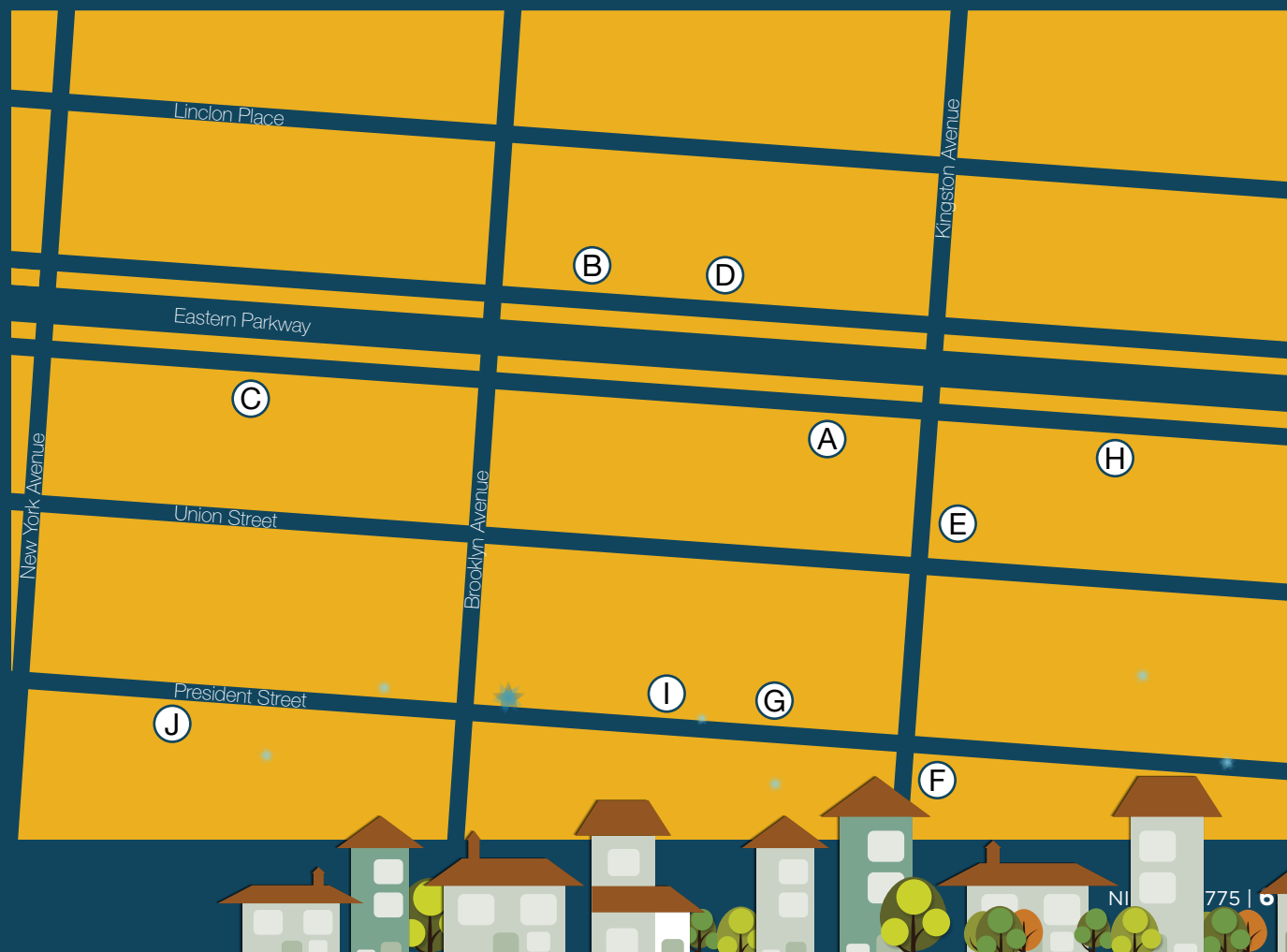


The Rebbe always began his visit by going through the crowd until the kitchen and giving a *brocha* to the kitchen staff in Russian, who then would take

There was such a rush and hubbub of activity during the preparations that first year that some things were just not done properly. After the Rebbe and those accompanying him had entered the building, the red carpet that had been laid out had moved a little bit and it was dangerous for anyone to climb the staircase like that. Quickly, a *jungerman* who had been working all day and was still wearing his weekday clothes, grabbed hold of the carpet and held it in place so that would be safe to climb. When the Rebbe was leaving, he turned to this *jungerman* and asked him in Russian, “And in your house they have already made Pesach?”

“Yes, now I am going home,” he affirmed.

The Rebbe's hagahos in Russian on a brocha to the participants at FREE seder; 5741



“Just remain here a little longer to ensure that everything is under control...”

During this conversation there was a chossid standing nearby, who then wanted to tell the Rebbe something in Yiddish. With a smile the Rebbe said to him, “He is speaking Russian and I also know Russian.”

The Rebbe concluded with asking the *yungerman* about his *parnassa* then gave him a *brocha*



The Rebbe would always give a special *brocha* to these refugees, blessing them to merit to one day be together with the rest of their families, many of whom were still behind the “Iron curtain.” In the years 5739-5741 the Rebbe edited these *brochos* in Russian.<sup>2</sup>

The effect those moments had on these Yidden, who literally gave up everything for Yiddishkeit, goes well beyond whatever we can imagine.

## A Russian Brocha

Mr. Gegerman was a refugee from Russia who was also a writer, he merited to receive some very special attention from the Rebbe.

He was present at the visit to F.R.E.E. in 5738. When the Rebbe entered the building, he turned to Mr. Gegerman and said that he should compose a nice write-up about the Pesach seder. Before the Rebbe left Mr. Gegerman commented that the Rebbe has a shining countenance. The Rebbe replied, “You should see to it that the light here should reach all the way to Moscow.”

“Rebbe,” said Mr. Gegerman. “It all depends on you.”

The Rebbe replied that through Mr. Gegerman’s writing skills, he has all the avenues to reach there.

Once again he said, “This is up to you [Rebbe].”

To this the Rebbe answered, “Everything on my shoulders?! Everyone must do what is their responsibility!”



BOCHURIM DIRECT IRANIAN CHILDREN AS THEY ARRIVE ON US SOIL

When the Rebbe was ready to leave after visiting the Russian *sedorim* in 5741, the children announced “יחי אדוננו מורינר” and began the *niggun* “We want Moshiach now.” The Rebbe clapped with his hands encouraging the singing vigorously.

That encouragement flowed through the blood of every Russian Jew, knowing that there was a Rebbe who cared and worried for each one of them personally.

## In Search of a Translator

Another special group that merited to have the Rebbe visit them during the seder was the children who had managed

to leave Iran. Children began arriving in 5739, and from their first Pesach in America the Rebbe stopped by every year to give them a *brocha*.

In a previous article, the story of this miraculous escape is described in full detail, as well as the special attention they received from the Rebbe.<sup>3</sup>

Here we highlight the events surrounding their Pesach *sedorim*.

In 5739 the Rebbe began his visit with the kitchen. Standing there was a *bochur* wearing an apron. Upon catching sight of this, the Rebbe broke into a wide smile. When the Rebbe came into the dining room he looked at the *ka'aros* that the boys themselves had set up, and he then turned to give them a *brocha*.



The Rebbe asked if anyone knew Persian and would be able to translate. Rabbi Yaakov Yehudah Hecht pointed to the *bochur* Hertzel Illulian who was fluent in the language. The Rebbe asked if he also understood Yiddish, which he did. At the conclusion of the *brocha* and its translation the boys all responded loudly, “*Amen, kein yehi ratzon*,” in their Sefardic accents. Following their lead, the Rebbe repeated this, also in a Sefardi pronunciation, and then began the *niggun* “*V’somachta*.”

On the way out, Reb Yankel Katz, who was accompanying the Rebbe, asked if these were all the children from Iran. To this the Rebbe replied, “This is only the beginning.”

Reb Yankel then suggested that it be publicized that the Rebbe had visited them. The Rebbe pointed to Rabbi Hecht and said, “I am relying on him.”

In 5740, as the Rebbe was walking into Hadar Torah to visit the seder of the Iranian immigrants, there was a group of American children standing around outside with their fathers. With a big smile the Rebbe asked if they were also Iranian.

When the Rebbe finished giving his customary *brocha* he picked up a Persian Hagadah from the table, but when he saw that it had a name inside he set it down. Then he picked up a different Hagadah and asked Rabbi Hecht if he could take it, leaving with it in hand.

The Rebbe then continued on to Machon Chana, where the Iranian girls happened to be staying. There were some girls milling around and the Rebbe inquired who they were. After hearing that they were the girls from Iran, the Rebbe asked where they were having their seder. Rabbi Groner replied, “They are each going to different homes but they have gathered here to hear the Rebbe’s *brocha*.”

Once the *brocha* had been translated into Persian the Rebbe said that the girls should say *Amen* with their Persian accents. They did so and the Rebbe smiled broadly.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 126178



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 126183

THE REBBE GIVES RABBI Y. Y. HECHT A BOTTLE OF MASHKE UPON BRINGING A GROUP OF IRANIAN CHILDREN FOR KOS SHEL BROCHA, MOTZOEI PESACH, 5739

In 5741 when the Rebbe was ready to give his *brocha* to the Persians, he asked if anyone could translate it. There was one *bochur* who knew Persian but not Yiddish, so he suggested that Rabbi Hecht would translate from Yiddish to English and then this *bochur* would translate into Persian. The Rebbe declined this and another *bochur* offered to translate. The Rebbe asked the *bochur* if he knew Hebrew, which he did, so the

*brocha* was given in Hebrew and then translated to Persian. The Rebbe broke it up into four allowing the *bochur* to explain it piece by piece. During the final part, in which the Rebbe spoke about Moshaiach, the Rebbe pointed out that the *bochur* had shortened it considerably. He then said, “The main thing is that Moshiach should come in all languages and in all countries.”

# Hadar HaTorah

Some years the Rebbe also visited the Hadar HaTorah yeshiva for *baalei teshuva*. As with the other *mosdos* the Rebbe walked through all the rooms of the building, including the kitchen, where he gave the cook a *brocha*. The Rebbe paid careful attention to the way the seder was set up and whenever something was amiss he would point it out so it could be corrected.

In 5737, the Rebbe walked into the *zal* on the second floor alongside Rabbi Hecht. The Rebbe sat down, said something and then walked over to the bookshelves and mentioned to Rabbi Hecht that the *seforim* were in such good condition it seems that they aren't used. To this Rabbi Hecht replied, "They bind them regularly..."



RABBI MOSHE FELLER WITH A GROUP OF YOUNG STUDENTS

## No Laughing Matter!

As mentioned earlier, the girls learning at Machon Chana held their own seder. This was led by Rabbi Moshe Feller, along with his wife, who were like parents to many of these girls. Although they were already on *shlichus* in Minnesota, from 5736 they came to New York for Pesach every year.

Rabbi Feller relates the following incident that took place during the visit to the seder in 5737:

The Rebbe came in and inspected the whole place. He looked at the classrooms, went upstairs to the dormitory, and he



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 140618

even went to the kitchen. More than 100 women, including students, teachers and helpers, were watching his every move. As he was leaving, he turned to Rabbi Groner and said, "ווער פרעגט די פיר קשיות? –Who's asking the Four Questions here?"

"Feller's son," Rabbi Groner replied, referring to my son Mendel, who was almost nine-years-old at the time.

The Rebbe was on the stairs coming up from the basement dining room—where the seder was being held—he looked over the banister at Mendel and asked him in Yiddish, "דו ווייסט די פיר קשיות? דו ווייסט זיי, בעל פה? –Do you know the Four Questions? Do you know them by heart?"

My son, who was standing at the other end of the room near the kitchen didn't hear what the Rebbe said and came a bit closer.

So the Rebbe asked again in English: "Do you know the Four Questions? By heart?"

This time, Mendel nodded and said יא in yiddish. The Rebbe smiled and pointed at me, saying

"But does he know the answers?"

Everybody laughed. It was a nice moment.

We had a beautiful seder. It must have been 4:00 a.m. when I got to sleep, so the next morning I didn't make it to

the Rebbe's *minyan*. I came later. When I arrived at 770, I was called into the Rebbe's room.

The Rebbe was there still wearing his *tallis*. When he saw me, he sternly declared, "What I said last night in Machon Chana was not a joke. Everybody there took it as a joke, but I didn't mean it to be funny."

And then he went on: "A child doesn't understand rituals. A child is thinking, 'We went through this whole thing last year! Why are we going through it again?' That's what he is asking in his heart. So the father has to transmit to the child that it's not the same thing as last year; it's a new thing. It's a new reliving of what happened last year. Do you understand this?"

I didn't respond, so the Rebbe repeated himself.

And then I said, "I understand. The Rebbe is referring to the chassidic explanation of the teaching of the *Chazal*, that in every single generation and every single day, a person must see himself as having personally gone out of *Mitzrayim*. We are meant to be constantly reliving the *geulah* from *Mitzrayim* and to see it as if it's a new experience."

The Rebbe nodded, "Yes. That's what I mean." Then he told me, "When you go



back to Machon Chana, tell this to them and explain that I didn't mean to make a joke."

Of course I said I would, but also, because I am an opportunist and here I was talking to the Rebbe one-on-one, I said, "Today happens to be my birthday. I had my own 'personal exodus' at *chatzos* after the first Seder."

The Rebbe chuckled and said, "It's the same message. Every time you have another birthday it's the same idea. Every birthday must be a whole new experience."


And then he gave me blessings galore.



In the following years the Rebbe built up on this:

In 5738, the Rebbe said to Rabbi Feller that he should answer all the questions, just as he did last year. In 5739 the Rebbe told him, "Most probably your son will ask the questions and you will answer, as was in the previous years. It should be *b'hatzlacha rabba*."

## Birkas Kohanim

The last year the Rebbe visited the mosdos on Pesach night was 5741. After concluding at the final location, Machon Chana, the crowd escorted the Rebbe to his home. When they reached the corner of President Street and Brooklyn Avenue, Reb Yankel Katz asked the Rebbe if he could bless the Rebbe and the whole crowd with *birkas kohanim*. The Rebbe replied, "This is a good thing at any time." When Reb Yankel concluded his rendition, the Rebbe responded with "*Amen, ken yehi ratzon*" and proceeded home. 

1. Usually we prepare the Marror on Erev Pesach, but when Erev Pesach falls out on Shabbos, this is not allowed, so we prepare the Marror on Yom Tov with a Shinui. In 5714, Erev Pesach fell out on Shabbos.
2. Likutei Sichos Vol. 17, pages, 461, 464. Vol. 22, pages 285-286.
3. A Chassidisher Derher, Nissan 5773



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## BEHIND THE PICTURE

# A TRADITION OF OLD

## RABBI YOLLES'S CHOL HAMOED VISITS TO THE REBBE

Rabbi Ephraim Eliezer Yolles (5651-5749), scion of a prestigious dynasty of rabbonim and *admorim*, was the very prominent rov of the city of Philadelphia, and he served as honorary president of Agudas Harabonim.

Though not of Lubavitcher pedigree, he harbored great respect for Chabad, and developed a close connection with the Frieddiker Rebbe, and later with the Rebbe as well.

Although he visited 770 rather frequently to participate in the Rebbe's farbrengens, one special tradition that he deeply cherished and adhered to, was his annual visit to the Rebbe during chol hamoed Pesach. He fondly explained the reason for these visits with the words of the *Gemora*<sup>1</sup>: "חייב אדם להקביל פני רבו ברגל" — "One is obligated to visit his teacher during the *regolim*."

Worthy of mention is that these visits occurred annually from the early years of the Rebbe's *nesius* until the very last Pesach before Rabbi Yolles's passing, in 5749.

He would usually come to 770 for shacharis on one of the chol hamoed mornings. Being a kohen, he often received an *aliya* (picture 1). After davening he would go over to the Rebbe (picture 2), and then follow the Rebbe to his room (in the later years, to *gan*

*eden hatachton*), where he would spend a considerable amount of time in *yechidus*, while the Rebbe was still wearing his tallis! Sometimes a number of his relatives would join him on this trip, and they would be present for a part or all of the *yechidus* as well.





The topics of those *yechiduyos*, some of which have been transcribed, ranged broadly; from ideas discussed at the recent farbrengens, to the reason for this very habit, which as mentioned above, was attributed to a *Gemora*. *Shlaymus ha'aretz* and other matters of international importance were also addressed. The Rebbe often advocated strongly for his written works to be published and even suggested a possible name for a *sefer*.

As Rabbi Yolles was a kohen, he was often asked to perform *pidyon haben*, either in his hometown and elsewhere. During these visits to the Rebbe in 770, he would deliver the money he received from all these *pidyon habens* to the Rebbe, saying that the concept of *pidyon haben* is deeply related to the *nossi hador*. Therefore, rather than keeping it he had an obligation to deliver the money to its rightful address.

At the end of the *yechidus*, Rabbi Yolles would exit the Rebbe's room walking backwards, out of respect, while the Rebbe escorted him until the hallway.

On 18 Nissan 5748<sup>2</sup>, Rabbi Yolles made what turned out to be his final visit. The Rebbe began the conversation by exclaiming: "Today my father turns one-hundred-and-ten years old!"

A *yoman* penned by a *bochur* at the time records the following:

**Tuesday, 18 Nissan.**

*In the morning, after shacharis, the Gaon, Rabbi Ephraim Eliezer Yolles arrived at 770. The venerable gaon was accompanied by his children and grandchildren. He waited for the Rebbe to return from shacharis downstairs, at the entrance to gan eden hatachton, and when the Rebbe arrived and saw him, he shook his hand with great warmth. The Rebbe, Rabbi Yolles, and his family then continued into gan eden hatachton [where they engaged in conversation]. After some time, Rabbi Yolles's family members came out, leaving him alone with the Rebbe. The visit lasted approximately half an hour.*

*When Rabbi Yolles was set to depart, the*




*Rebbe walked out into the hallway with him, while his two grandchildren helped him take a few step backwards, so as not to turn his back on the Rebbe. When Rabbi Yolles was standing in the hallway, a chair was brought for him, so that he may sit while his ride was readied. The Rebbe told him "Yero'eh cohen betziyon."*<sup>3</sup>

*The Rebbe then asked that those present sing a joyous niggun, since it is Yom Tov, and all the assembled began singing "Vesomachto Bechagecho," which the Rebbe encouraged greatly with both his holy hands while gazing upon Rabbi Yolles and everyone else.*

*When Rabbi Yolles's car was ready, the Rebbe escorted him until the door (Picture 3), and remained there until the car was no longer visible. After that, the Rebbe returned to his holy study.*

Chassidim speculated that perhaps by escorting him all the way outside and remaining there until he was gone, the Rebbe was bidding Rabbi Yolles one final farewell.



*Rabbi Ephraim Eliezer Yolles passed away on the following 26 Cheshvan 5749, at the ripe old age of 97. *

1. Rosh Hashanah, 16b
2. This day marks the birth of Rav Levi Yitzchok, father of the Rebbe, in 5638.
3. This is a phrase the Rebbe often said to visiting rabbonim, and on other occasions as well. In our case, there is a clear reference to Rabbi Yolles who was a *Kohen*. (In a letter to Reb Volf Greenglass, the Rebbe attributes this phrase as used by the Sefardic community, *Igros Kodesh* vol. 16 p. 109. See also *Sichos Kodesh* 5737, vol. 2 p 468 et al.)

לחיזוק ההתקשרות  
לכ"ק אדמו"ר זצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע  
בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן – קי"ג שנה

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות  
לכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע לרגל יום הבהיר י"א ניסן

ולזכות

אשר יעקב בן חדוה  
והעניא בת ברכה דבורה לאה

וילדיהם

חי' מושקא, מנחם מענדל, יצחק לייב, לוי, שניאור זלמן,  
חנה, פייגל, וועלדא רחל שיחיו

להצלחה רבה ומופלגה בכל אשר יפנו בגו"ר

לזכות בנו

הילד מנחם מענדל שי' לרגל הולדתו למז"ט ביום  
כ"א אדר תשע"ה

נדפס ע"י

ר' בנימין אהרן וזוגתו גיטל רבקה שיחיו באקמאן

ולע"נ סבתנו

מרת פייגא בת ר' עקיבא ע"ה גראס  
לרגל יום ה'יאהרצייט' כ"א אדר

Sponsored by the **Backman** Family in honor of the birth of  
their son **Menachem Mendel**, whose date of birth (21st of Adar)  
coincides with the Yahrzeit of their beloved grandmother Mrs.

Faigy Gross, whose infinite warmth and kindness was  
an inspiration to all those fortunate enough to know her  
and know of her

לזכות ידידנו

חבר המערכת הת' הנעלה יעקב לוי שי' בעל וב"ג תחי'  
לרגל בואם בשרי השידוכין למז"ט ביום כ"ח אדר תשע"ה

שיבנו בית בישראל בנין עדי עד על יסוד התומ"צ וכו'  
כרצו"ק ולנח"ר כ"ק אדמו"ר



לזכות

שלמה בן רנה

מרים בת רחל

דבורה לאה בת מרים

בנימין אברהם בן מרים

חי' מושקא בת מרים

סאשה בת מרים

לחיזוק ההתקשרות לנשיא דורינו, והצלחה רבה במילוי  
שליחותו הק' ושנוכה לגרום נח"ר רב תמיד כל הימים

לעילוי נשמת

הנגיד רודף צדקה וחסד

הרה"ח ר' ישכר דוב בהרה"ח ר' יונה ז"ל

נפטר כ"ז אייר, ה'תשע"א

זוגתו מרת מרים ב"ר אלתר מרדכי ע"ה

נפטרה ראש חודש שבט, ה'תשע"א

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

נדפס על ידי ולזכות

הרה"ת ר' משה אהרן צבי

וזוגתו מרת העניא רבקה רות שיחיו

ולזכות בניהם ובתם

שלום אליעזר, מנחם מענדל,

יונה מרדכי וחנה פערל שיחיו

ווייס

לזכות

הרה"ת ר' לייביש משה וזוגתו מרת רינה

וילדיהם

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

שיחיו

גולדהירש