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A ה'תשע"ה **CHASSIDISHER DERHER**

SHEVAT 5775
ISSUE 28 (105)



Historic Yud Shevat 25 YEARS. 40 YEARS. 65 YEARS. *with the* **REBBE**

IN THE REBBE'S CARE } Chinuch in Chabad Mosdos
REVOLUTION IN RASHI } New approach to the age-old pirush

A CHASSIDISHER DERHER

ISSUE 28 (105) • SHEVAT 5775

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>4 WARM UP!
Dvar Malchus</p> <p>6 IN THE REBBE'S CARE
Igros Kodesh</p> <p>10 FROM 770 TO THE CITY TO THE WORLD
Yud Shevat Celebration—25 Years</p> <p>23 IN ANSWER
Ksav Yad</p> <p>24 NOSSI FOR ALL
A Story</p> | <p>26 A PRECIOUS PEARL
Stories of the Rebbetzin</p> <p>34 TODAY, NOW!
Anticipating Moshiach's Arrival</p> <p>39 WHO IS BOSS
A Chassidisher Maise</p> <p>40 REVOLUTION IN RASHI
An Overview of the Rashi Sichos</p> <p>54 MINCHA IN GAN EDEN HATACHTON
Behind the Picture</p> |
|--|---|



A Chassidisher Derher magazine
is geared towards Yeshiva Bochurim
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Vaad Talmidei Hatmimim Haolomi.

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A Chassidisher Derher.



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PRINTED BY
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SPECIAL THANK TO

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Rabbi Dovid Dubov
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Editorial

As we approach Yud Shevat – the day that will mark 65 years of the Rebbe’s *nesius*, we are pleased to present this Derher magazine.

To adequately mark a day of such stature, many yeshivos around the world will join to experience the Rebbe’s farbrengen of Yud Shevat forty years ago; 5735. Complimenting this, we have prepared an extensive article herein providing background information on that period in 770, highlighting some of the occurrences in the Rebbe’s presence. It was indeed a time of celebration in the Lubavitch court, as the Rebbe’s reach was cast ever broader, from the mitzvah tanks on the streets of New York City, to the many honorary proclamations presented to the Rebbe in by leading heads of state in tribute to his holy work around the world.

Later in the month, we mark Chof Beis Shevat, 27th yohrtzeit of the Rebbetzin זי"ע. In a fascinating anthology of stories and anecdotes from the Rebbetzin, our readers are offered a small glimpse at the life of the Rebbetzin, who, in her own words, attested to the fact that “All Chassidim are our children!”

Following up with an essay presented in honor of Vov Tishrei on the Rebbe’s project of Rashi sichos, a more comprehensive look at this area of the Rebbe’s Torah can also be found in this magazine; sure to stimulate a Koch in this treasure-trove of *sichos*.

Of Beis Nissan, the day that marks the beginning of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *nesius*, the Rebbe writes:

...על כל אחד ואחד מהשייכים לכ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הכ"מ לחזק ההתקשרות שלו אליו, ע"פ הדרכים אשר הורנו במכתביו שיחותיו ואמרותיו, ביתר שאת ויתר עז, ולהתבונן ולקבוע במוחו ולבו אשר לא עזב ח"ו הרועה, הוא נשיאנו כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הכ"מ, את צאן מרעיתו...

“[On this day] each and every one of those connected with the [Frierdiker] Rebbe must strengthen his *hiskashrus* with him, according to the way he taught us in his *sichos*, letters, and statements, and contemplate upon the fact that our shepherd, the Rebbe our *nossi*, did not forsake his flock, *chas ve’sholom*...”

The material presented in this current edition is our attempt to assist our readership in that direction.

To quote the Rebbe’s words at the farbrengen, Yud Shevat, 5735: איז ווען ער זעט ווי אזוי די וואס זיינען געווען זרעו בחיים חייטו בעלמא דין זיינען ממשיך די השתדלות אויף פארשפרייטן אידישקייט, תורה ומצוות... דעמאלט איז אף הוא בחיים, ער אליין איז דא צוזאמען מיט די וואס קלייבן זיך צוזאמען...”

“When he [the Rebbe] sees that his children continue on his work of spreading Yiddishkeit... Then he too is alive; he is here together with those who have gathered [to mark Yud Shevat]...”

Let us hope that this year, we will be *zoche* to see this with our physical eyes as well, and experience a real farbrengen with the Rebbe, *teikef umiyad Mammosh*.

The Editors

Yom Habohir, Chof-Ches Teves, 5775

ABOUT THE COVER:

Yud Shevat 5750 marked 40 years of the Rebbe’s *nesius*. For almost an entire year leading up to this momentous day, the Rebbe often quoted the *possuk* ולא נתן ה' לכם לב לדעת ועינים לראות and the *Gemora* which interprets its meaning that a student only gains true insight into his Rebbe’s teachings after forty years.

The excitement in Lubavitch was fever-pitch. Tens of thousands of Chassidim came to be with the Rebbe on for this special occasion. The Rebbe himself set the tone for the electrifying atmosphere, beginning the sicha on the night of Yud Shevat with the words ויהי בארבעים שנה.

Pictured here are the Chassidim in attendance at the farbrengen of *leil* Yud Shevat in 770, joyously dancing to the nigun of “*Ashreinu ma tov chelkeinu!*”

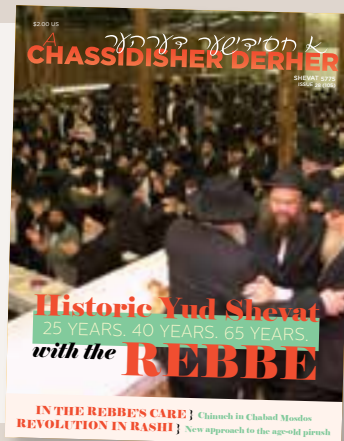




PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 104489

Warm Up!

*A fascinating story of the Friediker Rebbe with a timely lesson,
as told by the Rebbe at a Yud Shevat farbrengen*

One of the stories that the [Friediker] Rebbe recounted at length was of the time during the lifetime of his father [the Rebbe Rashab] his father sent him on a mission to the then capital city, St. Petersburg. It was during wintertime.

After the trip he related that at one point he had visited a certain government minister, who was not very fond of Jews. This particular minister led a wild lifestyle, and so the meeting was set for nighttime. The meeting dragged on, and by the time their discussion ended it was already well into the night.

Although he was wearing a large “puter” (fur coat), appropriate for the St. Petersburg climate during the winter, the [Friediker] Rebbe later recounted that the cold was to such a degree that despite his precautions and special clothing, he was forced to enter a bar to warm up. All sorts of people hung out there, but it was

the only place open at that late hour.

In this story of *nesi doreinu* there are numerous details, and being that he told the story in detail, each detail must teach us a specific lesson.

There is, however, also a general lesson that every public activist can learn from this:

The activist leaves the *daled-amos* of Torah. Not *chas ve’shalom* because he does not want to learn Torah, rather because he must discontinue his learning in order to perform his duties as a public servant. The Torah that he learned previously is taken along in his memory. He should be conscious that upon leaving the *daled-amos* of Torah and *teffilah* he must don special clothing; he must wear a fur coat!

...Yet, he may argue, “Why is this necessary? I have been around for quite a while and I have never worn a fur coat!”

The argument is strengthened when the cost of a fur coat can be high, together with the apparent discomfort of wearing a heavy garment. [He can claim that] without the coat he feels so much freer; it all seems so unnecessary...

...When going out on a *shlichus* to the “outside” in the winter season, one does not first wear summer clothing and only then check the temperature, changing afterwards into a fur coat. Rather, before heading out one should consult with those with experience, asking how to fulfill the *shlichus* in a manner that will not harm the *shliach*.

And they will tell him that at the outset he must wear the appropriate garments!

In addition to the clothes that are normally sufficient for a Yid who finds himself in the *daled-amos* of Torah, he must wear extra clothing when going out into the business world and dealing with

“the merchants of Lod and the nations of the world.”

Similarly, a public activist, or any Jew that must operate outside of his home, must don garments that will sufficiently separate him and his body heat from the cold that surrounds him. This will fend off the cold of the street.

In order for his body to be considered a truly Jewish one it must be warmed by Torah and mitzvos, by Yiddishkeit.

Mitzvos are considered clothing, and although a limited amount of “clothing” is enough to keep him warm in shul, yeshivah or at home, when leaving this atmosphere it is imperative that extra clothing be added.

One might argue: By isolating myself from the culture of the street, through adding extra clothing, I will not be able to affect it! In order to succeed I must be similar to [the outside] and allow some of my warmth to dissipate. And perhaps I must even remove some of my Jewish clothing!

But the fact is that is that the opposite is true. In order to be successful you have to be a healthy person, and in order to be a healthy person you have to be a healthy Yid. In order to be a healthy Yid you must be saturated with Torah and Mitzvos—“*Ki hem chayenu ve'orech yameinu.*”

Torah is our lifeline and our guide for life, and it instructs us that in order to be healthy and have the ability to influence the culture of the streets—to transform it from a *reshus harabim* to the *reshus* of “*Yechido shel oilom*,” where G-dliness is apparent and where everyone behaves accordingly—then before going out into the streets it is vital to put on additional clothing.

It must be clothing that will separate us from the cold, thereby protecting us from it.

Only through shielding ourselves from the cold will we succeed in constantly diminishing it, to the point that the entire world will shine and be warmed by Torah and mitzvos. **D**

(Based on Sichas Yud Shevat, 5741)



IN THE REBBE'S CARE

Chinuch in Chabad Mosdos

TO ALL OF ANASH

The following letter was sent as a michtov-kloli to all of anash in 5732, reminding them of the importance of educating their children in Chabad mosdos.

In addition to the general letter of two weeks ago, and as a continuation to its content, I herein turn to every man and woman of *anash*, may they live and be well, who shared close ties with the Rebbe, my father-in-law; who learned his Torah, and followed his ways and practices—which, as stated, they surely do now as well. [This call is opportune] especially now, coming on the heels of the auspicious day, the *yom hahillula* of the Rebbe, my father-in-law.

I turn to you with a deep-found request to be truly aroused and awakened and with the requisite enthusiasm to enhance the educational institutions that were established by the Rebbe, my father-in-law, during his lifetime in this world; as well as the educational institutions that were established afterwards in his name, which operate in his spirit and in accordance with his instructions.

[I call upon you] to enhance them as much as is needed, and beyond, with devotion of the soul, and certainly with physical effort, and all the more so with monetary support. And, wherever possible, to build additional similar educational institutions; to enhance, expand, and strengthen them as well. Surely, you [all of *anash*] will educate your sons and daughters in these institutions, in the spirit of the Rebbe, my father-in-law, and according to his teachings and guidance.

Obviously, this does not diminish, *chas ve'sholom*, the value and importance of other educational institutions “*al taharas hakodesh*” [which are run] by our fellow Jews. However, as an obligation a student has to his teacher (an obligation which is also privilege and causes gratification to the teacher); it is mandatory for every man and woman of *anash*—that in addition to being active for the benefit of proper educational institutions in general—to make a focused effort of enhancing the institutions of the Rebbe, my father-in-law; to expand them, and to educate their sons and daughters in them.

They [the children] will surely succeed with their education in these institutions, and they will grow there from strength to strength.

You should all influence those in your surroundings, your relatives and friends; and even those that are “far” for the time being, that they should do the same...

...It is certain, that the Rebbe, my father-in-law, will rouse abundant mercy on all those who act, and influence others to act, in the above mentioned direction; that their needs and those of their families will be fulfilled, with the essential goal being true *chassidishe nachas* from all their sons and daughters.

In accordance with the mandate to constantly grow in spiritual matters—“*maalin bakodesh*”—and with haste, you should swiftly increase in the above mentioned activities. And “all those who increase, receive increased abundance” beyond measure from the Holy, open, full, and expansive hand of Hashem; expeditiously for “His word runs swiftly...”¹

לזכות
הילד החייל בצבאות ה' שניאור זלמן הכהן שי'
לרגל ה"אפשערניש" ביום ח"י כסלו
ולזכות אחותו אלטע הינדא גיטל תחי'
שכ"ק אדמו"ר והוריהם שי' ירוו מהם נח"ר רב
נדפס ע"י הוריהם
הרה"ת מנחם מענדל הכהן וזוגתו שי' שיינמן

The following five excerpts originally appeared in Likutei Sichos vol. 22 p. 417, in a special section about the importance of education in Chabad institutions.

FOR THE CHILDREN'S SAKE

Based on what we heard multiple times from the Rebbe, my father in law, leader of the Jewish people, it is obvious that every boy and girl of *anash*—of *every* age—must be educated in Chabad educational institutions.

I have learned of several members of *anash* behaving otherwise. Moreover, they justify it using the guise of *yiras shomayim*. And I am pained for them, and even more so for their children, who are like innocent sheep. May a heavenly spirit stir those that have lagged in this regard.

ALL AGES

In response to your letter of 14 Iyar regarding a place for children of *anash* to be educated:

It is clear, that our holy *nesi'im*, the *nesi'ay* Chabad, are the active directors of all factions of Chabad educational institutions: yeshivos, talmud-Torahs, vocational schools, girls' schools, and so on. All the members of *anash* (and all Jews are considered part of *anash*) whose sons and daughters are educated in these institutions are fortunate, as it will serve them well both physically and spiritually, in a good and revealed manner.

You may certainly publicize my view and unambiguous opinion on this matter to anyone willing to listen, and it will be to your merit, as both you and your listener will benefit.

NO EXCUSES

...I am interested to know about the school-aged children of *anash*. Are they are learning in Chabad educational institutions? The spirit and blessing of our holy *nesi'im* rests especially upon them. (Based on this, the "excuse" of being too distant becomes irrelevant). To those yet to do so [I ask]: What is the real reason for this?

CHASSIDISHE CHINUCH

In response to your letter from Rosh Chodesh Elul, in which you mention your birthday, as well as your place of study; [noting] that it is not [name of place], because your opinion is that the educational institute in [name of place] is of unequal standards.

This comes as a wonder and a surprise to me, particularly because I am familiar with the type of home you were raised



YOUNG CHILDREN LEARN ALEF-BEIS IN A LUBAVITCHER CHEDER IN CROWN HEIGHTS, 5736.

PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 141078

in—a *chassidishe* home—and that you received this type of education. As such, it must be clear and certain to you that a school's high standard is determined by it being an institution under the auspices of the Rebbe, my father-in-law. This means that simply gaining knowledge is not the primary goal, rather the outcome is; that it be useful to [fulfil] a person's purpose in the world; as *Chazal* have said: "I was created to serve my Creator." The extent to which one is able to fulfill this purpose depends on the level of *yiras shamayim* of the education received, as well as assistance from on High—*sayata d'shmaya*.

Being that, as you write, you are starting a new year—and "the passage of years increases ones wisdom"—may you be directed to the path of truth, that "the foremost element in wisdom is fear of Hashem;" that you be educated in a *chassidishe* environment, in the *daled-amos* of the Rebbe, my father-in-law. Through this, there will surely also be an increase in Divine mercy regarding other matters.

May it be the Will of Hashem that as a result, from now you will serve as a living example of a *chassidishe* girl to those who were influenced by you regarding their place of learning, as stated above. [They will learn from you] regarding their education and where to find themselves. Simply meaning, they should be educated in an institution of the Rebbe, my father-in-law, as stated above.

CHANGE WITHOUT BEING CHANGED

...Regarding the reasons for your daughter and son-in-law not sending their son to be educated in our yeshiva; the first reason being that you are a member of the Agudah, and the second reason is the concern for his future [livelihood].

Both reasons are invalid, for:

1) The fact that you are in Agudah:

It is known that every person must make an effort to have a positive influence on his surroundings, and not the opposite [that the surroundings influence him]. Because you are associated with Chabad—and you were also connected to the

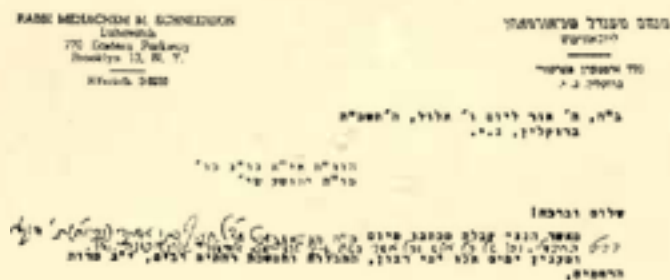
Rebbe, my father-in-law—and now you find yourself in the environment of the Agudah, certainly this is due to *hashgocha protis*, that you should transform the Agudah members into Chabad'niks. Not that you should cause yourself, your wife, and children, who are Chabad'niks, to become Agudah'niks...² (ש' a quantity of 200 includes 100, not the other way around [i.e. being a Chabad'nik includes the qualities of all the other factions]). This matter is obvious, so I will not elaborate further, as it would be superfluous.

2) As for the reason of livelihood:

Chazal have written, "A person does not know from where he shall profit," referring to both spiritual livelihood as well as physical livelihood. This being the case regarding adults, it applies even more so to children that are just beginning their education, for it is impossible to know what will be the source of their income when they become adults...

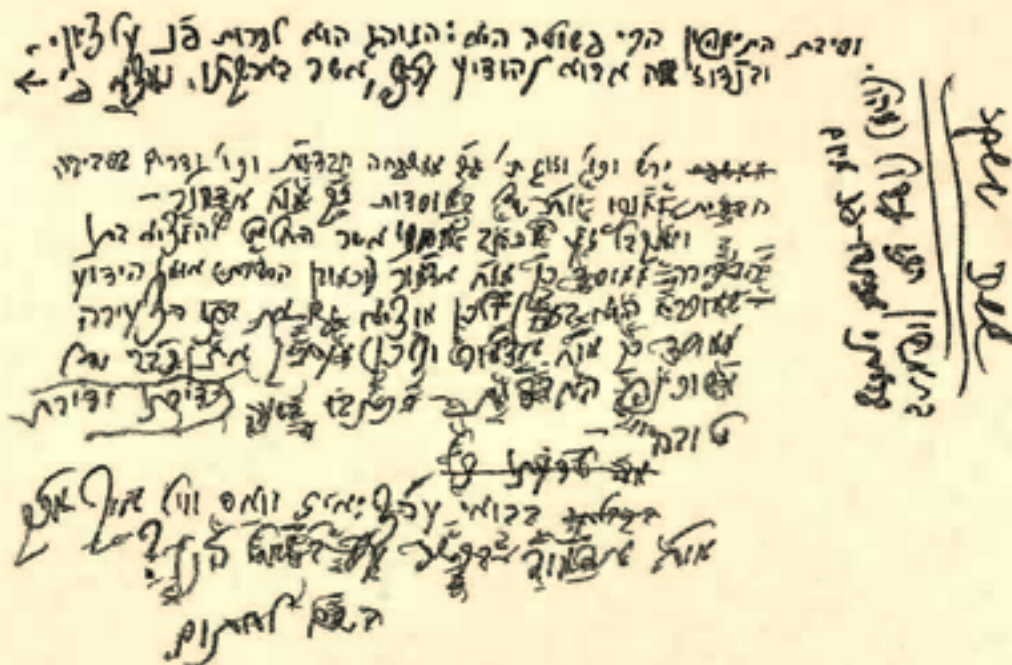
ASSOCIATED BY NAME

The following is a hand written response by the Rebbe in 5725, around the time that the "Bais Chana" elementary school was established in Yerushalayim.



ופשוט שצ"ל [=שצריך להיות] חינוך בתו אסתר (וכיו"ח [=וכל יוצאי חלציהם]) ת' [=תחי'] דוקא בב"ס [=בבית-ספר] החב"ד. וכן של כל אנ"ש וכל אשר בשם שייך לכ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר (רק) יכונה. וד"ל [=ודי למבין].

Obviously the education of your daughter, Esther (as well as that of all of your offspring), must be specifically in the Chabad school. The same applies to all of *anash*, and anyone associated with my father-in-law, the Rebbe, (even if only) by being referred to as such.



GOOD NEWS?!

In the late 5710s, a chossid in Eretz Yisroel informed the Rebbe that for various reasons he is forced to remove his daughters from the local Lubavitcher school. He was moving to be closer to their new school, and he requested the Rebbe's bracha. The following is the Rebbe's response:

בתמהון הכי גדול (מהול בצער) קראתי מכתבו - פ"נ ממוצש"ק. וסיבת
התמהון הרי פשוטה היא: הנוהג הוא לקרות פ"נ על ציון כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר
זצוקללה"ה נבג"מ ז"ע.

ובנדו"ז [=ובנדון זה] מה אבוא להודיע עה"צ [=על הציון], אשר באהקת"ו
[=בארץ הקדש תבנה ותכונן] נמצא פ' [=פלוגי] יר"ש [=ירא-שמים] וכו' וזוג'
תל"ג"כ ממשפחה חב"דית וכו' ודרים בסביבה חב"דית וחנכו יו"ח שי' במוסדות
כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר -

ונתקבל ז"ע מכתב ממנו אשר החליט להוציא בתו הבכירה ממוסד כ"ק מו"ח
אדמו"ר (וכמובן הסברת אומן הידוע - שמוכרח הוא בזה) ולכן מוציא גם את
בתו הצעירה ממוסד כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר (ולכן) מעתיק את דירתו ודירת כב"ב
[כל בני-ביתו] שי' משכונה החב"דית - ככתבו "בשעה טובה" -

בבואי עה"צ: איז וואס וויל איך מכ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר בקשר עם "בשו"ט" הנ"ל?

I was shocked and pained to read your letter-*pan* from Motzoei
Shabbos.

The cause for the shock is simple: It is customary to read a *pan*
at the Ohel of the Rebbe, my father-in-law.

In this case, what am I meant to inform him? That in Eretz
Yisroel there is so-and-so, a yorei- shomayim, whose wife
is from a Chabad family as well, they live in a Chabad
neighborhood, their children were educated in the Rebbe's
mosdos -

And I just received a letter from him, [saying] that he decided
to remove his older daughter from the Rebbe's *mosad* (the
explanation of the 'famous professional' [the *yetzer hora*] is,
of course, that he has no choice); and because of this he is
removing his younger daughter from the Rebbe's *mosad* as
well, and (therefore) he and his family are moving away from
the Chabad neighborhood, and—in using your words—"in an
auspicious time" —

When I come to the Ohel, how can I tell the [Frierdiker] Rebbe
this "good news"?³ D

1. Igros Kodesh vol. 27 p. 338

2. See Ibid. vol. 3 p. 475

3. See Ibid. vol. 18 p. 558

לעבן מיט'ן רבי'ן

FARBRENGEN
WITH THE REBBE
5735

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 108296

מוקדש ע"י
הרה"ת משה הלוי וזוגתו מרת קריינדל ומשפחתם ש'
קליין

From 770 TO THE CITY to the World!

YUD SHEVAT CELEBRATION - 25 YEARS

65 Years. 40 Years.

Yom habohir, Yud Shevat; the day that marks the beginning of the Rebbe's *nesius*, and the *yom hahilula* of the Frieddiker Rebbe.

Obviously, this day is of utmost significance in *dor hashvi'i*, and naturally scores of Chassidim would flock to New York to be in the Rebbe's presence, hear the Rebbe daven at the *amud*, and join in the highlight of the day, the Rebbe's *farbrengen*.

The years that marked major milestones saw even bigger crowds in attendance, as many Chassidim made even greater effort to be with the Rebbe, making those years all the more memorable. Who could forget the heavenly *giluyim* that enveloped Lubavitch on and around "Yud Shevat HaGadol"—5730,

marking 20 years of the Rebbe's *nesius*, when the Rebbe held a special ceremony completing Moshiach's *Sefer Torah*?

Five years later in 5735, Lubavitch marked another milestone: 25 years of the Rebbe's *nesius*.

A grand *farbrengen* lasting nearly seven hours was the focus of the celebration, as the Rebbe addressed a number of issues; from a deep, lengthy "*hadran*" on *mesichta* Sanhedrin, to Torah's view on current events. Numerous prominent dignitaries were in attendance, many of whom had the opportunity to approach the Rebbe for a brief conversation, presenting the Rebbe with honorary proclamations in tribute to his reaching this milestone.

Forty years after this historic *farbrengen*, as Chassidim prepare to mark 65 years of the Rebbe's *nesius* this

Yud Shevat, many Chabad yeshivos around the world will join to experience this *farbrengen* on video (recently restored, subtitled, and released by JEM). As such, we have chosen to bring the story of this Yud Shevat with the Rebbe alive, for the benefit of the participants.

This particular *farbrengen* is also significant this year for another reason. The *maamor Bosi Le'gani* that the Rebbe delivered in 5735 is based on the fifth *perek* of the Frieddiker Rebbe's *Bosi Le'gani*. Based on the cycle, which the Rebbe introduced, of focusing on one of the 20 *perokim* each year, this *maamor* is being studied by Chassidim this year,

It is our hope that this essay will stimulate greater interest in the *farbrengen*, and encourage our readers to join in one of the viewings, marking Yud Shevat with the Rebbe in a very real way.

Excitement in the Air

Starting a few weeks before Yud Shevat the atmosphere in 770 shifted, as Chassidim prepared themselves for this special day.

At the farbrengen of Shabbos Mevorchim Hachodesh Shevat, the Rebbe spoke about the upcoming milestone of 25 years, connecting it to the concept of “*malchus*”:

This Yud Shevat marks 25 years since the *histalkus* of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe. Now, the Mishnah in *Pirkei Avos* which discusses the milestones in one’s life only addresses 20 and 30, but it does not mention 25. However, in *Likutei Torah* the Alter Rebbe says that the word כה (in the *possuk* להי כה) refers to the 25th of Elul, the day the world was created. This is because כה—translated *like this*—refers to the *sefira* of *malchus*, which creates the world. This tells us something about uniqueness of 25.

Then the Rebbe went on to address the preparations for Yud Shevat:

There are those who want to go and print declarations [congratulating the Rebbe on 25 years of *nesius*], however, they shouldn’t spend one cent on it. Instead they should use the money on enhancing the *mitvzoim*...

Getting involved in the *mitvzoim* will be the greatest “*mazal tov*.” In general, the *mazal tov* [i.e. good wishes for the Rebbe upon reaching this milestone] should be connected to Torah and mitzvos, through which the *galus* will brighten, until it becomes a burning fire, which will bring the *geulah*. At that time “I [Hashem] will be a wall of fire around her [Yerushalayim]” with the coming of *Moshiach tzidkeinu*.¹

Following this powerful *sicha*, Tzach (Lubavitch Youth Organization) arranged for 10 mitzvah tanks to travel around New York throughout the week-and-a-half before Yud Shevat. (Remember that the concept of mitzvah tanks was fairly new at the time, only being introduced a few months earlier, in the summer. *Ten*

mitzvah tanks with complete furnishings was no small achievement then.)

Generally, bochurim do *mitvzoim* without infringing on the *sedorim* of yeshiva, and there are very few exceptions to that rule. Yet, marking this special occasion the *hanhala* granted permission for everyone to go out on *mitvzoim*, even during *seder*. For a week-and-a-half, bochurim were completely occupied in a whirlwind of *mitvzoim*, along with *hachanos* for Yud Shevat.

On numerous New York City street corners, bochurim could be spotted donning tefillin on another Yid, handing

out a Shabbos candles kit, or engaging in one of the other five *mitvzoim* (which the Rebbe had introduced up until that point). Their activities attracted so much publicity that the mitzvah tanks and the *mitvzoim* were featured on a television show, broadcast on the day after Yud Shevat.

On Sunday evening, 7 Shevat, as the Rebbe was returning to 770 from his house, he encountered a mitzvah tank coming back from *mitvzoim*. When the “*tankistin*” saw the Rebbe, they began singing a *niggun* and dancing near their tanks, and the Rebbe strongly encouraged



BOCHURIM LEARN IN THE MAIN SHUL OF 770. RABBI DOVID RASKIN SPEAKS WITH RABBI YOSEF BORUCH FRIEDMAN, THEN A BOCHUR IN 770.



THE REBBE ENTERS THE CAR AS A MITZVAH-TANK STANDS BY.

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 20733

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 141893

them from inside the car. [The Rebbe asked the driver, Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky, “Are they just now returning from *mivztoim*?! It’s too late to put on tefillin!”]

The following morning, all the tanks stood ready for the Rebbe’s arrival to 770. When the Rebbe arrived, the *tankistin* started dancing, and again the Rebbe vigorously encouraged them. When the Rebbe reached the door of 770, he turned around and gave one more gesture of encouragement with his hand.

In addition to *mivtzoim*, as a gift to the Rebbe, the bochurim learned things in the denomination of 25; like 25 *maamorim*, 25 *blatt Gemara*, and so on.

In the meantime, beyond the confines of 770 a whole different type of preparation was underway. Civic leaders throughout the United States issued proclamations and declarations honoring 25 years of the Rebbe’s leadership. The governors of several states, including New York, Michigan, California and Pennsylvania sent letters of acknowledgment and tribute to the Rebbe. Most notably, President Gerald Ford himself sent a letter to the Rebbe in honor of this special occasion (see below).

As Yud Shevat neared, hundreds of guests arrived from all over the world to spend this special day with the Rebbe. Shluchim from across the U.S. and their *baalei-batim*; representatives of the various governors, senators, and State Assemblies; and Lubavitchers of all ages. Two hundred people came from Montreal alone (!), and a group from England flew in as well.

Evening of Yud Shevat

The Rebbe led all the *tefillas*, as he usually would, and everyone wanted to hear. So bleachers were set up, similar to a farbrengen, and they were packed with people. Reb Zalman Jaffe, who had come to New York from England to be with the Rebbe for Yud Shevat, records in his diary:

“It was now the eve of Yud Shevat, The Yohrtzeit of the Frierdiker Rebbe and



NY STATE ASSEMBLYMAN HOWARD LASHER AND RABBI YISROEL RUBIN LOOK ON AS NY GOV. HUGH CAREY SIGNS THE PROCLAMATION DECLARING LUBAVITCH MONTH IN 1975, PRESENTED TO THE REBBE AT THE FARBRENGEN YUD SHEVAT 5735.



THE REBBE DAVENS AT THE AMUD FOR MAARIV.

the Rebbe Shlita would be officiating and davening Maariv. The Yud Shevat Farbrengen would take place on the following evening, Wednesday. We rushed to ‘770’ expecting to find a large crowd of people, but not such a crowd. The service had to be held in the large Shul, and a typical Yom Tov scene met our eyes. There were literally many thousands of people present and the place was absolutely packed. Even the women’s Shul was full to overflowing...”

Yud Shevat Day

All through the afternoon preparations for the grand farbrengen were underway. A large group of police officers stood outside 770 providing security, anticipating the arrival of a number of dignitaries and government officials. These included the mayor of New York City, Mr. Abraham Beame; New York City comptroller, Mr. Harrison Goldin; speaker of the New York State Assembly,

PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 142718



THE REBBE GREETES DIGNITARIES AND POLITICIANS AS HE ENTERS THE FARBRENGEN.

Mr. Stanley Steingut; Israel's consul general, Mr. David Rivlin; renowned author, Mr. Herman Wouk; and many others, who would be coming to offer their good wishes and to present awards and proclamations in the Rebbe's honor.

A video camera was set up facing the Rebbe's place, and by 7:15 p.m. 770 began filling up with people. On the platform behind the Rebbe's seat, the area reserved for the distinguished guests was overflowing. The farbrengen was to be broadcast live on local television and radio.

The room was packed with a colorful mix of people: *eltere* Chassidim, politicians, rabbonim, Jewish activists, and artists. As diverse as they were in occupation, they varied even more in their level of

Yiddishkeit. Yet, they were all united with one common purpose: to see and hear the Rebbe on this momentous day.

At 8:55, the crowd began singing Napoleon's March, in anticipation of the Rebbe's arrival.

The Grand Farbrengen

Suddenly, sounds of "shhhhhhh" rippled through 770. Silence descended on the crowd, and everyone immediately rose from their places. At precisely 9:00 p.m. the Rebbe entered. The Rebbe strode through the throng on the overcrowded platform, smiling at several of the dignitaries, and shaking hands with Mayor Beame.

In the first sicha the Rebbe spoke vigorously about מה זרעו בחיים אף הוא

בחיים: If after there is a *histalkus* and nevertheless the *talmidim* continue the Rebbe's work of spreading Yiddishkeit, then it is evident that the *tzaddik* truly still lives.

In the next sicha the Rebbe explained that every person must maximize his ability to influence the people around him, by acting like a "king," a leader in his environment. This happens in stages; a person first has to be a king over his own body, gaining full control over himself; and when he starts a family, he then becomes a king in his home too. Those who have the ability to influence larger circles must do so; they must become "kings"—leaders—in those surroundings.

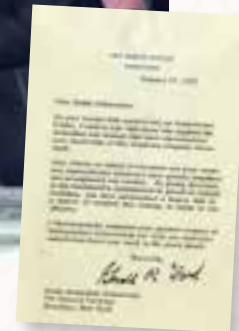
This comes with a great struggle, the Rebbe said. Once a person becomes a



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MR. KEN DAVIS BRINGS THE LETTER FROM PRESIDENT FORD TO THE REBBE.



king over his home, he must prioritize the good of his home over his own good—יחיד ורבים הלכה כרבים.

Similarly when one becomes the leader of a larger group of people, he has the duty to prioritize the needs of the public over the needs of individuals.

We observed a similar sentiment by the Frierdiker Rebbe: Before he actually became the leader of Chabad, his main involvement was with a narrow group of Chassidim. But when he became the *nossi* of Chabad, his time was spent dealing with the entire movement, and less with the specific group. Then, when trying times arose—עת צרה היא ליעקב—he cast his influence to even further circles, getting involved in such simple things as printing *aleph-beis* and opening

chadorim, activities to benefit Klal Yisroel as a whole. He saw that as a priority, even over spreading Chassidus.

Yet, when a person acts for the benefit of the larger group, it eventually helps the narrower group as well.

About the nature of the Rebbe's words that night, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Gourarie relates:

On the surface, the Rebbe was addressing the community leaders and politicians at the farbrengen. But we, as bochorim, felt that it had a deeper significance to us.

During that time period we witnessed the Rebbe dominating the world in a very tangible manner, reaching the furthest corners of the world with the *mivtzoim*, and so on. This was particularly evident at that farbrengen, where countless public figures representing some of the most powerful people in the world came to pay tribute to the Rebbe.

But at the same time, we felt that the Rebbe's personal connection with the bochorim was dimming. To some of us it seemed as if we were no longer the center of attention. The Rebbe is dealing with bigger and greater issues.²

Therefore, we felt that in a deeper sense this sicha was directed to us. The Rebbe was telling us that although it seems that he was getting more involved in the general world, ultimately this was

for the benefit of Lubavitch and for us bochorim as well. Our own personal connection with the Rebbe would never be hampered, only enhanced.

Letter from President Ford

After the second sicha, Mr. Ken Davis, a prominent Washington lobbyist, approached the Rebbe to present a letter from President Gerald Ford and the United States Senate.

The president had written a beautiful letter, stating:

"On your twenty-fifth anniversary as Lubavitcher Rebbe, I want to join with those who applaud the dedication and wisdom that have characterized your leadership of this inspiring religious movement," Ford wrote.

The Rebbe responded a few days later:

"...It was both gracious and thoughtful of you, my dear Mr. President, to send personal greetings and felicitations on the occasion of our 25th Anniversary.

"Your warm sentiments and good wishes are all the more meaningful in view of the fact that the United States has been host to the headquarters of our movement since 1940, after the [onset of the] holocaust. Under the conducive conditions of religious freedom in this great country, whose motto is 'In G-d We Trust,' our 200 years old movement,

The Borough President

Robert Abrams is a high powered lawyer who made history as the youngest elected borough president of the Bronx. His connection with the Rebbe stretches back to when he had a *yechidus* shortly after his engagement. He and his wife visited the Rebbe thereafter quite frequently, and they would come every year to receive *lekach*. In 1974, Mr. Abrams entered contentious political territory, when he ran against the incumbent attorney general of New York, Mr. Louis Lefkowitz. However, the Rebbe held that he wouldn't be able to win the election, and suggested that Mr. Abrams abstain from running for Attorney General until Mr. Lefkowitz's retirement. Mr. Abrams lost the election, and stayed on as Bronx borough president. On Yud Shevat he presented the Rebbe with a proclamation honoring 25 years of the Rebbe's *nesius*.



After shaking the Rebbe's hand warmly, he unfurled the proclamation. He said, "It is my pleasure to present to you this little token of—I'm sure, everybody's—appreciation for the wonderful things [you do]."

As he was talking, the Rebbe scanned the proclamation. "But it is for the Movement, not for me!" the Rebbe said. [The Rebbe repeated this theme several times throughout the farbrengen]. Then the Rebbe asked, "Is Mrs. Abrams also here?"

"Yes, she is," and he pointed out where she was sitting in the women's section. "I'm very happy," the Rebbe responded. "Say l'chaim, and may G-d A-mighty

bless you to go from strength to strength."

Rabbi Groner handed him a cup of wine, and he said l'chaim to the Rebbe. Then the Rebbe addressed his devastating political loss. "Don't be discouraged if I was right about our [discussion]. סוף הכבוד לבוא the honor will come in a good time."

The Rebbe continued, "But you have a big mission also in the Bronx. You have probably a million [people] like this also, and two million... Then you have enough work for the time being. After that you will go from strength to strength."

Four years later, in 1978, after Mr. Lefkowitz retired, Mr. Abrams won the election for attorney general, a position he then held for fifteen years. (See a Chassidisher Derher Kislev, 5773 for more on this story.)



The Singer's Cane



Jan Peerce was a famous opera singer, known as America's Tenor, and he produced many records of Jewish music. A few months before this farbrengen he broke his leg, and he was stuck in the hospital for three-and-a-half weeks. The Rebbe kept track of his condition, and he and his wife were touched by the Rebbe's unbelievable consideration, which gave them emotional strength throughout the ordeal. He recovered

shortly afterwards, but he was reduced to walking with a cane.

The Rebbe invited him to attend the Yud Shevat farbrengen, and he was to meet the Rebbe for the first time.

When he came up to the Rebbe, the Rebbe spoke to him about a concert he had recently performed at in Manchester.

The Rebbe said: "We have almost half of Manchester here," to which Mr. Peerce replied, "Yes, I saw them. My friends R' Zalmon and R' Yechiel (Vogel)!" The Rebbe continued, "They wrote to me about your concert, they say it was fantastic!"

Pointing to the cane, the Rebbe added: אבער געזונטערהייט! פארגעסן וועגן די זאכן! But in good health! Forget about these things!

Soon after, he and his wife had a *yechidus* with the Rebbe. The Rebbe told him to throw away the cane. He said that his foot hadn't completely healed yet, and he still needed something to lean on. The Rebbe didn't give in. "I am asking you to please listen to what I'm saying. ווארף ארויס דער שטעקן Throw out the cane!"

However, it wasn't easy for him to give up the cane, because he had grown emotionally dependent on it. But his wife kept at him. "If the Rebbe said, you need to listen," she told him.

Eventually he did throw it away - and he was healthy for years after. (See A Chassidisher Derher Tishrei, 5773, for more on this story.)

which I have been privileged to head and lead for the past 25 years, has been able to flourish with renewed dedication and vitality, and to make a lasting contribution, particularly in the area of education and youth activity, so vital in the present day and age.

“In behalf of our movement, therefore, no less than in my own behalf, I greatly acknowledge your warm felicitations and good wishes...”

Dignitaries Approach

Following this, Mayor Abraham Beame approached the Rebbe, and the Rebbe spoke warmly with him, holding his hand the entire time. Among the things they discussed, the Rebbe encouraged him to emulate the ways of the first Abraham, by spreading the knowledge of One G-d to all.

THE REBBE SPOKE TO HIM ABOUT THESE NEGOTIATIONS, STATING “YOU NEED TO BUY A LOT OF ARMS, SO SAY A LOT OF L’CHAIM...”

Many more distinguished individuals followed afterwards, enjoying short conversations and l’chaims with the Rebbe. They presented various honors and proclamations and keys to cities and *mosdos*. All of these conversations can be seen in their entirety on the DVD of the farbrengen.

Our Gracious Hosts

In the third sicha, the Rebbe began with thanking the government of the United States for the help they extended to the Frierdiker Rebbe. They helped secure his release from prison and (later) from Russia, then they assisted with his immigration to the U.S., and subsequently helped him settle here as well. The Rebbe gave a special thanks to the one standing at the head of the country; the president.



MR. HOWARD LASHER, A MEMBER OF THE NY STATE ASSEMBLY, SPEAKS WITH THE REBBE.

The Rebbe then asked three things of the American government:

Parochial Schools

Parochial schools are schools where religion is taught, in addition to other subjects. There is a big controversy over whether the government should extend financial aid to such schools. Some view such aid as a violation of the First Amendment to the Constitution, which mandates the separation between church and state.

The Rebbe explained that this country was founded on the belief in G-d, and it is therefore impossible to say that the Constitution would outlaw the funding of religious education!

The purpose of the First Amendment is to ensure that no one is forced into a specific religion, and no religion should take precedence over another, but not to outlaw religion in schools.

The Rebbe added an interesting point: For argument’s sake, let us assume that it is unconstitutional. [First of all, there are ways the government could support religious education that are definitely not against the constitution. But more importantly] the people weren’t made for the Constitution—the Constitution was made for the people! Two hundred years ago, when the Constitution was written, it really wasn’t so important to educate children about G-d in school; children received that education at home. These

days, children get all of their education from school, and it is the duty of the schools to educate them that there is a G-d who is watching them. This is the only way that children will turn out to be upright people.

Later on during the farbrengen Mr. Howard Lasher, an Orthodox Jew who was a member of the New York State Assembly, had a conversation with the Rebbe.

He said in the conversation that he is the only Orthodox assemblyman.

The Rebbe responded, “You are satisfied to be the only one? To be an only son is not good... there must be ‘twelve tribes.’”

The Rebbe continued: “I spoke before about the parochial schools.”

Mr. Lasher explained how his first priority in his position is to try and bring benefit for Yiddishkeit.

The Rebbe: “But if you speak about building parochial schools it is also for the benefit of your district. Faith in G-d is one of the seven Noahide Laws. One of the seven commandments, the first one, is belief in G-d. That means religion. May G-d A-mighty bless you to have good news about this Assembly.”

Russian Jewry

For the first time in a public setting, the Rebbe directly asked the United States government to intervene with the Russian

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MR. YOSEF CIECHENOVER, HEAD OF THE ISRAELI DEFENSE MISSION TO THE US, SPEAKS WITH THE REBBE.

government and help get the Jews out of Russia. The Rebbe said that this should be done with quiet diplomacy, not through public pressure.

There were factions in the Jewish community who believed that it was necessary to publicly embarrass the Soviets, through protests and the like, and that this was the strategy that would gain the Russian Jews' freedom. Similarly, some factions in the government believed that public pressure from the U.S. government would be beneficial to the Jewish emigration. However, the Rebbe held that public pressure was counterproductive. The only way to influence Russia, the Rebbe said, was through quiet diplomacy.³

Arms

In the period following the Yom Kippur war (roughly one year earlier), President Ford and the American government decided to stop sending excessive weaponry to the Middle East. Consequently, Eretz Yisroel was having a hard time obtaining necessary weapons. Addressing the United States government, the Rebbe said that the best way to ensure peace was not by holding back on the weaponry. On the contrary;

the only way to ensure peace was by supplying Israel with a huge stockpile of arms. These weapons would serve as a deterrent to further conflicts.

Right before this sicha, the Rebbe had a conversation with Mr. Yosef Ciechenover, head of the Israeli defense mission to the U.S. Mr. Ciechenover had a warm relationship with the Rebbe and is responsible for bringing many politicians to meet with the Rebbe over the years, where they received his guidance on many vital matters. Naturally, as the head of the defense mission, Mr. Ciechenover played a central role in the negotiations between the U.S. and Israeli governments regarding this issue. The Rebbe spoke to him about these negotiations, stating "You need to buy a lot of arms, so say a lot of *l'chaim!* They [the Americans] will give, but it needs to be used properly. In other words, there should be no need to actually use them! But in the meantime, there must be peace in Israel, and the arms can stay in the warehouse."

In the same conversation, the Rebbe also referred to the second request mentioned in the sicha regarding the Russian Jews:

"It must be behind closed doors. I hold of quiet diplomacy. It is always this way with



THE REBBE SPEAKS TO NY MAYOR ABRAHAM BEAME.

the United States, always this way with the Soviets. They're provoking them; by writing in the newspapers they will only ruin the good that has been achieved."

Personalities Present

Later in the sicha, the Rebbe went on to address the City of New York and its officials, including Mayor Beame, who (as noted earlier) was present at the farbrengen. Again, the Rebbe began by acknowledging the city for its great hospitality to the Frierdiker Rebbe during his first visit in 1929, as well when he arrived a second time to stay permanently in 1940. The Rebbe continued to say that he is certain that New York will set an example of supporting the Frierdiker Rebbe's institutions, so that they may continue to grow. For then everyone—other cities in the country—will emulate this as well.

Then the Rebbe acknowledged the representatives of the governments of various states present at this farbrengen. He extolled their assistance in *hafotzas hamaayonos* and their contribution to the good of society in general ("*tzedek ve'yosher*"), and expressed his hope that the governments of the remaining states would emulate their example as well.

Following this sicha, many more dignitaries approached the Rebbe, each thanking the Rebbe and receiving his blessing.

Compared to the above mentioned unique sichos—in which the Rebbe directly addressed governments and the world at large—the remainder of the evening (from the fourth sicha on), resembled more a typical Yud Shevat farbrengen. Keeping with the tone of the day, however, the Rebbe continued to connect the earlier mentioned subject of “*malchus*” with each of the topics he discussed. Showing, for example, how each of the five *mitvzoim* (Torah, Tefillin, Mezuzah, Tzedakah and NeSheK) uniquely possessed this element of sovereignty more than all other mitzvot in the Torah.

The hour was late. When Rabbi Simcha Elberg mentioned to the Rebbe that he thought the farbrengen was drawing to a close, the Rebbe smiled, “I still have to say a *maamor* Chassidus and a *hadran*!”

The Rebbe’s *hadran* (*siyum mesichta*) was also connected with sovereignty: He explained that the *mesichta* he had chosen was Sanhedrin, since it discusses issues of Jewish kingship.

“Tankistin”

Towards the end of the farbrengen, during a sicha on the weekly parsha, the Rebbe referred to a certain individual who had come out harshly critical of the *mitvzoim* in a recent newspaper article. The Rebbe strongly denounced this criticism, and then advised the Chassidim that they should have nothing to do with this individual in any way.

“It came to a point that he is not ashamed of starting up with *yungeleit* who are *moser nefesh* to help Yidden with *mitvzoim*.”

If someone fights *mitvza tefillin*, the Rebbe explained, his tefillin must be *possul*! That is the only explanation for his lack of *geshmak* in *mitvza tefillin*!

California

Following the *shturem* the Rebbe made on Yud Aleph Nissan, 5732 about founding seventy-one new *mosdos*, Rabbi Shlomo Cunin of California began opening more and more Chabad Houses throughout the state, including centers in S. Francisco and S. Diego. Together with the other shlichim he also developed connections with the state and city governments.

A large contingent of supporters came to the farbrengen to present the Rebbe with proclamations from all levels of government in California, as well as keys to several cities.

First Rabbi Cunin approached to present the key to Bais Menachem. Then Mr. Marvin Goldshmidt, a major supporter and close friend of Rabbi Cunin, presented the Rebbe with a proclamation from the governor and State Assembly. The Rebbe asked him about his daughter (today the mother of a Lubavitcher family):

“My daughter is doing fine; she’s in the Beth Rivkah school.”

“In New York?” The Rebbe asked.

“Seminary A, in New York. She hopes to come back to finish

Seminary B. She’s very, very happy here, so I couldn’t be more pleased myself.”

“Thank you very much for the personal regards,” the Rebbe said. And, pointing to the proclamation, “Also for this.”

He then went on to personally thank the Rebbe.

The Rebbe almost cut him off, “It is the Movement, not me.”

“Well, still in all, my daughter couldn’t do without the Rebbe,” he responded.

“She has a good roommate?” the Rebbe asked.

“Yes, she’s with the nieces of Rabbi Groner, and she’s living in Yankel Goldstein’s basement.”

“In Crown Heights,” the Rebbe said.

“Yes, in Crown Heights.”

“I’m very happy.”

When reflecting upon this conversation, one cannot help but be fascinated by the facts: The Rebbe is farbrenging on Yud Shevat with thousands of Chassidim and *baaleibatim*, meeting with dignitaries of the highest order. And yet, the Rebbe was concerned whether a young girl had a good roommate!



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 108268

The Rebbe continued:

“Those who merited being involved in the *mitvza* should continue, and do so with joy and happiness. They are extremely fortunate, and they have great merit! (‘אשרי חלקם וגדול זכותם’) And the same goes for every man and woman who supports them, and who will continue supporting them, and who will not shirk from those who laugh at them, or try to embarrass them, nor from the *muchrafim* and *migadfim*.

“Because, the truth is, he is starting up with Hashem. This has nothing to do with the bochurim who approach Jews and speak with them (whether in a loud voice or a soft voice) and eventually have

an effect on them. Either they put on tefillin, or they learn something in Torah, or they give tzedaka, or they now have kosher tefillin and kosher mezuzos.”

The Rebbe emphasized that no one should try arguing with this individual or with his sect, and that no one should come into contact with them in any way.

“And those who were involved with the *mitvzoim* did so at my behest. Not only the *mitvzoim* themselves, but also the way the *mitvzoim* are done: to go out with tanks and make a קול רעש גדול, a ‘loud and powerful sound’ in the ‘capital of Rome,’”

The Rebbe added that although it is

difficult to hear complaints and criticism, one has to remember that the opening line of the entire Shulchan Aruch is “אל יבוש מפני המלעיגים”, not to be embarrassed by the scoffers of Hashem and His mitzvos.

The Rebbe then reiterated:

“As we said, no one should have anything to do with him; not in writing and not verbally; not oneself and not through a messenger, nor a messenger of a messenger.

“As to the question, ‘What will happen with the *mitvzoim*?’ They will certainly be successful, because we are talking about spreading Chassidus (together with

Michigan

During the farbrengen, Mr. Irving Cohen, a noted philanthropist from Detroit, approached the Rebbe to present a declaration from the governor of Michigan. As he approached, the Rebbe smiled broadly, and in the conversation, the Rebbe said:

“Now we have many Lubavitch activities also in that state.”

Mr. Cohen answered, “Yes, I’m busy with the Lubavitchers day and night.” The Rebbe said, “They wrote me about it.”

Afterwards, Mr. Nick Stern gave the Rebbe the key to Ann Arbor, thanking the Rebbe for all the work Lubavitch was doing there. “If I’ll have the key,” the Rebbe said while mimicking the act of opening a door, “Then I can open the Jewish hearts also, and the hearts of the population, in general.”

After the Farbrengen, Rabbi Sholom Ber Shemtov and Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Kagan, and a group of supporters (who had been at the farbrengen) had a *yeichidus* with the Rebbe, where they discussed purchasing a permanent residence for Chabad in Ann Arbor.

Rabbi Kagan once related:

During the *yeichidus* the Rebbe smiled, and said: “The dedication or groundbreaking (depending if they got a new building or an old one) should be for Yud-Aleph Nissan.”

Yud Aleph Nissan was only two months away! They just stood there, mouths wide open; they didn’t know what to say. The Rebbe smiled and said, “Nu?!” and repeated again, “The dedication should be in two months.”



PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 104349

One of the braver souls there answered, “Amen!”

The Rebbe smiled broadly, “Amen is not a pledge.”

Rabbi Sholom Ber Shemtov relates:

After this special *yeichidus* Mr. Irving Cohen, who presented the Rebbe with the key to Detroit, went straight from the airport to look at houses for the Chabad House.

We looked in to a number of options, each time consulting with the Rebbe whether to go ahead with them. Meanwhile Yud-Aleph Nissan was getting closer and we still hadn’t signed on anything. Finally, a few days before Yud-Aleph Nissan, we found a beautiful house (where the Chabad house is located until today) for sale at the price of \$150,000. The Rebbe agreed to this option and we were ready to go ahead with it.

Yud-Aleph Nissan that year fell out to be on a Sunday. After some fierce negotiations I shook hands on the deal about an hour before Shabbos!



spreading the learning of Torah and the keeping of mitzvos).

“The Alter Rebbe went through much harsher suffering for spreading Chassidus, yet he later wrote in Iggeres Hakodesh that those who want to be associated with him should stay far away from [fighting] tactics which are against Shulchan Aruch, and that they should have nothing to do with the opposition.

“I mean every single person! Anyone who acts differently, *chas ve’shalom* [and fights him] has no part in Lubavitch, and has no connection to Lubavitch!

“As for those who are involved in the *mitvzoim* with the tanks, and with a *shturem*, it is as if **I am accompanying each and every one of them!**”

And the Rebbe concluded:

“Hashem will bring us, together with all of *klal Yisrael*, to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu. All of those who merited

being involved in the *mitvzoim*, and those who will be involved in *mitvzoim* [in the future]—from the first of the *mitvzoim* until the *mitvza* of Shabbos candles—should and will be at the head! Fortunate is their lot and great is their merit!”

Dollars Distribution

Afterwards, the Rebbe said that in order to connect all this with something physical, he would distribute packs of dollars to the *tankistin*, and they should give two dollars to everyone; one for themselves and one to give to *tzedaka* as a *shliach* of the Rebbe. The Rebbe also gave dollars to Rabbi Yosef Wineberg to distribute to the women.

The *chaluka* concluded at almost 3:30 a.m. On the Rebbe’s instruction, Chassidim sang the *Niggun Hachana*, the Alter Rebbe’s *Niggun*, and *Nye Szuritzi*, followed by another short *sicha*. Then the Rebbe began the *nigun* of “*Uforatzta*,”

vigorously encouraging the singing. Suddenly, the Rebbe stood up at his place and waved his holy hands in all directions, bringing the joy and song to their climax! It seemed that this came as a direct follow-up to the Rebbe’s speaking very passionately about the importance of the *mitvzoim*, and the encouragement to those who participated in them (by distributing of dollars to *tankistin*).

At 3:35 a.m., the Rebbe sat down to recite a *brocha acharona* and left the shul to the *nigun* of *Uforatzta*.

Thus ended a very special *farbrengen*. A *farbrengen* with the Rebbe that left all the participants of so many diverse backgrounds on a higher plane, uplifted by the Rebbe’s holy presence and ready to carry on doing his holy work.

Shabbos

That Friday, the individual publicized another deranging article about the Rebbe and Lubavitch, and he even quoted

certain things that the Rebbe had said at the Yud Shevat farbrengen.

On Shabbos the Rebbe farbrenged again. The farbrengen stretched past *shkia*—a very rare occurrence in those years—and the Rebbe spoke powerful words about *mivtzoim* and those who attack Lubavitch.

The Rebbe began by saying that after Yud Shevat he assumed that the story was over. Then, on Friday, he saw the newspaper article titled “Terror Brigade in the Jewish Street.”

The Rebbe said:

“When I looked at what was written there, I saw that they are writing about the Lubavitcher court (”הויף”). They should know that for the past 25 years, I am the *baal habayis* of the Lubavitcher court! And in the Lubavitcher court there is no terror brigade!”

Chamisha Asar B'Shevat

On Sunday the Rebbe held *yechidus*. Mr. Zalman Jaffe asked the Rebbe if he could farbreng on Chamisha Asar B'Shevat. The Rebbe replied that because the farbrengen on Shabbos had gone for so long, he would have to ask the Rebbetzin, but that he would see what he could do.

As it turned out, there was a farbrengen on Chamisha Asar B'Shevat, and during the farbrengen the Rebbe revisited the issue again.

Addressing the attacker, the Rebbe said that he is waging war against the *baal habayis* of the Lubavitch court, the [Friediker] Rebbe, who is the successor of the preceding Rabbeim until the Alter Rebbe, who succeeded the Bal Shem Tov, who can be traced upward to Achiya Hashiloni, Eliyahu Hanavi, Moshe Rabbeinu, and the Aibershter Himself!

“I don't need to do the work for them,” the Rebbe asserted. “They will see this matter through on their own. I only need to make sure that the bochur who goes out to lay tefillin with another Yid should not be dejected...”

“My objective is to try to bring light and to spread light...”

At the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe announced that being that there were some who did not receive dollars on Yud Shevat, he would now distribute dollars again. And in order to strengthen the stand of those who are involved in the *mivtzoim*, the distribution would again be through the *tankistin*.

It should be noted that following this farbrengen, the attorney Mr. Jerome Shestack (who was very helpful in supporting the Rebbe's activities throughout the years) threatened the editorial staff of the newspaper that if they did not publicly retract their statements against the Rebbe and Lubavitch, he would take legal action against them. They responded with three large front-page ads, apologizing to Lubavitch.

Because of the Rebbe's encouraging words about the great privilege of doing *mivtzoim*, and that he considers it as if he comes along with everyone that goes out, many bochurim utilized the next few days to go out on *mivtzoim* again, braving the freezing New York winter weather and brightening up the streets of the city with Torah and mitzvos. **D**

1. Sichos Kodesh 5735, Vol 1, page 319.
2. It should be noted that a mere few weeks beforehand, at the Farbrengen of Shabbos Bereishis 5735, the Rebbe had announced that the annual *yechidus* for bochurim on their *yom huledes* would no longer take place.
3. Four years earlier, at the farbrengen of Yud Shevat, 5731, the Rebbe addressed the issue, citing specific examples of Jews who were stuck in Russia as a direct result of these protests.



THE REBBE WISHES L'CHAIM TO MR. ZALMAN JAFFE AT THE FARBRENGEN.

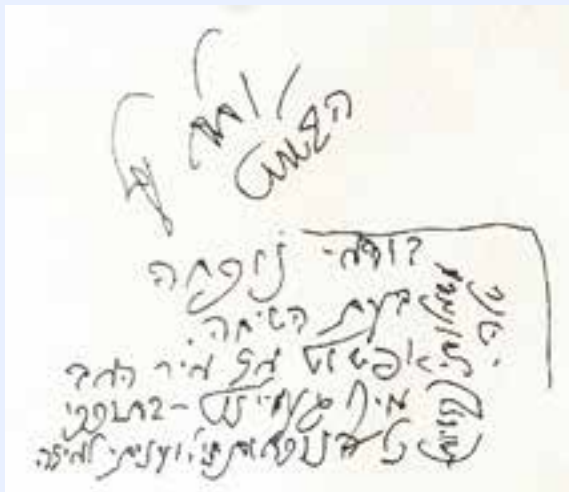


THE REBBE RECEIVES AN ALIYA IN THE UPSTAIRS ZAL ON THE MORNING AFTER THE FARBRENGEN, 11 SHEVAT.

In Answer

In this note the Rebbe addresses a woman who requested that the Rebbe receive her for yechidus, because she wanted to hear the Rebbe's specific answers to her questions.

The Rebbe assures her that he had her in mind when speaking at a recently delivered sicha (presumably a sicha to women), and that by listening carefully to his words, she would be able to discern the answers to her difficulties.



Thank you for the good news.

I am certain that you were present during the sicha.

Of course, [in my words] I had you mind, along with all the others present, and I responded to some of your questions.

ות"ח על הבשור"ט

בודאי נכחה בעת השיחה.

ופשוט אז איר האב איך געמיינט בתוככי כל

הנוכחות תי', ועניתי לאיזה משאלות (קושיות) שלה.

NOSSI FOR ALL

*In an interview with A Chassidisher Derher, **Rabbi Dovid Dubov**, shliach of the Rebbe in Princeton, NJ, shared this beautiful story.*



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 165302

There is an individual living in our area by the name of Robert M. Although he is not Jewish, I have known him for many years, and he is very friendly with Chabad, assisting us with various projects.

Every so often he would ask for my blessing for a problem that was weighing heavily on his heart. His daughter had been married for many years, and had yet to be blessed with children. I would always assure him that I had them in my prayers.

One time, as I was pulling out of the parking lot after meeting him in his factory, I suddenly heard someone knocking frantically on my window, trying to get my attention before I drove off. It was Robert's daughter.

She was on the verge of tears and she began begging me to please, please give her a blessing to have children. She had been married for ten years now and was undergoing various procedures for several years to try to have children. Now she was in the middle of her last procedure, and the doctors told her that if it comes back negative, she will never be able to have children. She was at her last straw.

When I saw how heartbroken she was, I realized that it was time for more serious measures, so I offered to go with the family to the Rebbe's Ohel. I explained that the Rebbe is not only the leader of the Jewish nation; he is also the leader of all people of the world, and he cares for every single person. The Rebbe could really help them.

They readily agreed. We set a date and I drove with her and her husband, a local policeman, to the Ohel.

Throughout the one-and-a-half hour ride, I spoke with them about the reason for the trip. I discussed the importance of creating a vessel for Hashem's *brachos*, and I encouraged them to take upon themselves a good resolution. I suggested that every morning, they should stop for a moment to think about Hashem and pray to Him. In other words, to say a private prayer every morning, a "moment of silence" (like "*mode ani*"). They both committed to this *hachlota*.

I also talked about the *sheva mitzvos b'nei Noach* in general, and, being that they are religious gentiles, I kept on stressing that we're praying to the *one* G-d, the one and only G-d who created the heaven and earth.

I also explained to them what the Ohel meant. We were going to the Rebbe so that he should daven for us to Hashem, and that in the Rebbe's merit our prayers should be answered. I told them that their letter is private between them and the Rebbe, and they should write everything they felt; it wouldn't be read by anyone else.

I also made sure they knew what to do when we get there; how to write a *pan*, to take off their shoes, say chapters of Tehillim and so forth.

We arrived, and they spent half-an-hour in the Ohel.

A short while later I received a phone-call from Robert. He had great news to share; after years of infertility, his daughter was pregnant! An open miracle!

A few months later, I received another call from Robert. His daughter had just given birth to twin girls! The family was overwhelmed with happiness, and they recognized the miracle that had unfolded before their very eyes.

For me, it was astonishing to see such a clear *moifes*. What was even more amazing was whom it happened with. This *moifes* hadn't happened to a Lubavitcher or another Jew. This was a miracle for a person who is not Jewish at all!

Yet, the Rebbe cared about them too, and the Rebbe helped them in their time of need. This is such a powerful illustration of the fact that the Rebbe is the *nossi* of every single person, no matter who they are and what they are.

I congratulated the ecstatic grandfather, and sent my best wishes to the family.

A while passed.

The rest of the story is related by Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook, director of Vaad Hanachos B'Lahak:

I received a massive shipment of newly printed books—over 100,000 *seforim*—

and I didn't have anywhere to store them. Storage for that amount of inventory is prohibitively expensive, and I didn't have the money to pay for it.

I managed to find a warehouse to store them for the short term, but the date I had to vacate the warehouse was fast approaching. So I wrote an email on "Shluchim- Achdus" asking if anyone could help me out.

Within a few minutes, I got a call from Rabbi Dubov. He told me that he happens to know someone who might be able to help me out. I would later learn that this was Robert M. I asked, "Do you realize how many *seforim* we are talking about? We need a huge warehouse for this!" He said that I should come check it out, and we'll see if it works.

I drove down to New Jersey, and I met with Rabbi Dubov and Robert in his packaging plant; it was a huge plant. He warmly welcomed us, and we sat down in his office.

Rabbi Dubov and I gave him some background on what Lahak does. The Rebbe would speak for countless hours every week, on both weekdays and Shabbos. All of these talks were transcribed at the time by a group of brilliant scholars, and, because most of these talks were on Shabbos, most of it was transcribed from memory. Lahak is working to collect and publish these talks from so many years ago.

As soon as he heard that this was for the Rebbe, he was sold. "If this is the Rebbe who gave us a blessing," Robert said, "Then this is the least I can do to thank him for my grandchildren."

He called in one of his workers and told him, "Whatever the Rabbi needs make sure to take care of him!" He gave us a generous space, plenty for all of our needs. To give you an idea of how many *seforim* there were, five trucks were required to transfer them all! He saved us



R-L: RABBI CHAIM SHAUL BROOK, ROBERT, AND RABBI DOVID DUBOV AT THEIR MEETING.




RABBI CHAIM SHAUL BROOK WITH A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE TWINS BORN AS A RESULT OF THE REBBE'S BROCHA.

close to \$100,000 in storage costs!

His appreciation to the Rebbe was striking. Any time I called him to arrange a pickup of some *seforim* when a big order came in, he was always very friendly. I would ask politely if it's possible to come tomorrow or the next day, and he would say "Come! No problem!" He doesn't know me at all, and my English isn't the best, but whenever I would meet him, he was unbelievably friendly. I've never seen such a thing; the *kavod* he gave me was simply astonishing, and he would always mention that he's repaying his debt to the Rebbe.

Just a few months before, Robert had known almost nothing about the Rebbe, and now he had become a major supporter of the Rebbe's Torah. The transformation that had occurred was astounding, and it was all due to the Rebbe's *brocha*. **D**



A PRECIOUS PEARL

לזכות הילדה חי' מושקא תחי' לרגל הולדתה למז"ט ביום י"ב טבת ה'תשע"ה
שתגדל לתורה חופה ומעש"ט לנח"ר כ"ק אדמו"ר
נדפס ע"י ולזכות הורי'
הרה"ת בן ציון וזוגתו חנה שיחיו אלפרוביץ



In connection with Chof-Beis Shevat, we present the following collection of short stories and anecdotes about the Rebbetzin. Even after moving to the United States and eventually assuming the royal title of "The Rebbetzin" when the Rebbe assumed the nesius, the Rebbetzin remained a very private person, shunning all publicity. Hence, little is known about the Rebbetzin, even from her later years; and even less then is known about her early years, when she and the Rebbe were still in Europe. Nevertheless, as time goes on, more facts come to light, telling the story of her giant personality. In this essay we have collected some of the facts that tell the story of her life, including much information that has only recently become known.

At the Forefront

In the year 5678 a revolution overtook Russia and Yiddishkeit was in grave danger. The Frierdiker Rebbe famously stood at the forefront of the fight to keep Torah alive, fiercely battling all those who wished to eradicate it.

Less known is the fact that the Rebbetzin stood at his side in those trying years, assisting in many important tasks and even coming along with the Frierdiker Rebbe to his *galus* in Kostroma.

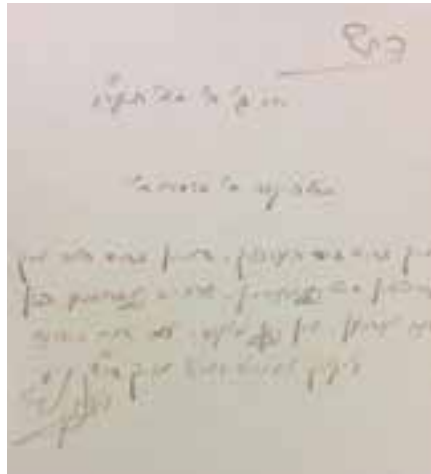
Throughout those years, the Rebbetzin carried out dangerous missions on her father's behalf, assisting in his work to establish and strengthen *yeshivos*, *chadorim*, and *mikvaos*.

In the Frierdiker Rebbe's *Igros Kodesh*, a very telling document is published, written by the Frierdiker Rebbe in 5685, in which he legally authorizes the Rebbetzin to engage in all monetary transactions on his behalf, to accept and transfer payments, and the like.¹ Indeed, in many of the letters to the Rebbetzin, we read of instructions on how to adequately transfer all the necessary funds to their proper destinations.²

When the Frierdiker Rebbe was sent into *galus* after his imprisonment, he asked the Rebbetzin to join him for the trip. When he was notified of his complete release two weeks later, on Yud Beis Tammuz, she was the one to call her

home in Leningrad to notify the family that the Frierdiker Rebbe would be coming home for Shabbos, adding that the matter should be kept secret—“*bli pirsum*.”

Later that summer, the Rebbetzin accompanied the Frierdiker Rebbe on a trip to Rostov to visit the Rebbe Rashab's Ohel, before her marriage to the Rebbe, which was to take place after the family would leave Russia.³



A LETTER FROM THE FRIERDIKER REBBE TO THE REBBETZIN AT THE AGE OF 12; 2 AV 5673

Son of Reb Levi Yitzchok

From the time the Rebbetzin was a young girl, the Rebbe Rashab kept her *shidduch* with the Rebbe in mind. Chassidim relate that the Rebbe Rashab told his wife Rebbetzin Shterna Sara, מ'דארף טראכטן "וועגן דעם זון פון לוי'ק" ("We should consider



the son of Reb Levi Yitzchok [the Rebbe's father] as a suitable proposal").

The Frierdiker Rebbe also wished for this *shidduch* to come to fruition. When someone suggested the idea, the Frierdiker Rebbe is said to have remarked that he hopes it would indeed happen.

For whatever reason, it took quite a few years until the matter was pursued. Reb Elchonon Dov ("Chonye") Marozov is said to have received a letter from Rebbetzin Shterna Sara, stating that she is anguished over the fact that her esteemed husband's wish is not being fulfilled. She added that she often visits his Ohel to daven that the *shidduch* should advance.

Hilchos Mendel Sheyichye

For Sukkos 5683, the Rebbe traveled to Rostov to meet the Frierdiker Rebbe, his future father-in-law, for the first time. Later that year, the Rebbe and Rebbetzin met for the first time while the Frierdiker Rebbe and his family were in the "datche" city of Kislovodsk, in the Caucasus region of Russia. Later, the Rebbe and the Frierdiker Rebbe traveled to Rostov, where they spent a week or two together. The Frierdiker Rebbe then wrote a letter to his daughter, the Rebbetzin, saying:

My daughter, this week I thoroughly studied "hilchos Mendel" sheyichye [i.e.

Secret Revealed

During her deposition in 5746, as part of the trial over the *seforim*, the Rebbetzin was asked if she had told her sister that books may be taken, but that the matter should be kept secret—“*bli pirsum*.” She responded:

“The last time I used the phrase ‘*bli pirsum*’ was in 5687, when my father was exiled in Kostroma. I had called my sister, who was at our home in Leningrad, and notified her that we were coming home for Shabbos, adding that the matter should be kept quiet—*bli pirsum*.”

Interestingly, at the Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen in 5739, the Rebbe based some of the *sichos* on the statement that was made in connection with the Frierdiker Rebbe's release: “*bli pirsum*.” At the farbrengen, no one realized that the Rebbe was actually quoting a statement from the Rebbetzin!



THE FRIERDIKER REBBE AND THE REBBE IN PURKERSDORF, AUSTRIA, FOR THE FRIERDIKER REBBE TO REST. 25 ADAR I 5695.

the Frierdiker Rebbe studied the Rebbe's character and personality etc.], almost every day until last night, for a few hours each day. On Sunday, the three of us [the Rebbe, the Frierdiker Rebbe, and Rashag] spent the entire day together, and it was quite pleasant. He [the Rebbe] remained here for Shabbos and will most probably leave for home on Sunday. He feels very different [after this visit] than the first time he was here...

I can say that I got to know him a bit...⁴

In the year 5686, the Frierdiker Rebbe resided in Leningrad. The Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Chana, came to meet her future daughter-in-law, where she was received by the Frierdiker Rebbe and spent some time in his presence.

After the Frierdiker Rebbe's release from prison in 5687, he resided for a while in Malakhovka, where he was visited by the Rebbe. An interesting detail is found in a letter from the Frierdiker Rebbe to the Rebbetzin:

My dear daughter; you most certainly received my heartfelt regards through our esteemed relative [i.e. the Rebbe]. I anticipate your response and detailed writing...⁵

Thank You for the Food!

After the wedding on Yud-Daled Kislev, 5689, the Rebbe and Rebbetzin moved to Berlin. In the summer of that year,

the Frierdiker Rebbe set out for a year of travels; first to Eretz Yisroel, and then to the United States. On the way out of Europe, the Frierdiker Rebbe stopped in Berlin and visited with the Rebbe and Rebbetzin. Upon returning, he visited there again.

When the Frierdiker Rebbe was in Berlin on his way out of Europe, the Rebbetzin gave him some food for the trip. In a letter written to the Rebbetzin from Egypt on Erev Rosh Chodesh Av, the Frierdiker Rebbe thanks her for this gesture:

[About] the food stuffs that you gave us: the biscuits are still of use [to us] and the three challos, we used for lechem mishneh; as there is no Jewish bread [pas yisroel] even in Trieste [Italy]. Thank you very much for supplying us with the challos; we spent Shabbos with challah...⁶

Throughout his year of travels, the Frierdiker Rebbe kept a close correspondence with the Rebbe and Rebbetzin. Interestingly, when reading

When I approached the Rebbe with the idea, he said: "I don't have time to rest. I am a shliach, and the Gemora says that a shliach is trusted that he'll fulfill his mission!"

the Frierdiker Rebbe's diaries from that period, the Rebbe and Rebbetzin are mentioned in various contexts. For example, recording his visit in Meron, the Frierdiker Rebbe writes:

Monday, 6 Menachem-Av: At 5:03, after kindling a light [in merit] of my esteemed mother... Our daughter C.M. and her husband M.M...

Not to Worry!

At the end of his visit to Eretz Yisroel, when the Frierdiker Rebbe was notified of the deadly riots that plagued the Jewish community in Chevron, he fell gravely ill. Describing a telephone conversation with the Rebbetzin that took place around that time, he writes in his diary:

Sunday, 3 Elul: 9:00, I spoke with my daughter C.M. who was informed that I was not in good health. I assured her that now, thank G-d, I am well...

For the Kallah

In Sivan 5692 the Rebbetzin's younger sister, Rebbetzin Sheina, was married to Reb Mendel Horenstein in Landrov, Poland. In the Rebbe's *Reshimos*, he records a detailed account of the wedding, including the Frierdiker Rebbe's special instructions to the Rebbetzin:

*He instructed the Kallah—through Mussia tichye—that she should recite Tehillim...*⁷

Paris

As the Nazi Party came to power in Germany in 5693 and anti-Semitism was rampant in the country,

the Rebbe and Rebbetzin moved to Paris, France.

Reb Yehuda Aryeh ("Leibish") Haber, who lived in Paris at the time recounted:

When the Rebbe and Rebbetzin arrived in Paris, they rented a modest, one room apartment in an unsound location. I was already well-established in Paris at the time, and I could not bear to see them living in this manner, so I rented a beautiful fully-furnished apartment, and notified the Rebbetzin that their new living quarters were available for them as soon as they wished to move in.

The Rebbetzin replied that she would need to discuss the matter with the Rebbe, and after a week of not hearing from them, I paid the Rebbetzin a visit. When I brought up the subject of the new apartment, she raised her hand as if to say, "What can I do about it?" and remarked, "What can I tell you; my husband is not interested!"

Another interesting encounter related by Reb Leibish:

At one point, I noticed that the Rebbe seemed very weak. I told the Rebbetzin that it looked like the Rebbe was over-exerting himself with his learning and perhaps it would be a good idea that he take a vacation. The Rebbetzin replied: "If you think you will be able to persuade my husband, perhaps you should speak to him on your own."

When I approached the Rebbe with the idea, he said: "I don't have time to rest. I am a shliach, and the Gemora says that a shliach is trusted that he'll fulfill his mission!"

[It should be noted that when speaking of the spiritual

revolution that transformed France for the good, the Rebbe mentioned that the Frierdiker Rebbe was the one to facilitate this change. That "in addition to visiting France on a few occasions and delivering *maamorim* and *sichos* there; he sent shluchim from his own family who lived there for a few years, doing *avoda*, learning *Nigleh* and *Chassidus*..."⁸]

No More Bread!

When the Rebbe and Rebbetzin lived in Paris, life as Torah-observant Jew was often accompanied by great difficulty, especially with the Rebbe's high standards in keeping Torah and mitzvos. The Rebbetzin always stood at his side and assisted, while the Rebbe trusted only her with many of his requirements.

When the Rebbe was notified that the local butcher sold already koshered meat, he went there with the Rebbetzin to observe the process and see if it was indeed efficient. Only when the Rebbetzin was comfortable with the kashrus standards, did the Rebbe agree to buy meat from the shop.

At one point, the Rebbetzin would travel a few miles to the outskirts of Paris in order to supervise milking for the Rebbe, ensuring that it was cholov Yisroel. Once, when visited by a Reb Eliyahu Reichman from Hungary, the Rebbetzin was seen sifting flour and preparing her own matzah for Pesach. When he asked for the meaning of this stringency, the Rebbetzin replied: "My husband does not eat anything that was prepared outside of our home!"

Once, when the Rebbe was in the bakery where he usually bought bread, a





THE REBBE AT THE TIME OF HIS WEDDING, 5689.

certain individual commented, “What? A *yorei shomayim* like you eats the bread baked here?” (Implying that there was something questionable about the kashrus of that establishment.) From then on, the Rebbe would not eat the bread from that bakery, despite that this rumor eventually proved to be false.

When relating this story many years later, the Rebbetzin added: “*Hut der Aibershter geholfen*; Hashem helped and from then on we had no bread either!”

I gave it to Mussia

In one rare instance, we learn of the Rebbetzin’s opinion on a book she asserts

is written “in passionate Chassidic spirit.”

In 5695, the Frierdiker Rebbe was collecting books for his library, and his *mazkir* took to the task of purchasing various books. In a letter dated Purim 5695, the *mazkir* writes:

“I chanced upon a German book entitled ‘Der Rav,’ printed in Frankfurt. It is a variation of ‘Beis Rebbe’ in German. I gave it to Mussia, tichye, to read and she says it was a pleasurable read, written in the spirit of a passionate Chossid. She says her husband [the Rebbe who was then with the Frierdiker Rebbe in Marienbad] wrote to her that the author is Dr. Ehrman... If

*“The precious pearl
which Hashem
has given you is
my daughter, your
esteemed wife,
tichye...”*

the Rebbe so wishes, I will purchase it for the library...”

We Have Sown

As a summation of this period through which the Rebbe and Rebbetzin lived in Paris, the Rebbetzin once told the shlucha, Mrs. Basya Azimov, OBM:

“מיר האבן געאקערט און געזייט, און איר דארפט שניידן...”

(“We plowed and sowed, and now you must reap [the results]”).¹⁰

Special Connection

Throughout her youth and all through the ensuing years, the Rebbetzin held a steadfast and deep bond with her father, the Frierdiker Rebbe. Much of the nature of this bond was unknown until the release of a recent volume of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *Igros Kodesh*, volume 15, which consists of letters sent to the Rebbe and Rebbetzin throughout the years.

The first letter that appears in the *sefer* was written to the Rebbetzin when she was all but 12 years old, while the Frierdiker Rebbe was away in Switzerland in the summer of 5673:

*I received your regards with pleasure. Write in detail about your learning and about everything...*¹¹

Margolis Toiva

While traveling to the United States in Elul 5689, the Frierdiker Rebbe wrote a letter to the Rebbe detailing some aspects of his trip, and then he wrote as a postscript:



*Contemplate deeply into the precious pearl Hashem has given you, may it be for many long years with all good. May Hashem grant you the chochama, bina, and daas to properly and truly understand this concept.*¹²

Four months later, the Frierdiker Rebbe mentioned the pearl again in a letter written to the Rebbe from Baltimore, Maryland:

*Regarding the great gift, the precious pearl; do you still not understand my intention, or have you already picked up on my metaphor?*¹³

In a response written by the Rebbe on 18 Shevat, the Rebbe confides that “I still have not understood the nature of the precious pearl; what is it?” And the Frierdiker Rebbe finally clarifies in a letter dated 25 Adar, the Rebbetzin’s birthday:

The precious pearl which Hashem has given you is my daughter, your esteemed wife, tichye...

It’s all His Work!

In the year 5695, the publishing of the “HaTomim” periodical began. These publications included much information and vintage manuscripts of Chabad Chassidus and history. The Rebbe was placed in charge of compiling and editing the text. In one letter to the Rebbetzin, the Frierdiker Rebbe praises the Rebbe’s work:

*With Hashem’s help, through the efforts and dedication of your esteemed husband, my dear and precious son-in-law, we will soon release a very prestigious journal called “HaTomim”. On paper, the editors’ names will be others, but [in truth] the entire work is his...*¹⁴

Rov in Paris

While the Rebbe and Rebbetzin lived in Paris, some of the locals realized that the Rebbe was a great tzaddik and thought perhaps he would agree to accept a position as a Rov. In the one letter, the Frierdiker Rebbe beseeches of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin to seriously consider this proposal:

THE REBBE LEAVES HIS HOME AT 1304 PRESIDENT STREET, TISHREI 5746.



“...Through the efforts and dedication of your esteemed husband we will soon release a very prestigious journal called “HaTomim”. On paper, the editors’ names will be others, but [in truth] the entire work is his...”

*...My beloved children, I have no words to describe the joy that this proposal brought me, and how happy I would be if you would accept it, and with Hashem’s help, this matter would come to be... I turn to you, my beloved children, with a heartfelt plea to both of you, strongly consider this idea and contemplate it...*¹⁵

The Sweet, Luminous Day

Another very telling collection of letters in this volume of Igros Kodesh are the ones sent to the Rebbetzin (and at times to the Rebbe as well) in honor of her birthday, on Chof-Hei Adar.

The Frierdiker Rebbe used expressions like the “lichtiken zissen tog”—the luminous and sweet day for all of us, and “libben zissen gliklechin geburts-tog”—your beloved, sweet, joyous birthday.¹⁶

In Nazi Germany

At one point while the Rebbe and Rebbetzin lived in Paris, the Rebbe’s

younger brother, Reb Yisroel Arye Leib, needed to obtain certain papers from the Nazi government in Germany. The Rebbe himself wanted to go, but the Rebbetzin explained that it would be more beneficial if she went to take care of it. Indeed, the Rebbetzin traveled to Germany and succeeded in obtaining the necessary documents.

On the Run

With time, the Nazis advanced into France. The Rebbe and Rebbetzin were forced to flee Paris and relocate to Vichy, and from there to Nice. In her later years the Rebbetzin herself related many of the stories that occurred during those turbulent times. She told of the Rebbe’s *mesirus nefesh* to observe even the minutest details of Halacha, and to assist other refugees as much as possible. In one instance the Rebbetzin related that the Rebbe was even particular about observing the Frierdiker Rebbe’s

instruction to hold a farbrengen on Shabbos *mevorchim*, gathering with other refugees to fulfill this special *minhag* each month.

Ish U’beisoi

When the Rebbe and Rebbetzin finally escaped war-torn Europe, they arrived in the United States on Chof-Ches Sivan, 5701.

Many years later during the Rebbe’s farbrengen in 770, an announcement was made about a special farbrengen to take place, marking Chof Ches Sivan, the day that the Rebbe arrived in the United States. Hearing the announcement, the Rebbe interrupted the *gabbai* and added with a smile, “*Ish u’beisoi!*” [I.e. the day also marks the fact that the Rebbetzin arrived here as well!]

Our Children

A family once visited the Rebbetzin in her home and asked her “Where are your children?”

The Rebbetzin pointed at each of the children and then out the window toward the street and replied, “Each of you, and each them out there; you are all our children!” D

1. Igros Kodesh Admur HaRaYYaTZ vol. 15 p. 34
2. Ibid. p. 34, 36
3. Shmuos Ve’sipurim vol. 1 p. 134
4. Igros Kodesh Ibid. p. 31
5. Ibid. p. 44
6. Ibid. p. 44
7. Reshimos installment 57
8. Sefer Hasichos 5752 vol. 1 p. 181
9. Sifriyas Lubavitch p. 104
10. Quoted in Sefer Hasichos 5752 vol. 1 p. 182, footnote 43
11. Igros Kodesh ibid. p. 1
12. Ibid. p. 59
13. Ibid. p. 74
14. Ibid. p. 208
15. Ibid. p. 212
16. Ibid. p. 82, 202

להביא לימות המשיח

TODAY, NOW!

For so many years, the Rebbe trained us that Moshiach's imminent arrival is a true reality, and that the belief and anticipation in his coming is at the very fabric of our religion. Detailing the numerous Torah sources of this subject, the Rebbe elucidated time and again that this notion is far from being a "chiddush" introduced by Lubavitch, and he expressed anguish when people attempted to present that argument.

WHY NOW?

On the Shabbos following Yud Beis Tammuz, 5744, addressing those who question the reason for the Rebbe's excessive talk about Moshiach, the Rebbe said:

They think to themselves, "Why is it that a Yid sits down and speaks publicly, during every single farbrengen, and constantly proclaims non-stop about one subject: the coming of Moshiach; and that he should actually come, this very day?"

"Surely every Yid believes that Moshiach can come every moment, but still"—they reason—"why speak of it incessantly, always stressing that he can come this very instant; an idea that is not easy for one to relate to as a realistic possibility?"

"If Moshiach's coming is mentioned once in a while, we would handle it; it is indeed one of the principals of faith. But why speak of it relentlessly, during every single farbrengen, as if he wants to force it into

the minds of the listeners against their will...?"

"Additionally that Yid, who speaks of Moshiach, keeps a siddur on the table (so that he will not err in reciting the brocha acharona), where the coming of Moshiach is mentioned specifically in future tense..."

"Rather, it must all be a dream, a truly wonderful dream. We indeed pray during birkas Kohanim that 'all my dreams shall be for good,' but in this case it is not realistic whatsoever. If so, why discuss 'dreams'?"¹

About one month later², on Chof Av, the Rebbe addressed a similar, but greater issue. There were those who felt that constantly expressing our anticipation for Moshiach's imminent arrival is not the correct course of action. They reasoned that a Jew should not deliberate the time of his coming; he should preferably place his trust in Hashem, who surely knows the proper time for Moshiach's arrival.

There was even one well-known individual who implied that just as the Yidden had been in *galus* for nineteen hundred years, there is a possibility that they will remain in *galus* for the coming nineteen-hundred years.³

The Rebbe sternly countered his argument:

It has never happened before, for a Yid to state that we are able to stay in galus for an additional long period of time; especially nineteen hundred years. Despite all this, no one has decried his statement!

I don't understand how, when a Chabadnik hears these claims, he becomes baffled and does not know what to say. This, after we have spoken about this so many times, on more than 'one hundred one' instances!

ANTICIPATING MOSHIACH'S ARRIVAL

The Rebbe then went on to point out the fallacy of this claim, extensively elucidating the sources in Torah that speak of a Jew's obligation to await Moshiach's imminent arrival, noting that these ideas are not a *chiddush* of Lubavitch.⁴

On that occasion, as well as many other times, the Rebbe explained that when we examine the words of the *chachomim*,

SHEVAT 5775 | 35

“Jew, Jew,” called out the Arab. “Resume plowing, for your cow has proclaimed that your savior has been born.”

The Rebbe explains⁵ that this story is connected to the Rambam’s statement that “the Torah has already promised that, ultimately, Yisrael will repent and will immediately be redeemed.” There is always a possibility that the Yidden will do *teshuvah*; therefore it is imperative that Moshiach be prepared to come at any moment. Hence, he was born immediately after the *churban*, when the need for the *geulah* initially arose.

Additionally the Rambam writes, “A person should always look at himself as being equally balanced between merit and sin, and the world also being equally balanced between merit and sin. If he performs one mitzvah, he tips his balance and that of the entire world to the side of merit, and brings deliverance and salvation to himself and others.”

The Rambam is not writing that hypothetically his action may be the one to bring Moshiach. The Gemora proclaims as a matter of fact that “all the predestined dates [*kitzin*] have passed, and the matter [now] depends only on *teshuvah*.” In other words, Moshiach is not only potentially able to arrive at any moment, but his coming is actually in our hands!

The possible arrival of Moshiach is so realistic that it affects the life of a Kohen on a day-to-day basis in the following fascinating halacha: According to some opinions, a Kohen is forbidden to drink wine at any given moment, for by doing so he disqualifies himself from serving in the Beis Hamikdash during the time that he is inebriated. A

quick look in Shulchan Aruch shows us that one who is intoxicated must wait just eighteen minutes before he can be considered sober again; leaving us with the conclusion that Torah truly expects that Moshiach can come within the next few minutes.

Based on all of the ideas mentioned, there is clearly no room left for the doubts cast by those who opposed the Rebbe’s course.

A Jew must constantly await and anticipate Moshiach’s arrival, sincerely anticipating that it will take place ***bekarov mammosh***.

A DREAM

If *galus* ending at any moment with the arrival of Moshiach is such a reality, why then is it so difficult to influence other Yidden to accept this as reality and feel that it’s about to happen?

I don’t understand how, when a Chabadnik hears these claims, he becomes baffled and does not know what to say

At the beginning of the article we quoted a *sicha* where the Rebbe speaks of those who seemingly cannot comprehend the *koch* and zeal in the belief in Moshiach. In other instances, the Rebbe addressed those who feel so comfortable in *galus* that they don’t see the urgent need for *geulah* at all.

One Pesach⁶, the yom tov of freedom, the Rebbe described their feelings:

There is a possibility that one is told that he must demand Moshiach’s coming, and he will protest that galus is pleasant for him. He contends that Hashem blessed him with living in a “kindly kingdom” where he is able to study Torah and fulfill mitzvos in comfort. Why would he demand an end to this enjoyable situation?

When he is told that he must forget about galus, for the time has come to pack his bags and prepare to be transported to Eretz Yisroel, he will sigh in discomfort. Why should he bother himself to shlep to a new place when he is so well-established right here?

On a different occasion, the Rebbe was *melamed zechus*⁷:

How can Hashem come to him with complaints, when Hashem himself is keeping him in *galus*? He was born, became bar mitzvah, and even got married in *galus*!”

And so, it can indeed be difficult to influence our fellow Yidden to relate to *geulah* in a realistic manner.

TRUE REALITY

But the truth is, as the Rebbe taught us so many times, the opposite is correct:

The “dream” is not the fact that the *geulah* could come now; *galus*, being that it is not where a Jew really belongs, is itself the delusion. *Geulah* on the other hand is the essential reality and rightful status of a Yid.⁸

The word *galus* implies that one is exiled from his place and position; someone who is exiled loses his true identity. He is compared to an individual who is confined to a prison, where he isn’t free to express himself and develop his

capabilities, or to live his life in a way that suits his character. He isn't just restricted to a specific location; rather his entire personality and all of his abilities are limited.

B'nei Yisrael are the children of Hashem and the life that suites them is one where they have everything they need; living without pain or suffering while "dining at their father's table."

In other words, a Yid in essence is supposed to merit a state of *giluy elokus*, where he enjoys basking in the light of the *shechina* and does not experience hardship in his *avodas Hashem*. There should be no disturbances from

non-Jews, and we should have a Beis Hamikdosh, which will enable us to fulfill Torah and mitzvos in their purest fashion.

However, part of the *galus* is the fact that one is so restricted and confined that he forgets who he truly is and what his real capabilities are. He doesn't realize that he is in exile.

This is the meaning of a dream. The experience is not real, and one can dream phenomena that are factually untrue, but he still believes that reality is as he sees in the dream.

A Yid has the capability to feel our true state is that we belong "at our father's

table;" that *galus* is completely contrary to logic and to Torah, while the *geulah* is the natural state of the universe.

We have the tools to recognize—even within a dream—that it is so, to feel that our correct and normal state is that of *geulah*.

When we come to the realization that our current situation is unusual, we will naturally begin to long for a return to our normal state. It should not be viewed as a new and exciting possibility; rather it is our suitable and proper situation.

Returning to the Rebbe's *sicha* on Pesach:

Even someone that thinks that as an American citizen he can feel perfectly



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 147967

WHY THE OPPOSITION?

The Navi in Melachim writes that during the reign of King Yoshiyahu, Pesach was observed in its entirety for the first time since the times of the Shoftim, after the king had cleansed the land of idol worship.

This is an extremely strange phenomenon: The first Beis Hamikdosh was standing, with the Aron, the *urim vetumim*, and everything else that comes along with it; yet at the same time there was a situation where idolatry is rampant, and the king had to initiate a special campaign to eliminate it.

The Rebbe explains that since the revelation of Hashem was so strong in that era, there was an equally strong pull towards *avoda zarah* to counter it. To the extent that King Menashe told Rav Ashi in a dream that “had you lived in that time, you would have raised the corners of your robe so that they will not impede your race towards it [idol worship].”

Similarly in our times, during these last moments of *galus*, the need to insist that *geulah* comes is so vital, that there is great opposition towards this idea.

(ליל ו' דחג הפסח תשמ"ח)

comfortable in galus, must know that this feeling is only external. His true self wants to go free; to leave this galus and to return to his true state. Not as an American citizen, but as a child of Tziyon and Yerushalayim.

Revealing this hidden will, the Rebbe explained, is brought about through the emphasis placed on declaring *עד מתי*; insisting and demanding that Moshiach arrive immediately.

This is even more relevant in our times, when the Friediker Rebbe stated that “*L’Alter L’Geulah*”—Moshiach is ready to come and all we must do is “polish our buttons.”

And the Rebbe took this a step further, telling us that even polishing the buttons has already been completed. *Hafotzas hama’ayan* was already done, the Yidden have already called and begged

“*ad mosai*,” and we’ve witnessed all the *simanim* pointing to that fact that the world is ready for Moshiach.

Therefore, the belief, longing, and anticipation that Moshiach is prepared to arrive is much stronger now than ever before. We can actually expect him to arrive now, bringing the cry of “*ad mosai*” to be a much stronger demand.

ANTICIPATE AND HE WILL COME

The Rebbe emphasized that the anticipation and demand for Moshiach actually hastens his coming.

The Chida points out a strange detail in the verse from *Shmone Esreh* mentioned before. We say *את צמח דוד עבדך מהרה* ... *כי לישועתך קוינו* [speedily cause the scion of Dovid your servant to flourish... for we hope for your salvation all day]. It seems that the reason Hashem

should grant us the *geulah*, is simply because we demand it!

He therefore concludes that the very fact that we demand Moshiach’s arrival is a merit for itself—even in the absence of any other merits—with which we can hope to be deserving of the *geulah*.⁹

One of the fascinating aspects of a dream is its capacity to combine two complete opposites; two extremes that clash in reality have no issue blending into a single setting within a nighttime reverie.

This concept can also be applied to our discussion:

While it is true that we currently find ourselves in the depths of *galus*, it is nevertheless possible for there to be a complete turnaround at any given moment, with our exodus from this exile to the complete and ultimate redemption. **D**

1. Hisvaaduyos 5744 vol. 4 p. 2210

2. Ibid. p. 2397

3. This statement was said in regards whether the Yidden should retain their control over the Golan Heights. This person’s view was that “just as the Jewish nation survived two thousand years without the Golan Heights, they will survive another two thousand years without it as well”. For more on the subject, see sicha of 24 Teves 5742; Hisvaaduyos 5742 vol. 2 p. 691.

4. Note that the Rebbe discussed this topic on many occasions and with various explanations. We bring herein only one of those perspectives.

5. Shavuot 5744; Hisvaaduyos 5744 vol. 3 p. 1912

6. Sixth night of Pesach, 5748

7. Shavuot 5751

8. See Torah Or Vayeshev 28c; see also Likutei Sichos vol. 2 p. 542

9. See Hisvaaduyos 5746 vol. 1 p. 536



Who is Boss

A Chossid once came to the Mezritcher Maggid. “Rebbe,” he said, “there is something I do not comprehend. When Hashem commands us to do something or forbids a certain act, I understand. No matter how difficult it may be, no matter how strongly my heart craves the forbidden course, I can do what He desires or refrain from doing what is against His will. After all, man has free choice and by force of will he can decide on a course of action and stick to it, no matter what. The same is true with speech. Though somewhat more difficult to control, I accept that it is within my power to decide which words will leave my mouth and which will not.

“But what I fail to understand are those precepts which govern matters of the heart; for example, when the Torah forbids us to even entertain a thought that is destructive and wrong. What is one to do when such thoughts enter his mind of their own accord? Can a person control his thoughts?”

Instead of answering the Chossid’s question, the Maggid dispatched him to the town of Zhitomir. “Go visit my disciple, Reb Zev” he said. “Only he can answer your question.”

The trip was made in the dead of winter. For weeks the Chossid made his

way along the roads which wound their way through the snow-covered forests of White Russia.

Midnight had long come and gone when the weary traveler arrived at Reb Zev’s doorstep. To his happy surprise, the windows of the scholar’s study were alight. Indeed, Reb Zev’s was the only lighted window in the village. Through a chink in the shutters the visitor could see Reb Zev bent over his books.

But his knock brought no response. He waited a while, then tried once more, harder. Still, he was completely ignored. The cold was beginning to infiltrate his bones. As the night wore on, the visitor, with nowhere else to turn, kept pounding upon the frozen planks of Reb Zev’s door, while the rabbi, a scant few steps away, continued to study by his fireside, seemingly oblivious to the pleas which echoed through the sub-zero night.

Finally, Reb Zev rose from his seat, opened the door, and warmly greeted his visitor. He sat him by the fire, prepared him a hot glass of tea, and inquired after the health of their Rebbe. He then led his guest -- still speechless with cold and incredulity -- to the best room in the house to rest his weary bones.

The warm welcome did not abate the next morning, nor the one after. Reb

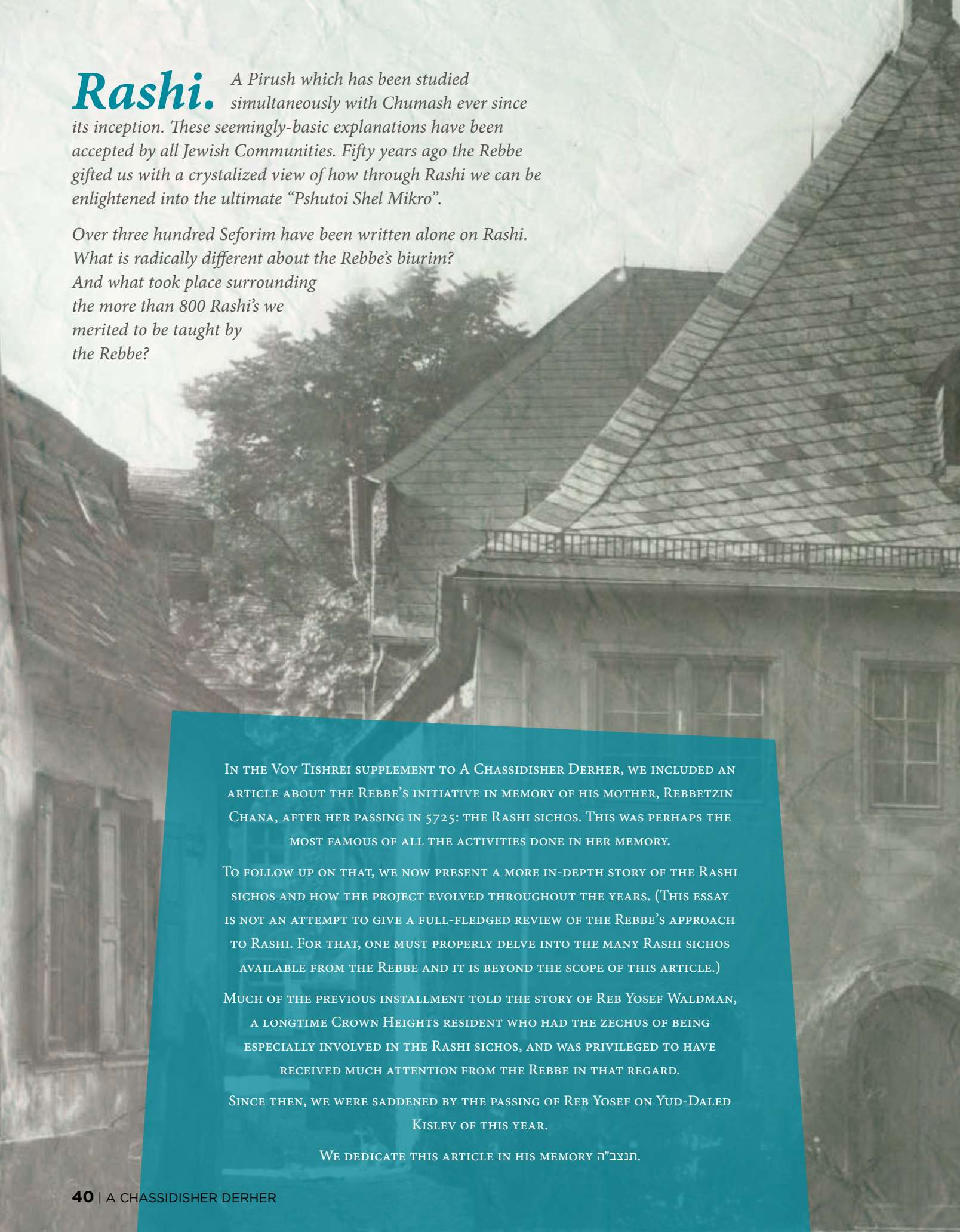
Zev was the most solicitous of hosts, attending to the needs of his guest in a most exemplary manner. The visitor, too, was a model guest, considerate and respectful of the elder scholar. If any misgivings about the midnight “welcome” accorded him still lingered in his heart, he kept them to himself.

After enjoying the superb hospitality of Rabbi Zev for several days, the visitor had sufficiently recovered from his journey and apprehension to put forth his query. “The purpose of my visit,” he said to his host one evening, “is to ask you a question. Actually, our Rebbe sent me to you, saying that only you could answer me to my satisfaction.”

The visitor proceeded to outline his problem as he had expressed it earlier to the Maggid. When he had finished, Reb Zev said: “Tell me, my friend, is a man any less a master of his own self than he is of his home?”

“You see, I gave you my answer on the very night you arrived. In my home, I am the boss. Whomever I wish to admit -- I allow in; whomever I do not wish to admit -- I do not.” D

(Reprinted from “Once Upon A Chassid”, Kehos 1994)



Rashi. *A Pirush which has been studied simultaneously with Chumash ever since its inception. These seemingly-basic explanations have been accepted by all Jewish Communities. Fifty years ago the Rebbe gifted us with a crystalized view of how through Rashi we can be enlightened into the ultimate “Pshutoi Shel Mikro”.*

Over three hundred Seforim have been written alone on Rashi. What is radically different about the Rebbe’s biurim? And what took place surrounding the more than 800 Rashi’s we merited to be taught by the Rebbe?

IN THE VOV TISHREI SUPPLEMENT TO A CHASSIDISHER DERHER, WE INCLUDED AN ARTICLE ABOUT THE REBBE’S INITIATIVE IN MEMORY OF HIS MOTHER, REBBETZIN CHANA, AFTER HER PASSING IN 5725: THE RASHI SICHOS. THIS WAS PERHAPS THE MOST FAMOUS OF ALL THE ACTIVITIES DONE IN HER MEMORY.

TO FOLLOW UP ON THAT, WE NOW PRESENT A MORE IN-DEPTH STORY OF THE RASHI SICHOS AND HOW THE PROJECT EVOLVED THROUGHOUT THE YEARS. (THIS ESSAY IS NOT AN ATTEMPT TO GIVE A FULL-FLEDGED REVIEW OF THE REBBE’S APPROACH TO RASHI. FOR THAT, ONE MUST PROPERLY DELVE INTO THE MANY RASHI SICHOS AVAILABLE FROM THE REBBE AND IT IS BEYOND THE SCOPE OF THIS ARTICLE.)

MUCH OF THE PREVIOUS INSTALLMENT TOLD THE STORY OF REB YOSEF WALDMAN, A LONGTIME CROWN HEIGHTS RESIDENT WHO HAD THE ZECHUS OF BEING ESPECIALLY INVOLVED IN THE RASHI SICHOS, AND WAS PRIVILEGED TO HAVE RECEIVED MUCH ATTENTION FROM THE REBBE IN THAT REGARD.

SINCE THEN, WE WERE SADDENED BY THE PASSING OF REB YOSEF ON YUD-DALED KISLEV OF THIS YEAR.

WE DEDICATE THIS ARTICLE IN HIS MEMORY תנצב"ה.



revolution in

כשי

לע"נ

הרב יוסף וואלדמאן ז"ל

זכה להתייחסות מיוחדת מכ"ק אדמו"ר בקשר לאמירת ה"רש"י שיחות"
ולזכות אשתו יבלח"ט מרת מרים תחי' וואלדמן ובתם מרת חנצא שתחי' מעט

נדפס ע"י

החברות וחברי הכתה של חנצא בבית רבקה
לרגל התחלת שיעור קבוע ב"רש"י שיחות" לע"נ אביה ע"ה



The farbrengen of Shabbos parshas Noach 5725 began like any other farbrengen. Although in those years Shabbos farbrengens generally only took place on Shabbos *mevorchim*, the Rebbe had notified that he would farbreng every Shabbos during the year of *aveilus* for his mother. The previous Shabbos had been Shabbos *mevorchim*, when there would have anyway been a farbrengen, so this was the first farbrengen of the new initiative. By all accounts, no one could know what lay ahead, and so a perfectly ordinary farbrengen was expected.

All that changed though, immediately after the Rebbe arrived at his place. Instead of starting a *sicha* as soon as he sat down, like he usually did, the Rebbe requested a Chumash. That the Rebbe should request a *sefer* during a farbrengen was something extremely rare. It was the first indication that something unusual was underway.

The Chumash was brought, and after quoting the now famous words of the Alter Rebbe, that Rashi on Chumash is *יינה של תורה*, (lit. the “wine” of Torah), the Rebbe opened it to parshas Noach, and began reading and translating the first *possuk*. He then moved on to Rashi, reading and translating the second Rashi on the parsha.

It was a beautiful scene; hundreds of Chassidim crowding around as the Rebbe sat and taught Rashi like a *melamed* in *cheder*, first translating it, and then proceeding to ask a number of penetrating questions, cutting to the very heart of Rashi’s words.

No one realized it at the time, but this was an historic moment. The Rebbe had just—quietly and without much fanfare—launched a revolution that would accompany every Shabbos farbrengen for the next 23 years, and would change the way we look at Rashi.



THE REBBE DAVENS SHACHARIS AT THE AMUD IN THE SMALL ZAL, UPSTAIRS 770, FOLLOWING THE PASSING OF REBBETZIN CHANA ON VOV TISHREI 5725.

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 109331

WHY RASHI?

Although the Rebbe never expressly explained why he chose to focus specifically on Rashi *le’iluy nishmas* his mother, Chassidim suggested some



PHOTO: VAAD HANOCHOS BELAHAK

THE REBBE'S HANDWRITTEN HAGOHOS ON THE GROUNDBREAKING FARBRENGEN OF PARSHAS NOACH 5725, WHEN THE REBBE LAUNCHED THE RASHI SICHOS.

reasons. Firstly, it is said that learning Rashi in memory of a *niftar* elevates the *neshoma*. Now just imagine the countless hours spent by Chassidim studying and discussing Rashi, through learning the Rebbe's sichos, all in memory of Rebbetzin Chana. It was also speculated that Rebbetzin Chana learned Chumash

and Rashi with the Rebbe as a child, making revolutionizing Rashi a fitting memorial.¹

FULL FARBRENGEN

Following that first farbrengen of parshas Noach, the group of bochorim known as '*chozrim*,' who were tasked with memorizing the Rebbe's farbrengens, gathered immediately after Shabbos with Reb Yoel Kahn to review the farbrengen. Reb Yoel then prepared a transcript, as was done every time.

The transcript was typed up, copies were made, and being that in those days there was quite a cost associated with such matters, it was distributed for a nominal fee as a "*bilti-mugah*" farbrengen.

At that time, *sichos* were generally not reviewed and edited by the Rebbe. Full farbrengens were only *mugah* from 5747 (with a few exceptions), so there was no reason to give the Rebbe a copy of the farbrengen before it was published. As such, the completed and already distributed product was delivered to the Rebbe's room, and nothing more was thought of it.

Imagine the surprise when this farbrengen was returned from the Rebbe's room with edits on the *hanocha*. The

writers were told that not only was the Rebbe planning on holding a farbrengen every Shabbos of the year; he also intended to edit the entire farbrengen every week!

The Rebbe instructed that on the cover of the published farbrengens a dedication should be included to honor Rebbetzin Chana. The unedited copies were quickly collected, and the new *mugah sicha* was distributed.

For technical reasons, this only went on for seven weeks, through parshas Vayishlach. These seven farbrengens, along with the dedication for Rebbetzin Chana, can be found in Likutei Sichos, in the *hosafos* to *chelek hei*.

How, at the end of each *sicha* in Likutei Sichos, the date on which this *sicha* was said appears in small print. But a glance in the beginning of *chelek hei* will leave one a bit confused. A number of Rashi *sichos* are taken from those farbrengens in early 5725; the same farbrengens which are printed in their entirety in that very same *chelek*. Why are the same *sichos* printed twice in the same *sefer*!?

To answer this question we must first expand our understanding of the Rebbe's innovation, and why this shook the world of Rashi learning to the very core.

RABBAN SHEL YISRAEL

Ever since it was written, about 900 years ago, Rashi's *pirush* on Torah has become almost synonymous with learning Chumash. A child begins learning Rashi shortly after he starts learning Chumash, and for the rest of his life, Rashi accompanies every *possuk* that he learns. Learning Chumash without Rashi is inadequate at best, and any publisher that prints a Chumash without Rashi is bound to be left with many unsold copies. The uniqueness of his *pirush* contributed to "Rashi" also being the popular *roshei teivos* for רבן של ישראל—The teacher of Israel.

A FAMILY AFFAIR

In the Rebbe's childhood, he was taught by Reb Zalmen Vilenkin of Yekatrinoslav. Being the Rebbe's *melamed*, Reb Zalmen was a frequent visitor at the home of Reb Levi Yitzchak, the Rebbe's father. He related how Reb Levi Yitzchok was once expounding upon a Rashi in Chumash, bringing out the deepest concepts of Kabbalah in every nuance of Rashi. The assembled had never heard such a thing before, and someone asked Reb Levi Yitzchok if Rashi could realistically have intended all the things he was saying. R' Levi Yitzchok replied that Rashi did not necessarily have this all in mind, but since he wrote with *ruach hakodesh*, surely all that he had written is explainable *al-pi* Kabbalah.

NOT SO SIMPLE

Studying Rashi in depth is not a new phenomenon. Already the Ramban, who lived shortly afterwards, paid careful attention to every word and detail of Rashi. In his own *pirush* on Chumash he begins almost every *possuk* with a critical examination of Rashi before offering his own explanation.

Rabbeinu Tam, Rashi's famous grandson and the first of the *ba'alei hatosafos*, innovated a new method of being *mefarsh* Gemora. He looks at every *sugya* through the lens of the rest of *Shas*, and by resolving contradictions from many other *sugyos*, he brings the learner to a much broader and deeper understanding of the current *sugya*. He is known to have said: The fact that my grandfather explained the Gemora—that I can do too, but his commentary on Torah—that I cannot emulate, it is beyond my capability.²

The Ibn Ezra, also known for his *pirush* on the whole *Tanach*, even wrote a song extolling Rashi's life and *pirush*.

At first glance this seems quite unexpected; Rashi writes very little of his own, taking a large portion of his commentary from *Midrashim* and *Shas*. Perhaps it can be said, that his *pirush* is really a collection of *ma'amorei Raza*"l, with some French words thrown in. Additionally, Rashi himself writes on several occasions, starting right away in *parshas Bereishis*:

“אני לא באתי אלא לפשוטו של מקרא”

“I am only here to give the simple meaning of the *possuk*”

So what's the big excitement, and why were hundreds of *seforim* written on Rashi, if there is little original content there, and whatever is there, is—according to Rashi himself—simple and uncomplicated?

It is this very promise of simplicity that bothers all the *meforshim*, starting with the Ramban. There are many different and varied *Midrashim* on each *parsha*, yet Rashi generally chooses to quote only one, leaving us to figure out why he chose specifically that one; especially when the others seem to be simpler, staying closer to the actual words of the *possuk*.

The problem is amplified when Rashi does quote two opinions. Only one of them can be the simple interpretation, so why does he mention two? And sometimes he stays true to the wording of the *Midrash* he is quoting, and at other times he makes changes or adds his own details, without any explanation as to why he is doing so.

It is this issue, the contrast between Rashi's assurance that he is only concerned with the simple meaning, and the way he actually writes, that leads the Ramban to frequently offer his own explanation of the *possuk*. It also caused so many of the other *meforshai* Rashi to write so much, sometimes several pages on one *possuk*, in their attempt to answer these questions.

For most of the *meforshai* Rashi, until the Rebbe, there is one common thread. With few exceptions, notably the Maskil Lidovid, none of them took the statement of Rashi—that he only clarifies the simple meaning—as literally as the Rebbe did.

The Ramban, being a *Rishon*, simply argued with Rashi, and asserted that the correct *peshuto shel mikra* lay elsewhere. From the words of other *meforshim* it seems they believed that Rashi never intended to establish a rule which would guide the entirety of his *pirush*, and the promise of *peshuto shel mikra* applies only to those places where he says so clearly.

Another explanation is that Rashi always attempts to offer only *peshuto shel mikra*, but at times this proves impossible, or too difficult, and on these occasions he resorts to a *Midrash*.

רש"י - ישר

Early on in the period of Rashi *sichos* the Rebbe pointed out that Rashi shares the same letters as the word *yoshor*—straight. It is a testament to the holiness of the entire Torah, including *pirush* Rashi; that



CHASSIDIM GATHER AROUND IN THE WEE HOURS OF THE MORNING AS REB YOEL KAHAN LEADS THE CHAZZARA FOLLOWING A FARBRENGEN.

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 141909

KLOLEI RASHI

As mentioned in previous installments, when explaining a Rashi the Rebbe would often introduce a new ‘*klal*,’ or principle, which Rashi adhered to in writing his *pirush*. By keeping these guidelines in mind we can know when to ask a question on Rashi (which would frequently be answered by a further application of this rule), and also provide answers to many questions which arise.

These rules fall into many different categories. Some examples: When Rashi quotes a certain person or source, when is the source named and when not? What sort of difficulties in a *possuk* does Rashi ignore? When does Rashi quote more than one opinion on a matter? Which words will he include in the *dibur hamaschil*, and what does that tell us about the issues he is addressing?

By the time the Rebbe had been discussing Rashi for a few years, there was a sizable amount of new *klolim* that the Rebbe had introduced. In 5731 Rabbi Tuvia Blau published an article in “*Shmaytin*”—a scholarly journal in Israel—titled “The Lubavitcher Rebbe’s New Method in Learning Meforshim on Torah.” A short while later he received a letter

from the Rebbe’s secretary, Rabbi Hodakov, thanking him for the article, and informing him that the Rebbe had enjoyed it. Rabbi Hodakov then suggested that he look for even more *klolim*, and print them all in a book. Rabbi Blau of course agreed to work on the book, and in the introduction to Likutei Sichos *chelek hei*, which was published in 5732, readers are promised that a separate volume containing all the rules of learning Rashi will be available shortly.



For some reason, however, the project was delayed about ten years, until 5740, when Rabbi Blau was notified by *mazkirus* that the Rebbe wished for the book to be published as soon

as possible. Naturally, he immediately began working frantically on it, and in just three weeks the first edition of the *sefer* “*Klolei Rashi*” was published. In it were seventeen categories containing a total of 207 *klolim*. It is worth noting that this is one of the only books officially written by someone other than the Rebbe but is printed with the Rebbe’s *shaar blaas*.

The Rebbe expressed great appreciation for the *sefer*, writing to Reb Tuvia:

ת”ח ת”ח במיוחד על כל ששלח בקשר לכללי
רש”י וכו’, וחכמה (נוסף על המלאכה גדולה) יש
כאן וכו’ וכו’... דהפך בה כו’... תבוא מהדורא
ב’...

“Many thanks, especially for what you sent regarding Klolei Rashi. The wisdom (in addition to the great labor) is evident... You should continue delving deeper, and surely there will be a second addition.”

In other words, the Rebbe is telling him that if he looks deeper into the *sichos* he will discover even more *klolim*, and that they should be included in a second edition of the *sefer*. In 5751 he in fact published a second edition, which this time contained twenty categories and 389 distinct *klolim*! (Rabbi Blau notes that 389 is the *gematria* of פשט).

if Rashi says something, his words are not to be explained away or taken out of context. So when Rashi writes *אני לא מקרא* “אני לא מקרא”, he means **only** *אני לא מקרא*, and every word of his is pure *pshat*; nothing more.

What is the definition of *pshat*? First of all, it should not be based on any outside sources. *Meforshim* often ask questions on Rashi, and they write that to answer them we must first know this *Gemora*, or this *Midrash*. Only then will we understand why Rashi wrote what he did.

This, the Rebbe says, is not ‘*pashtusdik*’ enough for Rashi; it was written as *pshat*, so from the *possuk* itself we have all the information we need to understand the Rashi. If Rashi wants us to know something, he will write it, but he will never rely on what we know from other places.

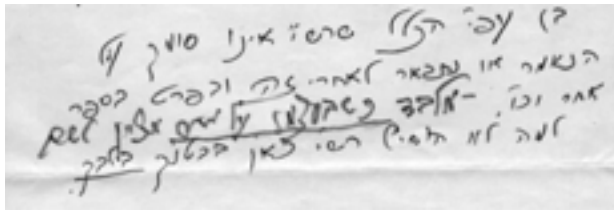
Also, Rashi always relies on the learner’s knowledge of earlier *pesukim*.

And a third point: He wrote with *seichel hayoshor*—common sense. Children, in

their simplicity, often ask questions that adults wouldn’t think of. Rashi wrote his *pirush* in a style that can be understood even by a child, addressing all his questions.

So with enough work and common sense—*seichel hayoshor*—it can be demonstrated that every single word of Rashi, even the words he chooses to put into the *dibur hamaschil*, and whether or not he finishes the *dibur hamaschil* with “*vegomer*,” is all based on the true and ultimate *peshuto shel mikra*.

The Rebbe's handwritten response on a note written by one of the *chozrim*, commenting that Rashi does not rely on what it says later in Torah.



מלבד כשבעצמו על אתר מציין לשם

Except in instances where Rashi himself refers to there

Chassidisher Derher, that when Rashi *sichos* first began, it took some time for the Chassidim to realize that the Rebbe was unveiling a new approach of looking at Rashi. The realization came when, week after week, the Rebbe discussed the first and last Rashi of every *parsha*; it became apparent that this would go on for the whole year.

Normally, even the brightest individual cannot promise to have something to say on every occasion. When there is something that needs explaining, he'll explain it. Some people will explain things in a more simplistic fashion, while

EVERY WEEK?!

Rabbi Leibel Schapiro, rosh yeshiva and rav of the Lubavitcher community in Miami Beach, Florida, who was part of the team of *chozrim* during that period, related in an exclusive interview with A

Without reading Rashi, what we would otherwise consider *peshuto shel mikra* will often overlook some basic commonsensical question. But by carefully analyzing the Rashi, taking into account the entire Chumash up until that point, it can be shown that no matter how far removed it seems to be from the literal meaning, Rashi's *peshat* is the real *peshuto shel mikra*, and it answers every question that could have arose.

A small example of this is right at the beginning, in *parshas Bereshis*. The *possuk* says:

ויקח ה' אלקים את האדם וינחהו בגן עדן

"Hashem took Adam and placed him in Gan Eden."

The obvious understanding is that Hashem physically moved Adam Harishon from his original location in and put him in Gan Eden. Rashi however, explains it differently:

לקחו בדברים נאים ופתהו ליכנס

"[Hashem] took him with kind words and convinced him to enter."

In a 5745 *sicha*, the Rebbe demonstrated how the seemingly obvious meaning of the *possuk* overlooks some basic questions; such as (1) why didn't Hashem just create Adam in Gan Eden to begin with, and (2) when exactly was Gan Eden created? Only by delving deeply into Rashi's words are all the questions of someone learning like a *ben chamesh limikra*—a five year old child—answered, and the real *peshuto shel mikra* emerges.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 108668

a greater genius will have a considerably deeper view point.

But what if there is a passage that requires no explanation and seems too straightforward for any elaboration? Obviously he will not comment on it, and instead move on to the next challenge.

Yet, here the Rebbe was promising to elaborate on the first and last Rashi of every single *parsha*. Only one that learns Rashi in a whole new light, through lenses never before worn, can promise to do such a thing! What if one particular week there will be no questions on Rashi? And what if the answer will be so short and simple that even the greatest scholar can't uncover any additional depth?

In such a situation all of the *meforshei* Rashi are silent, letting the seemingly obvious words of Rashi speak for themselves. Yet here the Rebbe was planning on having what to say every week. This told the Chassidim that here was no ordinary *biur* on Rashi. Rather the Rebbe was going to learn Rashi in a way never before attempted, leading to every Rashi being illuminated by this new light.

An example of this is in *parshas Korach*. Early on in the year, *bochurim* looked

through the first Rashi of each *parsha* to try to discover what the year had in store. Rabbi Schapiro recalls waiting for *parshas Korach* to see what the Rebbe could possibly say about it. The first Rashi is very short, saying only *פרשה זו* פרשה זו, "This *parsha* is expounded upon nicely in *Midrash Tanchuma*." What could the Rebbe possibly add to such a Rashi?

Of course, come Shabbos, the Rebbe said a *sicha* on that Rashi. He explained that Rashi is telling us what to do when there seems to be no *pshat* to the *possuk* without resorting to *Midrashim*, and how it is possible that a *possuk* doesn't have a *pshat*.

MULTIPLE PESHOTIM

Now, if the Rebbe was going to embark on this new journey, there were many things that needed to be explained. Here is not the place for a comprehensive overview answering all the questions, but we will focus on one, which many readers may have already asked:

It is common for Rashi to explain the

possuk in one way and then state: *ומדרשו* or *ומדרש אגדה*, and then go on to give another explanation. Meaning, the first way was *peshuto shel mikra* and now he is going to offer another opinion which is not *pshat*. How does this fit with the Rebbe's view, that every word of Rashi is only *pshat*?

The answer, the Rebbe explained, is that *pshat* has different levels. There is of course the most basic *peshuto shel mikra*. But when that won't do, for whatever reason, there are *Midrashim* which complement the *pshat*. These *Midrashim* are needed for the *pshat* itself, as they address problems inherent in the *pshat*, and as such Rashi's bringing them is not a departure from his rule.

There are also different levels in *pshat*. While every Rashi is pure *pshat*, many can also be understood using another level of *pshat*. While still considered in the realm of *pshat*, they represent *דרוש* רמז שבפשט or *שבפשט*, and when other *meforshim* explain Rashi's words based on outside sources, they are following these lines.

In the first few weeks after his mother's passing, the Rebbe focused on a less "*pashut*" level of *pshat*. There was more of an emphasis placed on the lesson in *avodas Hashem*, and less on uncovering the real *pshat*. For this reason, the seven *farbrengens* printed in the back of *Likutei Sichos chelek hei* are prefaced by the following disclaimer:

"It is worth noting, that the method of '*pshat*' in the *sichos* printed here is not as '*pashtusdik*' as the *sichos* of the later years, because in *pshat* itself there are multiple methods."

הקדמה כללית

סאזי כדאי צו באשפטיקן. אז דער "דרך השלם" פון די שיטת חסידים
זינען געווען דא (השכנים) זינען גוט אזוי פשוטדיק ווי די ביאגרים
אויף פירשטי פון די שטעטערדיקע יארן: חסידים, כדור, אזוי אויך אין
פשוט שפרייט פארשידענע אומנים.

הפול



THE REBBE LEAVES 770 HOLDING THE NEWLY PRINTED VOLUME OF LIKKUTEI SICHOS VOL. 14; 5 TISHREI 5738.



BOCHURIM LEARN IN THE SMALL ZAL, UPSTAIRS 770. A LIKKUTEI SICHOS CAN BE SEEN ON THE TABLE.

LEARNING RASHI – FOR EVERYONE!

The Rebbe always expressed pleasure whenever there was a ‘koch’ in Rashi sichos. But extra attention was paid when the interest came from an unexpected source.

One such occasion involved a young girl. During the farbrengen of Shabbos parshas Bo 5741, the Rebbe asked a question on a Rashi in that week’s parsha, and as was quite common, he said he would deal with the question at a later opportunity. A little over a month later, by the farbrengen of parshas Titzaveh, the Rebbe returned to the topic:

There is a question that we asked a number of farbrengens ago. Considerable time has elapsed since then, but not one person has corresponded with me concerning it.

So I waited, until finally somebody wrote to me about it. And who was it? A young girl!

All the ovdim and learned bochurim were apparently sleeping, so only a girl was concerned with this issue.

She requested—in English, as that’s

the only language she can write—that maybe we can go back and finish what we started discussing back then.

So I will now talk about it, because if I don’t, I’m afraid everyone will forget about it, even this girl.

The Rebbe went on to explain the Rashi, and then ended off:

“Again, nobody was bothered by this question besides for this girl... Surely she will get a good shidduch, especially considering the zechus she has by us speaking about it.” (Sichos Kodesh 5741 vol. 2 p. 461)

A similar occurrence took place in 5744. Rabbi Mendel Kaplan, today of Oak Park, Michigan, was then a young child who came to the Rebbe with his father, Rabbi Leibel Kaplan ע"ה, from Tzfas. At one of the farbrengens during their visit, the Rebbe asked questions on Rashi, and again, left them unanswered. Mendel thought he knew the answers and decided to write them down to send to the Rebbe. (His answers to the Rebbe were later printed by Oholei Torah, and the age and simplicity of the writer

is quite evident). He received the following response in the Rebbe’s *ksav yad kodesh*:

נהנתי במאד מקריאתו, ובפרט מהדיוק בהפרטים וכו'

“I greatly enjoyed reading it, especially your attention to the details etc.”

The Rebbe then told him to look into an apparent difficulty with his explanation, based on another Rashi, and suggested to publish the entire overview in one of the *kovtzim*.

For an answer to be accepted by the Rebbe was not a common occurrence in those days, yet here the Rebbe not only accepted this child’s answer, he even helped him develop it by pointing him to another Rashi and encouraging him to explain the contradiction between the two.

On the following Shabbos, the Rebbe asked Rabbi Leibel Kaplan ע"ה where his son was. The Rebbe then told Mendel to say Le’chaim. Later on at the farbrengen, the Rebbe discussed the Rashi at length, remarking that most of the answers he received were not good because they were written by older learned people who brought many sources and proofs for their ideas. But really, as Rashi himself says and as the Rebbe quoted innumerable times, his *pirush* was written on a level that even a child can understand. And being that children don’t have patience for sources or theories or complicated explanations, all they want to do is understand the Rashi as quickly as possible so they can go back outside to play.³ (*Hisvaaduyos* 5744 vol. 2 p. 952)



FRAGMENT OF PIRUSH RASHI,
WRITTEN ON PARCHMENT.
CIRCA 13TH CENTURY.

THE DEEPER MEANING

A story is told of a certain Rabbi, who, after spending many years studying and toiling over the secrets of Kabbalah, decided to write a complete *pirush* on Torah, *al-pi Kabbalah*.

It is well known that every part of Torah can be understood in four general ways:

pshat, *remez*, *drush*, and *sod*. *Sod* is the way Torah is studied in *Atzilus*, with every *possuk* carrying deep mystical meaning, and it was this dimension that the *mekubal* wanted to write and publish with.

He put his heart and soul into this lofty undertaking, and after many years he finally had a complete manuscript. That night, he had a vision where he was instructed to shorten the work, as the

world was not sufficiently prepared for such revelations. The deeper meaning must be hidden in simpler terminology. He did so, and after completing the abridged version of his *pirush*, he had the same vision with the same message. Again he shortened it, and again he had this dream. After shortening it for the third time, he saw that what remained was a word for word copy of *pirush* Rashi.

יִינָה שֶׁל תּוֹרָה

In the very first Rashi *sicha*, the Rebbe quoted the Alter Rebbe, who said that Rashi's *pirush* is יִינָה שֶׁל תּוֹרָה, lit. the 'wine of Torah.' Wine, the Rebbe explained, is obtained by squeezing grapes. Leaving the grapes whole will never produce wine. The same applies to Rashi. Taken at face value, the deep secrets hidden therein will remain hidden, but only by 'squeezing' it, by dissecting it and taking it apart, is the '*pnimius haTorah*' revealed. And just like wine gets stronger the longer it stays in the grape, so too the 'wine of torah'—the further it is hidden behind simple terminology, the deeper it is.

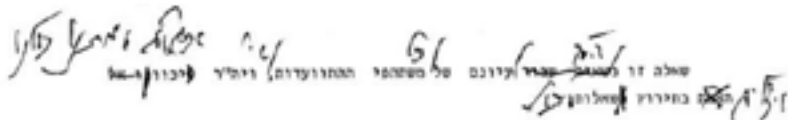
In other words, every single Rashi can be understood in two ways. There is the simple meaning, which—as we have shown before—is not so simple; and the deeper meaning, *sod*. Without arriving at the proper understanding of the *pshat*, that *sod* remains hidden.

Some Rashi's also include *remez* and *drush*, though not every Rashi can be understood on this level. *Pshat* and *sod*, on the other hand, are found in every Rashi without exception. At almost every Shabbos farbrengen, after taking care of the *pshat* aspect of Rashi, the Rebbe would turn his attention to the יִינָה שֶׁל תּוֹרָה, often teaching a *hora'a* in *avodas Hashem* based on Rashi's precise wording.

FOR EVERYONE

This Rebbe's interest in expanding the study of Rashi *sichos* to as broad an audience as possible was expressed on another occasion as well. In 5748, the editors of the *kovetz* of Oholei Torah wrote up a few unanswered questions on Rashi that the Rebbe had asked at a farbrengen, ending off that this question was left to the participants of the farbrengen to answer.

The draft of the questions was given in to the Rebbe to edit before it went to print. On the questions themselves the Rebbe didn't make any corrections, but on the ending the Rebbe added "כל", all the participants should attempt to answer the question.



שאלה זו ה"ה לעיונם של כל משתתפי ההתוועדות שי, ויה"ר שכאו"א מאתנו כולנו יכוון ויצליח בתירוץ שאלות וכו'

This question is for the consideration of all the participants in the farbrengen *sheyichu*, and *yehi ratzon* that every single one of us should correctly and successfully answer these questions.

JUST THE BEGINNING

On many occasions the Rebbe concluded a *sicha*—including Rashi *sichos*—with the *possuk* in Mishlei, תן לחכם ויחכם עוד, “Give to a wise man, and he will become wiser.” The Rebbe was informing the listeners that everything he says is only the beginning. But the *sicha* contains much greater depth than what is readily apparent, and he expects them to analyze the *sicha* and expand their grasp of the Rebbe’s words to its fullest potential.

There were, of course, certain “wise” individuals who said that the Rebbe’s words don’t apply to them, as the Rebbe specifically said תן לחכם, and who is arrogant enough to call himself a *chacham*? The Rebbe addressed this issue on Shabbos parshas Bo, 5744:

Since every Yid is assumed to be pure, surely everyone is on the level of ‘חכם’, being that he is part of the ‘wise and understanding nation.’ And since he was created this way, he is incapable of changing it.

Therefore, no one can excuse himself, saying that he is not a חכם, and pretend that he doesn’t understand what we want from him, because the reality is that he does know! Like the famous statement of the Rebbe Maharash, “The Aibershter certainly can’t be fooled; everyone around you is not being fooled either; so who are you fooling if not yourself?! And it’s no big deal to fool a fool.

The full extent of what the Rebbe meant is clarified with a story related by Rabbi Schapiro:



THE MANICHIM PREPARE A *SICHA* FOR THE WEEKLY LIKKUT, TO BE GIVEN IN TO THE REBBE FOR HAGAH, CHESHVAN 5736. R-L: RABBI LEBEL ALTEIN, RABBI NACHMAN SCHAPIRO.

The year was 5730 and the *manichim* had prepared a Rashi *sicha* the Rebbe had said five years earlier for publication as a *likut*, and eventually in Likutei Sichos.

In the course of preparing the *sicha*, they encountered a difficulty. As usual in these situations, they wrote their question to the Rebbe, and they suggested a proposed answer. The Rebbe agreed with their answer, and so the question, along with the answer, was printed as a footnote in the *sicha*.

The *likut* came out for Shabbos parshas Mattos and that Shabbos there was a *farbrengen*. During the *farbrengen* the Rebbe discussed this footnote, and then asked a question on the answer given there. Then the Rebbe said, “I have been waiting five years for someone to ask this question, but because not one person came forward, I had to do it myself!”

In other words, the Rebbe expected the *sicha* to be learned in such depth, that questions should be asked not only on what was said in the *sicha*, but even on an answer that the learner would come up with on his own, to answer his own question on the *sicha*. And as the Rebbe said, the fact that he wasn’t asked such a question shows that the *sichos* are not being learned properly. That was the

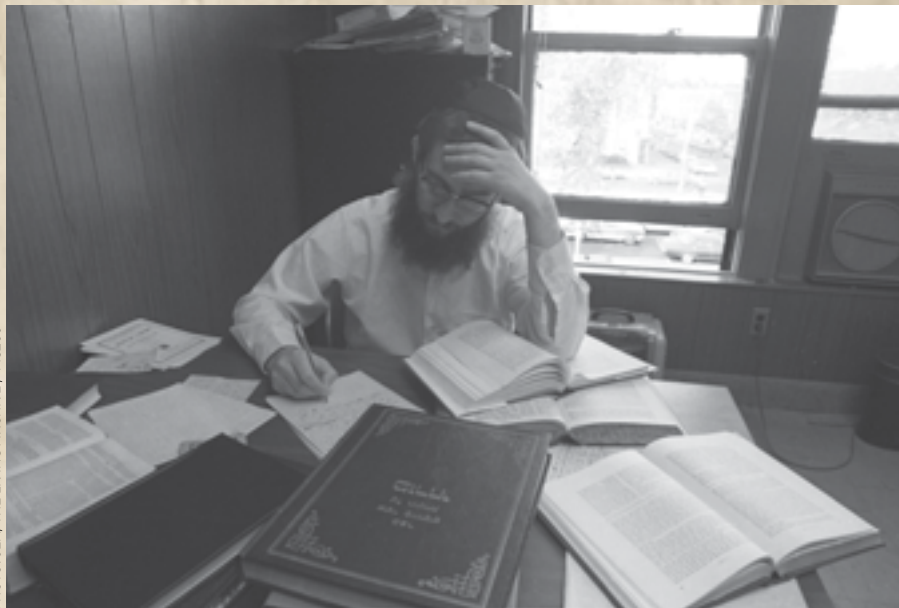
extent of the expectation of ויחכם עוד!

It is for this reason that some of the earlier *sichos* are found twice in Likutei Sichos. At first, only what the Rebbe said by the *farbrengen* was written, these are the *sichos* in the *hosafos* of *chelek hei*. Later, these *sichos* were revisited and relearned in depth, and written up in the style of פשט שבפשט. Additionally, the Rebbe frequently added new “*klolim*” of learning Rashi [see sidebar]. These *klolim* were applied to Rashis which the Rebbe had already explained, thereby shedding new light on the *sicha*.

PROPER TRAINING

As the years progressed, the Rashi sichos took on many new elements. For a full year, the Rebbe focused only on what Rashi didn’t mention, explaining that when there is an apparent question on the possuk and Rashi doesn’t address it, showing that this question is answerable using common sense and our knowledge of previous pesukim, therefore Rashi saw no need to address it.

At a later stage, the Rebbe began questioning the *dibur hamaschil* of Rashi, why he quotes specific words if he’s seemingly explaining something



else. That must also tell us something we didn't know.

The Rebbe also began leaving over questions. He would sometimes ask many questions on a certain Rashi without answering them all; sometimes not even answering any of the questions, but leaving them for the next week.

The Rebbe explained the reason for this at the farbrengen of parshas Mikeitz, 5744:

The explanation on Rashi from last week was not completed, and I had hoped that over the course of the week there would

The Rebbe's response to a question that the *chozrim* asked on a Rashi sicha:

מפליא ומתמי' וביותר שכ"ז צריך לפרט
(לאחרי יותר מעשר שני לימוד) ובאם לאו
כו'!!

It is utterly shocking and surprising that all this must be specified (after more than ten years of teaching) and if not...

be attempts to answer the questions in the kovtzim...

And again on parshas Bo:

Another reason we didn't finish last week's discussion on Rashi was to see if anyone would attempt to answer the questions; especially after last time, when I encouraged that the questions should be answered in the kovtzim...

There is a well-known *din* that a son may only begin selling his deceased father's property after he reaches 20 years of age. Only after 20 years is he mature enough to be involved in his father's business. Here the Rebbe is saying that 20 years after he introduced this *derech* in Rashi he expects Chassidim to learn Rashi this way on their own. Not just to learn the Rebbe's answers, but to answer the questions just as the Rebbe would have himself.

QUESTIONS FROM THE CROWD

This was only the beginning; in 5746 the Rebbe went even further.

Reb Velvel Rosenblum of Crown Heights relates:

After the farbrengen of parshas Beshalach 5746 I had a question on the Rashi *sicha*, so as I had done many times in past, I submitted my question to the *kovetz Ha'oros Ubiurim* of Oholei Torah.

At the next farbrengen the Rebbe responded very sharply to my question, saying that it was a 'wild question' which came as a result of using the *klolei Rashi* improperly and thinking out of context.

I was a bit shaken, but not entirely discouraged. So in the *kovetz* for parshas Vayakhel I again wrote on Rashi, this time asking my own question on that week's *parsha*. What happened next changed the face of farbrengens and the future of Rashi *sichos*.

The Rebbe came out of his room on Shabbos morning holding the *kovetz*, and pointing to my *ha'ora*, told a *bochur* who was standing nearby that this was the Rashi he would speak about this week. As soon as I came to shul, I was eagerly told what had happened, that the Rebbe would address my *ha'ora*!

I was understandably a bit apprehensive, considering what had happened just a few weeks earlier, but as it turned out I had nothing to worry about.

The Rebbe was happy with my question and said that from now on this will be the new *seder*: questions should be submitted to one of the *kovtzim*, and he will choose from there which Rashi to talk about. For the first three weeks the Rebbe used my questions. After that it was different people every week, although my questions were still addressed on occasion. The Rebbe had clearly comforted me following the rebuke of two weeks prior.

There are a number of benefits to such an arrangement:

Here is what the Rebbe said then, introducing the new system and explaining why:

As usual, we will explain a Rashi in this week's parsha, but this time we will discuss questions on Rashi that were already asked in one of the kovtzim.

In general, it would be a good idea to do this from now on. Before Shabbos, those who participate in the farbrengens should publish their suggestions for which Rashi we should discuss, along with their questions on that Rashi.

1) Since the suggestions will be only Rashis that have not yet been discussed, this will save me from having to search for such a Rashi.

2) Being that no two people are alike, it is quite possible if I choose a Rashi to discuss I will end up choosing one that everyone understands and has no difficulty with. But if the suggestion for the Rashi comes from the participants in the farbrengen, I will know for sure that this is a Rashi that people have trouble understanding.

3) Most importantly—this will certainly increase interest for everyone to pay

attention to what is being spoken at the farbrengens.

Reb Michoel Rainitz, who was then part of the *maareches* of *Ha'oros Ubiurim*, recalls that time clearly. Previously, the *kovetz* was a relatively small publication and it sometimes struggled to find content to fill its pages. But after that *sicha*, there was a sudden surge in submissions, and the *maareches* would stay up nights sorting through all the *ha'oros*, determining which ones were fit for print. On Thursday night, after



After a few months the Rebbe commented that people were asking on Rashis that had already been discussed over the last 20 years. So every week, the editors included a list of all the Rashi *sichos* on the next week's parsha, for the perusal of the readers.

[illegible]

In conclusion, it is clear that the Rebbe's Rashi sichos constitute an entire section of Torah that is uniquely the Rebbe's. As the Rebbe's Chassidim, it is also our privilege to learn these *sichos* with a "*Koch*," as the Rebbe asked us so many times to do; and to try as much as possible to adopt these methods in our own learning of Rashi. Especially considering the fact that—although of course every part of Torah was dear to the Rebbe—clearly the Rashi *sichos* were unique, as they were introduced in memory of the Rebbe's mother, and learning them undoubtedly brings immeasurable personal *nachas* to the Rebbe. **D**

At that time, Rabbi Schapiro was preparing to publish a collection of *halochos* and *minhogim* taken from sichos and letters of the Rebbe, called פסקי הלכה ומונה. Upon informing the Rebbe of the details of the project, he received the following answer regarding the inclusion of matters of hearsay.

2. Shem Hagedolim by the Chida, erech Rashi
3. Hisvaaduyos 5744 vol. 2 p. 952.





BEHIND THE PICTURE

MINCHA IN GAN EDEN HATACHTON

Winter – 5752

Pictures courtesy of Jewish Educational Media

There are pictures of the Rebbe high on his platform at the front of the large shul in 770, often encouraging the chassidim's song, or davening a *tefilah* with a large crowd assembled. These photographs have become iconic, for they immediately bring to mind the joy and excitement of Tishrei, the warmth and glow of Chanukah rallies, along with many other emotions.

Less known, however, is that on several occasions in 5752 the Rebbe davened Sunday mincha upstairs, right outside his holy room—in the *gan eden hatachton*.

Ever since the distribution of dollars started on a weekly basis in 5746, the routine began sometime in the morning and it would last several hours. However in the summer of 5751, 'dollars' was

moved to begin in the early afternoon, around 1:30 p.m. Because it often lasted four or five hours, by which time it would be too late to daven mincha in the winter, the Rebbe decided that, beginning on 26 Cheshvan 5752, he would daven mincha before starting to distribute dollars. This new routine remained in place until the last distribution of Sunday dollars—as of now—on 26 Adar I, 5752. (The exception was Chanukah, when the Rebbe davened mincha in the big shul followed by *hadlokas haneiros*.)

Although we cannot expect to know the reason for this or any of the Rebbe's *hanhagos*, some have speculated that the Rebbe didn't want to daven this *tefilah* downstairs, as was the norm in that period, because the main shul below was

busy with people lining up for 'dollars.' Davening in the upstairs zal was not an option either, as the Rebbe did not want to disturb the *seder* of yeshiva¹.

For these *tefilos*, a *shtender* was placed alongside the wall between *gan eden hatachton* and the Rebbe's room, facing *mizrach*. A very small minyan, consisting of members of *mazkirus* and a few others, was formed. On some occasions, others joined as well; *chassanim* were allowed in as well in order to receive the Rebbe's siddur from his holy hand, and the family would receive coins for *tzedakah* (at times the Rebbe would give coins to everyone else present, as well). If there was a bar mitzvah boy, or other special guests, they too were allowed in to join.

One notable item of these special *teffilos*

occurred during *nefillas apayim*. The Rebbe would cover his holy forehead, despite not being in the presence of an *aron kodesh* (which, according to some opinions, is not necessary).

On Yud Kislev the Rebbe always recited kaddish for his uncle, Reb Shmuel Shneerson (5648-5704), brother of Reb Levi Yitzchok, and brother-in-law of Rebbetzin Chana². In 5752, when Yud Kislev fell out on Sunday, a microphone was installed to enable the large crowd below to hear the Rebbe reciting kaddish.

Upon the conclusion of mincha the Rebbe would enter *gan eden haelyon* and reemerge a few minutes after, beginning the regular dollars distribution. **D**

1. It should be noted that in the 5720s, when the Rebbe returned late from the Ohel, he often davened mincha in Gan Eden hatachton, so as not to disturb the learning in the zal.
2. Reb Shmuel Schneersohn married Rebbetzin Miriam Gittel Yanovsky, sister of Rebbetzin Chana.



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE /90830



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE /90244



PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE /89578

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לנשיא דורנו
כ"ק אדמו"ר זצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע
 בקשר עם יום התחלת הנשיאות – יו"ד שבט ששים וחמש שנה
 ולזכרון הרבנית הצדקנית נ"ע זי"ע בקשר עם יום ההילולא כ"ב שבט

לעילוי נשמות
 איש תם וישר והצנע לכת
 הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' **בצלאל ז"ל**
 בהרה"ח הרה"ת ר' **סימון ז"ל**
יעקבסאן
 נפטר ז' אדר ה'תשע"ג
 נדפס על ידי ולזכות בנו
 הרה"ת ר' **ירחמיאל** וזוגתו מרת רבקה לאה
 ויוצאי-חלציהם
 מנחם מענדל, חנה העניא, אסתר ברכה, מושקא, פריידא מרים, אלישבע ושלמה שמואל ארי'
 שיחיו לאורך ימים ושנים טובות ובריות
יעקבסאן

לזכרון
 הנשמות הק' שמסרו נפשם עקה"ש
 נדפס ע"י משפחת **גניביש שי'**

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

לזכרון
 הרבנית הצדקנית מרת חי' מושקא נ"ע זי"ע
 בקשר עם יום ההילולא כ"ב שבט
 נדפס ע"י
 משפחת **האגער שי'**
 לונדון, אנגלי'

לזכות
 החתן הרה"ת לוי **יצחק שי' הארליג**
 והכלה מרת נחמה תחי' **דערען**
 לרגל חתונתם בשעטומ"צ ביום
 כ"ח שבט תשע"ה
 ולזכות
 החתן הרה"ת **מרדכי שי' הארליג**
 לרגל בואו בקשרו שידוכים
 עם ב"ג מרת חיה **מושקא תחי' רוזנבלום**

לזכרון
 הרבנית הצדקנית מרת חי' מושקא נ"ע זי"ע
 בקשר עם יום ההילולא – כ"ב שבט
 ולזכות החתן **גבריאל הכהן שי' כהן**
 והכלה מרת רבקה תחי' **ברקלי**
 לרגל חתונתם בשעטומ"צ ביום כ"ו שבט ה'תשע"ה
 נדפס ע"י
 ר' **מיכאל הכהן** וזוגתו לאה ומשפחתם שי' **כהן**
 מנשסתר, אנגלי'



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