

שנת
הקהל את העם

A Chassidisher

Derher

א חסידישער דערהער

Fresh Waters

EXPLORING THE NEW
ADDITIONS TO THE
REBBE'S TORAH

ציור פני הרב

DARKEI HACHASSIDUS

Total Transformation

THE REBBE'S FRENCH REVOLUTION



ספר התורה לקבלת פני משיח צדקינו

THE STORY OF THE FAMOUS SEFER
TORAH, WITH NEW NEVER BEFORE SEEN
DOCUMENTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS



SHEVAT 5776
ISSUE 40 (117)

פרסום
ראשון!

Derher**Contents**

SHEVAT 5776 ISSUE 40 (117)



About the Cover:

Young and old stand together at the Rebbe's Farbrengen; 29 Tishrei, 5740.

JEM/The Living Archive ID: 193031

04 **Grow and Give**
DVAR MALCHUS

06 **First Yahrtzeit**
CHOF BEIS SHEVAT 5749

10 **Double Portion**
KSAV YAD KODESH

12 **Sefer Torah shel Moshiach**
THE STORY OF THE FAMOUS SEFER TORAH

22 **Getting Ready to Daven**
HORAOS V'HADROCHOS

26 **צִיּוּר פְּנֵי הָרֵב**
DARKEI HACHASSIDUS

30 **Fresh Waters**
EXPLORING THE NEW IGROS KODESH

Derher**Editorial**

Yom haGadol v'hakadosh, Yud Shevat, marks the Frierdiker Rebbe's *yom hilula* and the day the Rebbe became our *nossi*; it is *Rosh Hashanah L'malachim*. As the Rebbe explained at the farbrengen of Yud Shevat 5741: "There is a special virtue given from above at the time of year that the king began his reign; or with regards to a *nossi*, the time when there is a renewal in his leadership. Although he was a *nossi* or a king throughout his entire life, even before that specific day of his appointment, nevertheless, since this day marks a major milestone in his life, it is an appropriate day to be celebrated with a *yom mishteh*, or a *hisvaadus*." (Sichos Kodesh 5741 vol. 2 p. 183.)

True to the Rebbe's words in his letter for Beis Nissan 5710 (the day that marked the beginning of the Frierdiker Rebbe's *nesius*); Yud Shevat is a day that we recommit ourselves to connecting with the Rebbe and all his *inyanim*. As such, this edition of the Derher includes several articles in this spirit.

The Rebbe taught us that all of a Rebbe's *inyanim* are both personal and communal. Every matter the Rebbe discussed is applicable and accessible for each and every Yid, and it is our duty to spread the Rebbe's words as a part of the effort in *hafatzas hamaayanos*.

Together with that, we must work to internalize our personal connection with the Rebbe and our devotion to fulfilling his *horaos*. The Rebbe famously spoke of the *vort* from the *mashpia* in Lubavitch, Reb Michoel der Alter, that when learning Chassidus one must take the words to heart, as though he was discussing his very own father! (See farbrengen Yud Shevat 5725, sicha 6.)

These two points are really one and the same; two inseparable components of our lives as Chassidim. Even when speaking of the need to apply Chassidus in a personal manner, the Rebbe concludes that this will lead the Chossid to better feel and understand the need to share Chassidus with others. (Ibid.)

In this magazine, we placed emphasis on these two most integral components.

One will read of the importance of "*tziyur p'nei harav*" — envisioning the Rebbe's face and remembering how each and every one of us is connected to him in a very personal way.

At the same time, a detailed composition is featured of the Rebbe's impact and wide-ranging activities in France; essentially spurring a true spiritual revolution in the country once considered "beyond spiritual hope." This is a major milestone in the realm of *hafatzas hamaayanos*. As the Rebbe explained on Shabbos parshas Vayeshev, 5752, the

38 **The Momentous Gathering**
INSIGHTS IN HAKHEL

40 **The Attempted Cherem**
ARUM CHASSIDUS

42 **Total Transformation**
THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

60 **Headline's Answer**
A STORY

62 **Outdoor Distribution**
BEHIND THE PICTURE

64 **Letters to the Editor**



transformation of France constitutes and symbolizes the completion of preparing the world for the coming of Moshiach.



The day before Yud Shevat was also when the Rebbe chose to complete the "Sefer Torah for Moshiach"—a project commenced by the Friediker Rebbe in 5702.

During the inaugural farbrengen of Yud Shevat, 5711, the Rebbe explained that the Friediker Rebbe could have completed the task of writing the *sefer Torah* on his own without the assistance of others, but he wished to include everyone so that all of the Yidden will have the *zechus* of participating.

Similarly, says the Rebbe, each and every one of us is responsible to assist in the larger goal of completing the final stages of preparation for the coming of Moshiach.

From this special day of Yud Shevat, may we each gather the necessary inspiration to indeed do our part, and may our collective efforts be successful in bringing Moshiach *teikef umiyad mammash*.

The Editors

כ"א טבת, ה'תשע"ו, שנת הקהל (ופרצת)



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Printed by

The Print House

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The Living Archive



GROW AND GIVE

In this sicha of Chamisha Asar B'Shevat, Shabbos parshas Beshalach 5747, the Rebbe states that man must learn from the tzomeach within him, to constantly grow in avodah and to never stop influencing others.

Chamisha Asar B'Shevat is a yom tov; we don't say *tachanun* and celebrate with eating fruits.

The reason the trees' new year is a yom tov for Yidden is that man is compared to a tree, as the Gemara interprets the *possuk* "*Ki ha'adam eitz hasadeh.*"

This comparison of a person to a tree, whose qualities of life and speech are superior to the tree's value of growth, is unusual; especially considering that the *possuk* doesn't simply compare them, but very clearly says "man is a tree."

Yet, the comparison of man to a tree is based on the following factors:

Every creation is unique in its own way. We can learn something special from each one. לא ברא הקב"ה בעולמו "לא ברא הקב"ה בעולמו" - Hashem did not create anything in vain, and "לא בראו אלא לכבודו" - everything was created for Hashem's honor.

The unique value of vegetation is represented in its name—*tzomeach*—translated as "growth" in present tense—constant development; as opposed to man, who only grows in childhood and adolescence. It also reproduces throughout its life, as opposed to man who only reproduces up to a point.

However, being an "*olam katan*," man has an element of *tzomeach* within him.

These two points—that there is a *tzomeach* in every person and the fact that we must learn from it—explains the comparison in the *possuk*.

The *tzomeach* within man gives him strength to constantly grow in *avodah* — as Chazal say, תלמידי חכמים אין להם מנוחה שנאמר ילכו מחיל אל חיל יראה אל אלקים בציון...

Aside for personal growth, the *tzomeach* within us also gives us the capacity for sustained influence, even on non-Jews.



לזכות התמים **מנחם מענדל** בן הרה"ת **חיים צבי** שי'
לרגל הגיעו לעול מצות ביום י"ז **טבת תשע"ו**

Chazal say, **כל המלמד את בן חברו** — teaching Torah to another is a form of birth.

As such, the *tzomeach* enables man to reproduce throughout his life, even gaining strength in old age.

Being the trees' "Rosh" Hashanah, in that it contains its entire year—as the general Rosh Hashanah does for all of creation—Chamisha Asar B'Shevat is a day to restart the *avodah* of constant growth and influence, which should continue throughout the year.

Constant growth and sustained influence are always something to work on, but we are given a special *koach* to develop them on Chamisha Asar B'Shevat. Most importantly, on this day Hashem provides us with the *koach* to reach an infinitely higher level of *avodah* than before.

This *koach* lasts until the following year, when a new *koach* will enable man to climb even higher. **1**





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

First Yahrtzeit

CHOF-BEIS SHEVAT 5749

On Chof-Beis Shevat 5748, Chassidim across the globe were shaken by the news that the Rebbetzin was *nistalek* from this world. Throughout the ensuing year of *aveilus*, the Rebbe led most of the weekday *tefillos* and “dollars” from his home on President Street. On 21 Teves of 5749, eleven months following the Rebbetzin’s *histalkus*, the Rebbe concluded saying *kaddish*.

One month later, on Shabbos, 22 Shevat 5749, many guests came in to New York to commemorate the Rebbetzin’s first *yahrtzeit* with the Rebbe. In marking the *yahrtzeit*, the Rebbe led all the *tefillos* throughout Shabbos, and it was also the main focus of the *farbrengen*. In this *yoman*, we bring some of the special moments from that time.

THURSDAY, 20 SHEVAT

In a sense, the extended special Shabbos really began on Thursday. In the evening, the *tankistin* from Eretz Yisroel (led by Rabbi Dovid Nachshon) held a *siyum* and *hachnasas sefer Torah* in the Rebbetzin’s memory. This wasn’t the first *sefer Torah*¹ written in honor of the Rebbetzin; what made this one special though, was it’s proximity to the date of the *yahrtzeit*. The timing also meant that many guests were already in town, obviously creating an even more special atmosphere.

As per the usual custom, various rabbonim and elders were honored with writing the final letters of the Torah. After doing *hagbah* and *gelilah*, the *pesukim* of “*Ata hareisah*” were chanted and followed by a lively circuit of *hakafos*. As the night

progressed, 770 became more and more packed with Chassidim, with the energy level increasing by the minute. *Hakafo*s continued for a lengthy period of time and when they finally ended, everyone sat down to partake in the *seudas mitzvah* arranged by the *tankistin*. As can be expected when Chassidim come together, in no time, the *seudah* turned into a *chassidishe farbrengen*. Naturally, the talk centered around the life of the Rebbetzin and lessons that can be learned by Chassidim. Various people spoke about the amazing work of the *tankistin*; they are bringing a Jewish message across the world with them, even in the most remote places—remote in the spiritual and the physical sense.

What the participants didn't know, was that in less than 48 hours the Rebbe would attach special significance to this *sefer Torah*.

FRIDAY, 21 SHEVAT

Even on Friday, a day before the *yahrtzeit*, a special atmosphere could be felt in the air. This feeling was confirmed and magnified when a few minutes after *shacharis*, which took place at the Rebbe's home on President St., the Rebbe came back downstairs and distributed dollars to everyone present.

Later on in the day, the Rebbe went to the Ohel and remained there until shortly before Shabbos.



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THE REBBE LEAVES 770 FOR THE OHEL.

In the meantime, as it was getting closer to Shabbos, people began filling up the main shul at 770, and it was soon filled from wall to wall. All around the *amud*, people used tables and benches to build pyramid-like structures so that all could hear when the Rebbe davens the Shabbos *tefillos* at the *amud*. As Shabbos came in, the feeling was electric as the shul was packed with huge crowds; from one end to the other. Understandably, even someone who wasn't able to get close enough to hear the Rebbe's voice, wouldn't give up the chance to daven in the Rebbe's *minyan* and answer the *brachos* and *kaddeshim*.

Those who were in town throughout the year, or who had listened over the phone or heard recordings of the *tefillos*, had already experienced the Rebbe's davening on a weekday. But those *tefillos* cannot be compared to hearing the Rebbe daven on Shabbos. The special pleasantness and the *nigun* combining a sense of beseechment at some points, with a feeling of certainty at others.

When davening ended, old friends met one another with a special feeling of *ahavas Yisrael*; among the many people were also rabbanim, shluchim and *mashpi'im* who had all come in from across the world for the *yahrtzeit*. It was a very moving sight as the large crowds promptly sat down to diligently learn the *maamar* or *hadran* that the Rebbe had published specially for the occasion of the *yahrtzeit*. Others could be seen studying from the weekly pamphlet of Lekutei Sichos—this week on the subject of the unique advantage of Jewish women and why they got precedence at *matan Torah*: "כה תאמר לבית יעקב (אלו הנשים) ותגיד לבני ישראל: (האנשים)".

Later, some people went home to eat, but not for long; because shortly afterwards, they were already streaming back to 770 to partake in the *siyum Mishnayos*. The *Shisha Sidrei Mishna*, studied in the Rebbetzin's memory, had been divided many times by many communities throughout the world over the past year. The event and the ensuing *farbrengen* were organized by the *gabbaim*, Rabbi Yehoshua Pinson and Rabbi Zev Katz.

SHABBOS PARSHAS YISRO, CHOF BEIS SHEVAT

As *shacharis* approached, the shul once again began to fill with people—many more than usual. Already a while before davening, people began



streaming towards the area of 770. Men were hurriedly going to *mikvah* before learning the new *maamar*, and then trying to somehow push their way into shul, with the hope of finding a close place where they could hear the Rebbe's davening.

After davening, the excitement continued to build as people awaited the highlight of Shabbos: the Rebbe's farbrengen. In the short time people had between davening and the farbrengen, they managed to *chap arein* a *kiddush*, a small bite to eat, and then rush to find a place to stand at the farbrengen—no easy task when there are so many people all looking for the same thing.

When the farbrengen was set to begin, a path was somehow cleared through which the Rebbe could enter. The farbrengen lasted two and a half hours; time that was overflowing with Torah, Chassidus and *hora'os* in *avodas Hashem*. The *sichos* were interspersed with *nigunim* and Chassidim saying *L'chaim* to the Rebbe.

Much of what the Rebbe said focused on the Rebbetzin and her *yahrtzeit*, and of course its meaning for Chassidim and what they could learn from it. The Rebbe expounded on the *possuk* "והחי יתן אל לבו"; the lesson to take from such an occurrence is to ensure that the life of the deceased continues on through the living. It is one's responsibility to inculcate into his or her own life the special lessons to be learned from the Rebbetzin.

The Rebbe pointed out that the *neschama* continuously elevates from one level to the next throughout the course of the first year following the *histalkus*. These elevations however, pale in comparison to the significantly greater leap it experiences on and after the day of the *yahrtzeit*. Consequently, the Rebbe said, that all activities

and campaigns carried out in connection with the Rebbetzin should reflect this approach, and reach an entirely new measure of undertaking.

The Rebbe expounded on the daily Rambam, teaching a beautiful lesson in the nature of the *neschama*. The *halacha* is that one who burns wood on Shabbos is only liable if he did so with the intention of garnering the ashes afterwards and finding a use for them. This means that although fire naturally has a tendency to go upwards, always trying to return to its source, it is nevertheless the ashes—the utilitarian and corporeal part of the fire—which are *mechayev*.

Similarly, the same can be said of the *neschama*; that while it most enjoys living in the spiritual, it is only when confined to the physical that it fulfills its true meaning and purpose. Hence, the pain and sadness of a *neschama's* passing is still pronounced, despite reaching higher spirituality at this point, since it still cannot fulfill its greatest *avodah*—confining itself to a body and serving Hashem in this world.

Especially, since we are talking about the *yahrtzeit* of a *tzidkonis*, who lived a life of *mesiras nefesh*, we need to ensure that there be a tangible effect in our physical life. This can all be done now, since "just as her children are alive, so too is she alive" - מה זרעה בחיים, אף היא בחיים. This is also hinted in the Rebbetzin's names; "Chaya," which means life, the perfection of which is physical life in this world, and "Mushka," which, being a name in a language other than *Lashon Hakodeh*, shows on the concept of drawing down from a higher level to a lower level.

As usual, the Rebbe delved deeply into the *parsha* of the week, which tells the story of *matan Torah*, connecting it to today's theme—the *yahrtzeit*.

At the conclusion of the farbrengen, before reminding those who needed to say a *brocha acharona* to do so, the Rebbe asked that "Yehi ratzon...sheyibaneh" be sung, with the prayer that "*sheyibaneh*" be not just some time in



the distant future, but that we merit to be able to sing it in the past tense—“*nivneh*” Beis Hamikdash. “Additionally, we will sing the *nigun* expressing the idiom of *ein od milvado*” (referring to *Nyet Nyet Nikavo*). But first, the Rebbe said, everyone should say *l'chaim*, as “Hashem is wishing *l'chaim* to the entire congregation, with a single great response, with a single great *geulah* (מיט איין עני גדולה און מיט). (איין גרויסע גאולה). “*Lchaim, l'chaim, l'chaim!*”

At approximately four o'clock, after singing *Sheyibaneh* and *Nyet Nyet Nikavo*, the farbrengen ended. *Mincha* commenced immediately afterwards; one final opportunity to hear the Rebbe daven at the *amud*. As the Rebbe left the shul, the Chassidim started singing *Nyet Nyet Nikavo*, which the Rebbe began singing earlier at the conclusion of the farbrengen. One could feel the special excitement and energy which was brought on by the farbrengen.

MOTZAEI SHABBOS

Motzaei Shabbos marked a full year since the *histalkus* of the Rebbetzin and the end of *aveilus*. Aside for the personal feelings that everyone had, all were curious to know what the Rebbe's *seder* would be from then on. Since the passing of the Rebbetzin, the Rebbe had held most of the weekday *tefillos* at his house; and now, with the end of *aveilus*, nobody was sure how things would be; if the Rebbe would continue from his house or return to 770.

The suspense didn't last very long, for soon after *havdalah* the Rebbe returned home. It was announced that *tefillos* and Sunday “dollars” would take place at the house.

Later on in the evening, another farbrengen was held. The shluchim who had come in from around the world made a *siyum Hashas*, which they had learned over the course of the year. The division of Shas was overseen by Rabbi Nosson

Gurarie and Rabbi Aharon Slonim, with the participation of many shluchim. The shluchim had, among themselves, learned the entire Shas several times since the *histalkus*. The *siyum* was held at a particularly auspicious time, in that it came so shortly after a farbrengen with the Rebbe. All the speakers quoted a *vort* from the Rebbe said earlier in the day, and they based their talks on it.

SUNDAY, 23 SHEVAT

In the evening, after the Rebbe returned from the Ohel, he addressed the crowd once again with another *sicha* in connection to the *yahrtzeit*.

The Rebbe began by repeating what he said on Shabbos on the *possuk* “והחי יתן אל לבו”, and focused on the many activities and accomplishments done over the year in memory of the Rebbetzin. The Rebbe said that he had read all the reports at the Ohel, and he extended thanks to all those who had submitted reports, and also to those who would do so in the future.

The Rebbe concluded with a *brocha* that we will speedily merit *הקיצו ורננו שוכני עפר* - the return of the departed souls with the coming of Moshiach. Especially for those who are still alive now within their bodies; the ones who perform the *והחי יתן אל לבו* - they should certainly merit the *geulah* as well. ❶

1. The first *sefer Torah* in honor of the Rebbetzin after Chof Beis Shevat was written by N'shei U'bnos Chabad. The *siyum* took place on Rosh Chodesh Kislev 5749.



THE REBBE HEADS UPSTAIRS FOLLOWING DAVENING SHACHRIS AT HIS HOME, 1304 PRESIDENT STREET.

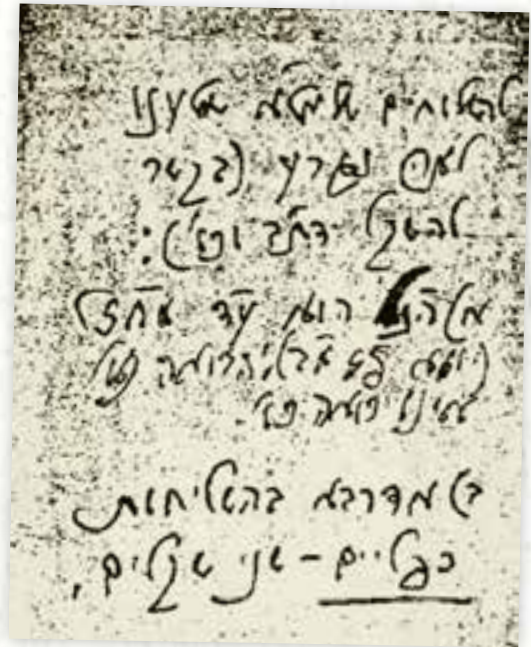


כתב יד קודש

לזכות משפחת לברטוב
שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר
בסנטא פי, ניו מקסיקו
להצלחה רבה במילוי שליחותם

Double Portion

This *ksav yad kodesh* is the Rebbe's response to a group of *bochurim* who were out on *Merkos shlichus* and therefore missed a distribution of dollars from the Rebbe, on Tisha B'Av 5732:



[In answer] to the Shluchim shlita, who asked, “Why should we lose out?”
(from receiving the dollar on Tisha B'Av etc.)

- This situation is similar to what Chazal say (in [the Mishna of] Yoma 7:2), “He who sees... Does not see...” [i.e. one is not able to be at all places at the same time].
- On the contrary, [one] on shlichus receives a double-portion—two dollars.

להשלוחים שליט"א שטענו למה
נגרע (בקשר להשקל דת"ב וכו')

א) הנ"ל הוא ע"ד מחז"ל (יומא
פ"ז מ"ב) הרואה כו' אינו רואה
כו'.

ב) אדרבא בהשליחות כפליים -
שני שקלים.

EXPLANATION OF THE REBBE'S ANSWER

In the 5730s, the Rebbe led a strong campaign to correct the “Law of Return” in Eretz Yisrael, which is applicable to all Jews, to only consider גיור כהלכה as acceptable means of conversion to Judaism.

Before Tisha B’Av 5732, the Rebbe requested that everyone should visit various shuls, either on the day of Tisha B’Av or on the following Shabbos, and speak about the importance of this campaign, with a list of practical instructions about what each person can do to help. (See letter in Igros Kodesh vol. 27 p. 472.)

On Tisha B’Av in the morning, the Rebbe asked the *gabbai* to announce that he would soon distribute dollars to all those who were ready to go out and speak in the shuls.

Indeed, at 2:00 pm on Tisha B’Av afternoon, the Rebbe handed out dollars at the door of his room, along with copies of a letter about Mihu Yehudi (printed in Igros Kodesh ibid. p. 470), wishing each one the words of the *possuk* במשפט תפדה.

A group of bochurim who were on Merkos shlichus wrote to the Rebbe that although they too fulfilled the Rebbe’s *horaa* and spoke at their local shuls, they felt dejected for not having received the Rebbe’s dollar.

In response, the Rebbe references the Mishna in Yoma about the Kohen Gadol’s *avoda* on Yom Kippur.

The Mishna states:

הרואה כהן גדול כשהוא קורא - אינו רואה פר ושעיר הנשרפין . . ולא מפני שאינו רשאי, אלא שהיתה דרך רחוקה, ומלאכת שניהן שוה כאחת.

One who sees the Kohen Gadol reading [the Torah in the ezras nashim] does not see the cow and goat being burned [outside the city of Yerushalayim]. Not because it is prohibited, but because it was a far distance [between the two events], and both were performed at the same time.

Additionally, before embarking on Merkos shlichus, each bochur received two dollars from the Rebbe (through the *mazkirus*). This symbolizes, says the Rebbe, that being out on shlichus is even greater.

(Igros Kodesh vol. 27 p. 481)



להביא לימות המשיח

Sefer Torah shel Moshiach

לזכות דוד בן שיינא וזוגתו מרת פערל גאלדא בת לאה,
ומשפחתם לוי, שניאור זלמן, מינא עטל, מאיר, וגבריאל נח
שיקויים בהם ברכת כ"ק אדמו"ר להצלחה רבה ומופלגה במילוי שליחותם בשמפיין, איל.



LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Simchas Torah in Lubavitch is renowned for its *lebedikeit* and the amazing energy the Rabbeim poured into the Chassidim. It is also a time when the Rabbeim would often talk more openly to the Chassidim about projects or ideas that were very dear to them.

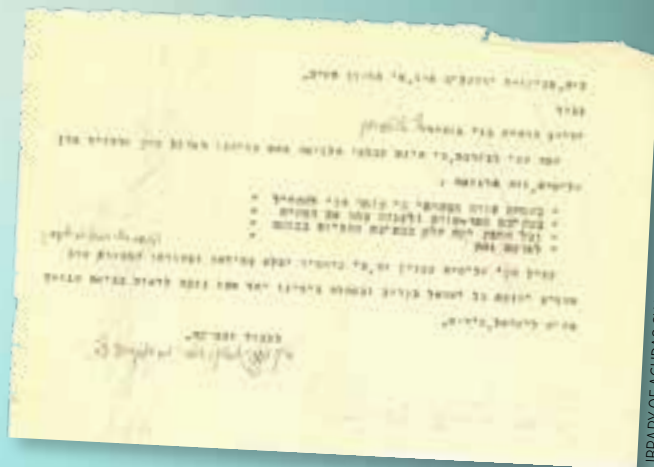
On the night of Simchas Torah 5702, during the *farbrengen* before *hakafos*, the Frierdiker Rebbe spoke to the Chassidim of writing a special *Sefer Torah* with which to greet Moshiach.

“With the help of Hashem and in merit of my holy ancestors, I merited to have the thought to become, *bli neder*, a messenger of *klal Yisrael* to write a special Torah—‘The Welcoming of Moshiach Sefer Torah’—with which to (go out and) welcome Moshiach speedily in our days.”¹

This was at the height of the Holocaust. As was later discovered, millions of Yidden were suffering in concentration

camps across Europe, although the extent of the unbelievable destruction was not apparent yet. It was during this dark time that the Frierdiker Rebbe worked to uplift the spirits of the Yidden and to inspire them to return to Hashem with complete *teshuva*. These are the birth pangs of Moshiach, he would say, and now an opportune time to bring him and the complete *geulah*.

With those few words the project to write a ‘Welcoming of Moshiach Sefer Torah’ began. At first the Frierdiker Rebbe was going to sponsor the writing himself, as a private and personal secret, but then he reconsidered.² “During the Simchas Torah meal, while speaking about the



A LETTER FROM RABBI SHLOMO YEHUDA LEIB ELIEZROV, A CHABAD ACTIVIST IN CHEVRON, TO RABBI SHLOMO YOSEF ZEVIN, NOTIFYING HIM ABOUT MOSHIACH'S SEFER TORAH.

importance of *ahavas Yisrael*, I had second thoughts as to whether I was correct in my decision to hide the truth and withhold the public from participating in this great and holy opportunity. I have therefore chosen to proclaim openly that, with Hashem's help, I do plan on writing a *sefer Torah* exclusively to greet Moshiach speedily."

Years later, on Yud Shevat 5711, the Rebbe compared this to Moshe building the *Mishkan* with the donations brought by all the Yidden, even though he could have done the entire construction alone.

The original plan was to start writing the Torah in a large public event, with much fanfare, on the 20th of Cheshvan, the Rebbe Rashab's birthday. This was announced in the official Lubavitcher periodical, *Hakriah Vehakedushah*, along with an invitation to all who wished to take part in the project to send funds, and to include their names for the purchase of a letter.

The Frierdiker Rebbe wanted to procure *klaf* from Eretz Yisroel that was *shlil* (the hide of a calf still in its mother's womb) from an animal that was kosher and properly *shechted*³. The parchment was to be prepared specifically for the sake of a *sefer Torah* and be at least six *tefachim* wide. To this end, he sent a telegram to Reb Shlomo Yehudah Leib Eliazarov of Yerushalayim, making him his agent to find and deliver these *klafim*.

It soon became clear that it would be very expensive to purchase the parchments in Eretz Yisroel and send them to America, so the search for kosher, *shechted*, *klaf* moved to America.

COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

For this and other reasons, the commencement of the Torah did not take place on the 20th of Cheshvan as was originally planned, but was instead postponed to Beis Iyar of that year. The actual writing of the *sefer* began in a private event, without any fanfare, in the Frierdiker Rebbe's room; only the *sofer* Reb Shmaryahu Faktor, and the *mazkir* Reb Eliyahu Simpson, were present. The *sofer* drew the outline of the letters of the first word and the Frierdiker Rebbe filled them in, setting this unique endeavor in motion. The writing was in the Alter Rebbe's *ksav*.

Following the completion of the first letters, Chassidim gathered for a special meal and *l'chaim* in the *zal* (at the time it was known as the 'downstairs shul,' being downstairs from the Frierdiker Rebbe's apartment). *Mincha* followed in the Frierdiker Rebbe's mother's room, as this was during the year following her passing, during which he regularly davened there.

After davening, the Frierdiker Rebbe said a *sicha*. He recounted the story of the miraculous *sefer Torah* of

ONE CAN BE STANDING BEFORE A PRECIOUS TREASURE, IN BROAD DAYLIGHT AND WITH OPEN EYES, YET HE DOES NOT SEE A THING!

the Baal Shem Tov, which saved his town from a devastating plague⁴. Now too, continued the Frierdiker Rebbe, the Jewish nation is in dire need of immediate salvation; "May Hashem help that writing this *sefer Torah* will indeed bring it about!"

Later that day, the Frierdiker Rebbe selected three elder Chassidim—Reb Shmuel Levitin, Reb Eliyahu Simpson and Reb Dovid Shifrin—to form a committee to supervise the project. They were charged with obtaining the proper *klaf* and supervising the writing, and instructed to publicly campaign that everyone should purchase a letter in this historic *sefer Torah*.



▲ REGISTRATION FORM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MOSHIACH SEFER TORAH, DATED 5702.

◀ LEDGER RECORDING THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE MOSHIACH SEFER TORAH FROM ISRAEL.

LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASSIDEI CHABAD

The Frierdiker Rebbe personally paid for all the actual costs of the *sefer Torah* and the *sofer's* salary. All contributions received towards the writing went to Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch and Machne Israel.

As soon as this momentous project was launched, the Rebbe (as chairman of Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch and Machne Israel) immediately began promoting the new campaign on a very large scale, enlisting many Jews—including community leaders—to sign on as participants in the writing.

The Torah was written in 770, in Reb Shmuel Levitin's room at the end of the hallway (now used as the *yichud* room for weddings). *Bochurim* who learned in the yeshiva in those years recall that every Thursday night they helped review columns of the *sefer Torah*, checking for accuracy.

By the end of the next year, Sivan of 5703, everything until Parshas Haazinu was written. For reasons unknown to us it was not completed at that time. Five years later in 5708, the Rebbe wrote to Reb Bentzion Shemtov that the Torah would likely be completed in the near future. But again, nothing actually happened. During this period, Reb Eliyahu Simpson composed a detailed program for a *siyum sefer Torah* ceremony, scheduled for the 20th of Cheshvan 5708. According to this plan, they would bring the *sefer Torah* to the Frierdiker Rebbe's room and request permission to proceed with writing the final *pesukim*. From there they planned to continue to the Rebbe's room downstairs, where the writing would take place, and then return to the Frierdiker Rebbe to fill in the last three words—“*Leinei kol Yisrael*”—to be followed by a great and joyous celebration.

However, this plan did not materialize. The reasons remain unknown, but the Chassidim always presumed that the Frierdiker Rebbe

had simply not given any instructions regarding a *siyum*. And so the Sefer Torah remained waiting, unfinished for over twenty years.



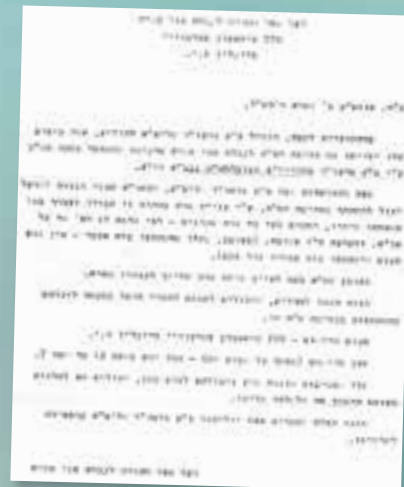
REBIRTH OF A TREASURE

In 5730, with the approaching Yud Shevat marking twenty years of the Rebbe's leadership, Chassidim from all over the world prepared themselves for the momentous day. A special committee, Vaad L'chagigos Ha'esrim (“Committee for the Twentieth [year] Commemorations”), was formed in Eretz Yisrael. This *vaad* fielded many suggestions and proposals for projects to mark this anniversary and broaden the reach of the Rebbe's activities, and achieve the ultimate goal—the arrival of Moshiach.

A Lubavitcher woman from Kfar Chabad suggested that the time had arrived to complete the Sefer Torah to Greet Moshiach, which was started more than twenty-five years earlier. This proposal was greeted with great excitement by all Chassidim—what better occasion could there be than the twenty year anniversary of the Rebbe's *nesius*?—and a letter was dispatched to the Rebbe. To everyone's dismay, the response was negative.

On Wednesday night, Erev Rosh Chodesh Shevat, the Rebbe returned from the Ohel with a surprise. The Rebbe announced that “all obstacles have been removed” and the time has come to complete the *sefer Torah*. Imagine the outbreak of joy at this extraordinary news. At last the Sefer Torah to greet Moshiach would finally be finished! That Shabbos the Rebbe announced the exciting news publicly, saying that the *siyum* for Moshiach's *sefer Torah* would soon take place. During the *sicha*, the Rebbe expressed surprise and disappointment that no one in 770 had made this suggestion.

The idea and request to complete the sefer Torah came from Eretz



A PUBLIC NOTICE DATED “MOTZEI SHABBOS PARSHAS VA'EIRA 5730” FROM THE VAAD OF THE SEFER TORAH, NOTIFYING ANASH OF THE LAST CHANCE TO PARTICIPATE BEFORE THE SIYUM.

Yisrael, when it should have come from right here in New York, from 770—b'gematriya “poratzta”—where the sefer Torah is kept! It remains a mystery to me (as do many other questions I have) why this is so. One can be standing before a precious treasure, in broad daylight and with open eyes, yet he does not see a thing! What greater and more precious treasure is there—anticipated and hoped for by all previous generations—than the coming of Moshiach? Yet people turn their faces this way or that; everyone is busy with their own affairs.

Just as when the *sefer* was started, the Rebbe announced that anyone who wanted to participate in the writing of the *sefer Torah* may do so by donating one dollar. Although the participants would no longer be able to purchase specific letters in the *sefer*—for only a few lines remained unfinished—they would nevertheless be able to contribute, “and the *malachim* will divide the letters among them all!”

The Rebbe then said that the members of the committee appointed by the Frierdiker Rebbe to supervise the writing of the *sefer Torah* would oversee the completion of the project now. And then the Rebbe concluded,

“Let the entire Jewish nation know about this endeavor so that they may all be granted the opportunity to participate in it. And may we indeed merit to bring the *sefer Torah* to greet Moshiach!”

Immediately after Shabbos, Chassidim around the world leaped into action. As soon as the news reached Eretz Yisrael, hundreds of *bochurim* and *anash* went from one end of the country to the other, enlisting tens of thousands of their Jewish brethren in this remarkable project. Newspaper advertisements brought the information to many cities, resulting in nearly one hundred thousand participants from Eretz Yisrael alone! A Jew from Kobe, Japan, saw the ads and bought letters for his entire family. The Steipler, from Bnei Brak, also asked to be included. The whole world was being affected!

Among the Chassidim the atmosphere was electric. Every Chossid had complete confidence and absolute certainty that with the completion of the *sefer Torah*, *golus* would end instantly, and the long-awaited *geulah* would finally arrive. Everyone prepared in his own way for the much anticipated future that was now so near! As Yud Shevat approached, the excitement peaked, as hundreds of Chassidim, from all corners of the globe, began to stream to 770 to take part in this historic moment. More than a hundred Chassidim arrived from Eretz Yisroel alone, bringing with them lists of the names of participants in the writing of the *sefer Torah*. Chassidim flew in from France, England, Holland, South Africa, and many other locations.

At that time, the *sefer Torah* was held in Reb Shmuel Levitin's room. Throughout the entire week, Rabbi Zirkind, the *sofer*, was seen entering the room, often not leaving until late at night.





When the Rebbe returned from the Ohel on Thursday, the night of the 9th of Shevat, he called the members of the committee into his room. When Reb Eliyahu Simpson emerged from the meeting, he announced in the Rebbe's name that the *siyum* would take place the next day at 2:30 p.m. The Va'ad Lchagigos Ho'esrim, which had overseen the project's promotion in Eretz Yisroel, were summoned to bring their lengthy lists of participants to the Rebbe's room. They had so many bags, that they began to place them on the floor; but the Rebbe instructed that they be spread out, not piled, on the table. Before they left, the Rebbe *bentched* them to utilize their time in New York wisely, and that the new period after the 20th *yahrtzeit* should be with an entirely new light, with all the *brachos*.

All that night, a constant flow of Chassidim arrived in 770. As buses full of Chassidim and their families pulled up from all across the United States and Canada, the building became more and more crowded; upstairs and downstairs, even outside. Inside 770, the night shone like day, as Chassidim sat together in farbrengen all through the night, in an unprecedented atmosphere of delight and anticipation of the rare events about to transpire.

~

THE SIYUM

Friday, the day of 9th of Shevat finally arrived. Downstairs 770 was packed wall to wall. In addition to the many Chassidim who had come from around the world, Jews from all across the New York City area arrived to witness this historic moment. At exactly 2:30 p.m., Reb Eliyahu Simpson made his way down the stairs and through the crowd, cradling the special *sefer Torah*. Close behind him walked the Rebbe, with a mysterious closed box in his holy hands, as the *bochurim* sang Napoleon's March.



The *sefer Torah* was set on the table near the Rebbe's farbrengen place. The Rebbe began with a short *sicha*, in which he explained that they were making the *siyum* after *chatzos* on Friday, so that it could take place as close as possible to the actual completion of the twenty years from the Friediker Rebbe's *histalkus*, on Yud Shevat. The Rebbe compared this to Shimshon, who is credited with leading the Jewish people for forty years although he was only a *shofet* for twenty years. Because his influence endured for twenty years after his passing, he was still mortally feared by the Pelishtim.

Additionally, Erev Shabbos is a most auspicious time to finish a *sefer Torah*, written on instruction of a *nossi hador*—just as the first leader of the Jewish people, Moshe Rabbeinu,

completed writing his *sefer Torah* for the Jewish people on Erev Shabbos.

In a unique turn of events, the Rebbe invited all the Jewish people worldwide—from the Diaspora, from Eretz Yisroel, and especially those in Russia, to join in the *siyum*. This invitation would be extended through the communal recitation of *kapitel Chof* of Tehillim. Normally, the Rebbe said, one does not say this *perek* after midday on Erev Shabbos; but now, he explained, we stand in unusual times, with all signs pointing towards Moshiach's imminent arrival. Unusual times warrant unusual practices.

The Rebbe then suggested that the eldest member of the *sefer Torah* committee, Reb Shmuel Levitin, say the *kapitel*. The Rebbe rose and pointed along in the *siddur* as Reb Shmuel recited verse by verse out loud, with the entire crowd repeating after

him. The Rebbe then instructed Reb Yoel Kahan to begin the Alter Rebbe's *nigun*, followed by the *nigunim* of each of the rabbeim and *Hoshiya Es Amecha*.

Finally, the most anticipated moment had arrived and the last few letters of the *sefer Torah* were finished by the elderly *sofer*, Reb Shmaryahu Faktor. The Rebbe stood up again; fixing a powerful gaze on the *sefer Torah*, he did not remove his eyes from its letters until the *sefer* was completed. Then the Rebbe asked Reb Eliyahu Simpson to distribute the honors of reciting the *pesukim* of *Atoh Horeisa*. Overwhelmed by the moment, Reb Eliyahu stuttered and seemed confused in distributing the verses, and the Rebbe repeatedly corrected him. The first and last *pesukim* were given to the Rebbe to recite; distinguished Chassidim representing communities around the world recited the others.

Rabbi Hodakov and the members of the *sefer Torah* committee were also honored with *pesukim*. They then sang *Prazos Teishev Yerushalayim*. After *hagbah* and *gelilah*, the Rebbe opened the box he had carried with him into

WE HAVE JUST COMPLETED SOMETHING THAT HAD BEEN LACKING. NOW IT IS ONLY UP TO EACH OF US TO FINISH THE LAST FEW THINGS THAT NEED TO BE DONE IN ORDER TO BREAK THROUGH THE GOLUS AND BRING MOSHIACH.



shul. The entire crowd looked on in awe as the Rebbe removed a majestic crown from the box and placed it atop the *sefer Torah*. As the Rebbe set the crown in its place, Chassidim sang, *Ani Maamin*. Accompanied by burning candles, the Rebbe carried the *sefer Torah* to the *aron kodesh* under a *chupah*.

Returning to his place, the Rebbe recited a *Shehechiyanu* on a new fruit, and included the new Torah. Chassidim sang the *Nigun Hachanah* and listened intently as the Rebbe delivered a *maamar*, *Lehavin Inyan K'sivas Sefer Torah*.

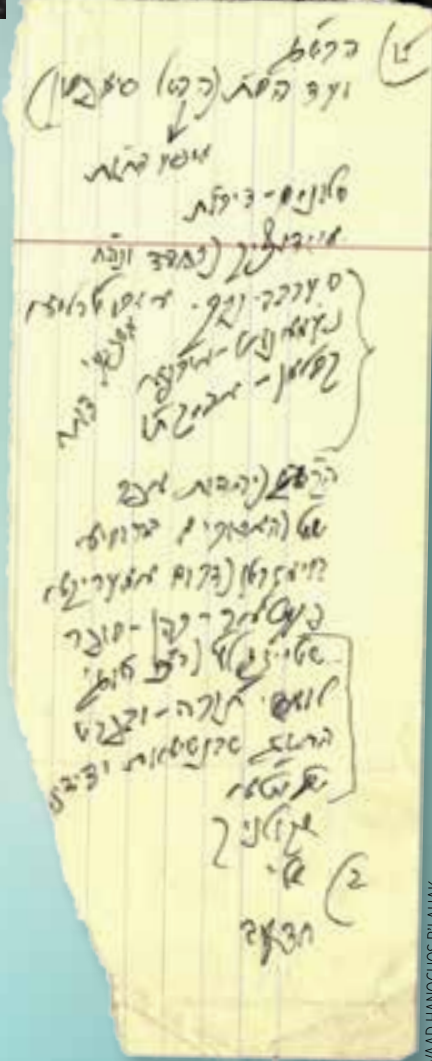
The Rebbe concluded the gathering with a short *sicha*:

We have just completed something that had been lacking. Now it is only up to each of us to finish the last few things that need to be done in order to break through the golus and bring Moshiach. It is Erev Shabbos, the day before the [Friediker] Rebbe's yom hillula. Let it be clear that we do not intend to make a dinner or banquet, or anything of that sort. A yom hillula is a day for Torah and yiras Shamayim; for inspirational words that will have positive effect on all those that hear them."

Then the Rebbe sang *Tzama L'cha Nafshi*—substituting *טובך וחוסדך* in the second stanza. Finally, after reciting a *bracha acharonah*, the Rebbe left the shul as everyone sang *Ufaratzta!*

Even after the Torah was finished, it stayed in the closet in Reb Shmuel Levitin's room. Only on rare occasions would it be transferred to the regular *aron kodesh* to be used. A short time before a special Shabbos or Yom Tov, the *sofer* Reb Yesahya Matlin would ask the Rebbe if they were going to use the *sefer Torah* of Moshiach. If given the go ahead, he would roll the Torah to the appropriate spot, and check that section to ensure that it had no mistakes. After being used, the Torah would be returned to its safe accommodations in Reb Shmuel's room. ❶

1. Sefer Hamaamarim Melukat Kislev-Shev'at page 260
2. Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz, vol. 6 p. 278
3. A *klaf* can be made from an animal that was kosher but died naturally, or that was *treif* internally. It is a *hiddur* to use a shechted b. non-treif animals.
4. Ibid p. 280, translated in Derher Issues 79-80.



A NOTE WRITTEN IN THE REBBE'S HOLY HANDWRITING LISTING THE NAMES OF PEOPLE SAYING A POSSUK OF ATA HOREISA DURING THE SIYUM.

VAAD HANOCHOS B'LAHAK

Sefer Torah Agreement

Presented here are two never-before seen documents, bringing to light some remarkable new details on the story of Moshiach's sefer Torah, highlighting the unpublicized role the Rebbe played in the arrangements for the sefer Torah.

The following are two written agreements, one with the original sofer who was hired for the job, Rabbi Yisroel Chaim Samet, and the second with Mr. Pinchas Stern, the manufacturer of the klaf for the sefer Torah. (It should be noted that ultimately, the sefer Torah was actually written by a different sofer, Rabbi Shmaryahu Faktor). They are signed by the Rebbe and the mazkir Rabbi Eliyahu Simpson—who took a leading role in organizing the sefer Torah—as well as by the above mentioned parties. (The agreement with Mr. Stern was also signed by Rabbi Hodakov.)

These documents were made available to A Chassidisher Derher Magazine by **Rabbi Sholom Ber Levine**, chief librarian of the Library of Agudas Chassidei Chabad. On behalf of our readership, we extend our thanks to him.



Basic details of the contract between us and the *sofer* R' Yisroel Chaim Samet, regarding the *sefer Torah* for *kabbolas p'nei Moshiach Tzidkeinu*, which he has undertaken to write with all the *hiddurim* known to him that were passed down from the Arizal, and according to our request.

1. As soon as the first *klaf*—meaning the first ream of parchment—is complete, he must begin the holy work of writing.
2. For the duration of the writing of the *sefer Torah*, which was agreed to extend no later than the coming 18 Elul, he will not involve himself in any other work besides writing the abovementioned *sefer Torah*, unless he receives permission from us.
3. The writing must take place in a specific room in our neighborhood.
4. The price for the *sefer Torah* is \$1100.
5. The schedule of payment will be as follows: a down payment of \$100, and then \$200 after the completion of each *sefer*.
6. Rent for the abovementioned room, as well as room and board, are his expense and not our concern.
7. All necessary preparations for the *sefer Torah*, such as sewing the reams together, are included in the above agreement.
8. He undertakes to be present while the hides are tanned and scraped, and he will have in mind that it is all *lishmah* as the *halachah* requires. And in general he will endeavor to ensure that the tanning of the *klaf* is done correctly.

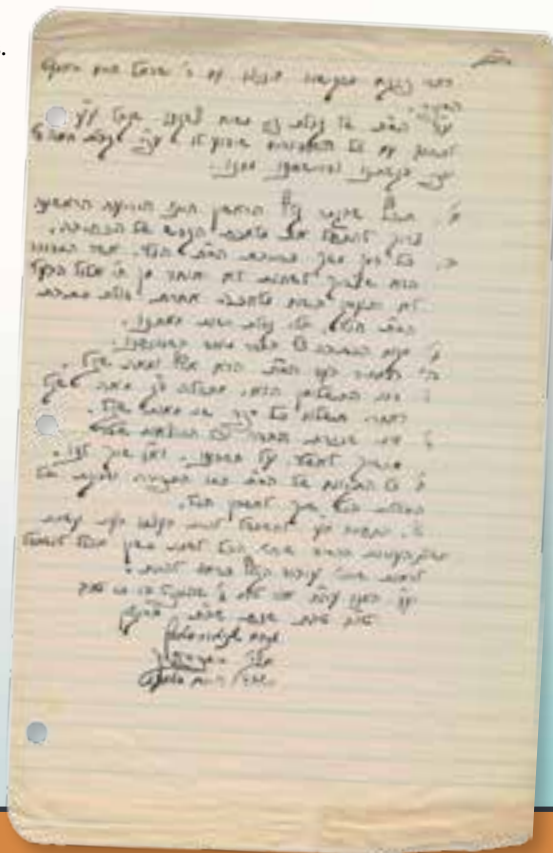
We hereby affix our signatures to this, on the night before the 3rd day [Tuesday] on which “*ki tov*” was doubled, 17 Teves 5702, Brooklyn.

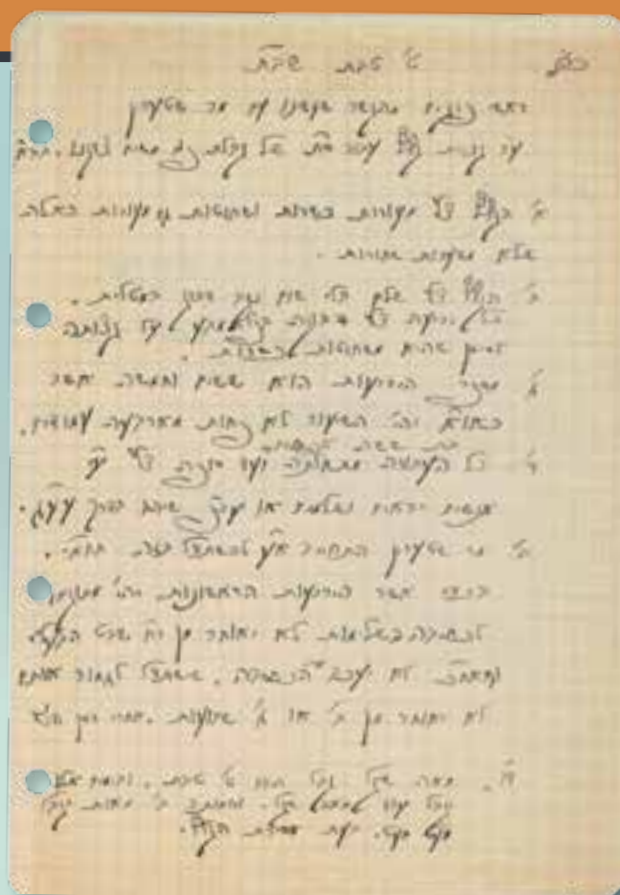
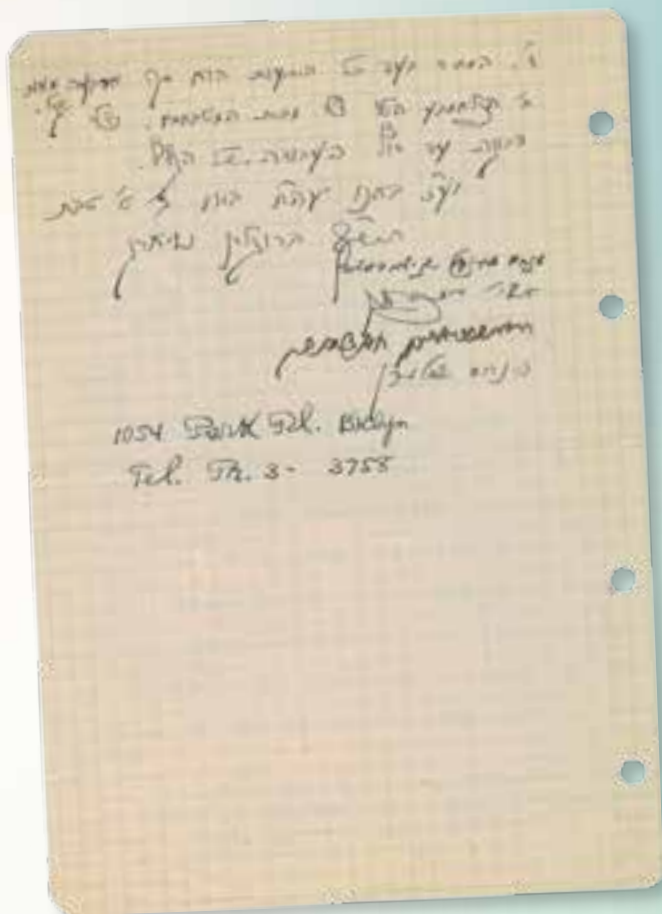
[Signed]

Menachem Schneerson

Eliyahu Simpson

Yisroel Chaim Samet





B"H 9 Teves 5702

Basic details of the agreement we have made with Mr. Stern regarding the purchase of *klaf* for the *sefer Torah* of *kabbolas p'nei Moshiach Tzidkeinu*.

1. The *klaf* must be made from the hides of kosher, *shechted* animals, and from non black-haired animals.
2. The *klaf* must be whole, without any holes patched up. Each ream must have a seal attached to its side as a sign that it is from a kosher, *shechted* animal.
3. The amount of reams is 65, each of which must be wide enough to contain at least four columns that measure six *tefachim* high.
4. The work, from beginning to end, must all be done by G-d fearing individuals, or at least in a manner that [a G-d fearing individual] stands by to supervise.
5. Mr. Stern undertakes to begin work immediately, so that the first reams will be ready for writing no later than the upcoming Rosh Chodesh Shevat. After this time, as well, he will not delay the writing; and he will

endeavor to complete the rest of them not later than two or three weeks after the abovementioned date.

6. He has been paid \$100 today, 9 Teves, and will receive an additional \$100 in the coming days. The remaining balance of \$200 will be paid to him in small installments, upon receipt of the *klaf*.
7. The total price for all of the reams is \$400.
8. The abovementioned seal must be affixed at the slaughterhouse and should remain attached until the completion of the *klaf's* preparation.

We hereby affix our signatures on this Monday, 9 Teves 5702 Brooklyn, New York.

[Signed]

Menachem Mendel Schneerson

Eliyahu Simpson

Chaim Mordechai Aizik Chodakov

Pinchas Stern

1054 Park Pl. Brooklyn.

Telephone: Pr 3- 3758



Getting Ready to Daven

The importance of attaining the proper mindset before davening is emphasized in both nigleh and Chassidus. As such, a proper hachanah [preparation] is an important part of a Chossid's avodah. The Rebbe teaches us how the various elements of hachanah should be done.



Importance of Hachanah

In this *sicha*, the Rebbe explains how *hachanah l'tefillah* serves as a bridge to davening.

...People complain that although they learn and daven, even davening with *d'veikus* [devotion], they are not taken by it (עס נעמט אים נישט).

This is because they lack the proper preparation.

The reason why [*hachanah* is necessary] is because the essence of Torah is [the world of] *Atzilus* and it is impossible to make a quantum leap (געבן באלד א שפרונג) from eating, drinking, and other physical matters, to matters of the [highest] world of *Atzilus*.

There are occasional exceptions, similar to the concept of *teshuvah*, which effects “in one moment and in one instant” [a complete turnaround—a quantum leap].

However, the standard behavior, as established at *mattan Torah*, is that everything must be done in an orderly, step-by-step fashion. Therefore, the *avodah* needs to be in the manner of “I will slowly banish¹.” First one must separate himself from his physicality by means of *hachanah* before davening; immersion in a *mikvah*, giving *tzedakah*, and studying *Chassidus*...²

Purifying Waters

In this letter, in answer to the question why some Chassidim delay the time of *krias Sh'ma* and *tefillah*, the Rebbe explains why *mikvah* continues to be an essential aspect of *hachanah l'tefillah*.

...The amount of time one needs for *hachanah* before davening depends on the characteristics of their soul, and varies from one person to the next. However, all people are equally obligated to make the *hachanah*, as

the *Mishna* states “One should not pray unless he is in a serious frame of mind³.” This is brought down as a *halacha* in Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim *siman* 92, in an annotation.

Included in this *hachanah* is also purifying the body [in a *mikvah*]. Although the *tevilah* of Ezra [—the mandate of Ezra that men immerse in a *mikvah* to purify themselves] was abolished, it was merely the *requirement* that was abolished; but bodily purity is of particular importance to davening [—one should still go to *mikvah* even though there is no obligation], as it is brought down from Rav Hai Gaon and others, and is elucidated according to *Chassidus* in Lekutei Torah parshas Tavo 53a⁴.

Chassidus Far'n Davenen

In this letter to the Hanhola of Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim in Eretz Yisroel, the Rebbe points to the prevalence



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and necessity of the study of *chassidus* before *davening*.

...It's appropriate to arrange the study of *chassidus* before *davening*, and I'm surprised that it hasn't been happening until now - perhaps [it is, in fact, happening, but] was mistakenly omitted from your report. As it is known, [*chassidus* before *davening*] has been the custom in all our *yeshivos* since the earliest days, and [it's] even the custom of laymen [to study *chassidus*] in their homes⁵.

When to Give Tzedakah

While some seforim instruct that tzedakah be given before *davening*, others write that it should be given at *ויברך דוד*. In this letter, the Rebbe explains when is the best time to give.

Since you write that your father follows the good custom of giving tzedakah at "*Vayevarech Dovid*", a custom which is sourced in the writings of the Arizal and elsewhere, he will certainly continue with this good custom. This [giving tzedakah at *Vayevarech Dovid*] can also be considered giving tzedakah before

davening, since the main "*tefillah*" is *shemona esrei* [and *Vayevarech Dovid* comes before *shemona esrei*]. But one can also give additional tzedakah before the beginning of the whole *davening*.

THEY FIRST STUDIED A PEREK OF TANYA AND ONLY AFTERWARDS OPENED THE SIDDUR AND BEGAN HAREINI.

The Rebbe adds in a footnote:

The *Pri Megadim* .. is of the opinion that "*tzedakah* before *davening*" should actually be given while saying "*Vayevarech Dovid*" (and it would indeed seem that the obligation to give tzedakah before *davening* can be accomplished by giving tzedakah during *Vayevarech Dovid*). However, the fact that the Alter Rebbe writes [about these obligations] in his *Shulchan Aruch* in two separate places

(in *siman* 51 and *siman* 92), implies that they are [actually] two [separate obligations of] giving. This seems to be the case particularly when one considers the intent behind [each of the] givings ..as the [intentions] are opposites. Even though the *halacha* that one should give tzedakah before *davening* is mentioned in *Shulchan Aruch* at the end of *siman* 92, the best time for it is actually before *davening*. And of course, there is no reason to create an interruption between the *brachos* of *ga'al Yisrael* and *shemoneh esrei* .. by giving tzedakah. This is not the place [to discuss this at greater length].⁶

Hisbonenus—Contemplation

An important part of *hachanah l'tefillah* is contemplating the Chassidus that one studied, thus internalizing its message. Here the Rebbe details the when and how of this *avodah*.

Forms of Hisbonenus

In reply to your letter, in which you ask for details about the proper time and method for contemplating *Chassidus*:

BETTER TO EAT IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO DAVEN AFTERWARDS THAN THE OTHER WAY AROUND.

JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE ID: 187046 ADAR II, 5749



REB YOEL KAHAN DELIVERS A SHIUR CHASSIDUS IN THE SMALL ZAL AT 770.

Obviously, *hisbonenus* must begin with understanding the concept, and sometimes one will merit that it automatically reveals the pleasantness and sweetness within the concept [being studied].

Regarding the various methods and times for *hisbonenus*; you should study—in depth—the letters of my father-in-law, the Rebbe, זצוקלה"ה, נבג"מ זי"ע, printed in *Hatomim* issue 4 p. 46, as well as the attached [material].

In general, you should discuss such matters with your *mashpia* who teaches you Chassidus, and elders of *anash* who were pupils of the elder Chassidim in *Tomchei Temimim* in Lubavitch, and they will instruct you.

With blessings for Torah study with *yiras Shamayim* and success in the *avodah* of davening; and may you also influence your friends in all this.⁷

The Words or the Meaning?

In reply to your letter, in which you ask if thinking *Chassidus* during

JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE ID: 204447 II TISHREI, 5737



davening needs to be specifically with the *osiyos harav* [exact wording]: This isn't required; on the contrary, thinking about a concept without being particular about the wording often involves one's mind more and adds enthusiasm (טראגט מען זיך מער חיות (צו און מען קריגט מער חיות [this method] is [anyway] preceded by careful study of the *osiyos harav*, you will certainly not stray from the point...⁸

Hisbonenus in tallis and tefillin

The essential part of this *avodah* is through *hisbonenus* in *tallis* and *tefillin*, as explained in the *maamar* titled *Lo Yetzei Ha'ish* 5632, and in greater detail in the letter of the Rebbe Rashab, which explains the greatness of *hisbonenus* before davening; specifically when done while wearing the *tallis* and *tefillin*.⁹

Think About the Rebbe

...I would suggest that your wife should put *tzedakah* in the *pushkah* of

Rav Meir Ba'al Hanes before lighting candles every Erev Shabbos and Erev Yom Tov, and that you should remind yourself, while putting on *tefillin*, that you are connected with my father-in-law, the Rebbe, ה"ק"מ. This will serve as the channel through which the blessing [for healthy children] will be fulfilled.¹⁰

Perek Tanya

Chassidim have the custom to study an entire *perek* of Tanya every morning.

The study of Torah should be strengthened and increased in a way of *mehadrin* (beautifying the mitzvah) and *mehadrin min hamehadrin* (beautifying the mitzvah in an exceptional manner), in each place and in every circle in a way appropriate [for that place and circle]. The *minhag* of Chassidim (in previous generations as well as this one) to study a *perek* of Tanya every day before davening should be included in this. This custom should be publicized and encouraged.

It is astonishing that this custom isn't publicized, despite there being Chassidim in our generation who perform this custom, as I have seen myself [to be the case] regarding Chassidim of our generation.

I didn't ask them whether this study [takes place] prior to the very beginning of davening —[meaning] even prior to reciting *Hareini*—or after reciting *Hareini*. It would make sense to say that this study took place *prior* to the beginning of davening; even prior to reciting *Hareini*. This means that they first studied a *perek* of Tanya and only afterwards opened the siddur and began *Hareini*.¹¹

Perek Mem Alef

The advisable [way to attain] *kavana* [concentration] during davening is by spending several moments before davening

contemplating before Whom one is about to daven. It is appropriate for you to also memorize the beginning of *perek* 41 in Tanya until the word המלך on the second page, and before davening you should either recite it or think about its content.¹²

Mezonos

Although generally we are careful not to eat before performing a mitzvah in its proper time, an exception was made for davening *shacharis*. The Rebbe explains why.

The Tzemach Tzedek's saying is well-known, that it is preferable to eat in order to be able to daven afterwards, rather than the opposite—davening in order to be able to eat. Due to the [relative] feebleness of our generation, even eating *mezonos*¹³ has been permitted (of course, only after reciting the "small *shema*"¹⁴) for those who finish their prayers long after awakening. There is no need to be stringent in this regard, as stringency can lead to a weakening in *avodas Hashem*.¹⁵ **T**

1. Shemos 23, 30. Hashem promises to slowly banish the inhabitants of Eretz C'naan to facilitate the Jews' conquest. Here, the *avodah* must be to slowly separate from *gashmiyus*, as the Rebbe elaborates.

2. Toras Menachem vol. 16 p. 341.

3. Brachos ch. 5 Mishna 1.

4. Igros Kodesh vol. 14 p. 407.

5. Ibid. vol. 4 p. 215.

6. Ibid. vol. 19 p. 72.

7. Ibid. vol. 12 p. 204

8. Ibid. vol. 11 p. 380.

9. Toras Menachem Hisva'aduyos vol. 2 p. 883.

10. Igros Kodesh vol. 4 p. 51.

11. Toras Menachem 5749 vol. 3 p. 68, p. 75.

12. Igros Kodesh vol. 17 p. 111.

13. Which is more likely to be considered a full meal.

14. I.e. just the paragraphs of *shema*, *vehaya*, and *vayomer*, prior to davening.

15. Ibid. vol. 14 p. 19.





ציור פני הרב

"When the image of one's Rebbe, nesi doreinu, stands before him—all the challenges preventing him from fulfilling his Rebbe's shlichus happily, or from fulfilling the shlichus at all, are completely annulled.

"Those who saw the Rebbe can certainly envision his face... Even those who were not zoche to see him can envision his face by looking at his picture..."¹

In honor of Yud Shevat, marking the Rebbe's *hascholas hanesius* and a day that we recommit our *hiskashrus* with the Rebbe,² we present this collection of *divrei his'oirus* on the importance of envisioning the Rebbe's holy face and the positive effect it has on a Chossid; especially in times as ours.

As Chassidus teaches, based on Tanya *perek beis*, the connection one has with the Rebbe is much deeper than that of an ordinary *talmid* with his teacher. The Rebbe is the ראש אלפי ישראל—the head of the *klal Yisroel*. The Rebbe is the *neshama klolis*, the *yechida* of the Yidden in his generation.

From this we understand how important the Rebbe's image is to a Chossid. Rabbeinu HaKadosh said that the reason he was better versed in his studies than his peers is due to the fact that while learning from Reb Meir, he saw his back. "And if I would have seen him from the front, I would be even sharper," he concluded, quoting the *possuk*, "והיו עיניך רואות את מוריך"—And your eyes shall see your teacher."³

If seeing the face of one's Rebbe has such a profound effect on the student with regards to learning, all the more so seeing the face of the Rebbe has a positive effect on the *neshama*.

The earliest source in Torah for this concept can be traced back to Yosef HaTzaddik. Rashi on the *possuk* says (based on the Gemara in Sota) that

when Yosef was faced with a challenge enticing him to commit an *aveira*, his father's image appeared to him (דמוות דיוקנו של אביו נראתה לו), giving him the necessary courage to withstand the temptation.⁴

At Challenging Times

The Frierdiker Rebbe often spoke to the Chassidim about the importance of envisioning the holy face of his father, the Rebbe Rashab, especially during the first year following his *histalkus*.

On one such occasion he warned the Chassidim not to do so on a regular basis but to reserve this practice for special times. "When one is in distress; either materially or spiritually..."⁵

Reb Zalman Duchman records in his *sefer*, *L'Sheima Oizen*, how the Frierdiker Rebbe once instructed Chassidim that when something [undesirable] happens, they should envision his father's face. The Frierdiker Rebbe then added: "One who never had a chance to see him [the Rebbe Rashab] could envision my face; for I have a similar bearing."⁶

The Gesture of a Tzaddik

The positive effect of seeing a tzaddik is recorded by the Rebbe in Hayom Yom 14 Teves:

The Shpoler Zeide was a man of intense fervor, far more than any of his colleagues—the Maggid's other talmidim. When he visited the Alter Rebbe in Liadi in 5569 or 5570 he related that when he was a child of three he saw the Baal Shem Tov. "He placed his holy hand on my heart and ever since I have felt warm."

A gesture of a tzadik, certainly seeing him and hearing his voice, must make an impression never to be forgotten.

This *vort* appears in a letter by the Frierdiker Rebbe from the year 5685, where he calls on the recipient to contemplate on the time he was in Lubavitch as a youngster: "True, you are from the younger *talmidim*, but your eyes have seen the crystal-clear shining light [of the Rebbe Rashab] and the holy words of his voice... This has the capacity of inspiring, awakening, and illuminating..."⁷

In our time, the Rebbe spoke time and again of the profound impact that the image of the Rebbe has on a Chossid.

On a number of occasions, the Rebbe related a story of a Chossid of the Rebbe Maharash in this



regard, and almost every time he spoke, the Rebbe's voice choked up with tears:

When the Frierdiker Rebbe visited Eretz Yisrael in 5689, he received a Chossid for *yechidus*, who, upon entering the Frierdiker Rebbe's room, immediately fainted. When he regained consciousness he was asked, "Why did you faint?" He explained: He had been by the Frierdiker Rebbe's grandfather, the Rebbe Maharash. Walking into the Frierdiker Rebbe's chamber, he was struck by the similarity that his face bore to that of his grandfather. Although this took place decades after the Rebbe Maharash's *histalkus*, the impact of seeing his Rebbe's face again struck him so deeply that he fell into a faint!

TEKIAS SHOFAR

On the two days of Rosh Hashanah, before *tekias*, you should envision my face before you, as well as the face of my teacher whom you merited seeing...

(Letter from the Baal Shem Tov to the Mezritcher Maagid; Hatomim vol. 2)

The Way Out

The Rebbe once quoted the Frierdiker Rebbe's *reshimas hamaasar*—the diary he wrote while in prison—and drew a powerful lesson on how important it is to envision the Rebbe's face:

The Frierdiker Rebbe describes the thoughts racing through his mind, and how as he thought of his family, he began feeling down. But then suddenly he stopped himself. “I am not allowed to think such thoughts that make me feel dejected...” he told himself. At that moment, the Frierdiker Rebbe brought to mind the image of his father—ציור פני קדש, and thought of his father; his holy father - אבא, אבא קדישא.

When relating this story, the Rebbe concluded with a practical lesson:

The Frierdiker Rebbe is teaching us that when one feels himself ‘imprisoned’ and dejected, the way out of this predicament is by connecting with the Rebbe through envisioning his holy face.

“From time to time, each person must envision the Rebbe’s holy face and remind himself of the words he heard from the Rebbe. Those who did not see the Rebbe can envision his face by gazing at his picture and learning his Torah. We all must know that we have an אבא קדישא—a holy father, and we therefore have no need to worry!”⁸

Growth is Now

In 5727 the Rebbe sent a group of *bochurim* on a two year shlichus to Melbourne, Australia. One can only imagine how hard it was for these *bochurim* to be physically so distant from the Rebbe through such a long period of time.

On Shabbos parshas Tetzaveh the Rebbe addressed this issue, explaining to the shluchim that by learning

the Rebbe’s Torah and envisioning his holy face, the physical barrier is of no significance.

The Rebbe related a story of the Mittlerer Rebbe: When he sent Chassidim to establish a settlement in Eretz Yisrael, he promised to send them writings of Chassidus so that they would remain connected.

And although this may seem insignificant, as in the meantime, they are missing out on the great advantages of actually seeing the Rebbe. So how could reading the Chassidus sent by the Rebbe substitute for that?

The Rebbe explained that through remembering and picturing the time that one saw his Rebbe, the desired effect will materialize. This can be compared to the “*sefichim*,” plants that grow from a sowing that happened much before the time of the growth. Similarly, the Chossid can have all the advantages of seeing his Rebbe by remembering and envisioning the time when he actually saw the Rebbe.

LEARN WITH THE REBBE

Learning this letter from the Rebbe (or any other letter) needs to be done in a manner just as if the Rebbe is standing before him—בעל השמועה עומד לנגדו. When one learns a *maamar*, a *sicha*, a *reshima*, or a letter from the Rebbe, he should contemplate upon and remember the Rebbe’s face. Those who did not see the Rebbe should do so by looking at his picture.

(Sichas Shavuot 5710)

The Rebbe is Looking at You

In response to many of the people who turned to him with challenges, both physical as well as challenges in *avodas Hashem*, the Rebbe proposed that by gazing at the [Frierdiker] Rebbe’s picture, the challenges would be less trying.

Many times, *bochurim* complained to the Rebbe in *yechidus* that going out in the street and encountering the tests of *olam hazeh* would bring about *machshavos zaros*. The Rebbe told them to always carry along a picture of the Rebbe with them as a means to ease the struggle.

In one *yechidus* the Rebbe also explained: “Carry a picture of the Rebbe and when these thoughts haunt you, you should look at the picture and remember that he is looking at you...”⁹



JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE ID: 108322 4 SHEVAT, 5733



TV CREW CAPTURE THE REBBE'S FARBRENGEN.

When a *bochur* asked the Rebbe how to stop himself from getting carried away in delight while eating, the Rebbe said, “During the meal, keep a picture of the [Friediker] Rebbe in front of you.”¹⁰

When hearing of someone who had trouble sleeping at night, the Rebbe advised: “Check the mezuzos in your home. Before you go to sleep, read at least a few lines from the [Friediker] Rebbe’s *sichos*, and envision, to the best of your memory, his holy face. With Hashem’s help you will notify me that your sleep has improved...”¹¹

But perhaps the most powerful words on this subject are in the Rebbe’s response to a woman who wrote about the challenges she faces, and how they make her lose her determination and ambition:

“תסתכל בתמונתו של כ”ק מו”ח אדמו”ר בעת שמרגישה חלישות רצונה הטוב ותזכור אשר גם הוא בהיותו רועה אמיתי של ישראל, מסתכל בה בשעה זו. ויועיל להנ”ל.”

“Look at the photograph of the Rebbe when you feel that your positive willpower is weakening, and remember that the Rebbe too, as a true shepherd [leader] of *b’nei Yisrael*, is looking at you at the same time, and this will help you with the above mentioned [challenges].”

“Lebedike Pictures”

From all of the above we discern how important it is for us as Chassidim, especially in times like ours—when we don’t see the Rebbe in the physical sense—to envision and picture the Rebbe’s holy face. Both

by thinking about the Rebbe in our minds, as well as looking at his picture.

In our time especially, technology gives us the ability to see the Rebbe not only by way of photograph, but also with video. The hundreds of hours of videotape of the Rebbe allow us to relive the moments with the Rebbe exactly in the manner they occurred, and to learn Torah from the Rebbe himself by watching the hours upon hours of recorded *farbrengens* with the Rebbe.

Perhaps it was our situation that the Rebbe was referring to when he spoke of the “*lebedike pictures*” at a children’s rally in 5751.

The rally of 13 Menachem-Av 5751 took place shortly after the fall of Communism in Russia. Speaking to the children from the local day-camps, the Rebbe said that they should serve as a living example for other children who unfortunately never had a chance to learn about Yiddishkeit, by excitedly reciting the *pessukim*, and then showing the pictures of this rally to the children in faraway places. “Real, live pictures,” the Rebbe said.

Later, while leaving the shul, the Rebbe met a member of *anash* who was leaving on a trip for Russia and asked for the Rebbe’s *brocha*. The Rebbe instructed him to take along with him a video of today’s rally and show it to the people there!¹²

Today as well, we may seem far away from the Rebbe in a physical sense and far from *beis chayeinu*—the source of our life as Chassidim.

But the Rebbe is essentially giving us practical advice: use the pictures and videos—the *lebedike pictures*—to enliven even those who are physically distant, until we will be able to see the Rebbe again. May it be *bekarov mammash!* ❶

1. Sichas Shabbos parshas Re’eh, 5746
2. Igros Kodesh vol. 3 p. 255
3. Eiruvim 13b
4. Bereishis 39:11. See the Rebbe’s letter, Igros Kodesh vol. 3 p. 81
5. Sefer Hasichos 5682 p. 30
6. P. 145
7. Igros Kodesh RaYYaTZ vol. 1 p. 447
8. Toras Menachem vol. 1 p. 67
9. Teshura Slonim-Stein 5768
10. Dem Rebbe’s Kinder p. 372
11. Igros Kodesh vol. 4 p. 206
12. Hisvaaduyos 5751 vol. 4 p. 108, 114

FRESH 'WATERS

Exploring the most recent
additions to the Rebbe's seforim

אגרות קודש חלק ל"א - ל"ב



לזכות החתן הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל דוד שי' קיעוומאן
והכלה מרת רות מיכל שתחי' וואלנטי
לרגל חתונתם בשעטומ"צ ביום כ"ד שבט תשע"ו
נדפס ע"י הרה"ת ר' אברהם יואל וזוגתו מרת גאלדא קיעוומאן

In preparation for this article we were greatly assisted by
Rabbi Yosef Boruch Friedman of Kehot Publication Society,
and **Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook** of Vaad Hanochos B'lahak.

Have you ever paused to consider the vast quantity and variety of Chabad Chassidus *seforim* filling so many bookshelves available for study by all? It may be something we take for granted but not so long ago almost all of these books were still in their potential state. It was the Rebbe himself who, since being appointed by the Frierdiker Rebbe, in 5702, to head the Lubavitch publishing house, Kehot Publication Society, created this revolution, working tirelessly to bring as many publications to print as soon as possible. Over the years the Rebbe urged the staff of Kehot to keep up the momentum and print seforim of Chassidus as much as possible.

Each time a new *maamar*, *kuntres*, or *sefer* came out, the Rebbe treasured it greatly; sometimes reciting *maamarim* based on the new publication, and urging the Chassidim to purchase and learn it. At times the Rebbe even brought the new *seforim* to farbrengens.

One example of this was Erev Rosh Hashana 5743 when the Rebbe came to the farbrengen carrying the two latest *seforim* printed by Kehos; Or HaTorah from the Tzemach Tzedek (מאורז"ל וענינים) and the fifth volume of the Frierdiker Rebbe's Igros Kodesh. The Rebbe even read from the beginning of each *sefer* and explained the *hora'a* in *Avodas hashem*!

Recently we were *zoche* to the printing by Kehot of volume 31 and 32 of the Rebbe's *Igros Kodesh*, edited by Rabbi Shalom Ber Levine, chief librarian of Agudas Chasidei Chabad Library, and a team of scholars. The *seforim* contain 579 letters and *maanos* from the years 5736 and 5737, diligently culled from various sources.

A mere glance through these volumes and one is immediately struck by the wide array of topics touched upon, as well as the astounding variety of recipients. Once again, the Rebbe's attentiveness and devotion to every individual and issue, physical or spiritual, significant or seemingly "trivial," stands out.

Within these pages we find letters to communal and government leaders regarding matters of global impact, and on the very same day and sometimes in the very same letter the Rebbe carefully tends to personal doubts and concerns of specific people, each according to his or her situation.

This is clearly the mark of a *nosi hador*.

In the Rebbe's words:

"The *nesius* is not only on the general population as a whole,



JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE ID: 139964 27 Iyar, 5737

POURING LIKE WATER

The joy of the Alter Rebbe's Chassidim when they merited to hear even one *maamar* from the Alter Rebbe is legendary.

If this is the case regarding one *maamar*, how much more so today when Chassidus is pouring forth like water ("עס גיסט ווי וואסער"); especially in recent days with the printing of a full *sefer* of the Alter Rebbe's *maamarim* and *ksavim*. And even more so here, as most of these *maamarim* are being printed for the very first time, and these *hanachos* are very exact with regard to *lashon harav*.

Understandably this is a cause for tremendous joy. In years gone by the Chassidim would have made a special farbrengen in full *shturem* to honor the occasion! (15 Shevat 5745)

When a new *maamar* or *kuntres* is published one must say "בשבילי—this *kuntres* and *maamar* was created for me." (Shabbos Parshas Shemos 5747)

The obvious intent in printing a new *sefer* is so that it is learned from. It is not enough to buy it and then put it in a respectable place on the shelf, because even though spending money on *seforim* shows the esteem a person holds these books, nevertheless the main idea is to learn their contents. (Shabbos Parshas Vayetzei 5748)

but with respect to each and every individual as well.

"This is highlighted in the work of my father-in-law, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe. Although great in dimension and impact, it didn't detract from his

care and concern for the individual and his issues, both in physical and spiritual matters, to the very point of self-sacrifice.

"The *nosi hador* endows each and every person who follows in his path

THE REBBE'S UNLIMITED ATTENTIVENESS AND DEVOTION TO EVERY INDIVIDUAL AND ISSUE, PHYSICAL OR SPIRITUAL, SIGNIFICANT OR "TRIVIAL", IS HIGHLIGHTED.

with this unique capability (Likkutei Sichos vol. 33 p. 111-112)."¹

THE SHEPHERD AND HIS FLOCK

As in the previously published volumes, the concern the Rebbe displays for the physical and spiritual well-being of the Jewish nation as a whole is evident. The quotes in this article are a free translation of the original letters, and are presented with permission from Kehot.

When the Israeli government considered discontinuing assistance and visa requests for the Russian Jews not planning on resettling in Eretz Yisroel, the Rebbe wrote a letter offering strong reasoning against such an idea.²

Before Purim 5736 the Rebbe introduced a new dimension to *mivtza Purim*, and, subsequently *mivtza matza*, with visits to those confined to hospital beds and prisons around the world, as well as activities on IDF bases throughout Eretz Yisroel.

In a letter to Prime Minister Yitzchak Rabin, the Rebbe thanks him for his assistance in enabling these *peulos* to be carried out. The Rebbe also stresses that the purpose of prison is to give the inmate an opportunity to regret his wrongdoings and to provide him the ability to lead a healthy and productive lifestyle upon release.³

SHNAS HACHINUCH

That year, soon after Pesach, the Rebbe launched *mivtza chinuch*, and termed that year as a "*shnas hachinuch*," calling for every Jewish child to receive a proper Jewish education. This was soon followed by the initiation of the Twelve Pesukim.

From the letters sent out from *mazkirus* it is clear that the Rebbe intended for this campaign to reach every corner of the globe, and to be carried out by everyone—whether shluchim or businessmen—including England, Ireland, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Italy, Austria, Belgium, Scandinavia and Romania.

In a fascinating letter to Rabbi Nachman Sudak, the Rebbe's secretary, Rabbi Mordechai I. Hodakov, explains

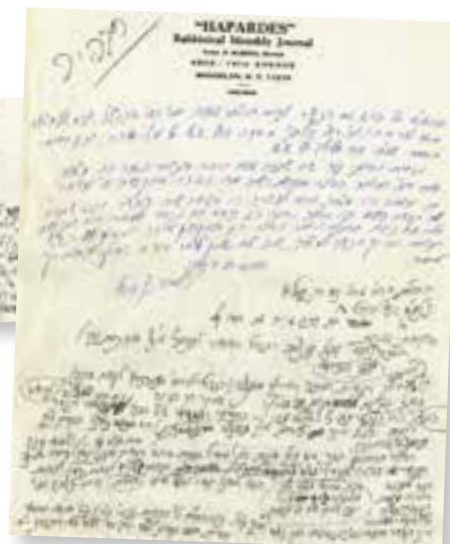
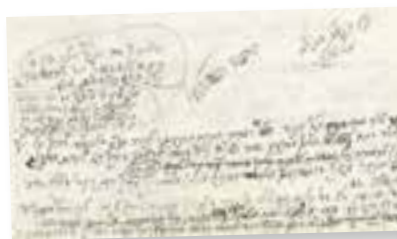
this *mivtza*: "The goal is to soon reach every single child, and all those who although along in years, are young in knowledge and education."⁴

To a son of shluchim who had written to the Rebbe that his parents were planning on taking a summer vacation that year, the Rebbe wrote: "This indicates how intense and blinding the darkness of *galus* is: specifically [now] when *shnas hachinuch* is announced, along with the urgency to prepare and launch summer camps — they decide to plan [a vacation]..."⁵

OPERATION ENTEBBE

After Operation Entebbe, which took place in the summer of 5736, the Rebbe spoke much about what could be learnt from the dramatic saga both in a spiritual and physical sense.

In response to a secret report sent to the Rebbe by an Israeli government official following the operation, the Rebbe expresses surprise that certain details were omitted, and ended the letter urging for a secret military unit similar to the one that carried out the operation to be established. As the report was delivered in secret, the Rebbe made sure it was returned





in the same way, and not through *mazkirus*.⁶

In *sichos* and letters from that period we also find the Rebbe explaining how Entebbe should serve as a signal for Yidden everywhere to fortify all matters of Yiddishkeit, while putting a special emphasis on *mivtza mezuzah*.

In retrospect it seems as though the Rebbe sought to “precede the cure to the illness,” calling in *sichos* and letters for the strengthening of Torah, *tefillah*, and *tzedaka* in the months leading up to the Operation.

In a public letter prior to Purim addressed to all *talmidim* and *talmidos*, the Rebbe writes: “Tragically, there are still various Hamans in the world who want to carry out the plans of the first Haman. Dear children, add in Torah learning and in fulfilling the mitzvot. In your merit, the *brachos* will extend to all of our nation.”⁷ (For an extensive overview on the Rebbe’s involvement before and after Operation Entebbe, see A Chassidisher Derher, Sivan 5775).

ERETZ HAKODESH

The Rebbe’s ongoing involvement in Eretz Yisroel in those years seems as strong as ever. This is evident from the special groups of shlichim dispatched by the Rebbe to Eretz Yisroel in 5736, as well as from Prime Minister Menachem Begin’s visit to the Rebbe in 5737.

In these volumes we find letters and *maanos* to many influential and political figures including the prime minister, head of the Mossad, speaker of the Knesset (Shimon Peres), the cultural minister, director of Magen David Adom, minister of transportation, director of Tel Hashomer Medical Center, and director of broadcasts, just to name a few.

In many of these letters, the Rebbe urges for Eretz Yisroel to truly live up to the name *Eretz Hakodesh*. In one letter the Rebbe pushes for the *Kosel Hamaaravi* to remain under the jurisdiction of the Department of Religion⁸. In another, the Rebbe explains to a respected *frum* Israeli

personality how he can serve as an example of how a Jew lives his life according to the guidelines of Torah and mitzvot.⁹

In addition, there are letters to numerous generals and other high ranking military personnel in connection to *mivtza Purim* and *Pesach*. For what seems to be the first time, the Rebbe also writes a letter addressed “To all members of Tzaha”¹, on the ground, at sea, and in the sky,” expressing hope that the inspiration from these *mivtzoim* experiences carry through for many days to come.¹⁰

EVERY DETAIL MATTERS

In a manner quite fascinating, the Rebbe also concerned himself with the smallest of details. For *mivtza neshek*, launched at the onset of the year 5735, the Rebbe suggested that a writing contest should be arranged between Jewish girls around the world, submitting compositions about the mitzvah of lighting Shabbos candles.¹¹ The Rebbe also pointed out that the brochures should state that it is not permissible to light candles after sundown.¹²

The Rebbe ensures that the Twelve Pesukim leaflets include a notice that they be treated with the proper respect as they contain Torah passages.¹³ For a *mivtzoim* brochure in Cleveland, the Rebbe says to make sure the drawing of the *tefillin shel rosh* has four compartments, and instructs them to add a line explaining that tefillin and *tzedaka* can only be performed on a weekday.¹⁴

In yet another letter, the Rebbe dissects and fixes the wording on a T-shirt displaying the *mivtzoim*.¹⁵

The Rebbe made sure that the *mishloach manos* for *mivtza Purim* didn’t contain anything that doesn’t meet the strictest standards of *kashrus*¹⁶, and in another letter the

Rebbe instructs a shliach building a mikveh to have an entrance from a side street.¹⁷

And the list goes on...

Every corner of the globe is within the Rebbe's reach and the Rebbe used his correspondence to impact the farthest of corners. Whether it was encouraging a businessman with connections in Alaska to use his influence to strengthen Yiddishkeit there, or the building of a mikveh in Sweden¹⁸, or sending free mezuzos to Romania for distribution among the Jewish community.¹⁹

All of the above and much more, the Rebbe sought to accomplish through his shlichim, as well as influential rabbonim, scholars, statesmen, laymen and ordinary individuals. At the very same time the Rebbe continuously encouraged these individuals to better their own spiritual condition in addition to utilizing their positions and standing to positively influence their surroundings.

THE SHEEP

With equal consideration and focus, the Rebbe is occupied with the solitary soul and its "small" issues, be they spiritual or mundane. Just as the Midrash describes how Moshe Rabbeinu, the very first *nosi hador*, pursued one solitary lamb and lovingly carried it back to the rest of the herd, so too the Rebbe, Moshe Rabeinu of our generation, devotes himself to each and every one of his flock. The Rebbe tends to their needs, concerns and fears, rejoicing in their happiness and offering comfort in times of sorrow.

When the Rebbe addressed a specific issue or provided direction, he really felt that individual, tailoring the answer with great sensitivity to fit that person and his situation.

"DEAR CHILDREN, ADD IN TORAH LEARNING AND IN FULFILLING THE MITZVOS. IN YOUR MERIT THE BRACHOS WILL EXTEND TO ALL OF OUR NATION."

A good example of this is an answer the Rebbe wrote to a man who expressed concern over the deteriorating *shalom bayis* of his parents-in-law. The Rebbe replied that he can only give his view after hearing the details first hand from the people involved, for only then can one truly grasp the problem at hand.²⁰

A certain *bochur* spending time in 770 was faced with emotional challenges, and the Rebbe had advised him to return home. In a relatively

long letter to the boy's psychologist the Rebbe explains the reasoning for this suggestion.²¹

In reply to letters with questions regarding health issues, the Rebbe pays great attention to detail, directing people to doctors and analyzing diagnoses.

To a man whose wife had a phobia of public places, especially with large crowds, the Rebbe advises both of them not to make a big deal of it and not to struggle too much against it.



SOMETIMES, IF THE MATTER REQUIRED A SWIFT REPLY THE REBBE WOULD WRITE "AIRMAIL" OR "SPECIAL DELIVERY" ON THE LETTER.

“There are those who say that we must think and strive [solely] toward accomplishments and decisions of universal proportions. But we must not forget about—in fact, we must greatly strengthen—the things that are considered ‘small and insignificant,’ which every community or individual require.” (Vol. 31 p. 81)

The Rebbe even goes so far as to show how this can apply to specific situations, as in the following letter to a school principal: “The concept that a solitary human being is akin to an entire universe underlines the type of relationship a principal shares with his students—in addition to his association and responsibility toward the institution and its operation as a whole.” (Vol. 32 p. 11)



A LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER OF ISRAEL YITZCHAK RABIN.

THE REBBE POINTED OUT THAT WHEN HE HAD ARRIVED YEARS EARLIER THE DIFFICULTY WAS IMAGINING SUCH MOSDOS EVEN EXISTING IN BRAZIL.

As they were on the path to becoming more *frum*, the Rebbe said that she should grow in her observance and her belief in Hashem, and His protection will inevitably strengthen, thereby decreasing her fears including the abovementioned.²²

In reply to a man asking how to go about providing his relatives behind the Iron Curtain with medical assistance and exit visas, the Rebbe directs him to the appropriate organizations and offices.²³ To another the Rebbe urges he do his utmost to extricate his entire extended family, explaining that living in constant fear of the KGB was not an option, even if the alternative would be a strange country with no initial steady income.²⁴

In an answer to Rabbi Chaim Binyamini, shliach to Petropolis, Brazil, the Rebbe addresses the hardships he faced in running the

yeshiva and seminary from a very practical standpoint. In one paragraph the Rebbe points out that when he had arrived there years earlier, the difficulty was imagining such mosdos even existing in Brazil. As for his initial worry as to how he would find *shidduchim* for his children living in a small Brazilian town, it seems that this had actually contributed to his children’s successful *shidduchim*...²⁵

A Lubavitcher woman dealing with *baalos teshuvah* asked in their name if being born from a union not in line with the laws of *taharas hamishpacha* rendered them flawed in some way. Putting matters in a positive perspective, the Rebbe replied that the very first Jew, Avraham Avinu, was born into such a household, as were all the *baalei teshuva* and *geirei tzedek* throughout the generations.²⁶

To a man who wanted to legally marry a non-Jew if only to receive

a green card, the Rebbe says that nevertheless it is forbidden and explains the severity of such an action.²⁷

Everyone is able to draw direction and inspiration from these pages. All you need to do is open these *seforim* and read their messages.

T טעמו ודאו כי טוב!

1. Likkutei Sichos Vol.33 p. 111-112
2. Vol. 32 p. 58
3. Vol. 31 p. 186
4. Vol.31 p. 192
5. Vol. 31 p. 192
6. Vol. 31 p. 333
7. Vol. 31 p. 158
8. Vol. 32 p. 208
9. Vol. 32 p. 196
10. Vol. 31 p. 326
11. Vol.32 p. 109, 147
12. Vol. 31 p. 337
13. Vol. 31 p. 272
14. Vol. 31 p. 341
15. Vol. 31 p. 247
16. Vol. 32 p. 135
17. Vol. 31 p. 338
18. Vol. 31 p.131
19. Vol. 31 p. 95
20. Vol. 31 p. 71
21. Vol. 32 p. 28
22. Vol.32 p. 1
23. Vol. 31 p. 178
24. Vol. 32 p. 44
25. Vol. 32 p. 57
26. Vol. 31 p. 100
27. Vol. 32 p. 287



JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE ID: 139742

THE REBBE HOLDS A STACK OF PANIM AT THE ENTRANCE TO HIS ROOM, EREV ROSH HASHANAH 5737.

the Momentous Gathering

and its
message today,

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

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

הקהל את העם
האנשים והנשים
והטף

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

HAKHEL INSIGHT

LIKE THE DAY TORAH WAS GIVEN

Our sages say that, "*Hakhel* was like the day the Torah was given at Har Sinai."

"Like" seems to imply that *Hakhel* isn't as great as *matan Torah*. Another perspective can be achieved, however, upon examining a famous saying of Chazal. "In matters of holiness we must constantly go upwards," says the Gemara. So, because *Hakhel* was after *matan Torah*, it has to be greater. Similarly, regarding the coming of Moshiach, where it is written "I will show you wonders, *like* I did during the days that you went out of Egypt," the word "like" means *Mitzrayim* and Moshiach are similar but the compared is greater than its counterpart.

(Adapted from *Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos* 5747 vol. 4, p. 208 fn. 117)

לזכרון הרבנית הצדקנית מרת ח'י' מושקא נ"ע זי"ע

בקשר עם יום ההילולא כ"ב שבט

נדפס ע"י הרה"ת ר' אברהם וזוגתו מרת סימא רבקה שיחיו יפה

מנשטער, אנגלי'



A TIMELY CONNECTION

THE INNER MOSHE

Part 1 - Rosh Chodesh Shevat

As a true leader, shortly before his passing, Moshe Rabbeinu “began to explicate this Torah.” The first of Shevat, one month before he was *nistalek*, was the day he gathered the nation and delivered this parting address. The Moshe inside us all replicates this event each year. We have the special ability to relate the Torah’s teachings to ourselves and to others. And here is where *Hakhel* comes in. This is an opportune time to gather everyone, even the “children,” those immature in their Torah observance, and influence them—beginning with the simple mitzvos and moving steadily forward. As the *possuk* comments when speaking of *Hakhel*, “They will observe all the words of this Torah.”

(Adapted from *sichas Rosh Chodesh Shevat 5741*, *Sichos Kodesh 5741 vol. 2, p. 109*)

TO SING AS ONE

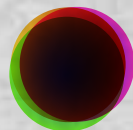
Part 2- Shabbos Shirah

The Jews, a newly emancipated people, witnessed an open miracle at the Yam Suf. The waters parted for them, allowing their escape, and drowned the Egyptians, Israel’s enemy. As soon as they emerged from the walls of water, all began to sing Hashem’s praises. The men extolled, led by Moshe, and the women were led by Miriam with her tambourine; and even the fetuses in the womb joined in chanting “*Ashira lashem*.” Ultimate unity. We commemorate this occurrence on Shabbos Shirah, during the month of Shevat. The connection to *Hakhel* is obvious.

(Adapted from *sichas parshas Beshalach 5748*,
Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5748 vol. 2, pgs. 299-300)

WHAT CAN I DO?

GATHERING ON 15 SHEVAT



The moon waxes until the fifteenth of every month, and once it reaches its fullness, begins to wane. A full moon signifies wholeness and therefore represents the completeness of the month. It is on that day that all events of the month are most powerful and revealed.

In Shevat we observe the *yom hilula* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, and we should therefore utilize the 15th of Shevat, the month’s highest point, accordingly. In addition, the fifteenth of Shevat is also the Rosh Hashanah for trees. People are likened to trees; just as these plants bear fruit, we do good deeds. Observing the 15th of Shevat in a spiritual way is therefore about strengthening our commitment to Torah and mitzvos.

So on this special day, let us gather “the men, women and children,” to encourage their growth in areas of Torah observance. A special emphasis shall be placed on the teachings of the Frierdiker Rebbe, who promoted *ahavas Yisrael* and *achdus Yisrael*, giving tzedaka, etc. Because we want these gatherings to be well attended, it is up to every community to determine the best venue and hour during this 24-hour period.

(Adapted from *sichas Shabbos parshas Beshalach 5748*, *Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5748 vol. 2, p. 309*)



לזכות הילדה בצבאות ה' מושקא שתחי' זעלערמאיר

נולדה י"א כסלו ה'תשע"ו

שתגדל לתורה לחופה ולמעשים טובים כרצו"ק כ"ק אדמו"ר

נדפס ע"י הוריה הרב שלמה יוסף וזוגתו מרת אסתר שיחיו זעלערמאיר

וזקניה הרה"ת ר' יצחק יהודה וזוגתו מרת חנה שיחיו קופפער ומרת דבורה תחי' זעלערמאיר

A Heated Quarrel

THE ATTEMPTED CHEREM

The years 5546-5549 (תקמ"ו-תקמ"ט) were fraught with tension for the Alter Rebbe. The students of the Mezritcher Magid, headed by Reb Mendel Horodoker, had appointed him to lead the Chassidim in all matters of public relations. After all, it was the Alter Rebbe whom the holy Magid relied upon to stand up to the opposers of the Chassidim and Chassidus. Often, delegates from Chassidic groups across Belorussia would consult with the Alter Rebbe about such concerns. It was then that the *misnagdim*, centered in Shklov and Minsk, focused their efforts squarely against our great Rebbe. While the Alter Rebbe spent most of his time fortifying the foundations of the Chassidim and Chassidus, he still found the time to travel to the big cities and deliver deep *pilpulim* in *nigleh* and fiery discourses in Chassidus.

A large debate took place in Shklov at that time which attracted scholars from around the region. People came from Tczaos, Mstsislaw, and other cities, joining the erudite Shklov residents. They sat together in one of the city's large study halls and devised many questions in intricate *sugyos*, intending to stump the Alter Rebbe. Upon answering the questions they posed, the Alter Rebbe countered with a few queries of his own, which proved too difficult for our gaggle of intellectuals. Our great Rebbe then said:

"Yidden, Torah, and Hashem are one. When one knows how things are in the Torah above, he will know the explanation in its revealed counterpart down here. Every day Torah must be new in one's eyes, because it is given to us daily. The Holy One, blessed be He—that is, the part of G-d that is in every Jew—speaks [the Torah],

and Moshe—the *da'as*, knowledge, that exists in the Jew—writes and reveals it; as it is written (Iyov 32:8), 'And the breath of the Almighty permits them to understand.'"

The scholars, confounded, begged the Alter Rebbe to tell them the solution to the difficulty he presented, but the Rebbe didn't answer. Ten of the young men, geniuses all of them, followed the Alter Rebbe after that, among them Reb Pinchas; this angered the *misnagdim* terribly. As the opposition recovered in Minsk, the Alter Rebbe arrived there and once again debated the local sages. They were greater scholars than those he confronted previously, but the Alter Rebbe did the same there as he did in Shklov. Here, however, the elders did not allow the young men entrance to the hall where they debated, so only three youths ended up changing camps. The elders and middle aged among the opposition didn't have the fortitude to follow our Rebbe. Despite this, the contest bore its fruit; messengers were sent to the Vilna Gaon telling him that he had been hearing false rumors. "The leader of the Chassidim is a great genius who has the whole of Torah at his fingertips."

For four years subsequently, the *misnagdim* quieted their resistance.

During that time the Alter Rebbe worked a lot on his students, both the old ones and the new. He placed a great deal of pressure on them to learn and to know the subject matter well. He would often enter the *beis midrash* at night to see if anyone was sleeping, and even the way in which they rested. The strict regimen also included a private visit with the Rebbe at his discretion; one couldn't just enter the study when he wanted.

During the calm, the Alter Rebbe also engaged in strengthening the Rebbe Meir Baal Hanes fund for the poor in Eretz Yisroel, by sending special delegations and letters (many of them printed in Iggeres Hakodesh), inspiring Yidden to donate. Another regular occurrence at that time was that many Yidden came to ask the Alter Rebbe questions in *avodas Hashem*, and the Rebbe stirred their hearts through teachings and blessings.



At that time, the *misnagdim* turned their attention to the other students of the Magid, leaders in Volyn, and stifled anything they sought to achieve.

The leaders of Volyn gathered on the day before Pesach, and decided to place the Vilna Gaon under *cherem*. The Alter Rebbe, occupied with other matters, wasn't present at the meeting. They chose ten from amongst them to look into the matter and determine Torah's stance. The *minyán* fasted and prayed for almost two months, and on Shavuot they asked of Heaven if they agreed with the proposal. Heaven answered, "This has to come from the strength of a *beis din*. You need someone as proficient in Torah as the Gaon."



The Mitteler Rebbe, an adolescent at the time, was sitting and studying at home with his friend Reb Aharon Strasheler. They heard noise outside the house and saw that two men had arrived on a simple wagon. One remained seated there and the second, a man with an awe-inspiring presence, entered their home.

"Can I see the Rebbe?"

The boys pointed in the direction of the study. Upon hearing this exchange, the Alter Rebbe came out of his room and warmly embraced the man, inviting him inside. The Mitteler Rebbe and Reb Aharon watched in surprise. Out of the room came the sounds of a heated argument

but the boys couldn't decipher what it was about. After a while the door swung open and the man stormed out.

"And what is your final decision? Are you in agreement?"

The Alter Rebbe stared somberly. "I cannot go against the opinion of my colleagues, but I will take no part in this. We have learned that when one ostracizes another, he severs the bond that exists between the victim's *neshama* and Hashem, which may lead him to deny G-d's existence! This will cause a great *chilul Hashem* and is therefore forbidden."

The man retorted angrily, "And what if the desecration of His name will come from the Rebbe's own house?"

"Hashem knows I'm sincere. Hashem knows that I cried before Him and our Rebbe about the load that he placed upon me, the public leadership of the Chassidim. He has blessed me and assured me. I trust in Hashem and will not stray from the Torah at all!"

When he left, the Mitteler Rebbe became ill with worry. On the one hand, he knew that something serious transpired between the guest and his father. On the other hand, however, the Mitteler Rebbe couldn't get himself to ask what had happened. Later, the Alter Rebbe visited his son and asked about his pale appearance.

"Ever since the visit of that guest, and the mysterious conversation he brought with him, I've been sick with worry."

The Alter Rebbe told him what happened and assured him that all would be okay.



[Because the Alter Rebbe refused to join the *cherem*, it never materialized and the Gaon was left alone.] **1**



(Based on a letter of the Frierdiker Rebbe, Igros Kodesh, vol. 14, pg. 164)



FAIT TRANS MATI

*In preparing this article we were greatly assisted by **Rabbi Levi Greisman**, project manager of Jem's soon to be released book "The Rebbe's Early Years," and **Rabbi Shmuel Lubecki**, shliach in Rouen, France. We are duly grateful for their help.*

FOR ON

מוקדש לזכות
הרה"ת ר' יעקב בן חנה
והרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק בן שרה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
עמאר



למעליותא - THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

The times were difficult. Russia and France were at war, and everything in between was being crushed. The Alter Rebbe requested that the march with which Napoleon's soldiers had crossed into Russia be sung for him.¹ After hearing it, he declared "It is a *niggun* of victory!" and he then fell into a deep *dveikus*. Coming out of the *dveikus*, the Alter Rebbe announced that in the end there will be "*didan notzach*."²

Today, just over two hundred years later, France has indeed been transformed. Yiddishkeit thrives in a phenomenal way, with tens of thousands of *baalei teshuvah*, colossal educational institutions, and Chabad Houses on every corner. Truly, a *didan notzach*...





Depths of Darkness

When Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Russia in 5572 (תקע"ב), a fierce argument broke out among the *talmidim* of the Maggid of Mezerich, as to whether the Jews in Russia should support and *daven* for the success of Napoleon, or for the success of Czar Alexander of Russia.

Many of the *talmidei haMaggid* felt that Napoleon's victory would bring a new era of freedom and economic growth upon the Yidden of Russia, who until then were subject to a life of persecution and destitution. Therefore, they maintained, it is incumbent upon the Yidden to *daven* to Hashem that the French should defeat the Russians.

The Alter Rebbe thought otherwise. While Napoleon would bring freedom and prosperity to the people of Russia, the Alter Rebbe reasoned that he would also bring along the spirit of freedom from religion that was so prevalent in French culture. If, however, Czar Alexander would be victorious, although Yidden will be downtrodden and destitution will become widespread "...their hearts will become attached and devoted to their father in heaven."³

**YIDDEN WILL BE DOWNTRODDEN,
DESTITUTION WILL BECOME WIDESPREAD,
BUT THEIR HEARTS WILL BECOME ATTACHED
TO THEIR FATHER IN HEAVEN**

Twelve years earlier, France had undergone a revolution that changed the face of its society and of the world in general. The people had overthrown the monarchy, they established the rights of every individual, and brought about a feeling of liberty and lack of restrictions. Since this revolution was not based upon a foundation of belief and trust in the Aibershter, and instead invoked the power of man, it brought along an atmosphere of anti-religion which unfortunately had an adverse effect on many of the Jews living in France. It then began to spread throughout all the countries of Europe and the world.

In this light, the Alter Rebbe viewed Napoleon, the ruler of France, as the ultimate representation of *klipah* in this world, and he sought to fight it in every way possible, spiritual and physical. The efforts he put forth for Czar Alexander's victory were so extensive, that the Russian government took notice and bestowed the Alter Rebbe's family with the status of "Honored Citizen for Generations," which stayed in effect for over one hundred years.

Because of his fierce opposition to the French and all they represented, the Alter Rebbe refused to remain under its jurisdiction even for a short period of time. Instead he chose to wander deeper and deeper into Russian territory, in the heart of winter, where he ultimately fell ill and passed away in the midst of the journey, in the town of Piena, on Chof-Daled Teves 5573 (תקע"ג).



Reworking the Klipah

Despite the above introduction about the spiritual status of France and its people, a visitor to the Jewish community of France today would be pleasantly surprised to discover that his preconceptions of what the country may look like had been completely unfounded. Paris, the 'city of lights,' itself has an astonishingly vibrant Jewish community, and especially the Lubavitch segment of it, that outshines many other cities in its size, strength, and *chassidishkeit*.

In fact, when the Rebbe spoke about the world changing and coming closer to and more befitting of the era of Moshiach, he used the transformation of France as an example.

The Rebbe explained that to combat a *klipah*, one begins by bringing *kedusha* into its own boundaries, according to its—the *klipah's*—own level. However, just doing that only makes the lower level a receptacle to the effects of *kedusha*, but it is not yet transformed into a force of holiness. True *birur*, the Rebbe said, is when the holiness brought into the boundaries of *klipah* is so effective that the lower realm itself continues—on its own,

יין נסך איז מטמטם המוח והלב

A poignant story, which the Rebbe mentioned in the *maamar* Basi L'gani 5711, is of the Rebbe Maharash traveling a long distance from his health resort to Paris. He stayed there for only a short period of time, just in order to meet a young Jew who had strayed from Yiddishkeit and had been spending time in the casino of the hotel in which the Rebbe Maharash was staying. The Rebbe Maharash sat alongside him for a while, as the young man was sipping from his non-kosher wine and playing cards. After a while, the Rebbe tapped him on the shoulder and said, “*Yungerman*, יין נסך defiles the mind and heart,” and then left to his room. A short while later, the young man went to the Rebbe

Maharash's room and they had a long talk, which led to him doing *teshuvah* and eventually raising a nice Jewish family.⁵

In later years, the Rebbe Rashab also made several visits to France.

Interestingly—as the Frierdiker Rebbe told—it was there, in the resort town of Menton, that the Rebbe Rashab envisaged and deliberated the basic ideas of the *Hemshech Ayin Beis*.⁶



THE SHORELINE OF MENTON, FRANCE.

with its own unique character and capabilities—to be a place of Torah and mitzvos. And so with France; it flourishes through its own institutions of Torah, *tefillah* and *gemilus chassadim*, completely independent and without a need for *hashpaah* from the Yidden in other countries.⁴

The Birur

“The primary and complete *birur* - in a permanent and internal way - was accomplished in our generation, by the Frierdiker Rebbe. In addition to visiting France a number of times, and saying *maamarim* and *sichos* there, he also sent some of his household members as *shluchim* there; they lived there for a number of years and learned *nigleh* and *Chassidus*. He also sent his letters and *kisvei Chassidus* there, and some of his work was prepared there for print....”⁷

This is a quote from the *farbrengen* of Shabbos Parshas Vayeshev 5752. In honor of a group of guests that had come from France to spend Shabbos with the Rebbe, the Rebbe devoted an entire *farbrengen* explaining the *birur* of France and how it demonstrates our closeness to the times of Moshiach.

Clearly, there is much significance to the fact that the Frierdiker Rebbe sent the Rebbe and Rebbetzin to live in France. For many years, most Chassidim were unaware of the extensive work the Rebbe did for the Frierdiker Rebbe while in France. But over the years, we have been offered a small glimpse into some of it, while most of it will likely remain unknown forever. Taking a closer look at what we know of the years the Rebbe and the Rebbetzin spent there, we see how it was truly another step in the *birur* of its *klipah*. In fact, the Rebbetzin herself once told one of the *shluchos* to France that “מיר האבן געאקערט און געזיט, און איר דארפט שניידן—we plowed and sowed, and [now] you have to reap.”⁸

Safer Shores

In 5693, Hitler ימ"ש rose to power in Nazi controlled Germany. The Rebbe and Rebbetzin were then living in Berlin, the capital of Germany, and with the new winds of anti-Semitism that began

flowing in Germany, they soon moved to Paris.

Upon their arrival, the Rebbe immersed himself in his *avodas hashem* while continuing the work on various tasks on behalf of the Frierdiker Rebbe. Meanwhile, the Frierdiker Rebbe, who was also visiting Paris at the time, asked Reb Meir Shochetman, a Jew living there, to help the Rebbe enroll in university.⁹



THIS IS NOT A REGULAR PERSON; IF YOU PAY ATTENTION YOU WILL SEE THAT THE LIGHTS NEVER GO OUT IN HIS APARTMENT

The Rebbe first joined the ESTP School where he studied mechanical and electrical engineering and later enrolled for classes at the famed Sorbonne as well.

While in Paris, the Rebbe - who kept to himself very much and made sure to avoid the public eye and the extra *kavod* he would get as the Frierdiker Rebbe's son-in-law - spent

the vast majority of his day in his small apartment with his *sefarim*. The Rebbe's downstairs neighbor was a *frumer* Yid, who observed that the entire night he would hear footsteps going back and forth in the apartment above him. When he mentioned it to a friend, he was told that "this is not just a regular person; if you pay attention you will see that the lights never go out in his apartment."¹⁰ For approximately two hours every day, the Rebbe would leave his home and go to the university to hear lectures from the professors, often taking along with him a small *sefer* to peruse during class.¹¹ Reb Moshe Reitzer, a young Hungarian Yid who was also studying at the Sorbonne, remembered being in awe of the Rebbe at that time: "The Rebbe would come directly to the lecture, and didn't speak to anyone. When he did speak, he was very brief. He would come in, and as soon as the lecture was over he would leave."¹² Often, the Rebbe would skip the classes altogether, missing more than half of the classes during the eight years that he spent in Paris.¹³

Over the years, the Rebbe would use the scientific knowledge to defend Yiddishkeit and uphold its truths in discussion with professors and perplexed Jews of all types, leading them to greater commitment to Torah and mitzvos. In Paris as well, the Rebbe would influence others about the truth of Yiddishkeit.¹⁴

Life in Paris

Reb Meir Shochetman who occasionally learned with the Rebbe, later recounted: "The Rebbe and Rebbetzin lived very modestly, in a

small room-and-a-half apartment, where the Rebbe had set *shiurim* in all facets of the Torah, often while fasting and remaining in tallis and tefillin throughout the day."¹⁵

We are offered a glimpse into the Rebbe's extensive Torah learning while in France from many of the Reshimos that we have today, which were transcribed during that period. These Reshimos, in which the Rebbe recorded some of his *chiddushim*, deal with topics covering Tanach, Gemara, Rambam, *halacha*, Chassidus and *kabbalah*. During the Rebbe's first few years in France, there were also many lengthy Torah letters that were sent back and forth between the Rebbe and his father, HoRav Levi Yitzchak—who was living far away, behind the Iron Curtain—until HoRav Levi Yitzchak was arrested by the Soviet authorities. The Rebbe often shared his *chiddushei Torah* with his father, who would comment and take much pride in the Rebbe's writings, as we can see from the letters that were sent in return.

"He would daven in the *chassidische shtibel* of Reb Avraham Chein, where he would take part in the *chassidische farbrengens*. Always insisting on staying on the sidelines, he refused to take a leading role as the Rebbe's son-in-law." Reb Meir Shochehtman recalled.

Years later eyewitnesses would relate to what extent the Rebbe went for the sake of a *chumrah* and *hidur mitzvah*. For example, the Rebbe would at times walk long distances to obtain *pas Yisrael* bread.¹⁶

Cholov Yisrael was also a constant issue. The Rebbetzin would at times walk many kilometers in order to watch a cow being milked, and from the milk she would prepare all sorts of foods, which would constitute the main part of the Rebbe's diet—since he wouldn't eat anything that was not prepared directly by the Rebbetzin.¹⁷

JEM/THE EARLY YEARS



THE REBBE'S FILE IN THE SCHOOL RECORDS OF THE ESTP, AN ENGINEERING UNIVERSITY IN PARIS WHERE THE REBBE STUDIED, DATED 1932-1933.



"I AM A SHLIACH OF MY FATHER-IN-LAW THE REBBE, 'THERE IS A CHAZAKA THAT A SHLIACH WILL FULFILL HIS SHLICHUS.' I AM NOT ABLE TO TAKE A VACATION..."

Working for the Frierdiker Rebbe

During the years in France, the Frierdiker Rebbe entrusted the Rebbe with many sensitive responsibilities on his behalf.

The Rebbe did extensive work in the realm of publishing and was intimately involved in preparing and reviewing many of the Frierdiker Rebbe's *maamorim*, *sichos* and *igros* for print.¹⁸ In particular, the Rebbe was the driving force behind the printing of "Hatomim," the periodical of Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim. Although the Rebbe kept his involvement a secret—on the cover of the magazine three other names were listed as editors - the Frierdiker Rebbe wrote in a letter to the Rebbetzin that "the entire work" was the Rebbe's.¹⁹

Reb Meir Schochetman remembered the Rebbe visiting Parisian libraries and *shuls*, leafing through old *sefarim* and *kisvei yad*. Years later Chassidim would discover that the Rebbe was doing this at the

request of the Frierdiker Rebbe who asked the Rebbe to search for *kisvei yad*, rare *seforim*, and other Jewish books and artifacts of interest, that may be available for purchase for the Lubavitch Library.²⁰

The Rebbe also did extensive work in cataloguing and indexing the *Igros* of the Frierdiker Rebbe in an organized fashion so that they can later be published by topic.²¹ At times the Rebbe also served as the Frierdiker Rebbe's personal secretary²², and at the Frierdiker Rebbe's request, the Rebbe took the responsibility of handling many major medical decisions relating to the Frierdiker Rebbe's health.²³

In addition, the Frierdiker Rebbe entrusted the Rebbe to manage the complex and clandestine network of transatlantic finances of the Frierdiker Rebbe, dealing with money arriving from the United States, which could not be directly sent to the Frierdiker Rebbe.²⁴

All of the above work done by the Rebbe on behalf of the Frierdiker Rebbe remained unknown to most

Chassidim for decades. Over the years, however, with the revelations and printing of volumes of the Frierdiker Rebbe's *Igros*, we have managed to get a small glimpse into the vast amount of sensitive work that the Rebbe quietly did for the Frierdiker Rebbe.

Reb Leibush Heber was acquainted with the Rebbe during his stay in France. Once, when he was driving the Rebbe in his car, he mentioned that the Rebbe must take a vacation from his hard work; the *possuk* commands "*v'nishmartem meod linafshoiseichem!*"

The Rebbe answered: "I am a shliach of my father-in-law the Rebbe, and the Gemara says that 'there is a *chazaka* that a shliach will fulfill his shlichus.' I am not able to take a vacation..."²⁵

Avodas Hakodesh

In addition to his own Torah learning, the Rebbe would also visit the local *shuls*, occasionally giving *shiurim* in either nigleh or chassidus. Many of these shiurim were given at the small Lubavitch shul in the famous Pletzel area known as *Zibbetzen* (the address of the shul is 17 Rue des Rosiers, hence the name "Zibbetzen", the yiddish for "seventeen"), where the Frierdiker Rebbe, Rebbe Rashab and Rebbe Maharash had all davened when they visited Paris. A number of these shiurim are documented in *Reshimos*, where we find the notes



TWO ENVELOPES ON WHICH THE REBBE WROTE HIS RESIDENCE IN PARIS IN HIS HOLY HANDWRITING.



TWO RESHIMOS WRITTEN IN PARIS, FRANCE.

the Rebbe wrote for some of them. (In addition to the eye-witness reports of these shiurim).²⁶

Besides for giving his own shiurim to adults, the Rebbe also involved himself in organizing chinuch for Paris's Jewish children and young people. Efraim Steinmetz remembers the Rebbe visiting his father and convincing him to send his children to a local cheder. And Reb Moshe Zev Reitzer, a Hungarian talmid chochom who the Rebbe met at the Sorbonne, was encouraged by the Rebbe to utilize his Torah knowledge to educate youth in Paris about Yidishkeit. "There are many young Jews roaming the streets of Paris. They have nowhere to learn. We need to ensure that they remain Jewish." The Rebbe told him. After he agreed to teach, the Rebbe helped bring students to him.

On one occasion, the Rebbe was not able to spend Simchas Torah with the Frierdiker Rebbe as he usually did, and was forced to remain in Paris. That Yom Tov was etched deeply into the memories of all that were present. The Rebbe led *hakafos* for hours on end, at one point singing and dancing "Al haselah hoch, hoch" with the crowd for three hours straight. While the

people dancing kept stopping to rest, the Rebbe didn't take a single break!²⁷

Avoiding the Spotlight

Even while engaged in all of the above, the Rebbe always tried to hide his identity and whenever possible made sure to avoid bringing attention to himself so that people would not feel that they need to give him *kavod*. In fact, there are even a number of stories of people who met and interacted with the Rebbe while he was in Paris, and only realized years later that he was the Rebbe.

The Rebbe even begged people that did know who he was, not to tell anyone that he was the Frierdiker Rebbe's son-in-law.

At the same time, however, the Frierdiker Rebbe constantly tried to encourage the Rebbe to reveal himself and take on a more public role in influencing the Jews around him. For example, in a letter to the Rebbetzin, the Frierdiker Rebbe wrote about the Rebbe that "concealing oneself from people doesn't achieve anything... he should allow people to acquaint themselves with him through interesting conversation, it would bring about much good benefit."²⁸ And in a letter to Reb Alexander Reinin,

a Lubavitcher chossid and *askan*, the Frierdiker Rebbe asks that he try to arrange that the Rebbe participate at a certain shiur because "they will surely then honor him to give a shiur, which I greatly desire, and surely after the shiur he will also be able to speak on topics relating to awakening people to Hashem, in which he is very talented."²⁹

But despite the Rebbe's efforts, some of his greatness did manage to seep through, and as time went by more and more people became aware of who was in their midst. Eventually, a committee of Jews in a leadership position in Paris turned to the Rebbe to be the Rav of their Shul. They even sent messengers to the Frierdiker Rebbe, telling him how much they wanted the Rebbe to be their Rav, in the hope that the Frierdiker Rebbe could encourage the Rebbe to accept the position.³⁰

Fleeing Again

After a number of peaceful years in France, new threats arose. The German army, which had already seen significant victories on the battlefield, was approaching the country and it was imperative for the Yidden in Paris to look for a safer location to live. A few days before Shavuot 5700, the Rebbe and Rebbetzin managed



A LETTER FROM THE REBBE MENTIONING HIS VISIT TO FRANCE IN 5707, WRITTEN ON THE STATIONERY OF THE HOTEL HE WAS STAYING AT.

to obtain tickets on a train leaving the city, a very short time before the German invasion.

Before leaving Paris, the Rebbe gave a speech in the *shul*, emphasizing the importance of *bitachon* in Hashem and the importance of keeping Torah and mitzvos in whatever situation one may find himself.³¹

The Rebbe and the Rebbetzin arrived in the city of Vichy just before Shavuot, bringing with them and saving bundles of treasured manuscripts from the Rabbeim's *ma'amorim* which would be printed years later. The Rebbe and Rebbetzin spent the next few months in Vichy. The situation was difficult, with little food and money to go around, and many refugees not having a roof over their heads. In order to gain entry to a hotel in the city (even to sleep in the hallway or lobby) one needed to prove that he owns a one-hundred dollar bill—an enormous sum in those days—and most Yidden arriving in the city had no such means.

The Rebbe owned such a bill, so he would stroll the streets in search of new refugees who had arrived in the city and were in need of a place to stay. He would lend them the bill, and once they gained entry to a hotel he would take the bill back and look for another refugee to take care of.³²

After the period in Vichy, the Rebbe and Rebbetzin traveled to Nice and then to Marseilles, in an effort to obtain visas and boat tickets to the United States. While in Marseilles, the Rebbe visited an orphanage, bringing bags of bread and basic foods to the many despondent children, many of whom had no idea what had happened to their parents and family members. The Rebbe sat with the children, whom he knew each by name, and cajoled them to eat. He took the time to speak to each of them and comfort them.³³

After a period of waiting, the Rebbe and Rebbetzin finally received the much awaited visas for entry to the United States. The evening before departure, the Rebbe wrote a Reshima

speaking on the subject of Moshiach's arrival.

The next day the Rebbe and Rebbetzin boarded a ship headed to the United States, and arrived safely at its shores on 28 Sivan 5701.

Chassidim in France

When World War II came to an end, many Polish citizens were left stranded throughout the Soviet Union, after arriving as refugees fleeing the Nazis. As a sign of goodwill, the Russian government allowed them to return to their homeland, provided that they are able to prove their status as Polish nationals. Lubavitcher Chassidim, desperate to leave that accursed land, organized an operation in which they forged hundreds of Polish passports and thus managed to escape to the other side of the Iron Curtain.

After an interim period spent in DP camps, many of the families arrived in Paris, as per the directives of the Frierdiker Rebbe, and were waiting there to move on to their final destinations, either Eretz Yisroel or the United States.³⁴

In order to assist in the refugees' placement, the Frierdiker Rebbe founded the "*Lishkah*"—the European Office for Helping Refugees and their Placement—and appointed Rabbi Binyomin Gorodetzky as its director. This office became the center for all of the Frierdiker Rebbe's—and later the Rebbe's—activities in Europe and North Africa. In addition to working with the displaced persons, they printed *seforim* in French, they cared for the Yidden of North Africa, and were involved in all sorts of activities pertaining to the Yidden of the region.

It was during that same period that Beis Rivkah and Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim of Brunoy were established, initially for the children of the refugees located in the area. These institutions grew to become bastions



RABBI BINYOMIN GORODETZKY LEADS A GATHERING IN FRANCE.



EARLY YEARS OF THE YESHIVA IN BRUNOY, FRANCE.

of Yiddishkeit and Chassidishkeit spreading the *maayanos* throughout the entire region. In the *sicha* on Shabbos Vayeshev 5752 the Rebbe referred to the establishment of Tomchei Temimim as a manifestation of the *birur* accomplished by the Rabbeim over the years.³⁵

The Rebbe's Visit

Rebbetzin Chana, the Rebbe's mother, was also among the refugees that left Russia on forged Polish passports; she arrived in Paris during the winter of 5707. The Rebbe, who had not been able to see her for eighteen years, traveled to Paris to meet her and to accompany her back to New York.

The Rebbe spent a total of three months in the city, and his visit left an unforgettable impact on all those that came into contact with him. Chassidim later recounted³⁶ how even when the Rebbe was walking down the street, people would turn their head to stare at the remarkable looking individual whom they had never seen before.

The Rebbe would visit his mother twice daily at the house of Reb

Zalman Schneerson, and also spent a considerable amount of time together with the Chassidim in the city; farbrenging, speaking, and giving them advice.

While in Paris, the Rebbe exerted tremendous effort into laying ground and planting the seeds for the central Lubavitch infrastructure in France, and established branches of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, Machne Yisroel, Beis Rivkah and Kehos.³⁷ A lot of effort was also put into printing *seforim* for the Yidden in France.

Years later, Chassidim still recall³⁸ the Rebbe's Beis Nissan farbrenging of that year—which lasted until seven o'clock in the morning—as an event that “elevated us beyond our physical surroundings.” A bit more than a week later on Yud Aleph Nissan, Rebbetzin Chana commented to one of the Chassidim that it was the Rebbe's birthday, and they should ask him to farbreng. The Rebbe agreed immediately, and once again sat down to inspire the Chassidim.³⁹

On Lag B'omer the Rebbe again farbrenged in the *shul*.

All in all, the Rebbe farbrenged a total of eight times while in Paris. In a way, this visit was the initial *hisgalus* of the Rebbe to the Chassidim, especially to the five hundred of them located in the city at the time. During those farbrengings, the Rebbe often spoke about the Frierdiker Rebbe, encouraging the Chassidim to be *mekasher* themselves to him as well as to send *maamad*.⁴⁰ Although it was not possible for most of them to travel to the Frierdiker Rebbe at the time, the Rebbe nevertheless demanded that there should be at least a yearning and desire to be by the Rebbe.⁴¹

After the Rebbe's return to New York, he continued to be in contact with the Chassidim in France, continuously encouraging them to grow and to do more in *hafatzas hamaayanos*. In one particular letter to Rabbi Shlomo Chaim Kesselman, the Rebbe reproves the Chassidim in Paris for not doing enough to be *mekarev* more people to the Rebbe, especially at a time when thousands of Yidden were wandering around looking for direction in their lives.⁴²



Early Steps of Hafatzas Hamaayanos

The urging of the Rebbe was not just regarding the Yidden of France. In 5714 the Rebbe wrote a letter⁴³ to Reb Nissan Nemanov about dealing with the Yidden of North Africa that were beginning to emigrate to France, saying that by being *mekarev* those immigrants, it will be possible to ultimately reach all of their friends and relatives, even those that remained in North Africa. The Rebbe reminded him that already in Russia, many years earlier, the Rebbe Rashab and the Frierdiker Rebbe sent shluchim to help the Sefardic Jews of Gruzia (Georgia) and Bucharra (Uzbekistan), and within a short period of time hundreds of families were brought closer to *Toras haChassidus*. Surely much work can be done within the Jewish communities



RABBI MULEH AZIMOV TEACHES YOUNG CHILDREN IN CHEDER.

of Morocco and Tunisia, the Rebbe felt, especially due to the warm nature of Sefardic Jews. If the Chassidim would realize that they have the opportunity to bring three hundred thousand Yidden to Chassidus, they would have the willpower to do so, and they would also come up with the techniques needed to succeed.

It was also during that period that Rabbi Chaim Hillel Azimov opened up the first Sunday Hebrew School for Jewish children studying in Paris's public schools. This endeavor brought the Rebbe much *nachas*, and he sent a number of encouraging letters to Reb Chaim Hillel, stressing the importance of the work and the great merit for all those that take part in it.

In 5722, the Rebbe sent a group of *bochurim* as shluchim to study in Brunoy, to strengthen the yeshiva, and to start activities of *hafatzas hamaayanos*.

The *bochurim* that arrived in France brought a whole new life to the yeshiva. They were full of vigor and were inspired by the Rebbe's call of 'uforatzta,' in turn they brought that excitement to the *bochurim* in the yeshiva. After half a year, the shluchim returned to 770, but their impact still remained.

In 5724, a group of *bochurim* from Brunoy came to the Rebbe for Tishrei. The Rebbe showed them many *kiruvim* and encouraged them to continue and



THE REBBE'S HANDWRITTEN HAGOHOS ON THE YECHIDUS TO THE TALMIDIM HASHLUCHIM TO FRANCE, 12 ADAR I 5722.

widen the activities that had already begun in France.

During that period, the Rebbe appointed three *bochurim* to oversee the *hafatzas hamaayanos* in Paris. One of those *bochurim* was Shmuel (Muleh) Azimov, who would later return to become the head of Tzach in the city and the surrounding area.

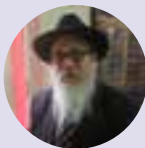
Unimaginable Success

At the end of the month, the Rebbe blessed Rabbi Muleh Azimov that he will have "*hatzlacha rabah*, and the meaning of *hatzlacha rabah* is success —למעלה מן המשווער—more than imaginable." He returned to France with a new *chayus* and energy, and brought his efforts in *hafatza* to a new level, causing many individuals to become closer to Yiddishkeit through *shiurei Chassidus* and a wide range of activities.

After his wedding in 5728, the Rebbe sent Reb Muleh back to France permanently. In the years following Reb Muleh's arrival, *hafatzas hamaayanos* in Paris reached new horizons, unprecedented perhaps in any other part of the world. The sheer number of people that were touched

"HATZLACHA RABAH, AND THE MEANING OF HATZLACHA RABAH IS SUCCESS למעלה מן המשווער - MORE THAN IMAGINABLE".

Reb Klafya Alush relates⁵⁴:



"I traveled to the Rebbe for the first time on Chol Hamoed Sukkos 5730, and came straight to 770 by taxi. When I arrived, the Chassidim took care of me and brought me food in the sukkah.

"Then came the long awaited moment; I saw the Rebbe for the first time. It was a very emotional and special moment for me, and it left an indelible impression on my mind. I wrote home right away that "I have entered the tent of Moshe Rabbeinu..." For me, the Rebbe was something out of this world; I saw in the Rebbe a reincarnation of Moshe Rabbeinu, a true leader. Just that first encounter for me was already enough. The rest was all just a bonus."

and brought closer to Yiddishkeit is simply mind boggling.

In order to properly document this extraordinary growth, we bring excerpts from interviews of the initial *mekuravim* in those early years, who merited to take an active part in France's spiritual revolution.⁴⁴

Reb Shalom Cohen, a world renowned professor, who travels to lecture throughout the world, tells the following:



"I began coming closer to Yiddishkeit after the famous student revolution, which took place in May 1968. With this revolution, the young



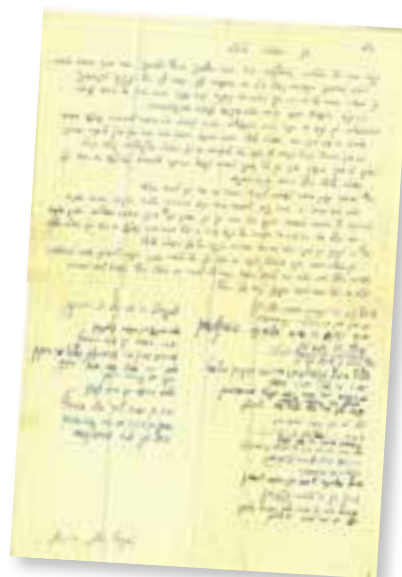
RABBI MULEH AZIMOV FARBRENGS WITH A GROUP OF MEKUROVIM DURING HIS EARLY YEARS IN PARIS.

people of France in essence tried to remove all boundaries, including religious and ethical. However, it actually brought about the opposite in the Jewish youth. Young Jews felt emptiness, and began searching for meaning and morals. It is noteworthy that Reb Muleh Azimov arrived in Paris on the same day that the revolution began. It was as if the Rebbe saw the yearning that would need to be filled, and was *makdim refuah l'makah*.

"I had approached the Lishkah with a request to participate in a *shiur* Gemara, and Reb Refael Wilschansky, who was then secretary of the Lishkah, gave me Reb Muleh's address.

"Reb Muleh invited us to 'an interesting *shiur*,' which he would deliver in his house on Shabbos afternoons. During those *shiurim* he would learn with us the first volumes of Lekutei Sichos, and afterwards we would ask him all sorts of questions on a wide range of topics. Everyone was able to ask whatever was on his mind, and Reb Muleh managed to connect every topic that was brought up with Yiddishkeit, showing us how to look at everything in the world with a Torah perspective.

"I remember Reb Muleh farbrenging with us at a later time. He emphasized that we need to remember that when one takes on upon himself to become a Chossid of the Rebbe, every *hiddur* and *minhag* becomes his; there is no difference between an elderly Chossid and a youngster who has just began keeping Torah and mitzvos. That farbrengen had a strong impact on us."⁴⁵



A LETTER FROM ANASH OF FRANCE REQUESTING THAT THE REBBE COME VISIT THEM. THE REBBE WROTE ON THE BOTTOM OF THE LETTER "נתקבל יב"ת [= יב תמוז] ה'תשי"ג".



RABBI MULEH AZIMOV AND HIS CHILDREN RECEIVE DOLLARS FROM THE REBBE, 13 TISHREI 5738.



MITZVAH TANKS TAKE TO THE STREETS OF PARIS PROMOTING THE MITVZOIM.

“THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW THE YIDDEN OF FRANCE THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO STUDY IN UNIVERSITY AND REMAIN A SHOMER TORAH AND MITZVOS.”

Reb Masoud Ben-Shushan, shliach in Orly, recounts:

“It was during those *shiurim* that Reb Muleh began telling us about the Rebbe, and it awakened within us a yearning to go see the Rebbe.”⁴⁶

Groups to 770

The extent of those early activities was so significant, that for the first Tishrei after Reb Muleh moved back to Paris, he came to the Rebbe together with a group of *mekuravim*. In the next few years larger groups came to spend Tishrei and other special days with the Rebbe. Although many of the people were still taking their first steps in Yiddishkeit, they all came for the full experience of Tishrei with the Rebbe. For many of them this was the *makeh b'patish* of their connection with the Rebbe.

Reb Shalom Ouaki relates:



“Throughout the entire month of Tishrei 5731, the Rebbe showed us many *kiruvim*. On Erev Sukkos the Rebbe requested that a representative of our group should come and receive a set of *daled minim*, in order to be *mezakeh* the rest of our group with *benching* on a lulav from the Rebbe.”⁴⁷

Reb Binyomin Mergi, a shliach in France and the administrator of Beis Chana in Paris, also merited to spend that Tishrei by the Rebbe:

“That Tishrei I was sixteen-years-old. If I thought I had gone through a big change until then, a lot more was in store for me. The Rebbe welcomed us, the *bochurim* from France, with special attention. As long as we were in 770, we saw that the Rebbe was paying close attention to us—like someone paying attention to that which he had plowed and sowed, and is now awaiting the fruits.”⁴⁸

Reb Shalom Ouaki:

“A short while after we returned from 770, Reb Muleh gathered all of

us together on a Sunday after the *shiur* and asked that each of us speak about his feelings from the trip. We all spoke excitedly about the effect it had on us. Then Reb Muleh revealed to us that it was actually the Rebbe who asked for this gathering, in order to hear about our feelings, because the Rebbe had *shepped* a lot of *nachas* from our visit. We were delighted to hear that, and we all began excitedly singing a *chassidisher niggun*.

“Then he told us that the Rebbe had requested to participate in the costs of our trip, and had given three options: eighteen dollars, half of the ticket, or the entire ticket.”

At the end of the gathering Reb Muleh told them that the Rebbe had sent a pocket size Tanya as a gift for each of them, and that really the Rebbe had wanted to call them all into a special group *yechidus* before they left, but he didn’t in the end, so as not to offend those who had already left.

Throughout the years to come, one of the main and most noticeable groups of guests coming to spend Tishrei, or any other *yoma d’pagra*, with the Rebbe was the group from France. The Rebbe showed them many special *kiruvim*, and indicated that he derived much pleasure from the group of Jews who had come so far to become real Chassidim.

Setting an Example in University

The ‘group’ of university students that had become Chassidim were not given any time to rest. Once they themselves became closer, they were immediately recruited to become shlichim themselves within their respective venues and occupations. The Rebbe often didn’t allow them to learn in yeshiva, telling them instead to remain in their universities and spread Yiddishkeit to the other students there, and then to use



A SHIUR FOR A GROUP OF BAALEI TESHUVA FROM FRANCE.



STUDENTS AT “SEMINAR” LEARNING PROGRAM, 5737.

The Rebbe’s Torah in French

The Rebbe spoke on a number of occasions about the reach of *hafotzas hamaayonos* that is accomplished through translating Chassidus to other languages, a project that was started by the Frierdiker Rebbe.

As of today, in what is a unique phenomenon and does not exist in any other county, almost all of the Rebbe’s *sichos*, *maamarim*, Reshimos, and letters have been translated to French by Rabbi Chaim Malul.

Reb Chaim Malul recalls how it all began⁵⁵:

“When the Rebbe would farbreng during weekdays, we would listen by hookup, and I would translate the Rebbe’s words for those who didn’t understand Yiddish. People began to ask me to transcribe my translations so that they would be able to study them more in depth. I did so for three months, after which I sent the Rebbe the entire package of translations and asked for the Rebbe’s advice about the future.

“The Rebbe answered that it would be worthwhile to continue, and from then on every month we would put together a booklet of the Rebbe’s *sichos* of that month. Once, during *yechidus*, I asked the Rebbe what is the correct way to transcribe the Rebbe’s *sichos*. He replied: ‘Learn the *sicha*, forget my words, and write it down in your own terms.’”



Complete Transformation

Tishrei 5734 was unique on many levels. It was a *shnas Hakhel*, the Yom Kippur war had broken out, something which had a deep affect on the Rebbe's conduct and content of *sichos* and *maamotrim*, and also, a large group of French Jews came to the Rebbe—many for their first time.

On the night of Simchas Torah, the Rebbe called the French group for a *hakafa*. This in itself was not unusual, for the Rebbe had given them a *hakafa* during the previous two years as well. What was about to happen, however, was a complete shock and surprise.

Reb Chaim Malul, shliach in Creteil recounts:

“At the *hakafa* we sang one *niggun* after another, but the Rebbe had not turned around towards the crowd to encourage the singing, so we understood that the Rebbe is waiting for something else. We quieted down, and then the Rebbe turned around, walked towards the end of his *bimah*, and began to sing.

“The hall was silent; everyone's eyes were on the Rebbe, trying to decipher the tune. None of us could have entertained in our wildest dreams what the Rebbe was about to do. Suddenly, one of the French guests whispered excitedly that the Rebbe is singing the La Marseillaise, the French national anthem! We shushed him, not believing that to be possible, but we very quickly realized that he was right...

“The group immediately began singing with out-of-this-world enthusiasm, as they knew how to do so well. Later that night throughout 770 it was possible to see groups of Chassidim, some of them with long white beards, listening to a youngster with a ponytail teach them the Rebbe's new *niggun*.”

On Shabbos Bereishis the Rebbe explained that although ‘converting’ *niggunim* is not a task that is *shayach* to us in our generation, nevertheless, since the Alter Rebbe ‘opened the faucet’ and was *mevarer* Napoleon's march, it has become possible for us to do the same.

After the *sicha*, the Rebbe once again called the entire group to come up, and the Rebbe sang the new *niggun* again. He then said a short *sicha* entirely in French, telling the Jews of France to make a revolution against the *yetzer horah* “as soon as possible”!⁵¹

A few weeks later, a strange thing happened:

The prime minister of France announced that certain notes of the song were to be changed and modified. The Rebbe explained⁵² that the *sar* of France in heaven felt that this *niggun* now belongs to *kedusha*, and therefore brought about its change.

their professions towards *hafotzas hamaayanos*.

Reb Daniel Uzan relates:

“When I was in *yechidus*, I asked the Rebbe if I should continue studying in the university, because I wanted very much to leave college and

enter a yeshiva. The Rebbe told me I should remain in college and then he said something that remained etched in my mind forever. He said, ‘This is an opportunity to show the Yidden of France that it is possible to study in

university and remain a *shomer* Torah and mitzvos.”⁴⁹

Reb Shalom Cohen recalls a similar episode:

“My friend Chaim Malul and I desperately craved to learn in yeshiva, so we wrote to the Rebbe asking where we should go. We mentioned several universities, or, we asked, if we should go to yeshiva.

“The Rebbe answered ‘בזו שקל יותר להיות שומר שבת ויו"ט—In the place where it will be the easiest to keep Shabbos and Yom Tov.’ We were convinced that the Rebbe was telling us to go learn in yeshiva, but Reb Muleh cooled off our excitement and explained that it seems to be that the Rebbe wants us to go to university. Two years later we again received a similar answer, and we understood that the Rebbe wants us to learn a profession with which we can support ourselves.

“I always wondered why the Rebbe would want us to be in college instead of learning Torah in a yeshiva, but over time it became clear to me.

“It was all of those years that we were in college, many *baalei teshuvah* later told me, that brought about the change in their own lives. The fact that we were successful in our studies, and at the same time we were able to live as observant Jews, without any contradiction between the two, left a powerful impression on them.

Reb Binyomin Mergi speaks about his own ‘non-yeshiva experience’:

“When I entered *yechidus* before Yom Kippur 5731, I wrote to the Rebbe that I am currently studying in high school, but I want to enter a yeshiva. However, as soon as I entered the room, the Rebbe asked me, ‘How many years do you have left until you graduate?’

“I answered that it would take the next two years. The Rebbe then told me that it is not worthwhile to quit my studies now, rather I should finish

them, and afterwards to start learning *limudei kodesh*.

“I obviously continued my studies in high school, and during the breaks I would put tefillin on all of my Jewish friends. When I graduated, I wrote to the Rebbe about my plans to go to yeshiva, and asked for a *bracha*. But to my surprise and dismay, the Rebbe crossed out the plans for yeshiva, and signaled that I should go to university. It was a difficult moment for me, but with the *kabolas ol* that I was educated with, I knew that the Rebbe is in essence giving me a special shlichus to spread Yiddishkeit among the students.”

Continuing the Chain

Reb Yitzchak Izakovitch relates:

“When I was in *yechidus*, the Rebbe told me that I should put special focus on working with North African immigrants, specifying the Tunisians and Moroccans. The Rebbe explained that every person has an obligation to help his friends, especially since I am familiar with their style.

“In a *yechidus* two years later, the Rebbe told me: ‘Being involved in *uforatzta* is a *din mideoraisa*, for just as one must help a poor man physically, one must help him spiritually.’

“Then the Rebbe looked at me with his piercing eyes, and said: ‘We need to spread through the entire Paris, not just concentrating on one area. In every quarter there needs to be one person dealing with *mivtzoim* in that specific area. If you have an acquaintance in one area, he must become a *טופח על מנת להטפוח*—moist enough to get others wet,” to have an effect on his own area, and so on.”⁵⁰

The atmosphere in France at the time was completely secular; throughout the entire country there were between fifty and one hundred observant Jewish families. Many of them would send their children to college without beards or yarmulkes,



THE REBBE WATCHES THE SCREEN AS THE MENORAH LIGHTING IN FRONT OF THE EIFFEL TOWER IS FEATURED DURING THE CHANUKAH LIVE PROGRAM, CHANUKAH 5752.

NONE OF US COULD HAVE ENTERTAINED IN OUR WILDEST DREAMS WHAT THE REBBE WAS ABOUT TO DO. SUDDENLY, ONE OF THE FRENCH GUESTS WHISPERED EXCITEDLY THAT THE REBBE IS SINGING THE LA MARSEILLAISE, THE FRENCH NATIONAL ANTHEM!



REB NISSAN NEMENOV ESCORTS YITZCHOK IZAKOVITCH, A FRENCH BAAL TESHUVA, TO HIS CHUPA.

and suddenly these students showed up on the scene, dressed full Chassidic garb, all while studying in the university!

These students did not stay very quiet either. During lunch breaks, they would fan out throughout the cafeterias and put on tefillin with students and invite them to shiurim Torah that would take place on campus. By 5731 over fifty (!) *shiurim* were taking place on the campuses of the various universities throughout the city.

On Fridays they would travel to the villages on the outskirts of Paris, to gather the Jews living there and make Shabbos meals together. But their primary goal was to set up classes with them that would continue throughout the year.

Slowly but surely, signs of Judaism—beards, yarmulkes, tzitzis—began to be seen on Paris streets, and a current of Yiddishkeit began to flow through the different universities.

Before Yud-Alef Nissan 5732, Reb Muleh presented the Rebbe with the key to the first Beis Lubavitch in Paris. The Rebbe *benched* him that it should grow larger and larger until they will say צר לי המקום – the space is too small, and they will need to open a new one.

True to the Rebbe's *bracha*, the Chabad House was never large enough. Throughout the week, and especially on Sundays, the center would be overflowing with men, women, and children from all walks

of life. They came to hear *shiurim* on all facets of the Torah, and for the chance to partake in the 'tree of life' of Chassidus.

Spreading Further

Over the years following the *mahapeicha* of Paris, the Rebbe sent additional shluchim to Toulouse, Nice, Lyon, Marseille, Montpellier, and other areas of the country, to bring the revolution to those cities as well.

In each of these cities, the Rebbe was intimately involved in every detail, guiding the shluchim closely in the various ways they should go about their shlichus, encouraging them during hard times, and paying special attention to their families.

Didan Notzach

From these grassroots *shiurim* and *mivtzoim*, an entire movement of Chassidim has begun. Hundreds of *baalei teshuvah*, who in turn impacted their own friends and families, many of them going on to becoming full-fledged shluchim of the Rebbe. They brought the Rebbe's words to the furthest corners of France, raising generations of children as Chassidim and shluchim around the world.

To date, there are thriving Chabad Houses in every neighborhood in Paris, just as the Rebbe anticipated in the *yechidus* with Reb Yitzchak Izakovitch. There are thousands of full fledged Chassidim, diligent on קלה כבחמורה, who have been dragged

out of the furthest spiritual depths to become the Rebbe's chassidim. They too have taken on the Rebbe's mission to go out to bring others back as well.

Two hundred years ago, the Alter Rebbe spoke of a threat called *klipas Tzorfas*, which did not suffice with keeping to its own country, but rather felt the need to advance and threaten the purity of other nations as well.

Today, that same country has completely changed its face. The only aspect of the 'old France' that remains, is its attitude of advancement and conquest. Its name, which spell the word פרצת, and its *gematria*, which equals 770, accurately portray its essence.

The Rebbe explained⁵³ that the *birur* of France represents the *birur* of the entire world towards the *geulah*, in which we see two important components of a true *birur*. Firstly, that the *tachton*—the lower level which is being transformed—continues to exist in its unique form even after the *birur* is accomplished (instead of being completely obliterated and nullified). And secondly, its *birur* was implemented through *gilui ha'etzem*, which is expressed in the fact that the

Visiting New York Universities

Reb Daniel Uzan tells over, that the Rebbe instructed them on several occasions to utilize their time in New York to visit local colleges, to tell the students about the 'French Revolution' and Jewish life in France. "Indeed, we would go around to shluchim and lecture about the amazing turnover that the Rebbe had been carrying out in France, and people would be very inspired when hearing about it"



GROUP PHOTO OF THE SHLUCHIM IN FRANCE.

work there was accomplished, both in a revealed sense and a hidden way, through our Rebbeim.

This is exactly what will happen when Moshiach comes. As the *possuk* states, ועלו מושיעים בהר ציון—They will go up to *Har Eisav*, and show over there, in that very situation, that לה' המלוכה, that Hashem runs the world.

This truly is ידידן נצח! **1**

1. This is the niggun Napoleon's March that we customarily sing following neilah on Yom Kippur. Those who were present in 770 remember it as one of the most uplifting and spiritual moments by the Rebbe, as he would stand upon his chair (or, in later years, climb up stairs) and encourage the singing with much vigor and intensity.
2. Sefer Hasichos Admur Rayatz 5703, p. 118.
3. Letter to R' Moshe Meizlish. Igros Kodesh Admur Hazaken, p. 396-397.
4. Sefer Hasichos 5752, p. 175-176.
5. To see the full story, see Sefer Hatoldos Admur Maharash p. 77.
6. See Likutei Dibburim, p. 301, 1.
7. Sefer Hasichos 5752, p. 181, footnote 43.
8. Ibid, p. 182, footnote 43.
9. Yemei Melech Vol 1, p. 380-381.
10. Ibid, p. 452.
11. Ibid, p. 453.
12. Interview with JEM My Encounter with the Rebbe project.
13. Based on the Rebbe's university

documents. The Rebbe's early years - JEM.

14. See interview with Mr. David Bezborodko on Chabad.org about the Rebbe's "lecture" at "Club du Faubourg" for scientists on the topic of the age of the world.
15. Yemei Melech Vol. 1 p. 373.
16. Ibid, p. 391. See also an episode recounted by R' Mendel Notik who heard from the Rebbetzin, Ibid. p. 390.
17. Recounted by R' Berel Junik who heard from the Rebbetzin. Yemei Melech Vol 1, p. 392.
18. See for example, Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz Vol. 15 p. 318 and 321 among many others.
19. Ibid, Vol 15, p. 208.
20. Ibid, Vol. 15 p. 150.
21. Introduction to Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz Vol 3 by Rabbi Sholom Ber Levin, p. 12.
22. See Igros Kodesh Admur rayatz Vol 4, p. 305 and p. 310, where the Rebbe signs letters of the Frierdiker Rebbe while the Frierdiker rebbe visited Paris.
23. See for example Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz Vol. 15 p. 184, 236-7.
24. Introduction to Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz Vol 15 by Rabbi Sholom Ber Levine, p. 3.
25. Recounted by R' Asher Heber. The Early Years Vol 2.
26. Ibid, p. 464.
27. Ibid, p. 463.
28. Igros Kodesh, Admur Rayatz Vol. 15 p. 172.
29. Ibid, p. 86.

30. Ibid, p. 211.
31. Yemei Melech, Vol 1. p. 517.
32. Recounted by R' Mendel Notik who heard from the Rebbetzin. The Early Years Vol 4.
33. Recounted by R' Aharon Dovid Newman. My Encounter Interview 05/11/15.
34. Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz, Vol 9, Letter 4922.
35. Sefer Hasichos 5752, p. 182.
36. Harrabi b'Pariz p. 257.
37. Igros Kodesh, Admur Rayatz Vol. 9 p. 333.
38. R' Nochum Avrohom Jacobowitz. Harabbi b'Pariz p. 240.
39. Ibid, P. 241.
40. Yemei Melech Vol 3, P. 965.
41. Later recounted by R' Schneur Zalman Butman and R' Aharon Zakon.
42. Igros Kodesh Vol 3, p. 52.
43. Igros Kodesh Vol 9, p. 3 p. 201.
44. In 5774 Kfar Chabad Magazine interviewed many of the first ba'alei teshuvah in connection with forty years since the Rebbe taught the niggun of Hoaderes V'hoemuna.
45. Kfar Chabad, issue 1514.
46. Ibid, 1508.
47. Ibid, 1504.
48. Ibid, 1515.
49. Ibid, 1503.
50. Ibid, 1505.
51. Sichos Kodesh 5734 Vol 1, p. 101.
52. Sefer Hasichos 5752, p. 184.
53. Ibid, P. 182-183.
54. Kfar Chabad, issue 1507.
55. Ibid, 1522.





דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

Headline's Answer

AS TOLD BY RABBI SAGI HAR-SHEFER, SHLIACH IN NESS ZIONA, ISRAEL
AND HIS MOTHER DR. TZIPI HAR-SHEFER

Rabbi Sagi Har-Shefer relates:

On Gimmel Tammuz 5754 I was working in my office, when my neighbor suddenly ran in and told me the terrible news being reported on the radio. I immediately grabbed my tallis, tefillin, and passport, and ran to the airport. I joined the charter flight that had been organized, and went straight to the Ohel.

The next day when I returned from New York, I received a call from my mother. Although she isn't a Lubavitcher, she would always ask the Rebbe for advice when a question arose. She explained to me that she has a pressing issue at the moment, but now that she doesn't have anyone to ask advice of anymore, she doesn't know what to do. I reassured

her that she should write to the Rebbe just like she had always done in the past and surely the Rebbe will find a way to answer her.

Dr. Tzippy Har-Shefer (Rabbi Har-Shefer's mother) elaborates:

Just to provide some background, in the early 1990s I worked for the city of Haifa under Mayor Aryeh Gur'el. I oversaw a project called *Shikum Hashichunot*—otherwise known as “Project Renewal”—which was a program for the rehabilitation of distressed, underprivileged communities.

In 1993, Mr. Gur'el lost the elections to Amram Mitzna and it was decided to discontinue this project due to a budget problem. Mr. Mitzna offered me a new

job as director of *Beit Hagefen*, which was undergoing management changes at the time. The Beit Hagefen Center is a Jewish-Arab cultural center, which runs joint social and cultural programs for both Jews and Arabs.

I was hesitant about the new job, but time was of essence and I had to make a decision whether I was indeed interested in taking on this new job opportunity or not. I was afraid that if I declined the offer, I would be out of a job for a while, but I was also hesitant to say yes. In such a situation I would usually write to the Rebbe to get advice, but I felt that since Gimmel Tammuz, I no longer had whom to turn to. With this dilemma in mind, I called my son Sagi.

Having just returned from New York, I was shocked when he told me to write to the Rebbe! I was very hesitant and skeptical, but I really needed advice about the pending job opportunity so I decided to take my son's suggestion and write to the Rebbe anyway. With reassurance from my son, I wrote down all of my concerns and reservations. After sending the letter to be read at the Ohel, I inserted it into a Tanya that I had at home and awaited what would happen with a mixture of curiosity and skepticism.

Rabbi Har-Shefer continues:

My mother wrote her letter and I sent it to Rabbi Binyomin Klein, to take to the Ohel. By Wednesday, my mother was already calling me to find out what will be happening now that she wrote to the Rebbe. She couldn't understand how she would ever get an answer, but I told her that we must have some patience and that somehow there will be one.

That Friday, my parents came to my house from Haifa to spend Shabbos with us. After *seudas Shabbos*, my mother went to her room and suddenly I heard her screaming, "There's an answer!"

Dr. Har-Shefer explains:

I enjoyed reading a weekly column from the former mayor, Aryeh Gur'el, in the local Haifa newspaper called "*Colbo*". As a city employee, I particularly enjoyed it, as he primarily discussed local city gossip and the like. That particular week, I opened the newspaper and was surprised to see that Mr. Gur'el's column—which was usually about the ins and outs of the city—was about the Rebbe!

I was literally shaking when I read the headline, "My Encounters with the Lubavitcher Rebbe." I was further stunned upon seeing the synopsis of the article, which read:

...ומגלה ש...

התנגד הרבי בכל תוקף לקיומו של בית הגפן בחיפה..."

"The former mayor recalls his meetings with the Rebbe, and reveals that...the Rebbe strongly opposed the existence of Beit Hagefen in Haifa." (See sidebar for a summary of his article).

After reading the headline and subtitle, I immediately realized that I received my answer directly from the Rebbe. I understood that even after Gimmel Tammuz, the Rebbe can still direct me to his answers. Needless to say, I called Mr. Mitzna and told him I would not be accepting this new position. ①

In the article, Mr. Gur'el describes the two times he had visited the Rebbe. He starts by relating how although his first *yechidus* was scheduled for fifteen minutes, "it lasted two hours," before going on to note that the Rebbe spoke to him "in four languages; Hebrew, English, Yiddish and French."

Gur'el writes with amazement how the Rebbe "knew so much about me and my background, and demonstrated tremendous knowledge about what was happening in the city." But then, Gur'el makes a shocking statement and admission: "At the Rebbe's request, the contents of this *yechidus* were never made public. Today, however, I am allowing myself to reveal some details."

According to Gur'el, at first the conversation focused on the educational needs of the people of Haifa, and notes how the Rebbe's "knowledge of the city, was amazing. . . The Rebbe knew the statistics, the programs, and to this day I can not explain it."

At one point during the *yechidus*, the conversation turned to the good relations shared between the Jews and Arabs in the city of Haifa, which the Rebbe praised, but then, Gur'el writes: "The Rebbe inquired about Beit Hagefen and spoke strongly against it. When I asked him why, he expressed concern that it could lead to intermarriage..."

Gur'el goes on to give more details of his *yechidus* and concludes that the Rebbe gave him a pair of tefillin as a gift and he gave the Rebbe the medallion of the city of Haifa.



YOUR STORY

Share your story with A Chassidsher Derher by emailing feedback@derher.org.



Outdoor Distribution

YUD-GIMMEL TISHREI 5745

לע"נ האשה החשובה מרת חי' מושקא בת הרה"ח הרה"ח רב פעלים וכו' הר"ר דוד ע"ה פירסאן
נלב"ע י"ד טבת תשס"ד
נדפס ע"י וזכות משפחתה שי'

In the past, this column featured pictures of both 'ordinary' and 'rare' moments with the Rebbe. We've seen pictures of various *chalukos*¹—distributions of dollar bills and coins for tzedakah, Tanya's, siddurim, and much more. On the Rebbe's directive, some of those distributions were geared strictly to specific crowds; whether it was children under or over a particular age, shluchim, and so on.

Nevertheless there were also many unofficial *chalukos* which, with time, grew to become almost embedded in the routine of the Rebbe's schedule.

For one, very often as the Rebbe would enter or leave 770, and enter or leave the shul for *tefillos*, the Rebbe would distribute coins for tzedakah to the children standing nearby.



In these pictures we see one such 'common' *chaluka* of nickels to children, as the Rebbe is on his way out of 770, departing for the Ohel.

The *chaluka* took an interesting turn, when, after giving coins to all the children, the Rebbe began giving to the assembled *bochurim* as well.

Of course it didn't take long before there was somewhat of a commotion, as more

bochurim tried to reach out for a coin. To maintain order, a table was brought out, resulting in a rather extraordinary scene: the Rebbe standing at a table outside 770, distributing coins to a line of *bochurim*.

The Rebbe also handed a coin to Rabbis Groner, Klein, and Harlig who were present at the time. **1**

1. See "Behind the Picture" in issue 32 (109) - Sivan 5775 and issue 27 (104) Teves 5775 *et al.*

Derher**Letters**

A forum for readers to send their feedback, add to, or ask any questions about articles. Submit your letter to feedback@derher.org.

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



Wondrous Fruit

Dear Editors,

In reference to the article about public menorah lightings [“Towers of Light” Derher Kislev 5776], I would like to add an incredible response we were *zoche* to have received from the Rebbe 25 years ago.

We had recently arrived in Sweden on shlichus and it was our son’s first birthday.

We put a pen in his little hand and together we wrote a birthday *pan* to the Rebbe. As we faxed in his letter, at the same time we sent a letter regarding the menorah.

Our initial proposition of lighting a big public menorah in the center of Gothenburg, Sweden was met by hesitation and fear from many of our new friends in the community. They were concerned that taking Judaism to the streets was risky and could cause anti-Semitism, ח”ו.

We wrote to the Rebbe saying that although members of the local community were hesitant, we were ready to set up a public menorah with the *haskama* and *brocha* of the Rebbe.

The Rebbe’s response was quick in coming:

Aleph:

“מנהגי יום הולדת של בנם שיח”

[Fulfill] the *minhagim* of a birthday of your son, *sheyichye*. [I.e. we as parents should fulfill the *minhagim* on our son’s birthday as he was too young at the time.]

Beis: (referring to the Chanukah menorah)

“ויהיו מזה פירות נפלאות”

“This will bear wondrous fruits.”

Over 500 people attended that first year. Since then, we have clearly seen the fruits that the Rebbe promised us. The annual Chanukah event has had a tremendous impact on the consciousness of the people in our city. It continues to be our biggest event, attracting Yidden that we would never meet otherwise and it is an immense display of Jewish pride.

This year, due to the recent terror attack in France, there were security concerns throughout the European communities. The community canceled the Wizo bazaar, which heightened the fears of local Jews.

On the first night of Chanukah, a beautiful crowd of proud Jews gathered to celebrate Chanukah at Götaplatsen – despite storm and flood warnings.

Miraculously, (after an urgent letter to the Rebbe) in the middle of a storm, there was suddenly a clear starry sky and an unpredicted lull in the storm at exactly the right time! It was a clear and open miracle, witnessed by all who were present and all those anxiously following the weather reports. The very moment the event ended, the wind resumed howling, roaring and hurling branches all over town, until the next morning.

We shared with the crowd the Rebbe's vision, encouragement and blessing for Chanukah at Götaplatsen 25 years ago.

This was a tremendously uplifting and encouraging event, and an injection of courage for our community. The Rebbe's answer from so many years ago was just what everyone needed to hear now!

Alexander Namdar
Gothenborg, Sweden



Reason to Celebrate

Dear Editors,

Congratulations on over 5 years of publishing A Chassidisher Derher, I can only imagine the time and effort it takes to gather and research the material for such a wonderful source of inspiration.

There is something I want to point out and add to in the Dvar Malchus of the Kislev issue ["Celebrate Together" Derher Kislev 5776]. In the sicha from Yud-Daled Kislev 5739—the 50 year anniversary of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's chasuna—the Rebbe said, "We must find a source (at least a *raz*) in Torah for the idea that on the anniversary of one's wedding, friends and relatives gather to hold joyous *farbrengens*."

In the publication, the Rebbe's answer was not printed, but he did add:

"The source for this is hinted in the Midrash, which says "אזלת לקרתא", that when one goes to a town, he should follow its customs. This is found in, (1) a way of ascent: when Moshe Rabeinu remained on the mountain for 40 days and nights he didn't eat or drink, because he was the *malachim's* "town;" and in (2) a way of descent: even though *malachim* don't eat, when they visited Avraham Avinu they did. Based on this, when one celebrates an anniversary and it results in an increase of Torah and mitzvos, it becomes מנהג ישראל תורה היא.

I also want to express how much I enjoy when you bring הוראות from the Rebbe that *bochurim* got, whether in *yechidus* or in letters. Besides for the fact that many of them are applicable to us now, in our *avodas Hashem*, it brings out the type of connection that *bochurim* had with the Rebbe, and his connection with them in every aspect of their lives. May we merit to feel this bond in a physical and revealed way NOW!

Menachem Mendel Galperin
Morristown, N.J.



Far reaching Impact

Dear Editors,

Thank you for the incredible article about the Tanya *shiurim* on the radio ["Tanya on the Radio" Derher Kislev 5776]. Reading it reminded me of all the details surrounding the start of Rabbi Wineberg's Tanya *shiur* and the amazing encouragement he received from the Rebbe.

As is written in the article, just before the Rebbe started saying Rashi *sichos*, Rabbi Wineberg asked the Rebbe about taking a part of the Motzei Shabbos *shiur* to say over a *sicha* in memory of the Rebbe's mother ז"ל. The Rebbe

responded in the affirmative and added that this “supports his thought to farbreng, *bli neder*, every Shabbos during the entire year.” From that point on, this became an integral part of the weekly Tanya *shiur*.

I would like to mention two very interesting episodes that I heard of, which show the enormous impact of the weekly *chazarah* of the *sichos*.

At the farbrengen of Shabbos Tetzaveh 5725 the Rebbe spoke about the Rashi קודש קדשים הוא לה' regarding the mizbeach. The Rebbe's explanation included the answer to a long standing question (“צריך עיון גדול”) from the Minchas Chinuch (this piece of the *sicha* is printed in Lekutei Sichos Vol 6, Pgs. 184-185).

Following the *chazarah* of the *sicha* that night on the radio, a Yid from the Bronx, who was a great grandchild of the Minchas Chinuch called in, expressing shock and amazement. For years he had been searching for an answer to this question and did not come across anything. He finally got the answer when listening to the radio on that Motzei Shabbos.

Another episode that brings out the impact of this *chazarah*, took place after gimme! Tammuz. Being that we didn't merit to hear a farbrengen on Shabbos, Rabbi Wineberg would give over *sichos* that he remembered from previous years. Once, following the *shiur*, a Yid called in complaining that Rabbi Wineberg had missed a key point in the Rebbe's explanation when quoting the *sicha*. This Yid had heard the original *shiur* and remembered it differently from twenty years beforehand!

In the last two pages of the article you write about the great influence of the radio reaching different corners of the globe within split seconds, and that the Rebbe taught us how this is all for the purpose of spreading Torah and mitzvos. One can only imagine how many thousands of Jews were *niskarev* to Chassidus and to the Rebbe and continue to be influenced today through the use of technology to spread Chassidus and the Rebbe's Torah.

M. Davidson
Brooklyn, NY

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ולזכרון הרבנית הצדקנית נ"ע זי"ע
 בקשר עם יום ההילולא כ"ב שבט

לעילוי נשמת איש תם וישר והצנע לכת
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' בצלאל ז"ל בהרה"ח הרה"ת ר' סימון ז"ל יעקבסאן
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 נדפס על ידי ולזכות בנו הרה"ת ר' ירחמיאל וזוגתו מרת רבקה לאה
 ויוצאי-חלציהם
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יעקבסאן

לזכות החתן הרה"ת ר' חיים לוי יצחק הכהן שי' כהן
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לזכות
אסתר יוכבד בת שיינדל דוידה
 לרגל יום הולדתה
 ושתתברך לשנת הצלחה בגו"ר
 ולחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר

לזכרון
הרבנית הצדקנית מרת חי' מושקא נ"ע זי"ע
 בקשר עם יום ההילולא כ"ב שבט
 DEDICATED BY
DOVID AND CHANA JUNIK
 IN HONOR OF THEIR CHILDREN
NAFTOLI, MUSHKA, CHAIM, AND DOVBER

לזכות
 אבינו מורינו הרה"ח ר' אברהם חיים ישראל בן צבי' חי' שי'
 לאריכת ימים ושנים טובות מתוך גפ"ן בהרחבה
 נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו

מוקדש ע"י
 הרה"ת ר' לוי יצחק ומרת חנה באנון
 לזכות ילדיהם מנחם מענדל, חי' מושקא, שרה, חנינא, וישראל
 לחיזוק התקשרותם לכ"ק אדמו"ר

לזכרון
 הרבנית הצדקנית מרת חי' מושקא נ"ע זי"ע
 בקשר עם יום ההילולא כ"ב שבט
 נדפס ע"י
 ר' מיכאל הכהן וזוגתו לאה ומשפחתם שי' כהן
 מנשסתר, אנגלי'

לזכות החתן הרה"ת ר' חיים לוי יצחק הכהן שי' כהן
 והכלה מרת יהודית חביבה שתחי' דובינסקי
 לרגל בואם בקשרי שידוכין בשעטומ"צ אור ליום י"א טבת תשע"ו
 נדפס ע"י הוריהם
 הרה"ת ר' אברהם הכהן וזוגתו מרת רחל שיחיו כהן
 הרה"ת ר' חיים שניאור זלמן וזוגתו מרת טיבע גאולה שיחיו דובינסקי

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

A Chassidisher Derher
 Vaad Talmidei Hatmimim



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