



THE PRECIOUS LETTER A Letter of Hope and its Timeless Message

NAVIGATING THE SEA *The Rebbe's Sichos: A Guide*

צמאה לך נפשי

Lifted by Yearning – The Historic Farbrengen when the first Niggun was taught

The Remarkable Story of one Bochur's Journey that ended at a Farbrengen in 770

WHEN I MET THE BAAL SHEM TOY



בס"ד

The articles in this publication are original content by the staff of A Chassidisher Derher.

> Special thanks to Sichos in English Chabad.org Rabbi Michoel Zeligson

> > **Design** Lev Itchikel

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The Chassidisher Derher is a weekly publication for Yeshiva Bochurim covering many topics of interest. This expanded edition is published periodically throughout the year. Published in conjunction with the Vaad Talmidei Hatmimim.





HANDWRITING ON THE COVER:

Postscript to a letter sent by the Rebbe to Reb Avrohom Pariz, dated 9 Shevat, 5711 (one day before the Frierdiker Rebbe's first Yortzeit). Full letter appears in Igros Kodesh Vol. 4 pg. 152.

table of contents



Eternal Hiskashrus



Ksav Yad Kodesh *"The Rebbe will find*

a way to answer"



Sharei Neggina: Tzomah Lecho Nafshi Lifted by Yearning – the Historic Farbrengen when the Niggun was taught





Inyonei Geulah

Moshiach: Rav and Melech





Leben Mitten Rebben *Chof Ches Sivan – 5751*

28

Yud Beis-Yud Gimmel Tammuz The witty escape

36

Behind the Picture *The Rebbe, the key, and the photographer*

Rambam Moreh Shiur

FEATURE ARTICLES:



"When I met the Baal Shem Tov" *The story of a Bochur who came to the Rebbe for the first time and his life was totally transformed*



The Precious Letter

The Frierdiker Rebbe's letter of hope and its timeless message



Navigating the Sea *The Rebbe's Torah*

Dedicated By Zalman and Pessi Schochet and family

לזכות הגה״ח הרב ישראל פרידמאן שליט״א

שיצליח בעבודתו הק' עוד רבות בשנים מתוך בריות גופא ונהורא מעליא עד ביאת גוא״צ

נדפס ע"י הרוצה בעילום שמו

A WORD FROM THE EDITORS

It is with great pleasure and thanks to Hashem that we present our readership with this special issue of "A Chassidisher Derher."

As we approach Gimmel Tammuz for the eighteenth time (!), we take note of the fact that many of our readers were born at a time where they never had the opportunity (as of now) to see the Rebbe physically, or be seen by him. In this regard, we are reminded of the powerful words the Rebbe said in a *Sicha* on Pesach Sheini, 5710, a mere few months after the Frierdiker Rebbe's *Histalkus*:

Based on the famous lesson derived by the Frierdiker Rebbe from the idea of Pesach Sheini that "ס'איז ניטא קיין פארפאלן" (It's never too late to rectify our misdoings), the Rebbe says that even those who never saw the Rebbe and may think that they no longer have a chance to properly connect to him must understand that for them as well, it is never too late! A true and genuine connection can be developed even today.

In the Rebbe's words:

ישנם כאלה שאף פעם לא היו אצל הרבי. ישנם גם כאלה שבפועל ממש ראו את הרבי, ולא רק פעם אחת אלא פעמים רבות, אבל לא נפעל אצלם דבר, כך, שלאמיתו של דבר לא היו אצל הרבי אף פעם, "זיי האַבן ניט דערהערט", ורק נדמה להם שראו את הרבי.

וכיון שכן, יכולים לחשוב שעכשיו כבר אבוד.

על זה באה ההוראה מפסח שני – שגם אלה שלא הקריבו פסח ראשון, ואפילו אם הסיבה לכך היא באשמתם ("לכם"), יכולים לתקן את העבר ע"י הקרבת פסח שני, ועד"ז בנדו"ד, שגם אלה שעד עתה לא היתה אצלם הכרה והרגשה כו' יכולים מכאן ולהבא להכיר ולהרגיש ("דערהערן"), ועי"ז לתקן גם את העבר. וטעם הדבר – כאמור – שהרבי אינו מבודד וחסידים אינם מבודדים, ומצד הכח של הרבי שנמצא אצל החסידים, יכולים גם עתה להכיר ולהרגיש, ואפילו אם עד עתה לא הכירו והרגישו.

Sichos like these (especially those said by the Rebbe during the first year following the Frierdiker Rebbe's *Histalkus*) serve as a most telling message for Chassidim in a difficult time as ours. We are constantly reminded that even while we eagerly await the time that we'll be able to see the Rebbe again *Be'gashmiyus*, we are nevertheless capable to stand strong in our *Hiskashrus* and live with the Rebbe much as we would while we had his presence physically.

It is precisely this message that we hope to convey to you, our reader, with this publication. You will read articles, *Sichos*, letters, and stories of the *Rabbeim* illustrating how the connection between a Rebbe and his *Chassidim* is not restricted to the confines of physical time and space.

May Hashem help that already before this Gimmel Tammuz we will be reunited with the Rebbe *Be'gashmiyus*, and we will be able (in the Rebbe's words) to "Conclude the preparations for the *Yom Hahilula* together with the *Baal Hahilula*," with the coming of Moshiach, may it be *B'karov Mammosh*!

א געזונט'ן זומער, A Chassidisher Derher Chof Ches Sivan, 5772

האומנם ביינקט זיך אייך ניט?

ת"ח ת"ח על הידיעות אודות ההתועדות דיט"כ ובטח התועדו גם בנר ה' ויכתוב גם עד"ז ונא ונא להשתדל הוא וכל חבורתו תי' בכבוש של החוצה, ואם חסר לפי שעה די מוט ע"ז יתבוננו אז דאס האלט אפ די גאולה, תחה"מ און צו זעהן זיך מיטן רבי'ן דעם שווער מיטן רב'ין זיין פאטער וכו' וכו' האומנם ביינקט זיך אייך ניט? והיש השתדלות שתקשה בעיניהם ובלבד שיגיעו לזה? און דאס איז דאך דברים כפשוטם, ניט על דרך הצחות.

(ממכתב ט"ו טבת תיש"א)



The Rebbe; *Our* Nossi

Throughout the years, the Rebbe constantly assured us that even years after his *Histalkus*, a Rebbe remains connected to his Chassidim much as he was before and it remains our duty to strengthen our *Hiskashrus* with each passing year. The following is a small selection of *Sichos* on this subject.

Eternal Two-way Bond¹

THE TZADDIK REMAINS CONNECTED BELOW

After a *Neshoma* leaves this world, its connection to the physical world will vary through different stages. During the first twelve months for example, we are told that the *Neshoma* constantly ascends and subse-

they want to be.

This is especially true after their passing because *Tzaddikim* are greater after their passing than during their lifetime (as stated in *Masechta Chullin*). Hence, the *Tzaddik* is given the option to remain connected to the physical world even after the completion of the twelve-month period – if he decides that it is in his better interest to do so.

I have stated already a long time ago: the (Frierdiker) Rebbe has already explained and clarified everything we need to know we must only identify where in his writings a subject is discussed, either explicitly or in allusion

quently descends, but when the twelvemonth period ends, it only ascends, without coming down anymore.

Although the above is true regarding all *Yidden* – great *Tzaddikim* and simple people alike – nevertheless, a select few are not bound by this protocol. *Chaza'l* tell us that very great *Tzaddikim* are given control over what happens in this world י"צדיק גוזר ("צדיק מבטל") and are therefore capable of deciding where it is

THE REBBE'S MESIRUS NEFESH

The (Frierdiker) Rebbe is one who most certainly wishes to remain with us here in this lowly world.

Throughout his lifetime we observed how he willingly sacrificed his material and spiritual welfare for the sake of his fellow Jew. [This he based on the premise set by the Alter Rebbe that *Ahavas Yisroel* is the basis for *Ahavas Hashem*; when one focuses on *Ahavas Yisroel*, not only will this not negate in his personal service of Hashem, on the contrary, it only strengthens his *Ahavas Hashem*.]

We also find in the *Gemora* that once a person has completed most of the years of his life in good conduct, he can be certain that things will continue in this manner.

In our instance: the (Frierdiker) Rebbe sacrificed himself throughout his lifetime for others; we can be sure that now as well – even after the twelve-month period when the *Neshoma* typically only goes higher and ceases its connection with this world – the (Frierdiker) Rebbe continues to stay connected with us here.

Despite the fact that while remaining on high he would enjoy many heavenly revelations, nevertheless he negates these 'delights' in his desire to do good for others. His love and care is unconditional and beyond reason, as we saw time and again throughout his lifetime.

AT THE YEAR'S CONCLUSION: STRENGTHENING OUR HISKASHRUS

Practically speaking:

We now have passed the (Frierdiker) Rebbe's first *Yom-Hilula*.

[It should be noted that all along, I have tried to avoid the use of the term "first

Yortzeit"; when I feel the need to say "first" I say "the first *Hilula*." We all hope that there will not be any more than one *Yortzeit*², for we will see the fulfillment of the *Possuk* "הקיצו ורננו שוכני עפר", and we will no longer commemorate any *Yortzeit's*, only *Hilula's* (which are applicable after *Techiyas Hameisim* as well).]

Some may think that, *Chas Ve'Sholom*, our *Hiskashrus* with the Rebbe is now weakened somewhat. The truth though, is quite to the contrary. Now that the (Frierdiker) Rebbe is continuously going higher and higher, there is more in his power to share with us here below, making it easier for us to strengthen ourselves in doing what he would want of us; i.e. the *Shlichus* he gave each of us.

"DER REBBE HUT ALTZ BAVORNT"

This is also the reply to those who have been asking whether or not to continue reciting the (Frierdiker) Rebbe's *Kapitel* each day even after Yud Shevat, and if yes, until when must this continue? The answer is: continue saying it until Yud Beis Tammuz, when the (Frierdiker) Rebbe will grow one year older and we will move on to recite the following *Kapitel*. For even after the *Neshoma* leaves the body, there is reason to say that she still grows from year to year. This can be proven based on various Torah sources, but one clear indication in this regard can be found in the (Frierdiker) Rebbe's own writings:

[I have stated already a long time ago: the (Frierdiker) Rebbe has already explained and clarified everything we need to know ("דער רבי האט אלץ באווארנט") we must only identify where in his writings a subject is discussed, either explicitly or in allusion.]

In a *Reshima* recorded by the (Frierdiker) Rebbe after his arrival in the United States, he writes of a vision he had of his Father where he commentated on his new *Kapitel* – *Pei-Dalit* – years after he had long passed on. Clearly then, the Rebbe is indicating, even after the *Histalkus*, the *Neshoma* continues to grow year by year.

Constantly Increasing³

BLESSINGS CONTINUE INCREASINGLY Throughout his lifetime, the (Frierdiker) Rebbe imparted to us great capabilities, including the power of true *Mesirus Nefesh*, enabling us to accomplish the missions he gave us and follow his teachings.

But this stream of blessing from the Rebbe does not end with his *Histalkus*. After his passing, his care and concern for us only grows stronger, for, as the Alter Rebbe assures us in *Iggeres Hakodesh*, a true leader won't forsake his people. As the *Gemora* relates about Moshe Rabeinu, the first faithful shepherd of the Jewish people, אומה להלן, he continues to serve his people from on high.

MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS!

We are now standing twenty years after the *Histalkus*. In Torah, we find a clear example by Shimshon, whose role was similar to that of a *Nossi*, taking care of the *Yidden* in all matters, and who continued to lead his people even twenty years after his passing.

The Talmud Yerushalmi states:

One *Possuk* says of Shimshon "He judged the people for forty years", while another *Possuk* says "He judged the people for twenty years," implying that the *Pelishtim* were afraid of him for twenty years after his passing, just as they were during his lifetime.

What happened after the twenty year period was over? We cannot assume that after the twenty years there was a decline in Jewish leadership, for holiness only gets stronger with time, "מעלין בקדש".

Concerning the leadership of Shimshon,

he was succeeded by another Shofet twenty years later, however, regarding a Nossi מי" הען לנו תמורתו" his *Nesius* only grows stronger from year to year, even after twenty years!⁴

Leading us Out of Golus⁵

THE REBBE WILL LEAD US OUT OF GALUS!

May Hashem help that the (Frierdiker) Rebbe will come back in a *Guf* and lead us out of *Galus*! True, the normal order of things is that *Techiyas Hameisim* will only be after the coming of Moshiach, but certain select individuals (*"Yechidei segula"*) will be able to arise earlier⁶. Beginning with my father-in-law, the Rebbe; he will come back in a *Guf* (no difference how; whether through the door, the window, or the roof) – he'll gather all the Jewish people and announce: "It's time to leave the Galus! Let us go to *Eretz Hakodesh*!

1. Based on the *Sicha* of **Yud Shevat**, **5711**, as it appears in Lekutei Sichos vol. 2 pg. 494, with some additions from the Rebbe's original words as they can be heard on the audio recording of the Farbrengen.

2. The Rebbe cried while saying these words.

3. The following are short excerpts of an incredible *Sicha* said by the Rebbe on Motzoei Shabbos, Yud Shevat, 5730. For a better comprehension of the subjects discussed, it is advisable to see the *Sicha* in its entirety as it appears in SIchos Kodesh 5730 vol. 1 pg. 412, or listen to the recording of the Farbrengen, *Sicha* 6.

4. לאלות הענין, ראה בשיחת י' שבט תשמ"ג: "מציאותה של בכללות הנשמה נצחית היא גם לאחרי ההסתלקות. וכאשר מדובר אודות נשמתו של נשיא בישראל – אזי מתבטא ענין הנצחיות שבושמה גם בענין הנשיאות, כלומר שפעולתו בעולם (שזהו תכון ענין הנשיאות) היא גם באופן נצחי... "עיי"ש באריכות הביאור. (התוועדויות תשמ"ג ח"ב עמ' 800 ואילך).

5. Sicha Shavuos, 5710. (Toras Menachem Vol. 1 pg. 100).

6. See the Rebbe's handwritten response published in the Expanded Derher – Shevat 5772.







The Undercover Mission

The Alter Rebbe was outstanding, both as a leader and as an organizer. Every word he spoke and every decision he made was the result of careful consideration and planning. With his vast knowledge and forceful determination he never once retreated from anything he had decided upon – neither in spiritual matters nor in worldly matters – regarding his public service.

Reflective of a true leader, the Alter Rebbe's public service was conducted in absolute discretion; only those who truly needed to know were kept informed. And even then, they were instructed by the Alter Rebbe to maintain the secrecy.

n the year 5532, Empress Catherine II assumed control over White Russia and granted civil rights to the Jews of the annexed territories. The Alter Rebbe saw this as a good opportunity to send several Jewish families to these territories.

Choosing twelve men¹ from the chassidic community, most of which were energetic young scholars, the Alter Rebbe helped them and their families settle in their new surroundings. Their special mission was that, in the course of their business affairs, they were to become acquainted with the counts, princes, dukes, and heads of the government ministries. This effort would form the cornerstone of his public affairs program.

A plan was deliberated for the twelve emissaries in the capital city, and one of them, Reb Avraham Yaakov ("the Smith"), was elected to lead the effort. Using their acquaintance with the nobility and the government officials, the group aided the neighboring Jewish communities for many years. When the chassid Reb Avraham Yaakov passed away, the Alter Rebbe chose his son, Reb Shmuel Moshe, who was smart, capable, and energetic, to be his father's successor.

The following year Poland was conquered and soon became a breeding ground of Jewhatred. French professors began spreading false accusations against prominent Jewish figures and greatly influenced the Polish nobility.

When the secret Public Affairs Committee of the chassidim learned of the growing animosity, Reb Shmuel Moshe, the group leader, instructed each member of the group to approach the officials with whom they held sway, and speak well of the Jews. He further instructed them to influence the Interior Ministry's local office to suppress letters from officials of the provincial governments – speaking ill of the Jews – from reaching the Interior Minister.

Reb Shmuel Moshe, himself, was well acquainted with Count Lubamirski who held influence at the court of Empress Catherine II. However, his efforts were in vain as Count Lubamirski couldn't be swayed. Another member of the committee, the chassid Reb Zundel Yitzchak of Shklov, knew Lord Potimkin who held also held great influence over the Empress, and managed to persuade him to intercede for the Jews. Lord Potimkin succeeded in persuading the Empress to send agents to investigate the reports against the Jews, and she ordered the Minister of the Interior to send a reliable official. The official was to travel throughout Lithuania, Little Poland, and Ukraine to observe the commercial affairs and lifestyles of the Jews, and their relations with their non-Jewish citizens. Every meeting and encounter was to be written down in a notebook and the mission was to be completed within two years.

The Minister of the Interior referred the Empress' command to his assistant Niksin. However, Niksin was a well-known anti-Semite and he chose the famed author Derzhavin² for the job – a man whose Jew hatred was equal to his.

In his youth, Derzhavin had been an apprentice to an estate owner near Disna. At the time, Reb Dov Moshe was renting the estate, and the young Derzhavin would often visit him. Reb Dov Moshe, impressed by the young apprentice, would regularly praise Derzhavin's achievements to the estate owner. Many years later – after Reb Dov Moshe had moved to Petersburg and Derzhavin had become a distinguished figure in the literary world – the two happened to meet and immediately recognized each other. Derzhavin was reminded of his youth, and asked to visit Reb Dov Moshe at his home.

Reb Dov Moshe spoke to Derzhavin several times about his attitude toward the Jews, and reproached him for his hatred. And yet, despite his many proofs to the virtues of the Jewish people, Derzhavin only replied, "If all your fellow Jews were like you, I would love them; at least, I would not hate



They managed to obtain copies to some of Derzhavin's notes, and a list of bribes that had taken place. Names and dates were all recorded in detail

them so much."

Now, when word spread that the author Derzhavin had been appointed by the Interior Minister to undertake the investigation, Reb Dov Moshe visited Derzhavin, urging him to be fair in his report – as would be expected from such a scholarly writer.

However, Reb Dov Moshe found Derzhavin in very cheerful spirits.

"I will fulfill this mission with a joyful heart," he said. "And as for you, my longtime friend, and your fellow Jews - prepare yourselves to go into exile.³ In two years' time, when I return from my journey, my first recommendation will be to expel the Jews from the capital city."

Reb Dov Moshe took leave of Derzhavin with a growing sense of gloom. Reporting

the conversation to the other members, the committee seemed resigned to their fate – only Reb Shmuel Moshe remained unconcerned.

The meeting tarried on late and concluded with several instructions:

The happenings at the Empress' court and the visit to Derzhavin were to remain secret, and if the royal decree did happen to become public knowledge, the committee would try to wave it off with little concern.

Additionally, it was decided to send an emissary to the Alter Rebbe, to inform him of the situation. Since Reb Dov Moshe knew Derzhavin well, and had personally heard his evil plans, they decided to send Reb Dov Moshe of Disna to the Alter Rebbe.

The Alter Rebbe's replied to the commit-

tee with specific instructions:

An agent with the details of Derzhavin's planned itinerary should be sent to him immediately, and that the council members should continue their diplomatic efforts.

In his reply, the Alter Rebbe also reassured the council members regarding Derzhavin's threat of expulsion, quoting the verses, "Let not the [warrior] who girds on [his sword before battle] boast like one who removes it [from his belt after victory in battle],"⁴ and "Deliverance is the L-rd's,"⁵ and concluded with a brocha.

When Reb Dov Moshe returned to Petersburg he procured a copy of Derzhavin's planned itinerary, along with a list of names of the people he would be visiting. An estimate of Derzhavin's travel time was also obtained, and the information was relayed to the Alter Rebbe.

The Alter Rebbe chose two businessmen, instructing them to arrange their schedule similar to Derzhavin's itinerary. One of them was the chassid Reb Shmaryahu Zalman of Polotzk⁶, a dealer in silk and velvet cloth, and an expert tailor of women's clothing. The second was the chassid Reb Nasan of Shklov⁷, a dealer in jewels and precious stones.

Through the guise of business pursuits, they were to try to gain admittance to the homes of the officials and the estate owners whom Derzhavin planned to visit. Every encounter was to be recorded in writing and no expense was to be spared in obtaining information.

Reb Shmaryahu Zalman and Reb Nasan fulfilled their mission with genuine mesirus nefesh, and, with cunning and guile, they managed to obtain copies to some of Derzhavin's notes, and a list of bribes that had taken place. Names and dates were all recorded in detail.

During this time, Empress Catherine died, leaving her son Paul to inherit the throne. He was an honorable and peaceloving person, and he surrounded himself with advisors who pursued justice. His chief advisors were Counts Dalgarukov and Lubamirski, men of stature that had been spurned by Empress Catherine for degenerate ministers.

Czar Paul also replaced the government ministers with finer people, striving to improve the conditions of the population – including the Jews. When he ascended the throne, he granted the rights of citizenship to the Jews of Courlan. It was as though the Jewish people were given a breath of fresh air.

Remembering the Alter Rebbe's words, quoting the verses, "Let not the one who girds on [his sword] boast like one who removes it," and "Deliverance is the L-rd's," it was clear to the Public Affairs Committee that the new atmosphere within government circles was what the Alter Rebbe had hinted to.

Meanwhile, the Alter Rebbe summoned the chassidim Reb Moshe Vilenker⁸ and Reb Moshe Meisels⁹, supplying them the information that Reb Shmaryahu Zalman and Reb Nasan had obtained. He instructed them to arrange the material in proper order, and then take it to Petersburg to meet with the committee and determine the next step. Enlisting in the help of counts and noblemen who were in a position to exert their influence in favor of the Jewish people was key.

The chassidim Reb Moshe Meisels and Reb Moshe Vilenker executed their instructions. When they arrived in Petersburg, they found that the writer Derzhavin was already there. Through his acquaintances, Reb Dov Moshe of Disna learned that Derzhavin was in the process of submitting his final report.

The wicked Derzhavin took no notice of the new atmosphere at the Imperial Court. He submitted the report based on his investigations in the cities where the Jews lived, severely maligning the Jews. In a personal letter to Czar Paul, he stated that he had accomplished his mission honestly, as assigned to him by the empress.

During the three months of Shvat, Adar I, and Adar II, the chassidim Reb Moshe Meisels and Reb Moshe Vilenker succeeded in their mission - with the help of Counts Lubamirski and Dalgarukov. The Czar punished Derzhavin and ordered the reports to be burned, allaying the fears of Jews throughout the country.

The chassid Reb Moshe Meisels had an impressive mind and fervent heart, and was a determined character. Even in his early youth his astute mind was well recognized. At about thirty years old,¹⁰ the geonim Reb Yissachar (brother of the Gaon Rav Eliyahu) and Reb Avraham sent him and a few of his outstanding fellow students to Berlin.¹¹

In Berlin, Reb Moshe Meisels studied German, French, and Italian, ¹² and spent his time reading various books.¹³ Handsome, witty, and jovial, Reb Moshe always made a good impression, and he soon found favor with several wealthy residents of Berlin. His new friends owned libraries and they would lend him books for long periods, and he would return them by mail and receive new reading material.

Upon returning from Berlin, he described in detail of the political maneuvers he and Reb Moshe Vilenker had just achieved. Of course, he also mentioned the participation of the Public Service Committee of the Petersburg chassidim, headed by Reb Shmuel Moshe, following the Alter Rebbe's orders.

The members of the Vilna chassidic congregation recommended a communal feast of celebration be held, complete with the recitation of Hallel and prayers of thanksgiving, and with Tachanun to be omitted. Furthermore, a description of the entire event - in all its details, and including the names of the participants - should be written down in the official archives of the congregation, to be remembered forever.

However, the party of the misnagdim opposed this idea, and the chassidim were aware that the leaders of the misnagdim were plotting against them.

However, the Chassidim set a date for feasting and rejoicing, disregarding that it was already several days into the month of Nissan. Pesach was only a few days away and most of them were busy with preparations. They sent notices to all chassidim of the district, and a few young chassidic volunteers set out to inform the neighboring districts of Minsk and Polotzk.¹⁶

At the designated time, many chassidim arrived in Vilna. Reb Meir Raphael, president of the congregation, opened his home for the celebration, and build a large building in his courtyard for the event.

During the feast, Reb Moshe stood up and once more recounted the story in true detail, emphasizing the contributions of the Public Service Committee that had operated under the Alter Rebbe's instructions. The audience paid close attention to the recital, and afterwards, they passed a unanimous resolution that the story be written in a scroll, and sent to all chassidic communities.

Hundreds of copies of the story were made and wherever it was heard, Jews rejoiced, praising the chassidim and the Alter Rebbe. Thousands of people joined the Chassidic movement and the chassidic communities grew larger. About two years after his return from Berlin, and fifty years of age, Reb Moshe was appointed secretary and trustee of the congregation, and, with his energy and enthusiasm, breathed new life into the congregation. The Gaon Rav Eliyahu attested that since the day the congregation was first established,¹⁴ there had been no person like him.¹⁵

Adapted from "Branches of the Chassidic Menorah" Vol. 2 p. 38

1. We know the names of only nine of them: from Minsk, Reb Avraham Yaakov and Reb Gedaliah Zev; from Borisov, Reb Avraham Zev and Reb Baruch Yosef; from Shklov, Reb Zundel Kohen and Reb Chayim Moshe; Reb Dov Ber Moshe of Disna, Reb Eliyah Shmuel of Radczov, and Reb Mordechai of Vitebsk. 2. The Russian poet, Gavrila R. Derzhavin (1743-1816).

3. Lit., "Prepare utensils of exile for yourselves"; Yechezkel 12:3.

4. I Melachim 20:11.

5. Tehillim 3:9.

6. The grandfather of the chassid Reb Shlomo Zalman of Yanovitch.

 The father of the chassid Reb Shlomo Monnessohn.
See *Links in the Chassidic Legacy*, Sichos In English, Brooklyn, 1997, p. 125ff.

9. See Vol. 1 of *Branches in the Chassidic Menorah*, Supplement E: "The Alter Rebbe's Later Years." 10. He was born in the year 5505.

11. These scholars were sent to investigate Moses Mendelssohn and his German translation of the Chumash. For the rest of his days, Reb Moshe would quote the blessing they had received from The Gaon Rav Eliyahu before departing for Berlin. He had said, "My sons, I am well aware that the road you are about to travel is a perilous one. It is forty years since I last traveled in Germany. In those days there were still great Torah scholars to be found there; even so, the atmosphere there favored the attractions of the pleasures of the material world. And this is especially true today! May G -d bless you and watch over you."

12. He had a native talent for learning foreign languages.

13. He used to say that while he lived in Berlin, the twenty-four hours of the day were not sufficient for him.

14. He was referring to the time of Rav Yehudah the notary and magistrate, who would set the calendar for hearing lawsuits and other disputes.

15. The Gaon Rav Eliyahu was unaware that Reb Moshe was already a Chabad Chassid. [He came to be one] when the famous gaon Reb Yosef Kalbo visited Vilna in 5531. Reb Yosef was already a fervent chassid, and was one of those who urged The Gaon Rav Eliyahu to grant an audience to the holy Reb Menachem Mendel of Horodok and the Alter Rebbe. Several of the outstanding scholars, including Reb Moshe, were drawn to Reb Yosef. When the Alter Rebbe visited Vilna in 5532 (this was before the cheirem was proclaimed), Reb Moshe became his adherent, and began to study Chassidus diligently.

16. To avoid the expense of sending a special messenger, they would hire a horse, and one of the younger chassidim would volunteer to ride it.



The Rebbe will find a Way to Answer

The following was written as a postscript to a letter to Reb Sholom Posner a few months after the Frierdiker Rebbe's *Histalkus,* in which the Rebbe advises how one can receive answers from the Rebbe in times similar to ours:



I received your letter of 9 Nissan. In brief, an answer to what you wrote there, can, in my opinion, be found in my preface to the *Kuntres* published after the passing [of the Frierdiker Rebbe] and in this letter.

[In reply to] the question you raise: that now we cannot ask my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, הכ״σ, when there is doubt how to conduct oneself: If you will stand firm in your connection with him, without paying attention to the lures of the *Yetzer Hora*, and send the question to the gravesite of my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, הכ״מ, the Rebbe will find a way to answer you. מכתבו מט' ניסן קבלתי. ומענה בקיצור על האמור בו ימצא בהקדמותי להקונ'[טרס] שהו"ל [שהוצאנו לאור] אחרי ההסתלקות ומכתבי זה, מה שנלפענ"ד [שנראה לפי עניות דעתי] בכ"ז [בכל זה]. - ומה שמקשה הלא א"א [אי אפשר] עתה לשאול את כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הכ"מ [הרני כפרת משכבו] כשיש ספק בהנהגה - אם יעמוד חזק בהתקשרותו אליו, מבלי ישים לב לפתויי היצר, וישלח השאלה על ציון כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הכ"מ - וועט דער רבי געפינען א וועג ווי עם צו ענטפערן.

(ממכתב יו"ד ניסן תש"י; אג"ק ח"ג עמ' רסו)



LIFTED BY YEARNING

"צמאה לך נפש, כמה לך בשרי, בארץ ציה ועיף בלי מים. כן בקודש חזיתיך לראות עוזך וכבודך..."

The *Niggun* of "*Tzomah Lecho Nafshi*" merited special attention by the Rebbe as it was the first *Niggun* he chose to teach us. But there is something unique and novel that we saw only by this *Niggun*; the Rebbe leading and the Chassidim answering on cue, like a perfectly rehearsed act, yet completely spontaneous.

Thousands of Chassidim standing side-by

-side, listening intently to every holy word being said by the Rebbe. Suddenly, the Rebbe's booming voice bursts through the air. "*Tzomah Lecho*…" – one can feel himself being transported to another sense of being.

"Aya aya ya..." The Chassidim answer in unison.

The power and emotions from those moments are precious; moments that are engraved forever on the hearts on any one who experienced it.

A SPECIAL FARBRENGEN

The *Niggun "Tzoma*" was not taught on *Simchas Torah* as many of the other *Niggunim* were, but rather at a Farbrengen.

The Farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Kedoshim 5714 was memorable and unique. Memorable for, as mentioned above, the Rebbe taught the Chassidim a *Niggun* for the first time, and unique for the first five *Sichos* focused on the *Niggunim* which were being sung, by the Rebbe's farbgrengens.

"ANI MAAMIN"

After entering and making *Kiddush*, the Rebbe instructed the crowd to say "*L'chaim*" and said, "Those who have still not been invited to say *L'chaim* should now raise their hand."

The Rebbe then added, "Being that this Farbrengen is a continuation of *Seudas Moshiach* on *Acharon Shel Pesach*, it is appropriate to begin this Farbrengen with the *Niggun* '*Ani Maamin*."

"NYE ZHURITZI"

When the singing died down, the Rebbe began to talk about the *Niggun "Nye Tzuritzi.*" The deeper meaning of this *Niggun* is that even when on the way to the tavern, one need not worry because he already has everything he needs with him now, and once he arrives and unpacks his belongings, he will recognize this.

The same thing applies to us, explained the Rebbe. On our journey towards Moshiach, we are told to be joyful. It's true that one might believe his spiritual standing is no cause for joy and happiness, but nevertheless, one must bear in mind that all the revelations that will occur when Moshiach comes are already in existence now, and when he comes, they will be revealed.

The Rebbe then instructed the Chassidim to sing "*Nye Zhuritzi*".

LONGING FOR ELOKUS

After the *Niggun* the Rebbe started a third *Sicha*, which, while a continuation of the previous one, served as an introduction to the highlight of the evening – the teaching of the *Niggun Tzomah*².

Returning to the analogy of those on the way to the tavern for a drink, the Rebbe engaged in further analysis and asked:

"True it's comforting to know what lies in store for us once we reach our destination, but right now we cannot see it so why rejoice?"

In answer, the Rebbe explained that when a persons thirsts for something, the desire itself somewhat satisfies him. And so, when a person develops a true a thirst for *Elokus*, this already "quenches" his yearning.

Drawing an example, the Rebbe quoted a *Possuk* from *Tehillim*, "צמאה לך נפשי... כן "אישי" - "My soul thirsts for you... As I saw you in the *Mikdash*," and, as explained by the Alter Rebbe in the name of the Baal Shem Tov, reads, "[*Halevai*] If only I could see you in the *Mikdash*." This means that although one might be on a low spiritual



"Hearing this, the Rebbe chided: 'He says Kein Bakodesh and you are silencing him?"

level, he can elevate himself to a higher level through genuine desire and yearning.

Concluding the *Sicha*, the Rebbe for the *Niggun* of the Alter Rebbe on the words *'Tzomah Lecho Nafshi'* to be sung."

However, the request was met with silence, as no one seemed to know the Niggun. Then, slowly, one man's voice could be heard singing a *Niggun* to those words, but after patiently hearing him out, the Rebbe indicated that this wasn't the Niggun. This scene repeated itself three more times; someone attempting to sing and the Rebbe asking if anyone knows another *Niggun* with those words.

THE NEW NIGGUN

The moment arrived. The Rebbe leaned his head on his hands and with deep sincerity, began, "*Tzomah L'cho Nafshi…*"

Because no one had ever heard the *Niggun* before, the Rebbe repeated it a number of times. The Rebbe then requested from those present to join in the *Niggun*, but the crowd had still not properly grasped it. Turning to the *Bochurim*, the Rebbe asked that they help out, but they also had a hard time with it so the Rebbe repeated it one final time.

"ESSEN EST ZICH"

However, the *Niggun-Sicha* combination was still not finished, and in the fourth *Sicha*, the Rebbe focused on the *Niggun* "*Essen Est Zich*."

"What should one do if he does not have such a thirst?" the Rebbe said, continuing the theme of the previous *Sichos*.

"It is for this that we ask Hashem for mercy, 'With your great mercy have compassion on us' – for the *Rachmonus* on the person is so great, that he himself does not even realize that he is in need of it." This is expressed in the *Niggun – "Esen Est Zich…Davenin Davent zich Nit,*" as the Niggun describes the bitterness one feels when he doesn't thirst for Elokus. And this in turn sparks his desire to come closer to Hashem.

"MAAMOR NIGGUN"

It was now time for the Maamor.

However, keeping in line with the rest of this Farbrengen, something else unusual happened. Instead of simply indicating to begin singing the *Hachona Niggun* – as was done by most Farbrengens – the Rebbe explained why we sing a *Niggun* before the *Maamor*:

"Being that it is an old *Minhag* to sing a *Niggun* before the saying of a *Maamor*, we will now do so."

PERFECTING THE NEW NIGGUN

Later in the Farbrengen, the Rebbe again instructed that they sing the new *Niggun*, "*Tzomah L'cho Nafshi*," but because the Chassidim had still not grasped it properly, the Rebbe sang it a few more times. Before singing, the Rebbe commented, "The (Frierdiker) Rebbe once said that he would not be meticulous in the accuracy of one sixteenth of a note; but now I won't even be careful with one eighth...

In the interim, one of those present said to the Rebbe that the crowd had grasped the second part "*Kein Bakodesh*." Immediately the Chassidim silenced him – they wanted to hear it from the Rebbe again. Hearing this the Rebbe chided, "He says '*Kein Bakodesh*' and you are silencing him?"

When someone else tried singing the *Niggun* but still hadn't quite got it right, the Rebbe sang it several more times and then said, "I have tried my best".

The spectacle continued to repeat itself,

the Chassidim endeavoring to sing the new *Niggun* and the Rebbe continuously correcting them.

At one point the Rebbe explained the makeup of the *Niggun*, which would help in the singing of it.

"Until the third stanza the *Niggun* is ascending," the Rebbe said, and then, pointed out each stanza, explaining how they express the *Niggun's* message.

At the next Farbrengen, which was approximately one month later on Shabbos Mevorchim Sivan, the Rebbe instructed the Chassidim to sing the *Niggun "Tzomah L'cho Nafshi.*" Then, again, at the end of one of the *Sichos*, the Rebbe spoke about the thirst that one should have for *Matan Torah*, and, while referring to "*Tzomah L'cho Nafshi*," concluded, "We will now sing a *Niggun* connected to this idea of a thirst and yearning." From then on, and specifically in the period immediately following that Farbrengen, the Rebbe instructed the Chassidim to sing this *Niggun* by Farbrengens.

The last time that we merited to hear the Rebbe sing the *Niggun* by himself was at the Farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Nasso, 9 Sivan 5743.

[On Shabbos Parshas Lech L'cha, 5749, the Chassidim sang the *Niggun* in unison (without the Rebbe's solo as was done in previous years).]

The Rebbe's insight to the *Niggun of "Tzomah*" has special relevance to the circumstances of today. On the one hand, we are distressed at not being able to see the Rebbe, and yet, at the same time, we try our best to live with the Rebbe and strengthen our Hiskashrus, assured by his words of "לא יעזוב צאן מרעיתו".

The message of the Sicha is that even in our feeling of longing and yearning itself, we can strengthen our connection with the Rebbe and feel his presence in a more tangible sense.

The following is an incredible story told by the Frierdiker Rebbe about how a group of the Tzemach Tzedek's Chassidim were able to connect to their Rebbe and feel as though he were with them even decades after his *Histalkus*:

One of my childhood memories is a reunion that took place between a little group of elder chassidim during Chanukah in the year 5650: my teacher, the Rashbatz, Reb Hendel, Reb Aharon, Reb Yekusiel from Dokshytz, and Reb Zalman Cherbiner. They soon began to reminisce of when they had been young *Chassidim* of my great-grandfather, the Tzemach Tzedek.

Suddenly, Reb Zalman jumped up from his seat and began singing the melody to which my great-grandfather used to daven *Mus*- *saf* on Rosh Hashonah. Seeing this, the other elder *Chassidim* stood up too and sang with him.

Then they came to the stirring chords, so well-known among *Chassidim*, to which my great-grandfather used to sing the words, "אשרי האיש שלא ישכחך, ובן אדם יתאמץ בך", "Happy is the man who does not forget You, the son of man who holds fast to You."

Burning with passion and sincerity, the men soon had tears streaming down their cheeks. Clearly they were reliving those hallowed moments, and surely each of them felt as though he were standing by the Tzemach Tzedek, seeing and hearing the Rebbe as he was davening.

Having had my great-grandfather's *Beis Midrash* described to me many times before, I knew exactly what it looked like and where he stood while davening. And thus, the aura of these five *Chassidim* made such an intense impression on me that I was swept along with their ecstasy.

In my mind's eye, I witnessed the sight of my great-grandfather, wrapped in his *Tallis*, dressed in his white garments, with a white *Yarmulke* on his head, as he said:

... אשרי האיש שלא ישכחך, ובן אדם יתאמץ בך"...







"רבי; האק מיר אפ דעם לינק'ן זייט!" **Reb Yikusiel Liepler**

Reb Yikusiel Liepler stands out among the great personalities in the annals of Chassidic history. He figures in many popular stories and is mentioned not once, but twice in Hayom Yom – a distinction shared by only one other Chossid (all the rest are Rabbeim or Talmidei Hamagid).

An elder Chossid from the first generation of Chassidim, Reb Yikusiel lived to see four Chabad Rabbeim, living more than one hundred years.

Reb Yikusiel was a young man living in Liepli. He was around twenty-five years of age when he first heard of the Alter Rebbe, and, inflamed with passion, he rushed to Liozna to see him. The Alter Rebbe responded to his cry, "Master of the universe, it is written that you give life to all," and Reb Yikusiel left the room full of joy. The Alter Rebbe gave him a chayus but this was '*Makifdik*'.

Chassidim have a saying, "A Chossid's service of Hashem follows his first Yechidus, and his first Yechidus is according to his essence. According to one's essence, the Rebbe prescribes an appropriate Avodah."

This first Yechidus of Reb Yikusiel was indeed a '*Makifdike*' one. He jumped and shouted his needs and so the Alter Rebbe answered in a '*Makifdike*' way.

This set the trend in the Avodah of Reb Yikusiel. For his entire life, he was a

"...He climbed up the wall and jumped through the Alter Rebbe's window, crying bitterly..."

Arriving there, he looked to go into Yechidus by the Alter Rebbe. However, the elder Chassidim tried to explain to him the extent of preparation a Chossid does before he is ready to go into his Rebbe, especially for the first time: some Chassidim would prepare for years before Yechidus! And for example, Reb Moshe Vilenker prepared for three years before his first Yechidus¹.

But Reb Yikusiel wouldn't hear of it, and demanded to be allowed to see the Alter Rebbe. 'When he realized that his arguments were not heeded, he climbed up the wall and jumped through the Alter Rebbe's upper window crying bitterly, "Rebbe, chop off my left side where my Yetzer Hora is." *'Makifdike'* Chossid². Even in Maamorim and Sichos he is brought as an example of Kochos Makifim having an effect on a person *B'pnimiyus*.

His place as a '*Makifdike*' Chossid was in contrast to Reb Moshe Vilenker, who was known as a Chossid P'nimi.

This is not a bad thing, rather a descriptive label appended to Reb Yikusiel that gives insight into many stories retold about him.

"Chossid '*Prishal*' Chossid '*Utziyak*'," "the Chossid came; the Chossid is gone." These were phrases Reb Yikusiel would use to describe his Matzav Hanefesh. When the Chossid was "'out" he would be very depressed and would rapidly daven from his siddur pointing with his finger to every word.

When the Chossid "came back," he would dance and daven with a fiery excitement. There were times in his "Chossid in" periods where he would daven Shacharis, Mincha, and Maariv one after the other, without a break³. Some days he wouldn't eat, commenting that since the Rebbe gave him a Brocha to live a long life, he should be able to live and be healthy without food. Such is the seder of a '*Makifdike*' Chossid.

Another story where we see his unique '*Makifdike*' seder:

Reb Yekusiel would sometimes have an outbreak of his 'Chossid', and no matter where he would find himself he would burst out into a joyous dance and remark in Russian: "Chossid *Prishal* – the Chossid came!" Or "We must make a dance, we must make a dance," and would then force any bystanders to dance along with him.

Once, Reb Shmuel Ber Borisover⁴ related that "Reb Yikusiel came to Borisov and stopped in the post office to mail off something. Suddenly he experienced a revelation of his "Chossid" and he went off to dance with the postmaster⁵.

After his Yechidus with the Alter Rebbe, Reb Yikusiel returned to Liepli where he opened a shop to sell salt.

This continued for fifteen years, until something happened that turned Reb Yikusiel's world upside down. As it is known, the Mitteler Rebbe explained Chassidus in greater depth than his father had, and also demanded of his Chassidim to Chazzer Maamorim as they traveled back from Lubavitch to their home towns.

And so, one day a young Chossid, one of the Mashpiyim the Mitteler Rebbe had established, arrived in the city of Liepli. During his week stay, he reviewed a Maamor each day by heart. These Maamorim were very profound and deep, and proved difficult to convey. However, this Chossid was a talented and smart individual with an eloquent manner of speech; each phrase he spoke was clear and precise, and deeply affected his listeners.

Now, although Reb Yikusiel was a Baal Avodah and would daven for many hours, his knowledge of Torah in general, and Chassidus in particular was very limited.

Try as he might he could not grasp the Maamorim. This bothered him immensely; he became depressed and would berate himself, calling himself names.

Reb Shmuel Ber Borisover later recounted Reb Yikusiel's own words describing that turbulent time.

"Imagine," he said, "I was forty years old at the time, having traveled to the Rebbe for over fifteen years⁶ and studied to the best of my abilities. Suddenly, a young man, a hatchling really, comes and repeats Maamorim from the Rebbe⁷ with such eloquence, and I hear it all but canno't understand a word! I feel the topics are incredibly deep, wondrous things, but I have no clue.

"Every day I would hear Chazzara from the Chossid, hear but not understand. My flesh had goosebumps, each Maamor crushed me like mortar in a pestle. I called myself many names. A fire burned within me to understand the Maamorim.

"I asked the young Chossid to repeat the Maamor again and again – he even attempted to explain it to me on a personal level – yet my head was like wood and my mind was stuffed; nothing entered.

"For three weeks I kept him in my house. I dropped my family and store and spent day and night trying to unravel the Maamorim. Unfortunately I couldn't understand a word, the Chossid left and I was left alone like a rudderless ship stranded in the middle of the ocean. I fasted and cried over my Tehillim, but nothing helped, so, with little options left, I set out for Lubavitch.

"When I arrived in Lubavitch, I encountered a different world from when I had last been there a month prior.

"...For four months, I worked in training myself to think about one topic for many hours straight..."



"Five or six Minyanin of Yungerleit study Chassidus for hours on end, day and night. I arrived on a Wednesday. The first Maamor was before Kabbolas Shabbos and on Shabbos day a Biur⁸ was given before Mincha.

"I understood the Maamor and even chazzered some of it Baal Peh. But the Biur was beyond my scope, and I was surprised to see that the younger Chevrah had understood it.

"On Monday I entered into Yechidus and poured out my heart, telling over everything up until the past Shabbos."

"The Rebbe answered me: Nothing stands in the way of the will. He went on to explain that since Rotzon is part of the Nefesh, it could force the Nefesh to change.

"Once I heard that everything hinges on my will, I decided to stay in Lubavitch until I would begin to understand.

"I sent a message home with some travelers to take care of the store until I returned.

"For four months I worked in training myself to think about one topic for many hours straight. And I sweated many more hours in training myself to re-think one topic tens of times.

"Much of my progress I owe to Efrayim of Semilyan; he would tirelessly review the Maamorim with me, over and over until I could follow their depth. I had two favorite places where I would like to think: the cellar under the large Shul or on a beam under the roof of the Shul.

"That Tishrei I felt like a new man."

How much of a change did he actually succeed in making?

It is known that the Mitteler Rebbe wrote different Sforim for different groups of Chassidim.

Aside for the general split of Oivdim and Maskilim, there were many smaller groups within the two broader categories..

Imrei Binah – the most advanced of his Sforim – he wrote for Reb Yikusiel Lepler.

(*To be continued…*)

- 5. Sefer HaSichos 5704 page 9, and Reshimas Hayuman page 307.
- 6. Alter Rebbe.
- 7. Mitteler Rebbe.

^{1.} In general it is very interesting to note that both the Frierdiker Rebbe and Rebbe compare Reb Yikusiel and Reb Moshe Vilenker.

^{2.} True, they were B'pnimiyus but the Koichos were Makifim.

^{3.} Brought in Hayom Yom 3 Kislev.

^{4.} See Links in the Chassidic Legacy.

^{8.} A Maamor of explanation, for the Friday night Maamor.

WHEN I MET THE BAAL SHEM TOV

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How the Rebbe's Farbrengens Transformed My Life



This is the story of Reb Yisroel Horowitz; a Bochur in the 5740's who embarked on a journey, searching for the deeper truth of Chassidus that seemed so distant and unfamiliar.

In his remarkable story, we'll learn about the need for every Yid to connect with the Rebbe in order to truly connect to his own Yiddishkeit, regardless of which sect or approach it is.

Part I: THE SEARCH

I grew up in Eretz Yisroel in a family of Chassidim. My friends were Chassidim, the yeshiva I attended was a Chassidishe Yeshiva, and I was always conscious of my distinct identity as a Chossid. I was different from my neighbor who learnt in a Litvishe Yeshiva, and from so many other boys my age. And yet, I wasn't sure how I was different. In my Yeshiva we learnt, and in theirs they did too, I had many serious and true Yerei Shomayim in my class, but so did my neighbor in his. Perhaps it was the one-hour we spent every Thursday night learning Chassidus, which in fact set us apart from them?

But was that really all there was to it? If they would incorporate Chassidus in their curriculum, would we be the same?

These thoughts went from being random guests in my head to full time residents; I couldn't help but to ponder what it meant to be a Chossid. I knew the Baal Shem Tov had paved an entirely new path in Avodas Hashem, but I hadn't the faintest clue of where the path leads to, or where it began.

I began voicing my questions to my peers and to my Roshei Yeshiva, but the answers they offered didn't satisfy me. At times I was even frowned upon for daring to ask such sensitive questions, and I was often told that it wasn't my place to voice such concerns.

Finding no answer within my own circles, I ventured to other places. I visited several Yeshivas, attended many Shiurim by distinguished Rabbis, and at times I almost thought I had come to the final stop. Never, however, did the feeling last for more than a few days, after which I would find myself once more at square one – that is, until that day.

A BIG AIBERSHTER IN A SMALL BOOK

I had heard about a periodic Tanya Shiur in one of the neighborhood Shuls, and in yet another shot at finding some answers I decided to give it a try.

I began attending the classes religiously from the beginning of Tanya and I quickly uncovered a new world. Words started to resonate with me, and those words carried meaning. At last, I saw that the Baal Shem Tov was alive and well, and Chassidus was shining a bright light in this world.

But that was only my first encounter with Chassidus Chabad. Little did I know that the following months would take me on a journey to the place where the heavens meet the earth; where I could find solace for my tired soul.

After only the first Perek of Tanya, I realized that Chassidus wasn't a diluted form of Yiddishkeit tailored for the unlearned, and that the Baal Shem Tov was far more than simply a warm and loving Jew. Unlike I had been told earlier, Chassidus had plenty to teach to Tzadikim as well, beginning with the definition of their very being. I reminded myself of what R' Hillel Paritcher had said after his first encounter with the Tanya: "I used to think I am a Tzadik and now I wish I were a Beinoni."

Progressing in our study of the Tanya we reached Shaar Hayichud Veha'emunoh, and I was introduced to a novel sense of faith in Hashem; the Baal Shem Tov had entirely redefined the idea of Emunoh.

Moreover, when I chanced upon the Alter Rebbe's emphasis on the immeasurable value of Torah study I realized the accusations that Chassidim don't appreciate learning were utter lies. My world became clear, and the distorted rumors about Chassidus were instantly dispelled.

As I connected more with my study

group, I began attending Farbrengens, and was soon growing in my new-found self.

Of all the Farbren-

gens I attended at that early stage of my exposure to Chassidus, one in particular made a significant impression on me. R' Yehoshua Lipkin was explaining why the Rebbe thought it necessary to include all the Shaar Blatt of previous editions of Tanya in every new edition.

"It was," he said, "because the Tanya's message was relevant to every Jew at any point (Shaar) in life; if one particular approach (Shaar) doesn't seem to suit you, try a different one. Either way, the message is there – no matter where, and no matter when.

MY CONTAGIOUS JOY

I was excited and overjoyed about my new findings, and I would tell whomever I spoke to the about the Tanya classes, and the meaning I found in them.

After that particular Farbengen I met a Bochur who learnt in a nearby Yeshiva and I started discussing with him the things I had just heard from Rabbi Lipkin. I told him his explanation about the "Shaar Blatt" with great enthusiasm, but he showed no interest in my words.

"The whole Chassidus Chabad is based on '*Moichin*'; understanding the intricate layers and dimensions of creation, but how is that relevant? Is not the most important thing the passion that burns in my heart?"

I replied with a question of my own and asked him how he coped with Machsovos Zoros during davening. After spluttering through several fragmented sentences he confessed that he was broken to his core over them; to him, their very presence was an indication to his lack of Yiras Shomayim.

My question caused the desired effect and I quickly told him that the Alter Rebbe says just the opposite. According to Tanya, Machshovos Zoros are only part of the Kelipos' effort to battle the Nefesh Ha'elokis, and when it notices it is losing, it intensifies its efforts – as a person who is battling with someone stronger than himself would do (Tanya Perek 28).

This approach seemed to genuinely interest him, and, needless to say, he joined our class.

Another Bochur standing nearby interrupted our conversation and said that Chabad inappropriately investigates Hashem, whereas we know – as an old Chassidic adage goes – that the world stands on three pillars: Emunoh, Emunoh, and Emunoh.

I quickly dismissed his claims but invited him to join me in my journey. I told him that I was no less curious than he was, and so, rather than making uneducated allegations, perhaps we might search together, and observe their ways objectively.

We had heard that Lubavitcher Yeshiva Bochurim go out to public places and offer to don Tefillin with other Jews. He didn't hide his contempt for this particular activity, so we wanted to see what it was like and why they did it. We went to a nearby Lubavitch Yeshiva and asked the first Bochur we saw about the practice that we had come to learn was called 'Mivtzoim'. He told us that it takes place on Friday afternoons, a time during which in other Yeshivos every bochur has the liberty to do whatever he pleases.

Hearing this response, I turned to my friend.

"Do you still need any explanations? While your friends are busy with personal things; when one is heading to the beach and the other is doing his laundry, these boys are out in the street putting on Tefilin with people – *these* are their personal issues!"

He said nothing.

'DON'T GO THERE!'

Over the following days I learned about the Seder in Lubavitch Yeshivos and I found out that Chassidus wasn't left to a sliver of time on a tired Thursday night. Rather, it was learnt each morning and evening. This very fact, I thought to myself, shows just how important it is to study Chassidus. In my mind, it was no longer a cute brainteaser on the Parsha to learn during one's spare time but something to pursue rigorously and seriously.

Nonetheless, I wasn't able to take that leap of faith and I remained in my Yeshiva, continuing with my regular activities.

I wanted to travel to the Rebbe, from whom I had learned so much from but never had the opportunity to see. When a chavrusa of mine heard of my idea he was quick to warn against it. He said that if Chassidus is what I want to learn then so be it, but to travel to the Rebbe, that's crossing the line!

Spewing platitudes born of baseless animosity, he warned me not to take the step, saying the trip would have a big impact on me, and maybe even change who I was. He even dared to say that the Rebbe's very authority and legitimacy was questionable and surely his address wasn't the right place for me.

Then, just when the prospect of my trip seemed to slip further and further away, a relative of mine needed to travel to the United States for medical reasons and he was looking for somebody to go with and help him. I jumped at the miraculous opportunity, looking to take advantage to go see the Rebbe.

Part II: FINDING THE REBBE'S GREAT LIGHT

THE REBBE'S BITTER CRY

I first came to the Rebbe on Shabbos Parshas Shemos 5743. On that day, new air was breathed into my lungs and my heart awoke. It would be no exaggeration to say that I was born once more.

I was by the Farbrengen when the Rebbe passionately explained Moshe's question to Hashem in the Parsha. After being charged with the mission of freeing the Yidden from Mitzrayim, Moshe asks, "If they ask me what is His [Hashem's] name, what will I tell them?"

The Rebbe said that the nature of the question was both surprise and dismay. The Yidden knew that Hashem was 'their G-d and the G-d of their fathers', and here they are enslaved and abused for hundreds of years. Every day, tens of Jewish children are sent like sheep to the slaughter so Paraoh could bathe in their blood, and you are their G-d? What is Your name? Who is this G-d who can idly watch as his children are massacred by the thousands and remain silent?

To that Hashem answered "I am who I am", sending the message, the Rebbe ex-

"At last, I saw that the Baal Shem Tov was alive and well, and Chassidus was shining bright light into this world..."



plained, that if the Jews are suffering, so is Hashem, and if they are crying, He cries with them.

As the Rebbe was saying this, he broke down in tears like his Creator.

Words fail to describe how I felt at that precise moment. However, I do remember thinking in disbelief that here sat a person who was crying in pain over the suffering endured by his nation more than three thousand years ago! I was utterly beside myself. My friend was right after all, the trip was transforming me already, but not the way he meant it would, rather the way he *feared* it would.

So overwhelmed was I from the holy scene I had witnessed that shortly thereafter I found myself repeating it to a Litvisher Rosh Yeshiva. He told me he was surprised to hear about this; thus far, he had always had the impression that the Rebbe spoke in a cold and distant manner about whatever topic he addressed, so this was something new to him.He asked me to forward him the written version of the Sichos we had spoken about.

Chassidus also emphasizes the impor-

tance of song in one's Avodah and by the next Farbrengen I experienced how the Rebbe was literally pulling me away from my materiality through song. That's when I saw the Rebbe singing "Tzomoh Lecho Nafshi." That's when my soul took flight.

Somehow managing to extend my stay in New York for a short period, I attended more of the Rebbe's Farbrengens. I remember hearing a "Hadran," which the Rebbe made on Maseches Megillah over the course of three Farbrengens; Yud Aleph Nissan, Shabbos Hagodol, and Acharon Shel Pesach. I remember digging back into the recesses of my memory for the shiurim I had heard in the several Yeshivas I had visited on my path to the Rebbe, and I could now proudly affirm how incalculable the distance was between them and what my ears were listening to now.

THE ANONYMOUS COOK

Not long thereafter I encountered an intelligent, young Litvishe Kollel student, and, faithful to the rules of Yeshiva etiquette, he asked me for a Chiddush. Calmly and confidently, I delivered a brilliant talk on the theme of Sefiras Ha'omer. Not to my surprise, the man was speechless (from what he thought was my own working), so when I saw the visible satisfaction on his face I confessed that in truth I couldn't be credited for the words I had just spoken. Rather, I divulged, I had heard it from the Rosh Yeshiva of our generation, and, without saying the name, invited him to guess. He rolled out a list of names of people he deemed as suitable candidates for the title of "The Rosh Yeshiva par excellence," but to his dismay, he could-

"...The Rebbe was literally pulling me away from my materiality... That's when I saw the Rebbe singing"Tzomah Lecho Nafshi". That's when my soul took flight."



n't seem to uncover who it was, and so he begged me to reveal his name.

I complied, but I told him that I would say it by means of an allegory:

"Legend has it of a woman whose husband would eat only from food prepared by his mother. However, so sour were the ties between mother-in-law and daughter-inlaw, that, notwithstanding the fact that the meals were delicious and fresh, the wife could not bring herself to eat it.

"One evening, the husband decided to put an end to this farce; he walked into a restaurant and took a bag bearing their name and logo, wrapped the food in it, and delivered to his spouse. The woman ate and enjoyed her dinner, and once she had finished her meal, her husband decided to 'drop the bomb' on her and tell her that in truth, it had been his mother – as usual – who had cooked her food, but now, there was nothing she could do about it.

The coin dropped. My Litvishe friend had no trouble identifying who would be the one authority he couldn't tolerate and guessed it on his first try. Since then, he has signed up to receive the Rebbe's sichos, which he studies and enjoys until today.

SOBER JOY

On the eve of Purim 5743 I traveled with other Bochurim to several shuls and Chassidishe Shtiblach to see how the occasion was celebrated. Almost all of them had a humorous and witty feel in the atmosphere; many of them had a *Purim Rov* or buffoon who, as always, would entertain the crowd with jokes and sarcasm.

The following day I stood by the Rebbe's Farbrengen. This time there was no buffoon, no joker, and no skits. The room was fur-



nished with a décor of majesty and solemnity, fit for a king's presence. Indeed there was joy, but a most elevated and refined joy that stemmed from true celebration of the Yom Toy.

During that Farbrengen, I felt the paradoxical mix of happiness and seriousness all at one time. I felt like I was hovering a foot above the ground, and I found myself dancing, sucked in by the multitudes of men in ecstasy and transcendence. The entire world was transformed before my eyes; my perception would never be the same after being exposed to this bright light!

I had now received my fair share of 'character building', and I gradually became more prone to understanding the Rebbe's words.

THE FINAL ANALYSIS:

MANY INSTRUMENTS, ONE DIRECTOR The moment arrived at last when I had to return home and wrap up what I had acquired while in New York. I had assembled a wealth second to none, and now I needed to assess how to use it in the future.

Was I to formally become a Lubavitcher Chossid, despite my own roots? I eventually concluded there was no contradiction in that statement. In the orchestra of our holy nation there are many instruments that play on different keys, and on different rhythms. There are the happy and quick melodies, and the more awe-inducing ones; there are slow and calming tones, and fast moving ones. Then there is one person who knows how to play all the instruments, who is aware of every song at any rhythm. He can help any person to play their song and dance to it. No one note is lost, there is not a second too many or too few, and all fit in his script.

When I thought of all this I realized that no matter what you play, you'll play along with the Rebbe.

I delayed my return to Eretz Yisroel one final time, in order to stay for Shavuos; I felt I wanted to receive the Torah anew, with true Hiskashrus to the Rebbe.

I fully believe that a Jew, any Jew, particularly a Chossid, must connect to the Rebbe – if not just to be able to understand what *his* Rebbe wants to convey in his particular teachings. It was not for naught that the Rebbe encouraged other Rebbes to print their books, and expand their reach. It was not for naught that he shared a common language with so many of them.

Indeed, the Rebbe is an outstanding conductor by whose hand every musical note finds its place.

"רועי ישראל לא יפרדו מעל צאן מרעיתם", און מ'איז פארבונדין מיט אים איצט פונקט אזוי ווי דאס איז געווען אין דער ערשטער רגע און אין דעם ערשטן טאג נאך די הסתלקות! און דערפאר מען זיך אנהאלטן אן דער "קליאמקע" ביז אנהאלטן זיך אין א אפענער טיר און גייען אויפן ציון מיט שאלות ובקשות, שרייבען פדיונות, און בעטן רחמים און ברכות ביז אז מ'בעט אויך עס זאל זיין "והוא יכלכלך" – אז ער זאל אויך מאכן די כלים מיט וואס אויפצונעמען די ברכות.

און מ'זאגט אז די אלע וואס האבן זיך געהאלטן אן דער "קליאמקע", און וואס האלטן זיך איצט אן דער קליאמקע", אדער אזעלכע וואס האבן בהשגחה פרטית געהערט תורתו, אדער אן אנדער ענין זיינעס – זיינען זיי זיך דורך דערוף אליין גואל ווארום עס איז "לא אותי בלבד גאל הקב"ה וכו'".

ס'איז מערניט וואס די גאולה פרטית שטייט בכח, און מ'דארף דאס ארויסברנגען מן הכח אל הפועל. (משיחת ש"פ יתרו תש"מ סט"ו) אפענער טיר...'אנהאלטן זיך אין א אפענער טיר'

Our **Teacher,**

Moshiach is portrayed in the classic *sforim* as a king, leading the nation as supreme leader. Is this really needed in a time of complete peace and prosperity? Can't Moshiach just be a teacher?

Our **King**



hen referring to Moshiach we often use the title Melech – king. Being a Tzaddik and leader is not enough; we insist that he will also have the qualities of a king.

What does it mean that Moshiach is a king?

When describing the personality of Moshiach, Yeshaya Hanovi says, "The spirit of, a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of counsel and heroism, a spirit of knowledge and fear of Hashem."

He then continues to enumerate what his accomplishments will be:

"A wolf shall live with a lamb, and a leopard shall lie with a kid; and a calf and a lion cub and a fatling shall lie together, and a small child shall lead them. A cow and a bear shall graze, their children shall lie down together; and a lion, like cattle, shall eat straw.

"An infant shall play over the hole of a viper snake, and over the eyeball of an adder, a weaned child shall stretch forth his hand. They shall neither harm nor destroy on all My holy mount, for the earth shall be full of

the knowing of Hashem as water covers the seabed."

So it seems that when Moshiach will come there will be a great revelation of Elokus in the world that even the wild animals will feel a higher presence and act differently, i.e. in a tame manner.

WHAT IS A MELECH?

The usual definition of a king is one who wages wars, defends his country and maintains peace and serenity between his subjects. But in a period of time when all creations sense and feel their creator, who needs a king? Who needs any government at all? In such a world can

there really be the temptation to kill, steal, or otherwise cause harm to one another? So what role will **King** Moshiach play on such a stage?

True, right in the beginning of Yemos Hamoshiach we will need a king-like personality to rid us of all our enemies, as the Rambam writes, "[Moshiach will be] Someone who will strengthen the Torah"fight the wars of Hashem" – not necessarily military wars, but actions that have significant political and social ramifications.

But once that is done and the world is at peace, to the extent that even the leopards and wolves will graze with cattle, then everything changes. What would be crucial at such a point would be not a king, but a teacher. Yes, the world will be infused with Elokus like never before, but it will still be evolving. Moshiach, as a teacher, will guide people to see and to understand this new world in which they are living.

So we ask again, what is the need for a king?

However, it is inconceivable to say that after a certain amount of time the need for a king will cease. *Moshiach*,by definition, means "anointed" - anointed to be a king. But back to our earlier question, who will need a king?

KING OR TEACHER?

To answer this question we need to do some redefining. Do we know what a king really is?

This question is discussed in several Maamorim of the Rabbeim.answer lies in understanding the personality of a king.

Yes, a king governs, but is that what he is really all about? Is that his sole function?

A king—an authentic, bona-fide king—is an individual who stands head and shoulders above the people around him. That's why a king who must force the people to accept him as king is not a real king. A real king is

"...מבואר בספר המצות להצ"צ "...מבואר בספר המצות להצ"צ (מצות מינוי מלך) שמשיח צדקנו "נקרא רב ומלך, מפני מה שיגלה טעמי מצות בהשגה לישראל יהי' מקרא רב, ומפני מה שישאר בבחי' מקיף עליהם נקרא מלך". כלומר, מצד אחד יהי' משיח צדקינו באופן שלא בערך כלל כל בנ"י – מלך, שלא בערך כלל כל בנ"י – מלך, וביחד עם זה, יומשך ממנו לכל העם שהרי ילמד תורה את כל העם – רב,..."

(משיחת י"ז בתמוז (נדחה) תשמ"ה)

someone like King, who, when chosen by Shmuel Hanovithe people, could not be found, because he had run into hiding.

About King Shaul, it says, "from his shoulders up taller than all the people.""shoulders" is not merely a physical measurement but rather refers to Middos. Shaul's Middos were at the level of another person's Seichel. His mind, then, was a different level altogether.

This will also be the character of Moshiach. Yes, he will be a teacher—because that's what those times will be all about: learning, knowing, gaining divine wisdom.

But a teacher—a good teacher—limits his lesson to that for which the student is ready and can handle. Thus, Moshiach will be a teacher, but with a regal character: as spiritual and elevated as the people may be, he will see far beyond them, on levels they can never attain. And yet, as a teacher/king, he will be capable of conveying his transcendental knowledge to all of us as well. Perhaps not where we can understand it consciously, but in some manner that permits it to be shared.

So yes, we need a king even in such a world. Our constant spiritual growth will be carefully nurtured by Melech HaMoshiach, and as we continue to reach new heights, he will continue to teach us.

May the time when we will learn Torah from Moshiach come very speedily, now.

A fascinating story of how a letter by the Frierdiker Rebbe gave hope to Chassidim in their darkest hour; and the Rebbe drawing inspiration from its content many years later.

fter the release from his arrest in Leningrad on Yud Beis Tammuz 5697, it was clear that the Frierdiker Rebbe could no longer stay in Russia. With each day was born another risk, and it would only be a matter of time until the "Yevseksia" (Jewish Communist Party) build another case against him, *Chas Ve'sholom*.

With the help of Chabad activists (primarily Reb Moshe Dubin of Riga), the Frierdiker Rebbe, along with his family and a few close associates, was finally granted permission to leave the USSR.

The Frierdiker Rebbe's departure from the land of his ancestors was not going to be an easy matter; for himself as much as for the thousands of Chassidim he would be forced to leave behind.

During the month of Elul the Frierdiker Rebbe went for a final visit to the Ohel of his father in Rostov, about which he writes in a letter:

"Today [Tes-Vov Elul – the day Yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim was founded] I merited to stand in the chamber of my holy father and be near his gravesite, to daven to Hashem and to plea from the servant of Hashem, that he should pray on behalf of his family and his students and their families, to be blessed along with all our Jewish brethren with a good new year..."

The Frierdiker Rebbe spent the festive

month of Tishrei in Leningrad, and many Chassidim from across the country came to see the Rebbe before he would take leave. The month concluded with the Yom Tov of Simchas Torah celebrated by thousands of impassioned Chassidim, saddened that the Rebbe would be leaving the next day but inspired by his comforting words:

"מען דאַרף זיך זען, מען מוז זיך זען, מען וועט "...יק ("We need to see one another; we must see one another; we will see one another [again]!")

"May Hashem grant that until we will see one another again each will have success in all their endeavors. You must stay strong in your Hiskashrus, learn Chassidus, and work on yourselves with Avoda. Promise this to me, and then my promise to you will also be fulfilled; that we will see oneanother in the near future, and in good spirit..."

On the following day, 24 Tishrei ("*Isru Chag*"), thousands gathered at the train station in Leningrad to see the Rebbe off on his way out of Russia. The presence of many Bolshevik spies throughout the station did not deter the throngs of Chassidim from seeing the Rebbe for one final time.

A daring few Chassidim, among them the *Chossid* Reb Moshe Gourarie, even boarded the train and joined the Rebbe until the border.

While on the train, the Frierdiker Rebbe

penned a very moving letter addressed to the Chassidim left behind and instructed his son-in-law, the *Rashag*, to hand it over to Reb Moshe on his behalf.

In the letter, the Frierdiker Rebbe shared the emotions of the Chassidim; their burning desire to remain connected to him in those most difficult times, and blessed them with the strength to continue in the ways of Chassidus with health and livelihood, and to see their children follow the same path. But perhaps the most poignant part of the letter was the Frierdiker Rebbe's assurance that the geographical distance between him and the Chassidim would be of no significance at all, and that they would stay connected much as they were in previous times.

He writes:

...Reflecting the feelings in your own hearts, my heart is well aware and senses the strong, pure, and pleasant Hiskashrus of Anash with the tree of life [the Rabbeim]

Each one of you, Anash and your families, sons and daughters; your material health as well as your spiritual education and conduct affect the deepest recesses of my heart.

It is the hope that the distance will not separate between us, Chas Ve'sholom, which strengthens and comforts me... Place your minds and hearts to the task of strengthening the 'cable' that connects us,

THE PRECIOUS

"Reb Moshe Gourarie suddenly stood up on the table and retrieved the letter from his pocket, and, with tears streaming from his eyes read the letter aloud..."

ב"ה

אל ידידינו אנ״ש ד' עליהם יחיו

כמים הפנים אל הפנים לבי ער ומרגיש בנועם טוהר תוקף עוז תעצומות ההתקשרות פנימי ועצמי של אנ"ש יחיו לאילנא דחייא ויעזרם השי"ת כי יהי' לבבם זה בגילוי אור פנימי ובכחם זה יקבעו עתים ללימוד דא"ח ברבים ואהבת רעים כאחים ממש אשר איש את רעהו יעזרו ללכת לאור כי טוב ואין טוב אלא תורה תמימה המאירה בעבודה שבלב זו תפלה וליבא פליג לכל שייפין להיות העבודה בפועל בקיום התורה ומצות והגברת מדות טובות באור וחיות פנימי אשר זיום והדרם יהיו ניכרים בהדרכת אנשי ביתם בניהם ובנותיהם לכוננם באורות חיים בלימוד התורה ובמעשה המצות בתום לבב.

ידידינו אנ"ש הנה כל אחד ואחד מכם הוא ביתו בניהם ובנותיהם ובני בניהם הנה בריאותם הגופני, חינוכם הנהגתם והדרכתם הרוחני נוגע לי לעומק נקודת פנימיות לבבי.

תקותי תאמצני והיא נחמתי אשר ריחוק המקום לא יפריד ח"ו וח"ו בינינו, ובאור זכות המנורה הטהורה, אבות העולם מוסדי ארץ ברוכה אזכה לראות כי כל אחד ואחד מאנ"ש הוא וביתו, ישימו דעתם ולבם להוסיף אומץ בחוט המקשרינו, היא העבודה, בלימוד בפועל ובחינוך והדרכת בני ביתו יחיו, ככל האמור, אשר בזה יזכו להיות כלי טהורה וראוי' אל הברכה האמורה ומסורה מאת קדש הקדשים כי יתן לכם האלקים שפעת חיים וברכה מרובה, איש איש מכם יצליח בעסקו ובכלי פרנסתו בריוח מרובה, איש היש מכם יצליח בעסקו ובכלי פרנסתו בריוח וישמח השי"ת לבבי ולבבכם לראות בנים ובני בנים עוסקים בתורה ובמצות מתוך הרחבה בגו"ר, וירים השי"ת קרן התורה והעבודה, וקרן אחב"י יחיו בכל טוב מנפש ועד בשר.

ינעם לי במאד לשמוע בכל עת משלום כאו"א וב"ב יחיו ומהנעשה אתם עמם בפרטי פרטיות וכאמור אשר כל עניניהם בגו"ר מגיע לעומק פנימיות נקודת לבבי המסורה ונתונה לטובתם הרוחני והגשמי, חזקו ואמצו, אתם וביתכם ללכת בדרך הסלולה באור כי טוב, וטוב יהי' לכם ולבני ביתכם כל הימים, ועזרינו השי"ת להתראות בשובע שמחות

יוסף יצחק

כ"ד תשרי תרפ"ח במרכבת המסע

(אג׳׳ק אדמו״ר הריי׳׳ץ ח׳׳א עמ׳ תרד)

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The original handwritten letter by the Frierdiker Rebbe

i.e. Avoda, learning [Chassidus] and teaching it to your families...

It would be my pleasure to constantly hear regards of the wellbeing of each of you and your families, for as stated, this affects the very depth of my heart, which is devoted to what's best for you materially and spiritually. Strengthen yourselves and your families; go on the path of light that has been set out for us, and it shall be good for you and your families always. May Hashem help that we will see one-another in happy spirit.

Yosef Yitzchak 24 Tishrei, 5688; on the train.

A TRUE FARBRENGEN

Throughout the ensuing years, Reb Moshe treasured the Rebbe's handwritten letter and held it close at all times, eventually carrying it with him when he was able to leave Russia many years later and settle in Eretz Yisroel. Quite often, Reb Moshe would turn to the letter as a source of inspiration; a constant reminder of the unbreakable bond between the Rebbe and his Chassidim, transcending natural circumstance.

Reb Yoel Kahan relates:

"I recall a beautiful *Farbengen* from the time I was a young *Bochur* growing up in Tel -Aviv. It was one year on Purim and the Chassidim of the city had gathered to celebrate the Yom Tov together. There were no words spoken throughout the night; just the Chassidim reciting 'Le'chaim' and singing heartfelt Chassidishe Niggunim.

"Then, sometime in the early hours of the morning, Reb Moshe Gourarie suddenly stood up on the table and retrieved the letter from his pocket, and, with tears streaming from his eyes, read the letter aloud for all to hear.

"It was an absolutely beautiful sight to behold. A *Chossid* truly living with his Rebbe's words so many years after they were first written to him, certain that as the Rebbe promised; 'the distance of location will not separate between us'.

"This is a true Chassidishe Farbrengen!"



As mentioned, Reb Moshe Gourarie held onto the handwritten letter as his most precious possession for many long years. When he came to the Rebbe for Pesach in the year 5724, he decided to give it to the Rebbe as a present.

Two years later, at the Farbrengen of Yud Shevat, 5726, the Rebbe compared the state of a Chossid after his Rebbe's *Histalkus* to that of the Chassidim who remained stranded in Russia after the Frierdiker Rebbe was forced to leave and lost almost any means of (physical) interaction. Nevertheless, the Frierdiker Rebbe clearly promised that he would maintain his connection with the Chassidim despite the dire circumstances. (The Rebbe was presumably referring to this letter, in addition to many other letters and *Sichos* said in this regard).

Today as well, the Rebbe concluded, we can connect to the Rebbe much as we did before the *Histalkus*, and he bestows all the blessings upon us without any distinction at all.

An excerpt from this Sicha:

When my father-in-law, the (Frierdiker) Rebbe departed from Russia, he said – as he did on a number of occasions – that it was against his will. As he crossed the border, he added, "Although there is a physical barrier separating myself and the Chassidim who remain behind, one need not be intimidated by it. My bond with them will continue as before."

And indeed it was so; not only in a spiritual sense, but even in material terms. There are many well-known

incidents related by various people that display the Rebbe's direct involvement in activities on the other side of the Iron Curtain.

In other words: even while his soul remained confined to the limitations of a physical body, he had the ability to determine that the physical barrier should not be of any relevance. He was able to maintain the bond with his followers in a manner that not only allowed him to connect with them, but that they would be able to reach him as well. This was despite their being people of a much lower spiritual status, upon which physical boundaries did have an impact.

Now, just as this applies to his relocating from one country to another against his will, it is also applicable to his status after his passing, which is also against his will – as the *Mishna* says, "*Al korchach ata chai...*"

If one looks merely with physical sight, he may think that there is – *Chas Ve'sholom* – an interruption in the Rebbe's connection to us. But the truth is, as the *Gemora* says, "Just as until now he has tended to us, now as well he continues to do so."

Much as his departure from one country to the other made no impact in this regard, so too his passing has caused no change either. And as he himself determined, he will continue to stay connected with those who he has educated, and they will continue to follow in his ways.



"Clean Your Bags"

Greetings and blessing!

I was very pleased to receive your regards through Rabbi Simpson. He also informed me about the Farbrengen that you held together in a warm Chassidisher environment. As my father-in-law, the Rebbe, said regarding a Chassidisher Farbrengen; it warms the mind, the heart, [one's entire body] down to the very heels. And when one returns home from such a Farbrengen, he brings light and warmth with him, making his home brighter and warmer than it was beforehand.

You certainly know what the [Frierdiker] Rebbe repeated over many times in the name of the Baal Shem Tov, that everything that a Yid hears or sees can be used to learn a practical lesson in his personal Avodas Hashem. [This idea can be applied] specifically from something that is one's source of livelihood, which one is involved in for a long period of time, full days of the year and many hours of the day.

The business that you are about to enter

into, may it be at a prestigious hour and filled with success, which has been recently patented, involves taking used bags that are full of bacteria and are unusable, and in fact can harm the objects one attempts to put inside. Research is being done to find a way to get rid of the bacteria [thereby allowing the bag to be used]. One of the ideas that have come up is to place the bags in an enclosed environment, and to then raise the temperature above usual, [raising the temperature to such an extent] in which the bacteria's cannot survive. [When done] the bags are subsequently cleared of all bacteria and are now able to be used again.

The same applies to our lives. When the Yetzer Tov comes to a person when he turns thirteen, the person has already been 'used' by the Yetzer Horah who precedes [the Yetzer Tov] by thirteen years [entering the person at birth]. [This being the case] the Yetzer Horah argues that he has a Chazokah over the person and his thought, speech, and action. He also claims that he is the Bechor. There is a solution to prevent Machshovos Zaros from easily affecting one's thought speech, and action, and the bad intentions of the Yetzer Horah. This is done through occasionally staying away from the outside hostile environment and secluding oneself in a Shul, Yeshiva or a Beis Midrash. [In this positive environment] he should properly warm himself up with the love of Hashem, the love of the Torah, and the love for Yidden, and then, one's 'bag' becomes clean from the bacteria of the Yetzer Horah, and ready for use.

An incomplete disinfectant is not good enough to clean these bags; rather it needs to be done perfectly. The same applies to a person's 'bags'; when one wakes up he needs to infuse himself with a Yiddisher and Chassidisher warmth, and then he can be assured that he will be an Oived Hashem, one who learns Torah and fulfills the Mitzvos...

(אג"ק ח' ד ע' שב-שג)

In the month of Iyar, 5718, Reb Tzvi Hersh ("Hirshke") Gansberg, along with a group of friends, were selected to go on a brief shlichus to New Haven, Connecticut, where they were to spur and encourage the chabad institutions, and spread chassidus in the various shuls of the city.

The following is an excerpt from his diary, penned during his years in 770, and describes a beautiful encounter he experienced during this trip.

Reb Dovid Deitsch, son of the elder Chossid Reb Mendel Deitsch, moved to New Haven (seemingly in accordance with the Rebbe's instruction), and opened an enterprise manufacturing plastic. *Boruch Hashem*, his business today is quite successful. He is also a loyal Chossid, devoted heart and soul to the Rebbe, and his influence is apparent throughout the city. He is a wholehearted and sincere, yet simple individual. He also educates his family well, and I believe that the Rebbe is very happy with him.

When Chaim Seribransky and I went to his house on *Motzoei Shabbos* before the *Melave Malka*, we spoke with him for a while and he opened up to us, speaking with genuine *Chassidishe* warmth. He then shared the following story:

Approximately a year and a half ago he was in *Yechidus* with the Rebbe. He would not disclose what exactly the Rebbe spoke with him about, only that the Rebbe requested of him to do something, and asked, "איר װעט פאלג'ן" ("Will you obey?"). Reb Dovid answered instantly, איר רבי וועט זאגן ווי דער רבי וועט זאגן ("Will you obey?"). "וואס הייסט פאלג'ן? מ'איז דאך א סאלדאט! ווי דער רבי וועט זאגן ("What is the question? We are soldiers! Whatever the Rebbe says we will do!").

It seems that these words were said with true sincerity and the Rebbe was very touched by them, to the point where he began to cry. And Reb Dovid cried with him.

S''2237 1977 7"3 KOVETZ CHOF CHES SIVAN

The day of Chof Ches Sivan deserves unprecedented commemoration by the Chossid of *Dor Hashvi'i*. It was on this day that the fraction of the Rebbe's aura known so well to the world throughout the years first began to sprout out in the open. Thanks to the intuition of a few *Bochurim*, in the later years of the Rebbe's *Nesius*, this day was added to the *Chassidishe* calendar – commemorated by the Rebbe (and subsequently by Chassidim) in various ways.

The most memorable celebration of the day of Chof Ches Sivan was undoubtedly in 5751. That year marked fifty years since the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's arrival in New York in 5701, and in honor of the day, a unique pamphlet was compiled, consisting of the Sichos and Maamorim that had been said or published by the Rebbe in connection with the day. The pamphlet also contained documentation of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's escape from war-torn Europe and safe arrival in the United States. And to the chassidim's surprise, the Rebbe announced that he personally would distribute the pamphlet to all; men, women, and children.

The following are excerpts of a diary kept by a bochur in 770 at the time:

SUNDAY,

THE NIGHT OF CHOF CHES SIVAN

The Rebbe entered for Maariv, and the Shul was crowded with many guests that had arrived from around the world to be in the Rebbe's presence on this momentous day. The niggun "Uforatzta" broke out excitedly among the crowd, and, upon reaching his place, the Rebbe vigorously encouraged the singing.

Throughout the night, Farbrengens were held in 770 and all across the neighborhood to commemorate the auspicious day.

MONDAY, CHOF CHES SIVAN

Today, I heard a lengthy report regarding the newly published "Kovetz Chof Ches Sivan." The booklet was compiled by a handful of Bochurim with the assistance of the members of Vaad Hanochos Hatmimim. Around a week ago, they had written to the Rebbe about the idea and the Rebbe responded (on Chof Sivan), "[do] as Agudas Chabad and Tzeirei Agudas Chabad [say]; may it be with much success." The members of these organizations suggested the material be reviewed by proffesionals.

On Friday, Chof Hei Sivan, a draft of the publication was submitted to the Rebbe, which included a large introduction detailing the significance and history of the day, and the Maamorim and Sichos that had been said or published by the Rebbe during previous years in connection with the day.

On Sunday, the Rebbe added a date at the end of the introduction, "Erev Chof Ches Sivan," and further instructed that the material be reviewed one more time. Meanwhile, an idea was proposed to also include the synopsis of the Rebbe's activities in America, which is recorded in "Hayom Yom," and the Rebbe agreed.

We also found out that, following maariv, the Rebbe was going to distribute the Kovetz to everyone.

The Rebbe returned from the Ohel approximately twenty minutes before sunset, and, shortly thereafter, entered the Shul for Mincha.

Following Mincha, the Rebbe descended from the Bima and received a blessing from Reb Zalman Gurary, on behalf of all of Anash, in honor of the day. Reb Zalman spoke with great emotion as he referenced the spiritual transformation the Rebbe had orchestrated in the world since his arrival in 5701, and wished the Rebbe immeasurable success in continuing in this direction until the long-awaited redemption. All the while, the Rebbe stood with closed eyes, and, occasionally, seemed to wipe away a tear. It was a most stirring moment to behold!

When Reb Zalman finished the Rebbe lifted his eyes and said, "There are Kohanim here, let them recite Birkas Kohanim as always." Rabbi Yosef Gutnick then blessed the Rebbe with Birkas Kohanim, after which the Rebbe began a Sicha that lasted a quarter of an hour. Among the various topics, ther Rebbe also made mention about the specialty of 770 and its significance in this generation.

After Maariv, the Gabbai Reb Zev Katz

announced in the name of the Mazkirus, that since the booklets had not yet arrived from the printer, there would be a short intermission for fifteen minutes. (It should be noted that the Rebbe had spent almost the entire day at the Ohel and was still fasting. It was anticipated that in the meantime the Rebbe would go up to his room and break his fast). The Rebbe smiled broadly and said, "They have announced about an intermission; that would be a waste of time. Instead, we'll make a continuation."

The Rebbe again began with a Sicha, lasting for ten minutes.

At approximately 9:20, the distribution of the Kovetz began. Throughout the three hours of distribution, the Rebbe seemed to be in high spirits - smiling to many passersby, especially children, and blessing all those in need. At 12:02, the Rebbe left the Shul while encouraging the singing of "Uforatzta".

The atmosphere in 770 was indescribable. Many Bochurim and Anash broke out in joyous dancing, while others immediately sat down to study from the new Kovetz, which they had just merited to receive from the Rebbe's holy hand.

Later on, a magnificent Farbrengen came to pass in the main Shul at 770, lasting well into the early hours of the morning - a natural result of the extraordinary events that had just transpired.

"They have announced about an intermission; that would be a waste of time. Instead, we'll make a continuation!"



THE WITTY ESCAPE אייב-ייג תמוז

The year 5687 marks a stormy period in the fight between communism and Yiddishkeit in the USSR. The men of the Yevisekziya (Jewish division of the NKVD) were trying desperately to snuff out the flame of Yiddishkeit. One of the ways they used to catch their fish was through 'Mesirah'; planting undercover agents everywhere, bringing terror into the hearts of the people.

In the city of Cuta'isi, Georgia, there lived a young man who was from the best students in the recently established Tomchei T'mimim. He worked as a chazzan in a Sfardic Shul and was known as a "Chacham." After the government closed the Yeshiva, he would teach children in secret, keenly aware that such behavior would be putting his life in danger.

It wasn't long though, until he received the dreaded order to appear at the offices of the NKVD. He was interrogated cruelly but after much useless questioning the interrogator asked him bluntly: Who pays you for teaching the children?

Without becoming flustered, he responded: "What children? What pay? Who's interested in having their children taught?"

"If so," retorted the interrogator, "why do you visit specific houses daily – if not to teach children?"

"People call me to remove an 'Ayin horah'."

The interrogator burst into laughter. "Are you at least successful in this work?"

"You can't know," replied the Chossid. "Each case is unique. They pay me, and they ask me to come again. Why should I care if they think it works?"

Having prepared himself for this, he continued playing dumb as well as being very cautious. The interrogators wouldn't relent, and continued barraging him with questions trying to pry out a confession. However, the Chossid soon proved too much for them and they commanded him to leave while they discuss his case.

Continuing to play dumb, he headed straight for the exit of the building. The armed guard stepped in and stopped him, asking him where he was going.

"I was told to go," the Chossid said simply.

The guard, certain that no one could leave an interrogation without permission, let him go.

Aware that going home was dangerous, as surely a search party would soon be sent for him,, he went to a friend's home for a few days, and then traveled to Rostov.

Arriving in Rostov, he found his fellow Chassidim in despair.

"The Rebbe has been arrested and sentenced to three years exile in Kostroma," he was told.

Without hesitation, he set out immediately for Kostroma. When he arrived where the Frierdiker Rebbe was staying, he requested permission to see the Rebbe. The Chassidim were reluctant to allow him in – as this could endanger the Rebbe – but at last he was granted a Yechidus.

In Yechidus, the Rebbe gave him peculiar instructions: Travel to Moscow and meet with several Chassidim who have genuine permits allowing them to purchase merchandise. Try to obtain for yourself such documents bearing your name, and once you have them, return to Cuta'isi and present yourself to the NKVD, and you should tell them that because during the interrogation they were not happy with your method of income, you therefore chose to go into business, and that's why you left so suddenly – to buy the merchandise already.

The Rebbe then gave him a note that contained specific instructions for the elder Chossid Reb Boruch Shalom who would make the necessary connections with the businessmen. He then warned him to ensure the note be destroyed immediately after reading it.

After shabbos he traveled to Moscow. The train station was packed with people, many of them secret agents of the NKVD and much caution was needed to not raise suspicion. He took the first trolley in the direction of the city taking a seat next to a bearded elderly Jew. After eyeing each other for some time, the elder broke the ice.

"From where does a Jew come?" He questioned.

"Kostroma", the Chossid replied.

The joy on the elders face was clear. Realizing that this was his chance, the Chossid probed, "Perhaps you know Reb Boruch Shalom?"

"Boruch Shalom – that's me", the elder responded.

Arriving in Reb Boruch Shalom's home, the two hugged and kissed as is customary by Chassidim. He inquired about the Rebbe, and the reason for his visit. He coneyed regards from the Rebbe, and gave him the note, which, after reading and rereading, they burned it.

The Chossid was overjoyed at finding Reb Boruch Shalom in such a large city. His joy turned to amazement when hearing from Reb Boruch Shalom that he usually never travels in the morning before shacharis, but that particular day he awoke with an urge to go to the train station.

"How wondrous are the ways of Hashgach," cried Reb Boruch Shalom. "When traveling with the Rebbe's koichos, wonders are no wonders."

On the following day there was a farbrengen with the ziknei hachasidim, and the Chossid conveyed regards from the Rebbe. Their happiness was tremendous, as much effort was being put into securing the release of the Rebbe – which was expected within the next few days. And after that, Chassidim hoped, he would be granted permission to leave the USSR.

After meeting with the right people and getting the necessary papers, he returned to Cuta'isi, following the exact directives of the Rebbe. When he arrived, although a wanted man, he informed his family that he had no intention of fleeing or going into hiding – and to compound their fears, he told them his plans to walk directly into their offices voluntarily. In vain his family pleaded with him to come to his senses but he remained adamant at following the Rebbe's advice and soon left toward the offices of the notorious NKVD.

The same guard was on duty from when he had left and he recognized him immediately. Seeing his chance to make up for his embarrassing saga, the guard led him directly to the integrator's office, announcing, "You were upset that I let this guy leave, well here he is, he returned on his own."

Almost instantly, he was bombarded with questions: Why did you run and disappear?

"I didn't run away," he answered calmly. "You told me to go – so I left. Who can escape you anyway."

"And where have you been until now?" the interrogators queried.

The Chossid then proceeded to them exactly what the Rebbe had told him to say, and concluded by presenting the paperwork to validate his tale.

After thoroughly inspecting the papers and finding them to be in order the interrogator told him:

"It's a fine choice you made to not be a chacham, and rather take the road of business, but take my advice; drop the business and become a worker!"

The Chossid nodded his agreement and promised to consider his advice.

"It is your good fortune," continued the

interrogator, "that you turned yourself in. Were we to find you, you would have been sentenced to ten years exile in Siberia. Now go home, but heed my word and become a worker." Each year on Yud Beis – Yud Gimmel Tammuz, he would celebrate his freedom, on the same days as the Rebbe's, thanks to following the Rebbe's advice.

(Pninei Hakeser Vol. 1 Page 85)

...were we to find you, you would have been sentenced to 10 years exile in Siberia"



TAMMUZ 5772 | 29

NAVIGATING THE SEA

A Look at the Development and Printing of the Rebbe's Sichos

The Chabad Bookshelf has over one thousand volumes of Chassidus. In contrast to other Chassidishe circles, Chabad places an emphasis on the personal understanding of each individual chossid. Connecting to a Rebbe is not enough to sustain an active love and fear of Hashem; the only way to be an active chossid is through studying Chassidus and the meditating on the concepts contained therein.

שיחות

יברים ו אנרת התשובה

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Each of the Rabbeim would speak and write Chassidus, and these writings were later published in book form, some comprising many volumes.

It is to our great fortune that our Rebbe

spoke Chassidus for many thousands (over 11,000!) of hours. Sichos, Maamorim, letters, and Reshimos, all add up to a colossal amount of Torah.

<u>i</u> i i i i i i i

There are those that are confused by the many different sforim of the Rebbe with similar sounding names, Sichos Kodesh, Likkutei Sichos, Sefer HaSichos, Toras Menachem. Add the Yiddish and Lashon Kodesh sichos to the mix and it can be a challenge to know where to find a specific sicha.

With this article, and the accompanying chart, we hope to clear your confusion. We will explain the background of each sefer, why and how it was printed, which sichos you can expect to find in each volume, and the language those sichos are in.

The Rebbe's Torah is unique in that it was not written by the Rebbe himself.

The historical precedent for this is the Alter Rebbe who only wrote two of his many sforim: the Shulchan Aruch and the Tanya. Aside for these two, all his other Torah, be it Maamorim, Lekutei Torah, Torah Or, were written by his MANICHIM.

A MANIACH is the title of the transcriber that would record on paper the Chassidus spoken by the Rebbe. A CHOZER would also review the Maamor in public for those who wished to review the Maamor.

The Alter Rebbe's MANICHIM were, interchangeably, his son, the Mitteler Rebbe, his brother, the Maharil, and the chossid Reb Pinchas Reizies. Some maamorim were even transcribed by all three.

Throughout the generations of Nesiei Chabad, the Rebbeim would usually say chassidus at set times – Shabbos Night or Yom Tov for example – and later write the *maamar* for distribution and study. Sometimes the Rebbe would first write the *maamar* and deliver it on a later date. Rarely, the *maamorim* would be disseminated without an oral delivery. The third section of Hemshech Ayin Beis (5672) is one of those rare occurrences, being printed without ever being delivered orally.

The Rebbe didn't write his own Torah, neither sichos nor Maamorim. It was left to the Chozrim and Manichim to put the Rebbe's words on paper in an intelligible manner.

As a general rule, no sichos or Maamorim would come out from the official Chabad sources without the Rebbe first looking them over and editing them. This was known has the Hagaah – editing. Something that was edited by the Rebbe is called מוגה (Mugah).

The Rebbe, with the worries of the Jewish nation resting on his shoulders, did not have the time to edit every single sicha. In the earlier years a few of the sichos that the Rebbe found time for were edited, but soon the system developed for unique or special sichos to be given to the Rebbe for editing. These could have been for special occasions, or when the Rebbe launched a new mivtza or project.

However, Chassidim could not contain their great love and interest in the Rebbe's Torah and soon unedited sichos and maamorim began to circulate. These were transcribed by the bochrim and chozrim and spread unofficially. These are known as מוגה (Bilti Mugah)

It is beyond the scope of this article to describe the history of the Chozrim and Manichim; we leave that for another time. We will also limit our focus to the sichos and not discuss the maamorim, letters or Reshimos.

Lekuttei Sichos 39 Volumes

Ever since the letter in which the Baal Shem Tov reveals the words of Moshiach, "I will come when your wellsprings have spread to the outside," spreading Chassidus has been a high priority among Chassidim. In the early 5710's, one of the principal ways of doing this was by visiting shuls on Shabbos afternoon and delivering a talk of Chassidus.

Towards the end of 5718 the Rebbe gave another push to this initiative when he began the all-out campaign of "Ufaratzta!" – the call to actively step up the effort to spread Chassidus and Yiddishkeit to the four corners of the world.

To enable Chassidim to review sichos in shuls, Vaad LeHachzoras Dach (already an active committee) began to prepare sichos specifically for chazzara.

These were specially chosen sichos from the years 5710-5719, re-written to bring the primary ideas to the fore and provide an easy style for chazzara. To make it as easy and understandable as possible, it was written in Yiddish and the style was simplified, thus explaining basic Chassidic concepts in more depth. Some of these Likkutim were a





collection of sichos, all advancing the same topic.

The Rebbe would edit these sichos that were then published by the Va"LD in small pamphlets. Soon, the responsibility for printing the booklets was given to Tzach (Lubavitch Youth Organization) who would distribute them around the New York area and send them, by request, to Chassidim around the world.

The first sichos began to appear Shavuos 5718 and publication continued for one year until Shavuos 5719.

In honor of the Rebbe's thirty-fifth anniversary, 14 Kislev 5719, Tzach held a Farbrengen at which it was proposed to print all the Likkutim in one book to be called Sefer Hasichos. Even though the Rebbe agreed, one thing led to another and it took another three years until the sefer was published.

Finally, right before Yud Alef Nissan 5722, the Rebbe's sixtieth birthday, the very first Likkutei Sichos (called at the time Sefer Hasichos) came back from the publisher. The Rebbe brought the first sefer along with him to the Yud Alef Nissan farbrengen.

Likkutei Sichos cont.

The publication of these sichos stopped for a while but resumed in the end of 5729. These later likkutim were more difficult and longer, aimed at the more educated crowd.

A team of scholars would organize the ideas raised in the original sicha, omit those the Rebbe had only mentioned in passing, and add references and footnotes. This write up would go to the Rebbe who carefully edited each word.

FORMAT OF THE SEFER:

Lekkutei Sichos was printed for each Shabbos in booklet form. Full volumes were printed as soon as enough material was accumulated, i.e. every few years of Likkutim would be printed in one volume. So in truth, Lekkutei Sichos is really 9 volumes of sichos on all the parshios of the Torah. This makes finding a sicha somewhat easier, for every fifth volume is Breishis.

As mentioned, the first sichos were published for chazzara in shuls, and they were therefore written in Yiddish. Later, it was decided to change the language to Lashon Kodesh. Many people are not able to learn in Yiddish, even if they are fluent in that language, and generally sforim are printed in LaHaK. Thus, from Chelek 10, the sichos began to appear in LaHaK.

After a few years, and the printing of another set of Lekkutei Sichos (volumes 10-14), technical difficulties disrupted the continuation of LaHaK, and the Likkutim were once again being prepared in Yiddish. This

Sichos Kodesh 50 Volumes

As mentioned earlier, unofficial transcripts of Farbrengens began to circulate almost immediately after Yud Shvat. A group of bochurim started transcribing every Farbrengen and sicha, sending out the *hanachos* (transcriptions) to chassidim and communities who had requested them. This group was called Vaad LeHafotzas Sichos. Later the people working on these sichos were the ones preparing and printing the Lekkutei Sichos, and the unofficial *hanachos* were shelved. This continued on and off until 5736 when Vaad Hanochas Hatmimim was founded to specifically to make *hanachos* of each Farbrengen. From then, **not one** Farbrengen is missing.

In 5745, a few bochurim began an ambitious project to collect all the scattered *hanachos* and print them in one set of sforim – to make all the sichos accessible for study. They combed libraries and personal collections to print the 50 volume set. continued until vol. 30, when they were permanently changed back into LaHaK. This is why some volumes are in Yiddish and some in LaHaK.

- SUPPLEMENTS:

Anything that had been edited by the Rebbe in the intervening time since the last volume of Likkutei Sichos had been published was inserted in the back of the next volume. This includes letters, Michtovim Klollim, and single sichos that had been printed. Anything that was inserted in miser reedited by the Rebbe especially for Likkutei Sichos.

LANGUAGE:

Yiddish and LaHaK.



FORMAT OF SEFER:

According to the date spoken, and more or less the words of the Rebbe as spoken.

LANGUAGE: Yiddish.

Toras Menachem 5710-5727 45 Volumes; 5742-5752 42 Volumes



With the Yiddish *hanachos* published by Vaad Hanachos Hatmimim, the next thing needed was LaHaK, both for the "Yeshiva world" and for those chassidim who did not understand Yiddish.

In 5742, Vaad Hanachos B'LaHaK was

established to write *hanachos* in Lashon HaKodesh. They continued this work until 5752.

Today Vaad Hanachos B'LaHaK is on a historic project to organize, and translate into LaHaK, all sichos from 5710 onwards. To complete this task, they are collecting many lost sichos and filling in missing sections of Farbrengens from private notes written at the time. Their next sefer is expected before this Gimmel Tammuz.

FORMAT OF SEFER:

According to the date spoken, and more or less the words of the Rebbe as spoken.

LANGUAGE:

LaHaK.

Sefer HaSichos 11 Volumes

Through the years the Rebbe would edit single sichos which would be published in small pamphlets. These would be published in the back of Lekkutei Sichos as part of the supplements (Hosafos).

Unlike the Lekkutei Sichos that were considerably worked on, usually collating a few sichos and completely changing the format from that of a spoken sicha to a question answer format, these sichos were formatted closer to the way they were originally spoken.

Already from 5744, the amount of *Mugah* sichos began to grow, but the real explosion

came in 5747, when the Rebbe began to edit sichos every single week. Starting Tishrei 5748, the Rebbe would edit a sicha each week. Vaad Hanachos Hatmimim, and Vaad B'LaHaK would alternate weeks, preparing the sicha in their language, VAH"H in Yiddish and VHB"L in LaHaK. They were intended for printing in the weekly magazines, the Yiddish Algemeiner Journal and the Hebrew Kfar Chabad. Each respective paper would print the *Mugah* sicha one week and translate the sicha from the other paper the next week.

The sheer volume of the sichos made it impossible to include them in the back of



Lekkutei Sichos, so a separate collection was created, called Sefer HaSichos.

FORMAT OF SEFER:

The sichos are taken from Farbrengens and organized into a print format. Most of what was said at the Farbrengen is included in this write up.

LANGUAGE:

Yiddish and Lashon Kodesh in alternate weeks.

To read further, and in more detail, see Kuntres Toras Rabeinu VeHotzahoso Leor, Vaad Tamidei Hatmimim, 5770.

Mugedike Sichos are Pikuach Nefesh Mamosh!

The constant call to chazzer Chassidus in shuls led two bochurim, Reb Leibel Raskin and Reb Nachmen Sudak, to send a letter to the Rebbe before Shavuos, 5718. Writing in the name of the volunteer speakers, they asked the Rebbe to edit each week a sicha from one of the previous years that they could then use to chazzer in the shuls.

Rabbi Raskin later related how after they had begged and pleaded with the Rebbe, Rabbi Chadakov gave them a message from the Rebbe: You yourselves know the value of the Rebbe's time. Do you not know he works on severe life-threatening issues? A Jew is lying down, his heart is being cut open, he is losing blood and he asks for a bracha and an answer to his letter. How do you have the audacity to ask the Rebbe to take from his precious time to edit sichos for your convenience?

They were not fazed and replied that for Chassidim sichos from the Rebbe are vital, for them not having sichos is also life threatening...

Rabbi Chadakov brought their response back to the Rebbe, and, to the Chassidim's great joy, he accepted their argument and agreed to their request. It was then that the first Lekuutei Sichos were made public.



THE REBBI



E'S TORAH





The Rebbe, the Key and the Photographer

By: Dovid Zaklikowski **Pictures:** The Kahn Family/ Lubavitch Archives

Mr. Irving I. Stone, of blessed memory, was the eldest son of Jacob Sapirstein, who sold postcards in the early 1900's from a horsedrawn wagon in Cleveland, Ohio. Mr. Stone, who did odd jobs for his father from his early childhood, soon realized that instead of selling cards others created, it was time for him to create cards to sell. Thus was born the largest greeting card company in the world: American Greetings.

Yet, Mr. Stone was a humble person, lived simply, and taught his children to live a meaningful life. "He never thought very much of himself," says his daughter Henshe Gansbourg. "He never dressed in an extravagant way; he never wanted to live in an extravagant way."

The Rebbe *ν*^{**}ν was deeply impressed by him; chairman of a multi-billion dollar business, and yet one who cares deeply for Jewish continuity and Jewish life.

"From what I have heard of you and know you," the Rebbe wrote to him in a letter from Rosh Chodesh Menachem-Av 5733, "you are more concerned with persons and values than with hard business, and this is what we are concerned here with – living persons and the eternal values of *Toras Chaim* and *Toras Emes*, which must be brought together, in order to save them and their future generations."

A CONVENTION SPURS CHABAD HOUSE

Rabbi Zalman o.b.m. and Rebbetzen Shula Kazen, at the time, were living on Shlichus in Cleveland for over fifteen years. The Rebbe had suggested several times to Rebbetzen Kazen that she organize a N'shei Chabad Convention.

Thus a convention took place in 5730, with the concluding banquet for both men and women, which Mr. Stone attended. The result of the convention was that a Chabad house was needed, and that Rabbi Leibel and Mrs. Devorah Alevesky (the Kazen's daughter) were to "prepare the landscape." Thus they began visiting the city several times a month to do programs.

At the time, Rabbi Alevsky was a Shliach in Tzach, the Lubavitch Youth Organization, in New York, where he headed several programs and had several Shluchim working under him. Although he never planned on moving to Cleveland, he was happy to assist his in-laws with their new initiative.

During one summer when the couple was in Cleveland, Rabbi Alevsky held a "Stump the Rabbi" program every Tuesday night at the Hillel House. The program met great success, and the general community was surprised to hear that college students, who had little interest in general Jewish life, were spending hours with a bearded Rabbi.

Having heard about the Tuesday evenings and other Chabad activities, Mr. Stone decided to participate and "see with his own eyes" what it was all about.

After a few visits he was convinced of Chabad's revolutionary and pioneering activities, and he told Rabbi Alevsky that he would sponsor the coming programs.

Rabbi Alevsky replied that he and his wife already had their Shlichus in Tzach, and while they would be happy to help find another couple, they couldn't leave New York.

However, Mr. Stone wasn't to be persuaded.

"I saw you in action and want you to come," he stated, "Listen, I am a businessman and I want to make an investment with dividends. I want you to come."

The conversation continued in this vein until Mr. Stone suggested that Rabbi Alevsky write the Rebbe, a suggestion he took up.

The Rebbe soon responded to him that any decision on his part would have to be discussed with the *Hanhalah* of Tzach.

After much negotiation, an agreement was reached where Rabbi Alevsky would travel to New York for several days a month, and, whenever needed, he would be on the next plane to New York.

The Rebbe received the agreement and gave his approval on two conditions; the budget be guaranteed by the local Jewish community, and a building be purchased for the Chabad House.

On his part, Mr. Stone arranged the budget for the first three years, and Rebbetzen Kazen with the help of Mr. Mel Wax-



man purchased a spacious house for Chabad.

The couple moved to Cleveland in 5732, and in 5733, Mr. Stone also arranged a color flier to advertise the Chabad House. "Are You a Searching Jew?" asked the flier, which featured a silhouette of dancing rabbis, "then... drop in at one of our Rap Sessions... or participate in a total Shabbat experience."

That summer, shortly after purchasing the property, Mr. Stone and Rabbi Alevsky travelled to New York for Yechidus and to present the key to the Chabad House and the flier to the Rebbe. Mr. Stone had Yechidus and then asked the Rebbe if he can call in a photographer to take pictures of him presenting the key.

The Rebbe responded "Normally I don't do this, but for you Mr. Stone I will make an exception, and you will make Cleveland a pilot project."

The Rebbe then posed for the camera while accepting the key to the Chabad House, and with the color flier visible on the table.

(When the photographer entered the Rebbe asked him if he had put on Teffilen that day. He responded that he had not done so that day. Sensing that the Rebbe was bothered by this, Rabbi Alevsky asked him if he will put on tomorrow, and he said he would. The Rebbe was pleased with the response.)

After the Yechidus, Mr. Stone said he was "more impressed [by the Rebbe] than by anyone else he ever met."

A LESSON IN LISTENING

"As agreed upon," says Rabbi Alevsky, "I continued to visit Crown Heights for several days every two weeks to assist in the work of Tzach."

Yet, because of the great success of the Chabad programs, Mr. Stone and Mr. Waxman continued complaining about his being away from Cleveland every two weeks, "they wanted me to spend all of my time in Cleveland."

And while Mr. Stone did not divulge his Yechidus or correspondence with anyone, he confessed to Rabbi Alevsky that he had discussed with the Rebbe about him being full time to Cleveland, without having to travel to New York anymore.

So when shortly afterwards Rabbi Alevsky was in Yechidus, he wrote to the Rebbe asking what he had told to Mr. Stone about his continuing coming to New York. In response, the Rebbe said, "Mr. Stone did want it very much and continued talking about it, and I let him finish what he wanted to say. Why do I need to interrupt a person who wanted it so much ... "

"But when he finished talking," the Rebbe said, "I repeated my position," that Rabbi Alevsky should continue to come to New York.

And so he continued to come to New York, until it was agreed that Tzach could run smoothly without me.

WHEN TIME FLIES BY

To conclude I would like to highlight a letter Mr. Stone received from the Rebbe





that has a positive message for all of us. The letter is the dated the 13th of Cheshvan, 5734 (the paragraph marks are mine):

In normal times, steady, albeit slow, progress might be satisfactory, and sometimes steady progress and speed may not even be compatible. However, we live in "abnormal" times, when things move with whirlwind speed, and we must not lag behind the times in our method of tackling problems in the vital area of Torah and Chinuch.

Indeed, in light of the Baal Shem Tov's *teaching that a person must learn from* everything around him how better to fulfill his purpose in life, especially in *fundamental matters, the present jet age* and supersonic speed should inspire the idea of time-saving in the spiritual realm.

A distance that not so very long ago took days and weeks to cover, can now be spanned in a matter of hours, and a message that took as long to communicate

can now be transmitted instantly.

If this could be accomplished in the physical and material world, surely the same should be true in the spiritual realm, whether in the area of personal achievement, or in the area of affecting a change in the environment.

To be satisfied with less in the realm of the spirit would be like arguing to return to the era of the horse and buggy on the ground that this was satisfactory in olden days, all the more so since spiritual matters have never been subject to the limitations of time and space...

So as life flies by, let us not forget to move our spiritual matters and good deeds at a comparable rate.

Rabbi Dovid Zaklikowski is the director of *Lubavitch Archives (www.LubavitchArchives.com)* and could be reached at dovidzak@gmail.com. His collection of sayings and pictures of the Rebbe Advice for Life will be available in stores in time for Gimmel Tammuz or contact LubavitchArchives@gmail.com.



פרקב פרקג

	פרק אחד ליום
	סדר תפילות נהגו העם חי וקיים תמיד ימלוך
	עלינו וכו׳
	נוסח ברכות התפילה וברכה אחת באפצע
4	וזהו נוסח כל הברכות האפצעיות שוב אינו צריך
	נוסח הוידוי שוש אשיש בה'. נגפר ספר שני כו'.
	ספר זפנים. הל׳ שבת פרק א
	פרק ב

שלשה פרקים ליום	
ספר הפלאה. הל' שבועות פרקים א-ג	כ״ה סיון
פרקים ד-ו	כ״ו סיון
פרקים ז-ט	כ״ז סיון
פרקים י-יב	כ״ח סיון
הל׳ נדרים פרקים א-ג	כ״ט סיון
פרקים ד-ו	ל׳ סיון
פרקים ז-ט	א' תמוז

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ״ק אדמו״ר זי״ע בקשר עם יום ההילולא ג' תמוז



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