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TEVES 5774
ISSUE 14 (91)



CHANUKAH LIVE

"Let there be Light!"

דידן נצח!

THE STORY OF HEY TEVES
FROM A HIGHER PERSPECTIVE

בס"ד

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

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Rabbi Avrohom Shemtov
Rabbi Hillel Dovid Krinsky
Rabbi Michael Seligson
Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook
Rabbi Dovid Zaklikovsky
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call (347) 541-4770.
email: editors@derher.org

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A CHASSIDISHER DERHER

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With gratitude to Hashem, we present our second monthly Derher magazine in honor of the month of Teves.

Highlighted in this issue, is a revolutionary breakthrough in *Hafotzaas Hama'ayonos* brought about through the historic event of Chanukah Live. During Chanukah Live the entire world was able to see and hear the Rebbe, and be seen by him, through cutting-edge technology available only in our generation. Presented here for the first time, you will read a detailed overview of all the preparations that went into the making of this incredible program. You will also see the Rebbe's guidance and encouragement to every step – including many documents and photographs in *Pirsum Rishon*.

The month of Teves bears great significance to us as Chassidim in *Dor Hashvi'i*, as it carries within it the auspicious day of Hey Teves – Didan Notzach.

The Rebbe's approach to the entire episode of the *seforim* was far from a mere dispute over a valuable collection of precious articles. Examining the *sichos* and answers from the Rebbe at the times reveals to us a much deeper perspective, one that is closely tied to our identity as Chabad Chassidim, especially in our generation.

For this reason, we have prepared a comprehensive outline of the story of Hey Teves, emphasizing this point at every step.

It is anticipated that this composition will assist our readership in having a better understanding and appreciation for this auspicious day.

This edition will also bring you a wealth of *sichos*, letters, and stories of our Rabbeim and their Chassidim on a wide variety of subjects.

One of the amazing points elucidated by the Rebbe in a *sicha* at the Chanukah Live event, was that this program brings out the oneness of creation in a very evident manner. Before the discovery of satellite technology, it was hard to believe that the whole of creation is essentially one. But now, that so many different people, in the farthest corners of the earth, hear and see the same Torah message, even in the privacy of their own homes, the idea is better understood (See *Sichos Kodesh* 5752 vol. 2 p. 440).

Indeed, the Chanukah Live event signifies a major step towards the final *geulah*, as the Rebbe's holy presence, and *Divrei Elokim Chayim*, instantaneously permeated so many remote locations across the globe.

Let us hope, that we will speedily succeed in completing the job of revealing the underlying oneness of creation, bringing on the days of Moshiach when "והיתה לה' המלוכה", may it be ***teikef umiyad Mammosh!***

A Freilechen Chanukah!

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אין אים לעבט נשיא דורנו!

Almost immediately after the crisis over the seforim emerged, the Rebbe began addressing the issue in public at farbrengens, explaining how all the arguments of the opposing side have no basis in fact.

What is most amazing about these sichos is that within his words, the Rebbe illuminated, in an unprecedented manner, what it means to be a truly devoted Chossid of the Rebbe, particularly in times like ours.

The following is an excerpt of a sicha during the summer of 5745:

There is a well-known “*Kol-Koreh*” issued by the [Frierdiker] Rebbe that “לאחר לתשובה, לאחר לגאולה” (immediate *Teshuvah* will bring about the immediate redemption). The meaning of “לאחר” is to be taken literally: immediately in a very literal sense.

Now, the *Yetzer Hora* (who is referred to as the “*Kluginker*” - the “wise-guy”) may come with an objection: This “*Kol Koreh*” was issued by the [Frierdiker] Rebbe many years ago; since then, some forty-two or forty-three have passed. Who is to say that things will not continue in this manner in the future as well?

However, it is quite obvious that arguing with the *Yetzer Hora* is a waste of time. The *Yetzer Hora* is referred to as a “מלך זקן וכסיל”—an old and foolish king. It would be no use to argue with him, or with anyone who speaks his words, attempting to doubt the words of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe that the *Geula* is coming now, and that “לאחר” is to be taken in a literal sense.

The [Frierdiker] Rebbe’s words stand true today as

ever, for he clearly printed and published these words in a publication by “Agudas Chassidei Chabad,” an organization active until this very day. It did not cease to exist in 5710 [with the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *Histalkus*], for just as his children are alive, so, too he is alive!

Especially, for those individuals who do not need these explanations [about how the Frierdiker Rebbe still lives], for they feel it within themselves. They feel that the [Frierdiker] Rebbe is with them, whether by way of a dream, or by seeing extraordinary success in business, or in other manners.

Others may feel the [Frierdiker] Rebbe’s presence due to the fact that one day, in the midst of nowhere, they feel a sudden arousal to *Teshuvah* (“הרהור תשובה”) when they happen to be occupied with something else, totally unrelated.

From where would a thought about *Teshuvah* emerge, seemingly in the midst of nowhere? Why would it enter only his mind and not someone else’s? Very simple: because the [Frierdiker] Rebbe, *Nessi Doreinu*, is alive and lives within him! ■

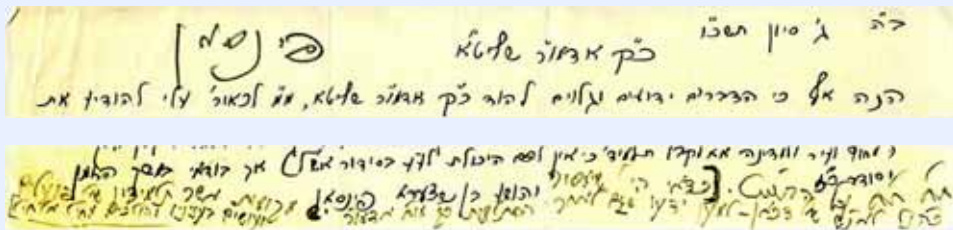


Sixteen Years and Growing

“Though the Rebbe is surely aware and knowledgeable of the following, yet it is obligatory to notify the Rebbe what I observed in the Chabad institutions throughout my travels..”

Thus begins a letter to the Rebbe written by Reb Yehoshua Pinson, the legendary Gabai of 770, dated 3 Sivan 5726. He continues to recount the progress the Shluchim in Milan, Italy are making with the locals; the incredible growth in the educational institutions in Kfar Chabad; and Lubavitch’s purchase of a building to accommodate the growing student-body in London, England.

The recently discovered Ksav Yad presented here is the Rebbe’s response upon receiving the letter.



Many thanks for the good reports.

[It would be worthwhile to inform the above to the Anash here – so they should know that even after the passing of the Friediker Rebbe there are locations where his students Sheyichyu perform and accomplish in his activities, and are intensifying from strength to strength].

ת"ח על הבש"ט.

[כדאי ה' שימסור כהנ"ל לאנ"ש שי דכאן - למען ידעו שגם לאחר הסתלקות כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר יש מקומות אשר תלמידיו שי' פועלים ועושים בעניניו והולכים מחיל אל חיל]



לעבן
מיט'ן
רבי'ן

“ותחי רוח יעקב אביהם”

The following essay revisits the entire story of Hey Teves, pointing out that all along, the Rebbe's approach to the issue was more than just a legal battle over the seforim. There was a major ruchniyus/dike aspect as well, alluded to very often in the Rebbe's sichos and ma'anos before, during, and after the court case.

The material collected here is comprised of the sichos and answers from the Rebbe, as well as first-hand accounts by bochorim in 770 at the time when these stories took place.

Let us preface that of the following statements, those quoted directly from the Rebbe (both from sichos or written responses) are obviously completely true and authentic. The rest of the comments reflect the speculation of Chassidim and their own understanding of things, and may be subject to differences of opinion.

DER BEINKEL IZ A GREISER!

The story of the Yom-Tov of Hey Teves took place in our own generation, but it is essentially connected to all of the preceding generations of Chabad as well – up until the Alter Rebbe, and even the Baal Shem Tov.

Although the robbery of the Seform began around Yud Shevat the Rebbe was only officially notified about the theft of the seforim around Shavuos time in 5745. However, months before, on Yud Aleph Nissan of that year, the Rebbe addressed an idea which, in retrospect, seemed to be very much connected to the seforim saga.

In the farbrengen, which turned to be the last time the Rebbe farbrenged on Yud Alef Nissan, the Rebbe began the second sicha by posing a question: It is well-known that one of the worst middos according to the Torah (and especially Mussar) is ga'ava – haughtiness. If so, how is it possible that people gather here and participate in a farbrengen, which is being held in honor of one single person?

The Rebbe continued that the answer should be self-

Based largely on a farbrengen with Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook of Vaad Hanochos B'Lahak in honor of Hey Teves, 5769.

THE STORY OF
HEY TEVES
FROM A
HIGHER
PERSPECTIVE

Erev Rosh Hashona, 5744

Each year on the night of Erev Rosh Hashona, the Rebbe held a Farbrengen – a way of welcoming the guests that had arrived to spend Yom Tov with the Rebbe.

But this time, something unusual happened: the Rebbe entered the Farbrengen with two new Seforim in hand, aside for his Siddur. The first was the most recent volume of Or HaTorah by the Tzemach Tzedek, and the other was the most recent volume of Igros Kodesh, by the Frierdiker Rebbe – *Chelek Hey*.

In the fourth Sichá, the Rebbe explained that since the publishing of these Seforim happened now its obviously *Be'Hashgocha Protis*. Therefore he will now open each of them and discuss a short point from what is written there.

After explaining an idea from the Or HaTorah, the Rebbe opened the volume of Igros Kodesh and read the first letter.

The letter is dated from the period when the Frierdiker Rebbe was in Warsaw, Poland, under the brutal rule of the Nazis YM"Š. In it he describes the desperate situation of himself and his family. The letter needed to be written in a language understood also by non-Jews, and in codes – out of fear of the censor, and so that it will reach its destination without delay.

This is what he writes:

"I currently don't have living quarters and find myself by a friend along with the entire family in one room. There I have no place for the books that were lent to me by Agudas Chabad... I would be pleased if Agudas Chabad would take them back."

Meaning, he wished that the Seforim and manuscripts should also be rescued from captivity, along with his own escape and that of the family.

The Rebbe then went on to explain the lesson in *avodas Hashem* that we can learn from the letter, and the connection with the time of Erev Rosh Hashonah.

How ironic is it that a year and a half's time before the eruption of the entire story of the *seforim*, the Rebbe read aloud at a farbrengen a letter from the Frierdiker Rebbe where he explicitly states that the *seforim* belong to Agudas Chabad – the longstanding claim which the Rebbe would later defend in court.



AT THE FARBRENGEN OF EREV ROSH HASHONA 5744. NEAR THE REBBE ARE THE NEW SEFORIM WHICH THE REBBE BROUGHT TO THE FARBRENGEN.

understood, but nevertheless, we'll specify it clearly: the honor in this regard is not of one single individual, but that of the entire movement which he represents; an unbroken chain of Chabad Chassidus spanning over the last two hundred years, beginning with the Alter Rebbe. The one who was chosen to head the movement is not here just to "be in charge," but rather to serve the people of the movement - "לא שררה אני נותן לכם אלא" (עבדות אני נותן לכם).

This is similar to the *Yom-Tov of Simchas Torah*, the Rebbe explained. On the *Yom-Tov of Simchas Torah* the Torah wishes to dance, so we, the *Yidden*, must serve as its hands and feet. So too with regards to Chassidus Chabad, there must be one individual who serves as the unifying force and ensures productive activity amongst all the members of the movement. The leader in our generation is the Frierdiker Rebbe. But since the Frierdiker Rebbe is on high, he needs someone to serve on his behalf here in this world and oversee all the activities of his movement. Thus one individual was chosen to do that job. Who that one individual is, is of little importance.

To better illustrate this point the Rebbe told the following story:

When we were children in *cheder*, they would tell a story of a Rav who was very small in body but had a very prestigious position. When asked how is it befitting that a man so small serves a position of

such magnitude, he answered, "True, I may be small, but the chair is very big!" (*"Der beinkel is a greiser!"*)

The Rebbe explained: the work and Torah of the Frierdiker Rebbe is great and must be carried on; the one who is actually filling the position is not of all that much significance.

Therefore, concluded the Rebbe, it isn't an issue that we celebrate the birthday of one individual, for the main thing is the continuity of the work of Chabad Chassidus – something which is pertinent and very much of concern to the entire movement as a whole¹.

In a sense, it seemed as though the Rebbe was addressing this to forewarn an issue that would soon arise. Namely, that a Rebbe is not merely an individual person, but one who "belongs" to all Chassidim, as the Rebbetzin famously stated during her deposition.

SEFORIM MISSING

Now for a bit of history:

As mentioned, the theft began around Yud Shevat time. The first one to notice that something was wrong was Rabbi Yitzchok Wilhelm, the Librarian of the Frierdiker Rebbe's library, who immediately contacted Rabbi Chaim Baruch Halberstam to discuss the matter. It was decided that a telephone system would be installed in the library, sending a ring to the WLCC office any time the door to the library is opened.

Unfortunately, the system didn't work, because when the next break-in happened, the phone line was busy transmitting the Rebbe's farbrengen on hook-up. It was then that the crew realized that the thief was someone who knew to come only during the Rebbe's farbrengen, when his entrance would go unnoticed.

Rabbi Halberstam discussed the matter with the Rebbetzin, who suggested that a surveillance camera be installed in the library.

Indeed, a short while later the results came in and Rabbi Halberstam and Rabbi Wilhelm sat together to watch the recording. The thief had his face partially covered but Rabbi Halberstam immediately recognized him and realized that this matter was far from simple.

In a sense, it seemed as though the Rebbe was addressing this to forewarn an issue that would soon arise...

He quickly ran to the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's home and shared the sad news with the Rebbetzin: they had finally caught the thief, and it was none other than the Rebbetzin's own nephew.

THE ISSUE GOES PUBLIC

Shortly thereafter, the Rebbe called a meeting with the members of Agudas Chassidei Chabad, most of whom were elderly Chassidim, inviting also an additional two younger Chassidim, Rabbi Avraham Shemtov and Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky.

The Rebbe spoke with the group about the recent events, stating clearly that all of the *seforim*, *k'sovim*, and the building of 770 belonged to Agudas Chassidei Chabad, and that he planned to discuss

BIZBUZ HA'OTZROS

The Rebbe stated many unknown things about the Ba'al Shem Tov's siddur although the thief never touched it. Perhaps the explanation is: *Chassidus* explains that during the time of battle, the king will dispose of his most precious treasures in order to reach victory. Similarly, throughout the *seforim* saga, the Rebbe revealed many facts and secrets about our Rabbeim that we would never have known otherwise.

THE BAAL SHEM TOV'S SIDDUR

The Rebbe related:

It seems as though the [Frierdiker] Rebbe suspected that perhaps one day someone would tamper with or even sell the *siddur*, making a fortune by selling one page at a time. So he sent me to make photocopies of each page!

I always was, and in fact still am, afraid of touching that *siddur*. The [Frierdiker] Rebbe told me not to touch it without immersing in the *mikvah* beforehand. But at his behest, I indeed copied each page so that in case someone would tamper with it, we can track down all the pages.

LOST SLEEP

Another Fascinating story:

When the [Frierdiker] Rebbe began building his library while still in Russia, there were many professors and academics who would come and visit the library, to research various topics. The Lubavitch movement strives to be a light unto the nations, and the [Frierdiker] Rebbe assisted even the non-Jewish personalities who would seek help. Included in his library, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe held some books that are contrary to Torah values as well.

There was one *Chossid* in Leningrad who thought he would act as "*Pinchas hakano'i*" and burned one of those books. After hearing about it, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe summoned that *Chossid* and told him that his act was one of

a "*Chossid shoitte*" and chastised him harshly for what he had done.

Some people think that holding such books is inappropriate and they question the [Frierdiker] Rebbe for having owned them. There are issues that I asked the [Frierdiker] Rebbe about and I was given an answer, while others were left unanswered. Some questions bothered me to the extent that I could not sleep at night. But this issue never bothered me that much. I knew that if the [Frierdiker] Rebbe held on to these books, it was definitely not a problem.

An issue that does bother me though, to the extent that I can't sleep at night, is this story with the *seforim*. I sit at night trying to prepare a Rashi for the farbrengen but my thoughts are constantly disturbed because I'm worried about the building [of 770].

THE REBBE RASHAB'S TZAVA'A

During the farbrengen of 15 Tammuz, the Rebbe related a very interesting personal story, which, under normal circumstances, he presumably would not have shared with the public:

At one point in time, I was notified that the Rebbe Rashab wrote a *tzava'a*. One of the things he mentions there is that some of his *seforim* are to be passed on to his granddaughters' husbands after they get married. Hearing this, I went to the [Frierdiker] Rebbe and asked that the *seforim* be given to me, in accordance with his father's instructions.

I won't say that the [Frierdiker] Rebbe was upset with me for my proposal, but he definitely was not happy with me.

From here we see how precious the Rabbeim's *seforim* were to the [Frierdiker] Rebbe: despite a clear directive from his father to give away certain *seforim*, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe could not bring himself to part with a *sefer* that his father had used.

this issue in public at the upcoming Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen. (Bear in mind that in those years, the Rebbe's major weekday farbrengens were broadcast live via satellite around the world. Meaning, the Rebbe intended to bring the issue to the attention of a global audience.)

The Rebbe openly discussed the issue of the *seforim* a total of five times: at the Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen, at the *yechidus klolis* with the guests on 14 Tammuz, at the farbrengen of 15 Tammuz, at the farbrengen on Shabbos Parshas Balak, and then for the last time on Shabbos Parshas Pinchas.

The following are some partial quotes from the Rebbe's words regarding this matter, collected randomly from all of the above-mentioned farbrengens. To

"The last time I used the phrase 'bli pirsum' was in 5687"

better understand, it is encouraged to read the *hanochos* of these *sichos*, as most of them have been published throughout the years.

LIVE BOMBS!

When the thief wished to sell his goods, he wanted to make as much money as possible, so he approached his buyers with a witty proposal: these *seforim* are not just regular books, they belonged to, and were handled by a great and holy *tzaddik*, the Lubavitcher Rebbe. He hoped to fool the buyers into believing that purchasing these *seforim* was a good idea.

But in fact, the Rebbe explained, these *seforim* are like live bombs! When one wants to send a bomb to someone else, he doesn't say clearly that it's a bomb; he

What is the role of a Rebbe?

Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky relates:

At one point, the Rebbe spoke with me at great length concerning some of the aspects of the court case over the *seforim*. In addition to our conversation, the Rebbe also handed me a few pages of these points in his own holy handwriting. Presumably, due to the importance of the subjects we discussed, the Rebbe chose not to rely only on my memory, so that everything would be clear. An excerpt from those pages:

"As with all Chabad Rebbes – the first foundation is: truthfully nullifying one's own existence (starting with himself). Being a Rebbe, it is his integral and primary mission, to guide and strengthen [the Chassidim] in Torah and Mitzvos in general (beginning with belief in Hashem, keeping [the laws of] Shulchan Aruch, etc.) and to show them a living example of this (even when it requires the extent of actual *mesirus nefesh*). It is self understood that a Rebbe must also withhold all actions that may mistakenly be explained contrary [to the above]. [Only] after this comes the Rebbe's private life, and in this aspect as well, the foundation is not to interfere at all with his general and primary purpose.

"The primary proof which overcomes all the arguments of the opposition: the letter from the inheritor [the Frieddiker Rebbe] which officially declares that [the library] belongs to Agudas Chassidei Chabad.

"To think that he wrote the letter only to deceive [the European governments], (is foolish, and) one who says so creates a great *Chillul Hashem*. One who says this (intentionally) deserves excommunication, G-d forbid.

"In other words (and the main point), all the legal certificates, letters, etc., clearly express that [the *seforim*] belong to Agudas Chassidei Chabad – the opposing views are merely words transmitted orally [without any written proofs]."

"כבכל אדמו"רי חב"ד היסוד הראשון: ביטול היש (מתחיל בעצמו) באמיתות. היותו אדמו"ר ה"ז שליחות נפשית ועיקרית, לנהלם ולעודדם בתומ"צ בכלל (מתחיל באמונת ה' שמירת השו"ע וכו') ולהראותם דוגמא ח' בזה (עד כדי מסירות

נפש בפועל) ופשיטא לשלול

כל פעולה שיוכלו לטעות

לפרשם להיפך. לאחר זה

באים חייו בתור פרטי וגם

בזה יסוד שלא נוגע כלל

בתפקידו הכללי והעיקרי..."

"הרא"ה העיקרית והשוללת

כל הטענות שכנגד: מכתב

המוריש רשמית דשייך

לאגודת חסידי חב"ד. הקס"ד

אולי כתב רק לפנים (היינו

טיפשות) והאומר כך זהו

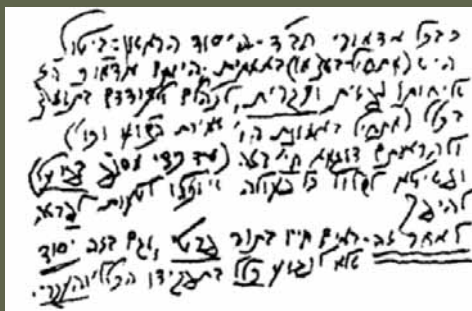
חילול השם הכי גדול ועד כדי כך שהאומר כך

(במזיד) צריך להיות ברמ"ח ר"ל. ובסגנון אחר

(ועיקר): כל התעודות רשמיות, מכתבים וכו'

כותבים מפורש דשייך לאגודת חסידי חב"ד -

הטענות שכנגד הם דברים שבע"פ סתם."



tries to convince the receiver that it's a "sweet apple," a desirable thing. Then, at any given moment, the bomb could explode. In a similar vein, the buyers were told that the *seforim* are holy and precious, something they should wish to keep in their possession. The truth is, though, that whoever brings them into his home brings in a live bomb, and only time could tell when it will explode.

Pointing at his holy eyes, the Rebbe said: "I see it with my own eyes. I know that these *seforim* are live bombs, and I therefore feel it my duty to warn everyone: don't keep them in your possession!"

MAN OF TRUTH

Another point stressed by the Rebbe in the *sichos* was the fact that the thief and his team wished to claim that the Frierdiker Rebbe only wrote that the *seforim* belonged to Agudas Chassidei Chabad as a tactic to help bring them out of war-torn Europe. In truth however, he never really meant that they belonged to the community. In other words, they ascertained that the Frierdiker Rebbe was capable of saying one thing and meaning something else, *chas v'sholom*.

The Rebbe decried this notion in the strongest possible terms, painfully protesting against the great *chilul Hashem* that comes along with claiming such an idea. (See the Rebbe's handwritten note in this regard).

HU BACHAYIM!

A vital point discussed by the Rebbe during these *sichos* was the theme of "*Hu Bachayim*"; the [Frierdiker] Rebbe lives on! Hence, there is no room for discussion about a "*yerushah*," that the *seforim* should be distributed amongst the heirs.

Basing his words on the *gemora's* statement *מה זרעו בחיים, אף הוא בחיים*, the Rebbe articulated: You see a *Chossid* walking in the street? That is "*Hu Bachayim*." So long as there are Chassidim who study his Torah and fulfill his instructions, then he is very much alive.

This is why the [Frierdiker] Rebbe did not write a will regarding the *seforim*. By preceding Rabbeim there were instances where the *seforim* and other possessions were divided amongst the children, as was the case by the Tzemach Tzedek. But the [Frierdiker] Rebbe did not do so, because *Hu Bachayim*!

THE REBBE'S VERY LIFE!

At the farbrengen of 15 Tammuz, the Rebbe said:

"This issue is not one of concern only to me personally, but to every single *Yid* who is a *Chossid* of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe; no matter where he lives, be it here or in Eretz Yisroel. In fact, some of the *seforim* were actually brought to Eretz Yisroel and sold to dealers there in a most audacious manner. Selling *seforim* that belong to the [Frierdiker] Rebbe is a dangerous act. The seller is actually tearing away a part of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe's very life, then and now!"

When addressing the issue of the *seforim* on Shabbos Parshas Pinchas, the Rebbe mentioned that by *hashgocha protis*, the theft began around Yud Shevat; the day of the [Frierdiker] Reb-

The Rebbetzin's Role



On 13 Kislev the Rebbetzin had a deposition in her home. It was her powerful words that "My father and the *seforim* belong to Chassidim" which tipped the scale in our favor, as the Rebbe explained in a *sicha* after her *histalkus*.

We will bring a few short excerpts from her words:

When the Rebbetzin was asked if her father owned anything personal, she responded: "No, not at all; perhaps his clothing. Personal? Only his *tallis* and *tefillin*."

When they asked the Rebbetzin if she had spoken to her sister about the library recently, she responded: "Yes. I told her that I heard people had broken into the library, and that Barry came in there and took *seforim*. My sister said, 'But Barry is not a thief!' To which I responded, 'So why did he go in there secretly?'"

"I continued: 'Our father was a very organized individual. He knew how to write very well and was free to write as he wished. Had he intended to give us the library, he would have written some sort of note indicating what should be done with the *seforim*'"

Then the Rebbetzin said some very difficult words to hear:

"I told my sister: 'We had a sister who perished in the concentration camps and is no longer with us. With regard to this matter, consider it as if I am not here, as if I passed away. Do as you please.' With that, I hung up the telephone."

This chilling statement reminds us of the *mesirus nefesh* performed by the Alter Rebbe's daughter, Rebbetzin Devorah Leah, who took upon herself to give away her very life so that her father may continue spreading Chassidus.

When the Rebbetzin was asked if she had told her sister that Barry could take the books but the matter should be kept secret – "*Bli pirsum*," she responded:

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

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

be's *histalkus*, and the story broke around Yud-Beis Tammuz, his *yom huledes* and *chag hageulah*. For the one who stole the *seforim*, said the Rebbe, the day of *histalkus* is indeed timely: he thinks that the [Friediker] Rebbe passed away thirty-five years ago and is no longer with us anymore. But a Yid who is a believer knows that such thought is nonsense.

MONETARY COMPENSATION

The following incident relayed by the Rebbe helps shed light on the entire episode of the *seforim*, and how the Rebbe perceived it not merely as a dispute over a valuable library, but as a much deeper issue:

Some of the Chassidim had suggested that instead of going through the hassle of retrieving the *seforim* rightfully, perhaps it would be better to compensate the thief with the money he wanted, and save the *seforim* that way.

The Rebbe strongly criticized this idea publically, questioning in disbelief how a *frummer Yid* could possibly think up such idea.

Clearly then, the Rebbe's primary concern with regard to the *seforim* saga was not a monetary loss. Plainly put, the opposing side refused to admit that the Lubavitch movement continues after the Friediker Rebbe's *histalkus*. They wished to put the Rebbe's *nesius* and the whole of *Dor Hashvi'i* in question, *chas ve'sholom*.

In fact, during a *yechidus* with the members of Aguch a few months later, the Rebbe clearly stated that the fight is not only over the *seforim*, but rather over the "*Beinkel*" as we'll soon explain.

THE MISSING NIGUN

On 15 Tammuz, the Rebbe returned from the Ohel relatively early, davened *mincha*, and then came down to farbreng just as *shkia* set in.

The Rebbe began by saying that he wished to farbreng in honor of 15 Tammuz, and to begin the farbrengen by reciting the [Friediker] Rebbe's *geulah ma'amorim*, which were printed in time for Yud-Beis Tammuz this year.

"As is customary," the Rebbe said, "we'll preface the words of Chassidus with a *nigun*. But since this is a matter which concerns not only our generation but all future generations as well as the preceding ones, we will sing *niggunim* from all the Rabbeim, beginning with the Baal Shem Tov."

It was at that moment that something dramatic took place: Reb Yoel Kahan started a *nigun* from each of the Rabbeim and the crowd sang them all together. But when he finished the "*Beinoni*" from the Friediker Rebbe and began to sing the Rebbe's *nigun* of "*Ata Ve'chartonu*", the Rebbe immediately began with the *ma'amor* (*ke'ein sicha*) almost stopping him abruptly, preferring that his own *nigun* not be sung.

NEW ERA

During the time period that the Rebbe was speaking about the *seforim* so openly, Chassidim observed that to an extent, a new era had begun in Chabad. The Rebbe implemented some drastic changes in conduct. On the one hand, the Rebbe stopped some of the most basic customs, but on the other, he added some new major initiatives, perhaps in connection with the trial over the *seforim*.

The Rebbe ceased to recite *ma'amorim* in their usual tune. After Tishrei, 5746, all the *ma'amorim* were "*ke'ein sicha*".

(This is with the exception of two occasions in 5749).

On the other hand, the Rebbe began to frequently be *magiha ma'amorim* in honor of *Yomim Tovim*, something that came completely from the Rebbe himself.

SIMCHA

Beginning on Rosh Hashonah, the Rebbe encouraged Chassidim to be *be'simcha* in an unprecedented manner. At the Rosh Hashonah farbrengen, which generally bore a more solemn atmosphere, the Rebbe instructed the crowd to sing a Simchas Torah *nigun*, and the Rebbe stood up at his place and clapped along in ecstasy. This was the first time in many long years that the Rebbe stood up during a farbrengen and this repeated itself several times over the following months.

DIDAN NOTZACH!

On Shabbos Parshas Vayetzei, Yud Kislev, the Rebbe spoke again about *simcha* and that it carries with it the power to do away with all the undesirable issues we encounter.

That night, the Chassidim danced away. It was on that occasion that the words "Didan Notzach" were fitted to an old Chabad *nigun* (by Rabbi Berel Lazar – later to become Russia's chief rabbi) which became an instant hit.



A RARE PICTURE OF RABBI HODAKOV AND RABBI SHEMTOV BRINGING IN THE SEFORIM WHEN THEY WERE RETURNED TO 770 ON BEIS KISLEV 5748.



As a matter of fact, at the farbrengen of Yud Shevat, 5746, the crowd sang this *nigun* vigorously, and the Rebbe actually sang the words along with them in undertone. (This is visible on the video recording of the farbrengen.)

WE WILL BE VICTORIOUS!

During that same farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Vayetzei, Rashag approached the Rebbe and suggested perhaps settling for a compromise with the opposing side. The Rebbe became very serious and answered loudly, moving his holy hands all the while: "It's not a fight against me! It's a fight against the Alter Rebbe, the Mittler Rebbe..." (The Rebbe specified all the Rabbeim.)

Rashag told the Rebbe that he really wishes to abstain from testifying and the Rebbe replied: "I will go testify and you will go testify. We will see this matter through until the end, and we will be victorious!"

Those standing nearby heard the Rebbe's stern words, and everyone around saw the Rebbe speaking passionately, moving his hands fiercely along.

**"My thoughts
are constantly
disturbed
because I'm
worried about
the building of
770"**

DEM BEINKEL!

On the morning of 13 Kislev 5746, a few days before the actual trial began, the Rebbe summoned the members of Aguch for a *yechidus* in his room. Some of the members of the delegation still hoped for the possibility that a compromise would be made and the matter would not have

to go to court.

The Rebbe responded very sharply and totally rejected the idea. The *bochurim* stood outside and were able to hear the Rebbe's passionate response, although they could not make out the exact words. Later on it was told that the Rebbe had said: "Did you say *Tehillim* for this issue? Did you fast? You speak of settling for to a compromise? They want the *Beinkell*!"

Later that day, the court ruled that the Rebbe does not have to testify, and all sensed that the victory had already begun. It was a step in the right direction towards a complete *Didan Notzach*.

FREQUENT VISITS TO THE OHEL

The trial began on Yud-Tes Kislev. The Rebbe went to the Ohel each and every day while the trial endured, from Sunday to Thursday (except Rosh Chodesh). It's interesting to note that with him during these visits, the Rebbe brought along many old *duchos*, reports written by Chassidim of the Chabad activities worldwide, some of which had been written even in the 5730's.

NOT ACTIVE?

A very important subject mentioned

by the Rebbe quite a few times regarding the *seforim* episode was the claim raised by the opposing side that (Agudas) Chabad is not active. Although the Rebbe proved time and again how baseless this accusation really was, the Rebbe still called on the Chassidim to intensify their

That night, the Rebbe held a surprise farbrengen where he explicitly addressed the claim raised against Chabad that they are not active, explaining that although this claim is ridiculous, nevertheless, we'll take it as an indication to do even more than until now.

Chassidus in the proper manner, we must take that as an indication to intensify our efforts in *Hafotzas Hama'ayonos*.

The Rebbe also elaborated on the *possuk* of "ותחי רוח יעקב אביהם" from that day's *Chitas*. Chassidim understood that the Rebbe's spirit had been revived, so to

Dancing with Tears

After many years of not doing so, the Rebbe stood up and danced at farbrengens a total of five times during the year 5746. Pictured here is the Rebbe dancing at the farbrengen of 15 Tammuz, 5746, where the Rebbe clapped vigorously to the *nigun* of "Nye Zhuritzi". Notice the seriousness on the Rebbe's face as tears flowed from his holy eyes.



efforts in *Hafotzas Hama'ayonos* in unprecedented measures. It was during this time-period that the Rebbe spoke fervently about establishing Chabad Houses in all corners of the globe.

In addition, the Rebbe spoke a lot about printing Chassidus.

At the farbrengen of Shabbos Chanukah, the Rebbe made mention of the fact that some of the *ma'amorim* that had recently been printed were part of a hidden collection of the Rabbeim's writings, which were never disclosed to anyone. That being said, how can we take the tremendous responsibility of publishing such treasures? Here the Rebbe mentioned the famous *moshol* from the Alter Rebbe about grinding the precious stone in the king's crown in hope of saving his only child.

After stressing the importance that everyone must learn these words of Chassidus, the Rebbe concluded: "But even if people won't learn from them, I am not intimidated, I will continue printing more and more, in the spirit of "יענו אותו, כן ירבה וכן יפרוץ".

These words from the Rebbe were almost a clear indication that a *kitrug* had formulated on high after the Rebbe had accomplished an unparalleled breakthrough in the dissemination of Chassidus.

The Rebbe also spoke at great length about the *kitrug* on the Alter Rebbe before Yud-Tes Kislev, continuing the explanation at an additional surprise farbrengen the following night.

IT'S A SPIRITUAL MATTER

Later that winter, towards the end of Adar I, the Rebbe began davening *shacharis* on Shabbos in the small *zal* upstairs because the Rebbe was walking with great difficulty. Still, the Rebbe came down for the regular *Shabbos mevorchim* farbrengen and said a very long, complicated "*hadran*" on Rambam.

During the following week, Reb Nissan Mindal asked the Rebbe "Vi fil't der Rebbe?" (How is the Rebbe feeling?), to which the Rebbe responded, "S'iz mer geistish vi fizish..." (It's more of a spiritual issue than a physical one).

"ותחי רוח יעקב אביהם"

The joy and celebration in Lubavitch that met the verdict on Hey Teves is well known and beyond the scope of this article. We will suffice with mentioning that the Rebbe, in his *sicha* on Hey Teves after *mincha*, made reference to the *kitrug* raised on the Alter Rebbe, and drew a lesson regarding the story of the *seforim* as well. Since the claim against us was that we are not sufficiently active and don't use the *seforim* and *k'sovim* of

speak, as we had finally emerged victorious.

The next day on 6 Teves, the Rebbe spoke and again mentioned that *possuk*. It was then that the Rebbe declared this time as an "*eis ratzon*" and encouraged everyone to write in requests for *brochos* in whatever they needed. If it wasn't clear enough yet, the Rebbe indicated unambiguously that indeed the *seforim* saga was a heavenly ordeal and the positive ending marked a true *Yom Tov*.

HEY TEVES

From all the above we can discern that the story of Hey Teves was far from a simple battle over a valuable library, but a real spiritual issue which the Rebbe perceived as very serious. The way the Rebbe spoke about the issue with such passion and his refusal to settle for any compromise, as well as the renaissance of Chabad activity the Rebbe prompted in its wake, all attest to that.

In conclusion, let us pray that the *seforim* and *k'sovim* of *Rabboseinu Nesi'einu* which still remain in captivity in Russia will finally return to their proper home², and may their *geulah* bring about the final גאולה האמיתית והשלמה תיכף ומיד ממש! ■

1. Hisvaaduyos 5745 vol. 3 p. 1692

2. See Sichas Hey Teves, 5752



The Midnight Encounter

At the approach of Tishrei 5678, Reb Leizer Nanas was in the Yeshiva Tomchei Temimim in Kremenchug, which was separate from the Rebbe Rashab who had moved to Rostov.

As Tishrei approached, the Bochorim in Kremenchug began planning their well-anticipated journey to the Rebbe, not a single one of them wanted to remain behind. "How is it possible to spend Yom Tov anywhere but with the Rebbe," was the feeling shared by all.

The 800-kilometer (approximately 500 miles) journey was fraught with danger. Along the way, one would be exposed to the brutality and cruelty of the Cossack and Communist troops.

In addition the Bochorim would collect penny by penny until they had enough to buy a precious ticket.

But with a burning desire to spend Yom Tov with the Rebbe, Reb Leizer along with his fellow Bochorim made the arduous and expensive journey to Rostov.

CONFUSION AND WORRY

Every year on Motzei Yom Kippur someone would announce in the name of the Rebbe that all the Bochorim should return to Yeshiva the next day. Whoever did so had his travelling expenses paid for. Anyone who chose to remain in Rostov for Simchas Torah would have to arrange their own accommodations, meals and way back. This system was put in place to encourage the Bochorim to remain in Yeshiva for Simchas Torah.

A handful of Bochorim were able to fend for themselves, but for most it was time to leave, as difficult as it was.

Reb Leizer Nanas was part of the small group who were able to remain for Simchas Torah. His benefactor was Reb Folik Gourarie who lived in the same city as the newly resettled Yeshiva – Kremenchug.

For a number of years already Reb Folik was unable to make the long, difficult journey to Rostov, so he appointed Reb Leizer as his personal Shliach. He supplied him with the necessary travel tickets for his return journey and plenty extra for his personal needs.

As the line at the train station began to fill with Bochorim waiting to acquire their return ticket to Yeshiva, Reb Leizer went to his lodgings and went to sleep.

Suddenly he felt himself being woken up from his sleep and was shocked to see Reb Shilem Kuratin the Mashpia of his Yeshiva standing in front of him.

Utterly surprised, he quickly washed Negel Vasser and turned his gaze to the Mashpia.

"This evening," began Reb Shilem, "I showed the Rebbe the list of Bochorim who had traveled from Kremenchug to Rostov for the Yomim Noraim. As he was going through the names, he paused by yours and told me to hurry to where you are staying and awaken you. The instructions are clear: you are to go immediately to the train station and buy a ticket to your hometown, not to the Yeshiva."

Hearing this sudden news, Reb Leizer was shaken to the core. "What is the meaning of this sudden 'eviction' in the middle of the night? Perhaps something terrible has happened to someone in my family and the Rebbe has received a telegram informing him of this. Surely this is why he told me to go home and not to Yeshiva."

Overwhelmed, he stepped out into the cold night. He went to seek the advice of his friend Rabbi Yaakov Landau, an assistant in the Rebbe Rashab's house and one who took care of the Yechidus roster at the time. He had a room in the Rebbe's house from which he organized the schedule of those going in to see the Rebbe.

Rushing into his room, he poured out his heart to Reb

Yaakov and begged him to allow him to speak to the Rebbe that same night.

AN UNUSUAL YECHIDUS

Reb Yaakov was adamant, "A Yechidus on Motzei Yom Kippur?" This was something unheard of and could not be arranged.

Feeling his pain, Reb Yaakov advised him: "Rebbetzin Shterna Sorah is busy with some things and has not gone to bed yet, she holds you in high esteem, why don't you go to her and see what she suggests."

Reb Leizer hurried off and met the Rebbetzin in Gan Eden Hatachton. He burst into bitter tears as he explained to her the situation. However, the Rebbetzin also had the same response: a Yechidus on Motzei Yom Kippur was impossible.

Standing helplessly outside the Rebbe Rashab's room, Reb Leizer was at a loss about what to do next. Suddenly, two men rushed by him and headed into the room. "They certainly were dealing with a matter of extreme importance that won't be delayed at all," thought Reb Leizer.

The Rebbetzin, who was still standing nearby, understood what was going through his mind and suggested, "Stand opposite the door and wait. Perhaps the Rebbe will notice you and signal that you can come inside."

Following her advice, he stood there waiting with hope in his heart. After about five minutes the two men left. The Rebbe's seat was positioned opposite the door, so when he sat down he noticed Reb Leizer and motioned for him to approach.

Tears were already streaming down his face. "Rebbe," he cried, "If I am not Zoiche to spend Simchas Torah here, then at least grant me permission to be with my friends in Yeshiva. Has something happened at home?"

The Rebbe calmly reassured him that nothing had happened.

The next question came out of Reb Leizer's mouth

almost against his will, "Then why is it necessary for me to return home?"

The Rebbe gazed intently at him and replied, "Not everything can be said. I am telling you, go home."

Seeing Reb Leizer's crestfallen face, he added, "You will be my Shliach. When you pass through Yekaterinoslav, please deliver a letter to Horav Levi Yitzchok. Now hurry to buy a ticket, and tomorrow at ten o'clock in the morning come back here and I will give you the letter."

He quickly rushed to the station. As he approached the crowded station, he saw many of his friends who had been standing in line for hours already. Without thinking he rushed passed all of them and positioned himself at the head of the line.

Seeing this, his fellow Bochorim cried out in protest. "I am a Shliach," he told them proudly and they let him keep his spot.

At five o'clock in the morning, after many hours of waiting, the ticket booth finally opened up. Being first in line, Reb Leizer quickly paid for his ticket and

got his passport stamped.

At exactly ten o'clock, following the instructions he had received the day before, Reb Leizer went to get the letter for Horav Levi Yitzchok. He was now ready to leave; yet he could not. Rooted to his spot, a terrible fear overcame him. "Rebbe," he cried out, "am I to travel on the train all alone?"

The Rebbe's forehead creased and he turned his sharp gaze to the trembling Bochor, "Alone? How can you say that? Alone? There is no place empty of His presence."

Staring at him sharply, the Rebbe concluded, "Hashem should help you, may you merit a Refuah Shleima."

These words struck him with great surprise; being a healthy and strong young man he did not understand them at all. Yet he knew that his time was up and there



REB LEIZER NANAS



was no way he could ask the Rebbe a question.

THE SPECIAL DELIVERY

The train stopped in Yekaterinoslav on Friday afternoon. Reb Leizer went directly to Horav Levi Yitzchok's house to hand him the letter.

Horav Levi Yitzchok himself opened the door. He read the letter and said, "Being that you are not returning there now, I will send my response with someone else."

After a short pause he told Reb Leizer, "Come with me, I want to show you something."

Horav Levi Yitzchok headed to a nearby room and opened the door. Sitting in the room was a young Bochor of about sixteen years old learning Chassidus, completely oblivious to the arrival of the 'guests'. "Take a good look at him," he said to Reb Leizer, "you will certainly benefit from this." [This Bochor was none other than our Rebbe.]

At long last he arrived home and celebrated Simchas Torah with a group of Bochorim who were in the city at the time.

THE NEED FOR A CURE

The morning after Simchas Torah, Reb Leizer awoke, but something was awfully wrong. He tried to open his eyes and lift up his head, however he was too weak. His head was burning with fever and he was in a terrible condition.

The doctor was quickly brought in to see him. After a short check, the doctor announced that he was a victim to the dreaded Typhus disease.

His illness dragged on for weeks. Finally when the doctor established that he was healthy enough to get up from his bed, he discovered that his feet were unable to support him; he couldn't walk properly.

As the months went by, his strength had still not fully returned. In the days following Pesach a letter arrived from the Rebbe Rashab with instructions for Reb Leizer. The Rebbe instructed him, along with another Chossid who was also weak, to travel to an inn for the summer months. This would be very beneficial for their health, the letter stated.

Reb Itche Der Masmid's father owned the inn and all expenses had been taken care of already. The innkeeper dedicated himself to nurturing them back to their full strength and slowly but surely improvements could be

seen.

THE CHALLENGE

In the meantime a group of secular youngsters also moved into the inn. Their schedule and lifestyle was completely different to that of the Bochorim. They would work during the day and sing and dance at night.

Yet as happy and content as those youths appeared, there was one boy who seemed somber and dejected. His mannerisms and conduct gave off the impression that he had also been a Bochor in Yeshiva until not so long ago.

Reb Leizer and his friend realized this and decided that they must come up with a way to save this boy.

After much thought, they concocted a scheme. They approached the group and boldly stated, "We are ready to debate you, do you accept the challenge?"

The arguments were heated; back and forth they went, until the youths were stumped and completely defeated.

The debates continued throughout the summer.

Through these arguments the Bochorim were able to approach the boy and build a connection with him.

As Tishrei approached, the Bochorim began preparing themselves for the trip to Rostov. Their hearts filled with excitement as they busied themselves with the necessary Hachonos.

As the day of the trip approached, the Bochorim discussed what they should do with their new friend with who they had managed to build a relationship. They agreed: "Let's invite him to come to the Rebbe with us."

The Bochor readily agreed to travel with them.

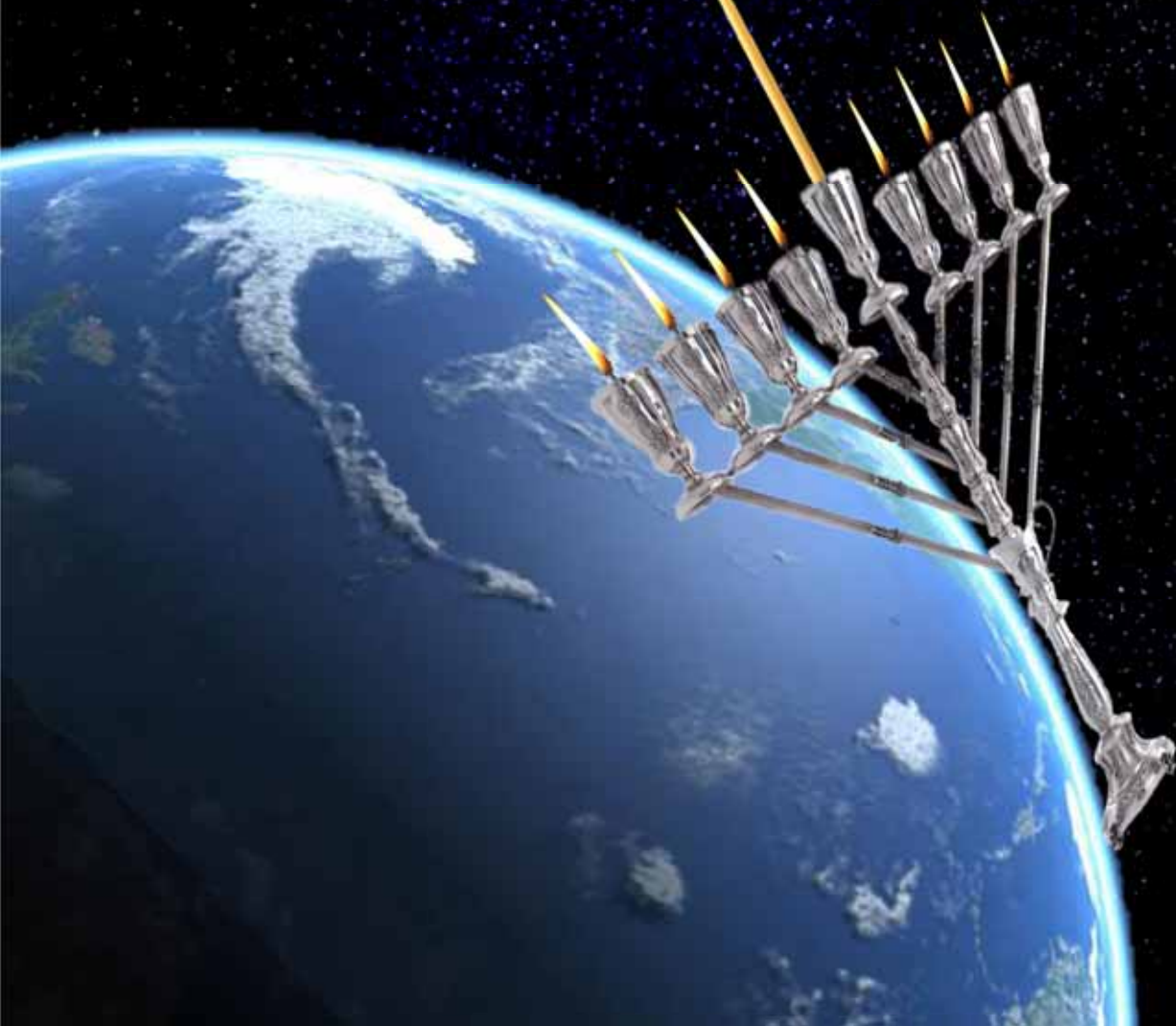
REALIZATION AND CLARITY

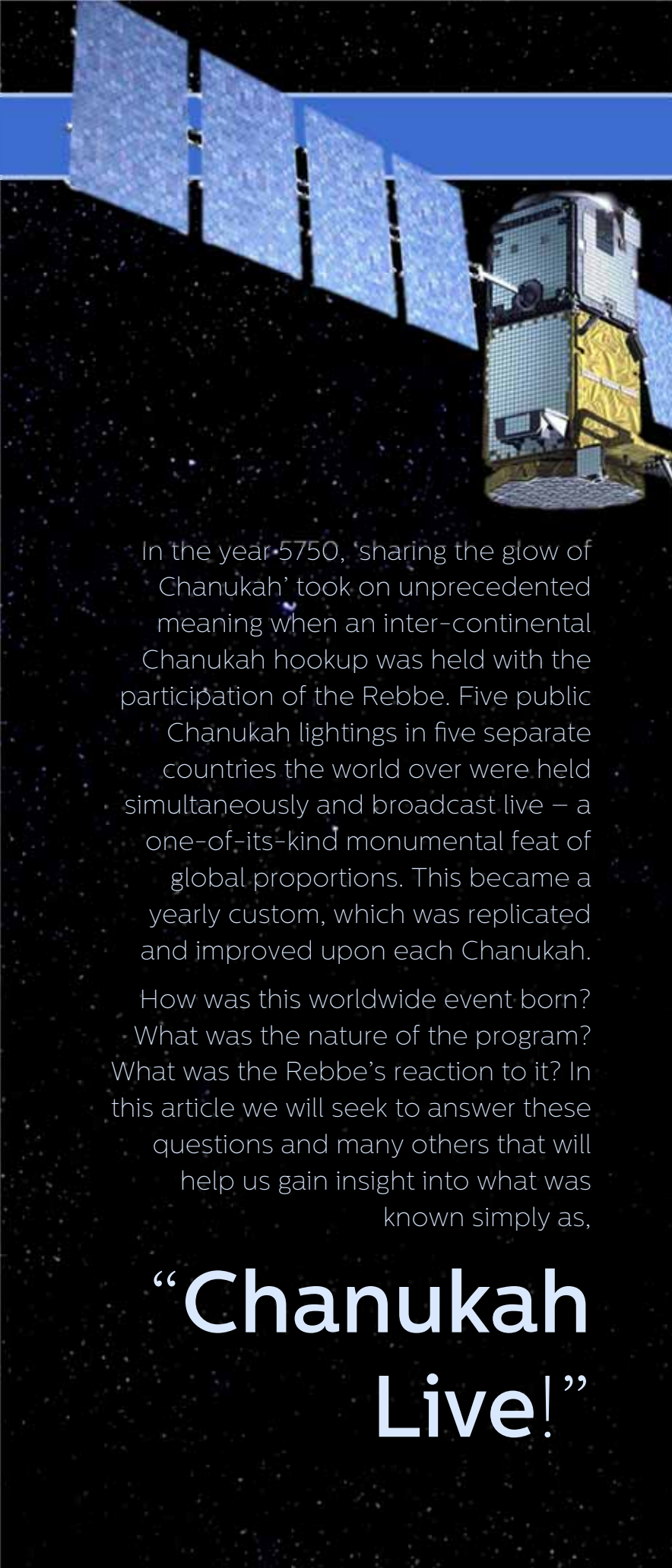
As the train pulled into the Rostov station, Reb Leizer, his colleague, and their new friend stepped off. And as they headed into the city, an incredible flash of inspiration entered Reb Leizer's mind.

"Aha, now I understand everything. The Shlichus that began last Motzei Yom Kippur had come to an end today, nearly a full year later. The Rebbe foresaw all the events and knew that in order for me to save this Bochor, I had to become ill at home and then be sent to that specific inn for recuperation."

That Bochor who was saved from the clutches of those not true to the Torah and its Mitzvos, eventually became a respected and esteemed individual, thanks to the Rebbe Rashab's foresight and care. ■

AND THERE WAS
Light!





In the year 5750, 'sharing the glow of Chanukah' took on unprecedented meaning when an inter-continental Chanukah hookup was held with the participation of the Rebbe. Five public Chanukah lightings in five separate countries the world over were held simultaneously and broadcast live – a one-of-its-kind monumental feat of global proportions. This became a yearly custom, which was replicated and improved upon each Chanukah.

How was this worldwide event born? What was the nature of the program? What was the Rebbe's reaction to it? In this article we will seek to answer these questions and many others that will help us gain insight into what was known simply as,

“Chanukah Live!”

Preface: To properly document this remarkable part of Lubavitch's history is both immensely necessary and intensely challenging. Over a year of intense research, and interviews with founders and those involved, and uncovering never-before-publicized documents, brought this article to fruition.

The Chassidisher Derher would like to extend a special Yaasher Koiach to a few of the individuals who selflessly gave of their time and much more so that Chassidim around the world be able to relive the extraordinary moments in this article:

*Chairman of Agudas Chassidei Chabad **Rabbi Avrohom Shemtov**, JEM Founder **Rabbi Dovid Krinsky**, Rabbi Yosef B. Friedman, Rabbi Eliezer Zaklikovsky and Rabbi Mendel Feller.*

A UNIVERSAL MIVTZA

Chanukah has been perceived by many around the globe as a time to focus on family, yet the Rebbe transformed Chanukah into a time to radiate Chanukah's light to all who come within our sphere.

The Rebbe's persistent encouragement brought about a new phenomenon which has become widespread practice: Public Menorah lightings.

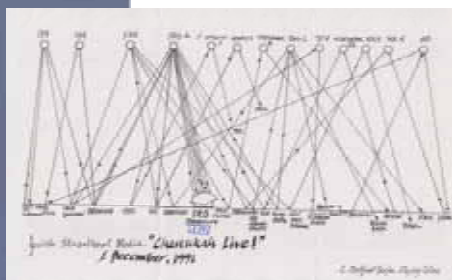
Chassidim and Shluchim around the world mobilized to bring this new Mivtza to fruition. Some organized public lightings; others visited people in their homes, while still others took to the streets to bring Chanukah's light to every last Jew.

In the winter of 5734 Rabbi Avrohom Shemtov spearheaded efforts to conduct the first public Menorah lighting at the Independence Hall, near the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This hallmark Menorah lighting continued each year in the same location as the practice became commonplace around the world.

At first a smaller Menorah was used at the Liberty Bell, however, in 5739, Rabbi Shemtov coordinated the fashioning of a 32-foot Menorah to be used instead. His forethought in ensuring the Rebbe's Mivtza was carried out in the grandest fashion was a forerunner of numerous replicas of these large Menorah's around the globe.

Twenty years later, as Chanukah 5750 drew near, Rabbi Shemtov had a team of artisans put finishing touches on a magnificent new Menorah at the same height of its predecessor.

Thoughts began to swirl in Rabbi Shemtov's head



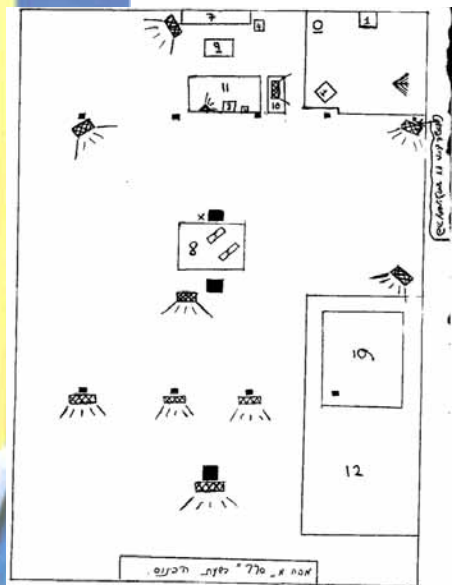
THE SCHEMATIC RABBI H. DOVID KRINSKY PRESENTED THE REBBE WITH.



A CREW OF BOCHURIM HELPS THE CAMERA CREW GET SET UP.



SATELLITE DISHES ARE SET UP ON EASTERN PARKWAY OUTSIDE 770.



A MAP DRAWN BY A BOCHUR WHO WAS LEARNING IN 770 AT THE TIME, GIVES A BIRD'S EYE OF WHAT THE SETUP IN 770 WAS LIKE.

as to how best celebrate this new Menorah. Guided by the Rebbe's constant urge to utilize newest technologies for purposes of Yiddishkeit, Rabbi Shemtov set his eyes onto an idea of global proportions—literally.

He thought to himself: "Perhaps we can hold Chanukah lightings in multiple cities world-wide simultaneously, and we can link them with a video broadcast via satellite? For example, we can coordinate that Menorah lightings in Philadelphia, Washington, and Eretz Yisroel should be held at the same time and connect them in this way."

As the idea formulated in his head, it occurred to Rabbi Shemtov that in the present time, when Hashem's aura can be felt most strongly where the Rebbe is found, this would be the ultimate "Aliya L'regel"—short of coming in person. An inter-continental hookup, which could also be viewed on any personal television, would show Chanukah being celebrated in 770 in conjunction with four other public lightings around the world.

The broadcast would enable countless Jews to not only have a glimpse into the Rebbe's Chanukah, but for them to be seen by the Rebbe.

On the other hand, an interconnected broadcast of such vast proportions had barely been attempted even in the secular world, so Rabbi Shemtov realized that this idea would be a giant challenge.

With a bit of trepidation he wrote a tzetel with a detailed overview of the project. He was delighted to receive the Rebbe's response and an indication that the Rebbe would participate in person!

This would mean that the Rebbe would deviate from his usual schedule of davening Mincha at 3:15 and join the program, which would begin sometime earlier.

GROUNDWORK AND SKY-WORK

A small group of Shluchim and Bochurim worked feverishly to assemble a program that would bring the Rebbe great Nachas. At its helm, Rabbi Avrohom Shemtov brought to the team Rabbi Hillel Dovid Krinsky, founder of Jewish Educational Media, and the one

who pioneered the broadcasting of the Rebbe's Farbrengens.

In anticipation of and following each Chanukah Live, Rabbi Shemtov and Rabbi Krinsky would consistently write reports to the Rebbe regarding the goings on.

On one occasion they presented the Rebbe with a "schematic," which described how the broadcast was transmitted. A "schematic" is a term used for a diagram that describes the design or concept behind a sophisticated project.

On another occasion, Rabbi Levi Teitelbaum designed a map with color pins on all the locations it would be aired, whether on cable or local TV.

The costs and labor that it would take to produce a broadcast of such proportions were tremendous. Yet this small group toiled enthusiastically on bringing the idea to fruition.

The program was unique in its structure and great thought was given to each detail. Thousands of children from the New York area would gather inside 770 for a Tzivos Hashem rally. At the same time the participating events being held elsewhere would commence.

Inside the main shul of 770 an extensive camera crew and numerous screens were sprawled about. In order to broadcast, huge satellite dishes needed to be rented and brought to each location. In Crown Heights they were parked on Eastern Parkway in front of 770.

All the footage would be streamlined via the Galaxy3 communications satellite to the control center. There, Rabbi Yosef B. Friedman selected the choicest views to be shown on the screens at all locations and for those watching on their personal televisions. Rabbi Friedman would give instructions to the cameraman and managers at each locations over satellite phones and transistor radios.

In 5750 this control center was in a broadcasting studio in Manhattan. Its distance from 770 led to some unnecessary challenges in the smoothness of the broadcast, so in future years a mammoth control trailer was set up outside 770 on Kingston Avenue, complete with satellite

• Commanding • CHANUKAH'S GLOW

Throughout the years of Chanukah Live there were numerous command centers and individuals who hosted the program.

5750 – The entire program was controlled by Rabbi H.D. Krinsky and Rabbi Y.B. Friedman remotely from the CBS studios in Manhattan. Together with them in the control center, sat **Rabbis Shmuel Kaplan** and **Manis Friedman**, who accompanied the broadcast with continuous explanations and translation. One could only hear their voices and not actually see them.

5751 – After encountering numerous problems the previous year because of the remote location of the command center, a mobile-studio was rented. Rabbi Mendel Lipsker joined Rabbi Kaplan to give a live commentary from a small room in the control trailer.

5752 – From this year forward, an office in 788 Eastern Parkway was set up specially for the purpose of hosting the broadcast. In it sat Rabbi Shmuel Kaplan and a member of the Chanukah Live team by the name of Jerry Levine, who moderated the program in a most professional way.

After Gimmel Tammuz, when Chanukah Live was broadcast from the Rebbe's room, a command center was set up in the zal of upstairs 770.



RABBI YEHUDA KRINSKY OVERSEES THE PREPARATIONS.



RABBI H. DOVID KRINSKY MULTITASKS TWO PHONES AT A HECTIC POINT OF THE BROADCAST.



RABBI ELIEZER ZAKLIKOVSKY AND RABBI MENDEL FELLER HARD AT WORK COMMUNICATING WITH THE BROADCASTERS TO ENSURE ULTIMATE PERFORMANCE.



poles and the studio equipment.

Two individuals would "host" the program, offering running commentary as the event aired. Sitting in the studio these moderators would often be joined by special guests including Chief Rabbi Yisroel Lau and others.

The team would work with studio professionals for weeks before to create video clips in tribute to the Rebbe and describing the work of Lubavitch the world over. These were peppered throughout the broadcast. Many of these clips also included good wishes from dignitaries around the globe to the Rebbe.

ON AIR!

Beginning the evening prior, a crew of Bochorim cleared out 770 and reset it to best accommodate the program.

Inside 770, a number of Bochorim and members of the Chanukah Live team sat along the cameramen to help guide them as to where the camera should be focused. In 5750, Rabbi Avrohom Shemtov, and in the years following,

Rabbi Mendel Feller, stood right alongside the Rebbe's Bimah with a transistor radio, to transmit any requests, and directives as necessary.

Only children, along with their teachers, counselors, and a select few others were permitted to be in 770 throughout the duration of the program. Bochorim squeezed into the Ezras Noshim of 770 to witness the proceedings, yet when the main Shul in 770 overflowed with children they were made to leave to give space for more children to participate.

To accommodate the thousands of Bochorim and Anash that so desperately wished to be a part of this epic moment several screens were set up throughout Crown Heights. In the small Shul of 770 two screens stood. One played the broadcast while the other streamed footage from the camera of Reb Chaim Boruch Halbershtam, which was constantly focused on the Rebbe. Two additional screens were placed in the Ezras Noshim of 770.



CHASSIDIM WATCHING THE EVENT FROM A JUMBO-TRON OUTSIDE 770.



RABBI MANIS FRIEDMAN AND RABBI SHMUEL KAPLAN PROVIDE RUNNING COMMENTARY TO THE PROGRAM.



JERRY LEVINE PUTS LAST MINUTE TOUCHES ON HIS SCRIPT FOR THE BROADCAST, AS RABBI AVROHOM SHEMTOV SPEAKS RAPIDLY INTO THE PHONE.



IN THE COMMAND TRAILER RENTED SPECIALLY FOR CHANUKAH LIVE.

In 5750 and 5751, giant screens were placed in the Oholei Torah ballroom. In 5752, a truck with a jumbo screen loaded on the back, parked in front of 770 and droves of people watched the broadcast from there.

Once everyone had assembled in 770 and all the equipment was in place, the Rebbe would enter the Shul amid lively singing. The moderating of the broadcast would start a short while before the Rebbe entered the Shul to prepare the viewers for what was to come.

In the main shul of 770 the screens did not display the background commentary that was happening live simultaneously, and the program began with Mincha, as a children's rally would usually begin.

When Mincha concluded, the Rebbe turned to a second Bima facing the crowd in 770, which also had screens set up for the Rebbe to view the broadcast.

Typically, at this point in a children's rally the 12 Pesukim would be recited, however, during Chanukah Live this took on a new twist. The Chanukah Live team put in much effort to ensure that every location taking part would have a substantial moment on the screen at least three times throughout the broadcast. Each place would be seen by the Rebbe at least for one Posuk, during their Menorah lighting, and while they were singing Haneirois Hallolu.

Hence the Pesukim were said in a global succession. The Rebbe would watch the monitors very closely and often repeated the words of the pesukim after the children. At the culmination of the recital of the Pesukim, everyone joined together in the Brocho of "Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu Verabeinu" and burst into the singing of "We want Moshiach now."

At this point the Menorahs would be lit at each location consecutively. Usually the one who lit the Menorah, or another individual standing together with him in each location, would say a few words and end off with a Brocho to the Rebbe.

All through Chanukah Live each year, Chassidim recognized a rare sense of serenity in the Rebbe's face. It was clear that the Rebbe had great pleasure from

the entire program. Moreover, there were particular moments when it seemed the Rebbe's face would light up with joy.

Each year the tens of thousands of people that gathered at the Eiffel Tower in France, would elicit broad smiles from the Rebbe. During the first Chanukah Live, when a hookup showing Jews in Moscow celebrating Chanukah freely for the first time in decades, the Rebbe showed sheer delight.

Once the Menorah was lit in all locations, concluding with the kindling of the spectacular Menorah in 770, Haneirois Hallalu was sung in tandem throughout the world. As the participants at each location would see themselves on the screen, often they would excitedly wave and jump, out of great joy of being seen by the Rebbe.

HEARD AROUND THE WORLD

Now for the highlight of the entire broadcast: Chassidim watched enthusiastically as the Rebbe addressed the entire world, literally, giving the order of the day in a Sicho, and in most years two or three!

Simultaneous translation into English by Rabbi Manis Friedman could be heard anywhere other than in 770. In 770, as at every children's rally, Rabbi J.J. Hecht would deliver a summary of the Rebbe's message. After his passing, this was done by his son, Rabbi Sholom Ber Hecht.

In many of the Sichos given during Chanukah Live the Rebbe tied the event with the giving of Tzedakah and personally distributed various forms of money in the years 5750, 5751 and 5752.

As this unforgettable evening came to a close nothing lay more in the hearts of Chassidim worldwide that the Rebbe have boundless energy to accomplish all his heart's desires, that he only derive Nachas from all his Chassidim, and that he speedily lead us all to Yerushayim with the revelation of Moshiach.

Echoing these deepest wishes, each year Birkas Kohanim would be recited at this point followed by a heartfelt Brocho from Rabbi J.J. Hecht, and after his passing, his son Rabbi Shimon Hecht. ■

It is difficult to acquire an accurate picture of the breathtaking moments that occurred during Chanukah Live without describing each year on its own. Constraints render it impossible for us to describe each detail, however we will attempt to present a glimpse through the highlights we have compiled below.

The diaries presented here are from Chanukah Live in the years 5750, 5751, and 5752. The final Chanukah Live the Rebbe participated in was in 5753, however, Chanukah Live continued for many years afterward.



5750

decided to move on.

The seventh Possuk was recited by a girl in Paris, France, with audio connection. Suddenly a few people noticed that the girl could be seen on one of the screens in the back of the Shul. They hastily lifted the screen and turned it so that the Rebbe be able to see it. Upon seeing the child on the screen and hearing her recite the Possuk, the Rebbe repeated after her, word by word, along with the children.

Suddenly, Moscow appeared on the screens. Upon seeing the Moscow celebration for the first time, the Rebbe's face lit up as he looked strongly at the screen, which showed a boy leading the crowd in "Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu Verabeinu," and continuing with the song "We want Moshiach now."

Following the Pesukim, a film was presented of President George Bush receiving a Menorah from a delegation of Shluchim and after its conclusion, the Rebbe applauded strongly along with the crowd for a short while.

An additional video presentation was then shown of

On the night before this great event, unparalleled in prior history, 770 was prepared accordingly. Benches filled the entire Shul, leaving a very narrow space for the Rebbe to pass through on his way into Shacharis.

The program began with the Rebbe entering the Shul at 2:50 to lively singing of *al nisecha*, and continued with the regular schedule of a children's rally.

Upon reaching the third Possuk, a boy from Moscow was said to recite it, but as it turned out, only the audio was transmitted without any video connection. The sixth Possuk was supposed to be recited by a girl from London, but after a while of not succeeding in making a connection (during which the Rebbe expressed his astonishment quite a few times), it was



LUBAVITCH ARCHIVES

Mr. Bill Hayden, Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia bestowing his wishful greetings at a Chanukah celebration. The Rebbe clapped briefly after this.

The time for the Menorah lighting ceremonies arrived at last. Moscow was first, and the connection went very well, enabling the Rebbe and the Chassidim in 770 to see and hear clearly. The linkup to London and France for their ceremonies did not turn out very successful, so Rabbi Hecht announced that the program would move on to kindling the Menorah in 770.

Upon hearing this, the Rebbe turned towards him and exclaimed "Eretz Yisrael!" After this repeated itself a second time, Rabbi Groner approached and the Rebbe asked him, "What is with Eretz Yisrael?" Rabbi A. Shemtov spoke anxiously into the phone, trying to ensure that the satellite reach Eretz Yisrael, but was unsuccessful.

The Rebbe asked that the footage of Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu be replayed and several attempts were made, yet to no avail. So, the program continued in 770.

[During the rest of the program Rabbi Chaim B. Halberstam worked valiantly to get the footage of Chief Rabbi Eliyahu's speech, and after the Rebbe finished the Chaluka the Rebbe was told that the clip was available but the entire program would be viewable the following day. The Rebbe replied that he would watch the footage the next day in its entirety.]

The schedule held the kindling of the Menorah in Eretz Yisrael next, but again, the attempt to access Eretz Yisrael failed, and the children continued with Aleinu. As the Sharf children recited the Kaddish De-

rabonon, suddenly the face of Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu speaking fervently appeared on the screen, although his voice could not be heard. The Rebbe grinned and exclaimed "Eliyahu!"

Rabbi Hecht then announced that the kindling of the Menorah in France will now be shown. As he uttered these words, a video of the already ignited Menorah in France turned up on the screen. Once seeing this, many of the children shouted out at once "It's already lit!" and the Rebbe smiled broadly.

Here the Rebbe began to say the first Sicha, lasting approximately eight minutes. After the Sicha, a joint singing of "Haneiros Halolu" took place simultaneously around the world, with Avraham Fried leading the singing in Moscow, and the enormous crowd of over 20,00 people participating from Paris.

The Rebbe then continued with the second Sicha, which lasted until after the hook-up was disconnected. Following the translation (by Rabbi S.B. Hecht, as Rabbi J.J. Hecht was not feeling well), the Rebbe told Rabbi Groner that he would **personally** hand out four coins to each child present(!) and give dollars to the "Tankistim" to be distributed to the adults.

This "Chaluka" came as a complete surprise to all, and Chassidim suggested that the number four might correspond to the four decades of the Rebbe's leadership being celebrated that year.

On his way out of the Shul, the Rebbe waved at five of the news reporters from CBS, and shook hands with one of them.

The historic event came to a close at 6:30 that evening. ■

5751

Plans for the second annual Chanukah Live broadcast started a while before Chanukah. A number of steps were taken to avoid various difficulties that arose the previous year. Indeed the broadcast went much smoother in 5751.

This year the event was held on the afternoon leading into the eighth evening of Chanukah, and 11 locations participated! This was a sharp increase from the four locations that had taken part the previous year. The cities that were part of the broadcast were: Manhattan, Hong Kong, Melbourne, Moscow, Buenos



Aires, London, Sydney, Johannesburg, Cape Town, Paris and Montreal.

Two screens faced both sides of the Rebbe as he approached the bima after Mincha. After a global rendition of the 12 Pesukim, all burst into lively singing

of “We want Moshiach now,” and the Rebbe clapped along. When Rabbi Shimon Hecht said to give a hand for all the children who said the pesukim so beautifully, the Rebbe applauded strongly.

At this point a pre-prepared video composition, showing Public Menorah Lightings done by Shluchim around the world, in places that weren’t included in the live-broadcast, namely: Toledo, California, Cairo, Casablanca, Montevideo, Chicago, in the Red Square outside the Kremlin and at the White House.

When Casablanca, Morocco, was shown, the Rebbe asked: “Is this Morocco?” In the clip from Uruguay, the President of Uruguay lit the Shamash on the Menorah, and continued with giving a short Chanukah message.

A clip of Prime Minister Yitzchak Shamir speaking warmly about the Rebbe was shown afterward, preceding the lighting of the Menorahs.

The Menorahs were then kindled at all the places participating in the live broadcast, starting off in Yerushalayim, where it was lit by Chief Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu. Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu followed the lighting of the Menorah, speaking passionately about Chanukah and the Rebbe’s visionary leadership. After the Chief Rabbi concluded, one of the Children who had just been rescued from Chernobyl gave a Brocho to the Rebbe, and thanked the Rebbe for giving them the chance to leave the terrible situation they were coming from.

As the children from Chernobyl were shown, Chasidim perceived a unique glow pass over the Rebbe’s face.

When the Menorah was lit in each location, the Rebbe gazed at the screen along with all those gathered in 770. Mayor of New York, David Dinkins, spoke at the lighting of the Menorah in Manhattan. After the lighting in Montreal a clip was shown of the Prime Minister of Canada Brian Mulroney speaking about the lessons we learn from Chanukah and thanking the Rebbe for all he does for world Jewry and humanity.

When the Menorah was lit in 770, Haneiros Hallalu was sung, and the Rebbe encouraged powerfully, turning to all sides of the Shul.

The Rebbe then spoke three Sichos. The first and second one were about 15 minutes long, and the third one lasted for about five minutes. Throughout the Sichos the Rebbe discussed how each Yid and children in particular is a “Ner Lehoir,” sharing the glow of Yiddishkeit with the people around him, a message which is emphasized greatly throughout Chanukah.

The Rebbe announced that he would distribute three coins to each child so that the idea of children

HORAOS FROM THE REBBE to the organizers of Chanukah Live

After Rabbi Shemtov initially wrote to the Rebbe describing an overview of Chanukah Live, the Rebbe responded as follows:

נכון הענין. על דבר פרטים, בהתייעצות עם אגודת חסידי חב"ד העולמי.

The idea is proper. Regarding the details, you should consult with Agudas Chassidei Chabad Haolomi.

After the program the Rebbe wrote the following reply to Rabbi Shemtov:

הרי הצליח הן בהלראות והן בלהראות

I see that you’ve already been successful both in the “seeing” and in the “being seen.”

In preparation of and following each Chanukah Live, Rabbi Shemtov would consistently write reports to the Rebbe. On Zos Chanukah 5751, Vov Teves 5751, and on numerous other occasions the Rebbe responded with an encouraging phrase based on the Gemora¹:

“לראות ולהראות!”

To see and be seen!

In other instances, such as on 29 Kislev 5751, the Rebbe spoke to Rabbi Shemtov as he received a Dollar, mentioning the full quote from the Gemora brought earlier, and concluded with a request that he persist in sending reports:

“כדרך שבא לראות כך בא ליראות”

“Just as one came to see [the scene in the Beis Hamikdosh] so too he came to be seen [in Hashem’s presence].”

In 5751, Rabbi Shemtov submitted plans for that year’s Chanukah Live, and received an answer on the sixth eve of Chanukah:

ושיהיה באופן של 1) אראנו 2) נפלאות

And may it take place in fashion of 1) I will show you 2) wonders.

After Rabbi Shemtov had presented the Rebbe with a specially designed album titled “One Hour. Forty Years.” the Rebbe wrote the following response:

הרי בזה משמש את “קונו” (תואר לאצילות)

Indeed, with this you are servicing your “holder” (a title used for Atzilus).

1. Chagiga 2:a. This Gemara discusses the Mitzva of Aliya L’regel, which entails that one see Hashem’s glory, as well as be seen in Hashem’s presence. The Rebbe used this as an allusion to the incredible achievement of Chanukah Live, which enabled one to see the Chanukah celebration in 770 and just as well be seen by the Rebbe.

giving Tzedokah be done with the strength of a “Chazakah.” The Sichos ended with the Rebbe giving a Brocho that we merit to be redeemed from this golus before the end of the last night of Chanukah, so that we will still be able to light the evening lights in the Beis Hamikdosh Hashlishi.

The Sichos were translated by Rabbi Sholom Ber Hecht. This was followed by Birchas Kohanim given by Rabbi Chaim Hakohen Gutnick. When he gave the Brocho he gazed directly at the Rebbe, and chanted the words one by one, and the children repeated them after him. Those closely following the Rebbe’s every move noticed that the Rebbe was also repeating each word of the Birchas Kohanim.

5752

This would be the third year of Chanukah Live, and with it would come a number of amendments to the program from the way it had been done previously. It would be held on Sunday afternoon leading into the first eve of Chanukah.

The moment Shabbos concluded and the Rebbe had left the Shul after Maariv, the main Shul in 770 was emptied and locked. There were less than 24 hours to complete the preparations for the grand event, and so the team entrusted with setting the Shul worked feverishly.

Rabbi Levi Teitelbaum led the groundwork, first beautifying the Rebbe’s stage with new red carpets, and a black curtain behind the Menorah. A lighting professional dimmed the lights in most of 770 and had spotlights facing the Rebbe’s Bima. 770 was decked out with a banner displaying the greeting “Happy Chanukah” in many languages.

At 2:50 the Rebbe entered the Shul to live music and exuberant singing of “Al Nisecho.” Following Mincha the Rebbe turned to face 770 and the program began. Torah Tziva was said by a student of Beis Rivka of Crown Heights. Shema was said at the Kosel, by a child who had just been airlifted from Chernobyl following the Nuclear Reactor disaster that had taken place there. He also gave a heartfelt Brocho to the Rebbe, thanking the Rebbe and his Chassidim for bringing him to Eretz Yisroel. The Rebbe gazed deeply at the screen as he spoke, smiling broadly. Bechol was then said in Moscow where over 6000 Jews gathered inside the Kremlin congress.

The principals of each school then came up to the Rebbe’s Bima to receive the coins from the Rebbe, and then in turn gave them out to the students of their respective schools. When the Rebbe finished giving out to the principals, the Rebbe turned to two female photographers who had been standing in the Ezras Noshim right near the Rebbe, and reached up to give them a rolls of coins each.

Suddenly the Rebbe turned around and asked that Rabbi Moshe Teleshevsky be summoned to sing Sheyibone Beis Hamikdosh. He was quickly sought and led 770 in the singing of Sheyibone, and the Rebbe encouraged the singing very strongly. ■



After the Pesukim ended the crowd in 770 burst into the singing of “We want Moshiach Now,” and the Rebbe moved from his place slightly, to encourage the singing of all in 770.

At this point a video exhibit was shown, focusing on the rebirth of Yiddishkeit in the former Soviet Union, and concluding with the historical airlift from Chernobyl to Eretz Yisroel. A second one was screened that showed Chabad activities with Israeli Soldiers, bringing joy to the battlefield, as its background music boomed in 770.

At 3:50 EST the Menorah Lighting circuit began. The lighting in Moscow came first, where Rabbi Aharonov led the proceedings. He invited Rabbi Avrohom Genin to kindle the Menorah. Rabbi Shlomo Cunin who was in Russia working on the release of the Lubavitch Library from the Russian government, took advantage of the free moment before the lighting of the Menorah to deliver a wholehearted Brocho to the Rebbe.

The next location to light the Menorah was at the Kosel by Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu. The Tzivos Hashem Choir (of Eretz Yisroel) led the crowd in the singing of Sheyibone, followed by a fiery speech by the Chief Rabbi.

The screens now focused on Melbourne, Australia,

where Rabbi Chaim Gutnick lit the Menorah, but without a Brocha, because it was already during the first day of Chanukah.

A definite highlight came at the Menorah Lighting in Paris. Rabbi Shmuel Azimov introduced the Chief Rabbi of France, Rabbi Avrohom Goldman, who spoke in French, standing in a truck-lift at 18 feet in the air. The boisterous crowd in Paris jumped up and down as they relished their moments with the Rebbe.

After the lighting, Rabbi Azimov called out “Lechaim Rebbe, Lechaim Rebbe,” and burst spontaneously into the Niggun the Rebbe had taught in 5734—Hoaderes Vehoemuna Lechay Olamim, to the tune of the French national anthem.

The trip around the globe came full circle at 4:20 EST with the Menorah being kindled in 770. In the middle of Haneirois Hallalu, the Rebbe motioned to Reb Leibel Groner and spoke instructions to him as the Rebbe’s hand covered the microphone. Later on, it was found out that the Rebbe had directed that packets be prepared with a dollar bill and a dime, so that the Rebbe would be able to distribute them to the children afterward. Hastily a group of individuals were assembled to fill the Rebbe’s directive so that they be ready within half-an-hour.

Ten minutes after the Menorah had been kindled, the Rebbe spoke the first of two Sichos that lasted 25 minutes, and a second Sicho for about 15 minutes. The Rebbe’s words had a high-spirited tone, and what the Rebbe addressed was unprecedented. The Rebbe went into detail discussing how much can be achieved through utilizing satellite technology, to spread the light of Yiddishkeit. The Rebbe even mentioned each participating location by name. It seemed that the Rebbe derived much Nachas from the event. Indeed this year was also unique in the incredible smoothness of the program, perhaps contributing to the Rebbe’s added Nachas.

The Sichos were translated simultaneously over the live broadcast by Rabbi Manis Friedman, and in 770 by Rabbi Sholom Ber Hecht. During the translation of the second Sicho, the Rebbe asked that a sample packet be shown to him.

After Chazzen Teleshevsky sang Yehi Ratzon, the Rebbe suddenly started speaking again, turning slightly to the right so it could not be heard over the microphone. Then the Rebbe turned and started the Niggun “Nyet Nyet Nikavo,” and 770 was swept into the lively singing as the Rebbe urged the singing vigorously.

The Rebbe turned to Daven Maariv at 5:25, after which the Rebbe gave out the specially compiled Chanukah Gelt packages to all the participants. As the Rebbe exited 770 the broadcast drew to a close. ■

“MOSCOW IS LIVE”?!



It was perhaps the most thrilling moment of a thrilling evening.

In the place where any sign of Yiddishkeit had been oppressed for over 60 years, a posuk of Torah was excitedly recited, as viewers around the world held their breath.

All these years the Rebbe refused to let the Yidden of the Soviet Union to fade away. Both materially and spiritually the Rebbe boosted these trapped Neshamos with incredible courage.

The emotionally charged moment that resulted when the Rebbe and these Jews saw each other face-to-face for the first time ever was truly historical.

The organizers related that these moments were the undisputed highlights of Chanukah Live. To witness the sheer joy on the Rebbe’s face each time the screen would display the Moscow lighting was simply invigorating. Tears flowed freely in the audiences as they internalized the magnitude of the moments.

The Rebbe’s pride in these moments were highlighted in a conversation with Mr. Joseph Cayre during a Yechidus with members of the Machane Yisroel Development Fund, on 26 Adar 5751. Mr. Cayre thanked the Rebbe for advising him to invest in the video industry, which he ended up being very successful in. The Rebbe exclaimed to him:

“You know that in the video business this year they showed in Moscow, how the Chanukah licht are light-ed, by all the Jews around all the globe. From Australia, from the United States, from Moscow and from Kiev etcetera etcetera. It had a special impact on all the people who saw it, especially in Moscow. They danced around the video!”

מהנסיון בתקשורת הנ"ל בימי חנוכה מקווים אנו שבמעט הבא יהי' השידור באופן מוצלח יותר.

הלל דוד בן דבורה קרינסקי

[illegible]

The Rebbe responded:

[Handwritten signature]



The Lubavitcher Rebbe SHOULD LIGHT THE MENORAH!

In the year 5750, during the first "Chanuka Live," the Chief Rabbi of Israel at the time, Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu, addressed the thousands gathered at the Kosel, with a passionate message to the Rebbe. His talk was being transmitted live to all the viewers around the globe, however, unfortunately, due to technical difficulties, the audio could not be heard in 770. The following day the Rebbe watched a professional video of the event including his remarks. Below you will find a free translation of his message and his fervent Brocho to the Rebbe.

"On this fifth night of Chanuka, we light five candles on the Menorah. The number five corresponds to the fifth sefira of Hod. Hod is a sefira that is often associated with the first Kohen Gadol, Aharon.

Regarding Aharon Hakohen it is told that he was 'Ohev Shalom' and 'Rodef Shalom', one who loved and pursued peace. In addition to meaning peace, the word Shalom means complete. This teaches us that Aharon's deep love of peace was wholesome in every sense of the word, regarding the Jewish Nation, the Jewish Land, and the Torah.

Furthermore, Aharon Hakohen was 'Ohev es Habriyos Umerkavan Latorah', he loved every Jew, and truthfully loving every Jew, means to use out your every opportunity to bring him closer to the Torah.

How many have done Teshuva?! How many thousands has the Lubavitcher Rebbe Shlita illuminated with the light of Yiddishkeit, through his divine wisdom and understanding?

The Rebbe is a giant in Torah, a great Rabbi who sends thousands of Shluchim the world over, to illuminate the souls of the Jewish People. Wherever there is a Jew, his Shluchim are there to kindle his spirit. Just like Aharon Hakohen, he is a true lover of Hashem, his Torah and his people.

Esteemed Guests! The Greeks endeavored to persuade us to forget the Torah and its Mitzvos, but the Chashmonaim radiated a brilliant light, a light unique to Aharon Hakohen and his descendants that throws off darkness, and in its place comes Torah, Mitzvos and Yiras Shomayim.

Esteemed Guests! In Tehillim it is stated: 'Arbaim shono okut bidor' – for forty years G-dliness could have been struggling with the darkness of this generation. Yet these forty years have seen glowing lights and the returning of thousands to their father in heaven.

I am addressing you from a location which is just a few feet away from where the Beis Hamikdash once stood. The Shechina rests here and this place will be restored to its full glory once Moshiach arrives.

I can assure you, that when the Moshiach finally does come, he will teach that it is permitted for any Jew to kindle the Menorah, not just the Kohanim. He will then continue on and proclaim:

Whom shall light the Menorah? It is only fitting that one who has brought myriads of souls closer to their father in heaven, one who has permeated the Jewish people with the warmth of Torah, and infused the entire world with Hashems glow, that you, the Lubavitcher Rebbe Shlita, should be the one to light the Menorah!

מוסקבה - ע"י משה חיים לוין
ד"ר על מבצע חנוכה חי' תהא שנת אראנו נפלאות

A few weeks after Chanukah, Rabbi Dovid Krinsky gave a Duch to the Rebbe on behalf of Rabbi Moshe Chaim Levine who was in Moscow at the time, reporting on the Chanukah Live event in Russia.

The Rebbe responded:

נת' ות"ח ויקויים בפועל אראנו נפלאות

"I received [the report]; many thanks. May it be fulfilled in actuality: [the Rebbe drew an arrow to the words] *Ar'enu Nifla'os*."

5751 AFTER THE EVENT

This Duch was written to the Rebbe by Rabbi Dovid Krinsky immediately after the event. He notes that many of the technological experts he spoke to told him that a satellite link-up of such proportions was very rare and is prone to be full of unexpected complications. Nevertheless, the program ran relatively smoothly.

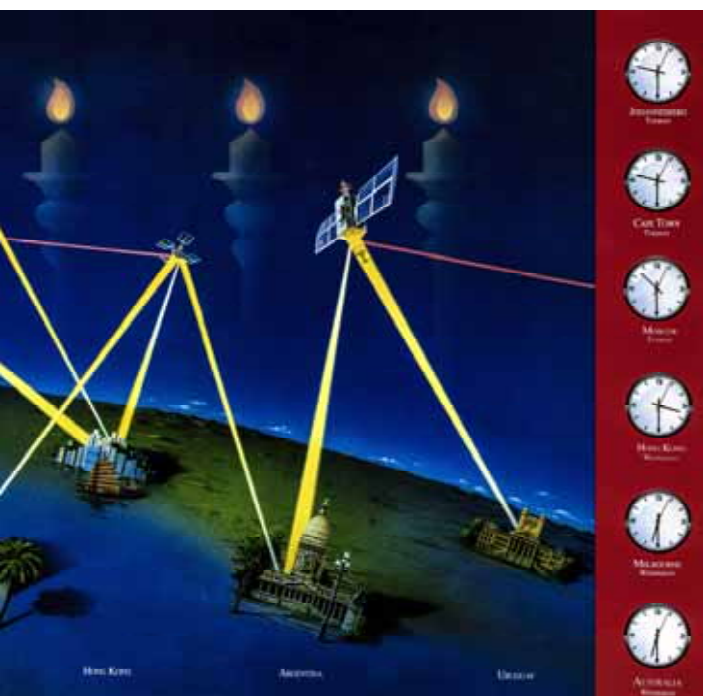
He ends off that this duch contains only brief highlights (*be'kitzur*).

The Rebbe responded:

נת' [נתקבל] ות"ח [ותשואת חן] ובטח יבוא (גם) בפרטיות המתאימה

"I received [the report]; many thanks. [Circling the word "*be'kitzur*"] You will certainly (also) write in greater detail, as befitting."

החל דבר כן גם
בפרטיות המתאימה



דעם רבי'נס א מענטש



RABBI BEREL BAUMGARTEN

דעם רבי'נס
א העלד
A Great Hero

AN ACCOUNT OF TRUE DEDICATION
AND REMARKABLE SACRIFICE

Reb Berel Baumgarten was born on 25 Menachem-Av 5682 in New York.

Prior to his coming to Lubavitch he studied in Yeshivas Chaim Berlin and Torah Vada'as. During that period, Reb Sholom Ber Gordon learned in Torah Vada'as as well, spending his breaks learning from a small sefer; this action piqued Reb Berel's curiosity, and he set out to discover what is this book, but his efforts were in vain, as Reb Sholom Ber always found a way of avoiding revealing to him the name of the sefer.

Eventually Reb Berel found out that it was a Tanya, and immediately approached Reb Sholom Ber telling him: "If

this sefer is good for you, then it's probably good for me too". Reb Sholom Ber consented to introduce him to Reb Yisroel Jacobson on condition that this remains a secret. At the time, Reb Yisroel Jacobson taught Tanya to a large group of Yeshiva students from various yeshivas and Reb Berel joined the shiur.

Later, Reb Berel described the courage and mesirus nefesh for them to keep their beards, an act frowned upon by American culture and even the Yeshiva culture; among the anecdotes he told of a time he walked in the street with fellow Tanya-students when a truck pulled up next to them and one of the workers

offered them a brush, a pail of water and a razor, saying "Apparently you don't have enough money to buy them yourselves."

When the Frierdiker Rebbe arrived in America and established Tomechei Temimim, many of these Bochorim formed the first group of temimim in the yeshiva, among them was Reb Berel.

Starting in 5702, Reb Berel dedicated much time and effort to reach Bochorim from other Yeshivos, sharing with them what he discovered. Though at first he was unsure whether his actions were proper, the Frierdiker Rebbe repeatedly encouraged him, and he saw the fruits of

his labor, bringing many students to Lubavitch. At some point the Rebbe encouraged him to approach the Jewish Theological Seminary, where he managed to obtain permission to give a Tanya Shiur. These various shiurim continued for many years until he went on Shlichus to Argentina in 5715.

In 5703 he was appointed to serve as a Rosh Yeshiva in Achei Temimim. Eventually he left the position, as he became deeply involved in other matters, but still

Dovber Baumgarten related that he was recently offered to get involved in a very complicated business deal. Unsure whether he should accept the offer, he turned to the Rebbe who told him that he should go to the Ohel and ask the Frierdiker Rebbe what he should do. Reb Berel replied that not everyone is able to see the Frierdiker Rebbe and that he needs a 'lebediker Rebbe'...

"The Rebbe advised that he should go to the Ohel, present his doubts and then

birthday of the Rebbe Maharash, and Reb Berel was one of those who was privileged to join this group representing Anash and Temimim from all over the world.

LIKE A FATHER

Reb Berel had developed a very personal relationship with the Rebbe before the nesius. For instance, it was customary that on Sukkos the Rebbe would give out cake and coffee to everyone who bentched on the Frierdiker Rebbe's lulav. (For the custom is not to eat anything before bentching lulav.) Reb Berel, who was not from a Chassidshe home, was very scrupulous about not eating before davening, and didn't take any cake. When the Rebbe asked him why he wasn't eating, he explained that he never ate before davening. "Do you want to be a Chossid?" the Rebbe asked him. "Yes," Reb Berel replied. "Then you should eat, for a Chossid eats before davening."

His personal connection to the Rebbe continued after the Rebbe accepted the Nesius, with the Rebbe being involved in every detail of Reb Berel's life, both regarding his public activities as well as private matters.

When once he had a court case, he wrote to the Rebbe asking for a brocha, the Rebbe then told Rabbi Chodakov to call Reb Mordechai Harlig, Reb Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky and Reb Yisroel Jacobson and have them attend the proceedings; the judge was impressed by the presence of these distinguished Rabbis and the verdict was given in Reb Berel's favor. Afterwards, the Rebbe asked Rabbi Chodakov that he call each of the three Rabbis and convey a personal thank you from the Rebbe.

HAFATZAS HAYAHDUS

When Tzach was established in 5714, Reb Berel became heavily involved in all its activities and together with Reb Leibel Alevsky was very active in arranging various shiurim and programs. He was involved in college campus outreach and helped establish the "Pegisha" weekends which brought college students to crown heights for Shabbosim.



REB BEREL SHOWS THE REBBE THE NEW PIN WITH THE MESIBOS SHABBOS LOGO. THIS PICTURE WAS TAKEN AT THE FRONT DOOR OF 770, IN THE YEAR 5702. LOOKING ON IS REB SHMUEL AIZIK POPACK.

continued to serve as a Mashpia for many bochurim, particularly those who struggled.

DOR HASHVIL

Immediately following the Histalkus of the Frierdiker Rebbe in 5710, Reb Berel turned to the Rebbe for guidance in all matters, both gashmi and ruchni. Already during the Shiva Reb Berel entered the Rebbes' room to discuss pressing matters concerning Hafotzas Hama'ayonos that couldn't be pushed off. But upon entering the Rebbes' room an unbelievable Bittul came over him and he couldn't utter a word from great emotion...

In Yemei Bereishis, the following story is chronicled:

"Thursday, 29 Shevat, 5710 – Reb

follow the first thought that comes to mind, but Reb Berel was persistent that he is incapable of attaining an answer, and requested the Rebbe give him an answer; the Rebbe then told him that he (the Rebbe) will go to the Ohel and ask for him. Immediately after Reb Berel left the room, the Rebbe called Rabbi Chodakov and told him to inform Reb Berel that he should not accept the deal at all costs."

Reb Berel was one of the most active Chassidim during the period of time after Yud Shvat, investing much effort to ensure that the Rebbe accept the nesius. After Pesach, 5710 it was decided by a meeting that a minyan of chassidim will go to the Ohel of the Frierdiker Rebbe and beseech that the Rebbe accept the nesius. The date chosen was Beis Iyar,

One of his friends from 770 possessed a myriad of talents which were instrumental in Hafotza and he used them for college campus outreach, bringing many groups to Yechidus. Eventually though, he veered off the path of Halacha but continued outreach work. This episode prompted Reb Berel to ask the Rebbe: "How can I ensure that I remain on the proper path and not veer aside?" The Rebbe replied 'Az Men Folgt, Farkricht Men Nisht' - When one obeys, one does not go astray."

His son, Reb Pinye, recalls a student who came from a family with no visible connection to Jewish practice, but he was very impressed by the lectures and evenings and came closer to his heritage, finally agreeing to undergo a Bris. The event took place in the Baumgarten residence, followed by a Pidyon Haben. Reb Berel sent the Rebbe some cake and mashke from the seuda and also informed the Rebbe that the student had chosen the name Shneur Zalman. The Rebbes' response was just one word: "Hecheyisani - you have revived me!"

At an occasion when the Rebbe saw Reb Berel and Rabbi Chodakov standing together on the steps outside 770 he remarked: "Tzvei Groiseh Held'n - two great heroes..."

TRUE SACRIFICE

Towards the end of 5715, he began his travels throughout South America as the Rebbe's Shliach eventually settling permanently in Buenos Aires, Argentina. This city had a sizeable Jewish community but was in dire need of a stronger sense of Yiddishkeit founded upon Torah and Chassidus. When he first arrived in Buenos Aires there was one esrog in the entire city and the concept of Matza Shmura was foreign to its residents, but with Reb Berel's tireless efforts all this changed. He established mikvaos, strengthened Kashrus observance, and raised the standard of Jewish education in the city, eventually becoming the Rosh Yeshiva of the local non-Chabad Yeshiva. He translated some of Kehos' publications in Spanish including "Talks and

Tales" as well as various other sifrei chasidus.

One can safely assume that most of the Anash and Shluchim today in Argentina are the fruits of the labor. The Rebbe acknowledged his remarkable efforts saying: "Berel is bringing me an entire country..."

During one of his many travels to spread Yiddishkeit Reb Berel headed to the western city of Mendoza to meet with a local Jew. While walking the streets of this city, home to a sparse Jewish population, a young boy approached him and asked that he come home with him. Upon his arrival, the child's parents lost no

time telling him of their son's commitment to Yiddishkeit, and of how he had conducted their Pesach Seder. "But how?" asked Reb Berel, incredulously. There were so few Jews in Mendoza it seemed unlikely anyone would know how to conduct a Seder. The boy pointed to a copy of Talks and Tales in Spanish. Somehow the magazine had made its way to Mendoza, and the boy had used it as his guide to celebrate Pesach with his family in this remote corner of Argentina.

In his letters to his friends and fellow Shluchim he expresses his strong desire, to be physically near the Rebbe. Being in





Argentina at such a distance from the Rebbe was too much for him to bear, and so before his first Rosh Hashana on Shlichus he wrote to the Rebbe requesting to come to New York for Rosh Hashana and be present at Tekios, as he was in the previous years. The Rebbe's response was: "Do you think that I only have in mind those who are present during tekios? On the contrary, if one must be on shlichus in Argentina, I think about him even more."

He wrote to the Rebbe lengthy letters multiple times each week, describing in detail all his activities in Hafatzas Hama'ayanos. He wrote very openly, often pouring out his heart about his own situation b'ruchniyus and the daily hardships he faced in his shlichus. He merited to receive from the Rebbe very specific answers and horaos in all areas of his shlichus. At times when he didn't have financial means to put bread on the table, it was the Rebbe's fatherly attention and encouragement, together with his total dedication and hiskashrus that fueled him to continue his shlichus with incredible mesiras nefesh.

Reb Berel's ahavas yisrael and ahavas Chassidim was boundless. For instance,

Eved Ne'emon

The following is an excerpt from the Shavuos Farbrenge of 5714:

During the Shavuos Farbrenge of 5704, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe appointed three Chassidim (in the form of a beis din) and charged each of them with the task of bringing talmidim from other yeshivos closer to Toras Hachassidus.

The first two Chassidim became involved in their own personal matters – physical or even spiritual – and completely abandoned their shlichus. The third Chassid on the other hand is not a tremendous lamdan in nigleh or the greatest maskil in Chassidus, nor does he have parnassah... and nevertheless he fulfilled the mission which the [Frierdiker] Rebbe has given him; he continues to do so to this very day, and will definitely carry on in the future.

Ten years have passed since this Farbrenge and we already

see the fruits of his labor. It is also four years since the histalkus of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe – although in truth the presence of a tzaddik in this world is stronger after his histalkus, as explained in Igeres Hakodesh, still, to our physical eyes the concept of histalkus exists – and yet he still continues to carry out the Rebbes' shlichus. Certainly the [Frierdiker] Rebbe is with him wherever he goes, as it says 'shlucho shel adam k'moso'.

Being that "Hashem does not withhold reward" and "tzadikim are similar to their Creator," certainly the Rebbe will reward him for carrying out his Shlichus. The Rebbe's work is an investment with guaranteed results, and therefore this Chassid's needs and desires will be fulfilled.

[The Chassid whom the Rebbe was referring to was Reb Berel Baumgarten.]

when he received the news that Reb Mendel Futerfas left the U.S.S.R., he donned his shabbos kapote and made a resounding 'Shehecheyanu.'

A YUD BEIS TAMMUZ SAGA

It is impossible to write about Reb Berel without relating the following episode:

Reb Berel often spent Yud Beis Tammuz in 770 by the Rebbe's farbrengen. One year, however, he realized that on Yud Beis Tammuz he would be travelling from Argentina to Brazil. Disturbed at the prospect of spending this auspicious date far from anyone with whom he could share his feelings, he sent the Rebbe a telegram before he left home, asking to be remembered on that date.

In order to reach Brazil, one had to cross the Iguacu River by ferry; this ferry had an open deck covered by an awning, with several heavy-duty rafts tied together to carry cars and cargo. Reb Berel followed instructions and drove his car onto the raft. As soon as his car was parked, he joined the other travelers enjoying the fresh air beneath the awning.

He was happy to find that two of his fellow passengers were Jews. But his joy was short-lived as he discovered that they had no desire to hear about anything to do with Yiddishkeit. One of them even brazenly flaunted a ham sandwich before him. Feeling that further conversation would be futile, and offended by their actions, Reb Berel returned to his car and opened one of the seforim he always had with him in the car as per the Rebbe's instructions.

Suddenly, there was a powerful jolt; a boat had slammed into the raft, sending the huge beams tumbling down from the raft, pushing cars into the Iguacu River. Suddenly Reb Berel's felt his car move, and with utter shock he realized his car began to move; he slammed his foot on the brake but was powerless to stop his car's motion, and he too fell with his car into the raging rivers!

Though he was a large and strong man, Reb Berel couldn't open the car door for the water pressure was simply too great.



...The Rebbe remarked, "Berel is bringing me an entire country!"...



His entire life flashed before him and he considered the thought of saying Viduy; at the same time another thought ran through his mind, it's Yud Beis Tammuz, no day for saying Tachnun or Viduy...

He never knew how it happened, but suddenly his car door opened, and he found himself out of the car and in the water, being pulled upward.

His troubles, however, were far from over, for Reb Berel had never learned to swim. Frantically flailing for what seemed like hours, he was at the end of his strength when his head suddenly broke through the water. Exhausted, he

could only bob helplessly up and down; he had no idea what was keeping him afloat. Between waves, he could see the raft close by, but was powerless to move towards it.

To make matters even worse, he could hear a rumbling thunder in the distance, and realized with horror that the river's powerful current was beginning to pull him away from the raft, and towards a waterfall! As the white water crashed over him, Reb Berel looked up to see a man heaving a life preserver toward him. It splashed into the river just within reach.

Reb Berel grabbed the life preserver and drew it close. Though his strength was giving out he held on to it for it was too small to fit over his body. While in the water, he pictured the Rebbe's face before him.

After he had been hauled out of the river and was able to regain his composure, the two Jews whom he had met previously approached him, overcome with remorse. They realized that it was because of them that Reb Berel had returned to his car, and apologized for their previous conduct. The man who had flaunted the sandwich even promised to begin keeping kosher.

After Reb Berel reached the far shore, he began to contemplate his situation. He had no explanation for the miracle that had occurred.

All these calculations, however, came later; at the moment he had more immediate concerns. His personal belongings had sunk with the car, and he was far from any Jewish community. Where would he find Tallis and Tefillin with which to daven?

Reb Berel found that there was a small airport nearby, but he would not be able to reach another city before sunset on the scheduled flights. He was unable to conceive of letting the day pass without putting on tefillin.

He inquired about hiring a private plane. Although the cost was exorbitant, he was able to find a pilot who could fly him to another city before sunset. He sent a telegram to the leaders of the Jew-

ish community there, asking them to meet him at the airport with tefillin.

There was a mix-up in communications and instead of bringing a pair of tefillin they showed up at the airport with a sefer torah. With less than an hour left before nightfall, Reb Berel grabbed a cab and told the driver to hurry to the nearest shul. Unfortunately, night fell before he could get there. Broken-hearted, he stopped the cab and sat down on a nearby park bench and cried.

At his next yechidus, he asked the Rebbe how he could atone for not putting on tefilin that day. Before answering his question, the Rebbe looked up at him and asked, "Nu, did I think about you?"

The Rebbe then instructed Reb Berel to study Hilchos Tefillin from Shulchan Aruch, as well as specific Maamorim that speak about shibud hamoach v'halev.

At the end of the yechidus, Reb Berel told the Rebbe that in the car he had a Siddur and Tanya which he had received from the Rebbe some time ago and had been lost together with the car. "Am I to blame?" said the Rebbe, "And am I to blame?" replied Reb Berel. To this the Rebbe smiled broadly, removed a Siddur and Tanya from the desk and handed them to Reb Berel.

Later he found out that during that year's Yud Beis Tammuz farbrengen the Rebbe had turned to his brother Reb Mendel Baumgarten and asked "Where is Berel?" and told him to say lechaim. When Reb Berel heard this he approached his brother to ask what time this occurred and it turned out that this had occurred at the precise moment he had been under water!

HOW DO YOU MEASURE SUCCESS?

As part of his shlichus, Reb Berel would make an annual trip to various locations in Europe and Eretz Yisroel. During one of his travels across Europe in the early 5730's he happened to arrive in England for the dedication of the new Beis Lubavitch Center; from there he proceeded to Eretz Yisroel where he visited a new building that Reb Efraim Wolf had recently established. While rejoicing

at the success of hafotzas hayahadus in other countries, he could not help but feel dejected, for these luminous structures made his modest Beis Chabad in Buenos Aires look like a little shack.

The next time Reb Berel was in yechidus, he entered the Rebbe's room with a broken heart and this time he did not write a Pan. The Rebbe asked him "Where is your Pan?" He replied "I have nothing to report. I saw what they built in England and in Eretz Yisroel and I have practically nothing."

The Rebbe became very serious and said to him: "Success is not measured

with buildings but with talmidim." Then, the Rebbe opened one of the desk drawers and took out a recent report from the hanhala in 770; the report stated that the four bochurim Reb Berel had been mekarev and sent to learn in 770 were among the most outstanding. "This is success," said the Rebbe.

In 5738, while in England as part of his annual trip through Europe, Reb Berel suffered a stroke and on Tes Zayin Adar he passed away at the young age of 54. Upon his request, he was brought New York and was laid to rest just three rows behind the Ohel. ■

**...The Rebbe looked up at him and said
"Nu, did I think about you?"**



WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

A VISIT FROM THE ALTER REBBE

In this letter, addressed to Reb Yisroel Meir Altein, then Shliach in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania - the Rebbe admonishes him of his duty in Hafotzas Hamayonos. The letter is translated from the Rebbe's Igros Kodesh vol. 3 pg. 48

Presented in honor of 24 Teves.

B"H, 10 Shvat, 5709

Greetings and blessings,

I am surprised that regarding the Chalukas Hashas, you report that only yourself and Rabbi Shalom Posner participated. After all the years that you have been in your community, have you not been able to bring **even one** person under your influence? And if this is true with regard to *nigleh*, how much more so does it apply with regard to the inner dimensions of the Torah and its *mitzvos*, to which the *yetzer hara* shows much greater opposition and invents all sorts of prepared explanations. When will you finally begin doing your share to spread forth the well-springs of the Baal Shem Tov's teachings? *Mashiach* is waiting for the activities of each one of us so that the answer he gave the Baal Shem Tov will be fulfilled and he will then come and redeem us from exile — the exile of the body and the exile of the soul.

I don't write this as an abstract interpretation at all; rather this is what is written in the holy letter of the Baal Shem Tov according to its most simple meaning.

My intention in posing the above questions is not [merely] to motivate you to find several people who will participate in the Chalukas Hashas; rather, it is that you, and your friends in your

community, should each create an environment that should be a Lubavitch hotbed, which Hashem's *hashgocha* has, for this time, implanted in your community. That, should the Alter Rebbe travel around the world and come to your community, he would not come to a foreign place. Rather he would meet a group of people who identify with him and a Beis Medrash that also identifies with him. There would be tattered pages of Chasidische Seforim on the floor and the air would be filled with the letters of Torah [studied] with *Yiras Shomayim* in general, and with the letters of *Chabad Chassidus* in particular. For although [the letters of study] ascend upward, an eternal impression is left in the air. And as is well known, regarding every entity in the sphere of holiness, [even if the entity itself is removed,] the impression remains.

Until when will this task be postponed? In the interim, the entire Jewish people are found in exile, in twofold darkness in which the curse of each day is more severe than that of the preceding one. In particular [this applies at present], when there are those who have begun to call darkness, light, and servitude, redemption.

Give my regards to all the members of our fellowship. Certainly, the statements in this letter are relevant to all of them. ■

Grasping the Geulah

IF MOSHIACH IS SUPERNATURAL, HOW IS IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO HONESTLY UNDERSTAND IT?

Beginning in the 5710's, Lubavitchers in Crown Heights hosted student groups for "Pgisha im Chabad" ("Encounter with Chabad") weekends. In the earlier years, one of the highlights of the weekend was the yechidus the students had with the Rebbe, in which they would pose their questions to him.

The following transcript is an excerpt of one such dialogue between a group of students and the Rebbe in 5723, as recorded by Rabbi Shmuel Lew.

Student: *Do you think the Moshiach will come when all the Jews become a Kingdom of Priests?*

Rebbe: I hope he will come sooner.

Student: *What will the Jews achieve when Moshiach comes?*

Rebbe: After he comes?

Student: *Before he comes.*

Rebbe: What must we do to accelerate his coming?

Student: *Yes.*

Rebbe: To be as much prepared as possible for the order of things after he comes, when there will be justice and peace. We must fulfill the instructions to us and to those around us, in Torah, Nevi'im and K'suvim. Every act must be in accordance with these instructions and we must influence others. When you do this, you will do your share to accelerate his coming.

Student: *Do you believe that Moshiach will come within the next fifty years?*

Rebbe: Much sooner! Don't postpone it for so long!

Many people feel unable to accept the idea of Moshiach. They cannot understand with human reason how Moshiach can come and transform the order of things around us, to the extent that all basic aspects of our lives will be different.

This notion would be expected to exist many generations ago. However in our times, so many changes take place in a day, or even in an hour or minute. If someone makes a momentous discovery or invention he can change things quickly. In today's world, it should not be difficult to accept that Moshiach could arrive and change the world. And perhaps even more: not only is it acceptable but it can be believed.

To put it more bluntly: if tomorrow morning a more powerful weapon than any other country possesses should be invented, it would give its inventor the power to dictate. He can dictate to all governments, and demand certain behaviors and certain rules in their countries and governments. They have no choice: they must



החלטות טובות



accept his conditions, for it is now possible for him to destroy a large section of the earth even without an army on his side.

In other words, if a mighty intellectual should dictate instructions to millions around him, this does not need a miracle, and could happen through an electronic or the like. So, if you must understand Moshiach in physical terms, he may be great even in electronics and power.

Student: *This is very interesting, understanding the idea of Moshiach as a natural concept. You usually hear of Moshiach in terms of the supernatural.*

Rebbe: I also believe in Moshiach as supernatural. But people today find it hard to understand the supernatural. Maybe by understanding it in these terms, this will prepare the way for them to prepare themselves before he comes, and they will save Moshiach the job. ■

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Kalemenson, Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshiva Gedolah - Beis Dovid Shlomo of New Haven, Connecticut relates:

“I was a fifteen year old bochur, when I came from my hometown Brunoy to the Rebbe for the first time. This took place in Tishrei 5731 and every guest was able to enter the Rebbe’s room for a Yechidus. In fact all ‘Orchim’ were then zoche to two private Yechidus’n; one shortly after arriving in New York and the other before taking leave of the Rebbe.

I fondly remember a discussion people were having as to when is the best time to go in for one’s initial Yechidus of Tishrei: Is it better to go in the ‘earlier’ group for Yechidus (after Rosh Hashona) and thus be better prepared for the upcoming Yom Kippur, *or* perhaps rather be part of the ‘later’ group who went in after Yom Kippur when you’re *already* “clean”...

When it finally came my turn to enter the Rebbe’s room for Yechidus the Rebbe gazed at my tzetel and immediately answered the question I had asked: Usually, during times of *his’orirus*, I would take upon myself a *hachloto tova*, and it never seemed to last!

The Rebbe replied to me that one of the antidotes for this is to speak over your Hachlota with a friend; then one can be sure that the Hachlota will last.”

Special Deliverance

DELIVERY OF TUNISIAN SEFER TORAH SAVES TUNISIAN JEWISH COMMUNITY FROM HARM

Shlichus in the city of Tunis, Tunisia, was not very comfortable for shluchim Reb Nisson ע"ה and Rochel Pinson ש"י. The Tunisian government was notoriously known as one that was harsh with its citizens, and the Jewish community felt the brunt of it.

In fact, Mrs. Pinson once mentioned to the Rebbe in Yechidus that not only is she certain that her phone conversations are recorded by the government, but even when she speaks to people face-to-face she fears that somehow the government is listening in.

The Rebbe responded to her that this is even worse than Russia!

However, in 5729 tensions had reached their climax. The Pinsons feared that the government was planning on shutting down all the Lubavitcher mosdos and banishing the Shluchim from the country.

Realizing the gravity of the situation, the Shluchim immediately sent a message to the Rebbe asking for a Brocha.

The Rebbe's reply caught them by surprise; The Jewish community of Tunis should send one of their Sifrei Torah to the Rebbe and the Gezeira will become botul!

Without hesitation, Mrs. Pinson and her son Yosef Yitzchok began preparing for their journey. They set aside the Sefer Torah that would be taken to the Rebbe. Reb Nisson was unfortunately unable to travel because the government did not grant him permission to leave.

Once they had arrived in New York, they had a Yechidus together with Reb Nissons brother, Reb Shia Pinson

(Gabai of 770). The Rebbe instructed that this sefer Torah be checked through to ensure:

- 1) That פצוע דכא be written with an Alef (not with a Hey as other have the Minhog).
- 2) That the Shins are written with a pointy bottom, and not a flat one.



The Rebbe then said that once they bring back the Sefer Torah, he will personally bring it down to the Aron Hakodesh in 770! The Rebbe concluded by saying that on Shabbos he would get an Aliya in it and afterward there would be no more troubles in Tunis.

It was very important, stressed the Rebbe, that this all happen in a very low key fashion, therefore the Sefer Torah would be brought into 770 when it is very empty; on Erev Shabbos. The Rebbe also said that he would say a Ma'amer in honor of this special occasion.

The Sefer Torah was brought to the Rebbe, fully



checked, on Erev Shabbos Slichos 5729. Reb Shia Pinson, Reb Binyomin Gorodetzky, Reb Michael Lipsker and Mrs. Pinson entered the Rebbe's room with the Sefer Torah. Mrs. Pinson also placed a bottle of Mashke on the Rebbe's table.

Shortly afterwards, the Rebbe lifted the Sefer Torah in one hand and took his siddur with the other, and headed downstairs to the main shul of 770. **1st Picture**

As the Rebbe reached the Aron Haodesh, Reb Binyomin Gorodetzky did Pesicha and the Rebbe placed the Sefer Torah inside. **Second Picture**

The Rebbe then instructed Reb Shia Pinson to be the Chazzan for Mincha, even though a Chiyuv was already standing at the omud. The Rebbe commented:

Sicha about what had taken place, but this would happen at tomorrow's farbrengen.

At the next day's Shabbos farbrengen, the Rebbe closed the first Sichra with a discussion regarding the Sefer Torah that had arrived and how it had been placed "in the Aron Hakodesh in the Rebbe's shul".

After discussing the inyonom surrounding writing a Sefer Torah and learning Torah at length, the Rebbe concluded with a unique brocho:

"All those whom are involved in Hafotzas Hatorah vehamitzvos and Hafotzas Hamayanos, may the Torah remove all troubling and frightening situations, and they should have Hatzlocha in all their matters. May they be able to spread Torah, Mizvos, Yahadus, and the Mayanos without any disturb-

ance through "V'nofol Pachad Hayehudim Aleihem" (an expression from the Megillah).

When this had ended, the Rebbe took the bottles of Mashke that had been given in before Shabbos and poured a bit from each bottle into his Becher. The Rebbe now took his becher and poured it back into each of the bottles and gave a bottle each to Rabbis Pinson, Lipsker, Gorodetsky and two others. The Rebbe instructed that they give out a little

L'chaim to those at the Farbrengen and then return the bottles to the Rebbe. Once the Rebbe received all five bottles, the Rebbe poured them together into three bottles and handed them to Rabbi Hodakov to keep in the Rebbe's room.

Shortly after this unprecedented sequence of events, all the problems in Tunis faded away and the Pinsons continued their Shlichus for many years to come. ■

(Based on a personal account of Rabbi Nisson Pinson and a diary written at the time)



"זיכער וועט ער קיין פאריבל ניט האבען."

"Surely, he [the Chiyuv] will not be upset."

After Mincha the Rebbe instructed Rabbi Hodakov to tell Rabbi Gorodetzky and Rabbi Lipsker to bring a bottle of Mashke to Mazkirus so that the Rebbe can present them with it by the Farbrengen.

By time Mincha had ended, quite a crowd had amassed because word had gotten out that the Rebbe was going to be saying a Ma'amer. The Rebbe, however, wanted that things be done in a concealed manner so he let it be known that instead of a ma'amer he would say a



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בת הרה"ת ר' זאב שו"ב קזיניץ
נפטרה יו"ד כסלו תשע"ג

נדפס ע"י בנה

הרה"ת הלל דוד וזוגתו שטערנא שרה ומשפחתם שיחיו



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