

ואה שאלה הלא אלה
דנה ישראל את כל אלה מצאור הפע
כיום שכל דהנהגה - אה יעצור חפץ
דהתגבורת אליה, אלה חפץ חפץ היצר,
וישם השאלה על ציון כל מצאור הפע
וועט צער רדי געפילען א וועג ווי ער
13 עטבערן

דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

A COLLECTION OF PERSONAL STORIES OF THE
REBBE'S CONTINUED BRACHOS AND GUIDANCE
COMPILED FROM A CHASSIDISHER DERHER



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8



34



40



54



43



A Chassidisher Derher is honored to feature unique and historic photos
from Jewish Educational Media's Living Archive photo collection. The
Living Archive is a project to preserve, and provide access to the video,
audio, and photographic recordings of the Rebbe. These photos are
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Proper Decision 8

Rabbi Levi Klein

Divine Impulse 11

Rabbi Yitzchok Gurkow

The Delayed Dollar 16

Rabbi Ruvi New

The Absentee Rabbi.....21

Rabbi Sholom Greenberg

Health And Wealth.....21

Rabbi Yosef Katzman

Moving - But Where To? 29

Rabbi Moshe Feller

The Rebbe's Children31

Reb Benny Vaksberger and
Reb Sholom Mordechai Rubashkin

Reviving Assurance40

Rabbi Shneur Oirechman

Nossi For All43

Rabbi Dovid Dubov and
Rabbi Chaim Shaul Bruk

Cherished Forever46

Rabbi Ze'ev Kaplan

The Ultimate Partner.....49

Mr. Felix Sater

Seder Challenge52

Rabbi Levi Shmotkin

A Threefold Blessing51

Reb Shlomo Gutleizer

Flooded With Blessing ...57

Rabbi Chaim Goldstein

About the Cover:

Featured here is a picture of a letter - in the Rebbe's personal handwriting - that the Rebbe wrote to Rabbi Sholom Posner on 10 Nissan 5710, in which he advises him to write to the Friediker Rebbe and send it to the Ohel, and the Rebbe will then find a way to answer him. (Igros Kodesh vol. 3 page 266)

Special thanks to Rabbi Yossi Deren (Pittsburgh, PA) for the colored scan of the original ksav yad kodesh.





FOREWORD

"...מדי שנה בשנה, ווערט ער נאך מער לעבעדיקער און נאך מער שטארקער, און נאך מער אקטיוו, ציווישן אונז, און ביי אונז, און דורך אונז ביי יעדער אידן און ביי אלע אידן, ביז אין די גאנצע וועלט..."

We find ourselves in trying times. For more than twenty years we haven't seen the Rebbe in the physical sense, and we await the day we will be reunited with the Rebbe again.

Nevertheless, Chassidim do not despair, for the Rebbe is with us. We are told that רועי ישראל לא יפרדו מעל צאן מרעיתם—the shepherds of the Jewish people do not forsake their flock.¹

The Rebbe elaborates on this in many *sichos* and letters. Not only is the Rebbe here with us just as before; he is in fact more alive and more active, and his presence grows more alive from year to year, so to speak.² As the Alter Rebbe writes in *Igeres HaKodesh siman Chof-Zayin* (based on the Zohar), יתיר מבחייה—a *tzaddik* is found more in this world after his *histalkus* than during his lifetime.

But are things really the same? Before Gimmel Tammuz, Chassidim relied on clear guidance from the Rebbe; his holy words guiding every matter of their lives. What does one do today when in doubt?

The Rebbe clearly addressed this issue shortly after the Friediker Rebbe's *histalkus*. In a letter to a chossid who had asked a similar question, the Rebbe writes (featured on the cover):

ומה שמקשה הלא א"א עתה לשאול את כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הכ"מ כשיש ספק בהנהגה - אם יעמוד חזק בהתקשרותו אליו, מבלי ישים לב לפתויי היצר, וישלח השאלה על ציון כ"ק אדמו"ר הכ"מ - וועט דער רבי געפינען א וועג ווי עס צו ענטפערן.

Regarding what you ask: [What should one do] when in doubt, for it is not possible to ask the [Friediker] Rebbe now? If you will remain steadfast in your *hiskashrus* to him, without paying attention to the arguments of the *yetzer hara*, and you will send your

question to the Ohel of the [Friediker] Rebbe; the Rebbe will find a way to answer you.

In other words, the Rebbe is saying: Writing your question and sending it to the Rebbe at the Ohel is exactly like writing to the Rebbe before the histalkus.

Just like before Gimmel Tammuz, when a difficulty arose everyone knew what the one and only address to receive guidance and blessing was. And the same holds true today. There is no need to despair, for as the Rebbe wrote, "The Rebbe will find a way to answer."

It is important to bear in mind that the Rebbe's answers can be come about in various ways. Sometimes it's clear, and sometimes it is less apparent at first, with the writer only understanding the Rebbe's answer much later.

The Rebbe wrote to Reb Simcha Gorodetzky, who felt he was unworthy when he did not receive a clear response from the Rebbe in writing:

"...לפלא גדול כתבו שאינו ראוי (ח"ו) ולא נענה - והרי יו"ח וב"ב שי' קבלו היתר יציאה משם וכו',
והאפשר מענה טוב יותר מזה?!"

You're writing that you feel unworthy (*chas ve'sholom*) and therefore did not receive a response is very surprising. Your family just received a permit to leave [Russia]. Is there a greater response than that?!³

Today as well, at times the Rebbe's answer is obvious and sometimes it is less so. But the Rebbe will find his way. As the Rebbe says in a *sicha* on Tu B'Shevat 5748:

"When one asks for a *bracha* and the letter is brought to the Ohel, not only is [the request] heard and answered by the Rebbe, but the [Rebbe's] answer actually affects the one who receives it. Either he hears it in the physical sense, with his own ears, or his *neschama* hears it (מזלייהו חזי), ultimately affecting him *b'pnimiyus*..."⁴



Based on all of the above, it is no wonder that Yidden from all over the world who come to the Rebbe at the Ohel seeking his holy guidance and blessing are often *zoche* to experience open miracles. Sometimes the answer is given clearly, and sometimes the Rebbe's answer is apparent by the blessings that the writer sees as a result. In the Rebbe's words to Reb Simcha: Is there a better response than that?!



Over the past year and a half, the staff of *A Chassidisher Derher* collected and published stories of individuals who merited seeing the Rebbe's *brachos* in their lives after being at the Ohel and writing to the Rebbe.

These are a small number of the daily occurrences at the Ohel; the ones that we were able to gather and that people agreed to share with the public. Every story is told by the one with whom it occurred, and was verified again before publishing to ensure the accuracy of every detail.

In honor of Gimmel Tammuz, we now publish all these stories once more, in one booklet, for the crowds of Chassidim coming to the Rebbe's *daled amos*.

We would also like to take this opportunity to request: Those who have stories of their own or have heard stories first hand which they feel could be of interest to the public, we ask that you please share them with us, so that we can publish them in future magazines, בזכות הרבים תלוי בהם.



Let us hope that *teikef umiyad* we will be reunited with the Rebbe, and that there will no longer be a need to tell these stories, for G-dliness will be revealed for all to see, as the *passuk* says, "ונגלה כבוד ה' וראו כל בשר יחדיו"—may it be now, *mammosh!*

Erev Rosh Chodesh Tammuz 5775

A Chassidisher Derher

1. Igros Kodesh Admur HaRaYaTZ vol. 1 p. 141

2. Sichas 15 Tammuz 5745

3. Based on Reb Bentzion Vishedtzky's "My Encounter" interview, published in JEM's "Through the Veil" vol. 2

3. As heard on the audio-recording of the farbrengen.

YOUR STORY

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



THE PROPER DECISION

AS TOLD BY RABBI LEVI KLEIN

- MEMPHIS, TN -

We moved out on shlichus to Memphis, Tennessee, in 5754.

After spending two years in an apartment, we purchased a house with an extended garage that provided us with extra space, which we converted into a functional shul and Chabad House. The plan was to move the Chabad House to a bigger, better and more permanent location within a few years. But it was not to be.

We stayed in that same house for close to twelve years. Much money and effort was invested in various projects and properties, but every time we got close to closing on something, the deals would not materialize, for reasons beyond our control. In short, we suffered ten years of disappointment and lost opportunity.

Finally, in 5767, after eight attempted projects, a new prospect arose. There was a six-acre property for sale, with a large building and a parking lot, and it seemed to suit our needs perfectly. The building belonged to a non-Jewish religious establishment that had run

into major financial difficulties. They were desperate to sell the property to pay off their debts and that meant that we would be offered a very good price.

The only issue with it was the location, which was a bit out of our range. Every Jewish center or institution in the city is situated either on the main street of the city or just north of it. This property was a full mile south of the main road. My supporters were split, and of course, I was torn as well. Everything about it—the property, the building and the price—was perfect, all except for location.

In the middle of all this, I traveled to New York for the Kinus Hashluchim and as I usually do, I planned to take a taxi straight from the airport to the Ohel. Being that the flight would take a few hours, I decided to write my letter to the Rebbe on the plane. I included everything that was weighing down on me, and I poured my heart into the letter in a way quite uncharacteristic of myself.

I began "בקרוב יתמלאו י"ג שנה" — It would soon be thirteen years since our arrival

in Memphis and we still have not found a permanent location suitable for our needs. I described everything that had transpired in the previous twelve years, especially the latest developments with all its pros and cons. I was willing to invest all the time, effort, and money necessary for this project, but I first needed to be certain that this was the right course of action. Too many times I had chased after what seemed like a great opportunity, spending large amounts of money and effort on projects that eventually fell through. I did not want to repeat that process.

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



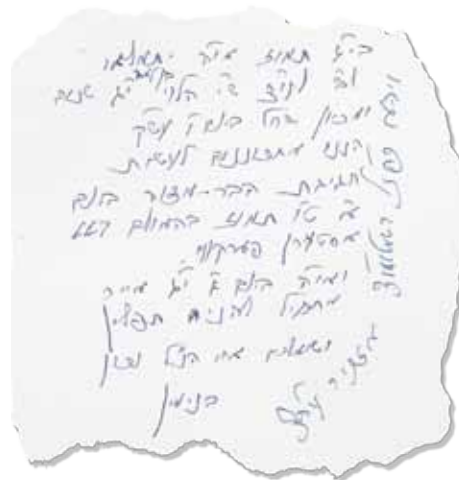
RABBI LEVI KLEIN, HIS FATHER RABBI BINYOMIN, AND RABBI MOSHE KOTLARSKY WITH DONORS AT THE OPENING OF THE CHABAD CENTER IN MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

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

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

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

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



THE REBBE'S HANDWRITTEN RESPONSE TO RABBI BINYOMIN KLEIN'S TZETEL ABOUT HIS SON'S BAR MITZVAH: ויהא כל הנ"ל בשעה טובה: MAY IT TAKE PLACE IN A GOOD AND AUSPICIOUS TIME, I WILL MENTION IT AT THE TZIYUN [OF THE FRIERDIKER REBBE].



THE CHABAD CENTER IN MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

which meant that the Rebbe was going to hold a farbrengen Thursday night.

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

The Rebbe's handwritten answer was on the *tzetel*. In his holy handwriting the Rebbe added "ויהא כל הנ"ל בשעה טובה ומוצלחת, אזכיר על הציון"—May it take place in a good and auspicious time, I will mention it at the *tziyun* [of the Frieddiker Rebbe]."

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

With a pounding heart, I looked closer at the *tzetel*. It immediately struck me that the wording in the beginning and end of the *tzetel* was practically identical to the letter I had written to the Rebbe earlier that day. Opening

"יתמלאו לבני לוי יצחק שי' י"ג שנה – My son will soon reach thirteen years," and closing with those questioning words "ושואלים אם הנ"ל נכון".

I was stunned. It became instantly clear to me that the slip of paper in my hand was an answer to the very question I had written the Rebbe earlier that day.

"ויהא כהנ"ל בשעה טובה ומוצלחת, אזכיר על הציון"...

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

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

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

DIVINE IMPULSE

AS TOLD BY RABBI LEVI GURKOW

- OCEANSIDE, LONG ISLAND -

Meir, a respected member of our community, is the owner of a trucking company called Moe's Trucking. When he began exploring Yiddishkeit more seriously, about six years ago, he started paying occasional visits to the Ohel. As his connection to Yiddishkeit strengthened, the visits to the Ohel become more frequent.

As the successful owner of a thriving business, Meir won the respect and esteem of many members of our community. As a result, Meir also gained the ability to influence people he knew from the community, who he brought along with him on his visits to the Ohel.

The spiritual bond that Meir and his family developed with the Rebbe and the Ohel made the trip to Queens an integral part of the family routine.

During Chanukah of 5771, Meir was fortunate to witness this unique and personal bond impact his business and family forever in a very tangible way.

United Parcel Service (UPS) is one of Meir's

most lucrative clients. Among other services, Meir rents out his trucks and drivers to companies for short-term jobs within the New York area. The agreement between Meir's local company and the international UPS was conducted successfully and smoothly, keeping both sides very satisfied.

But one day something went wrong. One of the senior employees at UPS, who was known to be somewhat unscrupulous in character and dubious in his actions, started harassing Meir to join him in some shady business. The harassment worsened, until it began sounding like real threats. He put forth an ultimatum to Meir, "If you fail to cooperate with me in this illegal activity, I will make it my business to end agreements between you and UPS."

Meir found himself in a difficult position. Cooperation with UPS was a decent share of his income and he had no desire to give it up. On the other hand, as an honest and truthful person, he refused to cooperate with the crooked actions of this man and break the law. So he tried to appease him, hoping

that he will reach into his heart and convince him to retract his threats. He sent gifts for his birthday, and invited him along to the baseball game they both enjoyed; but to no avail.

Meir was at a loss. He did not allow himself to be drawn into crime, and as a result he watched despairingly as UPS slowly severed ties with him and turned to his competitors.

Depressed as he was, Meir did not lose his cool. He knew the address to pour out his heart about his difficult situation. He headed for the Ohel, secluded himself in a corner of the

tent, and began to write a *pa"n* to the Rebbe. He laid out all the details that transpired, not leaving anything out. The pages filled up quickly, and he held nothing back.

Towards the end of his writing he mentioned his two sons, young men in their twenties and thirties, who assisted him in his trucking company, and his heart ached.

"They do not show any emotion or connection to Judaism," he wrote in his *pa"n*. In every such letter he made a point to mention them, and request the Rebbe's

blessing that at least they marry Jews. With a broken heart, he walked into the Ohel and immersed himself in prayer, his tears flowing freely. Meir came out of the Ohel with his heart several tons lighter. His future was in the best hands. Henceforth, the Rebbe will certainly take care of him.

Less than 24 hours later, the phone in Meir's office rang. When the caller identified himself Meir was astonished. The CEO of a major truck selling company, which provides thousands of trucks annually to other shipping companies throughout the U.S., was asking to speak with him!



RABBI LEVI GURKOW

To put things into perspective, all of Meir's business operations amounted to a tiny fraction of this caller's national, interstate company. The only communication between their companies in the recent past was when Meir joined the long list of customers and purchased several of their trucks. It was unheard of for such a distinguished CEO to call such an insignificant customer.

But it turned out, that one of the main divisions of this large trucking company is located in Long Island, and that this CEO

is Jewish. Meir's astonishment, however, increased even more, as the man politely inquired as to the location of Meir's office and whether he is now speaking from his home or office. Surprised, Meir replied to the question and he hears the caller say, "So, I'm coming to visit you in your home. Maybe we'll have a Chanukah party together."

Meir, still trying to digest this strange conversation, did not believe what he was hearing. "What? You are coming to me?" he asked, making sure he was not imagining. "Yes," the caller answered calmly. "I want to meet you."

Meir's home stirred in excitement as his family went about busily preparing an unplanned Chanukah celebration and reception for their esteemed guest. The man arrived and he was greeted politely. Everyone was eagerly awaiting some sort of explanation for this sudden visit.

"Listen," began the man after they were all settled. "I will tell you what is behind the visit. Today, I decided to take a break from my busy schedule and browse through the list of my customers. I did this as part of a common practice to improve business and customer relations. There is nothing very unusual with that. Then however, I noticed your name and the fact that you are a relatively new client.

"This is my neighborhood, I grew up here," the man continued. "I knew you were Jewish, because I realized the name of your company, Moe's Trucking, is from the Jewish name Moses, and I decided that I would like to meet you."

After the strange background surrounding the visit became somewhat clear, the man

moved on to talking business. "I know things are tough in business right now," he says. "If I may, allow me to give you some advice that will benefit you in the industry."

Meir listened to the man in silence, as he began laying out advice for him from his experience over the years in dealing with customers. Afterwards, the Jewish CEO focused on various problems that may come up in this kind of business with different companies and commercial entities. Meir suddenly realized that the man spoke precisely of the issues he was facing, offering him a magic solution that can solve the entire problem in an instant. He was beside himself with awe.

The CEO casually concluded his remarks by saying that an inner impulse urged him to come out and share this information for the benefit of someone. "This 'impulse'", he said, "sent me to contribute to the training of someone who must have needed it."

Meir's shocked wife recovered first. She was always more skeptical than her husband regarding *tzadikim* and spirituality. She turned to the guest and insistently asked him: "Tell me, who sent you to us? Was this a conspiracy concocted by the crook from UPS, or perhaps the Lubavitcher Rebbe? This is all quite unbelievable..."

"I have no idea what you're talking about. I do not know the man from UPS," the visitor replied calmly. "But the Lubavitcher Rebbe I actually do know. I've prayed at his grave a few times, and I also recognize him from his picture hanging here in your home.

"Actually," he admitted, "I got up this morning and asked G-d that I should have an easy day.



MEIR IS HONORED WITH LIGHTING THE MENORAH AT CHABAD OF OCEANSIDE'S CHANUKAH PARTY.

I was suddenly inspired by a 'push'. I decided I had to help a Jew with his livelihood, and—going over the list of names—I randomly chose you.”

Meir's next step, besides for implementing the guidelines of the experienced CEO, was to dial my cell phone number and share this miraculous occurrence. “Not even a day has passed since I prayed at the Ohel and I already got a response,” he said excitedly.

But the story still hadn't ended. Meir remembered the additional lines he added at the end of his *pa”n*, the lines that were repeated in every letter to the Rebbe, in which he begged for the Jewishness of his children and their descendants.

A short while later I met with Meir and his family at their office. One of the sons turned to me and asked if he may say something. His bewildered face indicated that something very sensitive was lying on his conscience.

“Recently,” he said, “I started feeling bad about my plans to marry a gentile girl. Somehow it began bothering me; I do not know why. Frankly, I have never had any problem with gentiles or qualms about marrying one, until now.”

His father, Meir, was astonished. In front of his very eyes the answer to his last request was materializing.

To date, Meir's older son is married to a Jewish girl. ❧



THE DELAYED DOLLAR

AS TOLD BY RABBI RUVI NEW

- BOCA RATON, FL -

In the year 5761, Gimmel Tammuz fell out on a Sunday and I travelled to New York with my family the week before. On Friday, Rosh Chodesh Tammuz, I took my family to the Ohel. At the time there was a certain pressing matter related to our shlichus that was weighing down on both me and my wife.

Of course we both included the details of the issue in our respective *pa'nim* (my wife's written on Friday, and mine on Sunday) and as the matter was quite crucial, we each independently chose to ask for a "*bracha mamoshis*"—that we should see the Rebbe's *bracha* in a tangible way. My wife read her *pa'n* to the Rebbe on Friday, while I planned to return to the

Ohel on Sunday.

On Sunday, Gimmel Tammuz, I came to the Ohel and wrote my *pa'n*, including my request from the Rebbe for a "*bracha mamoshis*."

While waiting on line, someone notified me that a good friend of mine, Rabbi Velvel

Butman, was desperately looking for me. When he finally found me, he said that he had something extremely important to give me. With much emotion, he removed an envelope from his pocket, handed it to me and told me to open it. I opened the envelope and pulled out a crisp dollar bill. Looking closer, I realized it was a dollar from the Rebbe. I was flabbergasted!

Rabbi Butman proceeded to share with me the story behind the dollar:

Eleven years earlier, in the



RABBI RUVI NEW

winter of 5750, the Rebbe had sent us together on shlichus for about two months, to the former Soviet Union. We left right before Chanukah and came back in time for Yud Shvat—*Shnas HoArboim*. We decided to visit the Alter Rebbe's *Tziyun* in Haditch as close in time as possible to Chof-Daled Teves, which fell out on a Sunday that year. We came to Haditch on Friday 22 Teves, and Velvel and I made a *siyum* and *has'chala* on Tanya, and a *has'chala* on Shulchan Aruch. We did not however, manage to make a *siyum*, as we did not have the final *chelek* of Shulchan Aruch with us.

On Sunday, Chof-Daled Teves, Velvel's father Rabbi Shmuel Butman came to the Rebbe for "dollars" and told the Rebbe that his son and I were in Russia, and that we were at the *tziyun* of the Alter Rebbe on Friday. He reported to the Rebbe that we had made a *siyum* and *has'chala* on Tanya and on Shulchan Aruch. But, as mentioned above, we in fact had not made a *siyum* on Shulchan Aruch. Without hesitation the Rebbe responded, "It is a shame that a *siyum* was not made as well. In any case, it will surely be for another occasion. *Besuros tovos.*" *Vayehi l'peleh!*

The Rebbe then said, "*Zol zein v'hokitzu v'ranenu shochmai ofor,*" and gave Rabbi Butman a dollar to be passed on to his son, Velvel. Rabbi Butman then asked for a dollar "for his chaver,

as well," whereupon the Rebbe gave him another dollar and said "*Hatzlacha rabba.*"

Rabbi Butman subsequently reached us a few days later, when we were already on the other side of Russia, and told us of the Rebbe's "unusual response" regarding the *siyum*.

We of course realized the open *ruach haKodesh* of the Rebbe, who knew that in fact we had not made a *siyum*. Because the Rebbe had added "It will surely be for another occasion," we promptly packed our bags, got hold of a copy of *chelek hei/vov* of Shulchan Aruch, and traveled for two days back to Haditch to make the *siyum* on Shulchan Aruch.

A week later, on Beis Shevat, Rabbi Shmuel Butman came again to the Rebbe for "dollars." He reported to the Rebbe that we had returned to Haditch and fulfilled the Rebbe's *horaah* to

make a *siyum* on Shulchan Aruch. The Rebbe gave him a dollar and said he should give it to tzedakah on behalf of his son and the Rebbe concluded with a *bracha* that his son should have even more *hatzlacha* in Russia than until now.

Similar to the week before, Rabbi Shmuel Butman requested a dollar for me as well. The Rebbe gave him a dollar to be given to tzedakah on my behalf as well and said "*Zol zein oif gutte besuros*—[There] should be good news."



RABBI VELVEL BUTMAN

As fate would have it, the dollar that was intended for me was inadvertently misplaced and I never even knew of its existence.

Fast-forward eleven years later, on Friday, Rosh Chodesh Tammuz—the very day my wife wrote in her *pa”n* to the Rebbe requesting a “*bracha mamoshis*”—Rabbi Butman was rummaging through his desk drawers, when he came across an envelope with my name on it containing

the dollar. He immediately gave it to his son Velvel, who *b'hashgacha pratis* was present in his father's office at that moment, to give to me at the earliest opportunity. As I stood in line on Sunday, just about to go into the Ohel after writing for a “*bracha mamoshis*,” a tangible *bracha*, Velvel handed me the long lost dollar.

“*Terem yikrau, va'ani e'eneh...*” The Rebbe found a way to answer us. ❧

While preparing this story, A Chassidisher Derher met with the staff of JEM who obtained the actual video footage from both “dollars” events. Presented here is a precise transcript taken from the videos:

ר"ד מחלוקת דולרים לצדקה יום א' כ"ד טבת ה'תש"נ

כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א נתן להרב שמואל מנחם מענדל בוטמאן דולר באמרו "ברכה והצלחה".

רשמ"ב: אונזער זון וועלוועל, צוזאמען מיט רובי ניו זיינען אין רוסלאנד. און ער איז געווען דאנערשטיק ביים מיטעל'ן רבי'ן אין ניעזשין, און פרייטיק ביים אלטען רבי'ן אין האדיץ האבן זיי געמאכט א התחלה און סוף אויף תניא, און א התחלה און סוף אויף שולחן ערוך.

כ"ק אד"ש: א שאד מ'האט ניט געמאכט קיין סיום אויכעט, בכל אופן, מסתמא וועט עס זיין בא א צווייטן געלעגנהייט, בשורות טובות.

רשמ"ב: אמן.

כ"ק אד"ש: [זאל] זיין והקיצו ורננו שוכני עפר, (כ"ק אד"ש נתן לו עוד דולר באמרו) דאס [זאלט] איר געבן דעם זון.

זאל זיין בשורות טובות.

רשמ"ב: און זיין חבר אויכעט.

כ"ק אד"ש: (נתן עוד דולר עבור החבר באמרו) הצלחה רבה.

רשמ"ב: אמן.



RABBI SHMUEL BUTMAN RECEIVES DOLLARS ON 24 TEVES, 5750

ר"ד מחלוקת דולרים לצדקה יום א' ב' שבט ה'תש"נ

כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א נתן להרב שמואל מנחם מענדל בוטמאן דולר באמרו "ברכה והצלחה".

רשמ"ב: (בהמשך למה שאמר לו כ"ק אד"ש ביום ראשון העבר בשעת חלוקת דולרים) דער זון איז געפארן צוריק אין האדיץ, און געמאכט א סיום ווי דער רבי האט געוואלט אויפן שלחן ערוך (און א התחלה אויפן שו"ע).

כ"ק אד"ש: (נתן לו עוד דולר באמרו) [איר] זאלט אפגעבן אויף צדקה פארן זון דא, און ער זאל האבן דארט נאכמער הצלחה ווי ביז איצטער.

רשמ"ב: אמן. [און] פאר זיין חבר.

כ"ק אד"ש: (נתן לו עוד דולר באמרו) זאל זיין אויף גוטע בשורות.



THE ABSENTEE RABBI

AS TOLD BY RABBI SHOLOM GREENBERG

- SHANGHAI, CHINA -

We were fortunate to become shluchim of the Rebbe in the year 5758, to the city of Shanghai, China. There have been Yidden living in Shanghai for over 150 years, and it was also a place where many Yidden fleeing World War II came through on the way to safety. In fact, many *bochurim* from Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim ended up in Shanghai on their way to America. There, they resumed studies, and even printed numerous *sifrei Chassidus*.

Because of the wealthy Jewish community Shanghai once had, many elaborate *shuls* and *mikvaos* were built. But with the demise of the Jewish community, the buildings were all repossessed by the government, leaving not a single active *shul* by the time we arrived in Shanghai.

The shlichus quickly grew in leaps and bounds, as we became the epicenter of Yiddishkeit in a place so devoid of it. Both locals and tourists were drawn to our *peulos*, looking to grow in their Yiddishkeit.

Although we rented a number of nice locations

through which to do our *peulos*, we were presented with a great obstacle. Because we were renting the premises, it was impossible for us to build a *mikveh*. Instead, anyone from Shanghai who wished to use the *mikveh* would need to fly to Hong Kong, a two hour flight! This was a great hassle, and was putting a strain on our shlichus.

I began doing research throughout the various surrounding neighborhoods for a suitable property. Soon enough I came across a property with a building that seemed just right. The setup and location was especially attractive for our Beis Chabad. Once we owned a property of our own we would be able to build a *mikveh*, in addition to having a permanent home for Chabad of Shanghai.

Only one obstacle stood in the way: The price of the building was \$1,800,000!

With time, the challenge grew stronger and we decided that although our funds were minimal, we would begin a building campaign for this property.



A few months went by, and the only money in the building fund was the first \$50 that I myself had donated. I wondered despondently whether we would be able to accomplish this great goal.

In Elul of that year we were visited by a special guest during his visit to Shanghai. Mr. Mel Waxman, a generous benefactor of the Lubavitch *mosdos* in Cleveland, Ohio, spent a Shabbos in our Chabad House. Fortunate for us, he pledged \$100,000 towards our building campaign and he even convinced one of our

congregants to match his donation, bringing us to a grand total of \$200,000!

Totally out of the blue, we suddenly had a very substantial amount of money. Although a large amount still remained to be fundraised, I was now especially encouraged and driven to complete this goal. I began coordinating brochures and materials to publicize the campaign.

In anticipation of the Kinus Hashluchim, I resolved to come in a bit earlier than usual and reach out to businessmen in America who do business in Shanghai.

I arrived in New York on a Thursday night and immediately went to the Ohel. I wrote out all that had transpired and explained the reason for my extended visit. I asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* that this dream should somehow become a reality. By the time I finished at the Ohel, Shabbos had already begun in China.

On Motzaei Shabbos, I called my wife in Shanghai. To my surprise she began to tell me a shocking occurrence that I could never have foreseen.



RABBI SHOLOM GREENBERG



On Friday afternoon in Shanghai, which was exactly the time I had been davening at the Rebbe's Ohel in New York—where it was still Thursday night—she had received an unexpected phone call.

George Buchbot, a wealthy business man from Hong Kong, had reached out to us, wanting to donate something in memory of his father Reb Yisroel z”l. After conversing with my wife and hearing that I was away because I was busy fundraising and praying for money in New York, he decided to donate \$1,000,000 to our building fund!

I could not believe the words my ears were hearing! Aside for the fact that the sudden amount was something completely beyond what I had ever received, I hardly knew this donor! For him to suddenly reach out to us and make such a large contribution could only be attributed to the Rebbe's *brachos*.

Raising the remaining funds became much easier, being that I had the main sum already taken care of. Today *baruch Hashem* we have a beautiful Beis Chabad that services the Yidden of Shanghai, China. ❖



THE BUILDING THAT HOUSES CHABAD OF SHANGHAI AND A BEAUTIFUL MIKVA.

HEALTH AND WEALTH

AS TOLD BY RABBI YOSEF KATZMAN

- BROOKLYN, NY -

During Iyar of 5759 I was *zoche* to receive clear and unmistakable guidance from the Rebbe, notwithstanding the fact that nearly five years had passed since Gimmel Tammuz.

Two issues were on my mind when I visited the Rebbe's Ohel on Sunday, 16 Iyar. I penned a *tzetel* detailing the problems, asking for the Rebbe's *bracha* that they be resolved easily and speedily.

The first issue involved our then two-year-old daughter, who suddenly began stuttering terribly a few days earlier. We could not figure out what had caused it.

My second request was regarding financial difficulties that were plaguing the home I owned in Crown Heights.

I wrote my *tzetel* and I went to the Ohel. I asked the Rebbe for guidance and a *bracha*, and I returned to Crown Heights.

The next day I was in 770 for *maariv* and while waiting for the *chazzan* to start, I noticed a volume of the Rebbe's Igros Kodesh lying nearby. In general I enjoy reading the

Rebbe's letters; often when there is a book of Igros Kodesh on hand and I have a moment, I will leaf through the *sefer* and read a few letters.

Now too, I picked up the *sefer* and to my surprise, the letter I opened up to on page 189 of volume six began as follows:

”במענה על מכתבו מו' תמוז בו כותב ע”ד בתו הצעירה
...תחי' שהתחילה פתאום לגמגום:

הנה בטח שאלו עצת רופא מומחה למקצוע זה, אף
שבכלל אין מה להתפעל ויש לחקור כי קרוב הדבר
שאירע לה איזה פחד פתאומי וכאשר יבררו סיבת
הפחד ויבארו לה שאין לזה מקור הנה לאט לאט
יעבור הגמגום...”

*“In response to your letter... in which you write
about your young daughter... who suddenly
started stuttering.*

*“Surely you consulted an expert doctor in this
field. Although there is really no reason to become
anxious, it is necessary to investigate the likely
possibility that she experienced a sudden fright.
When you will determine the reason for this fear
and you will explain to her that there is no reason*

to be afraid, then slowly the stuttering will fade."

I was floored, the wording of the letter directly addressed an identical case to that for which I had requested a *bracha* from the Rebbe just the day before!

How incredible that precisely in the letter I had chosen to learn that night, the Rebbe was addressing my daughter's condition!

After *maariv* I went home and checked the *mafteiach* of Igros Kodesh. I found that there are only four letters addressing the issue of stuttering in the entire 25 volumes that were printed at the time.

The chance of me opening to this particular letter was extraordinary. It was clear to me that the Rebbe was pointing me to this letter in order for me to know that he heard my requests for his *bracha*.

I discussed what had taken place with my wife, and she too was amazed at the clear sign from the Rebbe. But she had no recollection of anything that may have triggered a fright within our daughter that would resemble any similarity to the Rebbe's letter. So we just held out to see how things would unfold.

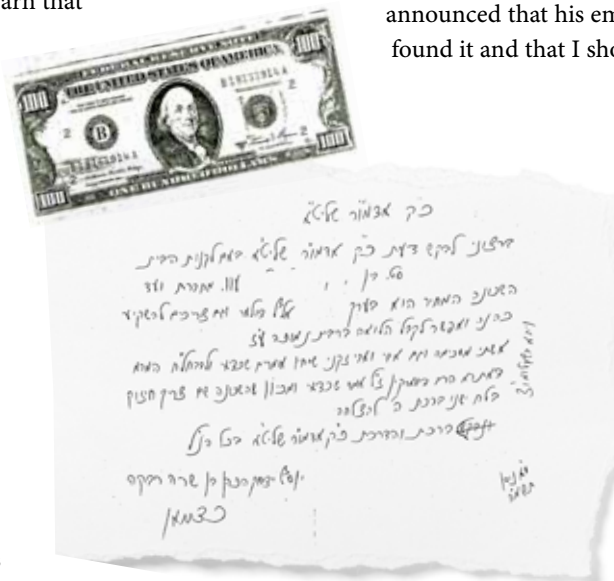
The following day, which was Lag Ba'omer, I received a call from a Lubavitcher, Reb Dovid Kohn from Kensington, who worked for a company in Boro Park. He asked me if I had ever received a \$100 bill from the Rebbe. I answered that in fact I had, many years earlier, in Cheshvan 5746. To my surprise he announced that his employer, a Mr. Rise, had found it and that I should come pick it up.

At my earliest opportunity I traveled to Boro Park to meet his employer. Although he comes from a Satmar background, he actually knew my grandfather, Reb Chaikel Chanin, from when they were neighbors in Paris. We reminisced about the time they had spent together in Paris.

He explained that he had recently withdrawn

money from the bank and upon inspecting one of the \$100 bills he realized that it had Hebrew writing on it. The inscription read that it had been received from the Rebbe by Yosef Katzman during the Kinus ashluchim of 5746. He insisted that instead of reimbursing him for the money, I should take it for free and give the money to a tzedaka my grandfather was collecting for.

The following is the story of how I got this \$100:



THE 100 DOLLAR BILL THAT RABBI KATZMAN RECEIVED AT THE KINUS HASHLUCHIM 5746, AND THE TZETEL HE WROTE TO THE REBBE IN REGARD TO BUYING A HOUSE IN CROWN HEIGHTS AT THE TIME.



RABBI YOSEF KATZMAN IN YECHIDUS BY MACHANE YISRAEL DEVELOPMENT FUND

On *Shabbos Mevorchim* Kislev 5746, the third Kinus Hashluchim was held for shluchim in the USA.

At that time, the shluchim from abroad and those that worked in the central *mosdos* in Crown Heights were not officially part of the Kinus. However, those working in the central *mosdos* were able to take part in the sessions. Being that I was working for Tzivos Hashem at the time, I participated in the sessions only.

On Sunday night of the Kinus, when Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky was driving the Rebbe home, the Rebbe remarked that he was very glad that the Kinus was successful, and that he would like to participate with the shluchim.

The Rebbe said that he will give \$100 to every shliach to cover their registration fee to join the Kinus, and another \$100 towards their travel expenses. The Rebbe then added that surely the shluchim would not want to use the bills that they receive from the Rebbe, so therefore he will give an additional \$1 bill for

the shluchim to keep. But he wanted that they should spend the actual two \$100 bills.

Initially, it was very clear that we, the locals, would not receive this money, because we were not officially registered for the Kinus. You can imagine the great surprise and delight we all felt when shortly after the Kinus, Rabbi Krinsky notified all those from the local central *mosdos* that the Rebbe instructed that we should also receive this gift.¹

After hearing the Rebbe's clear instructions that the money he is giving should be spent, and that only the \$1 bill could be held onto, I could not bring myself to keep the two hundred dollar bills, despite my great desire to keep it within my possession.

On the other hand, being that I had not officially registered, nor did I have any travel expenses, I was not able to spend the money for the purposes the Rebbe had designated.

After much contemplation, I decided that I would take one of the hundred dollar bills and

use it for a mortgage payment, as a source of *bracha* for the house I had recently bought in Crown Heights.

[I had decided to buy the house a half a year before that, around Purim 5745, despite it being in a considerably dangerous part of Crown Heights at the time. I had firm belief in the Rebbe's guarantee that Crown Heights would remain a Jewish neighborhood and would regain its old glory. The Rebbe answered my *tzetel* about buying the house on Yud-Aleph Nissan, about a month after I had submitted it, with the words:

“ויהא בשעה טובה ומוצלחת”

“May it be in a good and auspicious hour”]

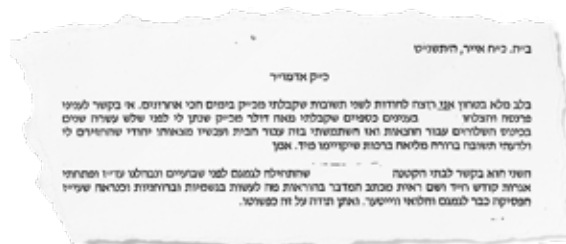
Now, 13 years later, the Rebbe sent me the \$100 bill once again, just days after I had asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* for that same house! For the bill to have remained in the area where I had originally deposited it, and for so many years, is almost inconceivable.

Indeed this clear indication from the Rebbe became a turning point for the financial difficulties I was experiencing with the house. Until this day the house remains a source of many *brachos* for me and my family.

One *brocha* led to the next.

A couple of days later my two-year-old daughter was sitting with my wife, when she suddenly started crying to my wife that she is scared of a “*ketzele*” [a kitten]. My wife suddenly recalled an episode that had occurred a few days earlier.

She had been shopping in Raskin's Fruit Store, and our daughter was sitting in the stroller. A cat that the store had bought in order to chase away mice was strolling around nearby, and



RABBI KATZMAN'S LETTER IN WHICH HE THANKS THE REBBE FOR THE CLEAR AND OPEN BRACHOS AND GUIDANCE HE MERITED TO RECEIVE

suddenly the cat jumped into the stroller with our daughter.

The cat was quickly removed, but it seemed that our daughter was traumatized by this event, and that she was still in fear of that cat. My wife immediately made the connection to the Rebbe's answer in the letter that the stuttering was most probably caused because of a sudden fear. Now we knew exactly what our daughter was afraid of, and what was causing her to stutter!

My wife calmed our daughter down, and she explained to her that a cat is a gentle animal, and that she has no reason to be afraid. My daughter slowly accepted my wife's explanation, and in a matter of only a few short days, the stuttering completely disappeared!

I had come to the Ohel with two problems weighing on my heart, and within a few days the Rebbe had provided me with clear guidance and open *brachos* on both matters—in the most unique and separate ways. *Brachos* that remain with me in full strength till this very day.

In the Rebbe's words: *אם יעמוד חזק* "בהתקשרותו אליו . . וישלח השאלה על ציון כ"ק אדמו"ר הכ"מ - וועט דער רבי געפינען א וועג ווי עס צו ענטפערן" ❖

1. See Kinus Hashluchim Overview in A Chassidisher Derher Magazine, Kislev 5775.



MOVING - BUT WHERE TO?

AS TOLD BY RABBI MOSHE FELLER

- MINNESOTA -

In 5731, Chabad of Minnesota purchased a 13-bedroom mansion in the Highland Park neighborhood of S. Paul, the neighborhood that the majority of the city's Jews resided. This mansion, which was to serve as headquarters for Upper Midwest Merkos-Chabad Lubavitch and for weekly Shabbatons, soon became the facility that housed our Bais Chana Women's Institute. Thousands of women walked through those doors over the years and were positively impacted by the Bais Chana program.

The building, which was known as Lubavitch House, was used heavily for almost 30 years, and the wear and tear took its toll. The city building-codes demanded a new roof, new windows, and various other costly repairs.

Bais Chana's growth also required an even larger facility. Our numbers had so outgrown our existing facilities that by the late 5750s, we were conducting Bais Chana courses in different locations—bed & breakfasts, college dormitories (while not in use by the colleges), hotels and the like.

We were in a dilemma. Should we spend the necessary quarter of a million dollars to renovate our grounds, or do we find a different and larger location? A great deal of emotional connection with Lubavitch House existed. Thirty years of Shabbatons, Bais Chana programs, weddings, *brisin*, etc. It had become a real *makom kadosh*, and parting with Lubavitch House would be very difficult on an emotional level.

Also, even if we were to look for a larger facility, the question would be where. During the previous few years we had been on the lookout for potential locations, but alas, nothing that seemed to suit our needs came along. There were many variables involved in this, since selling a holy site like our own had serious halachic ramifications, which needed to be scrupulously analyzed.

The turning point came on Erev Rosh Hashanah 5760, when I went to Lubavitch House to get our mail, and discovered a note stuck in our door. The note read: "I am a contractor and I love this mansion, and I am

willing to make you an offer to buy it as is. Call me.” And he left his number.

I called him and said, “I got your note regarding your interest in our building and we are debating whether to sell this mansion or to renovate it. We have very strong emotional ties with Lubavitch House; it is a very holy place. However, it’s not quite like the Holy Temple in Jerusalem so I would like to hear your offer.”

He mentioned a figure far above my wildest dreams. I was overwhelmed; it was almost twice the market value of Lubavitch House. I told him I would get back to him.

We agonized over what to do. We were frantically searching for an appropriate facility to move into immediately upon selling Lubavitch House, and we still had not found anything. I was anxious to get back to the contractor, so on the first day of Chol Homoed Sukkos 5760 I called a meeting with the senior shluchim of our region to decide what to do.

We discussed all the advantages and disadvantages of both options and painstakingly dissected every detail of each idea. Still at a loss, we decided to write to the Rebbe. Since we viewed this as a matter of extreme urgency, I wrote a letter to the Rebbe that very day. The gist of the letter was: “Can

we sell the current facility of our holy *mossad*, Lubavitch House, and if yes, where do we go?” I faxed the letter to the Ohel to be placed on the Rebbe’s *tziyun*.



RABBI MOSHE FELLER

At the conclusion of davening in our Chabad House, a real estate agent who had recently started attending shul and was looking for a suitable building for us, approached me with some news. “Rabbi, you won’t believe this, but a very suitable building has just now become available. It is a group home for severely handicapped individuals.

It has 20 bedrooms, a large dining room, a huge kitchen, and it’s just ten minutes from here, in West S. Paul. The county has decided that it would be better to house these people in spaces with 4 to 6 individuals together rather than concentrating them in a large institution.”

Hence, the owners of this Dakota County Nursing Home were now being forced to sell their facility, which obviously meant that we could purchase it for a very good price. We hurried to see the grounds, which consisted of a 23,000 square-foot building on five acres of land, just ten minutes from our existing Lubavitch House.

We took Senator Rudy Boschwitz, Chairman of Friends of Upper Midwest Merkos Lubavitch, along with us to tour the facility, and we all decided that it was exactly what we needed! It didn’t escape anyone that this most



RABBI MOSHE FELLER AND HIS SON RECEIVING KOS SHEL BRACHA

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE/113005 / 24 TISHREI, 5744

perfect building became available less than 24 hours after I had written to the Rebbe. This was clearly the answer.

We sold Lubavitch House, and with the money from the sale—together with a sizable contribution from a local benefactor—we purchased the property from Dakota County Nursing Home without a mortgage.

To put the above story into proper perspective, I want to cite the Rebbe's answer given immediately after the *histalkus* of

the Frierdiker Rebbe. Someone asked our Rebbe, “Where do we go now for direction?” The Rebbe responded, “If you will remain steadfast in your *hiskashrus* and you will send your question to the *tziyun* of my father-in-law, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe, he will find a way to answer you.” In other words, you continue to go to the same place you have always gone.

We faxed our question to the Rebbe at the Ohel and the Rebbe indeed found a way to answer us. ❧





THE REBBE'S CHILDREN

AS TOLD BY REB BENNY VAKSBERGER
AND REB SHOLOM MORDECHAI RUBASHKIN

My name is Benny Vaksberger. My family is Seret-Vishnitzer chassidim, and most of us live in Eretz Yisrael, where we have a Judaica business. Our company is called Malchut Vaksberger. We produce all kinds of Judaica, such as *bentchers*, *birkas hashachar cards*, and other such products. Today I also live in Eretz Yisrael, where I work for the family business.

At the time this story took place, approximately eighteen years ago, I was working as a *shochet* in Postville, Iowa, for Reb Sholom Mordechai Rubashkin. He had always wanted families to move to Postville, so that there will be children that need a *cheder*. That, in turn, would cause teachers to come with their families. In short, he wanted to build a full community.

Postville is a small isolated village, hours away from the closest Jewish community. To convince someone to move there with his family is no simple task, and every new member in the community was a cause for

celebration. Likewise, every baby born in Postville was a *simcha*; one more child for the *cheder*.

As I was one of the first to move there with my wife, the 'pioneers,' Reb Sholom Mordechai was always very grateful to us. Over the years we became good friends. We would spend many long hours in conversation, and I was a regular guest at his weekly *melava malka*.

I was living in Postville for a few years, and after four years of marriage, my wife and I had not yet been blessed with children. We tirelessly consulted with doctors and looked into countless forms of treatment, but nothing helped. We grew more desperate as time passed, and to make matters worse, my wife was feeling extremely lonely and cut off from her family in this little town.

Our efforts led us to consider certain treatments that were being developed in Eretz Yisrael. We managed to get an appointment with a top fertility doctor there, and my wife



REB SHOLOM MORDECHAI RUBASHKIN JOINS REB BENNY VAKSBERGER AT THE UPSHERENISH CELEBRATION OF HIS FIRSTBORN SON, BORN AFTER A VISIT TO THE OHEL

wanted to leave for Eretz Yisrael right away.

My job included a little bit of everything at the factory; I *shechted* chickens, turkey, cows, sheep, and anything else they produced.

As this was right before Tishrei, the busiest season at the meat plant, I didn't feel comfortable leaving Reb Sholom Mordechai short a *shochet*. I suggested to my wife that we stay until after Sukkos, and immediately after Simchas Torah we would go to Eretz Yisrael; she agreed.

That Simchas Torah was very *freilach* in Postville. There were only about twenty five people there, with plenty of *l'chaim* to go around, and the dancing went on all day.

The next segment of the story is related by Reb Sholom Mordechai himself:

I recall that Simchas Torah clearly; it was celebrated in true Postville style. The dancing, singing, and *farbrenging* were all *freilach*, and our entire small community was in a very uplifted mood.

During the dancing, I stepped out onto the front porch for a small break (something which I hardly ever do) and I bumped into Reb Benny. He looked a little too serious for Simchas Torah, as if something was bothering him. I approached him and invited him back inside to join the dancing. He refused, so instead we stood outside and chatted for a while.

He told me that he was leaving after Yom Tov back to Eretz Yisrael. I asked him why, and he told me he's going to look into medical help for having children. They had an appointment

with a big specialist who they thought would be able to help. So I told him, "Why don't you go to the greatest specialist of them all? Go to the Rebbe!"

He said it's too hard for him and his wife to go to New York. Being that my birthday is Chof-Ches Tishrei and I was planning on going to the Ohel, I suggested that they come together with me, and they'll ask the Rebbe for a *bracha* to have children.

Reb Benny continues his story:

During the festivities, Reb Sholom Mordechai approached me, and we started talking. I told him I had an appointment with a doctor in Eretz Yisrael, and that I would be leaving shortly after Yom Tov.

He tried convincing me to stay and suggested that we consult with specialists here in America. I told him that we had already gone down that avenue and nothing had helped. Then he told me that he's taking me and my wife to New York with him. We'll go to the Ohel, and ask the Rebbe for a *bracha* which will surely be fulfilled. I figured he was just in a *Simchas Torah'dikeh* mood, and I didn't take him too serious.

A few days later, I was sitting at home after a regular day's work, when I heard a car horn

frantically honking outside my house. I ran outside and found Reb Sholom Mordechai waiting in his car. As soon as he saw me he started screaming that we're late for our flight, the airport is an hour away, and that we must get into the car immediately. He wouldn't even let us pack. Before we knew it, my wife and I were sitting in the car on the way to the airport.

We flew on a tiny Northwest regional jet

carrying us, the pilot, and a handful of other passengers. In New York, Reb Sholom Mordechai rented a car, and we drove to the Ohel. We got to the Ohel at around two o'clock in the morning, where he brought us into a house adjacent to the *beis hachayim*. There was a big screen playing a video of the Rebbe distributing dollars. There were tables and chairs, and a very welcoming atmosphere.

This was our first time

there, and it made a big impression on us.

Reb Sholom Mordechai offered us drinks, but we weren't interested. We told him all we wanted to do was *daven* for children and leave. He then informed us that the *minhag* is not to wear shoes when we go into the Ohel. There were a few pairs of slippers laying there for visitors to use, and he told us that we can wear those.

We went into the Ohel. I must say that



REB BENNY VAKSBERGER AS A SHOCHET IN POSTVILLE

although living in Postville got me used to winter weather, the cold still shocked me. There is no roof on top of the Ohel, so we were standing there in the bitter cold, shivering from the freezing wind. After a moment my wife said enough is enough, she's going back inside.

I tried to reason with her and convince her to stay a little, but she refused to stand outside for even one more minute. Finally I told her, "Listen, we came here all the way from Postville. This kind man purchased plane tickets for us and went through so much trouble just to bring us here. Let's at least mention our names and ask for a *bracha*."

She finally consented, and we wrote our names. I also found a Maane Lashon and started reading. We stood by the Ohel, alone, with no one else there, crying our hearts out. We ended up being there for a while, enough time for me to finish the whole Maane Lashon. We went back inside, where Reb Sholom Mordechai was waiting for us with some hot tea. Then he himself went into the Ohel and after he finished, we drove straight back to the airport.

We got back to Postville and as Reb Sholom Mordechai dropped us off at our house, he



A RECENT FAMILY PHOTO OF THE VAKSBERGER'S, INCLUDING THE YOUNGEST, MENACHEM MENDEL

turned to us and asked, "Nu, so are you still going to Eretz Yisrael?"

My wife told him that we already had scheduled an appointment, and to cancel after working so hard to get it didn't seem right. Additionally, we already had plane tickets, which would cost a lot of money to cancel.

In short, our minds were made up about leaving for Israel. We thanked him warmly for everything he did for us, and told him how we felt standing at the Ohel. We believed that our *tefilos* would be answered, but there was no change of plans. We were determined to leave.

A couple weeks later we were in Eretz Yisrael for our appointment. The doctor performed all the tests, and we sat in the waiting room to hear the results. After about half an hour, the doctor came in and asked us impatiently, "What are you doing here? Why did you come to me? Don't you know that you're pregnant?"

We both burst out crying, and told the doctor the whole story. We called

Postville to inform Reb Sholom Mordechai that the Rebbe's *bracha* was fulfilled and we were going to have a child!

Our son was born on Yud-Beis Tammuz (the *chag hageula* of the Frierdiker Rebbe). I remember calling Reb Sholom Mordechai excitedly and telling him that today is indeed a *chag hageula* for my family! He replied that he feels responsible for this child and he will take care of him. And he did exactly that. Once we were back in Postville, all expenses for our son came straight out of his pocket.

For the *upshernish* he hosted a big party for the whole community, with a full catered meal. It was a really beautiful event.

My wife had a grandfather after whom she always wanted to give a name. In addition, throughout the first four years of our marriage, she had committed herself a number of times to give certain names, in the hope that this would grant us a child. When our first son was born we both knew that we

now had to repay the Rebbe. My wife would always tell Reb Sholom Mordechai, "Don't worry, as soon as I finish with the names I'm obligated to give, the next name is for the Rebbe."

Our sixth child was also born on a special day, Yud Shevat (the beginning of the

Rebbe's *nesius*). This turned out to be our last child, and he understands very well that he is here thanks to the Rebbe's *bracha*. When asked what his name is, he proudly answers, "My name is Menachem Mendel, after the Lubavitcher Rebbe!"

I also have a big picture of the Rebbe hanging on the wall in my house. People ask me if I'm a Seret-Vizhnitz chossid or a Chabad chossid. I answer them that I am a Seret-Vihnitz chossid, but I am no less a chossid of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. ✨



REB BENNY VAKSBERGER AND REB SHOLOM MORDECHAI RUBASHKIN AT A PURIM CELEBRATION

A special thank you goes to Reb Sholom Mordechai for his tremendous effort in bringing this story to print, despite his present situation.

We dedicate this story *l'zechus* **Reb Sholom Mordechai HaLevi ben Rivka**. May he merit a *geulah shleima* and revealed good, *teikef umiyad*.



REVIVING ASSURANCE

AS TOLD BY RABBI SHNEUR OIRECHMAN

- TALLAHASSEE, FL -

My family and I have the wonderful *zechus* of serving as the Rebbe's shlichim for the last sixteen years to the city of Tallahassee, the capital of Florida. *Boruch Hashem* we have expanded steadily and seen tremendous success in our holy work. But truth be told, it hadn't started out easy for us at all.

When we first came to check out the city as a possible *makom hashlichus*, we figured that as the capital of the state, and home to Florida State University with over four thousand Jewish students, there was bound to be great potential. Based on that, we decided to take the plunge.

The landlord of the first apartment we considered renting happened to be a Jewish college student and upon hearing why we were planning on moving, he excitedly told us that his mother had called from New York the day before and begged him to become more involved in Jewish activities. For us this was an indication that perhaps it really was the place we were meant to be.

In the pioneering spirit so typical of the shlichim of day's bygone, we arrived with no more than a month's rent and a few credit cards.

Looking to establish a database of contacts, we started by copying—with a typewriter—Jewish sounding names from the local phone book, and we frequented the public library to use the computer there to design and print flyers. Our first event, a Purim party, took place a month after we arrived and was a huge success with over thirty people in attendance. We were off to a great start.

However, as time passed we began to realize that we were sliding into a financial crisis. We didn't have a penny to our name and our credit was maxed to the limit. Although we were already acquainted with some of the locals, none possessed the means that would make them potential supporters.

In addition to our financial woes, I was plagued by doubt and uncertainty. It was the year 5759, nearly five years after Gimmel Tammuz, and I was desperate for some



RABBI SHNEUR OIRECHMAN AND HIS SON LIGHT THE MENORAH WITH FLORIDA GOVERNOR RICK SCOTT (R), AND FORMER GOVERNOR CHARLIE CHRIST.

indication that this was where the Rebbe wanted us to be. But our hopeless situation seemed to indicate that we didn't belong here.

Gimmel Tammuz was fast approaching and although I had made it a point to be near the Ohel every year on this day, I wasn't sure that I would make it this year; I simply didn't have the means to buy a ticket. In the end, the unthinkable idea of not being near the Ohel on this day, along with a few long-forgotten TWA miles, propelled me to a last-minute decision to book a ticket. The only available flight at that point was out of Tampa which is a four hour drive from Tallahassee. As our vehicle wasn't up to making the drive, I borrowed a car from a college student who I knew, and caught my NYC bound flight out of Tampa on Beis Tammuz.

Arriving in New York that evening, I took a taxi straight to the Ohel. Although my initial plan was to go afterwards to Crown Heights and return later that night, once I was at the Ohel I felt compelled to stay.

Sitting in the tent, my mind began reviewing the details of our dire predicament back home and with a heavy heart, I came to the obvious conclusion that under these circumstances, unless a miracle happened here and now, we would have no choice but to close shop and leave town. Making a mental note to include this in my *pa'n*, I went about preparing myself to enter the Ohel.

When I sat down a few hours later to write my *pa'n* to the Rebbe I included a detailed report of our situation and asked for a *brachah*. But inadvertently, I left out the punch-line,

namely, the fact that we couldn't possibly survive without an immediate miracle.

I began making my way towards the exit of the tent from where a pathway leads to the Ohel, when a fellow shliach from Miami¹ who had just emerged from the Ohel approached me. He was many years my senior but we knew each other from the two years I spent as a bachur-shliach in the Miami yeshiva.

Although we hadn't seen each other in a while, he greeted me warmly and inquired after my well-being. I gave him the run-down, and when I finished my woeful account, he asked me for the sum-total of our basic monthly expenses. I pronounced a considerable sum

and, without batting an eyelash, he took upon himself the burden of covering the entire amount with a monthly check!

Ecstatic and quite astonished, I asked him why he was undertaking this expense and he said that coming out of the Ohel, he was inspired to take upon himself to assist a fellow shliach financially. He had immediately noticed me, and knowing that I was a fresh shliach, he decided to make me his project.

I was blown away by the sheer magnitude of what had just transpired. Before I even had a chance to enter the Ohel, my troubles were

addressed and solved, and all the doubts that I had entertained as to whether the Rebbe really wanted us to be his shluchim in Tallahassee were washed away in an instant.

טָרַם יִקְרָאוּ וְאֵנִי אֶעֱנֶה!

The monthly support from this shliach continued for a full year until we were able to manage on our own. When we moved from

the apartment into our first house, he helped generously with that as well. Eventually, with the help of Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky, we managed to secure a grant from the Maurice and Lillian Tabacnic Foundation, which helped us expand our activities with the Jewish students on campus and

since then we have continued to grow.

But what has stayed with me more than anything throughout the sixteen years since, is the knowledge that the Rebbe wants us here and would insure us with the ability to fulfill our shlichus in the fullest measure. This awareness continues to provide me with the strength to face and overcome even the toughest of challenges. ❖



RABBI OIRECHMAN, ALONG WITH RABBI AVRAHAM KORF AND RABBI BISTON, PARTICIPATE IN A MENORAH LIGHTING WITH GOVERNOR JEB BUSH

1. When preparing this story for print, A Chassidisher Derher spoke with this shliach and confirmed all the details of his involvement. We respect his wish to remain anonymous.

NOSSI FOR ALL

AS TOLD BY RABBI DOVID DUBOV
AND RABBI CHAIM SHAUL BRUK

- PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY / BROOKLYN, NY -

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

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

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

She was on the verge of tears and she began begging me to please, please give her a blessing to have children. She had been married for ten years now and was undergoing various procedures for several years in an attempt to have children. Now she was in the middle of her last procedure, and the doctors told her that if it comes

back negative, she will never be able to have children. She was at her last straw.

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

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

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



RABBI CHAIM SHAUL BRUK WITH A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE TWINS BORN AS A RESULT OF THE REBBE'S BRACHA

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

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

I also made sure they knew what to do when we get there; how to write a *pa"n*, to take off their shoes, say chapters of Tehillim and so forth. We arrived, and they spent a half hour in the Ohel.

A short while later I received a phone-call

from Robert. He had great news to share; after years of infertility, his daughter was pregnant! An open miracle!

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

For me, it was astonishing to see such a clear *moifes*. What was even more amazing was with whom it occurred. This *moifes* hadn't happened to a Lubavitcher or another Jew. This was a miracle for a religious non-jew from New Jersey!

Yet when they turned to the Rebbe, the Rebbe cared about them too, and the Rebbe helped them in their time of need. This is such a powerful illustration of the fact that the Rebbe

is the *nossi* of every single person, no matter who they are and what they are.

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

•

Soon thereafter, Robert had the opportunity to express his immense gratitude to the Rebbe in an astonishing fashion.

Rabbi Chaim Shaul Bruk, director of Vaad Hanachos B'Lahak, relates:

I received a massive shipment of newly printed books—tens of thousands of *seforim*—and I didn't have anywhere to store them. Storage for that amount of inventory is prohibitively expensive, and I didn't have the money to pay for it.

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

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

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

Rabbi Dubov and I gave him some background on what Lahak does. The Rebbe would speak for countless hours every week, on both weekdays and Shabbos. All of these talks were transcribed at the time by a group of brilliant scholars, and, because most of

these talks were on Shabbos, most it was transcribed from memory. Lahak is working to collect and publish these talks from so many years ago.

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

He called in one of his workers and told him, “Whatever the Rabbi needs make sure to take care of him!” He gave us a generous space, more than enough for all of our needs. To give you an idea of how many *seforim* there were, five trucks were required to transfer them all! He saved us close to \$100,000 in storage costs!

Just a few months before, Robert had known almost nothing about the Rebbe, and now he had become a major supporter of the Rebbe's Torah. ➦



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

CHERISHED FOREVER

AS TOLD BY RABBI ZE'EV KAPLAN

- YERUSHALAYIM -

I came to 770 as a bachur in 5747 to spend a year with the Rebbe. At that time, the middle of the 5740s, Lubavitch had grown exponentially since the early days of the Rebbe's *nesius*. There were hundreds of shluchim around the world, and thousands of Chassidim crowded 770 every year for Tishrei and the *yomim tovim*. Additionally, because of the great influx of people, private *yeichud*s had been discontinued some years earlier. Due to these reasons, it was easy for me to feel as though the special connection the Rebbe had with each individual was lost in the crowd.

The elder Chassidim in 770 spoke of the special individual attention the Rebbe showered on them, and they shared the many personal stories that they merited to experience as *bochurim* with the Rebbe. Listening enviously to these Chassidim, I, along with some of my

chaveirim, couldn't help but feel—though irrationally—“Is it possible that today the Rebbe could know us as well as the bochurim in the early years? Chabad is so big now, and there are thousands of people crowded in 770 all the time. Can it be that the Rebbe notices all the young bochurim present by the davenings and farbrengens?”

Our *mashpi'im* assured us that without question the Rebbe recognizes each and every person. Not only does the Rebbe know each person, they explained, but the Rebbe cares about every *bachur's* personal life, concerns and progress.

Fast-forward twenty-four years.

I was sitting in the tent at the Ohel, reflecting on my current

situation. I was facing a major crossroad in my life, and the decision I made would have irreversible effects. As these thoughts raced through my mind, I wrote down the different options I was faced with. Deviating from my



RABBI ZE'EV KAPLAN

usual practice, I added a line to my *pa"n*: I would like to receive a sign from the Rebbe that whatever decision is made, the Rebbe will be with me, supporting me.

I left the Ohel and traveled directly to 770 to *daven mincha*. In the *zal* I met Rabbi Chaim Shaul Bruk. "I'm so happy I bumped into you for I've been looking for you!" exclaimed Rabbi Bruk. Asking for my email, Rabbi Bruk continued, "I found something important for you."

Rabbi Chaim Shaul Bruk, the director of Va'ad Hanachos B'Lahak, continuously searches for *kisvei yad kodesh*—originals of the Rebbe's writings and notes on *farbrengens* and *sichos*—that were forgotten and never published. Often, his intensive searches turn up other things aside for unpublished *sichos*.

When I opened my email later on, I wasn't surprised to find an email from Rabbi Bruk. But what totally shocked me was the content of the email, a picture of me as a young child in Lod. My father had sent this picture to the Rebbe in the year 5740 and had written "Ze'ev Kaplan" on the back. The Rebbe had added in his holy handwriting "לוד טבת תש"מ". Rabbi Bruk explained in the email that the

tear in the picture indicates that the Rebbe had taken the picture to the Ohel, and then brought it back to the library.

I trembled as I realized that more than 30 years ago, before I even knew of the existence of this photo, the Rebbe had already taken

my picture to the Ohel and cherished it. Now, on the very day that I stood before the Rebbe at the Ohel and asked for a sign, *b'hashgacha pratis* Rabbi Bruk approached me with this amazing find. This was a clear indication to me of the great connection that the Rebbe has with each chossid; the feeling of concern and worry of a father.

This was a very strong lesson for me. As a *bachur*, I did not merit any special stories or incidents underscoring my personal connection with the Rebbe. Therefore, I never truly understood and related to the exceptionally unique relationship the Rebbe has with each and every chossid. Now, many years after Gimmel Tammuz, when we are not *zoche* to see and hear

the Rebbe *b'gashmiyus*, I felt the Rebbe telling me, "You are my chossid and I care about you, today and always." ❧



RABBI ZE'EV KAPLAN AS A CHILD. THE REBBE ADDED "לוד טבת תש"מ" ON THE BACK OF THE PICTURE.



THE ULTIMATE PARTNER

ADAPTED FROM THE REMARKS OF MR. FELIX SATER

- AT THE CHABAD OF PORT WASHINGTON ANNUAL DINNER, JUNE 24, 2010 -

I am beyond honored and a bit choked up to be standing up here in front of all of you to speak about a subject that for about a week now, I've been contemplating how to best give over.

There is something that I would like to share with all of you. It is a story that happened with me; I didn't hear it from someone else, and it did not happen too long ago, and I have multiple witnesses who could attest to this incident. I'll attempt to recount it to you to the best of my ability.

There is a man whose picture hangs here at my side—the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Earlier today I was at the Ohel to pray, to thank him, and to ask him for blessings. True, my family and I are not very religious and could be considered rather modern.

While there today, I was startled to meet Rabbi Sholom Moshe Paltiel, the Chabad Rabbi of Port Washington. We were both amidst writing our notes to the Rebbe, when the Rabbi received a phone call from another Chabad board member, a gentleman by the name of Michael Samuel. I've known Michael

for a number of years. For a moment, the Rabbi passed the phone over to me, and Michael said, "So Felix, you've tapped in to my secret!" I was quite familiar with what he meant, and that's what I'd like to share with you. I'd like to tell you all a secret; I want to tell you about your own birthright.

Approximately a month or so ago, I started a business transaction with people who I would consider anti-Semitic—Muslims from Arab countries. It was a real-estate transaction that was taking place in Turkey, and I did not believe that it would go through. One day I was discussing my doubts with Rabbi Paltiel and he said, "You know, you should go visit the Rebbe about this." And I willfully agreed. So we drove over to the Ohel together, and to be honest, I was a bit timid at first. I thought this was more of a religious ritual or something to that effect, but then the Rabbi corrected my notion and explained: Make this a partnership. The Torah talks about giving a tenth of one's earnings to charity. Promise the Rebbe that you'll give one tenth of the profit that comes in from this transaction to charity, and you can be sure that all will go well.



And so, that's precisely what I did. I wrote a note to the Rebbe, and hoped for the best.

Well, I traveled to Turkey and we did the transaction, but when it was time to get paid there was nothing forthcoming! I got a phone call from a representative of the other side who said, "Sorry, there is no money for you. We've already used it for another business deal. Perhaps at a later stage we'll come up with something for you..."

I was devastated! I knew it was all over. When I got home, I called Rabbi Paltiel and explained that things were not going well. Suddenly the Rabbi interrupted me. "Just a second. Wasn't this the same deal about which we visited the Rebbe? You have another partner in this deal. Go tell the Rebbe what's happening!"

Initially, I was very reluctant but we drove over, the Rabbi and I, very late that night. When we reached the Ohel, I began to write a note to the Rebbe something to the effect of this: You must help me collect the money! I promised to give a large portion of the profit from this deal to tzedakah, and I really wish

to be able to carry through with it...

We arrived back at my house at 1:30 in the morning. As we sat in my driveway, the Rabbi attempted to enliven my spirit a bit and assure me that everything would turn out alright. I wasn't convinced. To me, the situation seemed hopeless.

One thing that I can assure you is that there was no way in the world that these people ever intended on paying me. They felt no need to do so. Why pay a Jewish boy from New York for a transaction that took place in Turkey? Especially given the fact that I had already dealt with these same people over a year before, and they had stiffed me on the last deal as well!

When they had called me earlier to tell me that they wouldn't give me the money, I had asked them to at least pay in small installments or even partially; but they wouldn't hear of any of it.

It was a sleepless night for me. When I awoke just a few hours later, at 5:30 a.m., I noticed that there was a text message waiting for me on my phone, from the lawyer of the other



side. It read: “Don’t worry. Tomorrow we’re sending you the money.” I was not sure what to think. As I mentioned, I had asked them to give me at least something, so I thought that they may have resolved to pay me only symbolically.

When I arrived at work that morning, there was an email awaiting me from the bank. It was hard to believe, but it was true—not only had they paid me in full for this transaction, but they also paid up for the transaction of over a year ago!

One would have expected that they would call me soon thereafter to request something of me, or at least to allow me to express my appreciation, but they did not!

This is by no means a coincidence. By the laws of nature it was absolutely impossible for this to have happened. I believe from the bottom of my heart, as does my family and everyone else who knows about this transaction, that this was the work of the Hand of Hashem—through the Rebbe.

I’m not that religious of a person to be standing here and saying this, but it is true!

My friends, if you ever need something—anything—be it success in business, health for a loved one or whatever it may be, I urge you: Go to the Rebbe! Go there and pray, and ask for blessings. If you open your heart and you really want it or you need it—it will happen for you.

I am living proof of it. 🌸



MR. FELIX SATER WITH RABBI SHOLOM MOSHE PALTIEL

SEDER CHALLENGE

AS TOLD BY RABBI LEVI SHMOTKIN

- MANHATTAN, NY -

We moved on shlichus to Mid-town Manhattan in 5769, about two weeks before Purim. Our primary task was to serve the many Jewish young professionals living and working in the area. Our first event after we arrived was a Purim party in coordination with several campus shluchim in the area, and it turned out to be a tremendous success. The next obvious step was a public Pesach Seder.

While planning for Pesach, we knew that it would be challenging as my wife was due with

our first child two weeks before Yom Tov. To top it all off, my wife's family was coming in from Australia for the birth of their first grandchild, and due to logistical issues, they would be spending Pesach in Crown Heights.

Immediately after Purim, we hired a designer to create a flyer and sent it to our small list of the approximately one hundred people that we knew at the time. We expected to receive about fifty positive responses and we sat back to wait for the reservations to start pouring in. A few days went by and we received no replies. I emailed many of the people we knew, texted and called some others, but everyone said they already had plans for the Seder.

This didn't deter me in the slightest. I was still very determined on making a Seder, especially considering that I spent most of my years as a *bachur* running public Sedorim, and I couldn't imagine this year, my first year actually on shlichus, being any different.

Our child was born three weeks before Pesach.



RABBI LEVI SHMOTKIN

Pesach was drawing closer and we still had not received a single reservation from anyone. Nevertheless I stubbornly insisted on making a Seder as I felt that as shlichim it was our utmost duty. On the other hand my wife had just given birth and it was going to be a humongous challenge putting it all together.

About a week before Pesach I was having a phone conversation with a fellow shliach and close friend of mine. Naturally, we began discussing the upcoming Seders we were both planning and he told me that he was expecting a crowd of about 150 people, or more. He then asked how many people we were having. After a long pause I told him that we still didn't have anyone signed up for our Seder... I also told him that my wife had just given birth and that her entire family had come in from Australia.

My friend thought I was completely crazy for going ahead with a public Seder. He also explained to me that if on my shlichus there's no real need for a Seder, then I was not obligated to make one. In truth, after hearing him talk I began to have my first doubts. I had simply never considered the possibility of not making a Seder until that moment.

I consulted with a few others who all said the same thing. One friend added that as long as there were other Seders in the area—where I would be able to direct people to in case any last minute reservations appeared—it would be unnecessary for me to make my own Seder.

It was late at night and I decided that early the next morning I would go to the Ohel and ask the Rebbe what to do. In the morning I drove from Manhattan to the Ohel and wrote a letter, including all the details of my situation. I listed who I had spoken to and what each one had said, and I finished by asking the

Rebbe a question: Should we, or should we not proceed as planned? I went in to the Ohel and after reciting a few *kapitlach* Tehillim, I left my letter by the Ohel and exited.

After leaving the Ohel I turned on my phone and barely two minutes passed when I received a call: “Hi Rabbi!

I would like to make two reservations for the Seder.” A couple of minutes later, I received another call “Hi Rabbi, I'd like to make a reservation for the Seder.” And sure enough the reservations continued. The Rebbe had clearly answered me.

Thirty five Jews attended our very first public Seder. ❖



RABBI LEVI SHMOTKIN, AS A CHILD, RECEIVING KOS SHEL BROCHO FROM THE REBBE

A THREEFOLD BRACHA

AS TOLD BY REB SHLOMO GUTLEIZER

- BROOKLYN, NY -

Approximately three years ago, a good friend of mine, a Satmar chossid by the name of Heshy Gross, visited my drug-store in Crown Heights. He pulled me over to the side and asked if I could tell him a story about the Rebbe. His sudden interest confused me and for some reason I evaded his request and he left.

A few weeks later he returned and again he insisted that I relate a story about the Rebbe, particularly a miracle story. Again, it seemed to me that he was just trying to get on my nerves and so, for the second time, I brushed him off.

Some time passed until one morning he arrived at my store more troubled than ever. He wanted to hear a story of the Rebbe that happened with me personally. We were such good friends, he said, that I was obligated to acquiesce.

It then dawned on me that perhaps something was deeply troubling him. I invited him into my office and encouraged him to tell me what was wrong.

Slowly, he opened up. Five years ago, after the

birth of their daughter, the doctors told his wife she would no longer be able to have children. But they did not accept this immediately. They visited dozens of doctors and underwent many tests, but the answer they always received was the same—there was no way that they can have more children. In the last year alone they had spent nearly \$45,000 on various treatments.

Heshy strongly believed that the power granted to doctors was only to heal and nothing more. He felt that he needed a *bracha* and he decided to turn to the Rebbe.

He fell silent and waited for me to speak. I thought a moment and then, instead of telling him a miracle story as he had asked for, I told him about the Ohel. Today, when one is in need of the Rebbe's *brachos*, he goes to the Ohel.

He immediately expressed his wish to come with me to the Ohel. I readily agreed but told him that he should first consult with his wife.

Heshy went home and spoke to his wife. She agreed immediately but felt it important to first request her parent's consent. She

would only go to the Ohel if they were comfortable with it.

They visited Heshy's wife's parents and her father immediately insisted that they visit the Ohel. Heshy called me excitedly to say that they would

like to go on Motzaei Shabbos, which turned out perfect for me because I take my children to the Ohel every Motzaei Shabbos.

On Motzaei Shabbos, Heshy called and we arranged to meet at the Ohel. I arrived with my children, we wrote our *pa"nim* and entered the Ohel; but Heshy still hadn't shown up. I thought that perhaps he had changed his mind and I decided to leave, but just as I was walking towards my car, Heshy arrived.

He was a bit nervous and he asked me to show him exactly what to do. I told him to go in, say some Tehillim and to simply tell the Rebbe whatever is on his heart. We went to the Ohel and I told him he should take his time, and that I would be waiting outside. He entered the Ohel and moments later he emerged very shaken and emotional...



REB SHLOMO GUTLEIZER

He in turn never mentioned anything about the matter either.

About five months passed in this manner, until one day he called me with exciting news. His wife was five months pregnant, and with triplets no less. I almost fell off my chair!

I told him that he must go immediately to the Ohel to inform the Rebbe of the good news, and to ask for a *bracha* for his wife and the children. We agreed to meet at the Ohel, and this time he was already waiting for me when I arrived. The Ohel happened to be quite full that day and he was just standing, awe-struck by the multitudes—even non-Jews—he encountered from all over the world; all there for the same purpose.

We went into the Ohel together. I stayed inside for about half an hour and waited an additional twenty minutes outside until Heshy came out looking content.

Four months later, on a Wednesday evening, at a quarter to six, I was getting ready to leave for the Ohel and I decided to call Heshy for his wife's full name (so I could mention her for a *bracha*). The call went to voicemail. I thought nothing of it and left for the Ohel. On the way I tried calling again, but again it went straight to voicemail.

I arrived at the Ohel and went directly inside.

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After that, I met him every few weeks for business purposes. I never mentioned a word to him about the whole episode, because I felt that at this point it was not of my concern.



HESHY'S MIRACLE TRIPLETS

I asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* that when the time comes, Heshy's wife should have an easy and speedy delivery, and that the triplets should be healthy.

I arrived home and literally as I walked through the door my phone rang. It was Heshy. "I have news," he said. "Nu?" I replied. "But I have news," he repeated. "Nu," I said again. "But I really have news," he said a third time. "Okay tell me the news!" I said impatiently.

He said that at 5:45 p.m. the first of three girls was born; at 6:05 the second child was born—both happening at exactly the time I tried calling him for his wife's name—and the third child was born at 6:30, while I was in the Ohel. Everything had gone smoothly, *baruch Hashem*.

That Shabbos, Heshy made a lavish *kiddush* in Williamsburg. I wasn't planning on walking

in, but on Shabbos morning I met a friend of mine that knew the story and he persuaded me to attend the *kiddush*. When I asked him why, he said that if anyone at the *kiddush* heard the story and wanted to go to the Ohel as well, then I needed to be there to answer a question or two.

I realized that he was right, so after *shacharis* I made the long walk to Williamsburg. Heshy was overjoyed that I came. To my surprise, the story had spread quickly and I was the center of attention all afternoon.

Incidentally, during the *kiddush*, Heshy's father-in-law approached me and said that he was marrying off a child in two months. He wanted to know if I could take him and his wife, and the *chossan* and *kallah*, to the Ohel to receive a *bracha* from the Rebbe. Of course I told him it would be an honor! ❧

FLOODED WITH BLESSING

AS TOLD BY RABBI CHAIM GOLDSTEIN

- PHILADELPHIA, PA -

We moved to Drexel University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on Chof-Daled Teves 5771. At the outset, my wife and I had our hearts set on purchasing a permanent location for the Chabad House. However, as young, new shluchim, we were obviously not in the position to afford such an expense. We rented a spacious apartment within our means, and we began tending to the spiritual and physical needs of the nine hundred Jewish students on campus.

After just a few months at Drexel, it became clear that we would soon outgrow our rented location. But still, it seemed that a larger property would have to wait a while, as we did not yet have the means to obtain a larger space. Additionally, there was quite some time remaining on the lease we signed for our apartment, which we could not terminate.

I was hesitant to take any steps, but my wife,

on the other hand, was insistent on looking to expand as soon as possible. And so, although the whole idea seemed to be the furthest thing from reality, we kept our eyes and ears open.

One day, on her way to meet me on campus, my wife noticed a house for sale. The location was perfect but the house was not. It was small and did not meet our needs. Still, we checked it out.

While there, the seller asked us if we were looking to purchase a space for a Chabad House! Shocked, we answered that, indeed, we were. He told us that he had another house for sale, a bit further off campus, and he felt it would suit our needs perfectly. It was not yet

on the market, but he agreed to show it to us.

This house was situated in the heart of student off-campus housing and really fit the bill. Although it was a bit further from campus than we originally anticipated, this house was the ideal site for our new Chabad House. With a beautiful brand new



THE CHABAD HOUSE IN DREXEL UNIVERSITY



AFTER THE APARTMENT FLOODED, WRECKING THE WALLS AND DESTROYING THE CEILING, RABBI GOLDSTEIN PRESENTS THE PLAN FOR A MOVE TO A NEW CHABAD HOUSE.

library, which could easily be converted to a shul, a large dining room, and huge pantry, it was truly meant to be a Chabad House!

Of course, our main concern was finding the money to buy the house. It seemed virtually impossible and I was very skeptical but my wife was absolutely determined to somehow make the purchase. In order for that to happen, we would need to come up with a large sum of money in a short amount of time, as the house was soon to be placed on the market and would inevitably be snatched up by an eager buyer.

One week later, we travelled to New York. Armed with all the details regarding the house, we visited the Ohel. We wrote a *tzetel* to the Rebbe, including all the relevant information, and asked for *brachos* to be able to buy the house. We hoped that with the Rebbe's *brachos* we would be able to do the impossible.

That night we returned home to Philadelphia. Opening the door, we were absolutely shocked by what greeted us. The entry room to our apartment was completely flooded, with water still pouring in from a pipe in the ceiling! My wife—who often tells students when it's raining that water is a blessing—laughingly turned to me and said, “We must be getting lots of *brachos*!”

Indeed our initial feeling of devastation soon gave way to the realization that this was truly

a blessing in disguise.

Seizing the opportunity to leave our apartment, we called the seller of the house and informed him that we needed to move in immediately. He agreed to rent it to us for a short while at a price much more than we could afford (approximately triple of what we were paying for our apartment).

But fortunately, our renter's insurance kicked in. After spending time on the phone with the insurance company, we managed to convince them that although the rent on the house was far more expensive than what we had been paying, it was the only arrangement that would suit our needs. This is highly unusual! Renter's insurance specifically covers *just* the cost of rent. That they agreed to pay triple that amount was miraculous. Not only was our rent covered, but being that the house required a few months of cleaning and renovation, our first landlord released us from the lease.

We moved in to the new house immediately, but that helped our situation only temporarily. Insurance would only cover the house for the duration of the renovations to our first home. Besides, the owner of our new home was not going to allow us to rent for too long without buying. We turned to Mr. George Rohr—benefactor of many Chabad Houses on campus around the country—and thankfully he agreed to help. His grant, together with a huge fundraising campaign, enabled us to secure a mortgage, which was a real miracle on its own. We completed the purchase just days before our time was up.

Our students are all well aware that we are in our present location due to a *bracha* from the Rebbe. ❧



מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לנשיא דורנו
כ"ק אדמו"ר זצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע
בקשר עם יום ההילולא ג' תמוז

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לעילוי נשמת

הרה"ח הת' ר' ירחמיאל בנימין ב"ר מנחם הלוי ז"ל
קליין

מזכיר של כ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע

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נדפס ע"י שלוחי הרבי במדינות אפריקא המרכזית
קונגו הדמוקראטי, ניגריא, אנגולה וגאנה

מנחם מענדל בן מושקא
לוי יצחק בן אסתר
דבורה לאה בת שרה
חי' מושקא בת דבורה לאה
ישראל נח בן רישא סימא
אלטא צרטל בת רבקה
יעקב יהודא בן אלטא צרטל
הלל בן אלטא צרטל
חי' מושקא בת אלטא צרטל

שלמה בן רנה
מרים בת רחל
דבורה לאה בת מרים
בנימין אברהם בן מרים
חי' מושקא בת מרים
סאשה בת מרים
ישראל מאיר בן זהבה זוהרה
חי' מושקא בת עדינה רחל
יוסף יצחק בן חי' מושקא
פרלה פרסיידה בת חי' מושקא

להצלחה רבה ומופלגה במילוי שליחותם הק'
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