

# *A Chassidisher* **Derher**

א חסידישער דערהער



## **Of Heart and Quill**

REB ELIYAHU  
CHAIM ALTHAUS

**ויעקב**

**הלך לדרכו**

FROM TISHREI  
TO EVERYDAY

# ממנה גדלה

THE STORY OF THE  
REBBE'S UNWAVERING  
EFFORT TO UPHOLD THE  
NEIGHBORHOOD OF NESSI  
DOREINU—CROWN HEIGHTS



**CHESHVAN 5777**  
ISSUE 50 (127)

# Derher**Contents**

CHESHVAN 5777 ISSUE 50 (127)



## About the Cover:

This month's issue features the saga of the Crown Heights Jewish community and the Rebbe's insistence on taking action to retain its Jewish character. Pictured is a banner overlooking Kingston Avenue based on the *possuk* שם צוה ה' את הברכה - the place where Hashem has commanded the blessing. This phrase was applied by the Rebbe to the neighborhood of nessi doreinu - Crown Heights.

Photo: Tishrei 5741, Levi Freidin via JEM, 191581

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# Derher**Editorial**

The month of Cheshvan begins our journey into everyday life. "The quiet after the storm," if you will.

Now is the time to "unpack" everything we acquired during the month of Tishrei and put it to good use in our everyday *avodas Hashem*.

One of the articles in this issue highlights the Rebbe's effort to save the Jewish nature of the Crown Heights neighborhood. The Rebbe asked each person to get involved and do everything possible to help the situation.

On Purim 5731 the Rebbe told the well known story of the wagon driver and the *gvir* who stopped at a town for Shabbos. The wagon got stuck in the mud and the *gvir*, looking to do a mitzvah, jumped in the ditch in order to help the wagon driver. Meanwhile the wagon driver left to shul and invited the local paupers to join him for the Shabbos meal.

This story embodies a confusion of *neshamos* (נשמות), where each one should have been occupied with what the other was doing.

Similarly, the Rebbe said, when he spoke about purchasing shares (which cost \$500 each, quite an exorbitant sum then), the first to get involved were the *bochurim*, whereas many of the *baalei batim* sufficed with saying Tehillim and giving "eitzos."

In fact just the opposite should have taken place!

The *bochurim* should have sufficed with giving 18 cents, and increased in saying Tehillim, while the *baalei batim* should have been actively working toward getting the *zechus* of purchasing a share.

Each of us need to focus on our specific *shlichus* and *avodah* in this world. In this manner, we will all have the collective success, together creating a *dirah b'tachtonim*.



Coming off of the month of Tishrei and the yom tov of Simchas Torah, the Rebbe asks (Shabbos Bereishis 5712):

How can we last through a whole year until next Simchas Torah? It will be half a year until another yom tov, and an



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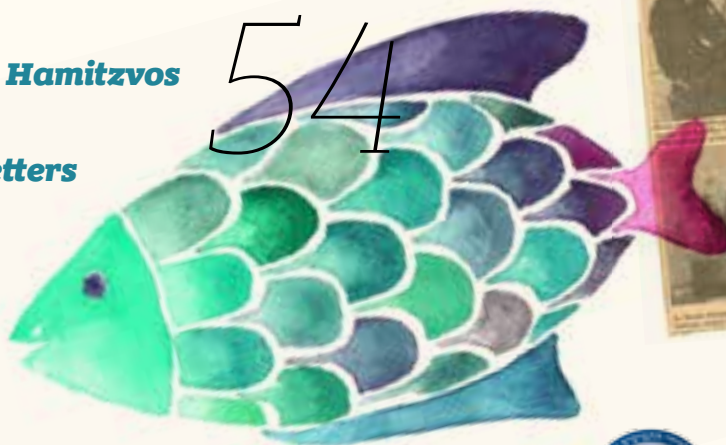
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נא לשמור על קדושת הגליון.

entire year until Simchas Torah, when we'll finally be able to experience the joy and vitality again.

The answer is:

Reexamine the content of the *possuk* "ויעקב הלך לדרכו"; true, Yaakov was going on his way, but he was actually standing at the border of Eretz Yisroel, about to enter the Holy Land. With just one turn and in just one moment, he could have been in Eretz Yisroel.

The same applies to us:

Each and every Yid stands right at the opportunity to bring Moshiach. With just one gesture and in just one moment ("בשעתא חדא" וברגעא חדא), we can each reveal the spark of Moshiach within our souls. And when all the Yidden will do their part, Moshiach will indeed be revealed.

May it be *teikef umiyad Mammosh!*

**The Editors**

שלהי תשרי ה'תשע"ז

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The Living Archive



# SAVE THE WORLD

There is a fascinating Rashi regarding the arrival of the animals to the *teivah*. Rashi tells us that they came on their own, and that the *teivah* would “absorb” only some animals, accepting those that had remained “pure,” while rejecting those that had become corrupted by cohabiting with other species.

This helps us understand how Noach managed to gather all the animals single-handedly, and how he knew which were corrupt and which were “pure.”

Likewise, we can infer that if the animals came on their own to the *teivah*, following Hashem’s command, they would not hurt other animals on the way, although this may seem unusual. For the nature of animals is that when they sense a danger to their

existence—a fire, for instance—they all run away from it in the same direction without hurting one another. Hashem had commanded them to enter the *teivah* in order to perpetuate the life of all species in the world; certainly they would not kill another animal.

However a question still remains: How is it that the animals lived with each other in peace for an entire year in the *teivah*? After entering the *teivah*, they had already fulfilled Hashem’s direct command, and they should seemingly revert to their natural tendencies.

This is a question according to the simple understanding of the *possuk*. Why then does Rashi make no mention of the issue?

The answer lies in a Rashi earlier in the *parsha*. Hashem told Noach

to “make the *teivah* with *kinim*,” the common translation of *kinim* is “nests,” a temporary, flimsy dwelling for birds. However Rashi translates it as “separate dwellings for each of the animals.” A dwelling has the connotation of much more than a nest, or even a cage; a dwelling is a place where an animal can live in its natural habitat. Having already mentioned these separate compartments, Rashi was not bothered by the question of how the animals co-existed, because they didn’t need to. They each had their own compartments.

This teaches us an important lesson: Noach saved all the animals in the world, yet he didn’t suffice with that, he built dwellings for each one. He could have built one-room cages in order to keep the animals apart;





לזכות החיילים בצבאות ה'  
התאומים  
שניאור זלמן  
ולוי  
לרגל הולדתם ביום  
כ"א מנחם-אב ה'תשע"ו - שנת הקהל  
נדפס ע"י  
הוריהם הרה"ת ר' שרגא פייוול  
וזוגתו מרת דבורה לאה ומשפחתם  
שיחיו  
מאן



*It is the  
responsibility  
of each of  
us to do  
everything  
in our power  
to save  
another from  
drowning.*

instead he built them dwellings, where they had all that they needed to live comfortably.


If that is how Noach treated animals, then we must treat other people, and especially Yidden with at least the same amount of care and compassion.

Just as there was a physical flood in the times of Noach, there is a spiritual “*mabul*” in the world today. Just as Noach was tasked with saving all living beings from the *mabul*, it is the responsibility of each of us to do everything in our power to save another from drowning.

However, we learn from Noach that it is not enough that we have simply saved another from drowning. Once we have saved them, we need to “build them a dwelling,” ensuring that

they have all that they need for their continued survival and comfort.

True, this may require hard work and a sustained effort, but nevertheless this is our responsibility, just as Noach spent 120 years building the *teivah*.

In the merit of this, Hashem will surely bless each of us with all that we need physically and spiritually in order to fulfil this shlichus. Very soon we will merit the ultimate “flood,” with the coming of Moshiach, when “the earth will be filled with the knowledge of Hashem, as the waters cover the sea.” 

*(Adapted from the sicha of  
Shabbos parshas Noach 5741)*



לעבן מיט'ן רבי'ן

לזכות  
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' חיים דוד  
וזוגתו מרת העניא שיחיו  
ליין  
נדפס ע"י משפחתם



4 CHESHVAN 5743, LEVIFREDIN via JEM, 200902

# Quiet After the Storm

YOMAN - THE MONTH OF CHESHVAN 5743 (תשמ"ג)

## MONDAY, SECOND DAY OF ROSH CHODESH CHESHVAN

At 3:15 the Rebbe came out for *mincha*, after which he gave a *bracha* in the hallway to some of the Tishrei guests who would be returning home shortly. This was followed by a *bracha* in *Gan Eden Hatachton* for the *talmidim hashluchim* heading to Milan and Brunoy. At the end of the *bracha*, the Rebbe gave each of them a booklet of the *michtovim kloyim* from Tishrei of this year, along with a dollar. As they were leaving, the *bochurim* sang "*Sheyiboneh*" and the *yechidus niggun* (known as

מחול היחידות - a joyous niggun traditionally sung after emerging from *yechidus*<sup>1</sup>). When the Rebbe heard the singing, he encouraged it with a wave of his arm, and then entered his room.

Later in the afternoon, the Rebbe came down to the main shul and spoke a *sicha* to the ladies<sup>2</sup> for around an hour, followed by a distribution of dollars.

## TUESDAY, 2 CHESHVAN

A rally was held for children of Tzivos Hashem and the Rebbe participated. Relative to the previous



rallies, the Rebbe was more serious this time. At the conclusion of the rally, the Rebbe distributed three dimes (through the *madrichim*) to all the children.

As on the day before, when the Rebbe returned to his room there was a group waiting in the hallway, on their way home from Tishrei. The Rebbe gave them a short *bracha*, and continued inside.

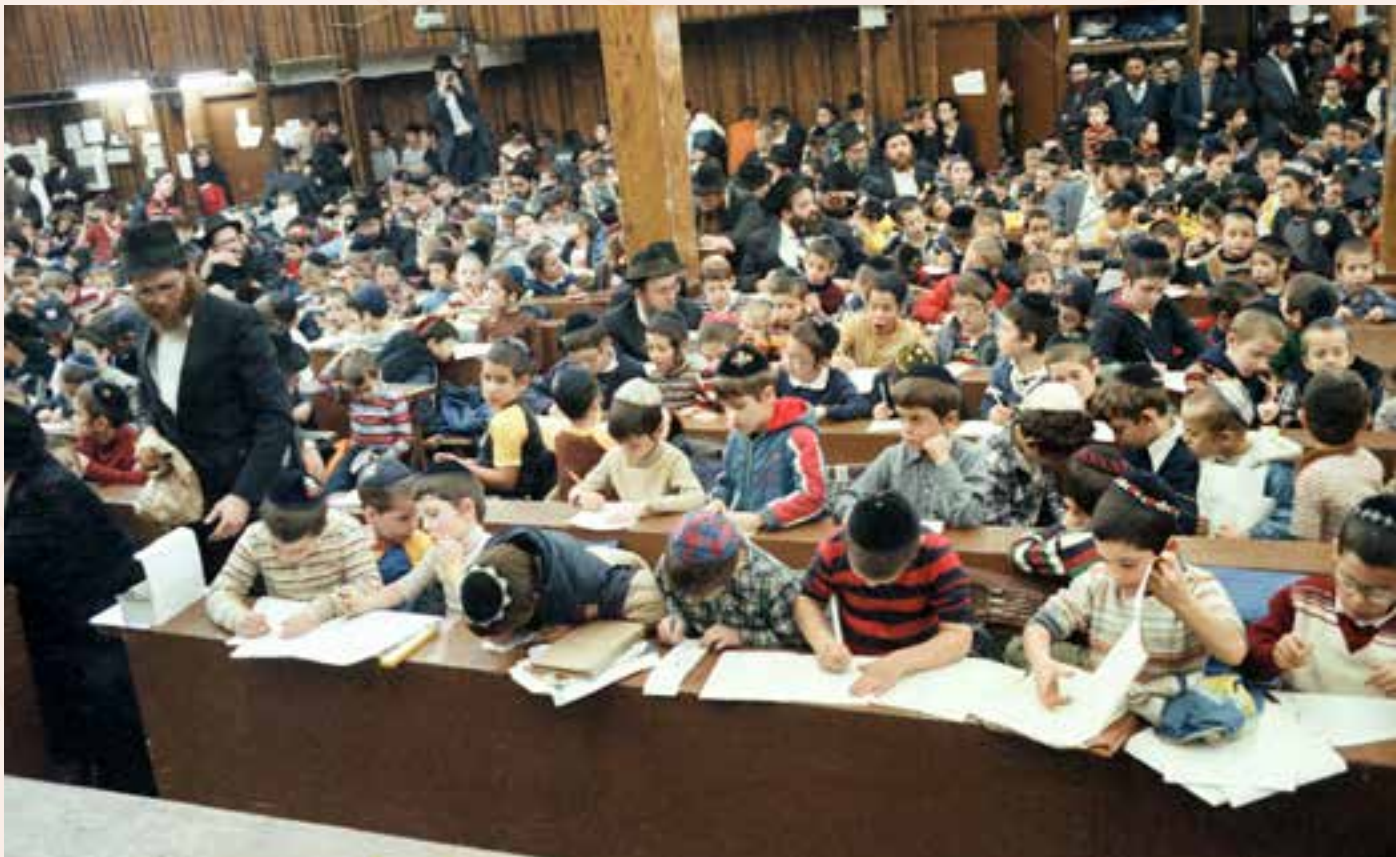
#### FRIDAY, EREV SHABBOS NOACH, 5 CHESHVAN

As the Rebbe returned to his room from the library (where he would stay for Shabbos), Rabbi Shlomo Cunin was standing there, and told the Rebbe of the meeting he and another six shluchim (Rabbi Avrohom Shemtov, among others) had with the President of the United States, Ronald Reagan. Rabbi Cunin said that it was well organized, the President greeted them warmly, and that at the end they sang "*Lechatchila Ariber*." The Rebbe inquired what this means [at an official meeting, to start singing?!] Rabbi Cunin answered, "We sang quietly." The Rebbe smiled broadly, and blessed him with success.



LEVI FREIDIN via JEM, 208991

THE REBBE ADDRESSES THE CHILDREN'S RALLY, 2 CHESHVAN 5743.



LEVI FREIDIN via JEM, 208988

CHILDREN TRANSCRIBE THE SICHA, 2 CHESHVAN 5743.

*Rabbi Cunin said that it was well organized, the President greeted them warmly, and that at the end they sang "Lechatchila Ariber."*

## SHABBOS NOACH, 6 CHESHVAN

When the Rebbe came to 770 in the morning, he informed Rabbi Leibel Groner that there would be a farbrengen. The farbrengen started at 1:30, and finished at 5:30, with four *sichos* and a *maamar* *kein sicha*.

The Rebbe spoke about the lesson from parshas Noach: When it comes time to do *mitvzoim*, the "קלוגינקער—clever one—(the *yetzer hara*) decides that first he must take care of himself and do *teshuva*. He even quotes Tanya—the "קלוגינקער" even learns Tanya!—that until one does *teshuva*, all his torah and mitzvos go to "other places."<sup>3</sup> The Rebbe explained at length the lesson from the building of the *teivah*, not to take these claims into account, rather to do what Hashem **really** wants.

*When it comes time to do mitvzoim, the "קלוגינקער—clever one—(the yetzer hara) decides that first he must take care of himself and do teshuva. He even quotes Tanya—the "קלוגינקער" even learns Tanya!*

## SUNDAY, 7 CHESHVAN

As the Rebbe got out of the car when arriving at 770 in the morning, the photographer Levi Freidin asked for a *bracha* before departing for Eretz Yisroel, and the Rebbe spoke to him for a bit.

At 11:15 the Rebbe went to the *mikveh* and later to the Ohel. On the way to the car, there was a woman standing in the path who wanted to speak to the Rebbe. While obstructing the pathway she said something to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe responded. At the end we could hear the Rebbe say to her, "We should hear good news." The Rebbe then entered the car. At that point, she remembered that she had a letter for the Rebbe, and knocked on the car window; the Rebbe opened the window and took the letter. When the Rebbe returned in the evening, the same woman was standing in the hallway. The Rebbe nodded his head in greeting.

Reb Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky, a senior and respected Chossid and one of the main activists



YOSSI MELAMED via JEM, 140023

THE REBBE ARRIVES AT 770 IN THE MORNING, CIRCA EARLY CHESHVAN 5743.



who worked on the Rebbe's acceptance of the *nesius* in 5710, passed away today.

### MONDAY, 8 CHESHVAN

The *levaya* for Rabbi Kazarnovsky passed 770 at 2:00 p.m. Until the last minute, no one knew whether the Rebbe would attend. As the car was about to pass 770, Rabbi Groner entered the Rebbe's room, returning a minute later, leaving the door to *Gan Eden Hatachton* open. The Rebbe came out, and slowly followed the car carrying the *aron* until the beginning of the next block, where he stood and watched until the car disappeared from view.

The Rebbe told Rabbi Binyomin Klein to tell the family—and signalled to them himself—that they shouldn't walk back to their cars on the same path. The Rebbe looked around for a few seconds, searching for something, then, with his eyes, followed the cars on their way to the *beis hachayim* in Queens. [Rabbi Kazarnovsky was interred near the Ohel.] The Rebbe then asked Rabbi Groner where the bus for *bochurim* was, and was informed that it was on the way to 770. When the bus arrived, it stopped close to the Rebbe, and immediately filled with *bochurim*. Again, the Rebbe accompanied them with his look and watched as the bus drove away, even leaning over to see as it crossed the horizon. Then the Rebbe returned to 770, clearly in a subdued mood.

At the entrance of 770, there was a *kvort* waiting. The Rebbe washed his hands eight times alternately, and went to the small *zal*. There he recited *Yoshev Beseser* seven times, changing seats each round. As today is a Monday of *Behab*,<sup>4</sup> the Rebbe did not go home in the afternoon (and return for *maariv* later on, as usual), rather, he waited until 6:35 to daven *maariv* and then went home.

### WEDNESDAY, 10 CHESHVAN

When the Rebbe arrived in the morning, a French family—a mother, her sons and a grandson—were waiting. The mother asked for a *bracha*, and the Rebbe responded—in French—that she should have *nachas* from them. He gave the grandson a coin, telling him to put it in the *pushka*.

At 8:00 p.m., Rabbi Moshe Rosen, chief rabbi of Romania, went into the Rebbe's room for almost two hours. Afterwards, he went into *mazkirus* for a minute, and then left without revealing anything from the *yechidus*.

A few minutes later, at 10:00 p.m., the Slonimer Rebbe—Rabbi Avrohom Weinberg, previously a *maggid shiur* in Tomchei Temimim, Lod—came for *yechidus* along with several of his Chassidim. The Chassidim shook the Rebbe's hand and then the Slonimer Rebbe signalled for them to leave the room. They waited in *Gan Eden Hatachton*, together with Rabbi Groner.

At around 11:00 he left. The Rebbe accompanied him to the door of *Gan Eden Hatachton*, and watched as he continued making his way out of 770. On his way out, the Slonimer Rebbe saw some of his former *talmidim* from Lod, and greeted them warmly. The Rebbe watched closely, and seemed pleased at the friendly exchanges. The *bochurim* and the Slonimer Rebbe didn't notice the Rebbe's gaze, with the place being so packed.

At 11:55, the Rebbe went home.

*The bochurim and the Slonimer Rebbe didn't notice the Rebbe's gaze, with the place being so packed.*

### THURSDAY, 11 CHESHVAN

At night, during seder chassidus, the Rosh Yeshivah, Rabbi Mordechai Mentlik taught the Rebbe's letter from Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan, expounding on the first reference in the letter.

### FRIDAY, EREV SHABBOS LECH LECHA, 12 CHESHVAN

Today the Rebbe released a note regarding the women's *mikveh*, which has already been under construction for several years. The Rebbe urged that its construction be completed quickly and strongly decried the lengthy delays.

### SHABBOS LECH LECHA, 13 CHESHVAN

On the way to 770 in the morning, an African American woman asked the Rebbe where she can find 749 Eastern Parkway (one of the yeshivah dormitory buildings where construction is currently underway). The Rebbe pointed it out, and before going inside 770, he turned around, making sure she had found it.

After *maariv* on Motzei Shabbos, the Rebbe went outside for *Kiddush Levana*. Although the moon was

clearly visible from the steps, the Rebbe continued on to the corner of the yard in front of his room. Around fifteen minutes later, the Rebbe went home.

## TUESDAY, 16 CHESHVAN

During *chazaras hashatz* of *mincha*, as the Rebbe began to sit down, he saw that someone was still saying *shemoneh esreh* on the opposite side of the table. The Rebbe remained standing (between the bench and the table) for the rest of *chazaras hashatz*. By *tachanun* the Rebbe stood at the side of the table, and for *nefilas apayim* he sat at his place. (The man was still standing, *shockeling* vigorously, until after *mincha* was over.)

The Rebbe stayed in 770 until quite late. At 12:35 a.m., Rabbi Groner brought in the last bundle of mail for the day. Shortly afterwards, the Rebbe went home.

## THURSDAY, 18 CHESHVAN

On his way to the *zal* for *krias haTorah* in the morning, the Rebbe distributed coins for *tzedakah* to a few children, and put some into the *pushka* himself too. During *krias haTorah*, the Rebbe looked closely at Rashi and some of the other *meforshim* in the Chumash in front of him (it was a Chumash “Beis Yehuda”). It looked like the Rebbe was focusing on the second *possuk* of Vayera (the *parsha* of the week).

Shortly after, the Rebbe went to the *mikveh*. On the way out of 770, there was a woman standing on the pathway with her baby boy. The Rebbe gave the baby a coin for *tzedakah*, and while sitting in the car, he continued looking at him the whole time, and waved twice.

At around 2:00 p.m. the Rebbe left for the Ohel, returning several hours later. After a few minutes, the Rebbe came out of his room and headed to the *zal* for *mincha*. *Maariv* was at the usual time, 6:45 p.m. At both *tefillos*, Rabbi Levi Goldstein’s young son stood near the Rebbe, and said “*amen*” each time loudly. The Rebbe looked at him, and said “*amen*” with him each time, nodding in encouragement.

## FRIDAY, EREV SHABBOS VAYERA, 19 CHESHVAN

Preparations are already underway for the Rosh Chodesh Kislev farbrengen, celebrating five years

since the Rebbe’s miraculous recovery. A sign was hung up in 770, inviting all *anash* to attend.

About 15 minutes before *licht bentchen*, the Rebbe went to the library—where he will be for Shabbos—for a few minutes.

## SHABBOS VAYERA, 20 CHESHVAN

In the morning, it was announced that the Rebbe would hold a farbrengen in honor of Chof Cheshvan, the Rebbe Rashab’s birthday. At the farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke about the fact that this year marks 100 years of the Rebbe Rashab’s *nesius* in 5643. It also has another special aspect, in that Chof Cheshvan falls out on a Shabbos—similar to the extra significance of Rosh Hashanah that is on Shabbos. The Rebbe noted the fact that Chof Cheshvan will always be on the same day of the week as Rosh Hashanah.

The next part of the farbrengen was dedicated to the significance of birthdays. The Rebbe explained that by the birth of a *nossi*, there is additional significance, in that already from his birth, he is a “shepherd of Yidden,” as *Chazal* explain regarding Moshe Rabbeinu.

## SUNDAY, 21 CHESHVAN

Before leaving to the Ohel, the Rebbe gave a *bracha* to the *talmidim hashluchim* travelling to Seattle. After the Rebbe left, they were all given by *mazkirus* a booklet of the *michtovim klolim* from the passed Tishrei, and a dollar from the Rebbe.

## MONDAY, 22 CHESHVAN

As the Rebbe was walking back to his room after *maariv*, the Rebbe gave a *bracha* to Reb Moshe Yeruslavski, who headed the *hachnosas orchim* operation during Tishrei. “פארט געזונטערהייט, און, מ'זאל הערן בשורות טובות, און איר זאלט קענען אנפירן מיט הכנסת אורחים ביז משיח וועט קומען—Safe travels, we should hear good news. You should be able to direct *hachnosas orchim* until Moshiach comes.”

## TUESDAY, 23 CHESHVAN

The Rebbe edited the Yiddish version of the third *sicha* from the past Shabbos.<sup>5</sup>

A letter from the Rebbe was published, dated “Motzei Shabbos Chof Cheshvan,” in honor of the “Annual Celebration of Tomchei Temimim.”





YOSSI MELAMED via JEM, 140023

## MONDAY PARSHAS TOLDOS, EREV ROSH CHODESH KISLEV

After *maariv*, Chassidim began singing and dancing in the *zal*, then spilling out to the foyer. When the Rebbe exited his room on the way home, he swung his arm vigorously several times. The group then followed the Rebbe out of 770, and the energetic dancing continued outside. As the car pulled away, the Rebbe continued encouraging the singing.

Those gathered wished each other “*Gut Yom Tov*,” celebrating the Rebbe’s recovery in 5738.

At night there was a *seudah*, arranged by Reb Mayer Harlig and several other *yungeleit*. A large crowd attended, and the *farbrengen* went on until the wee hours of the morning, with Reb Mendel Futerfas and Reb Yoel Kahn. They were later joined by Reb Sholom Marozov, Reb Michael Teitelbaum

and others. Rumor has it that someone had told the Rebbetzin in advance about this celebration, and she asked why the Rebbe had not been informed. So, she was sent an invitation to the *seudah*, and was very pleased about it.<sup>6</sup> **T**

1. See Frierdiker Rebbe’s “Reshimas Shimon Hakofer” for more about this.
2. See *farbrengen Shabbos Bereishis* 5743; the Rebbe instructed that special gatherings should take place, one for the men, one for the women, and one for the children. *Hisvaaduyos* 5743 vol. 1 p. 361.
3. *Perek* 39.
4. Twice a year after Tishrei and Nissan, some people have a *minhag* to fast three times: Monday, Thursday and the following Monday.
5. This was unusual in those years.
6. Many of the events in this article were recorded in a *yoman* written by Hatomim Uri Holtzman, a *bochur* in 770 at the time.



YOSSI MELAMED via JEM, 140023





# כתב יד קודש

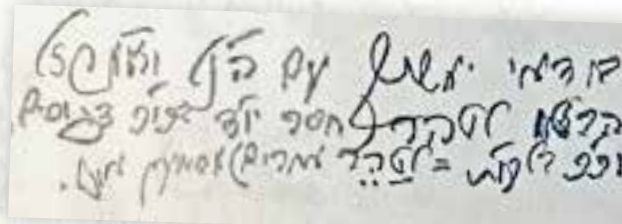
לזכות  
בנינו ובנותינו שיחיו  
ובהלל ותשבחות להשי"ת  
על שזכינו להיות נמנה  
בין שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר  
אבער דער עיקר איז אז עס זאל זיין  
חסידישע נחת פון דער קינדער  
נדפס ע"י הרה"ת ר' יואל גרשון  
וזוגתו מרת רבקה שיחיו  
קאראליין



## Help from Above

(Teshura Goldman-Mundshine 5776)

In honor of the Kinus Hashluchim, we present the following note in the Rebbe's ksav yad kodesh, written in response to a report of activities bringing Yidden closer to Yiddishkeit:



You will most certainly continue with the above mentioned [activities].

Chazal say, one who comes to purify (in many versions, the word לטהר is written without a "yud," this is also how it is printed in Likutei Torah; the implication is that it means to purify others [as opposed to the common understanding of the phrase - with a yud - meaning to purify oneself]) is assisted [from Above].

בודאי ימשיך עם הנ"ל  
ואמרז"ל [ואמרז"ל]  
הבא לטהר (חסר יו"ד בכר"כ  
[בכמה וכמה] דפוסים וכ"כ  
[וכך כתוב] בלקוטי תורה =  
לטהר אחרים) מסייעין אותו.

### EXPLANATION:

There are two ways to read the statement of Chazal "הבא לטהר מסייעין אותו"—When one comes to be purified he is assisted [from Above]."

Either it can read לטהר—with a yud—meaning to purify himself; or it can read לטהר—without a yud—meaning, to purify others.

The Rebbe is showing preference for the second version and notes that in Likutei Torah it is also written as such (see Likutei Torah Shmini Atzeres 89d).

# DAYS OF MEANING

EXPLORING SPECIAL DATES  
ON OUR CALENDAR

## CHESHVAN 20

*Birthday of the Rebbe Rashab*

The Rebbe Rashab was born in Lubavitch on Chof Cheshvan, 5621.

### {IN THE REBBE'S PRESENCE}

Chof Cheshvan 5735 was the first time the Rebbe held a farbrengen on this day during the week. The Rebbe spoke at length about the new *mitvza* of *neshek* (lighting Shabbos candles), which had been launched two months earlier.

Over the years that followed the Rebbe held a farbrengen almost every year on this day. Every Chof Cheshvan farbrengen came with its special highlighted lesson. Following are some of them:

**5741:** Although the Rebbe Rashab was born 120 years ago in Russia, and we are sitting in Brooklyn, it is in everyone's power to reflect on the meaning of Chof Cheshvan. Everyone can, and must, take a few moments out of the day to connect to the *baal yom huledes*.<sup>1</sup>

**5745:** There is a famous *sicha* of the Rebbe Rashab explaining the Gemara, "*Kol hayotze l'milchemes beis dovid, kosev get krisus l'ishto*"—One who goes out in the war of the house of Dovid, must first write a *get* to his wife." The Rebbe Rashab applied this saying as an instruction to the *bochurim* studying in Tomchei Temimim regarding the need to completely separate themselves from all worldly matters.

At this farbrengen, the Rebbe added that although the Rebbe Rashab said this specifically for *temimim*, in this final generation of *golus*, it applies to everyone.<sup>2</sup>

On a few occasions, the Rebbe held a distribution on Chof Cheshvan:

- In 5748 the Rebbe handed to each and every person over the age of bar or bas mitzvah, the "Kuntres Hechaltzu" of the Rebbe rashab (which is about *ahavas Yisroel*). While distributing the *kuntres*, the Rebbe wished each person "*ah hatzlochedike Chof Cheshvan*—have a successful Chof Cheshvan."<sup>3</sup>
- In 5751 the Rebbe distributed the *kuntres* "Eitz Hachayim" from the Rebbe Rashab (about Tomchei Temimim) to each and every one of the thousands of men, women and children who passed by. A few days later, at the Shabbos farbrengen, the Rebbe added that since a new *maamor* of the Rebbe Rashab was recently discovered, it will now be printed and distributed to all. On Monday, 25 Cheshvan, the Rebbe distributed the *kuntres* אנכי מגן לך - to thousands of men, women, and children. The date signed on the preface to the *kuntres* was "Chof Mar-Cheshvan, 5751".
- In 5752, the Rebbe distributed the "Kuntres Chof Mar-Cheshvan 5752" to thousands of men, women, and children while standing at the door of his room on the main floor of 770. The *kuntres* contained the *maamor* that the Rebbe edited for that day, ד"ה ויהיו חיי שרה תש"ל, said by the Rebbe twenty-two years earlier.

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THE REBBE DISTRIBUTES KUNTRES CHOF MAR-CHESHVAN, 5752.

## CHESHVAN 25

*Court of Appeals  
rules on the Seforim*

On Chof-Hei Cheshvan 5748, the U.S. Court of Appeals upheld the previous year's Hei Teves ruling by the New York State Supreme Court. Namely, that the *seforim* of the Rebbe's library belong to Agudas Chassidei Chabad, and are not a personal inheritance of a family member.

1. Sichos Kodesh 5741 vol. 1 p. 411
2. Hiva'aduyos 5745 vol. 1 p. 606
3. See "Leben Mitten Rebbe'n" Derher Cheshvan, 5776
4. Noach 8:14
5. Rabbi Eliezer says that "the second month" is the month of Cheshvan and Rabbi Yehoshua says that it is the month of Iyar. Rashi brings the explanation of Rabbi Eliezer before Rabbi Yehoshua, and in the translation of Yonasan ben Uziel he translates "the second month" simply to mean the month of Cheshvan.
6. Keser Shem Tov, hosafos 7-10
7. Ma'amorei Admur Hazoken, Es'halech Liozna p. 58
8. Motzei Shabbos parshas Chayei Sarah 5740. See also the farbrengens of Shabbos parshas Chayei Sarah 5736 and 5737 where the Rebbe speaks about the lesson from 27 Cheshvan.

# HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

The Rebbe draws lessons from occurrences on dates in Jewish history:

## 27 CHESHVAN

*Noach is commanded to leave the teivah*

בחודש השני בשבעה ועשרים יום לחודש יבשה הארץ.<sup>4</sup>

On the 27th day<sup>5</sup> of the second month the earth dried.

Following this, Hashem told Noach "צא מן התיבה", that he should leave the *teivah*.

What lesson can we learn from this story that took place so many years ago?

*Teivah*, the Baal Shem Tov explains, can also mean "word." The spiritual ark (*teivah*) is the words of Torah study and *tefillah*.<sup>6</sup>

Furthermore, the *teivah* symbolizes the revelation of *Elokus* that we will merit to see when Moshiach comes.<sup>7</sup> In the ark there were wild beasts and tame animals, all residing together, causing no harm to one another. The same will be when Moshiach comes, as the *novi* says, "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb."

How then do we apply the commandment of Hashem "leave the *teivah*" in our daily lives? Why would one need to **leave** the *teivah*?

The Rebbe explains<sup>8</sup> that leaving the *teivah* means to leave one's personal Torah study and prayer in order to achieve a *dirah b'tachtonim*—a dwelling place for Hashem in the material world.

"A Yid may complain that he wishes to remain in the '*teivah*,' within the words of Torah and *tefillah*. He says that the Torah itself justifies this, as it says "If only a man could pray the entire day." And the same is with Torah study; he wishes that תורתו ואומנתו—that Torah study should be his full time job, just as it was with Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai and his colleagues.

"However we answer this Yid that there is a commandment from the *Aibershter* to 'leave the *teivah*.' He must have a relationship with the outside world and thereby make it a dwelling place for Hashem.

"Yes, there is also a commandment from Hashem that one's *avodah* should begin with 'בא אל התיבה' entering the *teivah* [immersing himself in the words of Torah and *tefillah*].

"But once he has fulfilled 'enter the *teivah*,' both in shul (prayer) and in the *beis hamidrash* (Torah study), he must accomplish the *avodah* of "הנהגה בדרך ארץ"—working within the world that it become an appropriate dwelling place for Hashem.

"And for this one needs to 'leave the *teivah*.' He must go out into the world, into the 'ארץ' where he has been sent and make it a place of 'דרך ארץ'."

Rashi says that Noach and his family spent a full year (שנה תמימה) in the *teivah*. This teaches us that prior to one's *avodah* of dealing with the world, he must immerse himself in the words of Torah and *tefillah* throughout an entire year, which includes all seasons and changes. This will provide him with the necessary strength for his *avodah* after he exits the *teivah*, persistence in making a dwelling place for Hashem in every situation that may arise.



Event:

# DEATH OF BILLIONAIRE HOWARD HUGHES

Date:

**NISSAN 5, 5736**  
(APRIL 5, 1976)



The Rebbe spoke about him at the major Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen a few days after he died:

“The newspapers are all abuzz with this story. Someone even tried bothering me with this as well. A very wealthy man named Hughes passed away a few days ago. He was indeed quite wealthy; even by the United States’ standards.

“I asked the Yid who told me this story so excitedly, ‘What about this story moves you so much? You had nothing from the 2 billion dollars owned by Mr. Hughes!’

“But then I thought to myself: What lesson can we learn from this occurrence; specifically something connected with the month of Nissan—*Zman Cheiruseinu...*”

The bars of a prison are defined not by the material that makes them but by the meaning behind their existence. Someone in a self-imposed prison is actually a free man, armed with the knowledge that the only force imprisoning him is his own free will. And sometimes gold is more powerful than chains of iron clamped around a wrist.

Howard Hughes was an eccentric billionaire who made his money in the aviation and entertainment industry. Worth over \$6.24 billion in today’s dollars, he had nations doing business with him, purchasing military equipment and airplanes. And yet,

through it all, he was worried that someone was out to get him, poison him, kidnap him and to steal his money.

This paranoia only grew as he became more wealthy. As the years went on, a few plane accidents and head injuries led him to be in constant pain and on pain medication. His fear of other people grew and his neurosis got worse. At one point he moved into a theater for a year, living in the windowless screening room, eating chocolate and chicken.

When he died in 1976 he had been out of public sight for over 10 years, moving between hotels and resorts.

He purchased a hotel after living in it for a few months so the owners would not be able to evict him. In some of those hotels he wouldn’t even open his window drapes for years at a time. He weighed barely 90 pounds when he died, and the autopsy concluded that he had died from kidney failure, coming from dehydration, and malnutrition. Essentially he starved himself to death.

His paranoia prevented him from living like a normal human being. He feared for his life, for his money, didn’t trust his friendships, all because of a few dollars. A child can roam freely, but a billionaire? Not exactly.

A walk on the boardwalk? No. Eating at a restaurant? No. Relaxing with friends? Nope. What if they want to ask for half a million dollars for a project?

His billions of dollars granted him no freedom whatsoever; it made him the most miserable slave imaginable. The government listened to him, he owned everything from hotels to TV stations to airplane factories, and yet he couldn’t sleep at night.





On the other hand, there were people who lived in the concentration camps under the worst of conditions. But because they were connected to the “eternal”—to Torah and mitzvos—they felt themselves as free men.

Hashem did not create anything without purpose, to not have a use. If there is money, it must be used for good, not just sit in a bank. We tell Yidden, true, this non-Jew has 2 billion dollars but he is the slave of slaves. You might only have one million, nothing compared to his two billion, but you have the opportunity to use it for the good. Not drop it into a bank account, hire guards, crawl under a bed and begin trembling. Do good, bring the world closer to a *dira*

for Hashem, with the little money you have!

When a Yid decides that with the money Hashem gives him he will work to spread good, Hashem will send him another million, and when he uses it correctly, yet a third million. And he knows that with the wealth he can unlock many doors and open many listening ears; the purpose of his riches is to fulfill Hashem's shlichus.

Who is a free, truly liberated person? Not the wealthy individual in his own right, but someone who is not restrained by the *gashmiyus* of the world. This does not only include wealth; it includes addictions as well, for *taavos* do not shrink the more they are fed. The opposite is true<sup>1</sup>, and one who has 100 wants 200, and

he who has 200 wants 400, until he is completely enslaved to his *taavos*.

It is entirely in the hands of the Yid. No matter how dark the *golus* that he finds himself in is, when he decides that he is preparing for the freedom of *Zman Cheiruseinu*<sup>2</sup> Hashem will intervene and his challenges will shrink until he is a completely free individual.

1. Sukkah daf 52b

2. This *sicha* was spoken right before Pesach 5736.



JEM, 287464

FARBRENGEN 11 NISSAN 5736.



## TO READ THE ORIGINAL:

Yud Aleph Nissan 5736 - Sichos Kodesh 5736 vol. 2 p. 33  
Living Torah Program #234

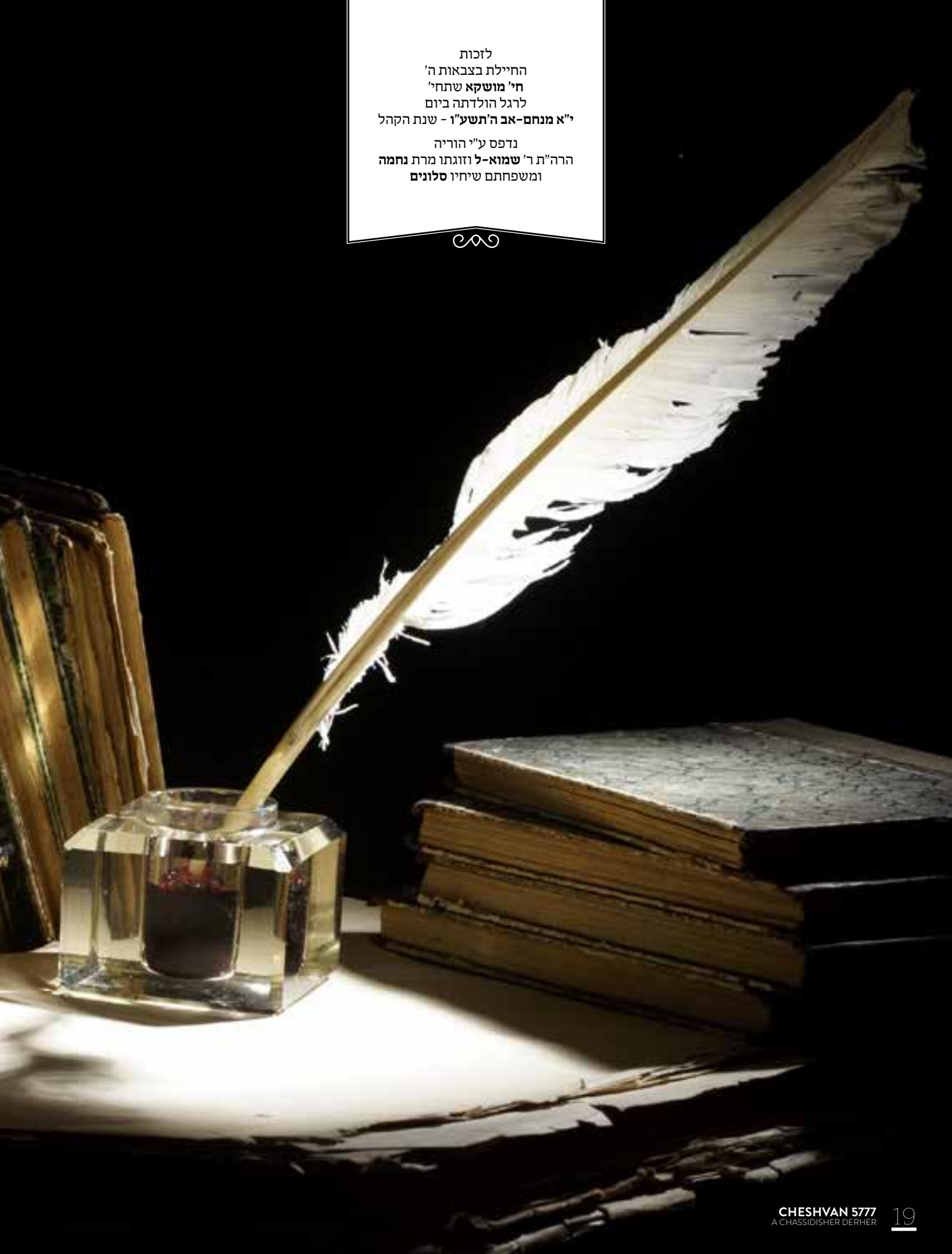
# OF HEART AND QUILL



REB  
**ELIYAHU CHAIM**  
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לזכות  
החיילת בצבאות ה'  
ח' מושקא שתחי'  
לרגל הולדתה ביום  
י"א מנחם-אב ה'תשע"ו - שנת הקהל  
נדפס ע"י הוריה  
הרה"ת ר' שמואל-ל וזוגתו מרת נחמה  
ומשפחתם שיחיו סלוגים



**“MY BEST OF FRIENDS,”  
“A YEDID OF OUR  
HOUSEHOLD,” IS HOW THIS  
CHOSSID IS DESCRIBED BY THE  
FRIERDIKER REBBE. THE REBBE  
REFERRED TO HIM AS “YEDID  
BEIS REBBE, THE WELL KNOWN  
CHOSSID.”<sup>1</sup>**

While there were many illustrious Chassidim who lived during his time, Reb Eliyahu Chaim Althaus—known as Reb Elye Chaim—stood out as unique. Blessed with an endearing *breitkeit*, his character personified the complete dedication and heartfelt love of a Chossid to his Rebbe. His love was reciprocated by the Frierdiker Rebbe, and the entire *beis harav*; he merited an unusual closeness and was entrusted to carry out the most intimate and complex of tasks on the Frierdiker Rebbe’s behalf.

A combination of a wide heart and a flowing quill, the prolific letters of Reb Elye Chaim have allowed us a glimpse into the world of the Frierdiker Rebbe during the fateful periods of his leadership, when Lubavitch was straddling between worlds—weathering hardships and celebrating rebuilding—giving us a backdoor entrance to the events that so altered the future of Chabad Lubavitch forever.

As we will see in the coming pages...

JEM, 2708





THE REBBE, IN THE PERIOD OF THE REBBE AND REBBETZIN'S CHASUNA.

## THE SECRET NODAH B'YEHUDAH

Reb Elye Chaim was once visiting a town for Shabbos, when he heard that a traveling *misnagdisher maggid* would be delivering a sermon on Shabbos afternoon. Arriving at the shul some time before the *drasha*, Reb Elye Chaim asked the *shamash* if the sefer *Nodah B'yehuda* was available. The *shamash* searched for it on the bookshelves, but was unable to locate it.

Meanwhile, the shul filled up, the speech commenced, and then, at the height of the *pilpul*, with the *maggid*

soaring in his *gaavah* and pride, Reb Elye Chaim cut in.

"The *Nodah B'yehudah* says otherwise..."

The *Maggid* was flustered; the shul was thrown into a tumult. Needless to say, Reb Elye Chaim had no factual basis for his statement and had simply wanted to break into the unbearable *gaavah* and *chitzonius* of the *Maggid*, accomplishing it in his bold and humorous way.

This *breitkeit* and boldness was Reb Elye Chaim's trademark approach to everything he would do and everyone he would meet.

## DEEP ROOTS

Born to the prominent Althaus family of Nikolaev, Reb Elye Chaim was raised in a setting that gravitated strongly to Lubavitch and the Rabbeim. His father, Reb Pinchas, was a Chossid of the Rebbe Maharash, and his entire extended family was well known for their warmth, *chassidishkeit*, and dedication to the Rebbe.

After learning in Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch for a number of years, Reb Elye Chaim was sent by the Rebbe Rashab to strengthen Yiddishkeit in the town of Dobranka, near Gomel, in 5678 (תרע"ח). In that distant town, when the news of the Rebbe Rashab's *histalkus* reached him, he is reported to have fainted [see sidebar]. Three years later, he traveled to join the Frierdiker Rebbe in Leningrad, and from that day, until the Frierdiker Rebbe moved to Poland, he remained part and parcel of the scene in Lubavitch.

For Chassidim coming to the Rebbe, Reb Elye Chaim was the embodiment of *hiskashrus* and dedication. When Reb Yisrael Jacobson arrived at the home of the Frierdiker Rebbe on Erev Rosh Hashanah 5685 (תרפ"ה), and noted—to his consternation—that not a single bench was to be found in the room where the *tefillos* were scheduled to take place, he turned to Reb Elye Chaim questioningly, and exclaimed, "Reb Elye Chaim, it's Erev Rosh Hashanah, and there is nothing for the shul." Reb Elye Chaim looked at him, and replied with the same words, just in a factual tone; "Yisrael, it's Erev Rosh Hashanah, and there is nothing for the shul."

Reb Yisrael related that Reb Elye Chaim's no-nonsense reply opened his eyes, and matured him by ten years.

"He had meant to say, 'From whom are you demanding? One should demand only from himself...' In my

eyes he filled the image of an *eltere* Chossid, totally dedicated to the Rebbe, and as one who educates the young to dedicate themselves as well, that they too should feel responsibility for the the Rebbe's *inyonim*.<sup>2</sup>

At one point in time, the Frierdiker Rebbe was not feeling well and was having difficulty speaking. One of the elder Chassidim farbrenged during

that time, with his typical broad Chassidisher manner. Reb Elye Chaim couldn't bear the sight.

"The Rebbe cannot speak, and you speak so well?!?"

## HIS LETTERS

Reb Elye Chaim was blessed with a flowing pen. His long letters, to the Frierdiker Rebbe, to his children, or to his friends, bring events he describes to life, and make the reader feel as if he is present in the situation, watching the happenings unfold. Reading those letters, one is able to vividly grasp his heartfelt character, and his intense love for the Rebbe.

In fact, the Frierdiker Rebbe wrote to him numerous times encouraging him to put his talent to better use; pushing him to write more stories and descriptions of Chassidim that he had known in his youth. Once, upon receiving a letter from Reb Elye Chaim, the Frierdiker Rebbe responded, describing the great pleasure he had derived from his vivid descriptions and even went so far as to quote his words and expound upon them. In letters to the editorial board of *Hatomim*, the Frierdiker Rebbe encourages them to specifically request that Reb Elye Chaim describe a certain event about which they were reporting.<sup>3</sup>

## LEAD UP TO ARREST

As the years moved on, the government began to intensify its effort to eliminate all vestiges of Yiddishkeit in the Soviet Union. The Frierdiker Rebbe responded in kind, and the secret operations continued as usual, and with even more vigor.

Reb Elye Chaim was no outsider to these events. Looking for someone with the discretion and willpower needed to be involved in his clandestine activities, the Frierdiker Rebbe had chosen him to run the mammoth operation of underground

*chadarim*, and he was thus intimately involved in all of the 'underground' activities of the Frierdiker Rebbe. In fact, all of the mail that would be sent to the Frierdiker Rebbe would be received through two homes: Reb Chonye Marosov and Reb Elye Chaim Althaus.

In a letter to his children after Yud-Beis Tammuz, Reb Elye Chaim describes the events leading up to the arrest, and among them, the memorable farbrenging of Purim 5687 (תרפ"ז).<sup>4</sup>

"Knowing about the Rebbe's many hardships, which—we understood—allow him no rest at night, while during the day he must stand in constant battle with those opposing him, we expected that at that Purim *seudah*, he would share his inner concerns with us, as Purim was usually a time of revelations. Instead, what we saw was totally unanticipated, unlike anything we had ever seen.

"The Rebbe spoke openly, sharply, and passionately. He wept, his face flushed with emotion, and in his voice was an intensity one had never heard before. We actually witnessed an outpouring of soul, so intense were his feelings.

"At midnight, in the midst of the *seudah*, the Rebbe abruptly stood up, pulled at his shirt to reveal his heart, and pounded hard with his fist on his bare flesh, and called to me to come closer to him.

'E-l-y-e C-h-a-i-m, E-l-y-e C-h-a-i-m!' he called out. 'I told you to write harshly last year, but you did not listen, and this is why there has been so much suffering all year. After Shabbos, you shall write a letter to all the cities and villages with these words: 'We had a Rebbe, and he left us his son to guide us, and the son has instructed us to write in his name that anyone handing his child over to the school of the Yevsektzia will not live through the year, *chas veshalom*.' Will

## IS IT TRUE?!

Reb Elye Chaim's daughter related:

When my father lived in Dobranka, Reb Itche *der masmid* would visit from time to time, and during those visits, my father went out of his way to honor him and make him comfortable.

About one month after the Rebbe Rashab's *histalkus*, Reb Itche came by. My father had already heard the news. When Reb Itche was getting off the wagon in front of our home, we ran to tell my father that Reb Itche had arrived. My father went outside to the stairwell in front of the house, where Reb Itche was standing at it's bottom step. Reb Itche immediately asked him,

"*S'iz richtig ader nit*—is it true or not?"

My father did not answer him. Instead he let out a deep sigh.

Reb Itche asked a second time,

"*S'iz richtig ader nit*?"

This time my father's head bent towards the stairwell.

When Reb Itche asked a third time, my father fell onto the steps, hit his head, and lost consciousness.



you write this? Remember well what I say to you!’

“He repeated these words again and again, pounding upon his chest. His fiery words brought an intense fear upon all of the assembled. One of the elder Chassidim begged the Rebbe to stop, but to no avail.”

## GREATER THAN YUD-TES KISLEV

A few weeks after the arrest, the Frierdiker Rebbe was banished to Kostroma, and he chose Reb Elye Chaim to accompany him on the journey, along with Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka.<sup>5</sup> Their stay was cut short; after just ten days, the Frierdiker Rebbe was informed that he was free to return home. When Reb Elye Chaim heard the news—he had accompanied the Frierdiker Rebbe to

the police station that day—he was so excited that his face first turned white, then red. The Frierdiker Rebbe was afraid that something would happen to him, so he hit him on the back to calm him down.

That day the Frierdiker Rebbe penned a letter to Reb Elye Chaim, in which he notes a fact that underlines Reb Elye Chaim’s closeness to him: Reb Elye Chaim was the first of the Chassidim to see the Frierdiker Rebbe as he was being taken off to prison, and he was also the first one who merited to wish him *mazel tov*,

upon hearing the good news of his liberation.

One week later, back in Leningrad, Reb Elye Chaim wrote a letter to the Chassidim in America, sharing with them his feelings about the Frierdiker Rebbe’s release:

“...On Tuesday, Yud-Beis Tammuz... the Rebbe was redeemed in peace. This day will be set for generations as a day of celebration and happiness. It is a remembrance to the day of Yud-Tes Kislev, and it is possible that this day is even greater, for this miracle is greater than the previous

**“WE HAD A REBBE, AND HE LEFT US HIS SON TO GUIDE US, AND THE SON HAS INSTRUCTED US TO WRITE IN HIS NAME THAT ANYONE HANDING HIS CHILD OVER TO THE SCHOOL OF THE YEVSSEKTZIA WILL NOT LIVE THROUGH THE YEAR, CHAS VESHALOM.”**



JEM 102371

one. The perpetrators in this case were Yidden, men of free choice, and they didn't only seek to uproot *Toras Hachassidus*—they attempted to uproot *Toras Hashem* in general, and to extinguish the flame of Yiddishkeit, *chas veshalom*.

“However, Hashem watched over Yosef Hatzaddik, and watched over the entire Jewish nation, bringing them salvation, and saved the Rebbe from the wrath of those who sought his harm. It was on the same day that his light began shining on this world [i.e. the Friediker Rebbe's birthday], on Yud-Beis Tammuz 5640, that the sun shone brighter.”

In midst of all the excitement, Reb Elye Chaim didn't lose touch, and remembered that they are still in the Soviet Union, and the NKVD still swore retribution.

Finishing off the letter, he implores the Chassidim of the United States and Canada to keep this fact in mind:

“But my dear friends, after all we have seen with our own eyes, we must take to heart the Gemara oft repeated by our Rebbes, that ‘a miracle does not occur every day’ and that ‘one does not rely on a miracle.’ We are not yet tranquil, and our joy is incomplete.

“There is still a sadness buried deep in our hearts. We are not aware how the salvation suddenly arrived, from here or from there, and why it suddenly turned for good. Therefore, the terrible fear from the past will continue to haunt us for the coming days. For who knows what a new day will bring?

“Who knows which way the wind will blow, which side of the political world will turn upon the Rebbe. Although he has absolutely no connection to politics, enemies have learned who this great man is, and they saw his great esteem in the eyes of the Jewish people who are spread out in all corners of the world, who revere him and the very mention of his name.

We are afraid lest an *ayin hora* take hold of him, lest they set upon him and treat him like a plaything for, *chas veshalom*, some terrible purpose.

“Therefore, a holy responsibility rests with us, and with our brothers and friends, to fulfill the *maamar Chazal*: ‘A wise man needs a guardian, and should not walk alone in the dark.’ Stand prepared at your posts to know always if the Rebbe is well and what his situation is. Do not turn from the ‘crown of our heads and the delight of our hearts’ for one moment. Stay in unison with our life-source at all times and with Chassidim around the world in general. For his sake, beg mercy from our Father in Heaven day and night. May the merit of his forefathers, our holy Rebbes, guard him against all evil, so that he shall not be suspected for that which he has not trespassed, and that all of the winds in the world shall not move him from his place, *chas veshalom*.”

## SHADCHANUS

Aware of his dedication and capabilities, the Friediker Rebbe entrusted delicate issues into the hands of Reb Elye Chaim. What could be more significant than being chosen to act as the middleman between the Friediker Rebbe and Horav Levi Yitzchok, to bring the *shidduch* of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin to fruition.

When the wedding finally took place years later, Reb Elye Chaim was chosen to be the *shomer* of the Chosson, and in a letter to Chassidim in Russia, he describes his experience in great detail.

“Regarding your requests and the requests of *anash* to inform them of details of the wedding in Warsaw of the Rebbe's daughter, I will not hold back anything from my good friends. Perhaps I was created just for this and for this reason I was sent away from my friends, so that I could relate to you—and so that Anash of our

country who shared in the *tzaddik's* sorrow and saw his “*churban*”—will know of all the glory, which by the kindness of Hashem our Rebbe *shlita* merited now in its ‘rebuilding.’

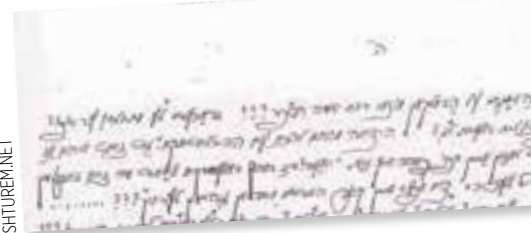
## IN WARSAW

“On Monday the thirteenth of Kislev, at seven in the morning the train slowly pulled into the Warsaw station.

“The *chosson* entered my compartment and suggested that I travel with him to the hotel, saying that this is what the Rebbe wanted. Naturally I didn't waste a moment. The two of us quickly left and made our way with difficulty from the train. It was not easy to push our way through the masses of people surrounding us. When an acquaintance greeted me, I did not reply.

“Sadly, due to the confusion and haste, I did not merit to see all the wondrous goings on at the Rebbe's compartment which I was told about later. Truth to say, however, my reward was doubled because I was with the *chosson* for the entire twenty four hours before the *chupa*. I came to know with absolute certainty that he has not changed at all as far as his great fear of Heaven and certainly it will draw good will from Hashem. His davening, saying Tehillim, learning *Reishis Chochma*, and his saying *krias shema she'al hamitah* were for me a source of great pleasure and *nachas*.

“I also merited to see the letter the *chosson* received from his father the *gaon* and Chossid Horav Levi Yitzchok, in honor of the wedding.



SHTUREM.NET



# THE REBBE'S SON-IN-LAW, THAT SILENT ONE WITH THE SILK GARTEL SHLITA, GAVE THE FIRST CRY FROM THE DEPTHS OF HIS HEART, AND IN HIS WAKE FOLLOWED ALL OF THE CHASSIDIM.

At length, he explains the special quality of the third day of the week, which is when the *chupa* will be. It is based on Kabbalah and from the little I understood I was overwhelmed and awed by his great knowledge and the truth of his words. He concludes by saying that the future *geulah*, too, will take place on the third day of the week, as it says in the verse, 'On the third day He will raise us up and we will live before Him.'

"I greatly enjoyed the letter because it has been some time since I heard his eloquent exegesis on Kabbalah which, as you know, is his custom.

## THE WEDDING DAY

"The following day, the day of the *chupa*, we went to the *mikveh* before *shacharis*. After davening he learned and I ate. Then, at the appropriate time, the *chosson* davened *mincha* and said the lengthy *vidui* before the One who knows the secrets of the world with great concentration and pouring out of his soul in a low voice.

"This awesome and frightening sight, with nobody there but me and him, two people as distant from each other as east is from west, for his thoughts are not my thoughts.

"Can you, my dear [friends], picture and describe for yourselves what I felt during this long period of time? I sat in a corner of the room, watching this young man, who in a few hours will become the son-in-law of our Rebbe, from whom he will build—in the future—an everlasting Jewish home, and no secret is hidden from him... and also from you.

"Did I myself not cry? Did I not join him in his prayer, in his pleading and asking for mercy from the depths of his heart? Don't I know that my destiny as well as that of my children to follow, are dependent on the ways of this praiseworthy young man? When Hashem will find his way pleasing, He will raise up the head of this *tzaddik* and even his enemies will make peace with him. 'His path is a path of life,' and 'he will protect the paths of his Chassidim'—for this I surely wept. The gates of tears are not locked, and certainly our prayers were accepted before the Master of all, and he will succeed with great success on the straight path which our fathers, our Rebbeim chose, and the *tzaddik*, as well as the Chasidim, will see and rejoice in him.

"I said to myself that I should praise and thank Hashem for everything I was able to see, for before me stands Mendel ben Levik, who, it is well known, was born and raised in purity and holiness and who constantly fears Heaven. As of today, all I see is fear of Heaven. I examined his deeds inside and out, and I found not one flaw. He is complete in *nefesh*,

*ruach*, and *neshamah*. He possesses his own great learning in addition to the merit of his saintly forebears.

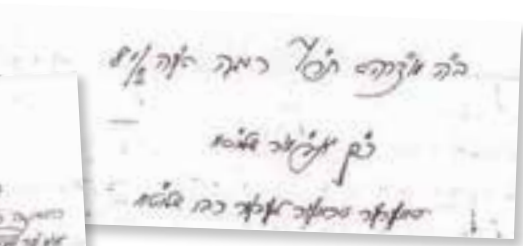
"True to say, I see for myself a young, precious lad, an outstanding scholar, one who truly fears Heaven, wearing a silk gartel, sitting and fasting, learning *Reishis Chochma* all day, his immersion and davening are truly intended for the sake of Heaven, for you know that he is naturally far from doing the slightest thing for outside appearances. And even if he is aware of what is outside of himself in secular matters, he also knows how to differentiate between holy and mundane and he hasn't, *chas veshalom*, profaned his holiness in the slightest way. What else can I say?

"Along with these thoughts, I contemplated those who came before him, generation after generation and found none better than he. I see only good. I rejoiced with this thought as though I would with a treasure and I said thanks to G-d for his goodness."

## PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

Unlike most Chassidim at the time, Reb Elye Chaim seems to have had a keen understanding in the significance of his actions. Reading the letter carefully, one is clearly able to see that he saw in this *shidduch* the continuation of *beis harav*, and the solidification of the future of Lubavitch.

While in these letters this message is somewhat subtle, it seems that in Reb Elye Chaim's home this was clearly understood. Reb Elye Chaim's daughter Batsheva overheard in her parent's home that on the evening that the *shidduch* was closed, the Frierdiker Rebbe spent the entire night with the Rebbe, imploring him to promise that he would fill his place after his *histalkus*.<sup>6</sup>



A LETTER FROM REB ELYE CHAIM TO THE FRIEDIKER REBBE, MOTZEI SIMCHAS TORAH 5690.

## תשרי תר"ץ

*In these letters to the Frierdiker Rebbe in New York, Reb Elya Chaim describes the events of Tishrei 5690 in Riga, where, in the Frierdiker Rebbe's absence, the Rebbe had begun to reveal himself ever so slightly:*

B"vh<sup>7</sup>, Motzei Rosh Hashanah 5690, Riga - 8:30 p.m.

At this moment I have arrived from the chambers of the Rebbe *shlita* to my room, I have turned on the lamp and the room has filled with light.

I sit at the table, with no one else in the house, my thoughts floating from America to Russia, and in the middle, Riga, Leningrad, Rostov, Lubavitch... My heart pounds with emotion and I ask myself, where am I? Where is our holy Rebbe? Where are my family members? I am wandering throughout the world; I feel lost; my world has been thrown upside down...

I merited to spend Rosh Hashanah in Lubavitch, in Rostov, in Leningrad, to spend Rosh Hashana by the Rebbe. The *avodah* of Rosh Hashanah by the Rebbe requires no elaboration; it is well known and etched in the hearts of all Chassidim who merited it; 'Ohel', 'Erev Rosh Hashanah *pidyonos*,' 'the Rebbe's *maariv*,' 'tekios,' 'maftir,' 'Chassidus,' 'yechidus,' 'farbrenging with Chassidim.'

There were many years that I did not merit it, and I remained in my city, in my home, in my shul, and then, there as well, everything was organized, and in its proper place. There was a time to daven, to hear Chassidus, as per the custom of *anash* in their respective towns.

This Rosh Hashanah, of תר"ץ, was different than all other Rosh Hashanahs. It was unique, different in all its ways, and I can't manage to grasp its character.

I am by the Rebbe for Rosh Hashanah, but without the Rebbe...

I picture in my mind that during these moments, at nine o'clock—it is possible that during these very moments our holy Rebbe is reciting the *haftarah*, "מרחוק", על כן משכתיך חסד "ה' נראה לי, in New York...

A great fear falls upon me, and trembling grips me, as I picture the Rebbe's 'tzubrachtenkeit' this Rosh Hashanah in America; the Rebbe's *mekuravim* are spread throughout Russia, in the depths of Siberia; the Rebbe's family is in Riga, and the Rebbe is in America... Gevald!!!



## DER SHTILINKER MIT DER ZEIDENEM GARTEL

I will describe the occurrences of Rosh Hashanah in short:

We came before dawn on Erev Rosh Hashanah to recite *selichos*. At five o'clock, the Rebbe's son-in-law came down as well. I did not have the temerity to command the start of the recital without the presence of the Rebbe *shlita*, and we all stood quietly, broken and sorrowful, and how we awaited that perhaps, soon the door will open, and the Rebbe *shlita* will enter, and from his place he will motion to us to begin.

The first one that could not hold himself in while quietly reciting Tehillim, and broke out into tears, was the Rebbe's son-in-law, that silent one with the silk gartel *shlita*, gave the first cry, from the depths of his heart, and in his wake, followed all of the Chassidim.

I saw that crying alone is no *seder*; I banged on the *bima*, and sent one of the elder Chassidim to lead the prayers. We did not hear one word, just weeping until the morning.

We had tremendous pleasure and satisfaction from the davening of the Rebbe's son-in-law, Reb M"m *shlita*, who, during the first *maariv* of Yom Tov, davened for more than two and a half hours, shedding many tears and cries from the innermost recesses of his heart. In general, his conduct on Rosh Hashana was wondrous. I closely observed his *tevilos*, davening, the way he spoke and ate, drank and slept, and I thank Hashem for the great kindness he has done to our community.

He categorically refuses all of the honors usually given to the Rebbe *shlita*. The Rebbetzins encouraged him, not once or twice, and I also tried, speaking with him earnestly at length, urging him to be honored with *maftir* or to recite the verses before the shofar is blown, until I realized that he genuinely didn't desire any of this.

The Yom Kippur davening finished later this year in the Rebbe's *minyan* than ever before, for the Rebbe's son-in-law became totally absorbed in his *tefillos* and oblivious to anything else during *neilah*. A nice while passed before he awoke from his reverie. All of us were filled with pleasure from this very pleasing wait. Before *maariv* we concluded with Napoleon's March like every year, but in every strain we sensed that everything we do without the Rebbe is as though we are only imitating; as Chaim Meir [the Rebbe's aid] says—'artificial.' The



element of truth and the lively enthusiasm, is somehow lacking. Why? I do not know. But certainly it is so.



## SUKKOS

Though I have not yet returned to my full strength after the strain of the last two days of Yom Tov, and from all the dancing I am still shattered, there is not a whole limb in my body... I am unable to withhold the good, the gratification and true pleasure from the Rebbe, who is beloved and dear, for even one moment. I must give satisfaction at the earliest opportunity, while I still stand in a state of great feeling of joy and pleasure; that I merited to see the rising glory of the Rebbe's household with my own eyes, exalted in spirituality and holiness, may we only merit that it should not cease till the coming of the redeemer.

I thank Hashem for his kindness that he did for me, paying me in accordance with my deeds. I was the first who merited undeservingly that the Rebbe should reveal to me, in a private audience during the summer of 5683 (תרפ"ג), that which was hidden in his pure heart, his early intention—that it was his desire to give his precious and beloved daughter that she should be the wife of this man about whom I will now speak. I am the only individual from amongst all of the closest Chassidim, who saw his toil, his pain, how he spilled his blood like water, his tremendous humility—unintentional and intentional, his tremendous patience—revealed and hidden, throughout the five years during which his head, the leader and prince of Israel [a reference to the Frierdiker Rebbe] was constantly between two mountains of burning fire<sup>8</sup>.

I was the first representative and I was chosen then to make the first step to bring him from Yekatrinoslav to Kislovodashk,<sup>9</sup> and now too, I am the one who merited to see the building of this everlasting edifice. And now too I saw wonders that I never imagined nor aspired to, Hashem has shown me on this occasion. For that which I will now relate, not only do I not exaggerate, but I only reveal a very small portion of the abundant good that we merited to enjoy, I and all the Chassidim here during this Yom Tov...

One night of *Simchas Beis Hashoevah* the Chassidim gathered in the Rebbe's sukkah and Ramash sat with us; we heard many beautiful things from his mouth and it was very pleasurable for all of us...

On the night of Shemini Atzeres there was a grand *kiddush* in the Rebbe's sukkah, to which all the Chassidim came, until late into the night, and Ramash, with overwhelming humility and without in any way making himself noticeable, drank a lot and spoke for a few hours without pause—words of Chassidus combined with Midrashim, Kabbalah and *gematria*, in the fashion that he received from his father. His words were sweet and appealing for my ears to hear and all of those gathered were tremendously impressed.

The next day the news spread throughout the city of all that he spoke and his wonderful abilities, and, as is the way of the world, there was much exaggeration, but for the good, such that all the questions and veils were removed. Each man commented to his fellow, 'You see, the Rebbe took a son-in-law befitting to him,' and even the critics were forced to concur against their will.

In the wake of these reports, many more people gathered the next day for *hakafos*, before which the older Rebbetzin [Shterna Sarah] made a *kiddush* in the room of Reb Chatche Feigin. Ramash sat at the head and spoke for four hours straight! I sat everyone at the table very orderly, rabbis on one side, wealthy laymen on the other, and gave each individual a place befitting to him. The brothers Valshanik, the brothers Chefetz, and Vekslir—the father of the young Vekslir—who is very quiet like his son, a great critic and considers himself to be a great intellectual. He came the first night to hear with his own ears, to confirm what he heard in Berlin of the greatness of the Rebbe's son-in-law, and he stayed until two o'clock in the morning with all the Chassidim. He left very impressed and told me, 'In my entire life I never saw or heard of such a thing! Happy is the one who bore him!' I heard similar statements from everyone.

The *hakafos* were carried out with much dancing and joy, with singing and gladness of heart.

Similarly, the next day approximately one hundred men gathered by about 11:00 am and we left three hours after midnight. In other words 3:00 am. The Yom Tov meal was set up in various rooms, we sat down to eat at about 4pm and we *bentched* at about midnight. For all those eight hours Ramash did not move from his place, and the entire time he spoke warm words, arousing *teshuvah* and *avodas Hashem*. He often mentioned the Rebbe's name with great respect 'I heard from the Rebbe, may he be well...' 'The Rebbe, may he be well said...' How good and how pleasurable it was for me to hear all this! Happy are we that we merited this. ►►►

## SEEING THEM OFF

Wednesday, Parshas Lech Lecha.

I have now arrived from the train station, to escort, together with the rest of *anash*, the Rebbe's son-in-law, the Rebbe's daughters, and grandson, on their way out to Berlin.

"How pleasant and sweet it was to see the honor and respect that was accorded to the Rebbe's young son-in-law. There are no words to describe the great name that he has acquired for himself during his recent trip here in our city.

It pains me greatly that the Rebbe never saw it, and will never see it, for whenever he is in the presence of the Rebbe, he nullifies himself as a flame before a torch. He is a crown of glory for the Rebbe *shlita*, and he will be able to pride himself with him, with Hashem's help, forever.

"Believe me dear Rebbe, I would not exaggerate if I said that I do not know him. His fear of heaven grows from hour to hour *mamash*, all quietly, without any external showing, all in an exalted manner.

I was informed that he fasts twice a week, learns much Chassidus, the Chassidus of the Rebbe *shlita* and of the Rebbe Rashab. *Halevay* that we should merit to hear him review the Rebbe's Chassidus every Shabbos...

Almost a year later, another batch of letters, this time written to the Frierdiker Rebbe, bring out the same message:

In the month of Av 5689 (תרפ"ט), the Frierdiker Rebbe embarked on a year-long journey, first traveling to Eretz Yisrael, and then moving on to the United States. When Tishrei 5690 (תר"ץ) approached, Reb Elya Chaim found himself spending Tishrei in Riga with the Frierdiker Rebbe's family, without the Frierdiker Rebbe, who was then in America. In a series of letters to the Frierdiker Rebbe in New York, he describes the events of Tishrei.

During the month of Tishrei Chassidim got a glimpse into the greatness of the Rebbe, who revealed himself ever so slightly, and farbrenged with the Chassidim, guiding them throughout the entire

month. Reb Elye Chaim's excitement gushes from his letters as he expresses his pain from being so distant from the Frierdiker Rebbe on one hand, and his excitement from watching the Rebbe and experiencing his leadership and spirituality, on the other. [See sidebar for parts of these letters].

## IN RIGA

When the Frierdiker Rebbe moved to Poland in 5693, Reb Elye Chaim remained behind in Riga, where he was one of the prominent Chassidim in the community.

During that period, Chassidim continued to daven in his home, with a *minyan* that was nicknamed "the Rebbe's *minyan*."

There was a young man, a *baal tzedakah*, who was in *aveilus* and davened at the *amud* during those prayers, but since the minyan began

**REB ITCHE  
DER MASMID  
OPENED  
THE ARON  
HAKODESH,  
TOOK OUT A  
SEFER TORAH,  
AND DECLARED:  
"WE HAVE  
THE ZECHUS  
TO SACRIFICE  
OUR LIVES  
AL KIDDUSH  
HASHEM,  
AND WE MUST  
THEREFORE BE  
HAPPY!"**

at ten-thirty in the morning, he threatened to daven in a different shul.

Reb Elye Chaim told him, "What is the difference between a stepson and a biological child? A son doesn't desert his father, even when his father hits him or chases him away, but a stepson might act differently.

"Similarly, we Chassidim often argue and yell, but the peace between us returns to its original state, and no one thinks of leaving.

"You however, act otherwise..."

When the Frierdiker Rebbe created *Achos Temimim* to educate and inspire the daughters of Chassidim, he appointed Reb Elye Chaim, along with Reb Mordechai Chafetz and Reb Avraham Eliyahu Asherov, to be the "*shloshes haro'im*" ("three leaders") of the Riga chapter.

## NAZI OCCUPATION

When the Nazis entered Riga, Reb Elye Chaim remained stranded in a death trap.



On Yud Kislev 5702, the Nazis conducted an *akztieh*.

Reb Elye Chaim's daughter related that when the Nazis knocked on the door, her father pushed his wife into the bathroom, where the Nazis didn't find her. Reb Elye Chaim himself was led away, although not before wrapping himself on his *kittel* and *tallis*.

The Nazis herded many Yidden into the shul, and gathered even more around the shul to watch the gruesome spectacle.

From outside, the Yidden saw how Reb Itche *der masmid* opened the *aron hakodesh*, took out a *sefer Torah*, and declared:

"We have the *zechus* to sacrifice our lives *al kiddush Hashem*, and we must therefore be happy!"

With that, he placed his hands on the shoulders of Reb Elye Chaim and Reb Chatche Feigin, and they began dancing to the tune of the *hakafos niggun*. While they were dancing, the Nazis burned the shul to the ground...

This description reached the Frierdiker Rebbe at the close of the war, when one of the spectators wrote the entire tale in a letter. Upon reading it, the Frierdiker Rebbe lost consciousness.

A difficult and tragic end to the life of a giant of a Chossid. The heartfelt letters he penned will forever give us a look into the occurrences of *Beis Chayeinu* in some of the most trying moments, as well as those of joyous

celebrations. His keen intuition made him one of the first Chassidim to catch an early glimpse of the Rebbe's bright light, and to realize what the future held in store for Lubavitch. In his own words:

"Don't I know that my destiny as well as that of my children to follow, are dependent on the ways of this praiseworthy young man? When Hashem will find his way pleasing, He will raise up the head of this *tzaddik* and even his enemies will make peace with him."

השם ינקום דמו.

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה. **1**

1. Kovetz Michtovim Tehilim
2. Zikaron Livnei Yisrael, page 97
3. The letters brought here are excerpts and translations, which do not do true justice to

the beauty of the original *Lashon Hakodesh*. Some of his letters have been published. See *Kovetz Lchizuk Hahiskashrus* issue 23 and 28, and the additions to *Likutei Dibburim - Lashon Hakodesh* vol. 5.

4. The following excerpts are based on the translation published in "The Heroic Struggle" by Kehot Publication Society, 1999 (pages 255 and on).

5. Reb Michoel Dvorkin preceded the Frierdiker Rebbe's arrival in Kostroma by a few days (See A Chassidisher Derher, Sivan 5776).

6. Interview with Kfar Chabad magazine issue #634

7. Some of the translations here are taken from "Chabad Revisited" by Rabbi Eli Rubin. For additional parts of the letter, see A Chassidisher Derher, Tishrei 5774 p. 16.

8. Presumably a reference to his prosecution at the hands of the communists in the USSR.

9. Regarding this meeting see the letter dated Friday of Parshas Pinchos 5683 (1923), printed in the Frierdiker Rebbe's *Igros Kodesh* vol. 15, page 30-2.



THE HOUSE WHERE THE FRIERIDKER REBBE RESIDED IN KOSTRAMA.



RIGA, LATVIA.



לזכות  
ח' מושקא בת גילה עלקא  
ואחותה  
מנוחה רחל בת גילה עלקא  
לרפואה שלימה וקרובה  
נדפס ע"י הוריהם  
הרה"ת ר' יוסף אליהו  
וזוגתו מרת גילה עלקא שיחיו  
אנדרוסיער



# On the Way

## ויעקב הלך לדרכו

וכן הי' גוהג הוד כ"ק אאמו"ר הרה"ק זצוקללה"ה  
נבג"מ זי"ע בהיותו בארצנו ליובאוויץ בקרב אחינו  
התמימים... אחרי הסעודה הגדולה הי' מתחיל לאמר,  
הנה עתה הגיע עת ויעקב הלך לדרכו, דאחרי העבודה  
חדש השביעי, הנה יעקב יו"ד עקב, הולך לדרכו  
בעבודה דתורה ומצוות דכל השנה...

...My father, the holy Rebbe [Rashab], when he  
was in our city of Lubavitch in the presence of our  
brethren, the *temimim*, after the grand *seudah* [on  
Simchas Torah], he began to say:

Now is the time of יעקב הלך לדרכו—Yaakov goes  
on his way.

After the *avodah* of the [festive] month of Tishrei,  
now Yaakov [the name corresponding to the lower  
level of our *neshamah*, as expressed in the name  
Yaakov], meaning "heel" must go on his way,  
serving Hashem with Torah and mitzvos through  
everyday life throughout the year...

(Igros Kodesh RaYyaTZ vol. 1 p. 194)

The month of Tishrei, chock-full of joy and  
inspiration, is now behind us. It is time for us to  
begin our everyday *avodah*.

It is now that the incredible feelings of elevation  
will be put to good use in carrying out our mission  
in this world, creating a *dira b'tachtonim*.

The Frierdiker Rebbe compared this notion to  
a businessman laying out his recently purchased  
merchandise:

"V'Yaakov *halach l'darko*; we must be sure that all  
the merchandise we acquired over the last fifty-odd  
days [since Rosh Chodesh Elul] should be unpacked  
and sold. From the *pesukim* on Rosh Hashanah and  
Aseres Yemei Teshuvah and the fasting on Yom  
Kippur; we all acquired this merchandise. Much like  
a businessman who purchases wares at the market  
and immediately sells them..."<sup>1</sup>

### The Announcement

"In Lubavitch on Motzei Simchas Torah, they  
used to announce 'V'Yaakov *halach l'darko*..."



A fact repeated by the Rebbe many, many times towards the end of the month of Tishrei.

On one occasion the Rebbe even specified that the announcement was specifically made loudly and for all to hear.<sup>2</sup>

Likewise, the Rebbe often made a similar announcement at the conclusion of the month of Tishrei, either on his own, or by having someone else do it.<sup>3</sup>

Over the years, the Rebbe expounded on the meaning of this quote and its application to the post-Yom Tov *avodah* for each of us. The Rebbe even explained each word of the quote and how they are specifically connected to this *avodah*:

עקב—The name Yaakov, from the word עקב (heel), symbolizes the lower level of our *neshamah*. It is our connection with the physical world and how we refine it. But, a “*yud*” is added at the beginning of the name, symbolizing our connection to Hashem’s name and our ability to connect the highest levels of *Elokus* with the physical world.

הלך—The word means “going,” symbolizing that we must continually progress in our *avodah* and not remain stagnant.

לדרכו—*Derech* is a “road” that connects two separate places; it can even connect the furthest corners of a country with the palace of the king himself. In our instance, after the *yomim tovim* of Tishrei, we connect our everyday lives in the mundane world to Hashem Himself, making a true *dira b’tachtonim*.<sup>4</sup>

### כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר יעורר רחמים

ידוע המנהג שבמוצאי שמח"ת מכריזים: "ויעקב הלך לדרכו" - לעבודה דכל השנה כולה, ובפרט לעבודה דימי החורף כו', וכהמשך הכתוב: "ויפגעו בו מלאכי אלקים", והיינו, שהמלאכים עוזרים ומסייעים ליהודי בעבודתו (אף שמקנאים בו כו').

וכדי שתהי' העבודה בשמחה, שאז היא בנקל ובמהירות יותר - הנה בשעת חלוקת "כוס של ברכה", יחלקו גם "משקה" מהתועודות זו לכל האורחים השבים למקומותיהם, וכל אחד יזכיר את מקום עבודתו, כדי ש"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר יעורר עליו רחמים רבים, שתהי' עבודתו בשמחה ובטוב לבב, ובאופן דמוסיף והולך ואור.

(ש"פ בראשית - התועודות ב' - ה'תשכ"א)

## Stages

The original source for connecting the *possuk* of ויעקב הלך לדרכו with the post-*yomim tovim avodah* is in the famous *maamar* by the Rebbe Maharash known as *תרל"ז*.<sup>5</sup> There, the Rebbe Maharash applies the *possuk* to the *avodah* following the *teshuvah* of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

In Lubavitch, this *possuk* was applied to the *avodah* of after Simchas Torah.

The Rebbe explains that there are several stages in the *avodah* of ויעקב הלך לדרכו.

One level is right after Yom Kippur. The *Yomim Nora'im* are a time when the unity of all the Jewish people shines. Rosh Hashanah is the day when אתם נצבים היום כולכם—all the Jewish people stand together before Hashem. Yom Kippur is known as “אחת בשנה” the one, singular day of the year, when all external elements melt away and the internal unity surfaces.

After Yom Kippur, we each start doing *avodah* on our own; building our own sukkah, acquiring our own lulav, and so on. That’s why we say ויעקב הלך לדרכו—each on our own way.

But in a deeper sense, the unity of the Jewish people is still apparent through Sukkos and Simchas Torah. That’s why another level of this *avodah* of ויעקב הלך לדרכו is attained immediately following Simchas Torah.

And in an even deeper sense, since the festive mood is still apparent until Shabbos Bereishis and the end of the month of Tishrei, we can apply yet another level of ויעקב הלך לדרכו to the beginning of the month of Cheshvan.<sup>6</sup>

At times, the Rebbe kept the theme of ויעקב הלך לדרכו going even further into the month of Cheshvan.

Most notably, the Rebbe dedicated many of the *sichos* in early 5738 to this theme, expounding each week on another level and another take on this special *avodah*.

[These *sichos* were delivered from the Rebbe’s room on Motzei Shabbos, transmitted live by speakers to the main shul, after the Rebbe had a heart attack on Shmini Atzeres. Later, they were *mugah* by the Rebbe and printed (along with the *maamarim*), in *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20. This collection comprises a unique step-by-step build up of the Rebbe’s take on the subject of ויעקב הלך לדרכו.]



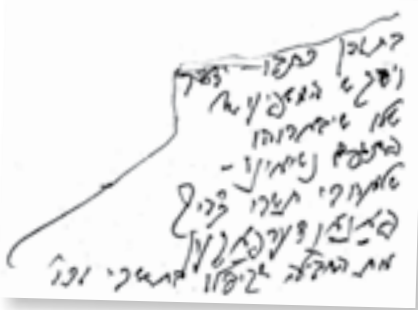
THE REBBE SEES OFF THE VISITORS FROM ABROAD  
AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE MONTH OF TISHREI,  
ROSH CHODESH CHESHVAN 5736.



LEVI FREIDIN vga JEM, 143284

## WHAT'S NOW?

This *ksav yad kodesh* was written by the Rebbe in response to a *bochur* who spent Tishrei with the Rebbe, and at the end of the month, he wrote to the Rebbe asking for guidance as to how to continue growing in *avodas Hashem*.



בתוכן כתבו - ידבר ויבקש המשפיע ש' שלו שיבארוהו  
פתגם נשיאינו - שלאחרי תשרי צריך פאנאנדערפאקען את  
החבילה שקיבלו בתשרי וכו'.

**...Regarding what you write - you should speak with your *mashpia* and ask him to explain to you the phrase from our Rabbeim—that after Tishrei, one must unpack the “bundle” [i.e. spiritual *hashpa'a*] that one received during Tishrei, etc.**

## Spread the Unity

In addition to the spiritual energy that we experience during Tishrei, we also have the advantage of being together with many other Yidden as we celebrate the *yomim tovim*. Especially in the time of the *Beis Hamikdash* when Yidden were *oleh regel* to Yerushalayim, or in our time when so many Chassidim join together to be in the Rebbe's presence for this festive month.

In addressing the theme of *לדרכו*, the Rebbe often explained that when we each reach our home after being together with so many other Yidden, that's when the real *avodah* begins.

The Rebbe explains:

Each and every one of us experiences *לדרכו* in our daily *avodah*. When we wake up in the morning we begin our day with davening and learning, then we go out into the world. This, in a sense is *לדרכו*.

On a more general scale, it is the time of year after Simchas Torah, when we get back into our daily lives.

And for those who spent Tishrei not in their homes but went elsewhere for the *yomim tovim*, their *avodah* of *לדרכו* begins when they reach home after Simchas Torah.

Both those who begin the *avodah* immediately following Simchas Torah as well as those who begin their *avodah* later, upon reaching home, must take with them the *simchah* from Simchas Torah and keep it going with them on their “way.”

## What to Do?

So what is the actual *avodah* of *לדרכו*?

The Rebbe explains that during Tishrei there is a sense of oneness between all Yidden, starting with Rosh Hashanah and ending with Simchas Torah. Hashem's Oneness permeates all of the Jewish people through all their various levels, thereby bringing out a sense of unity amongst the Jewish people themselves.

But the point of this unity is for everyone to go back to their respective places and spread Torah and mitzvos to each and every corner of the world, and to spread Chassidus to the furthest corners of the “outside”—<sup>8</sup>.

## LEFTOVERS ON THE TABLE

Up until the day of Zayin Cheshvan, we need not be reminded about Tishrei. A reminder is only needed in a situation where the object is not near you on the table. But in our situation, the “leftovers” of Simchas Torah are still on the table! In front of his eyes, a Yid can still see the joy he had while dancing on Simchas Torah. It is not a mere memory; it is an image that evokes a deep sense of yearning. “Where is that amazing feeling I had while dancing and rejoicing on Simchas Torah?” the Yid asks himself emotionally...

(Sicha 7 Cheshvan 5746)

## Maintain the Connection

But where do we get the strength to carry out this *avodah* on a day-to-day basis, being engaged in the physical world as we are?

The Rebbe explains:

The power for each of us to go out on our own way—לדרכו—comes from our *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe.

The life and sustenance for all the limbs of the body come from the head. It is of utmost importance

that a healthy connection is maintained between the head and all the limbs of the rest of the body in order to keep up this flow of life.

So too, we must keep up a healthy connection with our “head”—the Rebbe, ensuring that we have the proper *chayus* to do our *avodah*. Our *hiskashrus*



THE REBBE DISTRIBUTES DOLLARS TO THE ‘TANKISTIN’ AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE “FAREWELL” FARBRENGEN, 30 TISHREI 5736.



to the Rebbe is what gives us the power to fulfill the *avodah* of ויעקב הלך לדרכו throughout each and every day of the year.<sup>9</sup> **T**

1. Sefer Hasichos 5699 p. 313.

2. Sicha 4 Cheshvan 5721; (Toras Menachem vol. 29 p. 18).

3. See Sichos Kodesh 5731 vol. 1 p. 174.

4. See Likutei Sichos vol. 20 p. 269; vol. 10 p. 195 et. al.

5. Perek 96; quoted from a *maamar* by the Alter Rebbe.

6. Likutei Sichos ibid. P. 266.

7. Sicha 4 Cheshvan 5721; (Toras Menachem vol. 29 p. 191).

8. Sicha Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan 5746; (Hisvaaduyos 5746 vol. 1 p. 469).

9. Yom Simchas Torah 5711; (Toras Menachem vol. 2 p. 48).

## THE ENERGY IS HERE

In *yechidus* in Cheshvan of 5727, the Rebbe directed a *bochur* on how to properly bank on the precious time he spent in the Rebbe's presence, especially during Tishrei, using it as an inspiration to do his *avodah* throughout the year.

Selections of a *yechidus* about “unpacking” the acquired merchandise in the spirit of ויעקב הלך לדרכו:

*S.B.V. asked the Rebbe for a bracha to be able to return to the Rebbe's presence very soon (after spending over a year in the “kevutza” program). The Rebbe responded:*

To come back again? First you must unpack the merchandise you acquired here. Some of which you know about, and even more of which you don't realize you acquired. With Hashem's help you were able to be here for more than a year, including two months of Tishrei!

...As we spoke on Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah, one can acquire so much merchandise when here; during the year you must unpack and open it up.

You were here for a while in order to gain strength, meant to last for a long while afterwards, even for a few years. It should stay with you for the entire trip from here back to your father's house in Eretz Yisroel.

You have indeed received a lot. Some of it you see now, and some of it is currently not noticeable, but it will come out in due time. In fact, the hidden [*kochos*] you received are of even higher caliber than the visible ones.

You must utilize the *kochos* you received here, at least partially. Let it affect you to be a *lamdan*, diligent in your studies, and to serve Hashem with all the qualities expected of a *Tomim*.

(Kovetz HaYechidus; Vaad Hatmimim, Tishrei 5771)



LEVI FREIDIN via JEM, 143137



# A Job for the Chassidim

Jealousy, hatred and misdirected anger is what caused the Russian peasants to turn on their Jewish neighbors.

The summer of 5639 (תרל"ט) saw great unrest as the successful Jewish lumber merchants were being attacked and abused by the locals. It was no great surprise that the government did not come to their rescue.

Throughout the following winter, the Rebbe Maharash made a number of trips to Petersburg and Moscow in order to resolve these communal matters.

When he realized that the officials were not interested in helping, the

Rebbe Maharash decided to take drastic measures, and right after Shavuot he travelled to Germany and France to rally help from abroad. Upon his return to Russia, he went directly to Petersburg to meet with many influential ministers.

However, he soon realized that something had changed. In the past he had always been welcomed warmly and graciously, but this time they were being openly hostile and very uncooperative.

Not quite ready to give up, the Rebbe Maharash called an urgent meeting of the influential and wealthy Jews in Petersburg and suggested that two

people should volunteer to join him in approaching the interior minister and request that he arrange a meeting with the Czar.

The plan was unanimously accepted by everyone but it fell short because there were no two people ready to volunteer themselves.

Slowly, one by one, the truth started coming out. The Russian government was furious at the Rebbe Maharash because he had the nerve to involve foreign nations in their private business and embarrass them in so disgraceful a manner.

One of those present at the meeting repeated what he had heard from reliable sources. Apparently the assistant minister of foreign affairs had said to the finance minister that, "Ever since the 'tzaddik' Schneerson from Lubavitch visited Germany and France

and met with some of the most influential bankers and investors there, they threatened to halt all business dealings with Russia until the Jews were treated fairly."

The Rebbe Maharash was unnerved when hearing this and he calmly replied, "I am already aware of this because Professor Bertonson told me about this. He also told me that there are those who felt I should be punished for my actions. To this I replied, 'Am I any better than my holy predecessors? At a time like this I don't think about myself.'"

In reality, the Rebbe Maharash realized that his trip had indeed been successful and with a bit of pressure things started moving.

He concluded the meeting by saying, "We now have to meet with the interior minister himself

**IF YOU WEALTHY GENTLEMAN  
ARE MORE CONCERNED ABOUT  
YOUR OWN MONEY AND  
SKIN, I WILL TAKE TWO OF MY  
CHASSIDIM ALONG WITH ME**

לע"נ  
הרה"ת ר' רפאל משה הכהן ע"ה  
שפערלין  
נלב"ע י"א מר-חשוון ה'תשנ"ה  
ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.  
נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו



## DOES THE GOVERNMENT REALLY THINK WE WILL WATCH THE BLOOD OF OUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS BEING SPILLED FREELY, OUR POSSESSIONS LOOTED AND THEN BOW DOWN AND KISS THE HANDS OF THE PERPETRATORS?!

and request an audience with the Czar. If you wealthy gentleman are more concerned about your own money and skin, I will take two of my Chassidim along with me.”

It took about a week for the Rebbe Maharash to receive an appointment to meet with the minister. The two Chassidim who were to accompany him were Reb Chaim Masseyev and Reb Nochum Hermant, and they later relayed what had occurred.

When the Rebbe Maharash walked into the meeting, the minister greeted him with honor and one could tell that he was visibly impacted by the Rebbe's presence. Despite the respectful reception, the minister rebuked him for taking internal matters to foreigners and scolded him that he was deserving

of punishment as severe as those who rebel and revolt. The government was very displeased that he was mixing into their affairs and trying to manipulate them.

The Rebbe Maharash didn't flinch in the face of the harsh remarks and he replied:

“Does the government really think we will watch the blood of our sons and daughters being spilled freely, our possessions looted and then bow down and kiss the hands of the perpetrators?!

“No! We are upstanding citizens of this land and we have fulfilled our obligation to the government both with our bodies and money like all the other inhabitants. The degradation and humiliation that we are forced into ghettos and prohibited from settling

wherever we want is more than enough, and now the authorities are supporting the activities of criminals that are out to harm our wives, sons, daughters and ourselves, like a nation without any protection. We, like all residents, demand protection and safety.

“The reason I came here was to inform you, in my name and in the name of all the Jews, residents of this land, that I want an audience with the King, to relay to His Majesty our situation and to hear from His Excellency if we have been sentenced to death at the hands of these bandits. The promises and assurances of the ministers are worthless in our eyes and in the name of justice and righteousness we are turning to you to make this happen.”

The minister was visibly affected and shocked by the passionate words he had just heard from the Rebbe; words that were coming from the depths of his heart. The minister could not

talk and simply ended the meeting by saying that he will have an answer in the next few days and he hopes it will end well.

About ten days passed and word came from the minister of the interior that he should come back. The minister told the Rebbe Maharash that to arrange an audience with the Czar was very difficult. Regarding the situation of the Yidden, however, the government was stating with certainty that from here and on no evil shall befall any of them, anywhere they might live.

Sure enough an edict was passed on to the officials in each district. It warned that if they found anyone stirring up the peace or inflicting physical damage on any citizen that individual would be punished severely.

For the Yidden, they were able to breathe a sigh of relief! **1**

1. Adapted from Sefer Hamaamorim of the Friediker Rebbe, 5710 pages 198-199.



נדפס לזכות  
ר' יצחק בנימין וזוגתו מרת ח' רחל  
קאמען  
לאות הוקרה על ההכנסת אורחים  
וביתם הפתוח לרווחה

נדפס ע"י  
הרה"ת ר' צבי הירש  
וזוגתו מרת חנה רחל שיחיו  
נאוואק  
Chabad on Campus  
Rohr Center for Jewish Life at  
Washington University in S. Louis



The story of the  
Rebbe's unwavering  
effort to uphold  
the neighborhood  
of nessi doreinu—  
Crown Heights. The  
place where Hashem  
commands his  
blessing.

In preparing this  
article we were  
greatly assisted by  
Rabbis Michoel  
Seligson, Yosef  
Katzman, and Yossel  
Bar-Chaim



**שם צוה ה'  
את הברכה**





THE "FARBAND" BUILDING, LATER PURCHASED BY TZACH.

"Thousands of Yidden lined Eastern Parkway as far as the eye could see on Rosh Hashanah afternoon" recounts Rabbi Menachem Wolff in his diary of Tishrei 5725 with the Rebbe. "Relaxing in front of their homes after finishing their Yom Tov meals."

Although these Crown Heights residents were not Lubavitcher Chassidim, many fondly looked forward to the yearly *tashlich* procession that the Rebbe would lead down Eastern Parkway toward the Botanical Gardens.

Dressed in their Yom Tov finery, they rose in respect when the Rebbe drew near, many wishing the Rebbe "Ah gut Yom Tov!"

For those who did not experience it, it is hard to imagine how diverse and expansive the Jewish community of Crown Heights once was.

## THE COMMUNITY THAT WAS

"All my neighbors were *frumme* Yidden of assorted backgrounds," muses Rabbi Yossel Katzman, who grew up in Crown Heights in the early 5720s.

Although a few Lubavitchers lived in Crown Heights to be in close proximity to the Rebbe, the

surrounding areas was once shared with many different *kehilos*.

From the 5700s through the 5720s the borders of the Jewish community of Crown Heights ranged from Rochester Avenue to the east until Washington Avenue to the west, and extended as far south as Linden Boulevard and as far north as Atlantic Avenue.

Over 40 shuls of all types dotted the flourishing neighborhood. These included shuls as large as the impressive Young Israel congregation on Eastern Parkway and Albany Ave. (subsequently replaced with condos) and Chassidishe *shtibelach* like Viznitz (now Beis Binyomin) and Satmar (now "Shain's Shul").

Belz, Gur, Sadigur, Skver, Skulen, Sosnowic, Spinka and many others had shuls in Crown Heights for their members who resided there, and even a few Chassidishe rebbes were settled in Crown Heights at the time.

A number of Litvishe Shuls were also located in Crown Heights, including the Agudas Yisroel Shul on Crown Street, the Novominsker Beis Medrash on Carroll St. and Schenectady Avenue (now Kehal Chassidim), and others.

The building that now houses Oholei Torah Elementary and *yeshiva gedola* once served as a Conservative temple, the largest in all of Brooklyn. Alongside these shuls were tens of yeshivos and *mikvaos*. Bobov for example, had a large campus housing a yeshiva, shul and *mikveh* on S. Marks Place.

Kosher grocery stores and other Jewish businesses were found throughout Crown Heights, some in areas you would least expect these days. Utica Avenue was home to a kosher pizza store, Meal Mart, candy store, Flohr's Judaica and much more.

## FEARFUL FLIGHT

The Crown Heights of then, which was calm and *heimish*, was abruptly shaken up around the end of 5725. What was perhaps the scheme of some self-serving real estate brokers, caused the majority of the neighborhood's Jewish residents to flee, and quickly changing it to a predominantly low-income African-American neighborhood.

Initially, just a handful of Yidden sold their homes to non-Jews, acting on the rumor that a low-income populace would soon dominate the neighborhood and cause a rise in crime and the price of real-estate to drop. Taking the advice of the brokers, these Yidden sold their homes to African Americans. Almost overnight, this became a negative trend.

In droves, Yidden sold their homes to the first buyer and rushed to move elsewhere. The *frumme* Yidden moved to neighborhoods such as Boro Park and Williamsburg, whereas the less religious Jews moved further out to Queens and Long Island.

This story was nothing new for Jewish communities in North America. In many metropolitan areas, Jewish communities would settle in part of a city for a span of 30-40 years,



and invest heavily in building a Jewish infrastructure.

This wouldn't last long, and soon enough the Jewish community would collectively decide that it was no longer safe to remain in this neighborhood, they would swiftly move out, often leaving behind huge structures, the elderly, the sick and the poor.

Closer to Crown Heights, this had just taken place in the Brownsville and East Flatbush sections of Brooklyn, and many of those residents moved to Crown Heights.

Now the table had turned and Crown Heights was rapidly being emptied of its Jewish residents. Taking their places were multitudes of non-Jewish immigrants, many of whom were uneducated and unemployed. Shuls were abandoned and soon turned into churches, and crime abounded in the area.

## BRAVING THE STORM

By 5729 (1969) almost all other Jews outside of Lubavitch had left the neighborhood. Even a number of Lubavitch families had moved to Boro Park, under the impression that Lubavitch would soon follow suit.

Those remaining in Crown Heights were subject to harassment and often violence from their new "neighbors."

The young children playing in the yard of Lubavitcher Yeshiva at Bedford Avenue and Dean Street were often attacked during recess by lawless punks who plagued the streets. At Oholei Torah, located on Eastern Parkway and Buffalo Avenue, the children were being tormented as well.

Business owners were afraid to open their businesses too early in the morning. After dark, the streets of Crown Heights became inhospitable. Few wanted to take the chance of running into the criminals and gangs that roamed the neighborhood.

The police did little to stop the danger for their Lubavitch constituents, and the cries of help to local politicians fell mostly on deaf ears.

Only one voice rose to address the gloomy circumstances, and only one individual insisted that a completely different approach be taken.

## NO NEED TO PANIC

Years before the Rebbe's campaign to save the Crown Heights neighborhood, the Rebbe addressed the issue in a letter. In response to a private inquiry of a family who wished to sell their home on New York Avenue, reasoning that "a colored family has moved in nearby..." the Rebbe advised that they may sell their house, but was sure to bring an important matter to their attention:

"You must tell your mother that she has no need to panic from the fact that a colored family moved in nearby. They too are people with whom one can share a neighborhood. On the contrary: there are also white people that are not of the best nature..."

(Igros Kodesh vol. 6 p. 298)

## DEADLY DISEASE

The Rebbe publicly addressed this saga of Jews fleeing their communities at the farbrengen of Acharon Shel Pesach 5729. Later, the Rebbe was *magiha* that portion of the farbrengen and requested that it be published:<sup>1</sup>

*"There is a phenomenon that has recently become widespread, similar to a disease, among bnei Yisroel, to abandon Jewish neighborhoods. As a result, the homes are being sold to non-Jews. More so, the shuls and batei midrash are being sold, etc. By extension this brings into doubt and is in fact destroying the parnassah of many Yidden."*

The Rebbe continued:

*Truthfully, this matter should have been solved through the community askanim and the rabbonim. It is not my role to give rulings in these areas... however at this point I must announce my stance publicly and its basis in a clear ruling in Shulchan Aruch.*

Here the Rebbe went on to discuss at length, through a collection of *halachos* and *maamarei Chazal*, why according to *halacha* it is forbidden for a Jew to sell his home to a non-Jew when the sale brings inevitable



LEVI FREIDIN via JEW, 140816

negative effect, especially on the poor, sick and elderly.

All the more so, when every home in a Jewish community that is sold to a non-Jew will impact all other Yidden in the surrounding neighborhoods!

“Only through maintaining and building up the neighborhood,” stated the Rebbe, “can we avoid the danger of the damage that has been done.” The Rebbe emphasized how one could see a clear example from the communities of Williamsburg and Washington Heights, which remained steadfast in this strategy and did not allow their neighborhoods to be taken over, and they were in fact successful!

## IS IT DANGEROUS?

The Rebbe continued in the *sicha* to refute the claim that if a Jewish neighborhood becomes a dangerous area, people needed to leave and the above mentioned *halachos* did not apply:

1. It is obvious that through every additional house that a Jew sells, the strength of the Yidden in the area is weakened, causing greater vulnerability. Essentially, one who sells his home is creating the danger.
2. It is also clear that only a small percentage can move out to another neighborhood, however the majority, and especially the poor, sick and elderly will not be able to move.
3. The only matter that is questionable is whether they will be helped through moving to another neighborhood. Even that is not guaranteed, and in fact it has happened on many occasions that people who abandoned the previous neighborhood, moved to a new one, only to be met by the same form of danger and terror. (Among other examples,



LEVI FREDIN via JEM, 130536

it seems that the Rebbe was referring to those who had left Crown Heights and moved to Canarsie, which shortly thereafter also became a crime-ridden neighborhood.)

## THE BOTTOM LINE

The Rebbe ended the *sicha* with the following conclusions:

1. Those who move from Jewish communities like Crown Heights are damaging the neighborhood as a whole, and are impacting all other Jewish communities across the globe, where people will realize that this is a way to take advantage of a weakness among Yidden.
2. Aside for being prohibited by *halacha*, it is also foolish to move away from an established

community. Instead, the focus is to be on building and expanding the community.

3. Those who focus on maintaining these communities will be rewarded with abundant *schar*.

The Rebbe followed these conclusions by saying:

*“If after all that has been stated, one is ready to disregard all of these concerns and still sell his home, he should take a moment to imagine that he was an individual residing in a community of tens of thousands of Yidden, and that he was told that his neighbor was selling his home under the above mentioned circumstances. Think to yourself honestly, whether you would like this decision or not. When you have made your earnest decision, be sure to follow the Torah’s rule (and not just a rule but “כל התורה כולה”): Do not do unto your fellow that which you dislike...*



7 CHESHVAN 5748, LEVI FREIDIN 1/4 JEM, 2020



## SELFISH BEHAVIOR

The Rebbe mentioned a story of an individual who had sold his home to a non-Jew and rushed to move out of Crown Heights. Soon he discovered that the new neighborhood he had moved to was no better.

The Rebbe asked him whether he had told others in Crown Heights about his mistake so that they not end up in the same rut that he was in. He responded that he hadn't because he was afraid that if the truth would become known then the real estate rates in the area he had just moved to would plummet.

Commenting on the absurdity of this story the Rebbe spoke strongly: "This behavior is dangerous to the public both *b'ruchniyus* and *b'gashmiyus*!"

Perhaps instead of leaving to other communities, the Rebbe said, do what has been done in other places, where not only did people not leave, but new buildings were built and many Yidden successfully moved there!

*"In the end, those who remain here and those who will continue to uphold these neighborhoods will receive revealed and bountiful brachos, and they will also*

*be responsible for raising the pride of Yidden here and elsewhere in the world where they reside."*

Because in today's age, explained the Rebbe, whatever takes place here impacts elsewhere in the world. Therefore all we have spoken today will impact that the settlements of Eretz Yisroel will not be taken away from Yidden, and is even relevant to the Yidden in Melbourne and in London.

## THE OTHERS

One place, among others, that this *sicha* was published in, was in the the journal of Agudas Horabbonim known as "*Hapardes*." In the next issue, a strongly supportive letter from Reb Moshe Feinstein was published, who left no doubts that he clearly agreed that it was forbidden for Yidden to move away from Jewish Neighborhoods because of the ramifications it would cause. "I agree with the Rebbe. Had he not written already on this subject, I would have written almost the same thing on my own. But now that the Rebbe has given his opinion, I can only say that this is the truth and it needs to be publicized..."<sup>2</sup>

## THE MACCABEES

Crown Heights quickly turned from a nice neighborhood to a soft territory for crime. People were being robbed, beaten, and even murdered.

The crime hit close to home—an attempted attack took place when a Lubavitcher woman did not close the door of her home in order to watch her children playing in the yard.

Soon, a strong force emerged to keep Crown Heights safe, led by an individual by the name of Shmuel Schrage.

In an interview with JEM's My Encounter team, his wife, Mrs. Rose Schrage, recalled:

"My husband, Rabbi Samuel (Shmuel) Schrage, was a community activist in Brooklyn in the 1960s and 1970s.

He became involved because yeshiva boys in Crown Heights were being beaten up by gangs coming in from Bedford Stuyvesant, and a Jewish woman was attacked by a knife-wielding man in her own home. My husband went to ask for police protection from the Mayor, who said there was not enough police to go around. And that is when my



## FAR REACHING EFFECT

The Rebbe explained that ultimately, leaving Crown Heights can even have ramifications in *shidduchim*:

*"When you will tell your daughter that she should marry a bochur who has a beard, she will respond: 'If you are afraid of Goyim, why did you move to another neighborhood so that your former Jewish neighbors are forced to live with Goyim?' The explanation must be that you only felt compelled to ignore this result because you were living in a dangerous area.*

*"The message she will take from that is that whoever is mightier will have more power over others. Therefore instead of marrying someone who will study in kollel, she would rather marry someone with more money, or without a beard, or a better politician—because with the choice of either politics or Shulchan Aruch, her father chose to behave according to politics!"*

husband started the Maccabees, a neighborhood patrol group, which became quite famous and which was written up in The New York Times.

The Maccabees, most of them Chassidic Jews, rode around Crown Heights six to a car, equipped with nothing more than radios and large flashlights. If they saw an incident, they alerted the police and aided the victim until the authorities came.

Often they would use their vehicle to give rides to individuals needing to get to places in Crown Heights after dark, so they could avoid running into danger.

Still, my husband received a lot of criticism at the time. Mainly this was because the idea of neighborhood watchmen was so original, and some people didn't understand it—they thought the volunteers were vigilantes who took the law into their own hands. A lot of this criticism came from local Jews.

So my husband went to the Rebbe. He said, "I can take the criticism from the outside but I can't take the criticism from my own people. That really hurts. I would like to disband the Maccabees."

The Rebbe said to him, "Don't disband—make it stronger!"

My husband followed the Rebbe's advice and eventually he became the head of New York City's Neighborhood Action Program. He also got involved in politics. Mayor John Lindsay appointed him to the New York City Youth Board, and Mayor Abraham Beame retained him in that position.

With time, my husband became quite famous for his activism—he was called Mr. Crime Fighter—and he became a kind of folk hero. Because of this, many politicians who were running for office wanted his support."

## TRAGIC ENDING

Rabbi Schrage was himself a victim of the lawlessness in Crown Heights, when he suffered a heart attack just hours before the Shabbos of his son's bar mitzvah.<sup>3</sup>

Mrs. Schrage phoned 911 and Rabbi Bistritzky from the Hatzalah organization in Crown Heights. The Hatzalah at that time relied solely on man power, without an ambulance at their disposal. The local paramedics who arrived with the city ambulance refused to give Reb Shmuel the



RABBI YEHUDA CEITLIN

THE NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE AND THE NEW YORK TIMES REPORT ON SHMUEL SCHRAGE'S MACCABEES PATROL.

HE SAID, "THAT REALLY HURTS. I WOULD LIKE TO DISBAND THE MACCABEES." THE REBBE SAID TO HIM, "DON'T DISBAND—MAKE IT STRONGER!"

RABBI YEHUDA CEITLIN



INSIDE A MACCABEES PATROL CAR.



adequate care he needed, slurring anti-semitic comments, while the police stood idly by, fearing to get involved.

Alas Shmuel was *niftar* on the way to the hospital, on 11 Teves 5737.

The tragic death—which traumatized everyone that heard about this senseless wrongdoing—was accepted with total shock and great pain by all who knew him and by the many who respected him in the neighborhood and in the city.

The Rebbe personally came out for the *levaya* and instructed what text should be written on his *matzeiva*. After the *shloshim*, the Rebbe had a extensive *yechidus* with Mrs. Schrage and her children, giving them encouragement and special *brachos*.

As a result of this tragic incident, in his memory the Schrage family arranged for the first Hatzalah ambulance in Crown Heights.<sup>4</sup>

## SIMCHAS IN CROWN HEIGHTS

At the Shabbos farbrengen of Parshas Vayeshev 5730,<sup>5</sup> it was announced that a fundraising event would be held in Crown Heights that

Motzei Shabbos to benefit the Chadrei Torah Or.

In the *sicha* that followed the Rebbe suddenly began to dwell on this event and encouraged everyone present to support it:

*"They deserve a special yasher koach for planning their event in the neighborhood of Crown Heights 'section,' upon which Hashem has commanded his brachos... They will therefore have tremendous hatzlacha.*

*"We should learn from them to make all simchas, whether personal or public, in this neighborhood. Weddings, bar mitzvahs, t'naim, etc.*

*This is not a command, chas veshalom, rather a suggestion through which one can have tremendous hatzlacha, because it is here that Hashem has commanded his brachos—and so may it be!*

In numerous other instances the Rebbe expressed a desire that *simchas* specifically take place in Crown Heights.

On one occasion, earlier on in 5729, the Rebbe replied to a letter from Rabbi Avrohom Gerlitzky in which he notified the Rebbe that his wedding would take place at the

Simcha Hall of Young Israel in Crown Heights:

ת"ח ת"ח על הבשור"ט, ואזכיר עה"צ שמהם יראו רבים ויסדרו שמחות בקראונהייטס - שכונה. ואפילו הדדים (לע"ע) בשכונות אחרות.

*"Thank you for the good news. I will mention at the tziyon that many others should learn from you and have their weddings in the neighborhood of Crown Heights. And even those who (for the time being) live in other neighborhoods."*

Ten years later in 5739, Reb Gershon Ber Jacobson, publisher of the *Algemeiner Journal*, asked the Rebbe for a *haskama* to have the upcoming wedding of his daughter in the hall at the Brooklyn Museum (outside of the frum community of Crown Heights), as for various reasons he was unable to use a regular Crown Heights hall.

The Rebbe wrote to him in response:

באם יעשה שלא בשכונה זו, ח"ו, הרי זה יהי נגד כל ההשתדלות בביסוס השכונה, וכשנעשה ע"י עורך העיתון ה"ז "נגד מיט א טראסק" וכ' כפשוט, וכיון שעשיתי בשכונה זו מוכרחת בודאי ימצא פתרון טוב.

*"If you will not make [the wedding] in this neighborhood, chas veshalom, this will counter all the efforts in establishing*

**"THEY DESERVE A SPECIAL YASHER KOACH FOR PLANNING THEIR EVENT IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF CROWN HEIGHTS...THEY WILL THEREFORE HAVE TREMENDOUS HATZLACHAH."**



IN THIS KSAV YAD KODESH, THE REBBE THANKS FOR THE GOOD NEWS OF A WEDDING TO BE HELD LOCALLY IN CROWN HEIGHTS.



the neighborhood, and if this is done by a publisher of a newspaper, that will be “a thunderous opposition” etc. as is obvious. And because making the wedding in this neighborhood is so vital, surely you will find a good solution.”

## DON'T LOSE FOCUS

A year passed since the Rebbe had spoken openly for the first time about the grave situation in Crown Heights.

A number of families (including the Bryski and Keller families), who were then living in Boro Park, decided to move to Crown Heights, shaken up by the urgency that the Rebbe expressed about strengthening the neighborhood of Crown Heights. But aside from that, little had been done to correct the situation.

The Rebbe addressed this at the farbrengen of Acharon Shel Pesach 5730,<sup>6</sup> expressing dismay that instead of focusing on what needed to be done for the good of the community as a whole, people were more concerned about their status, which resulted in strong differences of opinion and *dinei Torah*.

The Rebbe requested of the Chassidim that they focus their energies primarily on what would be to the benefit of Crown Heights and only afterward on the gain



of the *mosdos* they had personal responsibility toward, and only after that toward personal gain.

“If we join and work on this in unison,” stated the Rebbe, “then the *Aibershter* will respond by providing *hatzlacha* in strengthening the entire



YOUNG ISRAEL OF CROWN HEIGHTS.



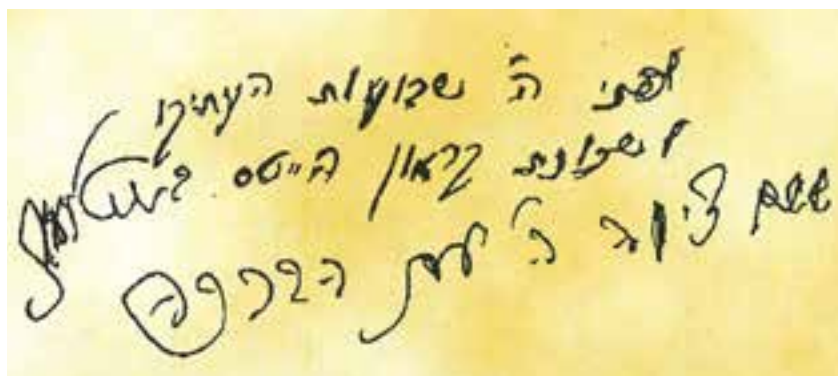
THE CHASIDEI VIZNITZ SHUL IN CROWN HEIGHTS.



THE KARASTIRER MIKVAH.



ANSHEI RUBASHOV (GELERNTER) SHUL.



שם ציוה ה' את הברכה

Crown Heights—not just two or three streets.”

The Rebbe concluded the farbrengen happily noting that day camps had been opened in Crown Heights for the first time. The Rebbe encouraged that they always be full of campers, even from other neighborhoods, as long as it wouldn't harm the organizations in those areas.

## KEEPING THE SHULS OPEN

One way through which Lubavitchers endeavored to salvage the shuls that were quickly disappearing from the neighborhood was by many of *anash* making an effort to

daven and learn at a *shtibel* that was dwindling.

On a number of occasions the Rebbe encouraged that Chassidim do so. One Rosh Hashanah the Rebbe instructed Chassidim to fan out to the shuls in the neighborhood to ensure that they have a *minyan*, and come to 770 later for *tekios*. When the Rebbe heard that a shul on Union Street and Troy Avenue did not have a *minyan* consistently and was on the verge of closing, he stated that if others won't daven there, then he would go there himself.

Rabbi Michoel Seligson shared how he would go with his father, Dr. Avrohom Abba Seligson, to keep the *minyan* going at the Halayner Shtibel,

which was located on the corner of Eastern Parkway and Schenectady Avenue.

In many cases the Lubavitchers who came to daven there in fact kept these shuls open.

One example was Rabbi Mordechai Harlig, father of Reb Mayer Harlig, who had a devoted following and a large shul and Mikvah located on the corner of President Street and Rogers Avenue. Like many other local Jews, his congregants began moving out of Crown Heights and begged him to come with. Some of the more wealthy members even promised that they would build him a shul in their new neighborhood. He asked the Rebbe whether he should follow his community or not, and the Rebbe told him that his followers will be fine, but he should remain in Crown Heights.

Reb Zelig Katzman, Reb Itche Springer and Reb Shlomo Laiken consistently davened at Rabbi Harlig's shul for over twenty years, helping keep it open until he passed away.

In the case of the larger, more modern shuls, these were saved in a unique twist. As the shuls dwindled, a few Lubavitchers would buy membership there, and that would prevent the shuls' boards from selling to non-Jews.

Many of the other shuls that are *anash* shuls today are around because Lubavitchers davened there on a regular basis.

## NOT JUST 770

At the farbrengen of Parshas Mikeitz 5731<sup>7</sup> the Rebbe spoke a lengthy *sicha*, agonizing over the dire situation in Crown Heights, and how so little had been done despite repeated entreaties from the Rebbe that a concerted effort be made toward retaining and reviving Crown Heights.

During the *sicha* the Rebbe mentioned that there were people who

thought he was only concerned about 770. To this shocking claim the Rebbe reiterated that the imperative to save the entire Crown Heights was from Choshen Mishpat in Shulchan Aruch. How could someone surmise that the Rebbe meant only 770?

The Rebbe dwelled on this question and refuted it, and the *agmas nefesh* was visible.

The Rebbe then mentioned that an organization had been started to deal with the crisis in Crown Heights. The focus was on buying the properties that the Yidden who had left were selling. This organization was called “Chebra” and was run by a group of Crown Heights residents.

“Unfortunately not many people are aware of this new organization,” the Rebbe said. “People need to come forward and purchase shares in the organization so that they can have the money to buy houses in Crown Heights on behalf of the community.”

Then the Rebbe announced the following initiative:

*“In general, the ideology of Chabad Chassidus is more strenuous than the ways of Chagas Chassidus. However, many Chabad Chassidim seem to get more pleasure when treated with ‘Poilishe inyonim.’ Therefore we will motivate everyone with a segula. I will purchase a share in the ‘Chebra’ and one dollar from the money I used to purchase my share should go to each of the other investors that will purchase a share...”*

*Purchasing the shares is not only pertinent to the residents of Crown Heights, but also to all those who live in other communities around the world. Even more so—those who live in Crown Heights are already supporting the neighborhood by living here, as opposed to those that don’t. The only way they can assist in bettering Crown Heights is through the shares they buy in ‘Chebra.’*

After the Rebbe spoke, a representative of “Chebra” announced

that each share cost \$500, and he explained how to purchase the shares.

## COLLECTIVE EFFORT

Indeed many Lubavitchers proceeded to buy shares, and many Chassidim received a dollar bill from the Rebbe through the representatives, a rarity for many in those years.

Individuals were able to purchase shares on their own, however others who could not afford a share, purchased a joint share in partnership with others. Even among the *bochurim*, groups joined together to purchase a share.

In Lubavitch communities around the globe, Chassidim pooled together funds in order to buy shares in “Chebra.”

Despite these initial efforts, at the farbrengen of Parshas Beshalach 5732<sup>8</sup> the Rebbe addressed a recent development with great anguish. Over two years had passed since the Rebbe had initially discussed the painful decay of Crown Heights, and had repeatedly encouraged any effort to rebuild and strengthen the area. Yet just three days earlier—on Yud Shevat—the Rebbe was informed that a home right near 770 was sold to a non-Jew!

The Rebbe expressed his disappointment openly, especially in light of the fact that there were many who were aware that the possibility of the sale of this home was developing, yet in the end they did not stop it from taking place.

“This hurts, and when something hurts, one cries out!

“However,” the Rebbe announced:

“כן יקום, עס וועט דא זיין די שכוונה, מען דארף נאר טאן!”

“The neighborhood will in fact remain here, we need only to act!”

A few months later at the Acharon Shel Pesach farbrengen, the Rebbe

again mentioned the dire situation of Crown Heights and explained:

Shuls and *batei midrash* are the dwelling places for Hashem in this mundane world. And the same goes for every Jewish home, because people learn Torah and perform mitzvos within them. Therefore, when one leaves a Jewish community and sells his home to a non-Jew, causing shuls and *batei midrash* to be closed, he is effectively banishing Hashem from where He dwells! And the same is on the other extreme: When one strengthens and expands Jewish neighborhoods he essentially brings another property under the dominion of Hashem.<sup>9</sup>

## MISSED OPPORTUNITY

The non-Jewish immigrants who moved into Crown Heights were predominantly individuals with low income, and beneficiaries of government programs.

In a time when no Jew had yet benefitted of the subsidized housing available for those who couldn’t afford, the Rebbe expressed disappointment that the *askanim* who were attempting to prevent additional Crown Heights homes from being sold hadn’t implemented a simple strategy that could greatly strengthen the Jewish character of the neighborhood.

Waves of Jewish immigrants from Russia, Poland and Romania were arriving on New York’s shores and were being placed in housing projects in random areas throughout New York.

If minimal effort was invested, explained the Rebbe, then these immigrants could have been settled into the many vacated homes and buildings in Crown Heights. The government would even give abundant funding to the communities who were welcoming them, as they had done elsewhere! Instead the



WE ARE ADDRESSING THE *MIKVEH* THAT IS CLOSEST TO THE SHUL OF *NESI DOREINU*, AND IN FACT THE ENTIRE NEIGHBORHOOD IS ONE THAT *NESI DOREINU* HAS CHOSEN TO RESIDE IN, AND GAVE *BRACHOS* TO IT—WHICH HAVE ALREADY BEEN FULFILLED



MAYOR OF NEW YORK CITY MR. JOHN LINDSAY IN YECHIDUS, 5 KISLEV, 5729.

homes abandoned by Yidden were increasingly being filled by non-Jews, many of whom harbored ill feelings toward the Yidden of Crown Heights.<sup>10</sup>

The Rebbe also addressed the sorry state of the Karestirer Mikveh, the one nearest to 770, saying that he had visited it a year earlier and the stairs were dangerously slippery and the lights dark.

“This is the state of the *mikveh* closest to the shul of the *nosi hador*!” exclaimed the Rebbe.

“When a guest from across the world comes to 770... he is sent to use that *mikveh*. What will be when he slips there? It is the fault of [the *askanim*], who were obligated to fix it.

“We are addressing the *mikveh* that is closest to the shul of *nesi doreinu*, and in fact the entire neighborhood is one that *nesi doreinu* has chosen to reside in, and gave *brachos* to it—which have already been fulfilled, and these above mentioned individuals [—the *askanim*] are beneficiaries of these *brachos*. So how could it be that they have not ‘dipped a finger in cold water’ to make this neighborhood how it should be? And the welfare of 770 is dependent on the neighborhood around it.”

## BE PROTECTED

Although some progress was made in the years following the Rebbe’s incessant call to strengthen Crown Heights, in the summer of 5741 the Rebbe highlighted a recent rash of robberies at a Shabbos farbrengen.<sup>11</sup>

Drawing a comparison to the mitzvah of *egla arufa*, where the elders of the city are held accountable for a person found dead outside their city limits, the Rebbe expressed surprise that nothing was being done to combat this ongoing issue of public safety!

“It is vital that those who have the status of the neighborhood’s ‘elders’

show a response to this unacceptable behavior, so that it be stopped...

"My intention is not that the elders themselves use weapons to protect the neighborhood, for they may unintentionally shoot themselves while trying to stop the thief, because they are inexperienced in this field.

"Rather it is incumbent upon them to find suitable people to guard the neighborhood to avoid further robberies."

## RENT HIKES AND RESPONSIBILITY

During one of the sichos when the Rebbe publicly addressed the saga of the *sefarim* that were stolen from the Library of Agudas Chasidei Chabad,<sup>12</sup> he also spoke strongly of an issue that Crown Heights was suffering from:

"It is imperative that in the neighborhood where the [Friediker] Rebbe lived and was active, that concern be given to strengthening and expanding the neighborhood. It must also be seen to that decent apartments and homes be available for all at an affordable price.

"Especially in light of the skyrocketing rent prices, which demands irregular resources in order to be able to afford an apartment, and which stands in the way of maintaining the neighborhood...

"Some may say that because this is the neighborhood in which the [Friediker] Rebbe lived, therefore one must be forced to pay exorbitant sums to live here. And paying these prices doesn't even merit an apartment with decent living conditions!

"Let it be known that this approach is contrary to the will of the [Friediker] Rebbe! It is also contrary to '*kiruv rechokim*.' And furthermore, this can even negatively impact our closest ones!"

The Rebbe expressed that it is of great importance that meetings be



held immediately to resolve this, so that affordable homes and apartments are made available to all, and that they be in perfect condition!

## THE REBBE'S VISION

Today, looking back at the Rebbe's early campaign for Crown Heights, the Rebbe's clear foresight becomes evident.

Taking into context the timing of the Rebbe's sichos on this matter, it may have been hard to understand the high expectations the Rebbe had.

Crime statistics from those years show that in fact every major urban city in North America was suffering from the same criminal epidemic! Detroit, Chicago, Los Angeles, Houston, and many others, were cities in which thousands of people



were murdered each year in regular homicide attacks.

Few residents of major cities in the USA ventured out of their homes from dusk through dawn, fearing the ruthless criminals who freely roamed the streets. In the same areas where today yeshiva *bochurim* can comfortably return home from a *farbrenge* in the wee hours of the morning, many would shudder to walk outside of their homes, in the 5720s, 30s and 40s.

As seen consistently throughout the Rebbe's *nesius*, the Rebbe spearheaded a new phenomena, far in advance of its mainstream acceptance.

The Rebbe expressed this in a letter to Mr. Sid Davidoff, an administrative assistant to then Mayor John Lindsay at the end of 5730, after encouraging him to communicate with community leaders and Rabbi Hodakov to better the situation in Crown Heights:

"...This will strengthen the joint efforts between you and the representatives of this community, so that the residents who expanded this community and erected educational, charitable and religious institutions will be encouraged to remain here. In essence our goal is that this neighborhood will serve as an example of harmony and coexistence for other neighborhoods in our vast city, and in fact throughout the entire United States which suffer from similar challenges..."

The Rebbe wanted strength in the face of crime, and that every Yid deserved to live in safety.

Only decades later would Mayor Rudolph Giuliani implement this idea through adding additional law enforcement officers, successfully bringing down crime in New York City in drastic proportions. He set a trend that the mayors of many other major American cities followed, to the extent that today it is difficult



to imagine how dangerous the communities around us used to be.

Standing today almost 50 years after the Rebbe pioneered the concept of a safe atmosphere for each of us, it still remains up to us to assist in this campaign, upholding the Rebbe's special *shchunah* in every way possible. We need to do all we can to ensure that every Yid is welcome in Crown Heights, offering affordable and livable

conditions, living up to the Rebbe's expectations.

In the Rebbe's words:

This is the neighborhood of *nessi doreinu*, who has been leading us before his *histalkus*, and now as well. The shepherds of the Jewish people won't forsake their flock. This implies that the Rebbe, *nessi doreinu*, is still in this neighborhood and watching everything that goes on. He will do everything to see to it that this

neighborhood is run properly, and in a kind and merciful manner—*בחסד וברחמים*.<sup>13</sup>

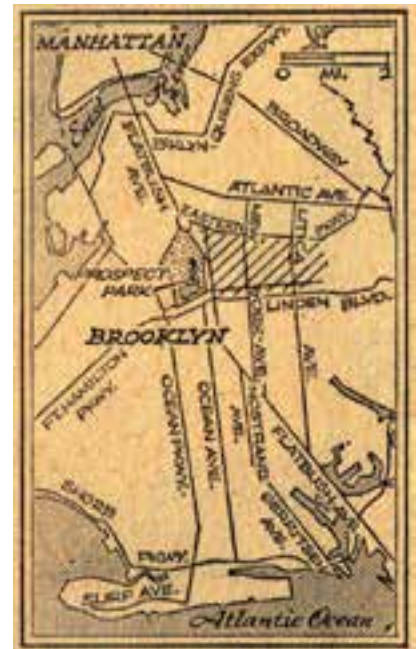
1. Sichos Kodesh 5729 vol. 2, mugah in Likutei Sichos vol. 6 p. 350
2. See follow-up letter in Likkutei Sichos vol. 6 p. 357
3. Much of this description is based on an article in the Crown Heights Newspaper written by Rabbi Michael Seligson.
4. See extensive article, Kfar Chabad Magazine 8 Teves 5767
5. Sichos Kodesh 5730 vol. 1 p. 302
6. Sichos Kodesh 5732 vol. 2 p. 81
7. Sichos Kodesh 5731 vol. 1 p. 359
8. Sichos Kodesh 5732 vol. 1 p. 598
9. Likkutei Sichos vol. 7 p. 278
10. Sichos Kodesh 5735 vol. 2 p. 60.
11. Sichos Kodesh 5741 vol. 4 p. 620
12. Tzadik L'melech vol. 4 p. 30
13. Hisvaaduyos 5747 vol. 2 p. 489

## NOT A GHETTO

In the initial *sichos* regarding the situation facing Crown Heights, the Rebbe stated that this was an issue which was a concern to all Lubavitcher Chassidim around the world. Various *askanim* and *anash* from around the world submitted their ideas of what could be done to combat the issue.

It is told that one *askan* sent in a suggestion that Crown Heights be converted into a gated community. Clear borders should be drawn and a fence should be built, and only Yidden would be permitted to reside within it.

This idea was immediately dismissed by the Rebbe, with the explanation that he desired “*uforatztta*” for the neighborhood to blossom and spread, not to be fenced in and closed!



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THE REBBE EXPLAINS HIS STANCE THAT NO ONE SHOULD MOVE OUT OF CROWN HEIGHTS.



LEVI FREIDIN via JEM 217687



# No Fish for the Ill

## Two Spiritual Ailments

*What seems to be a rather bizarre description of the end-time before Moshiach is illuminated by the Rebbe in a special reshima. Written by the Rebbe in Lisbon, Portugal just before embarking on the ship to the United States in 5701.*

### THERE WILL BE NO MORE FISH

A number of extraordinary events will have to transpire before Moshiach arrives to transform the world completely. The Gemara tells us about one particular astonishing event: “[Moshiach] Ben Dovid will not arrive until a quest will be made in the pursuit of fish for a sick patient, yet no fish will be found.”

When reading this passage, the question immediately arises: what could possibly be the connection between the disappearance of fish and the arrival of Moshiach?

### MOSHIACH’S TWO CONTRARY NAMES

To better understand the connection between these two events, we must first examine the diverse names of Moshiach, specifically the name “Ben Dovid” used in this passage.

There are various names used in reference to Moshiach. The superior of them all is the most frequently used term “Moshiach,” which means “anointed one.” From time immemorial, Jewish kings were anointed for leadership with a special “anointing oil.” By definition, the term “anointed” alludes to someone selected for greatness. In addition, kings were anointed only if they were elected to a position of leadership by virtue of their personal greatness alone. Hence, if a king would pass away and his son succeeded him by default, he would not be anointed with the special oil, since he was chosen by virtue of his father’s leadership, not by his own qualities. If however there was a competitor to the throne, and only after extensive dialog and deep scrutiny

לעילוי נשמת  
אבינו הרה"ת ר' צבי הירש ע"ה  
בהרה"ת ר' משה דובער ע"ה  
נפטר כ"ג מר-חשוון, ה'תשס"ז  
גאנזבורג  
ת.נ.צ. ב.ה.

נדפס על ידי ולזכות  
צאצאיהם שיחיו לאורך ימים  
ושנים טובות ובריאות

# What could possibly be the connection between the disappearance of fish and the arrival of Moshiach?

was the son restored to the throne, the son *would* then be anointed with the special oil, since he was reinstated on the merit of his personal reputation and importance.

Hence, the term “anointed” or in Hebrew “Moshiach” connotes personal prestige and prominence of the highest order.

The least prestigious of titles used in reference to Moshiach is the term “Ben Dovid,” or “Son of Dovid.” This term was used in the above quoted passage from Gemara describing the vanishing of fish prior to the coming of Moshiach.

The term “Son of Dovid” is the precise contrary to the term Moshiach. Moshiach alludes to personal prominence, whereas “Ben Dovid” demonstrates that Moshiach was selected not by virtue of his own qualities, but by virtue of the greatness of his ancestor, Dovid Hamelech. He is therefore referred to not by his own name but by his ancestor’s name—that he is the descendant of Dovid, by virtue of whom he was selected.

In that same vein, in the Gemara we find a number of young pupils who were yet to obtain Rabbinic ordination, who were called not by their own names, but by their fathers’ names, such as “Ben Zakkai,” “Ben Zoma,” or “Ben Azai,” since they were not yet personally prominent but were recognized for the prestige of their

fathers. Therefore, the term “Son of Dovid” is not quite the most honorable title with which to refer to Moshiach.

However, aside from the above mentioned translation of “Son (or descendant) of Dovid, the title “Ben Dovid” can also be translated in an alternate manner. A “*Ben Chorin*,” literally meaning a “son of the free,” isn’t the “son of a free individual,” but rather it means that he subscribes to and lives in the style of the liberated populace and that he himself is a free individual.

Likewise, not only does the term “Ben Dovid” imply that he is a descendant of Dovid, but moreover that his personality resembles Dovid and he lives in the style of Dovid.

What is Dovid’s style? Dovid was humble, small and insignificant in his own eyes; like he says in Tehillim, “And I am [like] a worm, not a man.” At times he was seen so by others as well, as we see when he was referred to as “Dovid the small one.” So the term used for Moshiach “Ben Dovid”—meaning someone like Dovid who was small and unassuming, alluding to the concept of *bittul* and *mesiras nefesh*—is in direct contrast of the esteemed title “Moshiach,” anointed one, selected for prominence.

Interestingly, it is specifically when foretelling the tragic heartbreaking events that will occur prior to the advent of Moshiach that we find the low-profile title “Ben Dovid” being used.

These two names used to describe Moshiach express the two extremes that Moshiach will possess—greatness and esteem on the one hand, as well as humility and self-nullification on the other.

## MOSHIACH: TWO DIVERSE POSSIBILITIES

Just as in the case with the extreme contrast in Moshiach’s names, the concepts and events pertaining to the

final redemption can transpire in one of two very diverse methods. Which path the *geulah* will take is dependent on the situation of the Jewish people and the world at the time of Moshiach’s arrival.

If the Jewish people will be at their lowest point and entirely undeserving of salvation to the extreme, Hashem will feel forced to send Moshiach to His unworthy people because of how catastrophic the situation has become. Because the world is undeserving, Moshiach will be revealed in the form of his lesser name, “Ben Dovid.” His revelation will therefore be on low key, on a lower spiritual level and with less pomp and splendor.

However, if Jewish people will be exceptionally meritorious and will be rightfully deserving of Moshiach, Hashem will send Moshiach to His people with joy, and he will be revealed in the form of his greater name, “Moshiach.” He will redeem the Jewish people with great spiritual revelations and with much pomp and glory.

With these guidelines we will be able to understand this passage of the Gemara in two alternate ways, depending on the situation of the Jewish people prior to Moshiach’s coming.

## FISH: THE ATONEMENT FOR SIN

If the Jewish people will be at their lowermost point, forcing Hashem to redeem them, the generation will certainly not be on a high spiritual level full of intense love, fear and yearning for Hashem. Rather they will be at a much more inferior level, merely trying to fulfill Hashem’s will and overpower their evil inclination.

In that case, the “patient” of which the Gemara speaks is an allusion to someone who has transgressed, causing ailment to his soul. The patient will have to do *teshuvah* in



*Sure the fish might be swimming freely, but they won't be able to help the person reach this high spiritual level, since he is looking for something so sublime that even the fish cannot provide it.*

order to cure the spiritual disease that the sin has brought onto his soul.

In truth, every Jew is connected to Hashem and by nature cannot do anything sinful to separate himself from the source of his own existence. If a person transgresses, it is because he mistakenly imagines himself to be a separate entity from Hashem and is oblivious to the fact that he is directly dependent upon Hashem. The sickness can only be cured by eradicating its source, which is by impressing upon the person that he is one with his Creator and is nullified to Him.

This is where the fish comes in. The Ramban writes that the reason why we are forbidden to consume non-kosher animals, especially those that are cruel, is because our character traits are molded very much by the food we eat. Consequently, eating wild animals could create a cruel temperament in one who consumes it, while calm animals cause a calm and peaceful temperament.

If there is a need to cause a person to appreciate that he is nullified, dependent and inseparable from Hashem, the natural choice would be to serve him fish. Why fish? Fish are always in the water, usually totally concealed by the water, and their greatest fear is that they might be forcibly pulled out of the sea. This is because unlike those who walk the earth, the fish truly feel how they are rooted in the sea—the source of their existence—and they feel part and parcel of the sea, which conceals

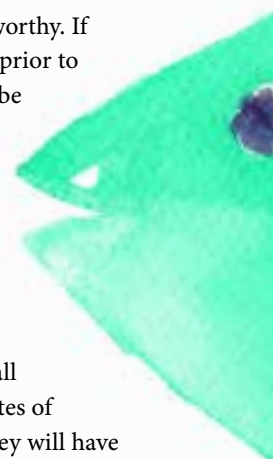
and inclusively nullifies them. They instinctively feel that they are directly dependent upon the sea, and that the moment they leave the water they will surely die.

Hence, it is specifically fish that has the power to create an understanding that a person is nullified to Hashem, and that he cannot possibly sin or do anything damaging to separate himself from his lifeline.

Before the coming of Moshiach, the Jewish people will be in desperate need of discovering this sense of nullification and connection to Hashem in order to eliminate the possibility of sin, yet search as they might, it will not be found. This indicates that the generation has deteriorated to an extreme and is entirely unworthy of redemption, in which case Hashem will redeem them simply for His own sake. This will cause Moshiach to reveal himself on a lower spiritual level, using the smaller title “Ben Dovid,” as the generation on its own will be undeserving of redemption.

## **FISH: THE KEY TO TRUE BITTUL. OR IS IT?**

This is what will occur if the generation is totally unworthy. If however the generation prior to Moshiach's coming will be incredibly meritorious, the situation will be entirely different. The Jewish people will be on a lofty spiritual level, serving Hashem with true love and fear. They will have reached all forty-nine of the fifty gates of spiritual wisdom, but they will have yet to reach the fiftieth gate, which will cause them to be totally unsatisfied with their present lofty situation, holy as it may be, and sick with passionate yearning to be fully connected to Hashem.



In order to heal the ailment of these righteous people, the root of the problem must be eradicated. There is still a “flaw” in their *avodah*, so to speak, spiritual and whole as it will be, as there is a high spiritual level that these *tzaddikim* have yet to attain. Although they serve Hashem with “*ahava beta’anugim*,” an intense love and pleasure in their connection with Hashem, they still feel to a miniature extent that they are a separate entity who loves Hashem. They have not yet reached the point where they are completely nullified and feel included in *Elokus*, completely losing any sense of individual existence. To attain this lofty level of *bittul*, they will search intensively for fish, which as we explained earlier, is known for its sense of total nullification and inclusiveness in its source, which would cause these *tzaddikim* to lose any sense of self and to be entirely nullified in *Elokus*.

But there is just one problem. They will find the fish to be

deficient and unhelpful for the patient. Sure the fish might be swimming freely, but they won’t be able to help the person reach this high spiritual level, since he is looking for something so sublime that even the fish cannot provide it. The *tzaddik* is yearning for a complete and total nullification to Hashem on the highest level, and even the fish—which are seemingly the epitome of nullification, and seem to have no separate existence for themselves but are included in the sea—at the end of the day do not possess that ultimate level of nullification for which the *tzaddik* is yearning, and therefore it cannot satisfy or heal him.

A generation in which longing for nullification to Hashem is the source of its illness, and even the most nullified creature such as fish is not on the sublime level for which the people are reaching, is truly a meritorious generation by all counts.

That generation will be deserving of the immediate coming of Moshiach, who will reveal himself with great excitement and grandeur.

But the question still remains if the generation is so meritorious and deserving of Moshiach’s greatest revelations, why is the seemingly low-key title “Ben Dovid” used for such praiseworthy a generation? The answer is because the term “Ben Dovid”—as we explained before—is among other things a testament to Moshiach being similar to Dovid Hamelech, who was humble and completely nullified to Hashem. For a generation whose only goal in life is to reach total nullification to Hashem, the title “Ben Dovid” is quite appropriate, and the *mesiras nefesh* and *kabbolas ol* of the term “Ben Dovid” reaches up to the highest of levels within Moshiach.<sup>1</sup> **T**

1. Adapted from Reshimos choveres 11.





# דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

Dedicated By  
Chabad Lubavitch of Westport

## A Clean Bill

AS TOLD BY PHILLIP (PINCHAS) ELIJAH (CHICAGO, IL)

I was born in Iraq to a Jewish mother and non-Jewish father. I have lived in many countries and cities before coming to Chicago, but it is really my spiritual journey that has been long and winded, up until a couple years ago when I reconnected with Yiddishkeit.

I have grown close with many in the Jewish community here, particularly with Chabad Rabbis Boruch Epstein and Shalom Gurewicz.

This particular story begins seven years ago. I was visiting a friend when my abdomen was suddenly wracked with a terrible pain that had me convulsing on the floor. My friend rushed me to the hospital where they ran some tests and, not finding anything, I was sent home with a suggestion that I go for a more thorough checkup. The pain soon subsided and I never looked into it any further. My life moved on and the incident was soon forgotten.

Early last year a strange thing began to occur. My spleen became extremely enlarged over a period of a few months and was causing me terrible pain. The idea of going to a hospital terrified me so I continued to push it off despite the persistent urgings of Rabbi Shalom and others. One Shabbos, as I was leaving my house for shul, I collapsed in tremendous pain. Struggling to breathe, I dragged myself to bed with great difficulty, certain that I was undergoing a heart attack. After a while my situation improved considerably but I knew something was terribly wrong.

On Motzei Shabbos I received many messages from concerned friends who hadn't seen me in shul that day. When I told them what had happened they declared that there was no more pushing off going to the hospital. The very next morning my good friend, Chananya Ehrenreich, drove me to the emergency room at Evanston Hospital





where the doctors ran many tests on me. When they were finished we were left to wait as they examined to pictures and results for a diagnosis. The wait dragged on for hours, filling me with a sense of foreboding.

The grim look on the doctor's face when he finally appeared gripped me with fear. He said he has good news and bad news. The bad news was that I had cancer. The good news, he informed me, was that I had a 1% chance to live...

It seems the cancer had slowly been growing for seven years and it had spread throughout my entire body. With cancer at stage 4.3 I had 6-12 months to live.

I was sent to more doctors and specialists and more tests were run to determine the cause and its effect. Everyone came to the same conclusion. The last doctor I spoke to was a man by the name of Dr. Greenblatt. After examining the x-rays and all the previous test results, he decided to take me under his care.

I was devastated. For two weeks I stayed home wallowing in despair, not even leaving the house to attend shul on Shabbos. I couldn't understand why now that I had found Yiddishkeit and every day of my life had become a blessing, Hashem was doing this to me. Together with the decline of my physical health, my emotional well-being was in tatters.

I had been diagnosed for about a month when I was suddenly hit by an idea like a bolt from the blue. Half a year prior, Rabbi Epstein had taken a group of us to the Ohel and it was like nothing I had ever experienced before; I decided I would return someday. Recalling that experience, I was filled with an intense longing to visit the Ohel and pour out my heart before the Rebbe and request his holy blessing. I wasn't sure how I would make the trip but I was determined to find a way.

A short time passed and one day my friend Chananya called me with an offer. He was planning to drive to New York for his niece's wedding and he thought it would be good for me to get out and enjoy myself a little, so

he proposed that I come along. Realizing the divine providence, I immediately seized on the opportunity. I told Chananya that I was willing to come on condition that we first stop at the Ohel on our way into New York. Chananya was very skeptical about such things, aside for the fact that it would add much travel time, so at first he resisted. When he realized I was adamant though, he relented.

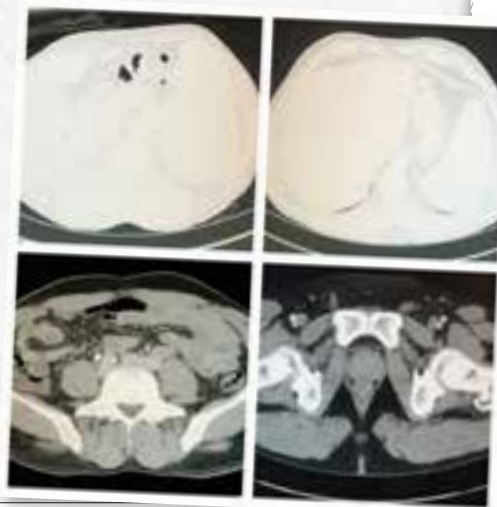
We drove for most of the night and arrived at the Ohel at four o'clock in the morning. I was euphoric. With mounting excitement I prepared myself to enter the Ohel. I prepared my *siddur* and removed my shoes in the tent and went out to the path leading to the Ohel. I noticed two people entering the Ohel and as I wanted to be alone with the Rebbe, I waited for them to leave.

Finally the moment came when I entered the Ohel alone. I cannot adequately describe the feeling that washed over me as I never prayed like never before. I left the Ohel completely shaken and filled with a strange sense of transformation. For the remainder of the ride I didn't utter a word but I was certain everything would somehow work out.

Upon returning from New York my chemotherapy treatments began. I also went back to work and started going to shul again and in general I tried to make the most of each day.

By the fourth session of chemotherapy in June of last year, they decided to run more scans and tests. Dr. Greenblatt spent some time studying the results and returned incredulous. He announced that the scans show that my body had entirely rid itself of the cancer. Not a shadow of the illness remained! Additional scans and supervision, which concluded in August, confirmed that I was completely healthy.

I will never forget those moments with the Rebbe and the certainty of his blessing that continued to accompany me until the day I received a clean bill of health and beyond. **T**



## YOUR STORY

Share your story with A Chassidisher Derher by emailing [derherstories@gmail.com](mailto:derherstories@gmail.com).



# MECHIRAS HAMITZVOS

*Motzei Shabbos Bereishis, 5740*

It was customary each year at the farbrengen of Shabbos Bereishis that the *gabbai* of the shul would 'sell' the *kibbudim* for the upcoming year, known as "*mechiras hamitzvos*." The proceeds of the sale went towards the upkeep of the shul, as is traditionally done in many communities.<sup>1</sup>

As per the Rebbe's request, the *gabbai* would don a *shtreimel* for the occasion. It was one of the rare times that the Rebbe publicly leaned back in his chair, and usually looked in *sefarim*.

In the earlier years, the *gabbai* was Reb Yochanan Gordon. Following his passing, Reb Shea Pinson, pictured here, filled the position.

Being that the Shabbos Bereishis farbrengen typically took place on Shabbos afternoon, no photographs or video recordings ever captured these moments. But in 5740, the farbrengen was held on Motzei Shabbos, which gave photographer Levi Freidin the opportunity to capture this rare event.

As he was about to begin, announcing "The first thing that we will sell..." the Rebbe interrupted Reb Shea saying: "The first thing will be a *dvar Torah!*" which he indeed delivered.

Following the sale, the *gabbai* approached the Rebbe for a *l'chaim*.



LEVI FREIDIN via JEM, 192987

1. See Otzar Minhagei Chabad p. 397 on this age-old *minhag* and how it was carried out in 770 throughout the years.





In memory of our loving uncle  
Stuart (Shmuel Yisroel)  
Ben Hersh Leib a"h

Dedicated by  
Shaya and Miriam Rochester



LEVI FREIDIN via JEM, 192992



LEVI FREIDIN via JEM, 13024



# Derher**Letters**

A forum for readers to send their feedback, add to, or ask any questions about articles. Submit your letter to [feedback@derher.org](mailto:feedback@derher.org).

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



## **“How is everything going?”**

**Dear Editors,**

First of all, the article about my father [“Dr. Yaakov Hanoka” Derher 48 (129) Elul 5776] is very powerful and I received nice feedback.

1) There is an incident that I would like to share: My father told me that during the year he was learning in 770, once while he was on the corner of Eastern Parkway and Brooklyn (same side as 770) he was talking to a few other *bochurim* when the Rebbe was walking home. The Rebbe stopped and asked my father, “How is everything going?”

My father was *zoche* to the personal fatherly care of the Rebbe.

2) Another anecdote that I heard from my father during the last week of his life.

My father said that when he was in college he made a lifelong decision to “view all of life trials and tribulations and struggles as challenges to be overcome rather than as problems to be endured.”

My father said that subsequently when he met the Rebbe, “I felt the

Rebbe saw this approach in me and the Rebbe liked it very much.”

I think this is a universal message that can benefit fellow Chassidim and with this in mind I share it with you.

3) Boston is known in secular society as “the Athens of America” due to all the prestigious universities based there.

Upon my father’s career change an opportunity arose for my father to get a job in the Boston area and the Rebbe told my father to take it, so our family moved to Boston (as mentioned in the article).

Once, in the midst of a heated *chassidisher* farbrengen amongst the local Chassidim in Boston, and after a few *l’chaims*, my father got up and said, “The Rebbe sent חנוכה תנוכה!”

**Yitzchok Hanoka**  
Brooklyn, NY

”

## **Named After Reb Meir Shlomo**

**Dear Editors,**

Thank you for the article in the Elul magazine [“בית הרב” Derher 48

(129) Elul 5776] about the Rebbe's grandparents.

In the article you write about the *sicha* that the Rebbe said on 23 Elul 5746, the *yahrtzeit* of his maternal grandfather, Reb Meir Shlomo Yanovsky. There's also an interesting story there from Reb Meir Shlomo Junik שיח' about how he wrote to the Rebbe in connection with the *yahrtzeit*, and that this was the first time the Rebbe mentioned Reb Meir Shlomo at a farbrengen.

I would like to share my story and the story of the first time I came to the Rebbe, also related to the *sicha* mentioned above.

I was born three months earlier, on 15 Sivan 5746. My parents chose to give me the name Meir Shlomo, after the Rebbe's grandfather; something that was not so common at the time. Of course, my parents wrote to the Rebbe with my name, Meir Shlomo, and received a letter in response wishing them Mazal Tov, as was customary with the birth of a child.

When Elul came around, my father, Reb Mendel Lubetzki שיח' won the raffle between Anash in Paris to fly to New York and spend Tishrei with the Rebbe. Shabbos, 23 Elul, was also Shabbos Selichos and my father traveled to New York beforehand, so he could be at the Shabbos farbrengen and recital of *selichos* with the Rebbe.

At the farbrengen, the Rebbe said the aforementioned *sicha*, speaking about his grandfather Reb Meir Shlomo for the first time. After the *sicha*, the Rebbe turned to my father, signalled that he should say *l'chaim*, and then the Rebbe waved both his hands, encouraging my father.

My father felt that this was clearly connected to the fact that he had named me Meir Shlomo. Here, the Rebbe had spoken about the original Meir Shlomo for the first time! After receiving such a *kiruv* from the Rebbe, my father immediately called home and asked my mother to come to New York and bring me and my siblings along too.

Despite the fact that I was just three months old, my brother one year old, and we were seven young children all together, my mother straight away bought tickets and a few days later, we all boarded the plane to New York. On Erev Rosh Hashana 5747 I saw the Rebbe for the first time and received a dollar.

As we mark ויהי בשלושים שנה—thirty years since the Rebbe said the *sicha* about Reb Meir Shlomo, may we merit to be united once again with the Rebbe and all the Rebbe's family, with the coming of Moshiach Now!

**Meir Shlomo Lubetzki**

Paris, France



## The First Rochel

Dear Editors,

Thank you very much for another amazing issue. *B'hasgcha pratis* it arrived on Shabbos instead of Friday, *mistameh* so I would actually take care of *hachanos* for shabbos...

A comment regarding the Rebbe's request that Reb Moshe Yitzchok Hecht give his daughter the name Rochel after his maternal grandmother, Rebbetzin Rochel Yanovsky [“בית הרב” Derher 48 (129) Elul 5776 p. 24]. When my daughter

Rochel was born I was told—I don’t recall by whom but by someone in the family—that the way it came about was as follows: Reb Moshe Yitzchok Hecht called the Rebbe to inform the Friediker Rebbe that his wife gave birth. It was then, or in continuation to that conversation, that the Rebbe asked “Would you consider naming...?” since there was no one named after Rebbetzin Rochel at the time, and how much it would mean to his mother, Rebbetzin Chana.

**Yosef Yitzchok Hodakov**  
Coral Springs, Florida



## Yechidus for Australia Shluchim 5742

Dear Editors,

In the Tammuz Derher [Issue #46 (123) “Bchatzros Kodsheinu”] page 38, you write: “... the *kiruvim* that the Rebbe gave to the *talmidim hashluchim* to Australia particularly. It was mentioned, that all the previous groups had merited going in for *yechidus* with the Rebbe, either inside the Rebbe’s room or in *Gan Eden Hatachton*, before their departure. However, when the last group left in 5742, there was no *yechidus* at all—not even a *yechidus klolis* (public *yechidus*) and we had also heard from *mazkirus* that no *yechidus klolis* has been scheduled yet for Purim, and there may not be one.” The article concludes that, however, in the merit of their initiative they merited to enter *Gan Eden Hatachton* (the hallway before the Rebbe’s room).

Reading the article I realized that the facts about the *kvutza* going to Australia in 5742 are inaccurate.

I B”H merited being part of the *kvutza* of 5742. To set the record straight, we did merit the same that Rabbi Alperowitz’s *kvutza* merited.

I will quote from a diary of the 26<sup>th</sup> of Nissan 5742:

“On Monday 26<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, after *krias haTorah*, all the *talmidim* traveling on shlichus to Morocco, **Australia**, Miami, Seattle and Montreal entered the Gan Eden Hatachton. The Rebbe benched us on the shlichus and explained the concept of the shlichus and related it to the *parsha* of the week. Then the Rebbe distributed to everyone a *likut* that consisted of the Rebbe’s Pesach messages for that year, a dollar for *tzedakah*, and *benched* us with a good trip and that we should have good news.

Monday evening, a *yechidus klolis* took place in the Rebbe’s room for many groups of guests that had come in honor of Yud-Alef Nissan marking the Rebbe’s 80<sup>th</sup> *yom holedes*. To two of the groups the Rebbe spoke in Yiddish, to three more groups he spoke in Hebrew, French and English. In addition there were also groups of *chassanim* and *kallahs* before their weddings, as well as bar mitzvahs.”

[On a side note, when I entered with the French *kvutza* (I think it was due to lack of room in the prior ones), I recall standing near the *chassidim*, Rabbi Mendel Futerfas, and יבדל לחיים טובים וארוכים Rabbi YY Gansbourg from Nachalas Har Chabad. During the entire *sicha*, Reb Mendel stood with his eyes closed concentrating on every word the Rebbe said, although he did not understand French.

When the Rebbe concluded the *sicha*, I asked the abovementioned



chassidim if I should take a dollar from the Rebbe for *shlichus mitzvah*, since I had already received one earlier that morning. They responded, “When the Rebbe gives, one takes.”]

It is interesting to note, that our *kvutza* in 5742 originally was supposed to leave after Purim, but we yearned to remain here for Yud-Alef Nissan, the Rebbe’s 80<sup>th</sup> *yom holedes*. We decided to ask the Rebbe. We were delighted (and we felt a special *kiruv*) that the Rebbe answered that we should remain for Yud-Alef Nissan.

The Rebbe’s response to us became known and Chassidim understood that something special is going to take

place on Yud-Alef Nissan. Indeed, from after the farbrengen until the morning, the Rebbe distributed a Tanya, printed exclusively for this occasion, to thousands of people—men, women and children.

Wishing you all much hatzlacha in your work.

On behalf of the entire *kvutza*,

**Sholom Dovid Geisinsky**  
Brooklyn, NY

*Editors’ note: We would like to note that Rabbi Alperowitz has already sent in the above correction regarding the yechidus in 5742, and it was published in Derher Elul 5776.*

## CORRECTION

It has been brought to our attention that in the article “בית הרב” [Derher Elul 5776], there is a typographical error on page 21. It says that Reb Avrohom Dovid Lavut passed away on 18 Iyar. He passed away on 18 Adar (as can be seen in the image of the Rebbe’s handwritten *hagahos* on his biography in the article.)

It has also been brought to our attention that in the article about Dr. Yaakov Hanoka [Derher Elul 5776], on page 53. It says that when Yaakov was married on 11 Tishrei 5725, “the Rebbe was sitting *shiva* for his mother, Rebbetzin Chana.” This is a mistake as the Rebbe got up from *shiva* on Erev Yom Kippur.

We apologize for the errors.

—The Editors

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לרגל חתונתם בשעטומ"צ ביום ה' חשון ה'תשע"ז  
נדפס ע"י הוריהם  
הרה"ת ר' **חיים רפאל** וזוגתו מרת **רבקה** שיחיו **גראסבוים**  
הרה"ת ר' **זאב וואלף** וזוגתו מרת **בתי' בריינא** שיחיו **קארפ**

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הרה"ת הרה"ח ר' **אשר** בהר"ר **נחום שמרי' ע"ה**  
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# מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר זצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע

לע"נ

הרה"ח ר' נחמיה יום טוב בן ר' מרדכי ע"ה  
קעסלער

לע"נ

מרת שרה נחמה

בת הרה"ח ר' מרדכי אברהם ישעיהו ע"ה

נלב"ע ר"ח מנחם-אב ה'תשע"ו

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

נדפס ע"י בנה

הרה"ת ר' יצחק יהודה וזוגתו מרת גאלדא שיחיו  
בוימוגארטן

לע"נ הרה"ח הרה"ת אי"א נו"נ ר' בנימין הלוי

בן הרה"ג הרה"ח מזקני התמימים ומשפיע בישיבת תו"ת הרב ר' שמואל הלוי ע"ה

לעוויטין

למוד בישיבת תו"ת במחתרת ברוסיה

והי' אח"כ מראשוני התלמידים בייסוד ישיבת תו"ת בארצה"ב וזה לקירוב מכ"ק רבותינו נשיאנו זי"ע הי' מראשוני התלמידים  
שנשלחו בשליחות המל"ח בערי השדה עסק ופעל בייסוד בית הספר לנערות "בית רבקה" והי' חבר מערכת "ניח"ח"

הצטיין באופן נפלא בכיבוד אב וכפי שכתב עליו כ"ק אדמו"ר מהוריי"צ זי"ע "עונג רב גרמה לי הנהגתו הטובה בכבוד אב באופן  
נעלה" עסק בביסוס וחיזוק שכונת קראון הייטס כפי רצון כ"ק רבינו נשיאנו וזכה להתמנות על ידו להיות חבר פעיל ב"אגודת חסידי  
חב"ד העולמית" וזה להקים דור ישרים יבורך הולכים בדרך התורה והחסידות ומהם שלוחי

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ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

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