

A Chassidisher  
**Der He**

סידישער דערהער



"אשרי העם"  
יודעי תרועה"

**Rosh  
Hashanah  
with the  
Rebbe**

A ROUNDTABLE  
DISCUSSION

**The Street  
will Dance**

SIMCHAS BEIS  
HASHOEIVA

**The Real  
World**

BALLEBATISHE  
HANOCHOS



TISHREI 5777  
ISSUE 49 (126)

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TISHREI 5777 ISSUE 49 (126)



## About the Cover:

The Rebbe hands out *lekach* at the entrance of his room, blessing the recipients with a “Shana tova umisuka,” Erev Yom Kippur 5750.

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DARKEI HACHASSIDUS

# Derher**Editorial**

The story is told of a Chossid who stood in line to receive a piece of *lekach* from the Rebbe on Hoshana Rabba afternoon. Although he had already received a piece of *lekach* on Erev Yom Kippur, he asked the Rebbe to give him another piece because his daughter had eaten the first one.

Hearing his story, the Rebbe explained: “She ate up the ‘*gashmiyus*’ of the cake, but the ‘*ruchniyus*’ certainly stayed with her!”



The month of Tishrei—חודש השביעי, the festive month that is “saturated” with spiritual energy meant to last through the entire year.

This is why the mitzvos we do during this month are of a more general nature, the basis of our *avodas Hashem* throughout the year.

From Rosh Hashanah, we derive our *yiras Hashem* for the entire year. From Yom Kippur we derive the power of *teshuvah* for the entire year. From Sukkos, we take *ahavas Hashem* and *simcha* for the entire year.

And on Simchas Torah we receive something even greater—the culmination of the month that includes the entire Tishrei in it. What we get on Simchas Torah is higher than intellect; a joy that is expressed by the dancing of our feet. (See *Igros Kodesh* vol. 4 p. 18).

In the Rebbe’s presence, the precious “merchandise” of the month of Tishrei is all the more felt and revealed. The impact of spending Tishrei with the Rebbe is everlasting.

The “*gashmiyus*,” and all the more so the “*ruchniyus*.”

In this magazine we have attempted to bring some of those precious moments to life. In an exclusive roundtable discussion with five Chassidim who were privileged to have spent Rosh Hashanah with the Rebbe, we’ll hear some of their recollections of those awesome moments with the Rebbe.

At all times of the year the Rebbe’s conduct was far reaching and held more than what met the eye. This was especially apparent during the Rebbe’s preparation for the blowing of the shofar and the *tekios* themselves, which were clearly a heavenly affair.

As we listen to these stories, we are certain beyond doubt that today as well, the Rebbe is blowing the shofar for us, bringing our *tefillos* on high and ensuring that each of us is inscribed and sealed for a שנה טובה ומתוקה ופורה.



As Chassidim, our view and perception of everything in life is based on the Torah, as it is illuminated by Chassidus. Everything in this world is here for a purpose; not as an end of itself, but to serve Hashem as taught by the Rebbe (see “The Real World—Darkei HaChassidus” in this magazine).

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מגזין דרר

With this in mind, we have added a new column to our regular line.

Each month, we will discuss events and occurrences that happened in recent history - but with the Rebbe's illuminating light on what really lies behind it all. The Rebbe's words will shine over these seemingly ordinary events and give us the true perspective of things—always with important lessons in *avodas Hashem*.

This is indeed what can be called the “real world”—a world where every occurrence radiates *Elokus* as revealed by the Rebbe. And this is ultimately the world of Moshiach; the time of which the *possuk* says וראו כל דיבר יחדיו כי פי ה' דיבר.

And then we will dance with joyous hearts to the *geulah*.

Moreover, the *gabbai* at 770 once announced on Simchas Torah that, “We will now do *hakafo*s מיט פרייליכע הערצער—with joyous hearts!” The Rebbe responded: “מיט פרייליכע פיס” - With joyous feet!”

May it be *teikef umiyad Mammosh!*

בברכת כתיבה וחתימה טובה לשנה טובה ומתוקה,  
**The Editors**  
ח"י אלול ה'תשע"ו, שנת הקהל, (ופרצת)



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A Chassidisher Derher is honored to feature unique and historic photos from Jewish Educational Media's Living Archive photo collection. The Living Archive is a project to preserve, and provide access to the video, audio, and photographic recordings of the Rebbe. These photos are copyright by JEM and are available at [TheLivingArchive.org](http://TheLivingArchive.org)





# JOY TO THE CORE

## *Celebrating Simchas Beis Hashoevah*

In one of his *maamarim*, the Alter Rebbe explains the concept of *levushim*, the garments of the *neshamah*. Thought, speech, and action are the external garments of the *neshamah*, and they can conceal the person's true personality, his intellect and emotions.

The Alter Rebbe brings two examples to illustrate this:

1) A person who is not very smart can quote the words of a wise person though he doesn't even understand the words he is saying. Someone observing might think that this person is very smart, but in truth it is the garment of speech that is concealing his actual intellectual capabilities, which are lacking.

2) A mean and spiteful person, may perform an act of kindness from time to time. Here too, although he doesn't feel the *middah* of *chesed*, his garment of action conceals his true emotions.

How do the *levushim* manage to conceal the intellect and emotions? It is explained in Kabbalah that the *levushim* have a very deep and powerful *ko'ach* that allows them to conceal one's personality, his *pnimiyus*, just as physical clothing can make an ugly person look good.

The Alter Rebbe is teaching us a very powerful lesson:

Nowadays, the *avodah* of refining our intellect and emotions is very difficult; it says in Tanya refining the *middos* is an *avodah* reserved for

*tzadikim*, and elsewhere it is explained that the refinement of our intellect will only happen once Moshiach comes. Nevertheless, we still need to do our *avodah* with our garments of thought, speech, and action. If we make sure that our *levushim* are beautiful, they will cause us to appear beautiful though we may be lacking in our *pnimiyus*.

Simply speaking, it seems that the spiritual beauty that comes from the *levushim* extends outwards only, to the eyes of an outside observer. However from the words of the Alter Rebbe it is clear that the *levushim* have such a strong *ko'ach* that they can actually change our *pnimiyus*! As we can see in the two above-mentioned examples; although the simple person is not so



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לזכות  
 גאלדא שתחי'  
 לרגל הגיעה לגיל שנים עשרה שנה,  
 היא עונת בת מצוה  
 ביום כ"ח מנחם אב ה'תשע"ו  
 שנת הקהל  
 נדפס ע"י הוריה  
 הרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק  
 וזוגתו מרת ח' שצערא ומשפחתם  
 שיחיו  
 שפאלטער



smart now, through speaking words of *chochmah*, he will eventually become smarter. Likewise, through performing kind actions, the mean person will slowly become nicer. So too in our lives; if we think, act, and speak in the right way, the *ko'ach* of these *levushim* will cause a change in our *pnimiyus*.

We see this idea in the following story:

Once, people complained to the Alter Rebbe about the behavior of certain Chassidim, who would spend a long time davening despite the fact that they were not on a level to do so adequately; they were doing it only *be'chitzoniyus*. The Alter Rebbe answered them by quoting the Mishnah<sup>1</sup> that “if a person pretends that he is lame, blind, etc. he will not die from old age until he

actually becomes like that.” So too these “pretenders” will not die before they actually reach the level they are pretending to be on.

From all of this we can learn a special lesson regarding Simchas Beis Hashoevah:

Simchas Beis Hashoevah comes after the *avodah* of Chodesh Elul, the twelve days from Chai Elul until Rosh Hashanah, the days of *selichos*, Rosh Hashanah, Aseres Yemei Teshuvah, Yom Kippur, the days between Yom Kippur and Sukkos, and the first days of Sukkos.

After an honest spiritual accounting, there will be some who will realize that they have remained unaffected by these special days, and have yet to begin their *avodah*. This may cause them to be downhearted

and depressed, and ask themselves “What do I have to celebrate at Simchas Beis Hashoevah? How am I to dance with joy?!”

The answer to this is, *hamaaseh hu ha'ikar*—action is the main thing. As we explained earlier, *levushim* have a special *ko'ach*, our actions have the ability to change reality. The Alter Rebbe (a *posek* in *nigleh* and Chassidus) *paskened* like the Mishnah that “if one pretends....he will not die from old age until he becomes!”

We must do our part and dance, and this will bring about true change within us—a justified *simcha*.<sup>2</sup> **T**

1. Pe'ah 8:9

2. Based on the maamar of Shabbos Chol Hamoed Sukkos 5721



לזכות  
שניאור זלמן, מנחם מענדל,  
דוד, אליהו, בן חנה  
שיחיו

# The Power to Bless

SIMCHAS TORAH 5744

After *shacharis* on Hoshana Rabba, the *gabbai* announced the schedule for *hakafos* in the evening, and that everyone should use out the time remaining before Shemini Atzeres for *mitvza lulav*. As he finished, the Rebbe motioned in surprise and told Rabbi Leibel Groner that they should announce regarding the extra *tzedakah* mentioned in the *sicha* the night before.<sup>1</sup>

Shortly after that, the Rebbe went to the *sukkah* and started distributing *lekach* to those who didn't receive on erev Yom Kippur. The distribution for men took two hours, and another hour for the women.

A few minutes after distribution ended (around 3:30 p.m.) the Rebbe joined the minyan in the small shul for *mincha*, and then headed home.

On the way to the car there was a large group of children waiting, and the Rebbe gave each one a coin for *tzedakah*.

When he returned before candle lighting, there was a group of French women waiting, and at their request, he gave each one a coin for *tzedakah*.



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## EVE OF SHEMINI ATZERES

The Rebbe came down for *maariv* at around 7:30, put his *siddur* down on the *shtender* and turned around to the signing crowd, waving both arms in encouragement.

Following *maariv* the *gabbai* announced that *hakafos* would begin at 9 o'clock. The Rebbe then went to his room. [Rumor was that he asked Rabbi Groner to check whether there was *kiddush* arranged for the guests from out of town.]

Some time later, the Rebbe came out suddenly and asked for Rabbi Leibel Bistrizky (head of Hatzalah in Crown Heights). When he arrived a few minutes later, the Rebbe asked about Rabbi Yisroel Leibov,<sup>2</sup> who had taken ill in the evening. Upon the Rebbe's advice, he remained in 770 rather than going to hospital. (The *cheder sheni* of the upstairs shul was emptied especially for him, and a place was arranged for him to rest there.)

### An Extra Joyous Hakafos

At 9 o'clock the Rebbe came down to the shul for *hakafos*, and as soon as he reached his place he turned to the crowd. For **five minutes** (!) the Rebbe enlivened the singing, waving both hands vigorously.

(The Rebbe's platform was moved out slightly from the southern [=right] wall, and several senior Chassidim stood in that space. Some of them stood on the platform, and the Rebbe stood further to the left.)

After the first round of *Ata Haraisa*—the first and last *possuk* of which the Rebbe says every Shemini Atzeres—the Rebbe turned to the crowd and clapped along to the *niggun* being sung. Same after the second and third round. After the third round of *Ata Haraisa* the Rebbe started singing “*Ufaratzta*.”

The *sifrei Torah* were removed from the *aron kodesh*, and *hakafos* started.

The Rebbe was given the small *sefer Torah*, and he followed the *chazzan* to the *hakafos bimah*. The shul was arranged so that the pathway for the Rebbe was flanked by tables on both sides. Many people pushed closer to kiss the Rebbe's *sefer Torah* as it passed.

Rashag followed behind the Rebbe. He struggled to pass, and the Rebbe turned around to him.

When they reached the *bimah*, the Rebbe put one hand on Rashag's shoulder, while in the other

hand he held the *sefer Torah*, and they danced like this for longer than usual. All the while, the crowd sang the *hakafos niggun*, and the Rebbe nodded in encouragement.

As they turned back to the front of shul, someone removed the crown from Rashag's *sefer Torah* [to make it easier for him to carry], much to his protest. The Rebbe noticed that he wasn't following, and turned around. Seeing what was going on, the Rebbe told them to put the crown back on the Torah.



For the second *hakafa*, special guests from Eretz Yisrael were honored. The *niggun* was “*Chayolei Adoneinu*.” At first the Rebbe stood in his place, looking at the *sifrei Torah*. But after a short while, the Rebbe began to encourage the singing with great enthusiasm, using both of his hands, at times even throwing them all the way up and all the way down again.

For the third *hakafa*, the *sifrei Torah* were given to guests from other countries around the world. The Rebbe instructed that Zalmon Jaffe—who had

remained on the platform in the front—should also be given a Torah. The song was “*Sheyiboneh Beis Hamikdash*.” In the beginning the Rebbe clapped at a regular tempo, and then started waving his arms in circles at great speed. As in the previous *hakafa*, the Rebbe also raised his hands all the way above his head and down again.

As the *Sifrei Torah* were being returned, the Rebbe sat down. When Dr. Weiss saw this he got a bit scared, and rushed over to check the Rebbe’s health, and the Rebbe said he was feeling fine.



YOSSI MELAMED via JEM 139850

For the fourth *hakafa*, they sang “*Vechol Karnei*.” In the second verse—“*Oivov albish...*” the crowd stretched out the “*oyyy*,” and the Rebbe signalled for them to repeat that part over and over, waving his arms in circles. The Rebbe again lifted his hands up and down. At the end of the *hakafa*, again the Rebbe sat down.

The fifth *hakafa* began with singing “*Al Hasela*.” The Rebbe encouraged this greatly, in particular by “*hoch hoch*,” where the Rebbe waived his right hand right and left. The singing continued on with “We Want Moshiach Now.” Although at first they went through the whole song, in order, several times, the Rebbe encouraged just the line “We want Moshiach now!” With the repetition, it became more of a chant than the usual lively song. This went on for a while, repeating that line again and again, as the Rebbe stood still, only occasionally motioning to continue.

The *niggun* of the sixth *hakafa* was “*Hoshiah Es Amecha*.” Again the Rebbe revved up the crowd with waving both hands (as in the fourth *hakafa*), but the singing did end quicker than in previous *hakafos*.

As customary, the last *hakafa* was like the first, being the Rebbe’s *hakafa*. Once again the *hakafos niggun* was sung.

Upon his return to the front, the Rebbe turned to Rabbi Mordechai Teleshevsky, who most years serves as *chazzan* on Yom Kippur, but this year he was unwell and was absent. That being the case, the Rebbe said that he should now sing a *niggun* [in lieu of what he missed]. He sang *Aleinu* in the well-known tune.

The Rebbe turned to the front and faced the wall as he finished davening. He then turned back to the crowd and called out three times: “Gut Yom Tov! Gut Yom Tov! Gut Yom Tov!” and everyone responded in kind.

As the Rebbe left his place and went upstairs, along the entire way he motioned with his hands to encourage the singing.

These *hakafos* were especially joyful, and lasted around two hours.

#### THURSDAY, SHEMINI ATZERES

Before *yizkor*, the Rebbe noticed a group of *bochurim* hiding in a corner, and motioned for them to leave the shul.

In the afternoon, *anash* and *bochurim* went on *tahalucha* to shuls all around town, spreading Yom

Tov joy to all. For *mincha*, at 6:15, there was just a very small group of people left in 770, and *maariv* was even smaller!

#### FARBRENGEN, EVE OF SIMCHAS TORAH

At 9:00 p.m. the Rebbe came in and started the *farbrengen*. He asked that someone make *kiddush* and be *motzi* whoever hasn’t heard yet.

The Rebbe began the first *sicha* with the quote of the Frierdiker Rebbe, that “the mitzvah of the day is to be joyful.” The Rebbe explained the uniqueness of the joy of Simchas Torah, which is higher than intellect, higher than logical limits. Although there is much to discuss on this subject, the main thing for now is to actually rejoice and dance.

During the *niggun* after this *sicha*, the Rebbe commented that if this is [all the] joy that has been mustered after having rested, one can only imagine what it was like before... The Rebbe added, “I don’t mean to merely admonish—it should make a practical difference.”

In the second *sicha*, the Rebbe explained that the ultimate level of joy is on Simchas Torah, not Shemini Atzeres. This explains why the Rebbeim’s *hakafos* on Shemini Atzeres were more serious, and had a time-limit, whereas on Simchas Torah they lasted much longer. Nevertheless—the Rebbe pointed out—last night’s *hakafos* (on Shemini Atzeres) were extra joyful being that “*עמך ישראל צריכים שמחה*—The Yidden are in need of *simcha*,” and this is the only way to end the *golus*!

In time of need, it is sometimes necessary to amend the prevailing custom. To illustrate this, the Rebbe told the story of the war between Napoleon and Czar Alexander, during which there was much debate between the Jewish leaders regarding who should win. The Alter Rebbe maintained that the Czar should win—although the physical situation of Yidden would suffer, they would remain spiritually healthy. By Rosh Hashanah 5573 (תקצ”ג), at the

*Nevertheless—the Rebbe pointed out—last night’s hakafos of Shemini Atzeres were extra joyful being that “עמך ישראל צריכים שמחה—The Yidden are in need of simcha”*





height of the war, the tzaddikim each tried to influence the outcome Above. One Rebbe even rushed through *shacharis* on Rosh Hashanah, hoping that by blowing shofar first, his side (Napoleon) would win. Despite all his efforts, when he reached *tekios*, he exclaimed: איי! דער ליטוואק האט אויסגעכאפט —“Ay! The Litvak [the Alter Rebbe’s nickname amongst his peers] has preceded me.” The Alter Rebbe had deviated from the usual custom and had blown shofar before starting to daven.

The third *sicha* was an explanation and lesson derived from the above story for everyone. “Even a simple Jew has the power to alter the course and conduct of entire nations through his Torah and mitzvos.

“The fact that foreign nations are fighting one another, should bring out a greater desire for Moshiach; as the Midrash writes, “If you see other nations fighting, anticipate the footsteps of Moshiach.”

“Every Jew should take advantage of this power, and bless Jews with good things. Being that this

is an auspicious time, it would be appropriate for everyone present to bless their friends, and other Jews in general, ideally using the accepted formula of *birchas kohanim*.”

Based on the above, the Rebbe strongly protested those speaking negatively about Jews. “It is a tremendous *chutzpah* to say such things before the King of Kings, about his only son, the Yidden.”

At the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe blessed those gathered, together with all Jews wherever they are, with the *nusach* of *birchas kohanim*, “*Vayedaber... Yevorechecha... Va’ani avoracheim*.” (The Rebbe did not say the beginning of the last *possuk*—“*Vesamu es shemi...*”—he skipped to “*Va’ani avoracheim*.” See the second farbrengen of Shabbos Bereishis this year for the reason<sup>3</sup>.)

At the conclusion of the farbrengen, the *gabbai* announced the time of *hakafos*, and the *kiddush* for the guests in the time remaining before *hakafos*.

It was a sight to behold: large crowds outside taking a bite to eat while blessing each other with *birchas kohanim*. Others were busy saving a place



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27 TISHREI 5744, LEVI FREIDIN via JEM 223235

for *hakafos*. Another group was searching for some *l'chaim* from the bottles that the Rebbe had distributed.

Until the last moment before the Rebbe came into shul for *hakafos*, at 12:45 a.m., people were calling out to friends who had just arrived, standing on the other side of the room, and blessing them with *birchas kohanim*.

*It was a sight to behold:  
large crowds outside  
taking a bite to eat while  
blessing each other with  
birchas kohanim.*

12:45 A.M. - *Hakafos*

When the Rebbe came into shul for *hakafos*, he put down his *siddur* on the *shtender*, turned around,

and encouraged the singing with his hands for a few minutes.

The *gabbai*, Rabbi Moshe Pinchas Katz (who would announce the *pesukim* of *Ata Haraisa*) then blessed the Rebbe and the crowd with *birchas kohanim*. He ended at “*Veyasem lecha shalom.*” Surprised, the Rebbe said, “[Why didn’t you continue] ‘*Vesamu es shemi?*’” He then finished off with that *possuk* as well.

As customary, the Rebbe was honored with saying the first and last *possuk* of all three times that *Ata Haraisa* was recited. At the end of each round, the Rebbe turned to the crowd and clapped vigorously to the singing.

The order of *hakafos* was like the previous night: The Rebbe danced the first and last *hakafa* exclusively with Rashag. On the way to the *bimah*, the Rebbe spoke to a few people along the path. Reb Zushe Rivkin, (*gabbai* of Beis Menachen shul

in Kfar Chabad) was told “You are a *gabbai*—dance with the entire shul.”

The dancing and *hakafos* were very joyful, ending around 3:00 a.m. After the seventh *hakafa*, the Rebbe wished “Gut Yom Tov! Gut Yom Tov! Gut Yom Tov!” and left shul, waving his arm, enthusing the singing.

Groups of people singing and dancing continued throughout the night. There were groups in the big shul, the small shul and the street, saying *l'chaim* and blessing each other with *birchas kohanim* until the morning.

## FRIDAY, SIMCHAS TORAH

At 10 o'clock the Rebbe came into the shul for *shacharis*. When he got to his place, the Rebbe turned around and clapped along to the singing for a few minutes.

The Rebbe said all the *pesukim* of the first *Ata Haraisa*, as well as the first and last *possuk* of the second and third round.

At the *hakafos*, the Rebbe, Rashag and several senior Chassidim circled the bimah three and a half times. The Rebbe then walked to the other side of the *bimah* and Rashag came there too. The Rebbe put his hand on Rashag's shoulder and they started dancing. The Rebbe danced energetically, nodding vigorously to encourage the singing.

As is customary, the Rebbe was called up for “*Chosson Bereishis*.”

At 6:00 p.m. the Rebbe came into the small shul for *mincha* and afterwards, at 6:15, the Rebbe came downstairs to the *farbrengen*.

First the Rebbe washed, and then he announced that, being that *shkiah* would be in only a few minutes, everyone should use out the time to say *lechaim*, as this time<sup>4</sup> they won't be doing “*pores mapah umekadesh*” (the procedure performed when one is already in middle of a meal and Shabbos/ Yom Tov starts). The Rebbe then asked that “*Vesamachta*” and “*Ata Vechartanu*” be sung.

In the first *sicha*, the Rebbe spoke about the Jews behind the Iron Curtain. “In their merit we will leave *golus* soon, and then everyone will recognize that... [the Rebbe began to sing] ‘*Nyet nyet nikavo...*’”

The Rebbe then reminded people about *Chitas*—the Chumash for Friday and Shabbos, and the whole Bereishis on Shabbos. Regarding *shnayim mikra*, the *minhag* is to say the portion of *Vezos*

*Habrachah* on the day before Simchas Torah (as the Frierdiker Rebbe instructed). Whoever didn't do so should make sure to catch up on it now. Additionally, there is *shanyim mikra* for Parshas Bereishis. For those complaining, wondering how it is possible to do all of the above in such short time, they should know just like Hashem can do the impossible—*nimna hanima'os*, a Jew too can achieve the impossible.

Following this, there was a lengthy explanation on the daily Chumash, the lessons from it, and its connection to Simchas Torah. The Rebbe concluded with a *bracha* that all the “revelations” of Simchas Torah should be drawn down and have a positive effect with blessings in all areas necessary—*בני חיי ומזורי*. Based on this, the Rebbe strongly negated fasting and self-affliction, saying, “Hashem doesn't want fasters, He wants followers (פאלגערס)!”

The Rebbe then began his father's *hakafos niggun*.

After the *maamar*, the Rebbe instructed to sing the *hachanah niggun*, then *Daled Bavos* and *Nye Zhuritzi*. After that was bentching. The Rebbe then gave the *challos* to Reb Moshe Yeruslavski (head of *Hachnasas Orchim*), and went to his place for *maariv*.

The *chazzan* inserted joyful tunes in the *nusach* of *maariv* and the Rebbe tapped along on the *shtender*. The Rebbe said *kaddish* for his maternal grandmother, Rebbetzin Rochel, whose *yahrtzeit* is on 24 Tishrei.

After davening the Rebbe turned to the crowd, waving his hand. They wished “Gut Shabbos!” (though the Rebbe may have meant to encourage singing), to which the Rebbe responded “Gut Shabbos!” He repeated it, as the whole congregation answered again.

## SHABBOS BEREISHIS

At 8:30 a.m. the Rebbe came in for *Tehillim*, and said *kaddish* after each *sefer* (as well as by the rest of the *tefillos* that day.)

Several times during *shacharis* the *chazzan* added in tunes from *Yomin Nora'im* and Yom Tov, as is usually done on Shabbos Bereishis, and the Rebbe tapped along on the *shtender* in rhythm.

At 1:30 p.m. there was a *farbrengen*, during which the Rebbe said that, as customary, the *gabbai* should sell the “mitzvos” (*pesichas ha'aron*, *hagbah*, *gelilah* etc.), but he should start with saying a *dvar Torah*, as Torah must always precede mitzvos.



YOSSI MELAMED via JEM 114627

KOS SHEL BRACHA, MOTZEI SIMCHAS TORAH 5744.

The farbrengen ended at 4:30, and was followed by *mincha*.

At 6:15, the second farbrengen<sup>5</sup> started with the Rebbe washing his hands for bread. As a continuation from the farbrengen of Simchas Torah, the Rebbe said to sing “*Vesamachta*,” with even more vigour than the day before.

The Rebbe began by explaining that after all of the *Yomim Tovim* of Tishrei, now is the time we must start work on keeping the inspiration and joy for the rest of the year. This includes in a literal sense, being physically happy. Therefore, the Rebbe continued, we will now distribute bottles of *mashke* to the assembled. Being that it’s not practically possible to give every single person a bottle—there are simply not enough bottles, and one person cannot drink an entire bottle—the fairest way would be to appoint the Kohanim as intermediaries. Within the Kohanim themselves, whoever gets there first, wins.

Several Kohanim approached and received bottles. When the bottles ran out, the Rebbe gave out *mashke* in cups. While the Kohanim returned to their places to give out the *mashke*, the Rebbe explained that although generally one shouldn’t use Kohanim for work, however with this instance being a labor of joy, surely they would “forgive” us.

*Seeing one Kohen with a full bottle, the Rebbe said: “There are some Kohanim already making calculations as to how much to give out now and how much to take home. That wasn’t the idea...”*

Seeing one Kohen with a full bottle, the Rebbe asked why he hadn’t distributed it. “There are some Kohanim already making calculations as to how much to give out now and how much to take home. That wasn’t the idea; they should give it all out now.”

Understandably, everyone wanted the *zechus* to receive *mashke* from the Rebbe, causing some commotion. The Rebbe reacted, saying “There are those who think that through making a tumult they’ll make a difference. To this the response is לא ה’ ברעש ה’—Hashem is not [found] in the noise.”<sup>6</sup>

The Rebbe turned to one Kohen and asked whether he had given out all his *mashke*. He raised the bottle, clearly empty. The Rebbe said he should take home the “old barrel”<sup>7</sup> and fill it with “new wine” or “old wine,” and continue distributing in the following days.

#### *Kos Shel Bracha*

The Rebbe led the *zimun* in bentching and then davened *maariv* next to the farbrengen place, (a small temporary “wall” was put up in front of the *shtender* that was brought there). After *maariv* the Rebbe made *havdalah*, which led into *kos shel bracha*, as thousands of people approached and received wine from the Rebbe. The Rebbe also gave out bottles of *mashke* to rabbonim, shluchim, *askanim*, and the *zochim b’goral* (those who won the raffles to spend Yom Tov with the Rebbe, as representatives of their communities).

The artist Reb Baruch Nachshon also received a bottle, and the Rebbe told him to mix the *mashke* into his paint. When someone took a bottle on his own, and someone else tried making him return it, the Rebbe waved dismissively [that he should keep it]. When Reb Zalman Teibel went by, the Rebbe told him to sing “*Ech Ti*”—Who Knows One in Russian, encouraging with his gaze and his hand.<sup>8</sup>

On Simchas Torah, a *bochur* fell from high up on the bleachers, and was taken to the hospital. On Shabbos, he had recovered sufficiently to be discharged, and walked back to 770. When he went by, Rabbi Groner told the Rebbe “This is the *bochur* that fell.” The Rebbe responded “Fell?!” and gave the *bochur* a bottle of *mashke*, saying “שבע יפול צדיק וקם ווקם—A *tzaddik* falls seven times, and gets up.”<sup>9</sup> **T**

1. In the *sicha* on the eve of Hoshana Raba, the Rebbe said that a special request (הצעה בקשה והפצרה) should be publicized that everyone add in *tzedakah*. After the *sicha* the Rebbe distributed dollars through the *tankistin*.

2. Head of Tzach in Eretz Yisroel, who was spending Tishrei with the Rebbe.

3. *Hisva’aduyos* 5744 vol 1, p. 367

4. On the second day of Rosh Hashanah, they were *pores mapah*, and it caused confusion.

5. When Shabbos followed a Yom Tov, there would be a regular Shabbos *mevarchim* farbrengen in the early afternoon, and then a second one in the evening, as a continuation of Yom Tov. These ended with *havdalah*, and *kos shel bracha*.

6. *Melachim* 1, 19:11

7. Cf. *Avot* 4:20

8. See *Behind the Picture*, Derher Nissan, 5776

9. *Mishlei* 24:16



# כתב יד קודש

לזכות  
ילדינו היקרים  
יצחק צבי, מנחם מענדל, אברהם מאיר,  
יהודית, ישראל ארי' לייב  
שיגדלו להיות חסידים יראי שמים ולמדנים  
נדפס ע"י הוריהם  
הרה"ת ר' אליעזר וזוגתו חנה שיחי  
וואלף

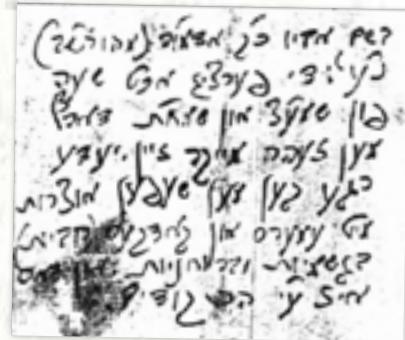


# Fill it Up

The culmination of the festive month of Tishrei is the forty-eight hour period of Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah; days of joy and unparalleled celebration.

Here, the Rebbe explains how important it is to actually dance during these days, and the positive effect it can have on the entire year.

The following is the ending of a draft the Rebbe wrote as an introduction to the Friediker Rebbe's *maamar*, published in honor of Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah 5711.



The Rebbe, my father-in-law הכ"מ, cautioned—repeating the words of his father, the Rebbe Rashab:

The forty-eight hours of Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah must be extremely cherished. At every minute, one can draw treasures with buckets and barrels [filled with] material and spiritual [blessings].

This is accomplished through dancing.<sup>1</sup>

והזהיר כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הכ"מ בשם אביו  
כ"ק אדמו"ר (מהורש"ב) נ"ע: די פערציג  
אכט שעה פון שמע"צ און שמח"ת דארף  
מען זעהר מייקר זיין, יעדע רגע קען  
מען שעפען אוצרות מיט עמערס און  
קאדקעס (חביות) בגשמיות וברוחניות.  
און דאס איז ע"י הריקודים.

1. Igros Kodesh vol. 4 p. 19

# DAYS OF MEANING

EXPLORING SPECIAL DATES ON OUR CALENDAR

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## 2 TISHREI

*Yahrtzeit of Rebbetzin Sheina Horenshtein*

Rebbetzin Sheina, the youngest daughter of the Frierdiker Rebbe, was born in Lubavitch in the year 5664 (תריס"ד). In 5692 (תרצ"ב), she married Reb Mendel Horenshtein, a grandson of the Rebbe Maharash.

With the outbreak of WWII, the Horenshteins attempted to escape the impending holocaust with the rest of the Frierdiker Rebbe's family, but, as citizens of Poland, they were unable to leave. After arriving in the US, the Frierdiker Rebbe expended much effort to secure visas for them but to no avail. The Horenshteins were deported to the infamous death camp Treblinka. A survivor of that camp reported to the Rebbe<sup>1</sup> that Rebbetzin Sheina was taken to the gas chambers on Beis Tishrei 5703. Hy"ד.

The Rebbe spoke and told stories about her a number of times at farbrengens over the years.<sup>2</sup>

{IN THE REBBE'S PRESENCE}

The Rebbe would say *kaddish* every year on her *yahrtzeit*, the second day of Rosh Hashanah.

יג

## 6 TISHREI

*Yahrtzeit of Rebbetzin Chana, the Rebbe's mother*

Rebbetzin Chana, the Rebbe's mother passed away Vov Tishrei 5725. (See Derher Issue 102 for a comprehensive overview of Rebbetzin Chana, her life, and her *histalkus*.)

{IN THE REBBE'S PRESENCE}

Every year on Vov Tishrei the Rebbe would daven at the *amud* and say *kaddish*, and hold a *farbrengen*.



In the later years, this *farbrengen* was televised and broadcast live.

In Rebbetzin Chana's *zechus* the Rebbe started Keren Chana, a fund to provide financial aid to girls who wished to learn in Jewish seminaries. Every year—when Vov Tishrei was on a weekday—the Rebbe would announce a *magbis* (an appeal for *tzedakah*) for this fund.

The Rebbe would also encourage an added *shturem* in the *mitvzoim* that are related to women—ח' - חלה (kashrus) ו' - נדה (*taharas hamishpacha*), ח' - הדלקת נר (neshek)—*roshei teivos* "Chana."

כד

## 13 TISHREI

*Yom Hilula of the Rebbe Maharash*

The Rebbe Maharash was *nistalek* in Lubavitch on Yud-Gimmel Tishrei 5643 (תרמ"ג).

The Rebbe would often refer to the Rebbe Maharash as the "*Baal Horaah of Lechatchila Ariber*," quoting the Rebbe Maharash's famous saying that "the world says if you can't go under, go over. I say go over to begin with (*lechatchila ariber*)."

{IN THE REBBE'S PRESENCE}

Starting 5733, the Rebbe would *farbreng* every year on this day.



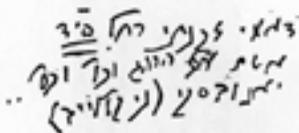
## 24 TISHREI

*Yahrtzeit of  
Rebbetzin Rochel Yanovsky*

In 5750 the Rebbe said a *sicha* on this day. In the edited version, the Rebbe added “[for a] number of weeks towards the end of the summer months—for many years—I was in Nikolayev and she took care of me.” (See “*Beis HoRav*” Derher Issue 48 (Elul 5776) for more details on this and an overview of Rebbetzin Rochel, along with the Rebbe’s other grandparents.)

### (IN THE REBBE’S PRESENCE)

The Rebbe would say *kaddish* on this day every year for his maternal grandmother.



1. See Igros Kodesh vol. 3 p. 173
2. See the farbrengens of 13 Nissan 5711 and Shemos 5725.
3. Sichas 24 Tishrei 5750.
4. Moed Katan, 9,1
5. See the farbrengens of Shabbos Shuva, 5733, 5736, 5737 and more.
6. Sichos Kodesh 5737 vol. 1 p. 45

# HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS



Frequently, when the Rebbe would farbreng on certain days—Shabbos or otherwise—the Rebbe would speak about events that happened in Jewish history on that date, and teach a *horaah* from them. Throughout the Jewish calendar there are many such dates.

In this column, we will discuss some of these days, together with the *horaos* the Rebbe learned from them.

## 8 TISHREI

*Dedication of the first Beis Hamikdash*

The first *Beis Hamikdash* was completed on 7 Tishrei 2936 (ב'תתקל"ו). The next day, 8 Tishrei, the Yidden started a week of celebration, which then continued for another week with the Yom Tov of Sukkos. Because of the celebration, no one fasted on Yom Kippur that year, which was the third day of the celebration. The Yidden were concerned that they would be punished for this, but a *bas kol* announced that on the contrary, all of the Yidden present would merit *olam haba*<sup>4</sup>.

The Rebbe spoke many times<sup>5</sup> about this day, and taught a number of lessons from it in *avodas Hashem*.

One of these lessons is that similar to the *Beis Hamikdash*, every Yid builds his own personal *Beis Hamikdash* in his private home, as it says ‘ושכנתי בתוכם—Hashem will dwell amongst **them**’—among every single Yid. Just as there was a dedication for the *Beis Hamikdash*, making it a fixed dwelling place for Hashem, so too, every Yid, even in the time of *galus* must celebrate the dedication of his personal *Beis Hamikdash*, bringing Hashem into his life in a permanent fashion.

We receive the strength and ability for this from the original dedication of the *Beis Hamikdash*. Every year on 8 Tishrei, the same revelation that was then is revealed now in a spiritual sense, giving us strength to fulfill this *avoda*.

“However, a Yid may ask: How can [my *avoda*] be compared to the dedication of the *Beis Hamikdash*, which took place in the times of—and with the efforts of—Shlomo Hamelech, in the most amazing and wondrous fashion (אין א מורא'דיקן און הפלאה'דיקן אופן)? What connection do I have to this?!

“The answer to him is that Hashem gives him the strength for this [*avoda*], and Hashem is ‘all capable,’ for ‘who can tell Him [Hashem] what to do.’ Hashem has given us the *koach* to fulfil this”<sup>6</sup>





*rosh  
hashanah  
with the  
Rebbe*

*Exclusive Roundtable Discussion*

לע"נ  
מרת אסתר ע"ה בת הרה"ח ר' יוחנן ע"ה  
נלב"ע טו"ב תשרי ה'תשע"ד  
ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

נדפס ע"י בנה  
הרה"ת ר' שמואל זאנוויל  
וזוגתו מרת צירל ומשפחתם שיחיו  
גאלדמאן



## ”אשרי העם יודעי תרועה”

The story is told about Reb Chaim Avraham, the Alter Rebbe’s son, who once came to hear *tekias shofar* on Rosh Hashanah from the Tzemach Tzedek, despite his old age and difficulty walking.

When asked why he would go through so much trouble, Reb Chaim Avraham replied:

“The *possuk* says אשרי העם יודעי תרועה - fortunate is the nation that *knows* how to blow shofar. Notice it does not say חוקעי תרועה - those who blow the shofar; rather יודעי - those who know how to. The shofar cannot be heard from merely any ordinary person. We need to hear it from one who ‘*knows*’.”<sup>1</sup>

~  
Chassidus explains that Rosh Hashanah is called “*Rosh*” and not “*Techillas*” Hashanah, because it is not just the beginning of the year. It is the head, containing all the necessary *chayus* for the entire year.

In more general terms, the entire month of Tishrei is considered the head of the year; as the letters of תשרי can also form the word רשית.

The head of the year is also connected with the head of the Jewish people; the *nossi*, the Rebbe.<sup>2</sup> In the Rebbe’s presence this *chayus* is most apparent and felt; through all the *giluyim* Chassidim witnessed on each day of this festive month.

But of all the special moments throughout the month, one of the loftiest times was certainly when the Rebbe himself blew the shofar and crowned Hashem as our King once more.

In order to help us relive these moments as they occurred with the Rebbe, the staff of A Chassidisher Derher sat down for a round-table discussion with five Chassidim who were fortunate to experience them first-hand: **Rabbi Yosef Kesselman** (Oak Park, MI), **Rabbi Moshe New** (Montreal, QC), **Rabbi Sholom Ber Spielman** (Crown Heights), **Rabbi Leibel Korf** (Los Angeles, CA), and **Rabbi Zalman Duchman** (NYC). We thank them for their time and patience, sharing these precious memories for the benefit of our readership.

THE REBBE RECITES HATORAS NEDORIM,  
EREV ROSH HASHANA 5737.



**Good afternoon rabbis, and thank you for joining us for this special interview.**

**Let us begin with a short description of the events in the days leading up to Rosh Hashanah in the Rebbe's presence.**

*Rabbi New:* During the weeks leading up to Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe began publishing the *michtavim klolyim*. The first would

come out on Chai Elul, a second one during the week of *selichos*, and the third one—all with a contiguous theme—was dated Vov Tishrei.

In those letters, the Rebbe would define and explain what the special *avodah* of the new year was; explaining and emphasizing what our task is in our work towards a *dirah betachtonim*.

These letters brought a special feeling with them. They set the tone—culminating the *avodah* of

the previous year, and telling us what we have to work towards in the coming one.

*Rabbi Kesselman:* The atmosphere of Rosh Hashanah began with *selichos*, on Motzei Shabbos. From shuls all around, from Boro Park and all over New York, Yidden would come to participate in the *selichos* by the Rebbe, and 770 was filled to capacity.

When the Rebbe entered the shul, the look on his face was



different than the rest of the year; it was clear that the *Yomim Noraim* had arrived.

### What would happen on the day of Erev Rosh Hashanah in 770?

*Rabbi Duchman:* I was fortunate enough that my father always brought me to 770, I was literally raised around 770, so I merited to be with the Rebbe throughout my childhood. In Tishrei 5752 I was eleven-years-old.

Erev Rosh Hashanah was a day that one spent hours in 770 and going to the Ohel; there was a lot of activity going on. I remember once, when Erev Rosh Hashanah was on a Sunday, that in addition to all of the regular activities, the Rebbe distributed dollars as well.

For us children it was a special day, as it was one of the few times a year that we didn't have to be in school and many of us would therefore use the opportunity to hang around 770.

*Rabbi Spielman:* The Rebbe would join the *minyan* for *selichos* at seven o'clock following which he would go to *mikveh*. Then he would daven *shacharis* with the *minyan*, which was a special occurrence; the only weekdays—until Chof Beis Shevat—that the Rebbe would join the *minyan* for *shacharis* were Erev Rosh Hashanah, Erev Yom Kippur, Purim, Tisha b'Av and on the days he davened at the *amud* (Vov Tishrei, Yud Shevat, and Chof Av).

At the conclusion of *shacharis* the Rebbe would recite *Hataras Nedarim*, then he would receive *panim*, and at the conclusion of all this he would go to the Ohel.

During the later years, beginning in 5738, *panim* would start a few days earlier.

*Rabbi Korf:* For us *bochurim*, *panim* was a unique experience. This was the time of year that we felt our *neshamah's* connection to the Rebbe. Standing in line with a *pan*, there was a feeling '*az mir geien betten zich bam Rebbe'n*'—that we are waiting to give ourselves over, to dedicate our *neshamos* to the Rebbe. This feeling of a Rebbe-Chossid relationship was something that we felt very clearly by *panim*.

There was once a *bochur* that expressed his doubts to a friend while waiting on the line, saying that it isn't possible that the Rebbe is paying special attention to each person, in a line so long and so quick. The *bracha*, he maintained, is more a general one. As he approached the Rebbe, the Rebbe wished him "*kesivah vachasimah*

*tovah*" like everyone else. Moving on, the Rebbe turned around to him again and said once more "*kesivah vachasimah tovah*." Obviously, his doubts immediately evaporated.

*Rabbi Kesselman:* After the line for *panim* finished, the elder Chassidim would approach the Rebbe with a *pan kloli*. Only the elder Chassidim were allowed inside to this 'event,' and the *bochurim* would not even sign the *pan*. That being the case, this was something I never merited to see with my own eyes.

Following *panim* and the *pan kloli*, at about twelve or one o'clock the Rebbe would leave for the Ohel.

As a rule, we knew that the Rebbe didn't appreciate people watching him in the Ohel. When I was there, I saw the Rebbe put on his glasses and read letters, and I was even able to see his lips



*Standing in line with a pan, there was a feeling 'az mir geien betten zich bam Rebbe'n' – that we are waiting to give ourselves over, to dedicate our neshamos to the Rebbe*



LEVI FREDIN via JEM 189029

THE REBBE RECEIVES PANIM,  
EREV ROSH HASHANA 5737.

YOSSI MELAMED via JEM 126882



LEVI FREIDIN via JEM 188004

moving, but I didn't see too much more. I knew the Rebbe didn't want us to watch him.

*Rabbi Korf:* Erev Rosh Hashanah and Yud Shevat were the only times during the year that Chassidim were allowed to be inside the Ohel together with the Rebbe, and therefore they were the only opportunities for us to see the Rebbe's *avodah* there.

One Erev Rosh Hashanah, I noticed that the Rebbe was tearing small pieces off of *panim* and putting them into a bag. Another time I saw—I really shouldn't have been watching—the Rebbe reading a lengthy wedding invitation written by one of the more interesting characters in 770, which he had filled with many novel and unique ideas. The Rebbe was reading it with much seriousness, reciting all the words on the invitation.

Seeing that taught me so much about the Rebbe's care

and concern for every Yid. The Rebbe is the father of literally every Yid, including the people that were lacking in one way or another. This invitation provided the 770 *bochurim* with much entertainment, but nonetheless, the Rebbe was reading it, with the full seriousness, on Erev Rosh Hashanah, at the Ohel. The scene made an indelible impression on me.

The Rebbe would return from the Ohel quite late. One year, as the Rebbe was arriving back in 770, I saw the door of the car swinging open before the car came to a stop; the Rebbe was clearly in a very big hurry.

**The new year has arrived, and the Rebbe enters the shul for maariv on the eve of Rosh Hashanah. Can you describe the atmosphere?**

*Rabbi Korf:* When the Rebbe would come into the shul for *maariv*, I remember his face being quite solemn. Even as a child, I was able to feel that the *tefillos* of the *Yomim Noraim* were not regular *tefillos*; there was a seriousness evident throughout the entire davening. The whole atmosphere was a higher one; the *niggunim* were different, the *chazzanim* sang in a different tone and we felt a very different feeling than the rest of the year. Although the Rebbe never moved much during davening, and this davening was no different in that respect, we still felt that it was still quite different than the Rebbe's davening all year.

*Rabbi Kesselman:* In 5734 something very notable took place. That year, the shul had been expanded to its full current size, and the work had been completed right as Rosh Hashanah arrived. It was then that the Rebbe agreed

to stand on a *bimah* for the first time; being that it was a *Shnas Hakhel*, some of us connected it to the custom of Hakhel in the *Beis Hamikdash*, where the king would stand on a *bimah* made of wood, while reading the Torah to the nation gathered before him.

From that year on, a *bimah* would be erected each Tishrei, and it enabled us to see and watch the Rebbe during the *tefillos*.

**Rabbi Spielman:** When the Rebbe would come in for *maariv*, he would begin with reciting Tehillim for about ten to fifteen minutes. Then, the Rebbe would indicate that we should begin singing “*Avinu Malkeinu*” (beginning davening with the singing “*Avinu Malkeinu*” was customary at most of the Rosh Hashanah *tefillos*, as long as it was not Shabbos). Following this, *maariv* would commence.

**Rabbi New:** “*Avinu Malkeinu*” and the various other *niggunim* during the *Yomim Noraim* were very special, as the Rebbe would conduct the singing by banging his hand on the *stender*. The fusion of everyone singing along in unison following the Rebbe’s hand motions was amazing. This would take place all year as well, but on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur it took on a whole new element of feeling and excitement. Often, the Rebbe would motion to repeat the *niggun* of “*Avinu Malkeinu*” a number of times.

### **Rosh Hashanah morning: How did one “earn” a place for davening and *tekios*? And what was the *seder* when the Rebbe would enter?**

**Rabbi Kesselman:** In earlier times, *bochurim* would

be standing from six o’clock in the morning and onwards to save a place close to the *bimah* for the Rebbe’s *tekios*. Some would faint, and the situation was becoming unbearable. By the time I arrived in 770 in 5731, they had made a *seder* that the places would be reserved from Erev Rosh Hashanah. Then, on Rosh Hashanah morning, you had to return to your place by eight o’clock, otherwise it was up for grabs. After we arrived at 8:00 a.m. to secure our places, some of the *bochurim* left for *mitvza shofar* to different areas and returned to their places in middle of davening. The first few rows around the *bimah* would be reserved this way, and around them, a bit farther from the *bimah*, the places would be open to the public. People would jostle each other for the best location, pushing and shoving and then holding on to their places for dear life.

I held on to a place in the second row in front of the *bimah*, where I could face and look up at the Rebbe during *tekios*. In front of me, in the first row, stood Reb Meir Harlig, Reb Sholom Duchman, Reb Simcha Zirkind a”h and others. We were all familiar with who stood in which place each year so everyone made sure that his companions’ places were not taken by someone else.

**Rabbi Duchman:** On Rosh Hashanah, a number of children—me included—would sit on the table that was positioned directly in front of the *bimah*. There was a special place reserved for children near a table behind the *bimah*, but I would be on the table in front, facing the Rebbe during *tekios*. From there, I was able to stand up on the table and see the Rebbe clearly during *shacharis*, over the

heads of the people standing in front of me. But what was more essential was the fact that by *tekios* I was literally a foot away from the Rebbe, being able to hear everything, including the ruffling of the paper bags as the Rebbe moved them around. However, I could not stand up to see the *tekios* because then I would be blocking the other people standing behind me in the first few rows.

We children had our own competitions and arguments over places and *mekomos kevuim*. It was quite *lebedik*.

**Rabbi Korf:** The Rebbe would enter the shul holding the shofars wrapped in handkerchiefs, and behind him the *mazkirim* Reb Leibel Groner and Reb Binyomin Klein would be holding paper bags, which they would place on a table located right next to the Rebbe’s *shtender*. These bags were filled with *panim* and letters that people had sent to the Rebbe throughout the year.

**Rabbi Spielman:** In addition to the shofars and the bags, the Rebbe would come in with the Arizal *siddur* and the regular *siddur* (Torah Ohr), and in the later years, with the newly printed large *machzor* as well. There were various other *siddurim* the Rebbe would bring in sometimes, but that differed from year to year.

### **Preceding *tekios* is the *haftarah* which the Rebbe would recite. What was the *seder* by *krias haTorah* and when would the Rebbe come to the *bimah* in the middle of the shul?**

**Rabbi Duchman:** Once *kriah* began, the pushing became crazy. As it progressed the room



got very noisy, and there was a major *balagan*. It took the Rebbe some time to get to the *bimah* before *maftir*; there were no tables creating a *shvil* like on Simchas Torah, so a pathway would have to be made within the masses of people, and it was a very difficult task. The path would open two feet in front of the Rebbe, and close two feet behind him.

*Rabbi Korf*: Before *krias haTorah*, the Gabbai, Reb Moshe Pinchas Katz a”h would make an announcement regarding the *seder*, ending off that “*m’zol vissen vu men shteit, un far vemen men shteit*—we should be aware of where we are, and before whom we are standing.”

The feeling of *tekios* was already in the air, and the announcement of “*yaamod*” before the Rebbe’s *aliyah* felt like a prelude for the exalted moments that were approaching.

On the first day of Rosh Hashanah the Rebbe came to the *bimah* when he was called up for *maftir*, just like a regular Shabbos. On the second day, however, the Rebbe recited *Kaddish* for the Rebbetzin’s sister, Rebbetzin

*The feeling of tekios was already in the air, and the announcement of “yaamod” before the Rebbe’s aliyah felt like a prelude for the exalted moments that were approaching*

Sheina, so he would come to the *bimah* earlier.

When the Rebbe came to the *bimah* for his *aliyah*, he brought along the shofars and the *machzorim*, and the *mazkirim* followed behind with the paper bags of *panim*.

**Rabbi Kesselman:** It was hard to hear the Rebbe reciting the *haftarah* due to the pushing. In the earlier years, the Rebbe would often cry during the *haftarah* of the first day, when reading about Chana, at *pesukim* such as “והיא פשה ומרת נפש ותתפלל על ה' ובכה” or “תבכה”. I remember one time, when reading Chana’s response to Eli, after he had accused her of being a drunk, “לא אדני, אשה קשת” לא אדני, אשה קשת... ואשפך את נפשי לפני ה'”, the Rebbe began sobbing; we barely heard the words.

Standing near the Rebbe on the *bimah* would be the *gabbaim*, *mazkirim* and people holding the *sifrei Torah*. In the late 5720s, another group joined: The Rebbe had asked that the Yidden that had recently emigrated from Russia stand near him during *tekios*. That custom remained from year to year and the Russian Yidden would always be on the *bimah* during *tekios*.

**Rabbi Spielman:** Although those that stood in the first few rows, like Rabbi Kesselman, were pretty stable in their places, the area a bit further away between the *bimah* and the *aron kodesh* was nicknamed the “washing machine” as *tekios* would approach. It earned its name because you would come in dry, leave sopping wet, and you were in a constant spin, being pushed from all sides.

One year on the first day of Rosh Hashanah, due to the fierce pushing as the Rebbe was returning to the front of the shul

after *tekios*, my glasses got pulled off my face, and I never saw them again. In order to witness *tekios* the following day, I had to borrow a pair from a friend; it wasn’t exactly my prescription, but it was definitely better than nothing.

### Let’s move on to the actual *tekios*, the part we’ve all been waiting for.

**Rabbi Spielman:** My father-in-law, Reb Berel Junik, related: The first day of Rosh Hashanah 5725, a few days before Rebbetzin

Chana’s *histalkus*, she was present by the Rebbe’s *tekios*. On the second day, when she was unable to go to shul, she told my father-in-law that although going the day before affected her health, it was well worth it in order to hear the Rebbe’s *tekios*.

Then she told him, “*Ir veist nit vos far a Rebbe ir hot*—You don’t know how great of a Rebbe you have. I’m not saying this as a mother; I’m saying it because that’s how it is.”

**Rabbi Korf:** For a number of years, I stood just a few rows

## Heaven on Earth

**Rabbi New:** Spending Rosh Hashanah with the Rebbe, was unique even in the context of other Yomim Tovim. All the Yomim Tovim commemorate an event in the past; Chassidus teaches us how to understand each Yom Tov as a current event, with a message for our day. But Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are so clear that even those who don’t learn Chassidus can relate to it. The *Aibershter* is simply sitting and judging the world. It is a very current and happening thing.

With the Rebbe it took on a whole new dimension: Rosh Hashanah, as we know from Chassidus is the *hamshacha klolis* for the entire year. It is the point of contact between heaven and earth, with the whole *avodah* of awakening Hashem’s will to be our king, which happens primarily at *tekias shofar*. Standing near the Rebbe during *tekios*, one knows and senses and feels that the whole purpose of creation, and this new *hamshacha*, and all of the Yidden’s *avodah*, is all embodied in the Rebbe, during these moments of *tekias shofar*.

Right before *tekios*, the crowd in 770 would swell. All of the shuls in Crown Heights emptied out, and their congregants came to hear *tekios* from the Rebbe, the *nasi hador*.

During the moments that the Rebbe blew the shofar, we were all “*guf echad*,” totally united; the thousands of people packed into the shul merged into one entity, with the Rebbe, the *nosi*, as its mind and heartbeat. Words cannot adequately describe the feeling that enveloped the room during those moments.

These were times that we literally transcended the physical limitations of the body; no matter how crushed one felt by the massive crowd, it was meaningless in the face of the magnitude of the moment.

The Rebbe’s face changed entirely. It looked like fire; it was awe inspiring and it was difficult to gaze at, yet at the same time you could not look anywhere else. Usually the Rebbe’s *tenuos* were the most simple, but now was entirely different.

away from the *bimah*. Standing so close to the Rebbe was not easy physically, but in such close proximity, one felt as if you were under the Rebbe's tallis as he conducted his *avodas hakodesh*.

When the Rebbe finished the *haftarah* and the time for *tekios* would arrive, he first looked around to make sure that the *sifrei Torah* were being held around him, and also to see if the *makri*—Rabbi Mendel Tenenbaum—was on sight. (Rabbi Tenenbaum was the *baal tokea* during *musaf*.) By this point, the *mazkirim* would have already placed the bags of *panim* on the *bimah* and the Rebbe began moving them around to bring them closer to himself. The Rebbe made sure that the *siddur* was open, that the bags were in their proper place, and then he would begin organizing the shofars.

**Rabbi New:** The Rebbe had a number of shofars. A light yellowish one, which had belonged to the Tzemach Tzedek; a black one, which the Rebbe Maharash had used, and later belonged to the Rebbe's father, HoRav Levi Yitzchok; and another white one, from the Friediker Rebbe. There was also a shofar that was sent from Eretz Yisroel that the Rebbe used for a few years after 5738.

**Rabbi Kesselman:** The 'organizing' of the shofars was very unique. The Rebbe would begin moving around the shofars and the handkerchiefs (a red

handkerchief passed down from the Tzemach Tzedek, a large white handkerchief, and another one), covering them and uncovering them again and again in a deliberate manner. While doing so, exertion was apparent on the Rebbe's face; it looked similar to a person lifting heavy weights, all the while moving around and organizing the shofars.

It was clear that there was some *rebbe'she hanhagos* happening in what the Rebbe was doing, which we did not see in other times. It was a special moment; this was one of the very few times of the year that we were able to catch a glimpse of such a *hanhagah*.

After organizing the shofars, sometimes for several minutes, the Rebbe would throw his tallis far over his head, covering the *panim* as well, and he would stand silently that way for a few minutes, leaning over the *bimah*. We would sometimes hear the Rebbe crying from under the tallis. I remember on Rosh Hashanah 5734, just ten days before the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War, the Rebbe cried very much, and we saw his shoulders shaking from emotion.

**So the Rebbe would organize the shofars and then pull his tallis over his head. When and how did he begin the pesukim?**

**Rabbi Kesselman:** After being under the tallis for some time,

the Rebbe put the tallis back to its normal position and pulled down its upper side. Then he held on to the two sides of the tallis tightly with both hands, leaving it in a straight position from on top. In a very loud voice, almost a shout, the Rebbe would begin "לְמַנּוֹחַ לְבָנֵי קָרָח מִזְמוֹר". Immediately afterwards, the Rebbe would once



RABBI ZALMAN DUCHMAN AS A YOUNG CHILD (BOTTOM FAR LEFT) IN THE EXACT SPOT HE STOOD DURING TEKIOS ON ROSH HASHANAH

*When the Rebbe recited the pesukim in their distinct tune, the atmosphere in the shul totally changed. In place of the balagan and tumult, came complete silence; you could hear a pin drop.*

again throw his tallis far over his head and covering the *panim*, until he concluded the *perek* seven times.

**Rabbi Spielman:** After being under his tallis for another period of time, the Rebbe would once again lift up his tallis and begin the *pesukim* of “*Min Hameitzar*,” leading the crowd, verse by verse:

מון המצור קראתי י-ה ענני במרחב י-ה  
קולי שמעה כחסדך ה' כמשפטך חגיגי  
ראש דברך אמת ולעולם כל משפט  
צדקך  
ערב עבדך לטוב אל יעש קני זדים  
שש אנכי על אמרתך כמוצא שלל רב  
טוב טעם ודעת למדני פי במצותיך  
האמנתי  
נדבות פי רצה נא ה' ומשפטיך למדני  
עלה אלקים בתרועה ה' בקול שופר

When the Rebbe recited the *pesukim* in their distinct tune, the atmosphere in the shul totally changed. In place of the *balagan* and tumult, came complete silence. The Rebbe would say them in a very loud voice, but the crowd was totally silent as well; you could hear a pin drop.



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**Rabbi Korf:** Before starting “*Min Hameitzar*,” the Rebbe once again picked up his tallis, and held it from either side, as Rabbi Kesselman described. Throughout the year, there were never such intense and serious moments like *tekios* and its leadup, when the Rebbe recited the *pesukim*.

The *pesukim* recited before *tekios* are generally verses of supplication. Sometimes the Rebbe would emphasize one phrase or another, and later in the year, when something troubling came about, we would sometimes see a hint of connection to what the Rebbe had said with extra fervor and emotion. This was most specifically by the words אל תבטח ביום יום; one year—5748, the year of the Rebbetzin’s *histalkus*—the Rebbe added a word: “*bal al yaashkuni zeidim*.”<sup>3</sup>

### And how were the *brachos*, and then the *tekios*?

**Rabbi Kesselman:** When the Rebbe finished saying the *pesukim*, he once again pulled the tallis over his head for a few moments. Then, the Rebbe picked up the tallis to its normal position and turned around once more to see if the *makri* was on hand. Now the Rebbe would begin the *brachos*:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר  
קדשנו במצותיו וצונו לשמוע קול שופר  
ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם  
שהחיינו וקיימנו והגיימנו לזמן הזה

**Rabbi Korf:** The *brachos* of “*Lishmoa kol shofar*” and “*Shehechyanu*” were usually recited by the Rebbe very loudly, in his unique tune. The whole shul was able to hear as the Rebbe said them.

Then the Rebbe would begin blowing; he would blow the shofar

with two hands—one hand near his mouth—and start the *tekios*.

The Rebbe would generally start to blow with the black shofar, the one that had belonged to the Rebbe Maharash. If the *tekios* came with difficulty, he switched to other shofars. This happened a number of times.

During the *tekios*, there are points where the *machzor* instructs the *baal tokea* to “confess quietly.” At those points, the Rebbe usually pulled his tallis over his head once again for a few moments. However, in the last years, the Rebbe did it very quickly, sometimes skipping it entirely.

**Rabbi Duchman:** There were some years that it seemed hard for the Rebbe to blow, and the *tekios* took a very long time.

There are famous stories of the Baal Shem Tov davening very strongly on Yom Kippur, dealing with a heavenly *gezeirah*, and the *talmidim* present at the time felt that there was a *kitrug* in heaven.<sup>4</sup>

When we, as children, saw the Rebbe attempting to blow the shofar, sometimes with much difficulty, we felt—like those Chassidim of old did—that there was a *kitrug* in Heaven, which we are totally unaware of, and the Rebbe, the *nasi hador*, is supplicating for the Yidden on High. When the *tekios* went hard, or the Rebbe was under the tallis for a long time before hand, this was how we felt.

**Rabbi New:** During those moments, tension filled the air, there was a strong feeling of intensity. I’m sure that there were those who, upon hearing those difficult *tekios*, were awakened to *teshuvah*.

**Rabbi Kesselman:** I remember that one year, in 5732, the last *teruah* took a full half hour, and



LEVI FREDIN via JEM140982

the Rebbe changed three shofars in the course of it. It went on for so long, that dozens(!) of people fainted, or almost fainted, and had to be helped out of the shul. That year, the Rebbe had specifically asked that the many Yidden who had come out of Russia and were spending Rosh Hashanah in 770 be on the *bimah* during *tekios*. The *bima* was filled to the brim with people.

I heard that there was once a person that was standing and



THE REBBE RECITES HAVDALAH AT THE CONCLUSION OF ROSH HASHANA 5736.

listening to the Rebbe having difficulty with the *tekios*, and he promised the Rebbe in his heart to accomplish a certain thing. Later, in *yechidus*, the Rebbe made sure that he had kept to his pledge.

During *tekios* and the moments that preceded it, the *bochurim* and *yungeleit* watching and listening to the Rebbe felt a very strong feeling of *hiskashrus* and closeness to the Rebbe. We felt that the Rebbe was giving us the opportunity to ascend to a level beyond our usual

limitations, and to become united with the Rebbe, the *neshamah kloris*. When the Rebbe would weep, those that stood close wept along, connecting to the Rebbe on the deepest of levels.

### Ashrei Ha'am Yod'ei Seru'ah: The *pesukim* after *tekios*.

*Rabbi Spielman*: As the *tekios* concluded, the Rebbe would say the three *pesukim* in the well-

known tune, raising his voice from one to the next, while the crowd would repeat after him. As in the *pesukim* before the *tekios*, when the Rebbe chanted them, the crowd was silent, listening intently to the Rebbe's voice:

אֲשְׁרֵי הָעָם יוֹדְעֵי תְרוּעָה ה' בְּאוֹר פְּנֵיהֶם  
 הַלְכוּן  
 בְּשִׂמְחָה יִגִּילוּ כָּל הַיּוֹם וּבְצִדְקָתְךָ יְרוֹמוּ  
 כִּי תִפְאֶרֶת עֲזָמוּ אֶתְּךָ וּבְרַצְוֹן תִּרְוֹם  
 קִרְנֵנוּ

*Rabbi Kesselman*: There was a major difference in the Rebbe's

*The Rebbe turned around and called out “Gut Yom Tov” three times, just as he would do on Simchas Torah and other Yomim Tovim. The crowd was shocked; it was totally out of the ordinary, and we didn’t know what to make of it...*

expression from before *tekios* to afterwards. I don’t understand too much in *Elokus*, *binyan hamalchus*, etc. but I can tell you that physically, before *tekios* the Rebbe looked extremely serious, and afterwards, the *pesukim* were in a tone that gave off the feeling that *m’hot upgeton di inyonim*—everything has been taken care of. I wouldn’t call it relaxed, but it was definitely a change from beforehand.

**Rabbi New:** The feeling of the tune of “*Ashrei ha’am*,” especially when the Rebbe called out the words “*uvirtzoncha tarum karneinu*” at the end, was a feeling of confidence; victory has been achieved, the year will be good, Moshiach is coming, and all is wonderful. We felt safe in the Rebbe’s hands.

**It is brought down in sefarim<sup>5</sup> that after tekios, the baal tokea turns towards the congregation and they gaze at his face. How was it by the Rebbe?**

**Rabbi Kesselman:** First, before leaving the *bimah* after *tekios*, the Rebbe had the *makri*,

Rabbi Tenenbaum choose a shofar to use for the *tekios* of *musaf*. Understandably, he would choose the shofar that the Rebbe had used, and then the Rebbe turned to leave the *bimah* with the rest of the shofars and returned to his place at the front of the shul.

**Rabbi Korf:** The Rebbe left the *bimah* behind the *sifrei Torah*, returning to his place where he put the *machzor* and the shofars down, and the *mazkirim* placed the bags back on their table. Meanwhile, everyone rushed towards the front of the shul to catch a glimpse of the Rebbe’s face while he turned around. The Rebbe would turn around and make a full circle, very briefly, while scanning the crowd.

**Rabbi Duchman:** As a child, I never knew that this was a *minhag* that has to do with the *baal tokeah*; I thought it was to look at the Rebbe’s face, kind of like looking at the Kohen Gadol after the *avodah* of Yom Kippur. When the Rebbe turned around we have a chance to see his face, and there is a big *bracha* in seeing the Rebbe’s face after *tekios*.

The situation would be total chaos. Everyone wanted to see the Rebbe, and they knew it lasted only a few short seconds, so everyone tried to find a position from which he would be able to see. Many of the adults would get up onto the table that I was sitting on, right in front of the *bimah*. Being that my view was now obstructed, I would climb on to the ledge of the *bimah* itself—a much higher perch—from where I was able to see everything.

Being that high meant I was able to see, but others were being blocked. I was not the only one committing such a ‘crime,’ and calls would come from all corners

of 770—addressed to the various perpetrators—“*Arup fun bank! Arup! Arup!*” (“Get down, get down!”) And sometimes I was yanked down.

**Wow!**

**Musaf on Rosh Hashanah is also unique. Tekios Dim’umad, Kori’m, Birchas Kohanim... Can you describe these?**

**Rabbi Korf:** During *Shemoneh Esreh* of *musaf*, Rabbi Groner would stand closer to the Rebbe, in order to see when the Rebbe would finish each *bracha*, and motion to Rabbi Tenenbaum when to blow the *tekios*.

Watching the Rebbe perform *kor’im* was unbelievable; the Rebbe would quickly drop onto his knees, put his fists on the floor, complete the bow, and stand up quickly enough to watch the *shliach tzibur* do it as well.

**Rabbi Duchman:** In the later years, my father got a place for *musaf* right behind the Rebbe, so I was able to see everything. There was *kor’im*, then *Birchas Kohanim*—all the Kohanim had to go out to wash their hands, and then they needed to come all the way back to the front, and that provided good reason for some more pushing. By now, 770 would empty out quite a bit, and it was possible—albeit with difficulty—to make your way in or out of 770, and I would sometimes go outside to bring in my younger siblings who had come later for *Birchas Kohanim*.

The custom in 770 for *Birchas Kohanim* was that the Kohanim *duchan* from on top of the Rebbe’s *bimah*. Towards the end of *musaf*, the Rebbe left the *bimah* and stood

at a different *shtender*, which was prepared right behind the *bimah*'s staircase. He would remain there until the end of davening.

As the Rebbe went off the *bimah* for the *bracha*, the Kohanim dashed up the stairs, competing each other for a place in the front row, to be as close to the Rebbe as possible.

After the last one-hundred *kolos* of the shofar were blown, and it was once again permissible to speak, the Kohanim went off the *bimah*, and the Rebbe thanked them with “*Yasher koach Kohen.*”

**Rabbi Kesselman:** As I mentioned earlier, Rosh Hashana 5734 took place shortly before the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War, and the Rebbe cried profusely during the *haftarah* of the first day. However, on that same day, at the conclusion of *musaf* the Rebbe turned around and called out “*Gut Yom Tov*” three times, just as he would do on Simchas Torah and other Yomim Tovim. The crowd was shocked; it was totally out of the ordinary, and we didn't know what to make of it. This same scene repeated itself on the second day too.

Then, as if that was not enough, as the Rebbe turned to leave shul, he began his father's *hakafos niggun*. It felt as if Simchas Torah spilled into Rosh Hashana.

**Rabbi Korf:** In 5750 the first day of Rosh Hashanah fell out on Shabbos. At the beginning of *shacharis* the Rebbe told Rabbi Groner that he would hold a farbrengen a half hour after davening. A farbrengen on the first day of Rosh Hashanah, a day that the Rebbe would usually speak very little, was unheard of. The *gabbaim* were under a lot of pressure; many people had bought seats in which they planned on

sitting during the *tefillos* of the next day as well, and now 770 had to be totally reorganized for a farbrengen. The table where the Rebbe sat at during farbrengens was also not in its proper place, but of course everything was set up, and the farbrengen took place.

### On the second day of Rosh Hashanah, as on each Yom Tov, the Rebbe held a farbrengen. Was there something unique about this specific farbrengen?

**Rabbi Spielman:** Before all farbrengens at the conclusion of Yom Tov, and this one was no exception, the Rebbe davened *mincha* in the small *zal*, as the big shul was in the midst of being set up.

People would save places from a while before, and although my memories are more general, I remember that it was not a very long farbrengen. The Rebbe washed for bread at the start of the farbrengen close to *shkiah*, and said a few *sichos* and a *maamar*. At some point, the Rebbe also asked to sing the *niggunim* of the Rabbeim. At the end, the Rebbe lead the bentching on a *kos*. Then the Rebbe davened *maariv*, followed by *havdalah* and then *kos shel bracha*. For *maariv*, the Rebbe did not go to his place at the front of the shul; instead, a *shtender* was prepared behind the Rebbe's farbrengen place, with a large divider in front of it to act as a barrier. Meanwhile the Vaad Hamesader set up for *kos shel bracha*.

**Rabbi Duchman:** My grandfather, Reb Yisroel Duchman, had a place for *kos shel bracha*, right behind Reb Meir Harlig, who would stand

## Niggunim

**Rabbi Kesselman:** In 5732 the Rebbe explained that we customarily sing the *niggunim* of the Rabbeim at the end of Rosh Hashanah as we connect the head of the year with the entire year. In connection to this, the Rebbe spoke about a very interesting concept. The Rebbe said that each of the Rabbeim—starting with the Baal Shem Tov—added one minute to Rosh Hashanah, and that this time represents the *chiddush* of each one of the Rabbeim. Through *niggunim*, the Rebbe added, we connect with the *chaya* and *yechidah*, the deepest levels of the *neshamah*, of the Rabbeim.<sup>6</sup>

The *seder* was that after we finished singing the *Beinoni* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, we would sing the Rebbe's *niggun*—“*Atah vechartanu.*” The Rebbe would encourage this *niggun* very strongly and it was a very *lebedike* part of the farbrengen.

very close to the Rebbe. When he passed away, I took his place, and while standing there I would help out by handing out the cups to the people in line.

It is interesting to note, that during *kos shel bracha*, the entire line consisted of a bunch of tables and benches. In order to get into the line, you had to climb onto a bench and after a while you would go onto a table upon which you would walk passed the Rebbe.

As *kos shel bracha* drew to a close, and the Rebbe walked out with his *becher* and *siddur*, we all knew that there are many more precious moments waiting for us in the days and weeks to come, as Tishrei had just begun.

**Rabbi New:** Just to end off with a few words: There is a known tradition of Chassidim,

that when we arrive at the point in *tekios* where one is supposed to be “*misvadeh belachash*,”<sup>7</sup> one should picture the image of the Rebbe. We all have that image of the Rebbe, whether it is from our own personal memories or from seeing the Rebbe’s image in pictures and videos.

There is no question that as we listen to the shofar, be it in 770, at the Ohel, or in our Chabad Houses, shul’s and yeshivos, that the Rebbe is blowing the שופר גדול on behalf of all of us, bringing our *tefillos* up High and davening for the entire *klal Yisroel* that we should be blessed with a שנה טובה ומתוקה.

May we merit to see and hear *tekios* from the Rebbe this year with the coming of Moshiach, may it be NOW.

**We thank you all so much for sharing these special memories and experiences. We pray that speedily we will have the final and ultimate *geulah*, and spend Rosh Hashanah this year together with the Rebbe. ①**

- 
1. Sichas Shabbos parshas Re’eh 5731
  2. See lengthy explanation in “Pidyon Nefesh—Regenerating the Connection” Derher Tishrei 5775.
  3. See letter by Reb E.C. Althoiz about the year 5687, the year the Friediker Rebbe was arrested; Likutei Diburim (LaHaK) vol. 5 p. 1358
  4. See Kuntres Toras HaChassidus perek 2
  5. Kuntres Limud HaChassidus p. 11
  6. Sichos Kodesh 5732 vol 1, p. 1-5
  7. Otzar Minhagei Chabad Elul-Tishrei p. 125

KOS SHEL BROCHO,  
MOTZOEI ROSH  
HASHANA 5738.





YOSSI MELAMED via JEM114315



Event:

# FIRST LUNAR ORBIT AND FIRST MAN ON THE MOON

Date:

**30 KISLEV - 6 TEVES, 5729**  
(DECEMBER 21-27 1968)

**1-9 AV, 5729**  
(JULY 16-24 1969)



Apollo 8 was the first manned spaceflight to successfully leave Earth's orbit, enter the moon's orbit and return to Earth. The three astronauts on board became the first people to see Earth as a whole planet, the first to directly see the far side of the moon, and then the first to witness 'Earthrise'—the way the Earth looks as it rises over the horizon of the moon.

Apollo 11 carried the first humans to the surface of the moon.

It was a Friday afternoon when the Apollo mission returned from orbit and it was a big deal. It was a very big deal. A major step in human exploration of space taking place at the heyday of space exploration. The Soviets, competing for space prominence, were firing their own rockets and spacecraft. The President, making grand speeches, promised space exploration using technology as-of-yet undiscovered; and the moon was in our grasp. A mere seven months later the first person stepped foot on the surface of the moon.

And in certain circles there grew a fear. How does Yiddishkeit accept these new innovations? Could it

possibly be that mankind was finally penetrating the Heavens? Would this bring the skies, figurative and literal, crashing down on humanity? *Migdal Bavel*—was that not a similar feat?

At the center of it all was the Rebbe, calm in the middle of a storm. As we well know, the Rebbe has clarity that cuts through the fog of *olam hazeh*, establishing every concept in its proper place. This comes to play in many events that would throw full communities and cultures, both frum and secular, into disarray. The Rebbe would guide the world with clarity, characterizing the events and providing the correct approach.

On both occasions, when Apollo 8 made its first manned flyby and when Apollo 11 landed in the moon, the Rebbe called special *farbrengens* during which he elucidated the perceived challenges presented by these scientific advances and explored some of the lessons to be derived thereby.<sup>1</sup> This in keeping with the Baal Shem Tov's teaching that everything one sees or hears must bring a lesson in *avodas Hashem*.

Let us begin by clearing up the potential challenges. These are split into two types—textual, based on a *possuk* or *tefilah*, and theological.

Two phrases were presented as problematic: The *possuk* says, "השמים הם ליהוה והארץ נתן לבני אדם"—"The heavens are for Hashem and the earth was given to people" it seems that people cannot reach the 'heavens', which at first glance seems to include the moon and planets. Also, we say during *kiddush levana*, "כשם שאני רוקד, כנגדך ואיני יכול לנגוע בך"—"The same way that I jump towards you and cannot reach you, my enemies should not be able to reach me as hard as they try." The implication seems to be clear; we people *cannot* reach the moon!

But these were easily answered, as follows:

The word '*shamayim*' can have several meanings. So it is obvious when we say "השמים שמים ליהוה" it is contrast to the word '*aretz*,' which in this case includes **all** of physicality, all *gashmiyus*, including the entire universe, planets, and stars. The heavens that Hashem is revealed in, and to which humans are not party,

is inaccessible no matter how many rockets ships one can invent.

As for the wording in *kiddush levana*, again, taking the words at their simple meaning, the translation is that when a person (“and old Yid”) stands on the ground and jumps up, he simply cannot reach the moon no matter how hard he tries or how high he jumps. Similarly we ask Hashem to keep us beyond the reach of our enemies. There is obviously no mention of taking a rocket and flying to said moon and touching it. There is no *makor* in Torah that man is not able to fly to the moon, or even to the stars far beyond.

However, the theological crisis was a little more nuanced, but is still played along the general lines of the frum world’s uncomfotability with scientific advances, a notion the Rebbe strongly rejected.

The religious establishment worried that the more the world can be explained according to basic scientific principles, the less need there will be for religion to explain the cause and effect going on around us. The less wondrous and mysterious the world seems, the less proof there will be of the hidden hand of the Creator.

The more confidence humanity has in accomplishing tremendous feats of technological and scientific prowess, feats thought impossible a mere few years before, the less humility they will have. To quote the *possuk*, “כחי ועוצמי” — “My strength and the might of my hand that has accumulated this for me”<sup>23</sup> will become widespread, causing us to lose sight of the all powerful G-d above.

The approach forged by the Rebbe recognizes that all technology and all scientific advancements are derived—like all things that exist—from one place and one place alone: the Transcendent Knowledge of

the Knower of All Things, Hashem Himself.

Any and all scientific advancement will only cause awe in the viewer, awe of the amazing power that Hashem has placed in creation, awe of the huge expanse of the universe and of the amazing discoveries yet to come, all from Hashem’s boundless wisdom.

Humans are not great, if anything they are small minded beings, caught up in what science deems impossible, in ideas to be falsified in the coming years. Reaching the moon was originally thought impossible according to science—due to overheating during takeoff, due to gravity destroying the vehicle as it leaves orbit, and other concerns—and yet it eventually happened. The fact that they reached the moon proves not only the brilliance of humans, but

לזכות  
החיילת בצבאות ה' הינדא שתחי'  
לרגל הולדתה ביום  
כ"ח תמוז ה'תשע"ו - שנת הקהל

נדפס ע"י הוריה  
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל הלוי  
וזוגתו מרת שולמית שיחי  
גערבער



also the absurdity of their claims to scientific ‘fact.’ The self sufficiency of humanity has yet to be proven.

By looking at the planets we can appreciate their greatness and Hashem’s greatness. The *navi* says, שאו מרום עיניכם, lift your eyes heavenward, see who created these. Viewing them up-close only heightens our awareness and wonder, bringing love and fear of Hashem. In fact, these sentiments were expressed by the astronauts themselves over the days of their flight, as they read the first ten *pesukim* of Bereishis.



JEM 287364

# THE LESSON

There are seven lessons in *avodas Hashem* to draw from the space journey and moon landing.

## 1: THE CRUCIALITY OF THE MISSION

The astronaut has enormous responsibility resting on his or her shoulders. The outcome of a mission costing over a billion dollars, and after many long ranging experiments, are dependant on the actions of this one astronaut. He cannot rely on the work of his fellow astronauts, or that the majority of his daily requirements is fulfilled; rather he must follow protocol for every single action down to the type of shoes he wears. Otherwise the mission is worthless.

At a *pegisha*<sup>4</sup> a few days before the *farbrenge*n, someone asked a presenter why an *aveira* is punishable with lashes. Is that not too harsh?

But looking at it from this perspective, the Rebbe explained, lashes are letting the sinner off easy! Similar to the astronaut that jeopardizes the mission with one wrong action, a Yid jeopardizes his mission in this world with this one misstep. The difference is the astronaut is only sabotaging a billion dollar mission, but the Yid is ruining the entire purpose of creation.

Each and every action a Yid takes must be in accordance with the directives of the Torah, the mission plan of the world.

## 2: NEW TIMES, NEW MEASURES

When traveling to outer space, the scientists made sure to sanitize the ship and the suits of the astronauts from any microbes. Because the rocket would be taking the ship to unknown atmospheres and conditions, there was

a worry that the microbes would react badly and create new diseases, and the immune system of the astronauts will not be strong enough to combat it.

In *avodas Hashem*, one can ask: Why must I grow each day in the service of Hashem? Why isn't what I did yesterday good enough?

Looking at the world and seeing how it changes day to day, and keeping in mind that the Gemara says, "There is not one day in which the curse is not greater than before," we understand that the only way to combat this is by growing in our *avoda*. The scientists understood that changing environment changes the circumstances, and we must react as well.

## 3: SHEDDING THE UNNECESSARY

One of the challenges faced by the designers of the rockets was getting the vehicle off the ground. To push off the launch-pad and to break out of orbit takes an enormous amount of force provided by the fuel engines. However, this leads to a vicious cycle. The more fuel that is needed, the larger the tank to hold it is needed. And the larger the tank, the more fuel is required to carry it, and so on.

The innovative solution was to create multi-stage rockets and boosters. Once the fuel is exhausted, the space and structure that contained it and the motors themselves are useless, and they only add weight to the vehicle, which slows it down. By dropping the stages that are no longer useful to the mission, the rocket becomes that much lighter. The thrust

of future stages is able to provide more acceleration than if the earlier stages were still attached. When a stage drops off, the rest of the rocket is still traveling near the speed that the whole assembly reached at burn-out time. This means that it needs less total fuel to reach a given velocity and altitude.

This teaches a wonderful lesson. If Hashem wanted us to conquer *gashmiyus*, the physical, why did he give us a *yetzer hara*? If the purpose was to make sure we wouldn't have 'bread of shame'—that we should acquire everything with work—why give the *yetzer hara* so much power?

But the ultimate purpose of the *yetzer hara* is to allow the *yetzer tov* to ascend, and in order to climb higher we need a bigger *yetzer hara*—the bigger it is, the higher one flies. However, once the purpose of the *yetzer hara* has been fulfilled, it is time to shed that part.

Three stages exist when fighting the *yetzer*. 1. *Iskafya* (breaking its nature and forcibly doing good), 2. *Is'hapcha* (transforming its nature to good), 3. The inbetween stage—killing it with fasting. Fighting it constantly, holding back, hoping that when Hashem is busy he will be able to indulge, is *iskafya*. Once he kills that aspect of the *yetzer*, it is discarded, and he is now lighter and able to focus on the other parts of his *avodah*.

## 4: ALL BELIEVE

From the fact that the astronauts prayed on the moon, and asked that people pray for them using *Tehillim*, shows that they believed in a Creator. They believed that the Creator watches

the world, and that davening can have an effect. These three points were obvious to the astronauts, even though there are some in the Jewish nation that have trouble admitting to them.

## 5: TO EACH THEIR OWN

Every person has a purpose in life and a place to carry out that purpose. An engineer in Mission Control, whose job is to facilitate certain aspects of the mission, can't suddenly decide to become an astronaut; and vice-versa would also be counterproductive. Each person must keep to his mission.

## 6: QUANTITY VS. QUALITY

Quality overcomes quantity. Small people, with a brain that physically only take up a small percentage of their bodies, are able to fashion a rocket that will carry them to the moon and back. The *tzura* overcomes the *chomer*.

## 7: THE WEARY JOURNEY

The trip to the moon is about 238,855 miles, and millions of dollars were spent on funding it. Your *neshama* traveled a much greater distance—מאיגרא רמה לבירא עמיקתא—all the way from the *otzar haneshamos*, to fulfill your mission and do what you must do! **T**

1. In fact during the landing the Rebbe spoke on three Shabbosim—Devarim, Va'eschanan and Re'eh.
2. Tehillim 115:16
3. Devorim 8:17
4. The "Encounter with Chabad" Shabbaton, where students would come spend time at 770. See *The First of Thousands*, Derher Elul 5776, for more about this.

## THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE: IT IS POSSIBLE TO REACH THE MOON

Israeli journalist Shlomo Nakdimon records a conversation he had with the Rebbe (a few years earlier in 5722) about space exploration:

"Will man ever be able to reach the moon?" asked Nakdimon.

"It is surely possible" replied the Rebbe.

"What will they find?" asked Nakdimon.

"What they will find, is something we will find out when they reach the moon..."

"How does Torah view these types of experiments?" Nakdimon pressed on.

"The discovery of the atom, its particles and its laws are more crucial in the Jewish view than the 'conquest' of space," said the Rebbe.

"The conquest of space is the advancement of science and technology, while the discovery of atoms corrodes the very foundations of science. Until now, science was perceived as a stable entity while Torah was no more than belief. Now, we see that all the assumptions of science and technology are not unequivocal truths. And this happened with the discovery of the atom.

"Thus, all of science's questions on Torah are removed, since science truly needs to be reevaluated.

"We shall see that with every advance in understanding the relation of atoms to each other, there will be greater need to reevaluate science as we know it today," the Rebbe predicted.

"And Torah doesn't withhold or prohibit exploring space?" Nakdimon persisted.

"Torah has no opposition to continued research," replied the Rebbe.



"THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE: IT IS POSSIBLE TO REACH THE MOON." NEWSPAPER HEADLINE BY SHLOMO NAKDIMON.



## TO READ THE ORIGINAL:

*Toras Menachem* v. 55 page 116

*Toras Menachem* v. 57 page 167, 204, 292

*Igros Kodesh* v. 27 page 223

*Igros Kodesh* v. 26 page 62

Letter 22nd of Iyar, 5721. Published at [chabad.org/1883374](http://chabad.org/1883374).



לזכות  
 הת' שמואל שיחי'  
 לרגל הגיעו לעול המצוות  
 ביום י"ב תשרי ה'תשע"ז  
 נדפס ע"י הוריו  
 הרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק וזוגתו מרת אסתר  
 שיחי  
 מרזוב



# The Real World

Our approach to “ballebatishe hanachos”  
–shunning the ways of the world

כותב לי אחד שרצונו, שבנו ידע אך ורק אודות  
 מציאותו של הקב"ה, מציאותה של "ליובאוויטש", ותו  
 לא מידי ("מער גארניט")!... וזוהי כל תכליתו. כל שאר  
 הענינים הקיימים בעולם אינם מציאות, כי אם דמיון  
 ("א פארבלענדעניש"), אחיזת עינים. . הילד צריך  
 לדעת - כך כותב אלי - אודות מציאותו של הקב"ה,  
 והקב"ה ברא את "ליובאוויטש", וכל שאר הענינים  
 אינם במציאות!

**Someone wrote to me that he wishes for his son  
 to know of nothing other than Hashem and the  
 existence of Lubavitch. That's it. This is his entire  
 objective. Everything else in the world is not a  
 true reality; just an illusion. The child only has to  
 know about Hashem, and that Hashem created  
 Lubavitch. Everything else does not exist!**

(Chof-Daled Teves 5712)

## What Does a Rebbe Do?

The officials had already come attempting an arrest. It was only a matter of time before they returned to take the Alter Rebbe to prison. Late at night, there was a knock at the door.

"Who's there?" the Alter Rebbe asked.

"A Yid!" came the reply.

The Alter Rebbe recognized the voice. It was his Chossid, Reb Shmuel Munkes.

Reb Shmuel came inside and the Alter Rebbe began telling him of what had happened that day. "You know Shmuel, they want to arrest me."

Reb Shmuel was unfazed.

"Nu; so what?" he said to the Alter Rebbe. "If you are a Rebbe, no bullet will harm you. And if you are not, then you deserve it. Who gave you the right to take away the pleasures of this world from thousands of Yidden?!"<sup>1</sup>



Above anything else, Chassidus came to teach us that the only true reality is *Elokus*. The whole

of our physical world only exists because Hashem hid away His infinite presence in order to create what looks like an independent reality. The truth is that *olam hazeh* only conceals Hashem's ever-present life within it.

This is the inner meaning of the *possuk* "אין עוד מלבדו" as explained in Chassidus. Not only that there is no other authoritative power in the world other than Hashem, but that there is actually no true existence in the world other than Hashem Himself.<sup>2</sup>

When understanding and contemplating this concept over and over again, we realize that the *gashmiyus* of this world in and of itself has no value at all.

It is only that Hashem placed us in this world in order to do our job of making a *dira b'tachtonim*. This is the reason to engage with the world.

But to become submerged in it and enjoy ourselves merely for the pleasures of the world is counterproductive and negates everything we learn about in Chassidus!

"When we realize that at the essence of everything in this world is the G-dly life creating it; the physicality is merely a byproduct of that *chayus*, we will automatically want to connect with the source of life and ignore that which is only secondary..." the Rebbe Rashab explains. "We will only want the physical as a means to connect to Hashem [through Torah and mitzvos in the physical world]."<sup>3</sup>

As the Rebbe sums it up in Hayom Yom, quoting the Chossid Reb Mordechai Horodoker, who heard from the Alter Rebbe:

"וואס מען טאר ניט טאר מען ניט, און וואס מ'מעג דארף מען ניט..."

"That which is forbidden [by the Torah], is certainly forbidden. And that which is permissible—is unnecessary..."<sup>4</sup>

For this reason, our Rabbeim taught us that the *הנחות העולם* (or in Yiddish *הנחות הוועלטליקע*), i.e. the ways of the world, the way worldly people assert and perceive things, have no place in our circles.

We disdain the notion of the "*ballebatsh*" approach. The Rebbe writes in Reshimos that to be considered a "*ballebos*" is a lowly level.<sup>5</sup>

## NO BALLEBOS!

The [Friediker] Rebbe related that when he lived in Rostov, his father, the Rebbe Rashab's apartment was on the second floor, and he lived on the ground floor.

On certain occasions, the Rebbe Rashab would have *kiddush* and a *farbrengen* in his son's apartment.

At one such *farbrengen*, the Rebbe Rashab said to his son, "L'chaim, *ballebos*!" [Referring to the title "*baal-habayis*" in the literal sense; they were sitting in *his* house.]

The [Friediker] Rebbe asked his father not to refer to him by this title again. "A *ballebos* is an unclean thing (דבר מזוהם)," he said.

*(Sicha Shabbos parshas Miketz 5713)*

In countless *sichos* at *farbrengens*, the Rebbe bemoans what has become almost inevitable in America, that even the most Chassidische homes pursue extravagance and luxury.

"You were born and raised in a small town in Russia," the Rebbe once said. "All you had was the bare minimum of bread and water. You never even dreamed that you would one day have your own living space, and certainly not that the floor would be covered in carpet. Perhaps you never even knew that something called a carpet existed! But now you're in America. Over here you think we have to follow all the customs of the place.

"True, by *hashgacha pratit* you were brought to America. But as the Baal Shem Tov explains, the reason you are directed to a certain place is in order to spread G-dliness there. Not so that you can follow the silly customs of this place...

"You spend hours and days exerting so much effort just to attain a carpet that covers the floor from wall-to-wall. The finest and nicest carpet available.

"What do you have to do with things like this?!"<sup>6</sup>

## WHAT IS PLEASURE?

The story is told of two brothers; one was *frum* and very poor, while the other was rich and not *frum* at all.

The poor brother had many daughters that needed to get married but he had no money to offer for dowry, so he traveled to meet his rich brother hoping to get some help.

The rich brother greeted his brother warmly and began showing him all his extravagant possessions. He took him for a tour of his mansions and beautiful dwellings, relishing in all the details and showing off his great wealth.

The poor brother had little interest in the riches he was seeing, but he knew he had no choice but to follow along until he would get some money.

Noticing that his poor brother was not moved at all by the affluence he was seeing, the rich brother finally asked, “Nu; what do you say?”

The poor brother answered apathetically: “If you’ll give me some money for my daughters; good. If not, I’m ready to go back home!”

“How can this be?” the rich brother asked. “Aren’t you impressed by all the things you’ve seen?”

The poor brother responded:

“There is a certain animal which I would rather not call by name. Her enjoyment in life is simply to lie in the mud all day. That is her dwelling; that is her food; that is her pleasure in life.

“There’s only one thing in the world that bothers her: she can only lie in the mud until her nose. If she could sink into the mud even deeper; now that would be her ultimate pleasure!”

(Sicha Yud-Gimmel Tammuz 5715)

## Let it Shine

At the beginning of the year 5702, a group of *temimim*, refugees from war-torn Poland, arrived in Montreal, immediately founding Tomchei Tmimim there. The Frierdiker Rebbe sent the venerated *mashpia*, Reb Shmuel Levitin, to assist and guide the *bochurim* in their new home.

In a letter to Reb Shmuel, the Frierdiker Rebbe explains how the atmosphere amongst *temimim* is supposed to be:

First and foremost, our own *daled-amos* need to stay clear of “stormy waters” of the world. We need to realize the absolute truth; that the reality of everything in this world is *Elokus*.

Our inner circle is altogether different than that of the rest of the world. We must open the “windows” of our *beis midrash* and let the light of Torah and *avodah* illuminate the darkness of the world. The darkness blinding people into thinking that they must carefully follow the latest fashions.

“I once said at a farbrengen,” the Frierdiker Rebbe recalls, “that I would wish to see some of the youngsters be meticulous about the mitzvah

of tzitzis as they are about the color of their tie, or the handkerchief in their outer pocket...”

The Frierdiker Rebbe even goes so far as to say that he could have come to America ten years earlier, after his visit in 5690 (תר"ץ).

“I could have saved myself so much heartache had I moved here then,” he confesses. “But I could not bring myself to move here until I was forced to [because of the war]. I saw how the custom of this country is to be so drawn after the *hanachos ha'olam*, the predisposed ways of the world...”<sup>7</sup>

## Urgent!

Another point that the Rebbe taught us is that we don’t have time to indulge and explore the pleasures of the world.

Every moment is precious. We are at the final moments of *golus* and we need to do all we can to complete the last things needed to bring Moshiach. The world is thirsting for G-dliness. Yidden are waiting to hear a *vort* Chassidus. How can we be lax and enjoy ourselves in a time like this?!

“Our Rabbeim considered *ballebatishe hanachos* a loathsome thing,” the Rebbe writes in a letter. “It is precisely this ‘comfortability’ that they disdained. This ‘good’ feeling has the nature of quicksand, trapping you inside and dragging you ever lower...”

“...Rumor has it that people [*anash*] feel like they have reached it all. They are content with their lot in spiritual matters (learning and davening) and they are satisfied with their ‘huge’ accomplishments in *hafatzas hamaayanos*. And, being that every living thing must grow, they found an area where to progress: they constantly add conveniences for themselves, and sleep peacefully and pleasantly.

“Is this the reason why their *neshama* had to descend from on high to this lowly world; in order to achieve ‘ascension’ like this?”<sup>8</sup>

The Rebbe assures us that the truth will prevail; it’s just a matter of time:

“Since Chassidus despises the notion of ‘*ballebatishe hanachos*’ so much, we can be certain that eventually this will be accepted practice by all the Jewish people. Because, as the [Frierdiker] Rebbe says in the name of the Alter Rebbe, Chassidus does not belong to one specific party or group. Chassidus is for all the Jewish people!”<sup>9</sup> **T**

1. Reshimas HaYoman p. 171
2. Shaar Hayichud V’Hoemuna perek 6 et. al.
3. Sefer Hamaamorim 5670 (עתי"ד) p. 19 (original edition)
4. HaYom Yom 25 Adar II
5. Reshimas HaYoman p. 266
6. Based on sichas Leil Zos Chanukah 5746
7. Igros Kodesh RaYYaTZ vol. 6 p. 84
8. Igros Kodesh vol. 19 p. 419
9. Sicha Shabbos parshas Miketz 5713

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## NUCLEAR ARMS RACE

Your father and grandfather only had a few dollars to their name, yet they lived a happy and content life. They didn’t have to deal with all the issues we have today: nervous breakdowns, mental crises, and so on. They didn’t feel the pressure to earn hundreds of dollars each week, without which they wouldn’t feel like a normal person.

Today however, one can earn a decent living very easily, live a normal life, and have plenty of extra time to help others, to learn Torah, and to spend time properly educating one’s children.

The problem is that the world today has a “nuclear arms race”—each country is trying to outdo the other in obtaining weapons of mass destruction. Because of this we need to expend all our resources and tax the citizens even more, just to bring this matter under control...

We have a similar issue in our community:

As soon as you hear of a neighbor down the street who obtained a special antique three-hundred-year-old chair, you cannot sleep at night until you get two of the same thing; for you need to outdo your neighbor! Or perhaps you can even find a five-hundred-year-old chair!

Chasing luxuries in this manner is eating away at us!

It takes away your entire mind and heart. You’re constantly thinking about what’s going on with your neighbor.

You don’t have one moment’s rest. No time to think about the purpose for which your *neshama* came down to this world in the first place. No time to spend educating your children. No time to turn your home into a holy place.

Your mind is preoccupied, because you read in the New York Times that so-and-so has reached the bracket of paying ninety-eight percent taxes, while you have yet to be written about in the paper...

(Sicha Purim 5723)

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## FURTHER READING:

*Shabbos parshas Beshalach 5724, sicha 1*

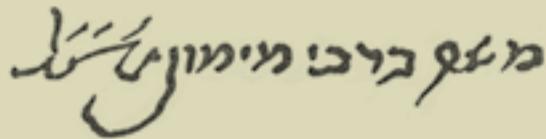
*Shabbos parshas Ki Sisa 5725, sicha 2*

לעילוי נשמת  
הרה"ח הת"ר ירחמיאל בנימין  
ב"ר מנחם הלוי ז"ל  
קליין  
מזכיר של כ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע  
גלב"ע ח"י סיון ה'תשע"ה  
~  
ולזכות אשתו תבלחט"א  
מרת לאה שתחי' קליין  
נדפס ע"י משפחתם



א) להשחלל ללמוד בכל יום שלשה פרקים כדי לסיים במשך השנה הבעל"ט,

RABBI M SELIGSON



THE RAMBAM'S SIGNATURE.



Every  
Yid.

Every  
Halacha.

Every  
Day.

THE LANDMARK TAKANA  
*of*  
LIMMUD HARAMBAM

## How to Learn Rambam

Long before the *takana* of *Limmud HaRambam*, Sefer HaYad was studied by Yidden around the world. They delved into it; *roshei yeshivos* gave *shiurim* on Rambam, deriving heaps of *chiddushim* in *Shas* from every word and letter.

However, by and large the *sefer* was not being used for the purpose its author intended; a *sefer* that every Yid, great or small, old or young, could use to know the entire Torah.

When the Rebbe instituted the daily *limud haRambam* on Acharon Shel Pesach 5744, the original intent and vision for this monumental work finally became a reality.

But this is just one of the many accomplishments of the *takana*. A one of a kind global initiative, uniting each and every Jew, from the wise to the simple, by studying the entire Torah - and specifically *halachos*.

A unity that is a prelude to the coming of Moshiach.

When the Rebbe introduced the method of learning Rambam as we do; studying the entire *sefer perek* by *perek* from start to finish, some may have felt that learning three *perakim* (or even just one *perek*) of Rambam a day is a pace far faster than Sefer HaYad should be studied. They believed that Rambam, being a complex and deep *sefer*, should be studied by first delving into the Gemaras on which a given *halacha* is based, and only afterwards learning *Sefer HaYad*. They believed that to learn Rambam without first studying the applicable *sugyos* in *Shas* would be disrespectful to the Rambam.

But the truth however, is quite the opposite; in order to respect the Rambam, one does not need to first learn the Gemaras. The Rambam did not intend his *sefer* to be a

commentary on *Shas*. In the *hakdama* to Sefer HaYad, he writes:

“I... sought to compose [a work which would include the conclusions] derived from all these texts regarding the forbidden and the permitted, the impure and the pure, and the remainder of the Torah’s laws, all in clear and concise terms, so that the entire *Torah Sheb’al Peh* could be organized in each person’s mouth without questions or objections.

“To summarize: [The intent of this work is] that a person will not need another text at all with regard to any *halacha*. Rather, this text will be a compilation of the entire *Torah Sheb’al Peh*, including also the *takanos*, *minhagim*, and *gezeiros* that were enacted from the time of Moshe Rabbeinu, until the completion of the Gemara, as were explained by the *geonim* in the texts they composed after the Gemara.

“Therefore, I have called this text, *Mishneh Torah* [“the second to the Torah,” with the intent that] a person should first study the *Torah Shebiksav*, and then study this text and comprehend the entire *Torah Sheb’al Peh* from it, without having to study any other text between the two.”

The Rambam makes his intention quite clear: the *sefer*’s purpose is to impart knowledge of the *halachos* of Torah, not the deeper meaning of the Gemara. That is why he called it *Mishneh Torah*; first and foremost, a Yid must learn *Torah Shebiksav*. Then, the secondary obligation is to know the *halachos*, the “Crown of Torah.” For this purpose the Sefer HaYad was written, and its study will give the student knowledge of “every Jewish law,” without need for any other *sefer*.

The Rebbe explains that learning Rambam only for the purpose of deriving *chiddushim* goes against the Rambam’s wishes. Until now, a *sefer* of learning Rambam for the sake of Rambam itself almost didn’t exist.

The *takana* is to learn Rambam for the sake of Rambam itself; not to figure out the source in *Shas* for the *halachos*, nor to derive *chiddushim*, but simply to understand the *halachos*, as the Rambam intended. (Once this has been accomplished, one can indeed learn *chiddushim* from the precise wording of Rambam.)<sup>1</sup>

## Restoring the Glory

*The Rebbe points out that immediately upon its completion and publishing, the Rambam was indeed studied properly:*

Recently we have instituted a new thing; having a set daily study session in the Sefer HaRambam. Essentially this is not completely new; we are restoring an old custom to its full glory (“החזירו עטרה ליושנה”).

In the Rambam’s times, and even for a while after his lifetime, the Sefardic communities had regular study sessions of Rambam. This lasted for quite a few generations. At some point this practice was also accepted in Ashkenazic communities as well.

(*Sicha* 29 Elul 5744)

While Lubavitcher Chassidim had been completing *Shas* every year since the times of the Alter Rebbe by dividing the *mesechtos*, the Rebbe explained that completing Rambam could not be accomplished by splitting the *sefer* up. This is because of a difference between *Shas* and Rambam. Although the placement of the *mesechtos* in *Shas* are in a particular order, the reasons for this order have no *halachic* implication;<sup>2</sup> thus, one needn’t study *Shas* in a specific order and it can be split up. On the other

hand the Rambam, when writing Sefer HaYad, expected the reader to have studied the entire *sefer* up until the current *halacha* and relied that the student would already know a lot of information.<sup>3</sup> The reader, unaware of what the Rambam wrote earlier in the *sefer*, may draw erroneous conclusions from the *halacha* he studies. The only way to properly learn Rambam is in the right order, from beginning to end.<sup>4</sup>

## Jewish Unity

“One of the principal elements in the study of *Rambam* is the unification of Jewry,” the Rebbe was quoted in the New York Times as saying.<sup>5</sup>

In those inaugural *sichos*, the Rebbe discussed the oft-mentioned need to unite the Jewish nation. The Rebbe explained that this unity can be accomplished by learning Mishneh Torah daily, because every Yid would be learning the same thing at the same time. Since “a person is wherever his thoughts are,” all Yidden are thus united in their common study. This unity is everlasting, as it is unity through the eternal Torah.

This unity expresses itself practically as well; Yidden who may otherwise have little in common will find a common language in the *inyan* they are all learning.<sup>6</sup>

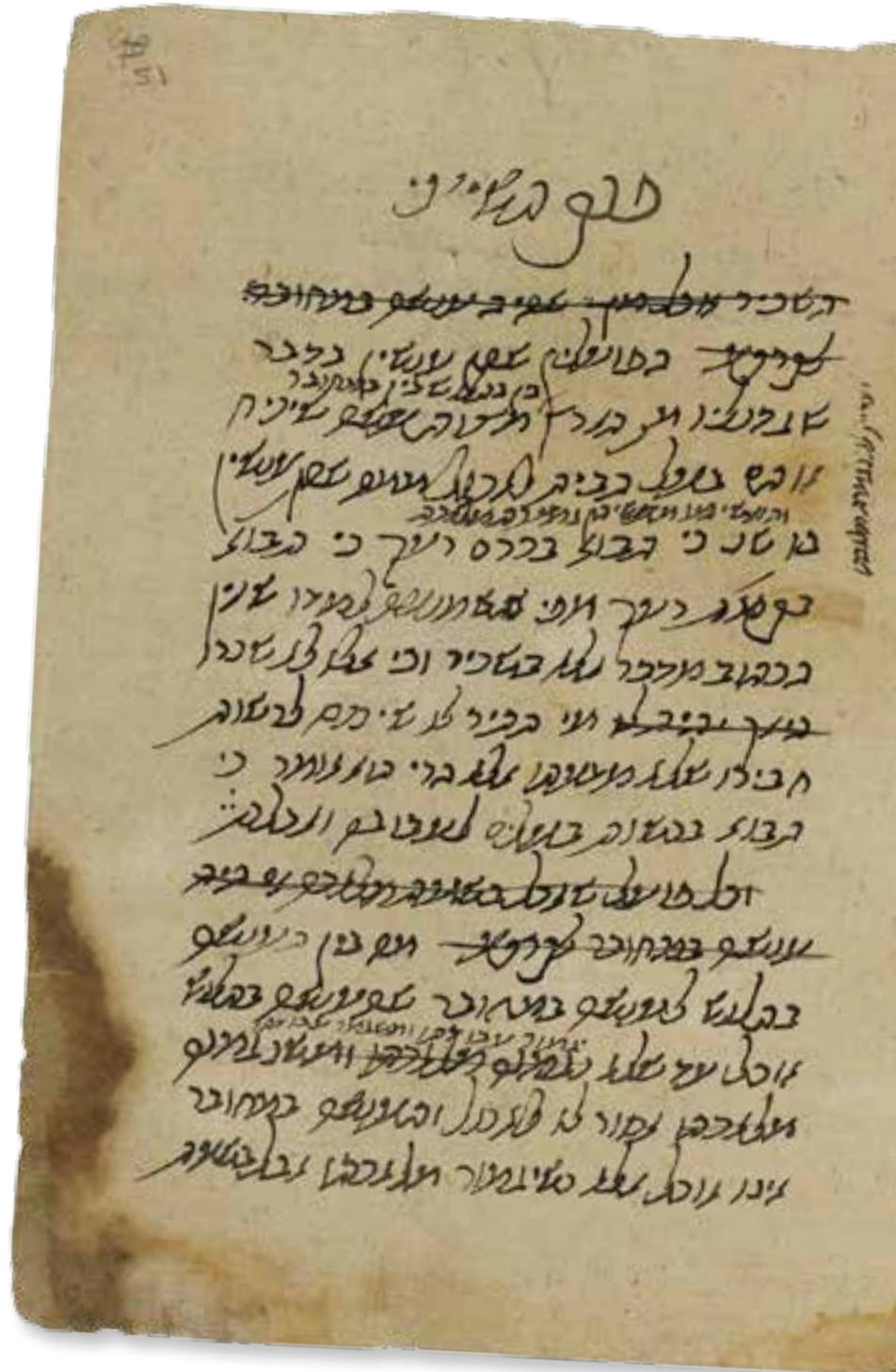
However, this unity could really be accomplished by the simultaneous

study of any *sefer* in Torah. Why then was Rambam chosen?

The Rebbe went on to explain that Sefer HaYad has two unique advantages:

1) As explained in Likkutei Torah<sup>7</sup>, the Jewish people are one united

body, but there are still some that are considered like “heads” and some that are like the “feet.” While there is a significant difference between scholars and simple folk when it comes to the give-and-take of *pilpul*, the difference fades when it comes to *halacha*. The



A PAGE OF MISHNE TORAH WRITTEN IN THE RAMBAM'S HANDWRITING.

Yidden who may have little in common will find a common language in the Torah they are all learning

schism between scholars and simple people with respect to *pilpul* can be compared to the difference between the head and the foot. The purpose of the head is logic and understanding, while the feet's purpose is walking—getting things done. On the other hand, when it comes to learning straightforward, practical *halachos*; simple dos and don'ts, all Yidden are equal.<sup>8</sup>

Sefer Hayad, a *sefer* of *halachos*, is a *sefer* that all Yidden can share an equal understanding of.

2) Yidden derive their *chayus* from Torah and are one with Torah—ישראל—אורייתא וקב"ה כולא חד the Yidden, the Torah, and Hashem are all one. Naturally, anything that is to be accomplished among Yidden must

come from Torah. Hence, שלימות העם—unity and completeness of the Jewish People—must come about through שלימות התורה—completeness in Torah; and the *sefer* used for that purpose must be one that contains the entire Torah.<sup>9</sup>

Sefer HaYad is unique in that it includes all of the *halachos* of the Torah. There are other *sefarim* of *halachos*, but none of them are comprehensive. For example, Shulchan Aruch contains only the *halachos* applicable to today, while Sefer HaYad also includes *halachos* that only apply during the times of the *Beis Hamikdash*, as well as *halachos* of *tumah* and *taharah*.

The Rambam clearly states that his *sefer* contains the entire *Torah Shebal Peh*, making the Sefer Hayad the only compilation that a person can use to learn the entire Torah. This is why the *possuk* that the Rambam uses to open his *sefer* is “אז לא אבוש בהביטי אל כל” מצותיך—Then I will not be ashamed when I gaze at all Your mitzvos.”

Sefer HaYad contains all of Torah, making it the ideal *sefer* to be used to unite all Yidden through learning all of Torah.

## The Greatness of Halacha

There are many components to the mitzvah of Torah study: 1) Practical knowledge—studying the *halachos* that everyone must know



THE REBBE HOLDS A RAMBAM WHILE VISITING THE CHILDREN AT THE LAG B'OMER FAIR, 5744.

# Sefer HaYad contains all of Torah, making it the ideal sefer to be used to unite all Yidden through learning all of Torah.



in order to perform the mitzvos. 2) To know the entire *Torah Shebiksav* and *Torah Sheb'al Peh*—this includes *Bavli*, *Yerushalmi*, *Sifra*, *Sifri*, *Tosefta*, *Midrashim*, and much more, as detailed in *Hilchos Talmud Torah*.<sup>10</sup> 3) Studying *halacha* in general, even the *halachos* that are not practically applicable today.

But if the uniqueness of *halacha* lies in its practicality, what makes *halacha* that is not practical unique?

Our *chachomim* placed *halacha* in high regard, referring to it as “the Crown of Torah.”<sup>11</sup>

The Alter Rebbe explains in *Tanya*<sup>12</sup> that just as a crown surrounds a person’s head, the “head” of Torah—the give-and-take of analysis in Torah, is surrounded by the “crown”—the *halachic* conclusion that arises out of it, which is Hashem’s will (רצון האלוקי) that governs our actions. This Divine will in *halacha* is greater and more elevated than the “head” of Torah, like a crown that is above and surrounding the head.

Therefore, learning Rambam—a *sefer* of *halachos*—has the advantage that the person learning connects himself with Hashem’s will. This advantage is one that learning any *sefer halacha* would provide. However, when one studies Rambam, a *sefer* which contains all the *halachos*, one connects himself to Hashem’s will in its entirety.<sup>13</sup>

## The Mitzvah of Knowing all of Torah

In *Hilchos Talmud Torah*,<sup>14</sup> the Alter Rebbe defines the obligation

for every Yid to learn and know all of Torah to include learning and knowing all 613 mitzvos along with their *halachos*, which are detailed in *Torah Sheb'al Peh*.<sup>15</sup> This is what the Rambam accomplishes in his *sefer*—he collects the *halachos* from throughout *Shas* that are applicable to all 613 mitzvos.

Thus, by learning *Sefer HaYad*, a Yid fulfills his obligation to learn and know the entire Torah, making it the ideal *sefer* to be used to unite all Yidden through learning all of Torah.

The Alter Rebbe also details<sup>16</sup> a *machlokes* between the Rambam and the Rosh regarding the study of *halachos*. The Rambam’s opinion is that one needn’t learn the reasons for the *halachos* in order to be able to fully understand them. The Alter Rebbe proves that this is the Rambam’s opinion from the fact that his *sefer*, *Mishneh Torah*, does not contain the reasons for the *halachos*. The Rosh, on the other hand, holds that learning the reasons for the *halachos* is absolutely necessary, for without knowing the reason behind the *halacha*, one could easily misunderstand its intent, and mistakenly use this *halacha* as a basis to rule in a case that seems similar, but is in truth different. The Alter Rebbe goes on to explain that in order to fulfill the mitzvah of knowing all of Torah, it is sufficient to merely know the *halachos* themselves, without their reasons. According to the Rosh, on the other hand, this mitzvah requires one to know the *halachos* of the mitzvos along with their reasons.

The Alter Rebbe rules like the Rosh; that one must learn the *halachos* together with their reasons. This, then, leads to the question; how can we fulfill the mitzvah of knowing all of Torah by learning Rambam, when a key component—the reasons behind the *halachos*—is missing?

The Rebbe gives two answers:

Firstly, one would still be fulfilling the mitzvah according to the Rambam.<sup>17</sup>

Secondly, nowadays, most Yidden are not able to learn and know all the *halachos* with their reasons. Indeed we find that the Rambam wrote about his day and age that learning *halacha* from Gemara is something that “requires broad knowledge, a wise spirit, and much time,” (and as a result a *sefer* that is “clear and concise, without questions or answers” was needed). So, if this was true of the Rambam’s generation, all the more so it can be said of our generation, that at the very least one should learn the *halachos* themselves, without their reasons, to fulfill the mitzvah of knowing the entire Torah.

The Rebbe then explains, after a lengthy explanation of the definition of the mitzvah of knowing all of Torah according to the Alter Rebbe, that the Alter Rebbe agrees that someone who cannot learn and remember all of the *halachos* with their reasons (due to a lack of time or intellectual capacity—both reasons that apply to most people today), should learn the meaning of the 613 mitzvos to the best of his ability, i.e. the *halachos* from *Mishnayos* and Rambam.<sup>18</sup>

## In the Meantime

It is a mitzvah for every single Yid to know all the *halachos* of the Torah.

Obviously, then, it is important for everyone to learn Rambam. There is no other *sefer* that includes all the *halachos* of each and every one of the 613 mitzvos; both the ones that are applicable today, as well as those only for the time of the *Beis Hamikdash*. There is no other way to fulfill the obligation of knowing the entire Torah other than by learning the Rambam!

Studying Rambam is not exclusively for Lubavitch. Someone might say, “I am not a Lubavitcher, so I don’t have to take part in this; I’ll study something else.”

Go find a *sefer*—other than Rambam—that enumerates and explains the *halachos* of every single mitzvah. Then there will be room for argument!

In the meantime, until you find another *sefer* like this, you must learn Rambam, because you have an obligation to know all of the mitzvos already today. And you probably won’t find another *sefer* anyway; according to the experts, a *sefer* of this kind has yet to be published!

(*Sicha Shavuot 5745*)

## Halachos Without Reasons

The Rebbe addressed a question that seems to arise from the words of the Rosh.

The Rosh writes, “Those who rule a *halacha* from Rambam without being well-versed in Gemara—to know from where his words are derived—are making a mistake. They err in permitting the forbidden and forbidding the permitted. Because [the Rambam] did not bring proofs and sources, like other authors of *sifrei halacha*, which would be able to be used to reach correct and true conclusions. [The Rambam] instead wrote his *sefer* as one who is prophesizing, without reason or proof. Anyone who reads it believes that he understands it, but this is not the case, for if one is not well-versed in Gemara, he will not understand the matter in its true depth, and will stumble in ruling and teaching. Therefore, a person should not rely on his reading of [the Rambam’s] *sefer* to

rule and teach, unless he finds a proof in the Gemara [for his ruling.]

Based on this, some people believed that it is forbidden to learn Rambam on its own, without knowing the reasons for the *halachos*.

The Rebbe explained just how implausible it is to say that this is what the Rosh meant. This flies in the face of the very reasons that Rambam wrote his *sefer*—that it be learned on its own and that even a youngster incapable of understanding the reasons should be able to know the *halachos*.

If it were to be forbidden to learn Rambam without also learning the applicable *sugyos* in *Shas*, the same would apply to Shulchan Aruch—it would be forbidden to learn the words of the Mechaber and the Rama without knowing their reasons. This would obviously be in direct contradiction to the established Jewish custom to learn Shulchan Aruch without the accompanying *sugyos* in *Shas*. One cannot say that this is what the Rosh intended.

Rather, it is certainly permitted, and in fact required, to learn Rambam as he himself intended; to gain simple knowledge of the *halachos*.

The Rosh’s ban on ruling from Rambam applies only to matters that are not clearly written in the *Sefer HaYad*, so that one would have to extrapolate the correct *halacha* from a similar case that is written in the *sefer*. In the case of *halachos* that are clearly written in Rambam, the Rosh certainly agrees that one may rule from the *Sefer HaYad*.

In addition, the Rosh’s intention was only to prevent *ruling* from Rambam (by extrapolation). However, it is certain that the Rosh agrees that one may *learn* the simple *halachos* without knowing the reasons, and one’s knowledge of the *halachos*, while incomplete without the reasons, would still be considered knowledge, and the *takana* of Rambam is not for the purpose of knowing how to conduct oneself, but merely to know the *halachos*.<sup>19</sup>

## Bringing the Geulah

There are two reasons that learning Rambam hastens the Geulah:

1) Since *golus* was caused by the opposite of *ahavas Yisroel*, it follows that *ahavas Yisroel* removes the reason for *golus*, and with it, *golus* itself. Therefore, the Jewish unity fostered by the study of Rambam helps bring *geulah*.

2) Chazal tell us: “The exiles will only be redeemed by virtue of Mishnayos, as it says, ‘Even when they are placed among nations I will collect them.’” Mishnayos are *halachos* gathered and taught without necessarily including their reasons. Similarly, the Rambam is “Concise... without questions and answers.” So just like the study of Mishnayos, the study itself of the *halachos* of Rambam hastens the *geulah*. This is also connected with the saying of Chazal



that, “Everyone who learns *halachos* every day is guaranteed a portion in *Olam Haba*.” The *Olam Haba* that will take place in the physical realm, with physical bodies, will happen when Moshiach comes and *techiyas hameisim* takes place, may it happen speedily. <sup>1</sup>

1. This point was explained in numerous *sichos* around the time of the *takana*. See, for example, Hisvaaduyos 5744 vol. 3 p. 1949 and on; Hisvaaduyos 5745 vol. 3 p. 1442.
2. Bava Kamma 102a; Tosafos at the beginning of Bava Metzia
3. Yad Malachi - Klalei Rambam, paragraph 6.
4. Likkutei Sichos vol 27 p. 232 note 27
5. “Thousands Honor Maimonides by Year of Study” NYT March 10, 1986
6. Likkutei Sichos Ibid. p. 230
7. In the *maamar* “Atem Nitzavim”
8. Toras Menachem 5744 part 3 p. 1983
9. Likkutei Sichos vol. 32 p. 271
10. Perek 1, se’if 4; Perek 2, se’if 2.
11. Megilla 28b
12. Tanya - Iggeres Hakodesh 29
13. See Likkutei Sichos vol. 32 p. 257.
14. Perek 2
15. See the Alter Rebbe’s *Hilchos Talmud Torah*.

16. Tanya - Kuntres Acharon beginning of chapter 2.

17. Likkutei Sichos vol. 32 p. 231 note 24

18. See Likkutei Sichos vol 36 p. 22-24 and the *sicha* of Shavuos 5745 for a lengthy discussion of these topics; only a few points are brought here.

19. This is only a brief synopsis; much of the explanation has not been quoted for the sake of brevity. See the explanation at length in the *sichos* of 12 Sivan, 12 Tammuz, Shabbos Parshas Pinchas, 15 Av in 5744, and 14 Kislev 5745.

## One Halacha in Depth

A set quota of *halachos* that must be learned daily could be seen as a hindrance to proper study. Since the quota is consistent, but a person’s responsibilities may change from day to day, and along with them his available time for learning, he may find that on some days he only has enough time to learn the *halachos* in a very simple way, without studying in depth. When the Rebbe introduced the *takana* of Rambam, he addressed this concern.

The Rebbe said that to start, the issue can be avoided if everyone realizes that since they are learning Hashem’s Torah, it is not appropriate to learn it without studying in depth.

The Rebbe also went on to say that even if this concern persists, the *takana* of splitting up Rambam into daily quotas has a precedent: the daily *shiur* of Tanya. The Frierdiker Rebbe split up Tanya into daily quotas, without concern that this could lead to learning without the requisite depth. This being the case, certainly Rambam can be split up without concern.

The Rebbe also instructed that at the very least, one should learn one *halacha* out of the day’s *perakim* in depth.

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 27 p. 231, 233)



# An Arm for an Arm

“I can’t move my hands, help! They are paralyzed.”

The hysterical cries emanating from Dina, the wife of one of the country’s wealthiest Jews were indeed heart wrenching. Meir searched far and wide throughout the entire province of Wallachia for some type of cure for his wife, someone who would be able to restore movement to her arms; but to no avail.

Distraught and desperate, they began travelling from city to city in the hope that along the way, something would present itself as a remedy for Dina’s shocking condition. They tried everything. Doctors with elaborate credentials were consulted, potions from exotic lands were suggested, but still nothing seemed to help.

At long last there seemed to be some light when they heard of the Baal Shem

Tov and his miraculous powers. Without hesitation the couple travelled to Mezibuzh. Upon hearing their story and situation, the Baal Shem Tov simply told them to remain in the city. This repeated itself a number of times, each time they were told to remain in Mezibuzh.

After some time passed in this manner, they once again came to the Baal Shem Tov and this time he had something else to say. He informed them that he would be going on a journey to a certain village and that they should follow behind him.

The horses were prepared and the wagons were hitched. Along the way, the Baal Shem Tov stopped at an inn, operated by one of his Chassidim.

When the innkeeper greeted him, the Baal Shem Tov asked if it would be okay to stay overnight. The

man was quite taken aback by the question, because he considered it an honor that such a righteous man would choose his tavern to spend the night and he readily agreed. However, the Baal Shem Tov had one request that would have to be met. Nobody should be allowed in during his stay and all doors and windows should be tightly sealed. No

**HE NOW WANTED TO KNOW WHO THIS ‘BAAL SHEM TOV’ WAS WHO HAD THE NERVE TO LEAVE HIM IN THE STORMY NIGHT AND ALMOST FREEZE TO DEATH.**

matter who came knocking, they were not to be granted entry; no exceptions even for a great minister or individual of high rank.

It was up to the innkeeper to keep the door locked and if anyone insisted on entering he was to tell them that they could not come in because the Baal Shem Tov is staying here.

The innkeeper took care of all the details and prepared dinner for his guests.

The night grew late and everyone retired except for the Baal Shem Tov who stayed awake learning from a *sefer* at the table. Not too far away, in a back room of the house, lay the despairing Dina.

Meanwhile in another part of town a drunken party was taking place. Two brothers had finally met up after more than twelve years of not seeing



## THE SWORD WIELDING VISITOR WAS NOW STANDING NEAR THE BAAL SHEM TOV WITH HIS HANDS FROZEN IN PLACE

each other. They were taking full advantage of this time together and were making merry. One of these brothers happened to be a great minister and the owner of the inn in which the Baal Shem Tov, Meir and Dina were staying.

As the wine kicked in and their minds began fogging from the alcohol, the owner of the inn began bragging and boasting about the beautiful tavern he owned not too far away. Eventually his guest, his brother, was convinced and he asked for a swift horse to go and see the place for himself.

Thinking that it was only a short distance away from his brother's estate, he didn't bother taking a coat or jacket, but made do with the shirt he was wearing.

Unfortunately for him, as soon as he began galloping away, the weather turned nasty and he was caught in a freezing and bitter blizzard. The supposedly short trip, instead took many hours.

As soon as he reached the inn, he jumped off the horse and began pounding strongly on the door waiting for someone to open and allow him in to warm his frozen bones.

Putting his ear to the door, the only sound he

heard was of his pounding heart but not the footsteps or voice of somebody inside he was so desperately waiting for.

Standing outside, his knocks became louder and more aggressive as the cold penetrated his very bones. Finally he heard a voice call to him, but not what he wanted to hear. "Sorry", the man called. "We cannot let you in, the Baal Shem Tov is here and he won't allow anyone to enter."

This repeated itself a number of times, until the Baal Shem Tov signaled to the innkeeper that he could now go ahead and let him in.

The visitor hurried through the entranceway and warmed himself by the fireplace.

After a few minutes, his breathing became steady and the numbness dissipated. Feeling returned to his hands, legs and entire body.

He now wanted to know who this 'Baal Shem Tov' was who had the nerve to leave him in the stormy night and almost freeze to death.

The innkeeper pointed to the table at which the Baal Shem Tov was learning and said he is the one. The man's rage boiled over and he

screamed and cursed again and again. When his anger had reached its breaking point he ran over to the table while brandishing his sword and was about to give a mighty swing. Just then the Baal Shem Tov called out to Dina, "Quickly raise up both your hands."

Suddenly, the most amazing thing happened.

Dina raised her hands with ease and comfort as if nothing had been wrong and the sword wielding visitor was now standing near the Baal Shem Tov with his hands frozen in place. Dina had taken his power of movement, and she had given him, so to speak, her paralyzed arms.

Realizing the gravity of the bizarre exchange that just occurred to him, the haughty visitor begged for mercy and forgiveness; if only he would have strength in his arms once again.

The Baal Shem Tov gazed at him and replied, "The exchange already took place, there is nothing more I can do to reverse it!"<sup>1</sup> **T**

1. This story has been adapted from the sefer שבחי הבעש"ט. Please note that the names don't appear in the original but were added in our English translation for the sake of clarity.

לע"ו  
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' אברהם דוב  
בן הרב יהושע  
גלב"ע כ"ד טבת ה'תשע"ג

ולע"ו  
זוגתו מרת ליבא בת ר' ברוך  
גלב"ע כ"א טבת ה'תשס"ד

נדפס ע"י  
בנו

הרה"ת ר' אליהו וזוגתו מרת דליה  
ומשפחתם שיחיו  
העכט



# The Street Will Dance

SIMCHAS BEIS HASHOEIVA  
RESTORED CELEBRATION OF BEIS HAMIKDASH TIMES



JOYOUS DANCING ERUPTS OUTSIDE 770, CHOL HAMOED SUKKOS 5742.

LEVI FREIDIN vga JEW 1997/6

## DRAWING WITH JOY

As darkness settled over Yerushalayim and the first day of Yom Tov slipped away, the *Beis Hamikdash*, usually so docile and quiet in the evenings, became a whirlwind of activity. Tonight was *Simchas Beis Hashoeva*, “the rejoicings of the water-drawings,” in honor of the rare *nisuch hamayim* (pouring of water on the *mizbeiach*) which would be held the following day. Throughout the year, every *korban* was accompanied by a libation of wine; on Sukkos, water was poured as well. In honor of this offering, the Yidden—who had gathered from all over Eretz Yisrael to celebrate Sukkos in the *Beis Hamikdash*—would hold a week of rejoicing.

There was much to be done. The outer courtyard of the *Beis Hamikdash*, the *ezras nashim*, would be the site of the dancing; huge wooden balconies for the women were quickly erected, and menorahs were placed all around for lighting. They were huge; every menorah had four basins for the oil, with wicks from the old tattered *michnasayim* (pants) and sashes of the Kohanim. Young Kohanim preciously balanced massive, 30 *lug* buckets of oil in their arms as they climbed steep ladders to fill them up. The menorahs were so bright that they illuminated the entire Yerushalayim; there was not a courtyard where a woman could not sift wheat to this light.

The celebrations commenced. As millions of people watched from all sides, the *chassidim* and *anshei maase* danced before them, juggling lighted torches in their hands and singing songs of praise to Hashem. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel juggled eight torches at a time; not one would touch the other. The Levi'im, who were stationed on the fifteen steps leading down to the *ezras nashim*, joined in the singing as well, and accompanied

it with harps, psalteries, cymbals, and so many musical instruments that they couldn't be counted.

What would they chant? The *chassidim*—people who never sinned—would say, “Happy is our youth which did not embarrass our old age” (i.e. that we did not sin in our youth and embarrass our older selves). The *baalei teshuva* would say, “Happy is our old age which atoned for our youth.” Both groups would say, “Happy is he who never sinned; and he who has sinned shall repent, and he will be forgiven.”

The Mishna states that someone who did not witness *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* never saw real rejoicing in his life. It was also a time of profound spiritual revelation: one of the reasons it was called “the rejoicing of water drawings” was because people drew *ruach hakodesh* from there. Yonah Ha'amitai—the famous *novi* who was sent by Hashem to warn Nineveh of their sins, and unsuccessfully tried slipping away from the task—was originally one of the regular people who came to the *Beis Hamikdash* for Sukkos, and it was then that *ruach hakodesh* rested on him.

The ecstatic celebrations continued throughout the night. A little before dawn, when the rooster first crowed, two Kohanim blew in their trumpets *tekia! terua! tekia!* signalling that it was time to begin the march towards the Shiloach stream, where the water

for the libation would be drawn. They continued blowing periodically as they marched out of the *Beis Hamikdash*.

A golden pitcher was filled from the Shiloach's water, and the retinue returned to the *Beis Hamikdash* through the “Water Gate”—which was named thus in honor of this occasion—and again, they blew three blasts. When it came time for the pouring, after the daily *tamid* was offered at about dawn, a Kohen ascended the *mizbeach*, turned to the left, and poured the wine and water simultaneously into the the two holes designated for it.

To the Kohen who poured the water the people called: “Raise your hand!” This is because it once happened that the Kohen charged with this duty was a Tzedoki—a sect that denies the validity of *Torah Shebaal Peh*, and thus does not believe in *nisuch hamayim*, which, as a *halacha leMoshe miSinai*, is not mentioned explicitly in *Torah Shebiksav*—and instead of pouring the water into the designated hole, he poured it onto his feet. All the people pelted him with their esrogim. From then on, the Kohen would always be told to raise his hand, to ensure he was doing his job properly.

It was a never-ending celebration. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chananya said: “When we were engaged in *Simchas Beis Hashoeva*, our eyes saw no sleep [on Yom Tov]. How so? The first hour

“He spoke for several hours without a break. He spoke words of Chassidus, mixed and spiced with midrashim and Kabbalah with gimatriyaos, which he received from his father. [His words] were sweet to the ears, and all the assembled were amazed...”

[of the day we were occupied with] the morning *korban tamid*; afterwards *tefillah*, and from that to *korban musaf*. After that was *musaf* prayer, following which we went to the *beis medrash*. From there we went to eat and drink [at home], and afterwards *mincha*. From *mincha* to the afternoon *tamid*; and from that time on was *Simchas Beis Hashoeva...*” They managed to stay on their feet by dozing on each other’s shoulders during the dancing.

## EARLY REVELATIONS

Even after the *Beis Hamikdash* was destroyed, *Sukkos* continued being a time of rejoicing and happiness. But in *dor hashvi’i* it was taken to a whole new level. The Rebbe’s *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* farbrengens are possibly the single longest-standing tradition of our generation, dating back far before the *nesius*.

A few months after the Rebbe and Rebbetzin’s wedding, the Frierdiker Rebbe embarked on a trip to America with the goal of inspiring the Chassidim there, raising much-needed funds for the Yidden in Russia, and exploring the area as the possible future seat of Lubavitch. Most of the Chassidim and the Frierdiker Rebbe’s family stayed in Riga, Latvia and conducted the *Yomim Tovim* without him, their hearts aching from his absence. But there was a bright side: It was then that, for the first time, the Chassidim were able to catch a glimpse of the Rebbe’s greatness, something that he always tried to hide, but it was especially concealed in the presence of his father-in-law, the Frierdiker Rebbe. Now, with the responsibility to guide the Chassidim temporarily foisted upon him, a new side was revealed.

Throughout Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, the Chassidim followed the Rebbe’s lead in davening and *hanhagos*. During *Simchas Beis Hashoeva*, and again on Shemini



Atzeres and *Simchas Torah*, the Rebbe farbrenged for hours.

In those years, the very fact that the Rebbe—who kept a low profile and shied away from the spotlight—held a farbrengen for a crowd was a novelty. But it was what happened during these farbrengens that truly astonished them.

In a letter to the Frierdiker Rebbe, Reb Elya Chaim Althois described the scene at the *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* and other farbrengens: “He spoke for several hours without a break. He spoke words of Chassidus, mixed and spiced with *midrashim* and Kabbalah with *gimatriyaos*, which he received

from his father. [His words] were sweet to the ears, and all the assembled were amazed... [One of the assembled was Mr.] Vekslir, a quiet man, a big critic, and a great intellectual in his own eyes. He came for the first time to hear with his own ears what he had been told by the *minyán* of Berlin, about the greatness of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe’s son-in-law, *shlita*. He stayed with the Chassidim until 2:00 in the morning. He left with amazement, and told me these words: ‘I have never seen or heard anything like this! *Ashrei yoladeto!*’”

From then on, up until 5725, the Rebbe farbrenged every year

(excluding the years when he wasn't around Chassidim during Tishrei).

The following year, 5691, the *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* farbrengen was held in the hall of Tzeirei Agudas Yisroel. As is recorded in Reshimos, the Rebbe spent the time expounding upon the inner meaning of the mitzvos of Sukkos and explaining a *sugya* in Gemara according to *pnimiyus haTorah*.

The Rebbe's innovative style was clearly on display here, and this was a precursor to the *reshimos* and *sichos* in the years that would follow—taking strands from all different parts of Torah and weaving them together into a holistic tapestry, and explaining everything according to Chassidus.

And there was another early indication of what was to come. The

Rebbe's profound *hiskashrus* to the Frierdiker Rebbe was evident even to casual observers, even in those early years, and in this *reshima*, it is the highlight of the farbrengen. The Rebbe explains at length how the sukkah and its dimensions and the lulav with its four types of plants represent *shlaimus*, completeness. But then he quotes a Midrash which says that the *possuk* “[three are beyond me] four I do not know” is referring to the four species—which seems to imply a certain deficiency. This, the Rebbe says in a short but charged paragraph, is because “after all, there are certain levels that are not within the ability of a person, no matter who he is, to reach on his own...Therefore, we are *miskasher* ourselves with the Rebbe, so

that he will guide us and we will follow in his path.”

In 5692, the Frierdiker Rebbe's court moved from Riga to Otwock, Poland for Tishrei, where the Rebbe joined him from Berlin, as he often did in those years.

Reb Moshe Eliyahu Gerlitzky related: “They rented a hotel where [the Frierdiker Rebbe] stayed with his entire family, and rooms were rented for the students as well. A few of us traveled from Lodz, probably thirty students, and we spent the entire month of Tishrei with the Frierdiker Rebbe. The Frierdiker Rebbe instructed the Rebbe to farbreng with the *olam* on *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* in the sukkah. The Chassidim were saying that we must call the Chassidim of the surrounding villages to come.

THE REBBE FARBRENGS IN THE SUKKAH ON CHOL HAMOED SUKKOS, CIRCA MID-5710S.



JEM 287286

“Until then, we didn’t know how well-versed the Rebbe was in everything. But at this farbrengen we heard such *gevaldike chiddushim*. He began with the Mishna, ‘Yehuda ben Teima says: Be bold as a leopard, swift as an eagle, quick as a deer and strong as a lion, to fulfill the will of your Father in Heaven.’ He farbrenged on this Mishna from 8:00 at night until 7:00 in the morning. He quoted Zohar, Kabbalah, Gemara, Mishnayos, Midrash, etc. etc., throughout the night. The crowd was astounded—*arais fun di keilim*. Until then, no-one knew that he was so knowledgeable. After that night we saw who he was.”<sup>1</sup>

The notes of this farbrengen form one of the longest *reshimos*, and the small, closely-written words fill eleven pages of the Rebbe’s notebook; in print they take up seventy-six pages.

As seen above, it wasn’t only the breadth of knowledge that confounded the listeners, but the original approach—and the Chassidim weren’t the only ones commenting on it. On the fourth day of Chol Hamoied Sukkos of 5693, the Frierdiker Rebbe asked the Rebbe to repeat the main points of the *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* farbrengen (which had taken place in the yeshiva hall in Riga). When he concluded, the Frierdiker Rebbe commented that this style - of explaining *maamarei Razal* and so on - had existed in previous generations, “but the Rebbe [Rashab] *Nishmaso Eden* took this path, and went on a thin pathway - the 32nd pathway, which the Zohar calls a thin pathway.” The Frierdiker Rebbe continued with his own explanation into a *sugya* he had learned that day.<sup>2</sup>

The farbrengens continued in the years that followed, changing location together with the Frierdiker Rebbe’s court. The *reshimos* of these farbrengens are some of the longest we have.

It is interesting to note that the Tzemach Tzedek would also

hold farbrengens on *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* during the lifetime of the Mittlerer Rebbe. He farbrenged entire nights, one after the other. These were passionate, fiery farbrengens, and the Tzemach Tzedek’s dancing was so spirited that even the *yungeleit* could not keep up with him.<sup>3</sup>

## FARBRENGENS FOR THE TALMIDEI HAYESHIVOS

After the base of Lubavitch moved to America, the newly founded Merkos L’inyonei Chinuch began officially hosting the Rebbe’s yearly *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* farbrengen. It was specifically for *talmidei hayeshivos*, and nearly all the yeshivas in New York participated, including Mesivta Chaim Berlin, Torah Vodaas, and Yeshivas Yitzchok Elchanan. The first of these farbrengens was held in 5702, and by 5706, the periodical magazine Kovetz Lubavitch noted that it had become an annual tradition among the New York *yeshivische kraizen*.

In her diary, Rebbetzin Chana describes her impressions from one such gathering:

*I don’t want to lose the opportunity to write down the enjoyment I had last night, listening to my son shlit”a speak before a crowd of hundreds of people.*

*As far as the lomdus, I’m not the expert to measure it. The part that I did understand created a big impression on me with its rich content....*

*...It was very nice to see how many of the youth were present, and how much interest they demonstrated to everything connected to my son shlit”a. I saw how they looked at him with such love that it cannot be described. See how they run from the subways and cars, groups of them, how one is trying to overtake the other to grab a place faster, so that he should be able to see and hear [the Rebbe] better.*

*They were from all types of crowds. Olimishe, chassidishe, Polishe, Litvishe,*

*old and young, non-religious and orthodox. Women were there too. Everyone was looking for ways to set themselves up so that they can not only hear him, but to see him as well. Hashem should give him the health and success to be able to do his work, and accomplish what he wants without disturbances, with menuchas hanefesh and menuchas haguf.*

The *sichos* were noticeably geared towards that crowd, with lots of sources cited in *nigleh*, as the Rebbe once commented: “I had to cite the source for everything, down to the *daf!*”<sup>4</sup>

But the Rebbe was also clear about his goal, as he said in a dramatic *sicha* in 5714:

*It says in the Gemara that “while a woman talks, she spins [flax].” Since the primary activity of a woman in the times of the Gemara was to spin—wherever she is and whatever she does, she will eventually end up talking about her spindle.*

*The crowd probably suspects that as I continue speaking, I will sneak in a few minutes before the end to say that one must learn Chassidus.*

*Therefore, instead of people suspecting me, I will just say it out loud: Hert zich ain Yidden—Listen up Yidden! You must learn Chassidus!<sup>5</sup>*

These yearly farbrengens continued up until 5725, when Rebbetzin Chana passed away.

## THE JOYS OF WATER

During these farbrengens, the Rebbe elaborated at length on the theme of *Simchas Beis Hashoeva*, retelling the Gemara’s description in vivid terms and teaching powerful *hora’os* from each aspect of the story.

In some of these *sichos*, the Rebbe also spoke about a key issue in the whole celebration. On the surface, there seems to be something very strange at the heart of the whole concept of *Simchas Beis Hashoeva*.

What is so exciting about drawing and pouring of the water on the *mizbeach* that merits such over-the-top delight? There are so many mitzvos we performed in the *Beis Hamikdash*, including on Sukkos itself, yet none inspire the exuberant joy that drawing the water does.

Why is this?

Chassidus asks the same question, albeit with a different twist: Generally, wine is a drink associated with joy; it is rich, tasty, and puts you in a good mood. Water is tasteless and boring. Yet, there is absolutely no celebration when we pour wine throughout the year. When do we dance for seven nights? When we pour water, the dull drink.

The inner meaning of this, as the Rebbe explained many times based on the *maamarim* of previous Rabbeim, is that wine, an enjoyable and tasty drink, represents *avodas Hashem* according to reason, *taam vodaas*. It is the type of *avodah* that a person can naturally relate to and enjoy. Water, on the other hand, represents an *avodah* that is not enjoyable in itself: *kabbalas ol* and *mesirus nefesh*—fulfilling Hashem's commands not because you understand it or relate to it, but because He said so.

Just as the foundation and beginning of a person's *avodah* must be *kabbalos ol*, *naaseh* and then *nishma*, so too the *avodah* at the beginning of the year, on (Rosh Hashanah and) Sukkos, is *kabbalos ol*—water.

Yet despite this, although it is not tasty and it isn't *geshmak*, we dance. Our joy isn't because we understand and appreciate what we're doing and are excited about it. On Sukkos we celebrate the fact that we are connected to Hashem and we will do anything He says. Wine may be tasty, but it is limited in its taste. Water, which represents the pure connection to *Elokus* achieved through *kabbalas ol* and *mesirus nefesh*, brings the ultimate

*simcha*. This applies today, after the *Beis Hamikdash* was destroyed, as well; as the Alter Rebbe writes in his famous *drushim* on *nisuch hamayim*, every person has a spiritual *Mikdash* in his heart, and he must apply the lessons of *nisuch hamayim* to his life.

The Rebbe elaborated on this point at length throughout the years, explaining it in subtly different ways each time. The Rebbe's *farbrengens* on Sukkos were infused with the theme of *kabbalas ol* and *mesirus nefesh*, especially as it relates to the *yeshiva bochurim*, who were present at the time.

However, this still doesn't explain the issue on a simple, *nigledike* level. So in the *farbrengen* of *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* 5712, the Rebbe proposes a fascinating answer.

There is another ritual that we do with a peculiar amount of excitement: the reaping of the wheat for the *omer* offering—*ketziras haomer*—which occurred on Motzei Yom Tov of the first day of Pesach. As the Mishna describes: All nearby towns would gather in the field to watch. When it got dark, the Kohen would announce, "Did the sun set?" And the crowd would answer "Yes!" This would happen three times.

Then he would shout three times, "Is this a sickle?" to which the crowd would roar in response each time, "Yes!"

"Is this a box?"

"Yes!"

"Shall I reap?"

"Yes!"

Before everything he did, he would announce what he was doing and he would be cheered on by the crowd.

Why all this? the Mishna asks. Because the Baitusim (a sect similar to the Tzedokim, who denied *Torah Shebaal Peh*) held that the *ketziras haomer* should be held at another time. Therefore, the reaping was done with a huge *shturem*, a great tumult, in order



to make them hear that they were wrong and to "remove the heretical ideas from their minds" (Rashi).

This, the Rebbe says, can also be an explanation for the unbridled joy of *Simchas Beis Hashoeva*. As is evident from the story of the Kohen who was pelted with *esrogim* (see above), the Tzedokim opposed *nisuch hamayim* just as the Baitusim opposed *ketziras haomer* after Pesach. In order to emphasize that Tzedokim's position is incorrect, the *chachamim* decreed



THE REBBE ENCOURAGES THE JOYOUS SINGING UPON LEAVING THE SHUL FOLLOWING MINCHA, 18 TISHREI 5741.

that the celebration of *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* should be conducted with the greatest fanfare.

Then the Rebbe takes it one step further. The explanation according to *nigleh*, that we are celebrating our break from the Tzedokim, and the explanation of Chassidus, that we are celebrating *kabbalas ol*, are truly one and the same. The deeper reason behind the Tzedokim's opposition to *nisuch hamayim* was because they could not come to terms with the

concept of *kabbalas ol*. They could not handle that the Yidden said *naaseh* before *nishma*. As a Tzedoki once told the *amora* Rava: "You are impulsive people, whose mouths precede your ears! You should have first heard the Torah before you accepted it!" On these grounds, they also rejected *Torah Shebaal Peh*—they were not ready to accept the tradition of Moshe Rabbeinu with *kabbalas ol*.

So on Sukkos we celebrate water, *kabbalas ol*. We pelt the Tzedokim

with our esrogim and dance through the night, celebrating the fact that we, unlike the Tzedokim, have *kabbalas ol* and *mesiras nefesh*—an unconditional and unlimited connection with Hashem.<sup>6</sup>

When you break it down, the question is in fact the answer. Why do we rejoice with such joy if it makes no sense? Because it makes no sense!



## FILL THE WORLD WITH FARBRENGENS!

In the summer of 5733, the Rebbe's *hanhaga* was different than usual. It was as if an emergency was afoot—he called for gatherings of children be held “in order to vanquish the enemy;” composed a special prayer for them to recite<sup>7</sup>; and instructed them to give tzedakah. At the time, no-one understood what the Rebbe was so concerned about; which unknown enemy was there a sudden emergency to vanquish?

Then, in what later became to be known as the Yom Kippur war, the Arab nations surrounding Eretz Yisrael converged on the tiny country to decimate it, *r”l*. Reservists were rounded up from shuls and sent directly to the front lines, as Jews throughout the world prepared for the worst. Hundreds of young soldiers died in the first few days. The Rebbe emerged as the single Jewish leader who lifted hopes in a time of horror, who showed strength when the situation seemed fatal, promising miracles “greater than the Six Day War.” (See Derher, Sivan 5776, “Gather to Save a Nation” for a more extensive overview.)

In the weeks after the war broke out, the atmosphere in 770—and the greater Jewish world—was no longer that of a typical Yom Tov. There was a feeling of urgency and desperation. The Rebbe went to the Ohel the day after Yom Kippur, which was quite unprecedented, and held an unscheduled farbrengen a few days later, on Yud-Gimmel Tishrei.

After speaking briefly about the fact that it was the *yom hillula* of the Rebbe Maharash, the Rebbe said:

“Seemingly, some explaining must be done, for when there is a place where Yidden are at war, how can there be a farbrengen?”

“However, it is known about the *baal hahillula* that he said: ‘The world says that first you try going under, and if that is not feasible you go from the top, but I say that *milechatchila aribber*, from the outset go from the top!’

“The way to help in these days is through *simcha*, in a way of *milechatchila aribber*.”

There were many wondrous, spiritual scenes at that farbrengen, as the Rebbe was clearly fighting on high for the success of the soldiers.

Then, on the first day of Sukkos there was another surprise, as is recorded by Rabbi Ahron Dov Halprin in his *yoman*:

“The announcement for the farbrengen was special; I happened to be standing nearby and heard it with my own ears. When the Rebbe was leaving *mincha* on the first day of Sukkos, he turned to Rabbi Hodakov, who was standing near the *aron kodesh*. I was standing right next to Rabbi Hodakov, and heard every word, as the Rebbe told him, “Nine o’clock, *maariv*, and afterwards there will be a farbrengen.” [Generally, a certain system was used for announcing the surprise farbrengens, and the fact that the Rebbe simply told Rabbi Hodakov about it in shul was out of the ordinary.] Those of us who were standing nearby obviously couldn’t hold ourselves in, and we immediately broadcasted the news before Rabbi Hodakov even managed to make an official announcement. There is no need to describe the great shock and excitement.”

This was noteworthy for a number of reasons. A few of years earlier, after someone had broken his foot at a farbrengen in the sukkah, the Rebbe had suspended holding farbrengens there. But more importantly, this

was the second night of Sukkos. The Rebbe would often farbreng on various Yomim Tovim, but it was always on the night leading into Motzei Yom Tov. No one had even heard of a farbrengen after *maariv* on Yom Tov, at the time of *seduas Yom Tov*. It had never happened before.

The farbrengen was held in shul without food or *l’chaim*. The Rebbe walked in without his *siddur*, since there would be no *bracha acharona*. For anyone who hung around 770, this alone was an odd scene. (It should be noted that the Rebbe held a similar farbrengen in 5731.)

During the *sichos*, the Rebbe announced that “from today until Simchas Torah, there should be constant farbrengens of *simcha*.” Specifically, “tonight, tomorrow morning, tomorrow night, two days from now in the morning,” and so on, listing all the days until Simchas Torah.

The Rebbe said that some of the guests, who are *mashpi'im* in their hometowns, suddenly become humble when they come to 770. But now is when they have time to farbreng! He quoted the famous Chassidic adage, “An onion should become of you, but Chassidus you should repeat,” and said that even if you only know *alef*, you can teach what you know. “Don’t be a *shin* with three dots, and also not three *shins*: *shiflus shel sheker* [false humility].” These farbrengens should be held at every opportunity, the Rebbe said, and if there is no *maskhe*

then farbreng without *maskhe*. Even in shul, people should tell stories.

The Rebbe concluded the *sicha* with the words, “Until it will be ומלאה הארץ לימ מכסים פארבריינגענישן כמים לימ מכסים”

After repeating once more that there should be constant farbrengens, the Rebbe added, “But it must be with the limitations of Zman Simchaseinu.” [Rabbi Halprin notes in his *yoman* that after the farbrengen, when Reb Yoel Kahn was doing *chazzara*, there was an argument between him and Reb Mendel Futerfas about the meaning of these limitations...]

“The end of the farbrengen was also special,” Rabbi Halprin writes. “The Rebbe himself began the niggun “*Hoshia es Amecha*” and, for a long time, encouraged the singing with all his strength. Suddenly, the Rebbe stood up and danced in his place, encouraging the singing in an extraordinary way. We could clearly see how the Rebbe, with all his might, is bringing down from on high the “*hoshia es amecha*”—salvation for the nation. The Rebbe left the shul encouraging the singing—he didn’t have to sit down for the *bracha acharona* since there had been no food so the singing never stopped—and the crowd continued dancing with “*Hoshia es Amecha*” long after.”

In the following days, 770 was a remarkable place to be. At all times, there were farbrengens everywhere. Reb Zushe Wilmowsky (the “Partisan”) took to wishing people ומלאה instead of *l’chaim*.

*The Rebbe announced that “from today until Simchas Torah, there should be constant farbrengens of simcha.” Specifically, “tonight, tomorrow morning, tomorrow night, two days from now in the morning,” and so on.*

## TAKING IT TO THE STREETS

The next era of *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* began as a surprise.

On the first night of Sukkos 5741, after *maariv* had drawn to an end and the Rebbe had wished the crowd the customary ‘*Gut Yom Yov*,’ something astonishing happened. Instead of walking down from the *bima* and leaving shul, the Rebbe suddenly began saying a *sicha*!

The crowd, taken off guard by the sudden development, immediately began pushing and heaving to get closer, and for several moments the commotion made it difficult to hear; but it quickly subsided

The Rebbe began the short, five minute *sicha* by saying that although we are in *galus* we must still celebrate *Simchas Beis Hashoeva*, since every person has a spiritual *Beis Hamikdash* in his heart, and now is the time to have “a *simcha gedola biyoser*” (immense joy). The Rebbe

concluded: “From this we should arrive at the great *simcha* of the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu, and we will thank the *Aibersheter*, with ‘*Shehecheynu vekiyemanu vehigeanu lizman hazeh!*’”

Then the Rebbe began the *niggun* “*Ata Vechartanu*,” encouraging the singing all the way out of shul, and the elated dancing and singing continued throughout the night in 770.

The following evening, the Rebbe again said a *sicha* after *maariv*, and once again, heaving and shoving immediately commenced. This time, he paused until it subsided. During the *sicha*, which lasted twenty minutes, the Rebbe emphasized that tonight, after fulfilling the mitzvos of Sukkos during the day, the joy must be even stronger than the night before. “Although one surely celebrated *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* on the first night of Sukkos, one must add to the *simcha*, *niggunim*, and dancing, *biyoser se’is u’viyoser oz*. This is a *hora’a* for every Yid!”<sup>8</sup> (Later

that night, the Rebbe also mentioned the *ushpizin* of Sukkos, which would become a hallmark of these *sichos* in the years to come.)

At the *sicha*’s conclusion, the Rebbe began the *niggun* of “*Uforatzta*.” Again, the dancing went on through the night.

The next morning at 8:40 a.m., Mr. Zalmon Jaffe was standing in line to shake the Rebbe’s lulav and esrog when the Rebbe approached. After exchanging Yom Tov greetings, the Rebbe asked him whether he had celebrated *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* the previous night (probably in reference to his relatively early showing).

Reb Zalmon answered in the affirmative.

The Rebbe smiled and said, “But not for long”.

Reb Zalmon admitted that it had indeed been for a short time only.

On the third night of Sukkos, Friday night (it was a three-day Yom Tov), the Rebbe said that the *simcha*



AVRAHAM FRIED, MORDECHAI BEN DAVID, AND THE PIAMENTA BROTHERS ENLIVEN THE CROWD AT THE SIMCHAS BEIS HASHOEVA IN CROWN HEIGHTS, 5749.

YOSSI MELAMED via JEM136030

“should break through the limitations of *simcha* that were in the previous nights.” This marked the first time the Rebbe spoke specifically about the *ushpizin* of the evening—Yaakov Avinu and the Alter Rebbe.

This time, the festivities broke out of 770. The crowds danced down Kingston Avenue, setting up shop on in the middle of Montgomery Street. A few individuals diverted the traffic until a police car eventually arrived to take over. (It should be noted that on the following day the Rebbe gave an instruction through *mazkirus* that all police orders must be followed).

On Motzei Shabbos, the fourth night—the first weeknight—the Rebbe said a lengthy *sicha*, stating that tonight, being the first night that would be celebrated in the *Beis Hamikdash* (since they would not dance with instruments on Yom Tov or Shabbos), called for a new level of joy.

A few musicians set up their instruments on a lawn on the corner of Montgomery and Kingston and they played throughout the night.

This continued for the rest of the week. Each night the Rebbe called for an increase in *simcha*—both because one must constantly increase in holiness, and because every night has a unique superiority over the previous nights. The Chassidim danced and sung and danced and sung. Night felt like day, and much like their forefathers in the *Beis Hamikdash*, people were up for days on end. It felt like one long cycle: *sicha*, dancing, *bentching* the Rebbe’s lulav and esrog; then repeat.

It must have been a bewildering contrast for some. For an extended amount of time, you’re absolutely stationary, in uber-focussing mode, listening intently to the Rebbe’s words. Then you stumble out into rambunctious dancing and singing, running around until your feet are

*The Rebbe asked him whether he had celebrated Simchas Beis Hashoeva the previous night; Reb Zalmon answered in the affirmative. The Rebbe smiled and said, “But not for long...”*

numb. But that is exactly the point, the Rebbe later explained. Dancing shouldn’t be a hollow exercise, joy with no meaning or context. In order to truly feel the happiness, you must first understand its inner meaning. This is why, in the times of the *Beis Hamikdash*, the *chassidim* and *anshei maase* would each say a different proclamation (see above); and it is also why, in days bygone, Chassidei Chabad would generally celebrate *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* with a *farbrengen*, where speaking would lead to dancing (unlike Chassidei “*Chagas*” who focus only on the dancing). Therefore, before going out to dance, it is necessary to comprehend the intellectual significance of the joy.

But talking alone is not enough, nor is feeling alone. Even for a Chabad Chossid, the main thing is to actually get out there and dance. True understanding means that you have digested the concept, that it became one with you, that it permeated every aspect of your being, and this is expressed when you dance.<sup>9</sup>

Mr. Zalmon Jaffe describes the festivities he found on Montgomery street on Sunday at around midnight:

“There was now a six piece (man) band with Ellie Lipsker and other friends in attendance. They were installed upon an open truck. It was really lively. Not only was the band itself making a terrific noise, but the sound was amplified by microphones and loudspeakers. Extra lighting had also been fixed.

“About fifteen hundred men and boys were dancing and singing, and about seven hundred women and girls—and quite a few babies—were milling around too. All the windows and the doors of the premises round about were wide open. Crowds of people were at each window and doorway—and every outside fire escape was filled to overflowing—very dangerously, I might add—with people who should have known better. We left at 1.30 a.m. I was told that the band played on until 4.30 a.m. It still wasn’t late enough for some of our dancers who continued at it until 5.30 a.m.”<sup>10</sup>

The outdoor venue was an integral part of *Simchas Beis Hashoeva*, as the Rebbe later explained. In the times of the *Beis Hamikdash* the festivities took place in the outside courtyard of the *Mikdash*, the *ezras nashim*. The drawing of water, too, took place far away, at the *Shiloach* brook, which was outside the entire city. This is because the focus of *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* is that the joy must permeate the world. Thus, we dance in the street, demonstrating that, in the Rebbe’s words: “Not only does the street not bother or impede the *Simchas Beis Hashoeva*, but even more so: a person affects that the street itself dances, until everyone sees that it’s a *chassidshishe* street!”

Upon the Rebbe’s instructions, groups of Chassidim traveled to communities outside of Crown

Heights to farbreng with them and spur their *simcha*.

On Hoshana Rabba, many must have presumed that it would be like every year—a night dedicated to reciting Chumash Devarim and Tehillim; who has time for dancing? But the Rebbe had other plans. Tonight, the Rebbe said, on the final day—the climax, in fact—of *Simchas Beis Hashoeva*, a short amount of time, 18 or 7 minutes, would have to hold the deepest and greatest joy and emotion. After dancing for a short time in *reshus harabim*, they should continue in the shul and sukkah.

Mr. Jaffe relates: “We obeyed the Rebbe’s instructions and about four thousand of us, men and boys danced and sang...in the shul. We then erupted into Eastern Parkway... We danced on the actual roadway of Eastern Parkway and completely blocked the three northern lanes. The police used their initiative and parked their vehicles in such a position that all traffic was diverted onto the other, the southbound carriageways. The three lanes on that side were then divided into two lanes of cars driving one way and one lane going in the other direction. We danced for eighteen minutes, and then transferred to the Succah—just as the Rebbe had instructed us to do.”

### UNCONSCIOUS PROPHECY

From that year on, the Rebbe would say *sichos* every night of Sukkos, encouraging the Chassidim to get out

and dance. He spoke at length about the *ushpizin* of each evening, both the traditional *ushpizin* (Avrohom, Yitzchok, Yaakov, etc.) as well as the *chassidische ushpizin* (the Baal Shem tov, the Maggid, the Alter Rebbe, etc.), elaborating on their life stories and explaining fascinating lessons we can learn from them. The *ushpizin* are especially significant, the Rebbe explained, because *simcha* comes from something new and fresh. At a *sheva brachos*, for example, a new person must attend each time in order for it to be considered a festive event. For *Simchas Beis Hashoeva*, this *simcha* is also brought by the new person of the night, the *ponim chadashos*—the *ushpiz*.

After the first year, Reb Yisroel Shemtov began to officially hire a band for every night of the week, building a makeshift stage out of benches and tables schlepped down from 770. Several years later, a few *bochurim* approached him. The Rebbe’s *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* has to be a real, high quality event, they argued. *Gezunterheit*, he answered, as long as you fundraise for it.

And they did. A four thousand dollar affair became a forty thousand dollar extravaganza. Famous singers were hired, full page ads were taken out in the Jewish Press and *Algemeiner*, and a gigantic stage was erected. It became the main attraction of the New York Metropolitan area, as an estimated ten to fifteen thousand people converged on Crown Heights

*“Not only does the street not bother or impede the Simchas Beis Hashoeva, but even more so; a person affects that the street itself dances, until everyone sees that it’s a chassidshishe street!”*



to join the celebrations every year. This continued for the following years (although, after a while, Reb Yisroel was left to handle with the enormous bill on his own).

In effect, where in the early years of the *nesius* the Rebbe developed the theme of *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* and made it relevant to our lives, in the later years he said that we must go out and do it just as they did in the *Beis Hamikdash*. Just as they danced, we danced; just like their water drawing was held outside Yerushalayim, so our festivities are on the street; just as they chanted, we too listen to and learn *sichos* before the celebrations.

And, the Rebbe said, just as the Yidden in the *Beis Hamikdash* drew *ruach hakodesh* from the atmosphere, we also draw *ruach hakodesh* when



## THE SECOND NIGHT OF DANCING FOLLOWING THE REBBE'S CALL, 17 TISHREI 5741.

we dance. This applies to every single person that attends. “There will surely be those that ask: how can you say that young children, and even very young children, who do not understand anything yet, have *ruach hakodesh*? When it comes to physical activities, like eating and drinking, it is understood that although the children have no comprehension at all in how it functions, it works anyway. But in regards to spiritual matters, especially *ruach hakodesh*, how is it possible to say that young children have any connection to such things?”

The answer is simple, the Rebbe explained. It says in the the Torah that Moshe Rabbeinu's face shined with a powerful light, so strong that the Jews were all afraid to approach him. And yet, as is described in the

*possuk*, he himself wasn't conscious of it. Similarly, a Yid can sometimes merit to see Eliyahu Hanavi without realizing who it is (as is brought in the *reshimos* of the Frierdiker Rebbe).

The same is true here, the Rebbe said. A person can have *ruach hakodesh* without realizing it. Even the youngest of children experiences this revelation during the dancing of *Simchas Beis Hashoeva*.<sup>11</sup>



To this day, thousands upon thousands of people throughout the world gather to fulfill the Rebbe's directive and rejoice on *Simchas Beis Hashoeva* in the streets. It is remarkable to watch, all types of people coming together, uniting to do the one thing everyone is able to do equally: dance.<sup>12</sup> **T**

1. Living Torah program 136, “11 Hours of Torah”.

2. Reshimos Hayoman p. 266

3. Sefer Hasichos 5703 p. 10; Toras Menachem 5712 p. 65

4. Yemei Bereishis p. 19

5. Toras Menachem vol. 10 p. 79

6. Simchas Beis Hashoeva 5712; Likutei Sichos vol. 2 p. 425

7. See Igros Kodesh vol. 28 p. 325

8. Sichos Kodesh 5741 Vol. 1 p. 135-136

9. See Sicha Second night of Sukkos 5746

10. My Encounter with the Rebbe vol. 12

11. Sicha second night of Sukkos 5744

12. It should be noted that the content of this article is only a small sampling of the Rebbe's vast explanations of Simchas Beis Hashoeva. For in-depth insight into this subject, study the many sichos in their original form.



# The Great Wake-Up Call

## The Six-Day War

### THE REASSURING VOICE

“We’ll throw them into the sea!” said the Egyptians who were about to wage war against the tiny Israel. “We will win this war! And when we do, we will complete that which has begun in Nazi Germany.”

The year was 5727. The Jews were preparing for war with four of their sworn enemies: Egypt, Iraq, Syria and Jordan. Jointly, they boasted nearly double the number of troops and tanks, and four times the air force of the IDF. The world was certain that victory was with the Arab countries. The many Holocaust survivors residing in Israel shuddered at the notion that yet another disastrous Holocaust was on its way, hurling rapidly towards the Jewish people. Parks were being designated as graveyards for the predicted mass casualties, and many foreign citizens attempted to evacuate before catastrophe hit. Amongst the uproar, just one lone voice preached optimism, predicted triumph, and bestowed strength, hope and reassurance to the horror stricken Jewish people.

“Hashem is protecting the Jews living in his Holy Land,” the Rebbe said. “He is sending them his blessings, success and salvation!<sup>1</sup> Do not be afraid! The eyes of Hashem are constantly upon Eretz Yisrael. Hashem is at your side and will guard you as well as all of the Jewish people living in Eretz Yisrael.”<sup>2</sup>

### REAWAKENING

The war turned out to be nothing short of unfathomable miracles, one after another. Syrian soldiers fled in fear even before the Israelis reached them, at times abandoning their weaponry. Some couldn’t explain their actions; whilst others claimed to have seen fictitious visions of giants

לזכות  
הרה"ת ר' מרדכי שיחי'  
דייטש  
נדפס ע"י  
בניו, ובנותיו, וכל משפחתו  
שיחיו

# The many Holocaust survivors residing in Israel shuddered at the notion that yet another disastrous Holocaust was on its way

and frightening images. The world watched in awe and disbelief, as the once doomed Israel rose to a miraculous unexpected triumph! The whole world recognized that Hashem's hand was at play in this miraculous war.

The Jewish people all over were ignited, felt united, and began searching for their heritage. There was an immense aura of *teshuvah*. The Rebbe saw this period of awakening as the final stages prior to Moshiach's coming, and felt that we must utilize the time properly. The Rebbe said that the great Russian Exodus in the summer of 5727 was also another link in the chain of miraculous events that would pave the way for Moshiach himself to redeem us.

In Tishrei the following year, 5728, the Rebbe said three different *maamarim* all beginning with the *possuk* "ה' ביום ההוא יתקע בשופר גדול."<sup>3</sup> The Rebbe said a *sicha* on Shabbos Bereishis<sup>4</sup> about the events of the period, the *hisorerus* that it caused, and the fact that it was a heavenly orchestrated event to prepare the Jewish people for immediate redemption. The Rebbe later edited the *sicha* and had it broadcast over the radio for the world to hear. Here are some of the points the Rebbe spoke about during that Shabbos:

In the weeks leading up to the Six Day War, the Jewish world was shaken to its core. Even the most unaffiliated Jew in the farthest corner of the world was suddenly gripped with fear and panic over the plight of his brethren in the Holy Land. When the wheel eventually turned and the

Jewish people rose to an incredibly miraculous triumph, every last Jew felt uplifted and inspired; he was filled with an outpour of love for his fellow Jews and longing for a deep connection to the Almighty. *Teshuvah* was in the air in a manner not seen by other such occurrences.

Never had such a reawakening swept the Jewish people as it had now. Even during the course of World War II, when there was good reason for panic and the result was indeed catastrophic—unfortunately, the Jewish people were not aroused with alarm and worry, and they didn't act with enough effort to save their suffering brethren. In this war on the other hand, in which the threats were not realized, only the fear was enormous, the Jewish people were filled with fright over the state of their fellow Jews, and were stirred to repentance. How can we possibly comprehend this unexpected and extraordinary reaction?<sup>5</sup>

## THE SOUND OF THE SHOFAR

The *navi* Yeshyahu prophesied, "And you will gather together the children of Israel, one by one."<sup>6</sup> The *navi* continues, "And it will be on that day, that the great shofar will be sounded, and those lost in the land of Ashur will come, as well as those persecuted in the land of Egypt, and they will bow to Hashem on the holy mountain in Yerushalayim."<sup>7</sup> During the dark exile, the Jewish people are dispersed in all corners of the world; it will therefore be necessary to approach each one of them and bring

them to Eretz Yisroel at the advent of Moshiach.

Unfortunately, during the lengthy period of exile, many Jews have gotten lost in the gloomy *galus* night, as result of which they will be unresponsive and uncooperative even when Moshiach will be prepared to release them from their bondage. It is for this reason that the "great shofar"—the great wakeup call—will be sounded. Just before Moshiach's arrival, Hashem will demonstrate such great revelations that they will shake up the Jewish people, and will arouse even those lost and oppressed Jews out of their reverie and misery, so that they too will be prepared to come and serve Hashem in Yerushalayim, with the coming of Moshiach.<sup>8</sup>

But before the sounding of the great shofar, yet another shofar will precede it. As the *navi* Zecharia had told us, "Hashem will sound the shofar and go about in the storms of Yemen."<sup>9</sup>

This is the Shofar of war. It means that Hashem will cause nation to rise up against nation, and they will combat each other so mercilessly that it will eternally transform the world. The Jewish people will suffer unspeakable atrocities as well, which will remind even the most assimilated Jew of his long forgotten Judaism. These atrocities are the "birth pangs" of Moshiach, which the Jewish people will have to endure prior to the redemption.<sup>10</sup>

Following this, comes the great shofar, when Hashem will give a loving fatherly call, to reawaken both kinds of Jews.

There are those Jews who are lost in the land of "Ashur." Ashur can also be read as "אושר" which means contentment; referring to those Jews who live in prosperous countries and have sunk in the slumber of worldly pleasures, and have long forgotten their connection to Judaism.

*Even during the course of World War II, when there was good reason for panic and the result was indeed catastrophic—unfortunately, the Jewish people were not aroused with alarm and worry*

Then there are those Jews who are persecuted in the limitations of Mitzrayim, who live in countries where they are tormented to no end, and are forcibly “pushed away” from Judaism. The endless tortures they’ve had to endure have weakened them so, to the extent that they are no longer able to pull themselves out of the darkness that they themselves detest.

### SOUNDS OF WAR

For these two types of Jews, a mere shofar (like the one mentioned in the *nevua* of Zecharia) is insufficient. For them, a “great shofar,” a call from Hashem himself, from the deepest levels in *Elokus*, is necessary; in order to tap into the essence of the Jewish soul to awaken her from the *galus* nightmare.<sup>11</sup>

Zecharia’s prophecy about the great earth-shattering battle became a stark reality in World War I, and even more so afterwards, in the devastations of World War II. The entire world was traumatized by these turbulent battles, and the Jewish people in particular suffered tremendous unspeakable horror and torture.<sup>12</sup>

It is nothing less than remarkable that these two horrific worldwide battles began based on such irrational reasons. Since when does one start a battle, never mind a World-War (I), on the basis of the murder of a single person? World War II began with an individual that started off as an insignificant unbecoming coward, who unexplainably terrified eighty million people into accepting his dictatorship. Even the world at large was much too

frightened to stop him, despite the fact that they were extremely conscious of his wicked scheme. This can only be explained as the sound of Hashem’s shofar which caused great chaos and havoc in the world, “the storms of Yemen,” which had to shake the world and modify its order, before Moshiach could come and transform the world completely.

Following the shofar of war that Hashem sounded across the globe,



IDF SOLDIERS LIBERATE THE KOSEL AND THE OLD CITY OF YERUSHALAYIM DURING THE SIX-DAY WAR.

the sound of an even greater shofar was fast approaching. Less than three decades after the Holocaust, the events that happened throughout and surrounding the Six-Day War awakened the Jewish people like never before. Even the most unaffiliated Jew was sick with worry over the plight of the Jews in Eretz Yisroel, of whom he may have never even thought of previously. The fright and terror of the Jewish people was just the beginning

of Hashem's wake up call to his people to do *teshuvah*. Then, with the great astounding miracles that followed, every last Jew watched in joy and excitement, feeling so deeply close to Hashem like never before.

### THE FINAL CALL

The Jews now stand in a great awakening (*hisorerus*), as Hashem sends them His loving fatherly call, pleading with them to return to Him. Hashem is now holding each Jew by

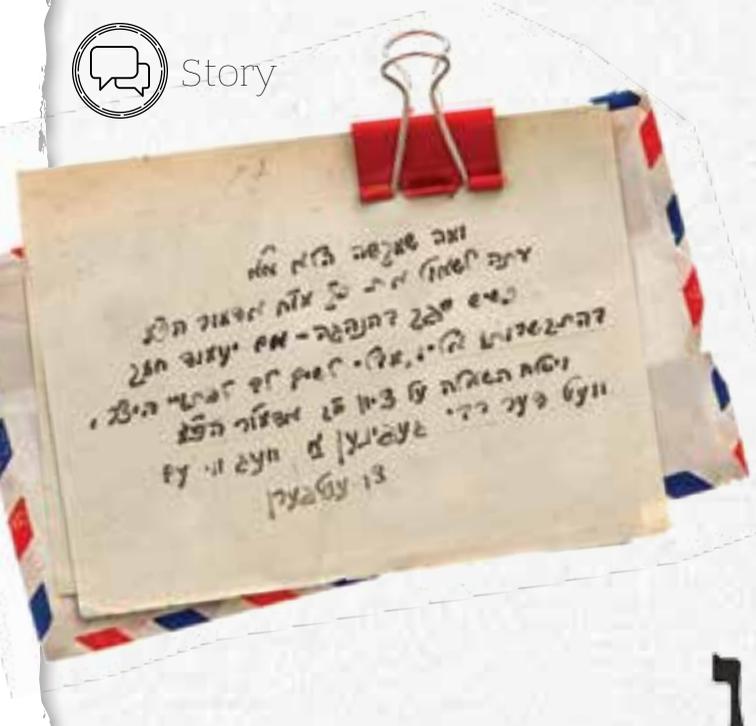
the hand calling out to him, "It is time that you finally come back!" It is our responsibility to utilize the sound of this great Shofar and the spark of *teshuvah* that it ignited in the hearts of the Jewish people, to do whatever we possibly can to bring these lost Yidden back to Yiddishkeit. As soon as we do our part, bringing about the best results of this awakening to *teshuvah*, Moshiach will immediately arrive.

Let us take advantage of this great revelation from Hashem.<sup>13</sup> The first moments following the sound of the great shofar have already passed, and the spark of *teshuvah* is beginning to dim once again. Yet, all is not lost, for Hashem is still waiting for us to take advantage of the aftermath of this great revelation, to arouse Yidden to *teshuvah*. Although the first crucial moments have already passed, and it will therefore be more challenging to utilize the inspiration that is no longer at its highest peak. We are nevertheless still in the aftermath of the great shofar and its influence, and if we try hard enough, we will, with Hashem's help, bring about the final redemption.<sup>14</sup> **T**



ISRAEL NATIONAL ARCHIVES

1. Likkutei Sichos vol. 7 p. 333
2. Igros Kodesh vol. 24 p. 332
3. The first *maamar* with the *dibbur hamaschil* "Vehaya Bayom Hahu", was said on Rosh Hashana 5728; Toras Menachem vol. 51 p. 3. The second *maamar* was said on Shabbos Parshas Haazinu, Shabbos Shuva, *ibid.* p. 13. The third *maamar*, on which this article is partially based upon, is from Shabbos Bereishis 5728, *ibid.* p. 185.
4. Toras Menachem *ibid.* p. 210
5. Toras Menachem *ibid.* p. 211
6. Yeshayahu 27:12
7. Yeshayahu 27:13.
8. Toras Menachem *ibid.* p. 185.
9. Zecharia 9:14
10. Toras Menachem *ibid.* p. 186
11. Toras Menachem *ibid.* p. 187
12. Toras Menachem *ibid.* p. 214
13. Toras Menachem *Ibid.* p. 215
14. Toras Menachem *ibid.* p. 221; 216



# דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

Dedicated By  
Chabad Lubavitch of Westport



## Open Eyes

AS TOLD BY ELIEZER TUNK (MORRISTOWN, NJ)

Our daughter Zelda Rochel was born this past year on 22 Adar II. According to the standard physical exam they ran within the first 24 hours, she was completely healthy.

Six days later we paid our first visit to a pediatrician in Crown Heights and to our horror, a quick examination of her eyes raised suspicion that our daughter may have been born with a cataract.<sup>1</sup> Although cataracts are very common in aging adults—cataract surgery is one of the most commonly performed operations in the United States—cataracts in newborns and children are relatively rare, affecting only 3 out of 10,000 children.

Our pediatrician referred us to a Manhattan-based medical practice called Pediatric Ophthalmic Consultants where Dr. Marc Lustig ran the full gamut of tests on our daughter. Fundus photography<sup>2</sup> clearly determined that indeed Zelda Rochel had been born with a double cataract in her left eye.<sup>3</sup>

Surgery was required to remove the clouded natural eye lens and replace it with an artificial one. Usually surgery is performed within six weeks of birth but because our case wasn't so severe, he felt we could wait six months before going ahead with the procedure. In the meantime the situation would be monitored with monthly examinations.

We were due to spend Pesach in England but before we left we paid a visit to the Ohel where we asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* that her condition should remain stable and the surgery be pushed off as much as allowed.

Upon returning from England, we once again visited Pediatric Ophthalmic Consultants where Zelda Rochel underwent her monthly examination. A different doctor performed the check-up and although no pictures were taken, she confirmed that surgery was still required and urged that it take place imminently.

We grew increasingly anxious at the thought of our precious little baby going under the surgical blade. We once



4 TISHREI, 5747, YOSSI MELAMED via JEM 129-098

again visited the Ohel where we implored the Rebbe for our child to be healthy. We also looked for a second medical opinion as per one of the Rebbe's well known instructions regarding medical diagnoses and treatments.

A few weeks later we were by our pediatrician who, upon completing the routine exam, told us that it seems to him the cataract had considerably faded, but as he doesn't specialize in the field, he couldn't be certain.

We became hopeful and at our next appointment with Dr. Lustig ten days later, on Yud-Gimmel Sivan, more pictures were taken of the eye.

The results were truly astonishing. Comparing the new pictures with those taken a couple months prior, it was



abundantly clear that the cataract had disappeared! We were overjoyed at the news that our daughter was healthy and wouldn't require surgery of any kind.

Most amazed was Dr. Lustig, who had never encountered such a phenomenon throughout his career as a specialist in this field, and he was at a total loss as to what had caused this miraculous recovery.

Of course we have no doubt that it is only due to the Rebbe's *brachos* that this wondrous miracle was wrought. **T**

1. A cataract is a clouding of the eye's natural lens.
2. Fundus photography involves capturing a photograph of the back of the eye. Specialized fundus cameras that consist of an intricate microscope attached to a flash-enabled camera are used in fundus photography.
3. He explained that while in the womb, the embryo's internal organs evolve from blood cells which then dissolve once the organ is formed. Apparently two of the blood cells developing her left eye had not disappeared, creating the blockage in the eye's lens.

## YOUR STORY

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



In honor of  
 Reb Avraham Hayman  
 And Reb Shloimy Litzman

Dedicated by  
 Reb Yisroel Schulman



YOSSI MELAMED via JEM 123955



YOSSI MELAMED via JEM 123961

# KAPAROS

*Erev Yom Kippur, 5747*

It is barely daybreak of one of the busiest days of the year. After *shlogging kaporos* privately in his room, the Rebbe emerges from 770 towards the adjacent courtyard, to bring the chicken to the *shochet*, Rabbi Yisroel Shimon Kalmanson. Following the *shechita*, the Rebbe performs the mitzvah of *kisuy hadam*, covering the spilled blood of a slaughtered fowl.

These photos were photographed by Levi Freidin and Yossi Melamed respectively, and have been made available by Jewish Educational Media's Living Archive project.



LEVI FREIDIN via JEM 8291



LEVI FREIDIN via JEM 8294

# 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.



## Merkos Shlichus Gift

Dear Editors,

In the article about Merkos Shlichus [“One Spark at a Time” Derher 47 (128) Av 5776] you mentioned that in the early years, the *bochurim* would have a special group *yechidus* with the Rebbe before the trip.

I merited to go on Merkos Shlichus a few times in those early years (once I went with Reb Yoel Kahn to Lakewood, another time with Reb Gershon Mendel Garelik, etc.) and I remember those group *yechidus*’n quite distinctly. The Rebbe would give us a *bracha* and words of encouragement for the shlichus.

Just to mention one specific *yechidus*. It was 5716 and a new small print of the Siddur Tehillas Hashem had just been printed for the first time. The Rebbe said that since a new *siddur* just came from the press, he will give a copy to each one of the *bochurim* going on Merkos Shlichus as a מתנה. We then all passed by the Rebbe’s desk and the Rebbe handed each one of us a small blue *siddur*.

**Mayer Harlig**  
Brooklyn, NY



## He’s Going With

Dear Editors,

Following up on the Merkos Shlichus article [“One Spark at a Time” Derher 47 (128) Av 5776], I would like to share my own personal Merkos Shlichus story which took place in 5718.

I was a *bochur* in 770 at the time and I had arranged with Merkos to go on Merkos Shlichus with Reb Yankel Holtzman to North and South Carolina and Georgia. Yankel had a driver’s license and we planned to drive down from New York to meet with the Yidden there.

My uncle Reb Hendel Lieberman was unwell at the time and I was the one taking care of him. When he heard of my plans to leave him for a few weeks in the summer he told me that I must stay because he needs my assistance. I wrote this to the Rebbe.

The Rebbe responded that I should explain to my uncle that with him allowing me to leave, although he is in need of my help, it is as if he too is travelling on the Rebbe’s shlichus. Of course I relayed to him what the Rebbe had said and he agreed wholeheartedly that I go.

(In the article you wrote that “every *bochur*... would usually receive a dollar from the Rebbe through *mazkirus* in connection with their trip.” When I returned from the trip and received my dollar, my uncle asked that since the Rebbe had said that it is as if he went; he too should receive a dollar.)

**Berel Futerfas**  
Brooklyn, NY



## Av and Sad Occurrences

Dear Editors,

Firstly, thank you for your constant supply of authentic *chassidische* content each and every month. I am especially appreciative that you are careful to include the sources for the information written in the articles.

Which brings me to my question:

In the Editorial for the Av magazine [Derher 47 (128) Av 5776], you wrote that the word “Av” reminds us of the sad occurrences that befell the Jewish people during this month, and that “Menachem” is the consolation and healing, so to speak, for those tragedies.

This statement struck me as interesting, so I decided to check out the quoted source (Sichas Motzei Shabbos parshas Pinchas 5738), but I did not find any explanation for this. Please enlighten.

Also, I have always wondered why it says in your ‘mission statement’ that your wonderful publication is geared toward *bochurim*. I think that anyone who has a love for

Lubavitch history and a love for the Rebbe will greatly enjoy and draw inspiration from your publication. For me, when I am reading it, it feels like I’m living before Gimmel Tammuz, like it never happened!

I eagerly look forward to the Derher and read it on Shabbos. I am so glad it is monthly and arrives before the month it discusses actually begins. Great work and please never stop!

Sincerely with much appreciation,

**Pinchas Winograd**  
Las Vegas, Nevada



Dear Pinchas,

Thank you for the tremendous feedback!

Regarding your question:

Indeed, in the *sicha* of Motzei Shabbos Pinchas this fact is not explained so clearly.

But it is explained in many places in Chassidus (see ד”ה נחמו עת”ר that the name “Av”—meaning “father”—alludes to the fact that Hashem, as our father, has to punish us at times in order to cleanse us of our sins. He is acting as a merciful father, although His kindness and mercy may be hidden in this instance.

We would like to turn your attention to another *sicha* said by the Rebbe a few weeks later, on Motzei Shabbos parshas Ekev 5738 (*se’if* 4 and on), where the Rebbe says that although the tragedies are indeed the work of a merciful father, the mercy is hidden within the tragic events. In order to reveal the kindness and mercy, manifest in the reality of *olam hazeh*, we add

the name “Menachem,” which can mean “reconsideration” (as in מִנְחָם וְיִנְחָם).

The reason why the *sicha* of Motzei Shabbos Pinchas was referenced, is to explain why specifically in recent times, as we draw closer to Moshiach, the word “Menachem” was added to the name of the month.

Thank you for bringing this to our attention and giving us the opportunity to revise and explain.

All the best,

The Editors

”



## Begin Visit

Dear Editors,

Job well done on the Av Derher.

I would just like to point out that the *bochur* mentioned on page 14 [“Prime Minister Begin Visits The Rebbe” Derher 47 (128) Av 5776] who *chazzered* the Rebbe’s *sicha* for the Israeli delegation while Begin was in *yechidus* was Rabbi Menashe Perman (today the Rebbe’s shliach in Chile). He was part of the Vaad HaMesader then and had a badge. He often dealt with the Israelis that would come to the Rebbe.

I have also enclosed a picture of the “R” badge which was worn by people with permission to be in the building during the visit, as mentioned in the article.

Mendy Schmukler

Brooklyn, NY

”

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר  
נדפס ע"י  
הרה"ת ר' לוי יצחק שיחי'  
וואגעל  
בקשר עם יום הולדתו ביום ו' תשרי  
ולזכות זוגתו מרת חי' פריידא ומשפחתו שיחיו

לזכות  
מרת חי' ברכה בת ר' יצחק ע"ה  
נלב"ע כ"ח אדר ה'תש"ע  
הקיצו ורננו שוכני עפר והיא בתוכם, בגאולה האמיתית והשלימה  
בקרוב ממש נאו  
ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.  
נדפס ע"י  
הרה"ת ר' יצחק וזוגתו מרת חי' ומשפחתו שיחיו  
פרוס

נדפס ע"י ולזכות  
הרה"ת ר' אברהם יצחק  
לרגל יום הולדתו ביום ח' תשרי  
ולזכות בנותיו  
שיינא מוסיא, וחיה גיטל  
לרגל יום הולדתם ביום ב' דראש השנה  
ולזכות אשתו מרת מינא רחל  
שיחיו  
ריטשלער

לזכות  
בנינו ובתנו  
מנחם מענדל, רבקה, יוסף יצחק, שלום דובער  
נדפס ע"י הוריהם  
הרה"ת ר' ישראל וזוגתו מרת חנה שיחיו  
זבדי

לזכות  
הרה"ת ר' משה וזוגתו מרת שרה חנה  
וילדיהם חי' מושקא, רחל, מנחם מענדל, דבורה לאה, שיינא, נתן,  
מנוחה מינדל, שירה, שמואל אייזיק שיחיו  
גורארי'

לע"נ  
הרה"ת ר' אליהו אריה לייב בן הרב יוסף ע"ה  
גראסס  
נלב"ע בליל שמע"צ אחר הקפות ה'תשנ"ה  
נדפס ע"י משפחתו  
הרה"ת ר' אברהם נחום וזוגתו רחל ומשפחתם שיחיו  
גראסס

לזכות הוריני  
הרה"ת ר' משה וזוגתו מרת פערל הערסון  
הרה"ג הרה"ח ר' אברהם וזוגתו מרת חי' בלומא אודאבא  
להצלחה רבה ומופלגה לאורך ימים ושנים טובות מתוך בריאות הנכונה  
נדפס ע"י בנו וכלתו  
הרה"ת ר' אשר וזוגתו מרת שרה שיחיו  
הערסאן

לע"נ  
הרה"ח הרה"ת אהרן בן הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' יהודה ע"ה  
חיתריק  
נלב"ע כ"ט תשרי ה'תשע"ה  
נדפס ע"י משפחתו  
הרה"ת ר' אברהם נחום וזוגתו רחל ומשפחתם שיחיו  
גראסס

לזכות  
החתן התמים מנחם מענדל הלוי שוי' בייטעלמאן  
והכלה מרת לאה תחי' ראזענברג  
לרגל חתונתם ביום כ"ב אלול ה'תשע"ו הבעל"ט  
נדפס ע"י  
הרה"ת ר' יחיאל מיכל וזוגתו מרת חנה שיחיו בייטעלמאן

לזכות  
מנחם מענדל ב"ר דוד הי"ו  
אסתר חנה מושקא ב"ר משה אברהם דוד הי"ו  
וכל יוצאי חלציהם הי"ו

לע"נ  
הרה"ת ר' ישראל מנחם בן הרה"ח ר' אלתר הלל ע"ה  
**רבינוביץ**  
נלב"ע כ"א סיון ה'תשע"ו  
ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.  
נדפס ע"י  
משפחתו שיחיו

נדפס ע"י ולזכות  
הרה"ת ר' לוי וזוגתו מרת יהודית ומשפחתם שיחיו  
**פייגענסאהן**

נדפס ע"י  
הרה"ת ר' לוי יצחק וזוגתו מרת חנה שיחיו  
**באנון**  
לזכות ילדיהם מנחם מענדל, חי' מושקא, שרה, חנינא, ישראל שיחיו  
לחיווק התקשרותם לכ"ק אדמו"ר

לזכות  
החייל בצבאות ה'  
מנחם מענדל שיחי'  
**גליצנשטיין**  
לרגל ה'אפשערניש' שלו ביום י"ג תמוז ה'תשע"ו - שנת הקהל  
נדפס ע"י זקניו  
הרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק וזוגתו מרת אסתר גאלדע שיחיו  
**גרינברג**

לזכות  
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל וזוגתו מרת נחמה דינה ומשפחתם שיחיו  
**מאנעל**

GMAR CHASSIMAH TOVA, AND A GUT YOM TOV TO TO THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY  
CHABAD OF BEL AIR, CA  
RABBI CHAIM AND CHARNA MENTZ

לזכות  
מרת מרים שתחי'  
לרגל יום הולדתה ביום כ"ף מנחם אב  
לשנת הצלחה בגשמיות וברוחניות  
נדפס ע"י  
בעלה הרה"ת ר' שניאור זלמן ומשפחתה שיחיו  
**פעלליג**

לזכות  
החתן התמים ר' יעקב מנחם מענדל שיחי' יוניק  
והכלה המהוללה מרת רענדל לאה שתחי' לויין  
לרגל חתונתם ביום י' אלול ה'תשע"ו - שנת הקהל  
נדפס ע"י הוריהם  
הרה"ת ר' דובער וזוגתו מרת שושנה שיחיו יוניק  
הרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק וזוגתו מרת חנה שיחיו לויין

לע"נ  
הרה"ח מוה"ר שניאור זלמן בן הרה"ח ר' נתן ע"ה  
**גורארי'**  
מקושר בכל נימי נפשו לרבותינו נשיאנו, ומקורב לבית רבי כל ימיו  
נלב"ע ביום השבת  
**א' דראש השנה ה'תשס"ד**  
נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות  
**לב"ק אדמו"ר**  
נדפס ע"י  
הרה"ת ר' יצחק וזוגתו מרת לאה שיחיו  
**גניביש**  
לרגל יום נישואיהם ביום י"א אלול לאריכות ימים ושנים טובות

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

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות  
לכ"ק אדמו"ר זצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע

לזכות

הבת הנולדת, חיילת בצבאות ה'

שיינא

ולזכות הוריה

ידידנו הנכבד, עמוד התווך של גליון

"א חסידישער דערהער"

הרה"ת **שלום דובער** בן רבקה נעמי

וזוגתו מרת **אסתר** בת מרים

ומשפחתם שיחיו

לאורך ימים ושנים טובות

ליין

שיזכו לגדלה יחד עם שאר ילדיהם שיחיו

"לתורה לחופה ולמעשים טובים"

מתוך הרחבה

ובהצלחה רבה ומופלגה

בכל אשר יפנו בגשמיות וברוחניות

A Chassidisher Derher  
Vaad Talmidei Hatmimim



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