

A Chassidisher **Derher**

א חסידישער דערהער



**SUPPLEMENT
MAGAZINE**

Celebrating 30 years of
Hei Teves
Didan Notzach

מבצע בית מלא ספרים

Redefining the Home

A Life in Beis Chayenu

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH REB MEIR HARLIG

Thought that Counts

THINKING CHASSIDUS BEFORE DAVENING



TEVES 5777
ISSUE 52 (129)

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TEVES 5777 ISSUE 52 (129)



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Marking 30 years of the yom tov of Hei Teves, we take a look at the Rebbe's call to fill every Jewish home with Torah books—Mivtza Bayis Malei Sefarim.

Photo: JEM and Rosenblum Family

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Derher**Editorial**

“All those who have recently proclaimed ‘*Didan notzach*—our side is victorious’ are most certainly referring to “our” side of the Rebbe, my father-in-law, *nessi doreinu*. Hence, everything that comes in sequence to this must exhibit the victory *nessi doreinu*...” (12 Teves 5747).

Indeed, this month we will mark the special milestone of 30 years since the victory on Hei Teves. The entire court case constituted and defined a broad-ranging and significant chapter in the meaning of a Rebbe and our connection as Chassidim. The ramifications of the episode included doubling our reach in *hafatzas hamaayonos* and so much more. This was all part a very evident “spiritual side” to the court case, clearly understood from the Rebbe’s words before and during the court-case, and after the victory.

To highlight and expound on all these points, we have prepared a special supplementary edition of the Derher magazine dedicated to the story and meaning of Hei Teves.

Still, at the base of the story lies the precious library of our Rabbeim. As the Rebbe said in the year following the victory, “It was a victory for the *sefarim*—דין דהספרים נצח... By extension, this is a victory and redemption for all of Torah Yiddishkeit and especially for the work of *hafatzas hamaayonos* in general, and specifically the Torah of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe, *nessi doreinu*.”

With this in mind, it seems appropriate to focus on one of the Rebbe’s ten *mivtzoim* in the current magazine: *Mivtza Bayis Malei Sefarim*.

Read about the Rebbe’s emphasis on the importance of *sefarim* in general, the Rebbe’s call

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for establishing Torah libraries in every community, and the details of this campaign itself.

And in the Rebbe's words (Hei Teves 5748):

"May the increase in all of our efforts hasten the most important 'didan notzach' of all; the victory of the light of Torah and mitzvos over the darkness of golus, with the true and complete geulah by Moshiach tzidkeinu!"

The Editors
י"ט-כ"ף כסלו ה'תשע"ז



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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





Tracht Gut In Pshuto Shel Mikra

POSITIVE THINKING

We are all familiar with the famous saying of our Rebbeim: “*Tracht gut vet zain gut*—Think good and it will be good.”

In any given situation our thoughts have a strong impact on the outcome. If we maintain a positive outlook and the confidence that it will turn out well, then it will actually turn out well. The opposite obviously applies to one who approaches with a negative outlook, that it won’t turn out well.

Is this an idea found only in Kabbalah and Chassidus, the more mystical parts of Torah, or can we find a source for this idea in the revealed part of Torah?

In truth we can see this idea reflected clearly in the Torah.

MOSHE RABBEINU AND THE MITZRI

In Parshas Shemos we are told the story of Moshe Rabbeinu growing up and going out to see the suffering of the Jewish nation. He sees an Egyptian taskmaster hitting a Jew and, thinking that no one can see, he kills him.

The next day, Moshe Rabbeinu approaches Dasan and Aviram who are fighting and rebukes them. They retort, “Are you going to kill us like you killed the Egyptian yesterday?!” At this point Moshe becomes frightened because he realizes that “the matter has become known.”

Rashi explains that this means simply; Moshe was scared because the news of him killing the Egyptian had become known and he was afraid of being caught and punished.

Why does Rashi need to mention that the *possuk* is to be understood simply, when a child reading the *parsha* can understand this quite well on his own?

EXTRA INFORMATION?

There is a basic question regarding the order of events in the *parsha*:

The description of Moshe’s emotional state at this point in the story is seemingly superfluous. Why do I need to know that Dasan and Aviram knew about the killing of the Egyptian and that Moshe was afraid that they would tell Pharaoh?

Technically, the news of the killing could have been known, but still not reach Pharaoh. The Torah could have skipped this entire account and just tell us that Pharaoh found out about



לזכות החייל בצבאות ה'
יחזקאל שיחי'
לרגל הולדתו
ולזכות הוריו
הרה"ת ר' יהושע וזוגתו מרת פריידא
קארענבליט
נדפס ע"י זקניו
הרה"ת ר' חיים שניאור זלמן
וזוגתו מרת מלכה שיחיו
גורקאו

the killing, which led to Moshe fleeing to Midian.

THINK GOOD

The explanation is based on the idea that “*tracht gut vet zain gut*.”

The fact that Dasan and Aviram knew about Moshe’s killing of the Mitzri should not have worried Moshe so much. He should have had faith in his fellow Jews that they would not go and relay the news to Pharaoh.

He could have maintained a positive outlook on the situation and had confidence that his secret was safe. If he would have “thought good” it would have “been good.”

However, Moshe Rabbeinu was scared because he assumed that Dasan and Aviram would spread the word and tell Pharaoh. This negative thought pattern actually allowed for the negative outcome to follow.

We need the Torah to tell us of Moshe’s fear upon finding out that Dasan and Aviram knew, because it is directly related to Pharaoh finding out. It also serves to teach us an important

lesson regarding the power of our thoughts.

This is why Rashi explains that the *pesukim* are meant to be taken simply; though Moshe should not have jumped to a negative conclusion regarding his fellow Jews, Rashi explains, he did. Doing so allowed the rest of the negative chain of events to follow.

The same idea can be seen in the Midrash in beginning of the *parsha*:

It says in the Midrash that *shevatim* came down to Mitzrayim with their Jewish names, and left Mitzrayim with the same Jewish names. Why not just tell me that they left with Jewish names? We know that they came with Jewish names.

The answer is that only through their positive approach to the challenges of *golus* were the Yidden able to maintain their Jewish names. When they came down to Mitzrayim they came with confidence and a positive outlook, that come what may, *golus* would not change them. This brought about the desired positive outcome; when they left Mitzrayim

after 210 years in *golus* they still had Jewish names.

OUR LIVES

This is a powerful lesson for each and every one of us in our own *avodah*. We all have challenges in our day-to-day lives that get in the way of our wholehearted service of Hashem.

We must never allow ourselves to think that a challenge is insurmountable. We must have faith that there is no challenge that we cannot overcome. If our approach to the challenge is with confidence that we will overcome, then the positive outcome is bound to follow.

May we all have the strength and mental fortitude to keep a positive outlook in every situation and may the words of our Rebbeim “*trach gut vet zain gut*” manifest in actuality with a positive outcome in all areas *b’gashmiyus* and *b’ruchniyus*. **1**

(Adapted from *Sichas Shabbos parshas Shemos*, 5726—*bilti mugah*. Selections of this *sicha* were later edited by the Rebbe and printed in *Likutei Sichos* vol. 31 *Shemos* 2)



לעבן מיטן רבין



לעילוי נשמת
הו"ח א"א ר' חיים ב"ר יעקב ז"ל
גרייזמאן
נפטר עש"ק לאחרי הדלקת הנרות
עשרה בטבת תשל"ד
ומרת דינה בת ר' חיים משה ע"ה
פייגעלשטאק
נפטרה כ"ג אלול תשמ"ה
ומרת שרה אסתר בת אלתר יהושע ע"ה
פייגעלשטאק
נפטרה כ"ג תשרי תשע"ו
תנצב"ה
נדבת ע"י ולזכות נכדם
הרה"ת ר' חיים וזוגתו ביילא מינדל
שיחיו
וילדיהם מנחם מענדל, חי' מושקא,
לוי יצחק, חנה דינה ומשה אליהו שיחיו
גרייזמאן

5739, YOSSIMELAMED via JEM 25114

Brazilian Delegation

TEVES, 5739

MONDAY NIGHT, EVE OF CHOF-DALED TEVES

During the afternoon, it was announced that there would be a farbrengen tonight. The farbrengen began at the usual time, 9:30 p.m.

On the way into the farbrengen, the Rebbe smiled to Reb Sholom Hecht. In the first *sicha*, the Rebbe spoke about the Alter Rebbe's style of spreading Chassidus and that of the Friediker Rebbe. After the *sicha*, the Rebbe had some cake and wine, and said *l'chaim*. During the *niggun* the

Rebbe said *l'chaim* and smiled to Mr. David Rosen (visiting with a group from Brazil; more on this below).

After the third *sicha*, the Rebbe asked that the pre-*maamar niggun* be sung and then said the *maamar* "*Habo'im Yashreish Yaakov*." During the *niggun* after the *maamar*, the Rebbe clapped along vigorously.

Towards the end of the farbrengen, they sang the *Niggun Hachanah* and the Alter Rebbe's *Niggun* followed by *Nye Zhuritzi*. The Rebbe then requested

that everyone should study the Torah of the Alter Rebbe [in *nigleh* and *Chassidus*] during the day of Chof-Daled Teves.

Niggun Shalosh Tenu'os was sung, followed by *Ani Ma'amin*. The Rebbe then started *Nyet Nyet Nikavo*, clapping along with great vigor.

Walking out of the farbrengen the Rebbe encouraged the singing of *Ki Besimcha* all the way to the elevator. When the Rebbe came upstairs he stopped to speak with Rabbi Klapman for a minute in *Gan Eden Hatachton*.

At 12:25 a.m. the Rebbe left his room and headed home. Again, the Rebbe smiled at Reb Sholom Hecht, as well as Mr. Henry Rhiner and Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda Hecht.

All the way until (and even when inside!) the car the Rebbe encouraged the singing of “*Ki Besimcha*.”

CHOF-DALED TEVES

During the morning, Rabbi Piekarski gave a *shiur kloli* on *Birchos Hanehenin*, as the Rebbe had requested (to study the Torah of the Alter Rebbe) at the farbrengen the night before. The *zal* was packed with all the *bochurim* learning in 770 and Chovevei Torah.

At 2:00 p.m. the Rebbe went to the Ohel. Before leaving, he glanced in the *zal*, where the *shiur* was still going on.

The yeshiva of Oholei Torah sent the Rebbe a booklet prepared by the *bochurim* with questions and answers and *marei mekomos* on the recent (Likkutei) Sichos. The response (a few days later, on Friday) was “נת'ח ודבר בעתו - בסמיכות לכ' טבת” (Received. Thank you. The hilul is due, I am writing you, etc.) It was time-appropriate, close to 24 Teves—the

hillullah of the Alter Rebbe. I will mention it at the Ohel.”

Just before *maariv*, Rabbi Binyomin Klein called over Rabbi Moshe Feller (shliach in Minnesota, who was on his way to Washington to meet Senator Rudy Boschwitz of who had become close to Chabad of Minnesota) and told him the Rebbe wanted to speak to him. Rabbi Feller waited in *Gan Eden Hatachton* where the Rebbe spoke to him for a few minutes. As the Rebbe was talking, he went into his room and brought out the two English volumes on the life and philosophy of the Alter Rebbe, and gave them to Rabbi Feller for Senator Boschwitz.

When the Rebbe went out into the foyer, Rabbi Feller's son was standing next to the big *pushka*. The Rebbe took out some coins and asked Rabbi Feller whether his son would also be going to Washington, to which he responded affirmatively. The Rebbe gave the boy some coins, and told him to give them to *tzedakah*. After taking a few steps forward, the Rebbe turned back to them and wished them “פארט געזונטערהייט און הערן בשורות טובות—Have a safe trip and may we hear good news.”

Mr. Katch from England was waiting there too. The Rebbe asked whether he received the message that had been sent to him. Mr. Katch confirmed that he had. The Rebbe smiled and blessed him that he should have a lot of *nachas*, then continued on to the car.

The Rebbe took out some coins and asked Rabbi Feller whether his son would also be going to Washington

25 TEVES

After *mincha*, the Rebbe spoke to the Oren family from Brazil in *Gan Eden Hatachton* prior to their return home.

The Rebbe started in English, “Thank you for your help [to Chabad in Brazil].” He then blessed Mr. Oren with success in business and in spreading Yiddishkeit here [America] and there [Brazil].

Accompanying them was Rabbi Yosef Wineberg who told the Rebbe that Mr. Oren's sister is also flying today. She mentioned that she understood French, so the Rebbe repeated everything in French for her. The Rebbe then said with a smile, “Are there any other languages we need to talk in?”



BOCHURIM LEARN IN THE SMALL ZAL, UPSTAIRS 770, 5739.

26 TEVES

The Rebbe arrived from home shortly after 10:00 a.m. and joined the *minyan* for *krias haTorah*, putting some coins in the *pushka* on his way in. After *kriah*, the Rebbe said Tehillim *kapitel* 77 (his *kapitel*), and the first and last *possuk* of 78 (the Rebbetzin's *kapitel*).

In the hallway from the *zal* to his room, the Rebbe exchanged words with Mr. Kay, a lawyer from Yerushalayim who was waiting there. The Rebbe greeted him with a smile and “*Shalom aleichem*.” After a brief conversation about his work, the Rebbe wished him success and good news.

SHABBOS VA'EIRA, 28 TEVES

At 8:30 a.m., the Rebbe joined the *minyan* for Tehillim, which he recited while seated. After Tehillim the Rebbe went to his room, returning at 10:35 for *shacharis*. In the afternoon, the Rebbe went home for about an hour.

Upon his return to 770 after Shabbos, the Rebbe spoke to Mr. Henry Rhiner. He had been taken to the hospital that morning, and the Rebbe asked whether he was feeling okay, and if there was anything wrong with his heart. Mr. Rhiner responded that his heart was fine. The Rebbe then told him to take the heart pills he was given and not to worry about it. “I take them too. Be well.” Mr. Rhiner responded that the Rebbe needs to be well too. The Rebbe then told him that during the *farbrengen* he should say at least two or three *lchaims*.

The Rebbe came down by elevator to the Motzei Shabbos Mevorchim *farbrengen* at 9:30 p.m. Once at his place, the Rebbe nodded in greeting to someone.

After the third *sicha*, Mr. Rosen (from Brazil) said *lchaim*. The Rebbe smiled at him, and then started clapping. This was followed by the *maamar niggun* and the *maamar* “*Va'era el Avraham*.” The Rebbe then said a *sicha* on Rashi, said *lchaim* on most of the cup of wine, and said a fifth *sicha*.

At the end of the last *sicha*, the Rebbe said “מען זאל אריינטאנצן צו די גאולה מיט א ריקוד עצום וואס איז מיט אלע רמ”ח אברים—We should dance to the *geulah* with intense dancing, using all of our 248 limbs.” The Rebbe then began his father's *hakafos niggun*. Suddenly, the Rebbe stood up and began to dance in his place, clapping along intensely! (We haven't merited to see this sight in quite a while.)



THE REBBE ENCOURAGES THE SINGING AT THE
FARBRENGEN MOTZEI SHABBOS 28 TEVES 5739.



JEM103524

TEVES 5777
A CHASSIDISHER DERHER



The Rebbe's head was down with his eyes closed. This continued for a full two minutes and then the Rebbe sat down. He signaled that the singing should continue and a smile could be seen on his face.

The Rebbe recited a *bracha acharona* and then started the *niggun* again. While leaving the shul to the elevator, as well as when exiting the elevator upstairs, the Rebbe waved his arm strongly to the singing.

On the path leaving 770, Mr. Rhiner spoke to the Rebbe briefly, and the Rebbe wished him “*gut voch*.” Two people stretched out their hands, and when the Rebbe accepted their handshake, they shook and kissed the Rebbe's hand.

All the way to the car the Rebbe continuously encouraged the singing.

You are the boss of the whole city, [and] through the whole city also of the whole country.

29 TEVES

When the Rebbe came in the morning, the Brazilian group—accompanied by Rabbi Shabsi Alpern (the shliach who had brought the group) and Mr. Rosen—were waiting to meet the Rebbe, as they would be leaving later that day.

Rebbe: When are you leaving?

Rabbi Alpern: Today *im yirtzeh Hashem*.

Rebbe: What time?

Rabbi Alpern: At 6:00 p.m. The flight leaves at 8:00.

Rebbe: Will you manage to be here for *mincha*?

Rabbi Alpern: We'll be here *im yirtzeh Hashem*.

Rebbe: But I'm going to the Ohel today. (I.e. *mincha* will be much later than the scheduled time, and you won't be able to attend *mincha* and still catch the flight.)

Rabbi Alpern: Now, we have decided to remain.

The Rebbe then turned to Mr. Rosen: פארט געזונטערהייט און זאל זיין בשורות טובות און א גרויסן דאנק
און דעם באזון—Safe travels, may we share good news, and thank you very much for visiting. The Rebbe continued in English: “It was my pleasure, and may the Almighty bless you in the near future to come again and in a happy opportunity.”

Mr. Rosen: Thank you!

Rebbe: And with joy and glad hearts.

Mr. Rosen: I saw yesterday that the Rebbe was very happy.

Rebbe: True, but it must be even more. Every day one must ensure that there is good news. I will leave [with the secretariat] an answer for your last two letters and give you another few dollars to be given to tzedakah when you get back. [In English:] You are the boss of the whole city, [and] through the whole city also of the whole country. I'll give you a few dollars, and you will give them to tzedakah.

The Rebbe then asked Rabbi Alpern whether they understood English, Yiddish or French best, or for the Rebbe to talk and Rabbi Alpern would translate.

The Rebbe turned back to Mr. Rosen, and said (in French), “Hashem should bless you with all you need and with joy. I received your wife's letter.” The



Rebbe then repeated in English, “I received through you a letter from your wife. Please give her my regards with all the necessary benedictions. Thank you very much.”

Again, the Rebbe wished them a safe journey.

When the Rebbe came in for *mincha-maariv* after his return from the Ohel, the group was there. The Rebbe looked at them with a big smile and a surprised look. After *mincha* the Rebbe spoke again briefly with Rabbi Alpern and Mr. Rosen in *Gan Eden Hatachton*.

Rebbe: Did you get delayed?

They replied that when the Rebbe asked whether they would be here for *mincha*, they realized that they should stay.

The Rebbe smiled, and wished them good news and success.

Mr. Rosen then said that in his letter to the Rebbe he wrote about love and closeness, which is expressed through a kiss. “I’d like to express this feeling to the Rebbe.”

The Rebbe extended his hand, and he kissed it.

Mr. Rosen asked, what [*hachlatah*] he should do as a result of this [feeling of closeness from their encounter]?

Rebbe: Be proactive in Yiddishkeit in your home, in my home, in Alpern’s home, in the Chabad House and in the city.

The Rebbe concluded with a *bracha* in French. ⑦



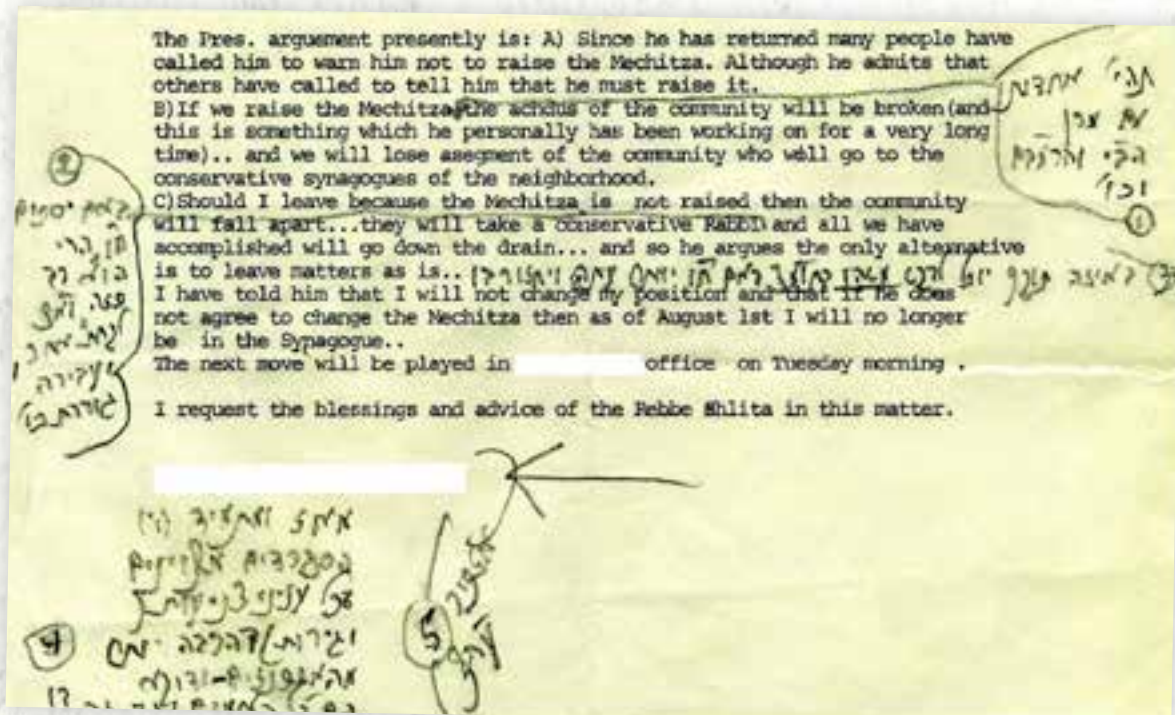
5739, YOSSIMELAMED via JEM130853



כתב יד קודש

Achdus with Whom?

The following response in the Rebbe's *ksav yad kodesh* was written in the summer of 5735 to the rav of a Sephardic shul who faced opposition to the idea of raising the *mechitza* in his shul.



לזכות
הת' אייזיק גרשון שיחי'
לרגל הכנסו לעול המצוות
י"ד טבת, ה'תשע"ז
נדפס ע"י
הוריו הרה"ת ר' אברהם
וזוגתו מרת הינדא שי'
מינץ

In his letter, the rav enumerates three reasons against the idea as presented by the president:

1. Many people in the community called the president warning him not to do it.
2. By raising the *mechitza*, the *achdus* of the community will be broken.
3. If he [the rabbi] leaves because of this issue, the congregation will take a Conservative rabbi in his place and all that has been accomplished in strengthening Torah observance in the community will go down the drain.

About the second reason, the Rebbe wrote:

(1) תהי' אחדות עם מרן הב"י והרמב"ם וכו'.

[Raising the *mechitza* will] bring *achdus* with the Beis Yosef, the Rambam, etc. [i.e. the *achdus* of the community must be in line with the rulings of our *poskim*; according to *halacha* (interestingly, the Rebbe specifically singles out Sephardic *poskim*)].

About the third reason, that they may take a Conservative rabbi in his stead, the Rebbe wrote:

(2) באם יסכים ח"ו, הרי הוא רב כזה, וא"צ לקחת אחר, ועבירה גוררת כו'.

If you agree [to not raise the *mechitza*] *chas v'shalom*, then you too are such a rabbi [i.e. you are just like a Conservative rabbi] and there is no need to take another. [Bear in mind that] *aveira gorres* [aveira; i.e. this will cause a chain reaction and the *frumkeit* in your shul will continue spiralling downward].

About the fact that what has already been accomplished in the past will be lost, the Rebbe wrote:

(3) באיזה תוקף יוכל לבקש משהו בתומ"צ באם ח"ו יותר עתה ויחזור בו

On what grounds will you be able to request something [else] in Torah and mitzvos [from your congregants], if you will *chas v'shalom* concede now [on the issue of *mechitza*] and back down.

At the end of the letter, he requests the Rebbe's brocha in this matter. The Rebbe wrote:

(4) מאז ומתמיד היו הספרדים מצוינים בכל עניני צניעות (וגירות) ובהרבה יותר מהאשכנזים - ודוקא הם

צ"ל נלחמים נגד זה?!

(5) אזכיר עה"צ

In the past, the Sephardim were always outstanding in all areas of *tznius* (and conversion), much more than the Ashkenazim—and now they fight against this?!

I will mention this at the Ohel [for a *bracha*].

(LaHaK Parshas Mishpatim 5773)

DAYS OF MEANING

EXPLORING SPECIAL DATES
ON OUR CALENDAR

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5 TEVES

Didan Notzach

5747- The United States District Court issued the verdict that the *sefarim* of the Rebbe's library belong to Agudas Chassidei Chabad, and are not a personal inheritance of a family member.

News of the victory was instantly communicated worldwide and greeted by chassidim everywhere with great relief and thanks to Hashem. In 770, thousands of *chassidim* celebrated, and hundreds traveled to New York to spend this special time with the Rebbe.

The joy reached its peak when the Rebbe davened *mincha* in the main shul, with the *chazzan* using the *yom-tov'dike nusach*. *Mincha* was followed by a *sicha*, and on the following day, the Rebbe asked that Yidden across the globe utilize this occasion to send in *panim* which would be brought to the Ohel of the Friediker Rebbe, before the Rebbe's trip to the Ohel the next day. During the following week, the Rebbe said a *sicha* each day, as the celebrations continued day and night.

{IN THE REBBE'S PRESENCE}

On the first anniversary of Hei Teves in 5748, which was on Shabbos, the entire farbrengen was centered around the victory of the *sefarim*, and the Rebbe began by marking the date as a *yom segulah*—an auspicious day.

In 5752 the Rebbe connected Hei Teves with the *sefarim* being held in Russia, saying that this is an ideal time for them to be returned to their home in 770, creating a true *didan notzach* with the release of all of the Rebbeim's *sefarim* and *kesavim*, and that people can hasten this by adding to their own collections of *sefarim*.

24 TEVES

Histalkus of the Alter Rebbe

On Motzei Shabbos Parshas Shemos, 24 Teves 5573 (תקע"ג), the Alter Rebbe was *nistalek* in the village of Piyena. His resting place is in Haditch.

{IN THE REBBE'S PRESENCE}

The Rebbe often farbrenged on this day, even as early as 5712.

24 Teves 5723 marked 150 years since the *histalkus*, also known as *Shnas HaKa"n* (שנת הק"ן – the year of 150). The Rebbe made a big *shturem* of this occasion, starting on Chai Elul the year before, and encouraged everyone to increase in the study of the Alter Rebbe's Torah and in giving *tzedaka* in honor of this special anniversary. When Chof-Daled Teves came around, the Rebbe held three farbrengens, one on Shabbos, 23 Teves, one on Motzei Shabbos, eve of Chof-Daled Teves, and a third one on Sunday, Chof-Daled Teves itself. While the first and third farbrengens were publicized in advance, the one on Motzei Shabbos was a surprise farbrengen. At 10:25 PM, the exact time that the Alter Rebbe had passed away 150 years before, the Rebbe walked into the farbrengen. At the farbrengen the following day, the Rebbe asked that all 10 *niggunim* of the Alter Rebbe be sung.

Some other noteworthy occasions included 5732, when the Rebbe spoke about the recently published *marei mekomos* to the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch, which had been published in Eretz Yisroel and brought to New York that same day, and 5741, when the Rebbe spoke about the connection between the Alter Rebbe and the Rambam, whose *histalkus* is four days earlier, on 20 Teves. They both wrote books of *halacha*—the Alter Rebbe, Shluchan Aruch, and Rambam, Mishneh Torah. Both wrote books of guidance—the Alter Rebbe wrote Tanya, and Rambam wrote Moreh Nevuchim. They both also faced fierce opposition from *frumme Yidden* in their times, and share other connections as well.

לזכות
הרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק הכהן
וזוגתו מרת תמרה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
כצמח

28 TEVES

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

5640 (תר"מ) – Rebbetzin Chana was born in Nikolayev to HoRav Meir Shlomo and Rebbetzin Rochel Yanovsky.

At the time, Nikolayev boasted a lively *chassidisher* Chabad community. As a girl, Rebbetzin Chana was involved in copying and transcribing the *maamarim* of the Rebbe Rashab, which would come from Lubavitch, in writing or by word-of-mouth from a *chozer*, so that many would be able to learn them. In the Rebbe's words: "She did this of her own volition, out of a desire to spread the wellsprings of Chassidus."¹

Rebbetzin Chana had exceptional musical talent, which she inherited from her father, HoRav Meir Shlomo, who composed numerous *niggunim*.

REBBETZIN CHANA
IN HER YOUTH.



1. Hisvaaduyos 5749 vol 1, p. 45
2. Sanhedrin, 21, 2
3. Iggeres Hakodesh siman 27-28
4. Orach Chaim, sof Siman 580

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

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

9 TEVES

Passing of Ezra Hasofer

Ezra Hasofer led the Jewish people back to Eretz Yisroel to build the second *Beis Hamikdash*. He also enacted numerous *takanos* that are in place to this day, encompassing all aspects of Jewish life. Ezra was so great that *Chazal* said about him, "It would have been fitting for the Torah to be given to the Yidden by him, had Moshe not preceded him."² Ezra is thus compared to Moshe Rabbeinu, in the sense of being "*rabbeinu*—our teacher," to the point where he was fit to teach the Torah to the Yidden.

"On the anniversary of a *tzaddik's histalkus*, all of his actions and work throughout his life are highlighted and are especially radiant in a revealed sense, causing salvation on earth."³

In the case of Ezra Hasofer, this includes all of Torah and mitzvos, as "it would have been fitting for the Torah to be given to the Yidden by [Ezra]." This day brings with it a special empowerment for the *avodah* of Asara B'Teves, as it immediately precedes the day and is thus a preparation for it.

(In Megillas Taanis, this day is listed as a fast day, but the reason for it is listed as unknown. In Shulchan Aruch, as well, it says that, "It is unknown what sad event occurred on this day."⁴ The Taz writes that it is clearly written in the *selichos* of Asara B'Teves that on 9 Teves, Ezra Hasofer passed away.)



Event:

BATTLE OF FRANCE

Date:
5700



The Rebbe and the Rebbetzin spent the 5690s (1930s) in Berlin and Paris. Towards the end of 5698, Germany attacked Poland, starting World War II. The Rebbe spoke a few times about that time in France and how they fled to the south ahead of the invading Germans.

Everyone had seen the way Germany operated. A world war had burned over Europe enveloping nations, destroying them. Pushed to the brink, Germany had surrendered, but suffering from humiliation it was only a matter of time before they broke out again. This time they were prepared.

Germany annexed Austria, Czechoslovakia and prepared for further expansion. On the 17th of Elul 5699 they attacked Poland, overwhelming the country in less than a month, and by Nissan of the next year they had added Norway and Denmark to their conquests.

The French military had seen this coming and ever since WWI they had been preparing a strong defense. Different ideas had been floated and the one that became policy was that of a strong defensible wall-like barrier on the border between France and Germany.

The Maginot Line, named after French Minister of War André Maginot, was a line of fortresses, barriers, weapons and blockades. The line was deep, in some sections reaching 15 miles back from the border, and was considered extremely strong. The state-of-the-art fortifications were well protected from all types of attack—air, artillery, tank and infantry. The bunkers had food, water and ammunition. It was thought the line could hold for months without being overcome.

Surprisingly, when the Germans attacked in Iyar of 5700, they completely outmaneuvered the line, shocking the French and their allies. Within five days the Germans swept around the line, going through the Ardennes Forest—which had been thought to be impenetrable—and Belgium and the Netherlands. Within a month and a half the French surrendered and the Nazis had set

up a puppet government. The French had the largest military build up of all the Allies in the months before the war broke out, but this swift attack destroyed the morale of their leaders and was the direct cause of the French defeat.

Fourteen years later, the Rebbe recalled being in France during those tense days:

The Germans had not yet recovered from their Poland invasion and were in no position to properly attack. Add the Maginot Line and it was almost impossible to conceive of a German victory. Even so they attacked France. What was their reason? Not to quote their actual words (may they be erased) but the *tochen* was: Strength and aggression that has no logic behind it.

What was the outcome? They won!

After their victory the tables were turned and it was very hard to imagine a successful recapture of France and the entire European peninsula. But again, unexpectedly there was an upending of the expected and the Allies were able to beat the Nazis back.

לזכות
הת' מנחם מענדל שיחי'
לרגל הכנסו לעול המצוות
כ"ה טבת, ה'תשע"ז

נדפס ע"י
הוריו הרה"ת ר' שניאור זלמן משה
וזוגתו מרת פרומא איטא
דריזין

LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD



ONE OF THE ADDRESSES OF THE REBBE AND REBBETZIN'S
RESIDENCE IN PARIS IN THE REBBE'S KSAV YAD KODESH.



THE REBBE AT THE JARDIN DU LUXEMBOURG PARK IN PARIS.

BAR-LEV LINE

Following the Six-Day War, the government of Israel built a chain of fortifications known as קו בר-לב (the “Bar-Lev Line”) along the eastern coast of the Suez Canal, to avoid an Egyptian attack.

In a letter to then general Ariel Sharon, the Rebbe described the complacency that the Bar-Lev Line would bring, and the great disaster it will cause in event of an attack. As it turned out, when the Egyptians attacked during the Yom Kippur war, the Bar-Lev Line was breached in less than two hours and there was nothing stopping them from continuing their attack in Israel.

When discussing the aftermath of the war at a Shabbos farbrengen, the Rebbe addressed an interesting point, drawing on the example of the Maginot line:

People are asking, why haven’t we seen miracles in the Yom Kippur War like we saw during the Six-Day War?

The truth is, an even greater miracle occurred during this war; more so than any of the miracles in the Six-Day War:

When the Egyptians breached the Bar-Lev Line, there was nothing stopping them from continuing forward and reaching Tel-Aviv or Yerushalayim—the catastrophe that *chas v’shalom* could have resulted...

But for some inexplicable reason, 12 kilometers after the Bar-Lev Line, they stopped.

Proof of the magnitude of this miracle can be learned from occurrences of WWII. The French had built a fortification called the “Maginot line.” The fortification in the Sinai was miniscule compared to the Maginot. Yet the Nazis *yemach shmom* stormed the fortification with full-force and went on to conquer France within one day!

In France, the Nazis were passing through heavily guarded cities. Here, the Egyptians were attacking deep in the desert with almost no opposition. The Egyptians certainly knew of what happened in France; nevertheless, they stood still and did not move forward.

This is an absolute miracle with no rational explanation whatsoever!

(Shabbos parshas Toldos 5734)

THE BAR LEV DEFENSE LINE.

[A similarly unexpected turn of events took place in Eretz Yisroel a few years later. Both the exit of the British, and the subsequent assumption of government by the Yidden, were unexpected and had every reason not to happen. There were even some that didn't want to attempt a government takeover because they were sure it would fail. And here we are three years later and the country is operating, not logically, but with a pure *nes*.]

The world is upside down, events with no rhyme or reason have occurred. I don't know if this is a generally good thing, but for us it is very important.

This upside down world is an inspiration for us, in our mission to spread Chassidus to the outside. We don't need to enter into debates and arguments over the value of Chassidus, like they did in the years past. If someone is to attack Chassidus you simply respond, "Why are you asking for logical reasons? Don't you see the world is not operating according to logic? Look at the reality if you want your answer!"

In years past it may have been possible to reach high levels in *avodas Hashem* without Chassidus. Today,

however, reality shows that you must have Chassidus. And there are many clear indications for this.

Rambam tells us that reality doesn't follow theories, rather theory is created by reality. If you see something in the real world that disputes your longheld theory, the only option available to you is the adjustment, or possibly, the destruction, of your theory.

Another thing we can learn from the Battle of France is that if you are willing to devote yourself to a goal and work at it with determination and *mesiras nefesh*, you will be able to accomplish it, even if there was no logical hope to reach that goal.

If we do this with the spread of Chassidus, *יפוצו מעיינותך חוצה*, we will quickly merit *קאתי מר*, the coming of Moshiach. **1**



A PART OF THE REBBE'S RESHIMOS WRITTEN IN PARIS.

KEHOT PUBLICATION SOCIETY



TO READ THE ORIGINAL:

*Shabbos Parshas Tzav, Shushan Purim, 5714,
Toras Menachem vol. 11 p. 158*

מבצע בית
מלא ספרים

REDEFINING THE HOME

*A call to create
sacred spaces*

לע"ג
הילדה התמימה אלטא מינא ע"ה
בת יבלחט"א הרה"ח הרה"ת
ר' ישכר שלמה שליט"א טייכטל
גלב"ע
ביום ש"ק, פרשת ואלה שמות
כ"ג טבת ה'תש"ג
ת.ג.צ.ב.ה.
נדפס ע"י משפחתה שיחיו



Our Strength

The Yom Kippur War ended in a miraculous victory for Eretz Yisroel. Against terrifying odds, the Arab nations who had converged on the tiny country from all sides were defeated. But the victory was a bitter-sweet one. Thousands of young soldiers died in the war, several hundred on the first day alone. Many more were injured and maimed or suffered sustained psychological wounds.

Perhaps for the first time in the young country's history, the soldiers' morale was low.

At the farbrengen of Yud-Tes Kislev 5734¹, the Rebbe spoke at length on the topic. After pointing out that morale is crucial to an army—for the best weaponry will only be effective in the hands of healthy, confident soldiers—the Rebbe said that any problem such as this can be approached from many perspectives, “six hundred thousand” of them, in fact.

“As is usual for *acheinu bnei Yisrael*,” the Rebbe said, “the arguments immediately began.”

The army's view was that the soldiers needed to divert their minds from thinking about their issues, and so they brought them entertainment. The other view—which the soldiers themselves expressed—was that they needed to be spiritually uplifted, with speakers who would have an impression on them and leave them food for thought.

Instead of considering the issue theoretically, the Rebbe said, it must be approached scientifically, just as one would approach an issue in medicine and engineering. When finding the solution to a problem, the question is not what *could* work, or what *should* work; it is what *has* worked in an identical situation in the past; theories are of secondary importance.

Throughout the generations, the Jewish people have sought strength in different ways; sometimes they looked for it in Torah, but other times—many other times—they searched other avenues, as far back as the golden calf.

History has shown that the single thing that has kept the Jewish nation alive was not a common language (there isn't one) nor a common dress (we don't have one), but the fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos. Anyone who veered from that path either found their way back or assimilated. So when there is an issue of morale in a Jewish army, we must use the tried and true solution—strengthening Torah observance among the soldiers, thereby tapping into the secret weapon of the Jewish people.

More specifically, and reflecting the soldiers' own request, the Rebbe proposed that they should be given sets of tefillin, *siddurim*, Tehillims and tzedakah *pushkas*, corresponding to the three pillars on which the world stands, Torah (Tehillim) *tefilla* (*siddurim*) and *gemilus chassadim* (*pushkas*)—all equally applicable to men and women. Having them around would give the soldiers access to these materials, as well as serve as a physical reminder to fulfill these mitzvos. Providing for their spiritual needs, the Rebbe said, will give the soldiers true meaning in their lives and energy in fulfilling their mission, and then “fear and terror” will fall on all our enemies. Quantity in numbers has no import; “these are with valor, these are with strength” but “we, with the name of Hashem we rally.”

Later, at the same and following farbrengens², the Rebbe expanded this proposal to all Jewish people, who are all part of an army—Tzivos Hashem. Every Jewish home should have a tzedakah *pushka*, corresponding to the action of a person, a *siddur*, corresponding to the heart, and a Tehillim, corresponding to the mind (being part of Torah); again, all three of these are applicable to men and women equally. In addition, those who are Chassidei Chabad should have a Tanya or Torah Or and Lekutei Torah.

What had begun as an initiative for soldiers became a worldwide phenomenon.

THE OTHER VIEW – WHICH THE SOLDIERS THEMSELVES EXPRESSED – WAS THAT THEY NEEDED TO BE SPIRITUALLY UPLIFTED, WITH SPEAKERS WHO WOULD HAVE AN IMPRESSION ON THEM AND LEAVE THEM FOOD FOR THOUGHT.



The Reasoning

On Shabbos parshas Bamidbar of that year, the Rebbe inaugurated the first five *mitvzoim* (the next five would arrive shortly): tefillin, Torah, mezuzah, tzedakah, and *bayis malei sefarim*; with the latter being “the *mitvza* that reminds one of the other *mitvzoim*.” Throughout the 5730s, the Rebbe had spoken at length about various *mitvzoim*, most prominently tefillin and mezuzah, but they had existed as single self-containing initiatives; now they came under a cohesive banner.

At this and following farbrengens, the Rebbe elaborated on the reason behind this *mitvza*—why it is so important to have *sefarim*.

The Rebbe provided at least three reasons:



PRACTICAL:
IT WILL CAUSE PEOPLE TO USE THEM.

On a very simple level, it serves as a powerful reminder and inspiration to use them. “Even a person who has no knowledge about what Yiddishkeit is, and what Torah and mitzvot are, when he walks in and sees a new thing in his home or room, it will lead to *mitzvah goreres mitzvah*.”³



ON A MORE SPIRITUAL LEVEL:
IT BRINGS UP OUR MERITS BEFORE HASHEM.

The Rebbe explained⁴: When the Kohanim would begin their *avoda* in the *Beis Hamidkash* every morning, they would announce that “the east is lightened until Chevron” in order to mention the merit of the Avos who are buried in Chevron. On the surface, the Rebbe said, the need to mention the Avos is odd. We are speaking about the offering of the *tamid* through the Kohanim, in the *Beis Hamikdash*, the gateway to heaven. Furthermore, this was the first *avoda* of the day, upon which the entire *seder histalshelus* depended. Everything is ready, the Kohen is prepared to offer the *korban*, the sheep is ready to be offered—and yet, the merit of the Avos needed to be mentioned. From this we can understand the critical importance and power of mentioning merits for our *avoda*.

When a person has a *siddur* or Tehillim laying around, the Rebbe said, those objects have even more power than mentioning Chevron, for they bring up the memory of one’s own merits—the Torah that he learned and the good deeds that he did in the past minutes and days. “This makes an *iberkerenish* (an upheaval) in all the worlds!” the Rebbe declared.



HALACHIC: THROUGH THIS WE FULFILL THE MITZVAH OF WRITING SIFREI TORAH.

Later⁵, the Rebbe added yet another reason. One of the final mitzvos of the Torah is that every person should write a *sefer Torah* for himself, as the *possuk* says, “And now, write for yourselves this song, and teach it...place it in their mouths.”⁶ According to the Rambam this means that you should write a *sefer Torah* which includes this song (Haazinu). However, throughout the generations, not many people have actually done so; few have commissioned *sifrei Torah* to be written, and even fewer have written one themselves. The famous question is asked: How is it possible that the vast majority of Yidden have neglected to fulfill a mitzva *min haTorah*!?

There are many answers given, and the Rebbe himself addressed the issue on multiple occasions. But one of the most famous and accepted answers is proposed by the Rosh, who writes (as the Rebbe explains at length) that the intent of this mitzvah is not that one should write a Torah simply for the sake of writing it; rather, the mitzvah was given as a tool to be able to learn Torah, so that one should always have a written record to learn from.

In earlier generations, when it was forbidden to record *Torah Shebaal Peh*, the only way to possess Torah in a written form was by writing a *sefer Torah*, which is why the *possuk* says to do so. But later, once the *chachamim* allowed the recording of *Torah Shebaal Peh*, it became possible to fulfill the same mitzvah—the mitzvah of possessing Torah in a written form—through buying *sefarim* (at least according to the Rosh’s opinion).

“From this is understood,” the Rebbe said in the *sicha*, “how important the effort is that every person should have *sefarim* in his house, and even better if it’s a *bayis malei sefarim*; but at the very least, he must have the basic seforim: *siddurim*, Chumashim, Tanach, Mishnayos, *piskei dinim*, etc...”⁷



21 TISHREI 5738. LEVI FREIDIN via JEM 22661

A Universal Challenge

The name of the *mitvza* initially alternated between “*mitvza sifrei kodesh bechol bayis*,”⁸ “*bayis malei sefarim*,”⁹ and other minor variations; eventually it was titled “*bayis malei sefarim—Yavne vechachameha*.” It is effectively one of the most universal of the *mitvzoim*: on the lower end, it demands that every single Yid should have a basic minimum of *sefarim* in the house; on the higher end, it is an everlasting challenge to continue filling the house with *sefarim*, no matter how many there already are.

Unlike the other *mitvzoim*, where the Rebbe was highlighting an existing mitzvah in the Torah—“*mitzvos-mitvzoim*” as they were sometimes called—this was a wholly novel initiative. In *michtovim klolim* and *sichos* the Rebbe would sometimes place it in a category of its own (sometimes in parentheses and such), apart from the others.

YOUNG AND OLD READ AND STUDY IN THE LEVI YITZCHOK
LIBRARY IN CROWN HEIGHTS, CHESHVAN 5740.

LEVI FREIDIN *via* JEM 193054





"Yavneh v'chachameha"

At the start of the year 5735, the Rebbe called for older *talmidim* to travel to other yeshivos, quoting the Mishnah "גולה למקום תורה" ("Exile yourself to a place of Torah"). The Rebbe also called for the founding of new yeshivos and places of Torah study—ensuring that every Jewish community should have a designated place for Torah study.

In doing so, the Rebbe said, we will fulfill the words of the Gemara in Gittin, "תן לי יבנה וחכמיה" ("Spare Yavneh and its sages"). The Gemara tells the story of Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai's visit to the Roman governor, and his request to spare the city of Yavneh and its sages from destruction.

The Rebbe pointed out that Rabban Yochanan's request implies that having yeshivos and houses of Torah study is almost paramount to having the *Beis Hamikdash* standing.

"Recently," the Rebbe explained, "talks have been held of conceding the Jewish people's hold on the newly conquered territories of Eretz Yisroel (the *"shtachim"*). In order to counteract this, we should establish places of Torah study like 'Yavneh v'chachameha.'"

Eventually, the Rebbe merged this *mivtza* of "Yavneh v'chachameha" with *mivtza bayis malei sefarim*. When asked in a letter why these two were being connected, the Rebbe explained that they are both components of *mivtza Torah*.

(See *sichos Yom Simchas Torah and Shabbos Bereishis 5735*)

The Name

The term *bayis malei sefarim* actually comes from a negative source: during Korach's rebellion, the Midrash says, he tried making a mockery of Moshe by asking, "Does a house which is full of sefarim—a *bayis malei sefarim*—require a mezuzah, which contains only a single passage of Torah?"

When the *mivtza* was mentioned in *michtovim k'lohim*, the Rebbe often referred to this Midrash in the notes, while adding a reference to Or Hatorah of the Tzemach Tzedek, who writes that the *malei sefarim* of Korach also has a positive connotation according to Chassidus; full of *sefarim* refers to the ten *sefiros*.

In later *sichos*, the Rebbe explained that this term was in fact very significant. On the most basic level, it connotes that the house must be *full* with *sefarim*; a few *sefarim* here and there is not sufficient.¹⁰ Furthermore, it is a continuous challenge: "When something is truly *full* it means that you can't fill it up anymore... as long as there is any *sefer* in the world that isn't in the house, it cannot truly be called full." Therefore, one must constantly continue acquiring new *sefarim*.¹¹

On a deeper level, it means that the entire house is permeated with the *sefarim*, to the extent that it is *full* with the *sefarim*, and that everything else is trivial compared to them.¹²



LEVI FREIDIN via JEM 194385

THE KEHOS SHOWROOM, CHESHVAN 5740.

The Importance of Sefarim

The Rebbe's emphasis on making *sefarim* widely available did not begin in the 5730s; in fact, it predates the *nesius* itself. From the early 5700s, when the Rebbe came to the United States and was appointed as chairman of the newly-established Kehos, he urged Chassidim in countries throughout the world to utilize the new resource and make the *sefarim* available to their communities. The Rebbe worked proactively in this regard, sending catalogs and samples for people to take their pick, offering steep discounts, and writing many letters explaining the importance of this work.

Remarkably innovative avenues were used in these efforts. In the early 5710s, the cold war was raging on, and the United States and Soviet Union were engaged in a mass culture war. Each endeavored to flood the international community with books that reflected well on their country, and the US government appropriated massive funds to the effort, offering subsidies to anyone who published west-flavored literature—and especially anti-Soviet literature—which could be circulated internationally. The government matched the publishers dollar for dollar on every book.

The *hanhalah* of Merkos and Kehos requested from the American government that their *sefarim* be recognized in this category; after all, the Soviets themselves recognized Chassidus Chabad as a major enemy to Communism, and the books were sold internationally. The request was approved, and this opened new, expanded possibilities for the printing and publicizing of Kehos's *sefarim* in general, and the *sifrei Chassidus* in particular.

Several years later, in 5720, Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky proposed opening a stand at the United States World Trade Fair in New York City, where Kehos books and other Merkos materials would be displayed and sold. The Rebbe encouraged him strongly in this regard, and a stand was indeed arranged for that and following years. Rabbi Krinsky would report to the Rebbe before and after each event, and the Rebbe urged him to look into such opportunities in other locations as well. In

subsequent years, similar exhibits were held in Chicago, Israel, and later even in Moscow. They were immensely successful; thousands of Jews—many of whom would otherwise never come in contact with Jewish or Lubavitch literature—were exposed to Judaism for the first time. On a report from one such event, where Rabbi Krinsky gave a summary of the expenses and revenues showing quite a deficit, the Rebbe wrote: - הריוח העיקרי - הפרסום בכלל, וברוחניות בפרט. ובדאי עוד יתקבלו *The primary profit is the publicizing in general, and in particular spiritually. And surely more [income] will come in.*

In addition, the Rebbe personally pioneered the aggressive sales-policy which is now synonymous with Kehos. It began in 5725 with a sale on a single *sefer*, when the new edition of Lekutei Torah was published. The Rebbe announced at a farbrengen that “I will speak to my treasury minister [i.e. Rabbi Hodakov] that the *sefarim* should be sold for less than they were printed for, in order to make it affordable to everyone.”¹³

This was followed, years later, with periodic sales on the entire Kehos which the Rebbe would often announce at farbrengens, typically around Tishrei, Pesach and Yud-Tes Kislev. In the earlier years it was to tune of twenty or twenty-five percent off.

Then, during a farbrengen in 5744, the Rebbe announced that the annual Tishrei sale would begin earlier in honor of forty years from Chof Av. “It would have been fitting that the sale be forty percent off; however, I’m afraid of a war...with the *hanhalah* of Kehos, because they already argue that they are being caused to lose money, and are arguing ‘*ad mosai*’... Therefore, the sale will be twenty percent, corresponding to *chof* [Av].” (The Rebbe added that hopefully Kehos will manage to arrange a donor to subsidize an additional twenty percent off.)¹⁴

In the following years, however, the average sale did indeed jump to forty percent. The Rebbe once explained¹⁵ (in regards to one of these sales) that the number 40 is significant since the letters *mem* (“the open mem”) and final *mem* (“closed mem”) represent *nigleh d’Torah* and *penimiyus haTorah*. Eventually, the sales were announced more often, covering longer portions of the year, until it became the regular practice at Kehos to hold sales during special occasions throughout the year.



TISHREI 5740, LEVI FREIDIN via JEM 192126

IT WOULD HAVE BEEN FITTING THAT THE SALE BE FORTY PERCENT OFF; HOWEVER, I'M AFRAID OF A WAR...WITH THE HANHALAH OF KEHOS, BECAUSE THEY ALREADY ARGUE THAT THEY ARE BEING CAUSED TO LOSE MONEY, AND ARE ARGUING 'AD MOSAI'...THEREFORE, THE SALE WILL BE TWENTY PERCENT, CORRESPONDING TO *CHOF*."

The components of the *mivtza*

Similar to *mivtza chinuch*, *mivtza bayis malei sefarim* is perhaps best seen as an umbrella *mivtza*, under which many different initiatives are included.

In a landmark *sicha* marking the first anniversary of *didan notzach*, on Hei Teves 5748, the Rebbe said that in order to know how the victory of the *sefarim* should be celebrated, "the *sefarim* themselves must be asked." He went on to reiterate and renew various campaigns regarding *sefarim* which he had been speaking about throughout the years—in addition to several new ones—all under the banner of *bayis malei sefarim*. Some of these were introduced even before the *mivtza* itself was announced, but later they seem to have been put under the same umbrella.

These include: 1) private libraries; 2) children's *sefarim*; 3) public libraries.

»Private Libraries

Over the years, the Rebbe gave specific directives:

- At the very least, every home should have a *siddur*, Tehillim and *pushka*; Chassidei Chabad should have a Tanya or Torah Or-Lekutei Torah.¹⁶
- In addition, every home should at least have the basic *sefarim* of Yiddishkeit, including *halacha sefarim* which will serve as an oft-used guide in everyday life.
- When a *chosson* and *kallah* get married, the first priority should be that they have a *bayis malei sefarim*; the more the better. As is the *minhag Yisroel* in many places, the *kallah* gives the *chosson* a *shas* as a gift, and the *chosson* gives the *kallah* a Siddur Korban Mincha, which has a translation of the davening and day-to-day *halachos*. In today's day and age, with women being educated and learned, and they do not need a translation of davening (such a gift may even insult them)—they should be given *sefarim* of *halacha* that are pertinent to running a Jewish home, in Lashon Kodesh or their language.¹⁷

»Children's Sefarim:

Throughout the years, the Rebbe *koched* in the necessity of *chinuch* even for infants, and spoke at length about how, immediately from birth, everything a child sees and experiences has a strong impression on him. Thus, the importance of hanging a *shir hamaalos* in the infant's cradle, that a child only see images of only kosher animals, etc. In 5747, the Rebbe announced that the directive of *bayis malei sefarim*—which until then had only been discussed in regards to adults—applied to children as well.¹⁸

In this farbrengen and later, the Rebbe gave specific directives:¹⁹

- This begins from when a child begins to talk.
- The *sefarim* should be their own property and responsibility.
- At the very least, they should have a Chumash, *siddur*, and *hagadah shel Pesach* (which has a unique connection to children, as the discussion of *maggid* centers around the questions of four sons).
- They should also have a Tehillim (either as a separate *sefer* or in the back of the *siddur*, but with its own cover page, to emphasize that it's a stand-alone *sefer*), and a *tzedakah pushka*.

- It should be explained to the children that they shouldn't worry about ruining the *sefarim* by using them, since the parents will buy newer and nicer ones if necessary.
- This even applies to very young children, where there is a bigger chance that the *sefarim* will get ruined and torn; as the Midrash says, "Even when a child dances on the Azkara [the name of Hashem, on this the possuk says] 'you will dance upon me with love.'" (See the *sicha*²⁰ for the explanation.)

» Public Libraries:

On the *possuk* "*Vetzidkaso omedes la'ad*—And his righteousness stands forever," *Chazal* say that this refers to "someone that writes *sefarim* and lends them to others." The simple reason for this, as the Rebbe explained, is because a lending library can last forever; the *sefarim* can be put to use over and over again.

In a *sicha* on the eighth *yahrtzeit* of his mother, Vov Tishrei 5733, the Rebbe introduced a new initiative:

"In every location where Jews live, starting with places where there are *anash* and people who listen to my call, a library should be established."²¹

Later, the Rebbe elaborated: "There are Jews for whom it is sufficient to simply tell them about Torah, and they will find the *sefarim* themselves. If they don't have their own, they will get from relatives. But there are others who don't have anywhere to get *sefarim* from, even if they wanted to; either because they have no relatives, or because their relatives are also far and lost, *rachmana litzlan*, and do not have *sefarim*. In order to bring such a person closer to Torah, one must provide him with a *sefer* to learn from, to give him a *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch*..."

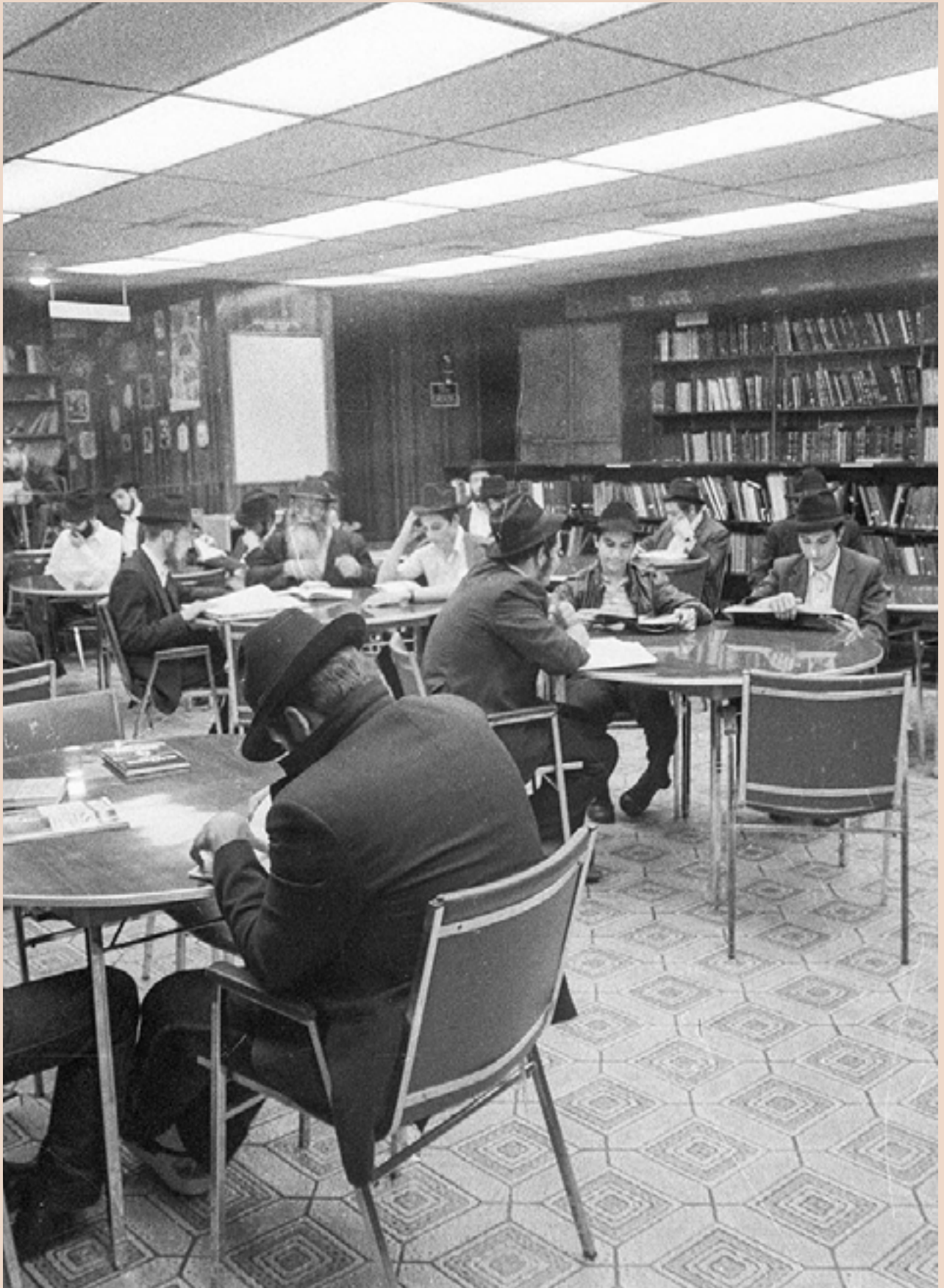
"In the time of the *shas*, one needed to write *sefarim*, but today one can obtain ready-made *sefarim*. All that is needed is to arrange them in a place where they are accessible for every person..."²²

The Rebbe gave a number of specific directives (at that time and in later years)²³:

- There should be a range of *sefarim*, from basics for beginners to advanced ones for those who are advanced in their study of *nigleh* and Chassidus.
- It should be open for a few hours a day, or at least a short time every day, or at the very least several hours a week.
- It should be publicized that anyone can come to browse and learn on the spot, and also borrow to read at home.
- It should be a nice building, so that bypassers will be drawn inside.
- Additionally, every communal building of Torah, *tefilla* and *tzedakah* should have a library in all fields of Torah (in addition to the basic *sefarim* which they would have regardless).

Following the Rebbe's call, there was a *hisorerus* throughout the Jewish world to establish new libraries. In Crown Heights, the Levi Yitzchak Library was established, and with the Rebbe's approval, it was named for the Rebbe's father.

"IN EVERY LOCATION
WHERE JEWS LIVE,
STARTING WITH PLACES
WHERE THERE ARE
ANASH AND PEOPLE
WHO LISTEN TO MY CALL,
A LIBRARY SHOULD BE
ESTABLISHED."



Using the sefarim



ften, when the Rebbe spoke about buying *sefarim*, he would also explain how they should be treated. In the above *sicha* marking the first anniversary of *didan notzach*, where the Rebbe elaborated on how the victory of *sefarim* should be celebrated, he said:

“According to *hanachos ha’olam* (worldly conventions), the victory of an expensive object, like precious stones and diamonds, is celebrated by giving it more respect: guarding it in the most dignified place, so that no-one will touch it, and surely not to use it. At the most, it will be seen from time to time...

“But according to Torah the victory of *sefarim*...is by using them and learning from them even more—the more they are used, the more dignity they have, even if they become worn out and torn from use.”²⁴


“Regarding the concern that the *sefarim* will become worn out from use, the solution is to buy duplicates of all the *sefarim*, so that the beauty is protected as well,” the Rebbe said in a later *sicha*.²⁵

At the farbrengen of Chof Av 5744, after announcing a sale on the *sefarim* in Kehos, the Rebbe added:

“*Yehi ratzon*, that people will not suffice with buying *sefarim* and placing them on the shelf with great beauty and elegance, making sure that they are not ripped, *chas veshalom*, and therefore avoiding browsing or learning from them too much...Instead of pitying the *sefer*, he should pity himself, and then he will browse and learn from it **in abundance**.

“As the Mishna says in Avos, “*Hafoch bah vahafoch bah*”²⁶ (learn it and learn it)—twice. Seemingly, it is sufficient to turn the pages once in order to find the right place. Why does one need to do it twice? Because when he is learning with passion and excitement, he flips the pages back and forth—suddenly he has a question, a *reminhu*—and then, right after, an answer falls in his head, and so it continues; *hafoch bah vahafoch bah*!

“About his concern that the *sefer* may tear—*tavo alav bracha* if he learns in the *sefer* so much that it rips from use! This is the purpose of the *sefer*, as the Mishna continues, “*visiv uvlei vo*”—that the *sefer* become completely worn out from the use! The *sefer* itself will thank him in this world and the next for using it and utilizing it in full, to the extent that not only did the *sefer*’s *yeshus* become nullified, its actual existence was nullified—it became absolutely nothing, so that a new *sefer* was needed!

“There are two opposites here: on the one hand, the *sefer* needs to exist, and specifically in a nice font, so that there are no mistakes in the language, words, etc.; at the same time, the purpose of the *sefer* is that “*hafoch bah vahafach bah, visiv uvlei vah*,” until it ceases to exist!”²⁷ 



CIRCA LATE 5705, JEM 286804

THE REBBE WALKS PAST THE KEHOS SHOWCASE DISPLAYING THE NEWLY PUBLISHED SEFORIM.

1. Sichos Kodesh 5734 vol. 1 p. 148-158
2. Ibid p. 160; 197; 240
3. Ibid p. 321
4. Sichos Kodesh 5734 vol. 2 p. 180
5. Lekutei Sichos vol. 23 p. 17-26
6. Devarim 30:19
7. Ibid p. 25
8. Igros Kodesh vol. 29 p. 189
9. Ibid p. 183
10. Hisvaaduyos 5747 p. 648
11. Hisvaaduyos 5751 p. 96, 103
12. Ibid, Ibid.
13. Sichos Kodesh 5735 p. 417
14. Hisvaaduyos 5744 vol. 4 p. 2441
15. Hisvaaduyos 5746 vol. 1 p. 662
16. Sichos Kodesh 5734 vol. 2 p. 180
17. Hisvaaduyos 5748 vol. 2 p. 171-172
18. Hisvaaduyos 5747 vol. 2 p. 648
19. Hisvaaduyos 5747 vol. 2 p. 648; Hisvaaduyos 5748 vol. 2 p. 172
20. Hisvaaduyos 5748 vol. 2 p. 172, haara 89
21. Sichos Kodesh 5733 vol. 1 p. 26
22. Sichos Kodesh 5734 vol. 1 p. 277
23. Sichos Kodesh 5734 vol. 1 p. 277; Sichos Kodesh 5734 vol. 1 p. 277; Hisvaaduyos 5748 vol. 2 p. 173.
24. Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5748 vol 1 p. 167-168
25. Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5750 vol. 2 p. 90
26. Avos, perek 5 mishna 21
27. Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 4744 vol. 4 p. 2441



לזכות
החיילת בצבאות ה'
ראדא זעלדא רחל שתחי'
לרגל הולדתו ביום י"א תשרי ה'תשע"ז
נדפס ע"י הורחים
הרה"ת ר' מתתיהו וזוגתו נחמה גאלדע
דעווילין



Thought that Counts

Thinking Chassidus before Davening

הרמ"א אומר במפורש שלפני התפילה "יתבונן ברוממות הא-ל", הרי שצריכה להיות התבוננות בגדולת אין סוף. ואין הכוונה במאמר שלם, אלא אפילו שורות ספורות שיחדרו אל האדם, וצריכים הרי לציית לרמ"א, כפי שנוהגים אחרי פסקיו באיסור אכילת בשר בחלב, כך צריכים לציית לו גם בזה!...

The Rema clearly states that before davening, one must contemplate on the greatness of Hashem.

This does not mean that you need to think over an entire *maamar*; a few lines is also enough, provided that they penetrate the person.

We need to follow the Rema's ruling in this regard.

We follow his ruling about the prohibition of eating milk and meat; we need to follow his ruling in this regard as well!

(The Rebbe in yechidus with a bochur, winter 5714)

"In times gone by, in order to awaken a sense of fear of Heaven before davening, to really feel that he was davening to Hashem; Reb Mordechai used to approach the *amud* and look at the words דע לפני מי אתה עומד—know before whom you stand.

"Then he would close his eyes and picture a huge animal, like a giant buffalo, which he chances upon while walking in the street. Of course, he would be gripped with an terrifying fear! No foreign thought would cross his mind at that moment; the only thought would be how to save himself from this buffalo.

"Then he would think to himself: the buffalo is merely one creation of Hashem. He created millions upon millions of buffalos and so many more big scary animals. Just imagine how afraid we should be of the Creator! While standing in His presence and davening, we cannot possess any other thought; we must stand with awe and fear.

"When this concept was well engraved in his mind, Reb Mordechai would go back to his place and start davening..."

This is how the Frierdiker Rebbe describes the thoughts of Reb Mordechai Hatzaddik, one of the *talmidim* of the Baal Shem Tov, in the years before he came to know *Toras haChassidus*.¹

Our Rabbeim teach us that the way to think about Hashem's greatness before davening is by learning Chassidus, and more importantly, by thinking Chassidus.

Chazal say, הרהורי עבירה קשים מעבירה—thoughts of *aveiros* are worse than the transgressions themselves. Chassidus explains the reason for this:

The *neshama* has three garments: *machshavah*, *dibbur* and *maase*. The first one, *machshavah*, is called the לבוש המאוחד—the garment that is attached to the *nefesh*. Thoughts are closer to the *neshamah* than words or actions. Hence the negative effect of bad thoughts on the *neshamah* will be much more profound than *dibbur* or *maase*.

If this is true of negative thoughts, we can certainly apply this rule to thinking good thoughts as well. The effect of thinking words of Chassidus in your mind is far more profound than just reciting words and doing actions. It brings the concepts of Chassidus “closer to home” so-to-speak and allows them to change the person for the better.

That's why it's so important to think Chassidus. After learning a *maamar* well, one should think over the concepts, even for just a few moments. The words will better permeate the student enabling him to really affect change.

When one does this before davening, he can be sure that his davening will be entirely different.

Chassidim used to tell a story of a wagon driver who traveled in the bitter-cold Russian winter with a wagon filled with barrels of vodka. One day while on the road, he felt that he was going to pass out from the cold so he took a sip of vodka from one of his barrels and suddenly, he felt warmer and came back to his senses.

The question on this story is: Why did he actually have to drink from the barrels in order to warm up? Wasn't it enough that he was sitting next to so many gallons of vodka?

The answer is, that as long as the vodka is not consumed, it remains distant and will never have an effect. The moment even one drop is swallowed, the warmth will penetrate the body.

The same could be said of learning Chassidus: you can learn many *maamarim* and *sichos*, but if you don't stop and think about the content, the concepts remain “outside” of you. In order for the words to have an effect, you need to think about them using the לבוש המאוחד—the garment most attached to the soul.²

IN YOUR LIFETIME

You write that your *hisbonenus* is worthless.

This is obviously untrue and you should not speak this way. You are thinking about concepts in the Torah of the living G-d, conveyed to us by our holy Rabbeim, whose words live on forever. In the end, their words will most certainly have the desired effect; whether in this *gilgul* or the next (which doesn't necessarily mean in another lifetime; it can also mean after you change yourself in this lifetime).

Therefore, *chas v'shalom*, you should not think lowly of your work, even if you do not yet see the fruit of your labor.

(Igros Kodesh vol. 6 p. 354)

Enliven the Davening

Hisbonenus—contemplating over Chassidus before davening, is different than the routine “thinking over what you learned,” the Frierdiker Rebbe explains in a letter. It is important to think over everything you learn, but before davening the act of *hisbonenus* has an additional element. “It's not just about connecting with the intellectual aspect of the concept at hand. It's about feeling the *chayus* within it.”³

In another letter, the Frierdiker Rebbe articulates this point even more:

“One can understand a deep concept in Chassidus, but it will not have any effect on him (‘לא פגע ולא נגע’). Only an ‘*oved*’ who works on himself can reach the truth; by contemplating on it before davening, and with the right concentration during davening...”⁴

What to think?

The Rebbe often quoted the Rema's ruling in Shulchan Aruch that before davening, a person is obligated to contemplate—“להתבונן”—about the greatness of Hashem and the lowliness of man.⁵



The meaning of the word "להתבונן" is to understand and think. In order to adequately fulfill this obligation, one needs to first study these concepts in depth. This can only be achieved by studying Chassidus—*pnimiyus haTorah*.⁶

In addition to thinking over the words of Chassidus studied before davening, the Rebbe also teaches that it's important to stop for a moment and think about the fact that you're about to stand before Hashem Himself. One's davening will automatically be very different with that in mind.

In response to the question of how one can have more *kavanah* during davening, the Rebbe says:

The way to do this is by contemplating before davening, at least for a few moments, about whom you will be davening to. It would be appropriate to study the beginning of *perek mem-aleph* in Tanya by heart until the word המלך (on the second page), and before davening, review it either orally or thinking over the content in your mind.⁷

In a *sicha*, the Friediker Rebbe bemoans the fact that Chassidim aren't davening well. "The problem is, they are lacking the proper preparation for davening," he explains. The bare minimum preparation is to think about these few words: מי הוא המתפלל ולפני מי הוא מתפלל—who is the one davening and before whom he is davening. This thought would bring at least some *chayus* in davening. But instead, people are busy with chit-chat before davening...⁸

BREAK THE SILENCE

I have been wondering for a number of years now:

Everything stated in Shulchan Aruch is to be taken as a ruling and **acted upon**.

...For some reason, there is one clear, undisputed *halacha* that is neglected in certain circles of Yidden, even those who are scrupulous about keeping all the mitzvos:

Before davening, a person is obligated to contemplate upon "the greatness of the Creator and the lowliness of man, and remove all worldly pleasures from the heart..."

...How long will the rabbonim and *roshei yeshiva* remain silent about this *halacha*, one that is neglected even by those who know about it?

(Igros Kodesh vol. 11 p. 230)

Practically Speaking

Very often, when the Rebbe was asked for specific guidance on how to be *misbonen* before davening, he would refer the question to *mashpi'im* and elder Chassidim.

"Seek the counsel of your *mashpia* and elder Chassidim who spent time with elder Chassidim in Tomchei Tmimim Lubavitch. They will teach you..."⁹

But at times, the Rebbe did indeed offer specific guidance in this matter, showing how thinking Chassidus is not a lofty act of past generations *chas v'shalom*, but it is indeed very practical and applicable for everyone.

In a letter about various aspects of *avodas Hashem*, the Rebbe addresses the way to go about *hisbonenus* before davening:

The best way to do it is to think about a concept you have already learned and know well. *Hisbonenus*

means either thinking deeper into the concept, or just reviewing that which you already know [in your mind]. Expound on it in a way that would bring to a practical outcome or an effect on your *middos*.

The exact method will vary for different people: some may feel that the *hisbonenus* works better while thinking over the exact words of the *maamar*; others will prefer to think over the general idea instead.

How can you maintain your train of thought to think about one concept for a while?

You need to train yourself and do it slowly but surely. First, try to keep it up for a shorter while, and with time add more and keep it going for longer. A good idea would be to have the *sefer* or *siddur* open to the page you're thinking about.¹⁰

In *yechidus* with a *bochur* during the winter of 5714 (quoted in part at the beginning of this article), the Rebbe describes quite vividly how to think Chassidus before davening and even offers a few examples from concepts in Tanya:

"Thinking Chassidus before davening is not the same as reviewing Tanya in the street, which is done to purify the air. Chassidus before davening is supposed to penetrate the person. You can find concepts to think about in Tanya: the concept of לית אחר פנוי מיניה—there is no place devoid of Hashem's presence [*perek* 21]; the concept of עובד אלקים לאשר—pushing oneself the extra mile to serve Hashem properly [*perek* 15]; כל אדם יכול להיות בינוני בכל—every person has the ability to be a *beinoni* at all times [*perek* 14].

"You can even contemplate on the first *perek* of Tanya, which seems to be a 'dry' *perek*. It talks about the five levels of צדיק וטוב לו, צדיק ורע לו, etc. Think about how Hashem gave us these five levels, and through our *avodah* we can reach a higher level, even in one instant!"¹¹

To another *bochur* the Rebbe advised that he should think Chassidus before davening twice a week; one time in one concept of Chassidus and the other in a different concept.¹²

Reb Shmuel Charoler

Reb Yoel Kahn relates a story he heard from Reb Moshe Gourarie of Tel-Aviv:

There was a Yid by the name of Reb Shmuel Charoler. He was a big *lamdan* and *maskil* in Chassidus, an "*oved*" who worked on himself

immensely, and a wholeheartedly-devoted Chossid of the Rebbe Rashab. He happened to be a relative of the Gourarie family.

Reb Moshe Gourarie had a brother, Reb Hirshel, who made his living from a small factory in the city of Kremenchug.

Once, Reb Shmuel Charoler came to visit Reb Hirshel in Kremenchug and stepped into the factory. The workday was drawing to a close and Reb Hirshel was finishing up his final tasks for the day, so he told Reb Shmuel to wait a few minutes and they'll walk home together.

Some ten minutes later Reb Hirshel was ready to go home and he looked around to find Reb Shmuel, but he was gone. Reb Hirshel went home, thinking that Reb Shmuel may have gone on his own, but Reb Shmuel was not there either. After a few hours of searching for his lost relative, Reb Hirshel decided to go back once more to his factory. Sure enough, after looking around in all the rooms, he found Reb Shmuel tucked away in a corner, head in his hands, leaning on the wall, lost in deep thought.

"Reb Shmuel! Reb Shmuel!" cried Reb Hirshel, "Are you ready to go home?" Reb Shmuel finally turned around, "awoke" from his contemplation, and went home with Reb Hirshel.

When they reached the house, Reb Shmuel began donning his *gartel*, and in a low voice, he whispered, "*V'hu rachum...*" breaking out in a silent cry.

It was time to daven *maariv* after some preparation, thinking Chassidus.¹³ **T**

1. Igros Kodesh Admur HaRaYYaTz vol. 3 p. 189
2. See B'Darkei HaChassidim by Reb Yoel Kahn pp. 180-182
3. Igros Kodesh Admur HaRaYYaTz vol. 3 p. 526
4. Ibid. vol. 14 p. 400
5. Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 98:1
6. Yechidus with Toldos-Aharon Rebbe, Toras Menachem vol. 30 p. 319
7. Igros Kodesh vol. 17 p. 111
8. Sefer Hasichos 5691 p. 151
9. Igros Kodesh vol. 12 p. 204. See also vol. 11 p. 378; vol. 8 p. 1 et. al.
10. Igros Kodesh vol. 20 p. 52
11. Sefer HaYechidus (Glitzenshtein) p. 237
12. Heichal Menachem vol. 1 p. 238
13. B'Darkei HaChassidim p. 358

AFTER ENABLING CHASSIDIM TO BENTCH ON THE REBBE'S LULAV AND
ESROG, REB MEIR BRINGS THE SET TO THE REBBE FOR HALLEL.

20 TISHREI 5736, LEVI FREIDIN via JEM 142498



A Life in BEIS CHAYENU



He's been a fixture in Beis Chayenu since the earliest years. He would hold the Rebbe's *lulav* and *esrog* for Chassidim to shake. He can be seen helping during *kos shel bracha*, standing next to the Rebbe at *Kiddush Levana*, and assisting during the weekly Sunday Dollars and more.

He almost never missed a davening or farbrengen in the Rebbe's presence and is present in almost every video of the Rebbe, and thousands of pictures as well.

A Chassidisher Derher staff sat down with Reb Meir Harlig for an exclusive interview, where he told stories, anecdotes, and *hora'os* that he was privy to throughout the years of the Rebbe's *nesius*.

*Special thanks to Rabbi Shea Harlig, shliach to Las Vegas, NV
and Rabbi Mendy Dalfin, shliach to North Bay Village, FL.*

נדפס ע"י ולזכות
החתן הרה"ת ר' חי' שי' קאהן
והכלה המהוללה מרת חנה שתח" כהנוב
לרגל חתונתם ביום
ה' טבת ה'תשע"ז



EARLY CONNECTIONS

Reb Meir Harlig was born on 6 Elul 5696 (תרצ"ו) in Zurich, Switzerland.

His father, Rabbi Mordechai Harlig, served as a rav in Vienna in the years prior to World War II. (The elder Rabbi Harlig's uncle was the famous Reb Meir Shapiro of Lublin whom Reb Meir was named after.) There he became acquainted with the Frierdiker Rebbe, who would periodically visit the city. During those trips, he had the merit to assist the Frierdiker Rebbe in various ways.

"There was one time that the Frierdiker Rebbe had a *yahrzeit*; my father organized a *minyán* and after davening he said to bring out *l'chaim*.

"Someone asked if he could ask a *shayleh*, and the Frierdiker Rebbe said yes, so he asked: How come the Frierdiker Rebbe wrote to a certain individual with the title of *yarei Shamayim*, when his business is open on Shabbos? How could he be a *yarei Shamayim*?

"*Ich vel dir entfernen*—I will answer you' the Frierdiker Rebbe told him, '*ich bin azoi vi a chemist*—I am like a chemist.

"When a chemist takes blood, he sees a lot of components; sugar, cholesterol, etc. *Ich hob gezen in em a horele yiras Shamayim*—I saw in him a strand of *yiras Shamayim*.

"Years later, my father told me that this person eventually became a *shomer Shabbos*."

SAFER SHORES

Rabbi Mordechai Harlig arrived in the United States with his family in 5700, and took up a position as a rav of a shul in Crown Heights. The close proximity to 770 led to further encounters with the Frierdiker Rebbe.

"The Frierdiker Rebbe once called a meeting of rabbonim, and my father was one of the attendees. I came along

with my father to 770 and waited in the hallway while the meeting took place in the Frierdiker Rebbe's room.

"At the conclusion of the meeting, my father requested permission to remain in *yechidus* for a moment. He used the opportunity to ask for a *bracha* for my mother, who was not feeling well at the time.

"My father then mentioned my name to the Frierdiker Rebbe, and Rabbi Simpson, the *mazkir*, (or maybe the Frierdiker Rebbe himself) said '*er iz doh*—he is here,' so the Frierdiker Rebbe told me to come in. He picked up the right side of his *kapota*, and gave me his *tzitzis* to kiss. I was about seven or eight years old."

Another time Reb Meir saw the Frierdiker Rebbe was at a farbrengen in the small *zal*.

"It was Yud-Beis Tammuz 5706 or 5707.

"There was a *bimah* set up with three seats. On the sides sat the Rebbe and Rashag, and in the center sat the Frierdiker Rebbe. I remember the Frierdiker Rebbe saying, '*Heint iz di Yom Tov*—today is the Yom Tov...' My father was inside, but for most of the time I was playing outdoors."

When the Harligs arrived in America, there were two religious schools: Torah Vadaas and Lubavitch Yeshiva. Being that he was a Chossid, Rabbi Harlig sent his son meir to Lubavitch.

Years passed, and on Yud Shevat 5710 the Frierdiker Rebbe was *nistalek*. Reb Meir remembers attending the *levaya*:

"The *histalkus* took place on Shabbos morning, and *bochurim* went around to the various shuls to inform everyone about what had happened. I remember that my classmate Reb Zushe Posner came to my father's shul during *shacharis* and delivered the sad news. The following day was the *levaya*. People sobbed with such intensity, the grief was unbelievable."

"Ich vel dir entfernen—I will answer you" the Frierdiker Rebbe told him, "I am like a chemist. When a chemist takes blood, he sees a lot of components; sugar, cholesterol, etc. I saw in him a strand of yiras Shamayim." Years later, my father told me that this person eventually became a shomer Shabbos.

Meir was learning then in Tomchei Temimim on Bedford Ave. and Dean St., but each Shabbos Mevorchim he came to 770 to participate in the Rebbe's farbrengen. (Reb Meir notes that another farbrengen that the Rebbe held by explicit request of the Frierdiker Rebbe, was the farbrengen before *hakafos* on Simchas Torah.)

After the *histalkus*, Chassidim began flocking to the Rebbe—until then referred to as the Ramash— and as the year passed, it was clear that the Rebbe would assume leadership of Chabad.

"I remember the farbrengen of Yud Shevat 5711, when the Rebbe said the *maaamar Basi Legani* and accepted the *nesius*. The room was packed and the hallway was also full of people. Rabbi Yolles from Philadelphia arrived just before the Rebbe's entry and he did not know how he was going to get

inside. The Rebbe told him, ‘Hold on to my *gartel* and follow me.’”

A NEW CURE

As a *bochur* in the early 5710s, Reb Meir was a beneficiary of the particularly close attention that the Rebbe accorded the *bochurim* during those years. The Rebbe would be regularly apprised of each *bochur*’s situation in frequent *duchos* submitted

by the *hanhala*, and every *bochur* would enter *yechidus* twice each year.

Once, the *rosh yeshiva* Rabbi Mentlik submitted a list of *bochurim* and inquired as to which subjects the different *bochurim* should be learning. For some it was *Yoreh De’ah*, for others *shechita* or something else. The Rebbe reacted with surprise about Reb Meir learning *shechita*. “The son of a rof learning *shechita*?” the Rebbe asked.



THE REBBE LEAVES THE SHUL FOLLOWING THE DISTRIBUTION OF KOS SHEI BROCHA MOTZEI SIMCHAS TORAH 5724.

Together with this close attention came personal *horaos*, sometimes on the topic of keeping *sidrei hayeshiva*.

“Once I came down with hay fever. The doctor first prescribed me some pill, then a different pill, and then he said that I need an injection. I received the injection in his office, and while I was waiting for the bus to take me home, the nurse came running after me saying that the doctor had given me the wrong injection, so he called me back. My hand had already gotten a bit swollen so he gave me an antidote, and sent me home in a taxi.

“A few weeks later I went into *yechidus* before my birthday, and I wrote the whole story in my *tzetel*. The Rebbe looked up at me, and told me as follows:

“*Es iz doh a naye erfindung*—There is a new invention for all of this; if you will be careful not to miss the morning *seder Chassidus* and the night *seder Chassidus*, all of the issues will go away.”

“Over the next two or three years, I didn’t miss a single *seder*.”

“One year before Pesach, I was standing near the window of the small *zal* during *seder* watching the Rebbe going to draw *mayim shelanu* [in later years this took place in the front of 770, but during those years it would occur in the *chatzer*]. When the Rebbe noticed me peeking, he shut the window...”

MESHAMESH BAKODESH

Over the years, Reb Meir was given numerous jobs and tasks, and ultimately, he took care of many functions at 770—buying the cake and wine for the Rebbe’s *farbrengen*, setting up the Rebbe’s place, and many other roles.

More importantly though, Reb Meir had the merit to help the Rebbe personally in a variety of ways. One very unusual job that Reb Meir recalls,



in 770, the door to *mazkirus* was open, and Rabbi Hodakov noticed me and said that the Rebbe had already come out a couple of times to see if I had returned.

“I knocked on the Rebbe’s door and was let in. When I gave over that I had fulfilled the *shlichus*, the Rebbe said, ‘*Yasher koach*; you have fulfilled your *shlichus*, I have fulfilled my *shlichus*, and together we have fulfilled the *Aibershter’s shlichus*.”

IT’S PURIM!

Starting in the early years of the Rebbe’s *nesius*, Reb Meir would prepare the Rebbe’s place for the *farbrengens*.

“Purim 5714 fell out on Friday, so the annual Purim *farbrengen* was instead scheduled for Shabbos afternoon. On Friday afternoon, as I was preparing the ‘*shalash*’ (the tent-like structure in the courtyard of 770 sometimes used as a *shul* in those years) for the *farbrengen*, which would take place the following day, the Rebbe came downstairs on his way home. When he saw me working, he said with a smile, ‘*Du veist as heint iz Purim, un m’darf gehen essen seudas Purim?*—You know that today is *Purim*, and one is required to eat *seudas Purim?*”

The first time the Rebbe requested Reb Meir’s assistance was when he was still a young *bochur*, on Rosh Hashana 5712.

“On the second day of Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe asked me to bring him a *Mishnayos* (*Taharos*) so that he could recite a few sections before *kaddish* at the end of davening.

is a somewhat discreet *shlichus* that he was sent on as a *bochur*.

“Once, as a *bochur*, I was sitting alone in the small *zal* after *maariv*, and suddenly the Rebbe walked out of his room and beckoned me to come over.

“The Rebbe gave me a package of matzos, and told me to go to the airport, to Pan American Airways, where I should look for a Jew traveling to the Far East. The Rebbe told me to give the matzos to that person; he will know who to give it to, and while doing so, he will know who to give it to, and while doing so, he should wish all those that receive the matzah ‘*a kosher un freilichen pesach in my name*’. The Rebbe also gave me copies of the *michtav kloli* for him to distribute. As compensation for the *shlichus*, the Rebbe said that the

individual can take two matzos for himself; one for each *seder*.

“How are you going to get to the airport?” the Rebbe asked me. I replied that I would take a taxi.

“*Es kost gelt*—it will cost you money,’ so I told the Rebbe I have money. ‘Are you sure?’ the Rebbe asked me, and I replied in the affirmative.

“What about the way back? It will also cost money.”

“I assured the Rebbe that I had enough money for both ways, and the Rebbe told me to knock on his door when I return and inform him how it went.

“I went to the airport (it was Idlewild Airport at the time), the man came over to me, and I gave him the matzos along with the other messages from the Rebbe. When I arrived back

TISHREI 5729, JEM 108981



REB MEIR AND MENACHEM WOLFF CONVERSE OUTSIDE 770, 30 ADAR 5749.

(The Rebbe would say *kaddish* for the Frierdiker Rebbe's youngest daughter, Rebbetzin Sheina, whose *yahrtzeit* is on the second of Tishrei.)

"On Yom Kippur, as *musaf* concluded, the Rebbe asked me, '*Du bleibst doh*—are you staying here during the break?' I said yes, and the Rebbe asked me to keep an eye on the bags of *panim* which he had brought along to davening. (Usually the Rebbe would bring *panim* on Rosh Hashanah to *tekios*, but that year he brought them on Yom Kippur as well.)

"A few days later, at the *farbrengen* that took place in the afternoon of the second day of Sukkos¹, the Rebbe asked for the time, so that those that didn't wash for *hamotzi* would be able to use the opportunity to say *l'chaim* before *shkiah*. I took off my watch and put it on the Rebbe's table. Later when the Rebbe gave it back to me, he said "A *groisen Yasher Koach*, *uber du zolst visen az Yom Tov trogt men nit kein zeiger*—Thank you very much, but you

should know that one shouldn't wear a watch on Yom Tov²."

On another occasion, at the *farbrengen* before *hakafos*, the Rebbe

The Rebbe asked, "*Du bleibst doh*—are you staying here during the break?" I said yes, and the Rebbe asked me to keep an eye on the bags of *panim* which he had brought along to davening.

gave Reb Meir two pieces of cake and told him to go outside and give the cake to two people standing there. "The Rebbe pointed to the two men but I was not familiar with them. It seemed that they were not *frumme* Yidden but they were present at the *farbrengen* and the Rebbe wanted them to get some of the cake."

These are just a few of numerous such instances over the years, where the Rebbe singled out Reb Meir for specific jobs.

THE REBBETZIN

Among the unique jobs that Reb Meir had was one that brought him in close contact with the Rebbetzin. Reb Meir relates:

"I used to bring the Rebbe *mezonos* and tea each morning. I would bring the cake from the Albany Bakery, milk from Reb Yankel Lipsker's store, and I would pick up the tea from the Rebbe's house. The Rebbetzin would prepare the tea in a thermos; sometimes she would leave it on the foyer in between the two doors, and sometimes she would tell me to come inside and I would wait while she prepared it.

"On one occasion, as I was waiting inside the house, the Rebbetzin inquired about my children's wellbeing. Right around that time, my son Sholom Ber was constantly catching colds and missing school, and the doctor recommended removing his tonsils. I told the Rebbetzin about the doctor's recommendation, and she said that if we would not need tonsils, the *Aibershter* would not have created them; since he did, it probably means that we need them.

"Two days later I came back, and she told me, '*Ich hob geredt mit mein man*—I spoke to my husband about it, and he said the same thing."

“WE DAVEN TOGETHER EVERY DAY”⁹

To anyone visiting 770 for close to forty years, Reb Meir was a constant part of the scene. Every farbrengen, every davening, every *krias haTorah*, Reb Meir was loath to miss an opportunity to be in the Rebbe’s presence. When his children were still young, he would bring them along as well to take part in the Rebbe’s *minyán* and farbrengen.

“My father once asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* that he should have *nachas* from his *einikel*, my son Sholom Ber, who was then two-and-a-half years old. The Rebbe told him:

“*Ich ken em doch*—I know him; we daven *mincha* and *maariv* together every day.’

“I indeed used to bring my son to *mincha* and *maariv* every day, and he would play around, *shlep* the *paroches* all over the place and sometimes I would even punish him for being too wild. From then on, I stopped bothering him, and I let him do whatever he wants.”

When Reb Meir got married, his father planned to host a large *kiddush* and *sheva brachos* at his shul on Shabbos. But Reb Meir soon broke the news to him that he would not be able to attend—that week was Shabbos Mevorchim and the Rebbe would be holding a farbrengen.

“My father went into *yechidus*. He told the Rebbe, that he understands that my *aufruf* will obviously take place in 770, but his *balebatim* are expecting that the Shabbos *sheva brachos* celebration take place in his shul, with their participation.

“The Rebbe told my father that he shouldn’t try to change my mind, instead the Rebbe suggested that my father should make a large *sheva brachos* on Motzei Shabbos, with all of

the *balebatim*, and that way they would be satisfied.”

On a later occasion, after the birth of a child to his son Sholom Ber, by then a shliach in California, the Rebbe took a different stand:

“I wrote into the Rebbe that my son Sholom Ber had a son and that my wife would be traveling to the *bris*. I wasn’t planning on going, because it was Shabbos Mevorchim that week, and there would be a farbrengen.

“The Rebbe told Rabbi Groner, ‘*Vi falt em ein aza zach*—how did he come up with such an idea? A shliach is making a *bris*, and it is possible to go and speak with people and be *mekarev* them. To miss it because of the farbrengen? He will come back and be able to read a *hanacha* of everything that was said.’”

On the topic of distant shluchim, Reb Meir relates another story, which took place many years earlier.

“Reb Berel Baumgarten [shliach in Buenos Aires, Argentina] wrote to the Rebbe that he had never missed hearing *tekios* from the Rebbe, and he wants permission to come in for Rosh Hashanah. He promised to leave back to Argentina immediately after receiving *kos shel bracha*.

“The Rebbe answered him, ‘*Gloibt mir*, believe me, when I blow *tekios*, I think more about the shluchim, than of those pushing right in front of the *bimah*.’”

In fact, being that many of his close friends had moved out on shlichus to distant lands and were no longer able to participate in the goings on in 770, Reb Meir would keep them informed via mail and, when possible, phone calls.

In 5718, Reb Meir acquired a tape recorder and he would send full recordings of the Rebbe’s weekday farbrengens to Reb Leibel Raskin in Morocco, Reb Nachman Sudak in England, Reb Chanoch Glitzenstein in Yerushalayim, and others.

Reb Meir never wrote to the Rebbe about his project, but somehow the Rebbe did learn of it.

“Once, at a yom tov *seuda* in the Friediker Rebbe’s apartment, the Rebbe said something and then immediately followed up by saying, ‘*Keiner zol dos nit iberchazeren*—no one should repeat it, and it should stay here.’ When the Rebbe was leaving the meal, he turned to me, and he said, ‘*Ich mein nisht kein joke*—I’m not joking around; I know you do good things, you send things from here to the shluchim, but what I said here should not be sent around.’

“I’m not sure how the Rebbe found out; it could be that one of the shluchim wrote to the Rebbe about it.”

Valuing anything that had a connection to the Rebbe, Reb Meir was known to collect every *sicha* and *maamar*, and any item connected to the Rebbe, and to keep them all in an organized form. He also wrote a diary listing various *hanhagos* of the Rebbe over the years.

One year, Reb Meir relates, the Rebbe asked Rabbi Groner to bring him the *michtav kloli* that he had written in a year with a similar *kvius*. Not having the letter immediately on hand, the *mazkir* called on Reb Meir, asking him to rush over to 770 and bring it.

On a different occasion, the Rebbe asked *mazkirus* if he had gone to the Ohel on this date in a previous year. Again, it was Reb Meir who was called on to provide the information being that he had all this information transcribed in his diary.

Regards

As mentioned in the article, Reb Meir would send recordings of the Rebbe's farbrengens and keep his friends who were on shlichus in far away places informed about the goings on at 770.

Below are excerpts of letters of correspondence between Reb Leibel Raskin a"h, shliach in Casablanca, Morocco, and Reb Meir. Reb Meir writes about the recent farbrengens, Lag B'omer 5720 parade with the Rebbe, Yud Shevat in the Rebbe's court, *tahalucha* on Pesach and many other events.

In his letters in response, Reb Leibel Raskin thanks Reb Meir and expresses his great appreciation for the recordings of the Rebbe's sichos and for keeping him in touch with Beis Chayenu.

Special thanks to Reb Hirshel Raskin for sharing his archive with us.





CHOL HAMOED SUKKOS MORNING, REB MEIR WAITS AT
THE ENTRANCE OF THE SUKKAH FOR THE REBBE TO HAND
HIM THE DALED MINIM FOR CHASSIDIM TO SHAKE.
LEVI FREIDIN *via* JEM 188211



NOW YOU SHOW UP?

For many Chassidim, one of the most well known images of Reb Meir is that of him holding the Rebbe's lulav and esrog, passing it from person to person allowing each a moment for a *bracha* and a light shake.

This position was given to Reb Meir by the Rebbe himself:

From the earliest years of the Rebbe's *nesius*, Chassidim merited to *bench* on the Rebbe's lulav and esrog. After the Rebbe would *bench* and conduct the *naanu'im* each Sukkos morning, he would open the door to his sukkah, and Chassidim would file in one by one and quickly recite a *bracha* in the Rebbe's presence. During that hour or two, while reciting *korbanos* or studying the *maamarim* of the Rebbe Maharash, the Rebbe would watch each person *bench*. Often, the Rebbe would say that it was a "*matana al menas lehachzir*" (this would be throughout Sukkos, not specifically on the first day of yom tov).

In 5722, a large group of guests arrived in New York to spend Tishrei

with the Rebbe, and on the first day of Sukkos, the line for *benching* continued until 10:45, much later than the planned time for *shacharis* to begin.

That night after *maariv*, Reb Meir (who was still a *bochur* at the time) was informed that Rabbi Hodakov wanted to speak with him. Initially, Reb Meir procrastinated; he thought Rabbi Hodakov wished to reprimand him for speaking his mind during a *simchas beis hashoeva* farbrengen the night before; he therefore didn't rush to see him.

However, receiving one message after another, he realized he had no choice, and made his way upstairs to look for Rabbi Hodakov, only to find

out that he was standing inside *gan eden hatachton*. Arriving there, he saw that the Rebbe's door was open.

Noticing him, Rabbi Hodakov pointed towards the Rebbe's room. The Rebbe wanted to speak with him.

The Rebbe told Reb Meir that he would be arriving late the next morning and he asked that Reb Meir take his lulav and esrog, keep them in a safe place, and the next morning take them out and allow the public to *bench* on them. When the Rebbe will arrive, he will take them for a few minutes, and then the public *benchen* will continue.

Startled by the staggering responsibility, Reb Meir was dumbstruck for a few moments, but he

The Rebbe told Reb Meir that he would be arriving late the next morning and he asked that Reb Meir take his lulav and esrog, keep them in a safe place, and the next morning take them out and allow the public to *bench* on them.



LEVI FREIDIN via JEM188211

REB MEIR EMCEES THE FARBRENGEN OF ROSH CHODESH KISLEV 5752.

quickly regained his composure and left the room with the lulav and esrog.

The next morning, at eight o'clock, Reb Meir stood in the Rebbe's sukkah and gave each person the opportunity to *bench*.

For the next two years, the *seder* reverted back to normal and the Rebbe himself remained in the sukkah while everyone *benched*. Then, when Sukkos 5725 came around, Reb Meir was once again given the responsibility for the public *benchen*. From that year on, rain or shine, Reb Meir would stand in the public sukkah—and later in the special sukkah built for this purpose—and hand each person the Rebbe's lulav to recite the *bracha*.

"Once, an elderly Chossid shook the Rebbe's lulav with much emotion, and dropped the Rebbe's *esrog*. To our shock and dismay, the *pittum* fell off. With no other option, I went to the Rebbe and told him that the *pittum* had broken off. Hearing that, he said not to tell him who had dropped it, because then 'it won't be good for me or for him.' On another occasion when the *pittum* fell off, the Rebbe instructed me to go to his house and bring the Rebbetzin's *esrog* for him to use during *hallel*. But this *esrog* was not sent out for people to *bench* on; the Rebbe said that it doesn't belong to him, so he can't give it out.

Someone once wrote to the Rebbe, protesting the fact that Reb

Meir would be the one holding the lulav and esrog. It should have been given to someone more befitting, he maintained, perhaps an elderly Chossid or the like. He received a sharp answer from the Rebbe. "*Itzt kumst du*—now you show up, after he saved me hundreds of hours, now you come?"

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

One of the most common roles that Reb Meir filled was organizer and master of ceremonies at many farbrengens that Chassidim held in 770.

Among those, a few stand out as unique.

Each year, on Rosh Chodesh Kislev, Reb Meir 'hosts' the farbrengen and *seudas Yom Tov* celebrating the Rebbe's recovery and return home on Rosh Chodesh Kislev 5738. Reb Meir has been organizing this farbrengen since the very first anniversary, in 5739.

Another unique time was Chof-Ches Sivan, the day that the Rebbe and Rebbetzin arrived in the United States by boat in 5701 after escaping Europe and the Nazis. The date was unknown to most of the Chassidim throughout the years, but in 5743, when the Frierdiker Rebbe's Igros were published, a letter marking the milestone was included. When 28 Sivan of that year came around, *bochurim* and *anash* sat down to farbreng in 770 at what was then a small and unofficial farbrengen. However, through Reb Meir's effort, this later became a full *seudah* and official farbrengen. A few years later, in 5746, this farbrengen received additional approval, when, during the Shabbos farbrengen prior, the Rebbe gave Reb Meir a bottle of *mashke* towards the celebration.

As per the custom, when receiving a bottle of *mashke* from the Rebbe at the Shabbos farbrengen, Reb Meir announced the occasion for which he was receiving the *mashke*, and invited the crowd to the farbrengen. When the Rebbe heard him announce that the farbrengen was in honor of the Rebbe's arrival in America, the Rebbe added, "*Ish ubeiso*, man and his household," referring to the Rebbetzin.

SPECIAL ATTENTION

Reb Meir's father passed away on Rosh Chodesh Av 5748, during the year of *aveilus* for the Rebbetzin, when the Rebbe was leading the *tefillas* in his home.

Rising from *shiva* on Thursday morning, Reb Meir rushed to the Rebbe's house to participate in what

was left of *shacharis*, and arrived just as *krias haTorah* was about to commence.

The reading progressed, and as usual, the Rebbe was called to the Torah for the third *aliyah*. During the entire year of *aveilus*, the Rebbe would bring along his *siddur* to the *bima*, in order to recite the half-*kaddish* at the conclusion of the *kriah*, customarily recited by mourners. This time however, the Rebbe left his *siddur* on his *shtender*.

Seeing that the Rebbe had left the *siddur* behind, Rabbi Groner rushed to bring it along, but then the Rebbe looked up, glanced towards Reb Meir, and told Rabbi Groner that today Reb Meir will be reciting *kaddish* in his stead.

This became the normal *seder* during every Torah reading over the next few months. The Rebbe would receive the third *aliyah*, but *kaddish* would be recited by Reb Meir.

This continued until the last day that the Rebbe recited *kaddish* for the Rebbetzin. During the last *kriah* before the *siyum hakaddish*, the Rebbe told Rabbi Groner to let Reb Meir know that this time, he would be reciting the last *kaddish* himself.

The following is another occurrence highlighting the special attention that the Rebbe showed to Reb Meir:

Many people are familiar with the image of the Rebbe reciting *V'yiten Lecha* after the distribution of *kos shel bracha* when a Motzei Yom Tov coincided with Motzei Shabbos. Reb Meir is always seen standing at the Rebbe's side and reading out of the same *siddur*.

"One Motzei Shabbos in 5712 or 5713, which coincided with Motzei Yom Tov, the Rebbe pushed the *siddur* in my direction, hinting that I should say *V'yiten Lecha* with him. From then on, I continued doing so."

At Kiddush Levana as well, the Rebbe would always tell Reb Meir "*shalom aleichem*" (along with two other people, as customary).

"One Motzei Tisha B'av, by the time I had changed back into my shoes and so on, I had missed Kiddush Levana, so I stood near the door to the small *zal* waiting to watch the Rebbe come back into 770. The Rebbe walked in, and right after he passed by me, he turned around and said once again '*Shalom Aleichem*.'"

GREATEST ZECHUS

Reb Meir's father had a close relationship with the Rebbe as well, going in often for *yechidus* and seeking out the Rebbe's advice. Once, Rabbi Harlig related, the Rebbe gave him a certain directive, and then concluded, "*Di yungeh* don't always listen to me, but I know that you will follow my instructions."

As a rov, Rabbi Harlig's activities included assisting couples going through hard times in their *shalom bayis*. One such couple was visiting Rabbi Harlig on a constant basis for over a year and a half, and he finally came to the conclusion that there was no way out; he could see no way that the couple can continue living together.

A short time later, he received a telephone call from Rabbi Hodakov.

"The Rebbe wants to know what is going on with this couple."

Reb Meir relates:

"My father went into *yechidus* a few days later, at 2:30 in the morning.

"Speaking to the Rebbe about the situation, he said that he sees no solution..."

"The Rebbe leaned forward, and pounding his fist on the table, said, '*Vi ken men tzubrechen a bracha vos m'hot gemacht b'sheim umalchus*—How can one renege on a *bracha* that was made with Hashem's name [the *brachos* of *kiddushin* and *nisu'in*]?!'





LEKACH, EREV YOM KIPPUR 5738.
YOSSI MELAMED via JEM 114468

SNIPPETS FROM THE YOM TOV MEALS

For many years of the Rebbe's *nesius*, the Yom Tov meals were held in the Frierdiker Rebbe's apartment, with the same arrangements that had been present during the lifetime of the Frierdiker Rebbe. While the elder Chassidim would dine with the Rebbe at the table, the youngsters gathered around to hang on to every snippet of conversation that the Rebbe had. Chassidim, primarily Rashag, would often pose questions to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe answered, usually with terse concise answers.

In his interview with A Chassidisher Derher, Reb Meir recalled a few of those conversations.

"Each year at the *seder*, they used to serve tongue, based on the story of Avraham Avinu, who served tongue to his angel guests.

"Reb Shmuel Levitin would not eat meat, and I remember once they brought him turkey. He thought it was the regular tongue that everyone else had received, and after noticing that he was staring at the plate, the Rebbe commented to him, '*Oich a indig hut a tzung*, a turkey also has a tongue.'

"Reb Elye Simpson also didn't eat meat, and the Rebbe told him that until arriving in America he had also never eaten meat, but when he arrived he was served meat at the table of the *shver*, the Frierdiker Rebbe, and since then he began eating.

"One time on Pesach, someone mentioned that it is not our custom to use a *kaarah* under the matzos, and the Rebbe was surprised. 'No *kaarah*? But there are three matzos, six *minim* which represent the first nine *sefiros*, and the *kaarah* represents *malchus*...'

"During another Pesach meal, the Rebbe said that if he would find a source in Chassidus for wearing silk on Shabbos, he would tell everyone to do so, for on Shabbos it is proper to wear silk.

"By the next Yom Tov meal, on Shavuos, Reb Elye Simpson showed the Rebbe that he had begun wearing a silk *kapota*...³

"Reb Shmerel Gourarie from Tel Aviv once mentioned to the Rebbe that it says in *sefarim* that *yizkor* is recited on the same day that *Aseir Te'aseir* is read in the Torah (Shemini Atzeres, Shvi'i Shel Pesach and the second day of Shavuos). But in Eretz Yisroel, where only one day of Yom Tov is celebrated, it doesn't work out that way. The Rebbe responded, '*Nu*, do as I do; keep two days of Yom Tov...'

"Reb Shmerel also used to bring his own matzos with him from Eretz Yisroel. Once, the Rebbe commented to him, 'You come here, you keep only one day of Yom Tov instead of two, and even our matzos are not good enough for you?'"

“My father began to excuse himself and tried to explain his position quoting a P’nei Yehoshua on the topic, but the Rebbe stopped him. ‘Harav Harlig, it’s now a quarter to three,’ he said pointing to the clock, ‘and five-six people are still scheduled to enter for *yechidus*. You can return a different time to talk in learning, but the point is clear; *vi ken men tzubrechen a bracha vos m’hot gemacht b’sheim umalchus*.”

Reb Meir relates another episode that occurred with his father:

“Before my oldest son had his *upsherenish*, my father went into *yechidus*. He asked the Rebbe how long *peyos* are supposed to be, and the Rebbe told him that in the Shulchan Aruch of the Arizal it says that they must cover the cheekbone, and in relation to that, he told my father a story.

“A few weeks ago, the Neturei Karta were here, and they demanded to know why I don’t promote wearing long *peyos*. When I told them that short *peyos* are based on the Shulchan Aruch of the Arizal, they were astounded; they didn’t believe me. I had to get up, go over to the shelf, and show it to them inside the *sefer*.”

“Before leaving, the Rebbe told my father one more thing. ‘The obligation of *chinuch* is on the father, not the grandfather,’ and that he should have me ask the questions on my own. My father’s response was, ‘He never would have asked these questions.’”

When the Yidden began moving out of Crown Heights in the 5720s, Rabbi Harlig’s congregants began moving out as well and begged him to come with.⁴ Some of the more wealthy members even promised that

they would build him a shul in their new neighborhood. He asked the Rebbe whether he should follow his community or not, and the Rebbe told him that his followers will be fine, but he should remain in Crown Heights. Like a soldier at the battlefield, stay he did; keeping his shul open until he passed away.

Reb Meir points out that all of his seven children are on *shlichus*; no doubt in the merit of their grandfather’s insistence on listening to the Rebbe’s words. **1**

1. This farbrengen took place each year, through 5730.
2. See “Derher Letters” Sivan and Elul 5776
3. See Hamelech B’mesibo vol. 1 p. 163
4. See “Crown Heights,” A Chassidisher Derher Cheshvan 5777



THE REBBE TURNS TOWARDS MEIR HARLIG IN THE GREETING “SHALOM ALEICHEM” DURING KIDDUSH LEVANAH, 11 TISHREI 5748.



לזכות
הת' יקותיאל זוסמן שיחי'
לרגל הכנסו לעול המצוות
ח' טבת, ה'תשע"ז
נדפס ע"י הוריו
הרה"ת ר' צבי אלימלך
וזוגתו מרת העניא חסיה
רבקין

The Forgotten Defendant

"If he dies, be sure to delay the burial until I return."

With these clear and rather somber instructions, Reb Michel Zlotchiver left the bedside of his ailing son, Yosef, and rushed off to defend the honor of Chassidus. An urgent message had just reached him and his immediate attention was needed. In a nearby town they were burning the *sefarim* of Reb Yaakov Yosef of Polnoa¹ and he was determined to take control of the situation.

Back in Zlotchev, his son made a miraculous recovery and after a few days broke a heavy sweat and related what had occurred to him while his life hung in the balance:

"I went up to heaven and was brought in front of the heavenly court; the most important case of my life began. In came angels holding bags and bags of all my deeds. The ones carrying

my sins outweighed the good ones and it looked like I would be found deserving of death. Suddenly another angel came running in with a bag containing all the suffering and challenges I faced down in this world and that erased some of the sins, but after it was all tallied up the transgressions were still more."

At the same time that his son was being judged, Reb Michel stormed the heavens making quite a commotion that *sefarim* of Chassidus were being burned. He screamed that Reb Yaakov Yosef hadn't written them for his own honor but for Hashem's.

At that point he noticed his son standing there and he asked him what this was all about. Yosef explained to his father that he was being judged and he asked that his father advocate on his behalf. Reb Michel promised that he would if he remembered but

immediately continued making a ruckus about the tragedy of the *sefarim*. Finally they told him that they were not able to deal with it and he had to go to a higher court.

As he left to beseech higher authority, his son's plight stayed behind.

A short while later Reb Yaakov Yosef himself came to see how he could save the *sefarim* and a similar thing occurred when he noticed Yosef standing there.

Once again, however, he forgot about the poor Yosef.

And then there was a major commotion.

"Make way make way! The Baal Shem Tov himself is coming through to rescue the *sefarim*."

As the *tzaddik* passed by Yosef he also asked him what was going on. The young man explained his predicament and hoped that this time he would be helped. Sure enough, the Baal Shem Tov went to the

Beis Din and convinced them to let Yosef live.

Seeing the tumult in heaven, and curious to see how the Baal Shem Tov would deal with the situation, Yosef, although pardoned, wanted to stay and watch how things would develop.

At that point an angel grabbed him and tried to force him back into his body. Yosef, however, had no intention of leaving just yet so he fought back. After a short grapple, the angel finally forced him back into his skin.

"It was that exact moment when I woke up in a terrible sweat that my soul returned to my body," concluded Yosef the account of his incredible journey. ⑦

(Adapted from *Shivchei Baal Shem Tov*)

1. He was a Talmid of the Baal Shem Tov and the first to transcribe Chassidus into *sefarim*.



Moshiach

The Bottom Line

Throughout the ages, Jews have always dreamed of an age when they wouldn't be subjected to the various troubles and trials that have followed our nation. We all believe that Moshiach will finally arrive, end our suffering and build the Beis Hamikdash.

But is this why Hashem will send Moshiach? Is it just to redeem us from exile?

Let's take a look at what the Rambam writes about Moshiach:

The Rambam¹ brings, as one of the sources in the Torah for Moshiach, the prophecies of Bilaam, and writes:

"Also in the section of Bilaam it is written, and there he prophesied about the two anointed kings (Moshichim). The first anointed king, which is Dovid.... and the last anointed king, who will arise from his sons..." Interestingly, the Rambam quotes the *nevuah* in its entirety, and then goes on to demonstrate, *possuk* by *possuk*, how it refers to Dovid Hamelech in its first half, and to Moshiach in its second.

The question is, why does the Rambam explain at length the entire section? What is gained by this, especially the part about how it relates to Dovid Hamelech, in the understanding of Moshiach?

After all, the Rambam wrote a book of laws, and there is seemingly nothing added to the *halacha* of believing in Moshiach by discussing the proofs at length.

WHAT IS MOSHIACH COMING FOR?

To understand this, let us back up a bit and see how the Rambam introduces the whole concept of Moshiach:

"In the future, King Moshiach will arise and renew the kingship of Dovid, restoring it to its initial authority. He will build the *Beis Hamikdash* and gather the dispersed of Yisrael.

"Then, in his days, the observance of all the mitzvos will return to their previous state. We will offer *korbanos* and observe the *shemittah* and *yovel* years according to all their particulars as described in the Torah."

נדפס ע"י ולזכות
משפחת קאטלער
היוסטן, טעקסס
להצלחה רבה ומופלגה
בגשמיות וברוחניות

Moshiach does not need to be a prophet, nor does the Rambam mention being a miracle worker as an indication that someone is or isn't moshiach.

SO WHAT IS MOSHIACH?

The Rambam is telling us that Moshiach's primary purpose is not to take the Yidden out of *golus*. Rather, it is to effect a completeness in the observance of Torah and mitzvos.

This is especially apparent when we look at the list of qualifications the Rambam gives us for the purpose of determining who moshiach is:

"A king of the House of Dovid will arrive, dedicated to the study of the Torah and observance of the mitzvos like his father Dovid, according to *Torah Shebiksav* and *Sheba'al-Peh*. He will compel all the Jewish people to follow its ways and strengthen its boundaries, and he will wage the wars of G-d. Then he is assumed to be the Moshiach.

"If he succeeds in the above, and he builds the *Beis Hamikdash* in its place and gathers the dispersed ones of Yisrael—then he is certainly the Moshiach..."

One thing that is missing is *nevuah*. Moshiach does not need to be a prophet, nor does the Rambam mention being a miracle worker as an indication that someone is or isn't moshiach.² Instead, the Rambam lists the steps necessary for Moshiach to accomplish his goal, namely, to bring the observance of Torah and mitzvos to its ultimate best.

KINGSHIP

Throughout these *halachos*, the Rambam emphasizes how Moshiach is a descendant of Dovid Hamelech, and is similar to him.

As explained many times in the Rebbe's *sichos*, a Jewish king's mission is to further Torah and mitzvos in ways that only he can. A king facilitates the fulfillment of many unique mitzvos such as the killing of Amalek and building of the *Beis Hamikdash*. He keeps the country calm and safe, as well as enforcing the Torah in his kingdom.

So the Rambam is telling us that Moshiach's mission is much the same as the mission of his ancestors, the kings of Yehuda. In fact, each of the requirements and descriptions the Rambam lists as necessary to be Moshiach—which in turn, reveal to us who he is—are all part of this goal. Moshiach must:

- Be a king from the house of Dovid, dedicated to Torah and mitzvos—this is an integral part of who Moshiach is.
- Compel the Yidden to do *teshuva* and walk in the ways of Torah—something only a king can do.
- Wage the wars of Hashem—this refers to all the nations of the world in general and Amalek in particular. The mitzva to destroy Amalek is something only a powerful king can accomplish. A king is also responsible to ensure that the nations around his kingdom do not obstruct the Yidden from keeping the Torah in peace.
- Build the *Beis Hamikdash*—being an integral part of our connection to Hashem. It is where Hashem "resides" and it was there that we serve Hashem through

davening and *korbanos*. Aside for the specific mitzvah to build the *Beis Hamikdash*, without it we are unable to fully complete our *avodah*. Building the *Beis Hamikdash* is also something only a powerful king can do.

- Finally, Moshiach must gather all the exiles. Aside for this making it easier for all those Yidden to keep Torah, bringing all the Yidden together to Eretz Yisrael is necessary in order to once again observe *shemitta* and *yovel*, which are only kept when all the yidden are in Eretz Yisrael.

So what it comes down to, is that Moshiach's purpose is the same as any Jewish king's: Achieve the full observance of the entire Torah.

Now it is clear why the Rambam quotes and explains at length the prophecy of Bilaam, who doesn't speak only about Moshiach, but about how Moshiach will be the same as Dovid Hamelech. The Rambam isn't bringing it as a proof for the fact that Moshiach will arrive, but as a source in the Torah for this concept. Namely, that Moshiach's primary purpose will be the same as that of the Jewish kings before him.

So to answer our original question, Moshiach will definitely redeem us from all our physical and spiritual troubles. But why do we need him? Because without Moshiach, no matter how peaceful and tranquil our lives may be, it is impossible to fulfill the entire Torah and accomplish our mission—to make this world a dwelling place for Hashem. **1**

(Adapted from *Likutei Sichos*
vol. 18 Balak 2)

1. Hilchos Melachim 11:1

2. This doesn't mean moshiach *won't* be a *navi* and/or miracle worker. In Hilchos Teshuvah the Rambam mentions all these qualities Moshiach will possess. But it isn't *necessary*, according to *halacha*, for him to be one.



דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

לע"נ
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' זאב יוסף ע"ה
בן יבלחט"א ר' שלום שיחי
וזוגתו מרת רחל ע"ה
בת יבלחט"א ר' מרדכי שיחי
גלב"ע י"א טבת ה'תשס"ח
נדפס ע"י משפחתם
הרה"ת ר' אריה
וזוגתו דבורה לאה שיחי
לאנג

Perfect Timing

AS TOLD BY RABBI YOSHI MARRUS (S. ANTONIO, TEXAS)

On 12 Cheshvan 5759, we welcomed a new addition to our family, our dear son Mendel. However, to actually give him that name was no easy feat. We first needed to organize a *bris*, with all of the myriad of details involved. Any *bris* requires preparation, but in S. Antonio, a *bris* comes with additional complications: namely, obtaining the services of a *mohel*.

The *mohel* (from Houston) that usually performs *brissin* in our community was out of the country. The closest available *mohel* I could find, was located in Los Angeles, an expensive, last-minute flight away.

Left without options, I booked the flight, but I realized that the cost of the *bris* had just doubled. I wasn't yet sure how I would cover the regular expenses of the *bris*, and now the budget had just jumped to a much larger sum.

The days passed, and two days before the *bris*, while teaching in the community day school, I made sure to inform everyone I encountered that, with Hashem's help, my wife had given birth to our first baby boy, and that the *bris* would be held in two days time at the Chabad House.

Later that day, I sat in my office brooding over the situation. While we were very happy and thankful for the blessed addition to our family, I was a new shliach, merely two years in S. Antonio, and I was really beginning to worry about the upcoming expenses which—I knew—I would ultimately need to cover.

I began expressing my concern in a letter to the Rebbe. I wrote about our new baby and I asked that everything should be *b'shaa tova umutzlachas*. I also described the dilemma of the expenses that was weighing on my mind.

I asked the Rebbe for a brachah that we be able to find the funds to cover them.

I finished writing the letter, and walked over to the fax machine to send it to the Ohel. I placed the sheet of paper in the slot, hit the send button and watched the paper begin inching slowly through the machine. At that moment, I heard the phone ring in the front office.

It was Marvin Vexler on the line.

A well known philanthropist in our town, Marvin was a colorful individual. He wore a wide ten-gallon cowboy hat and cowboy boots and was a real Texan, but underneath the hat was a warm *Yiddishe neshamah*, who had helped Chabad considerably over the years.

That very morning, I had chanced upon Marvin Vexler at the local JCC and I had informed him of the *bris*. He told me that he wasn't sure if he would make it, and he would have to think about it.

After exchanging mutual greetings over the phone, he informed me that to his regret, he would not be able to participate in the *bris*, as he is a diabetic, and he usually doesn't feel well during the morning hours, when the *bris* was scheduled to take place.

He then mentioned something else.

"Rabbi, I've got a question for you. Where are you getting a *mohel* from? We ain't got no *mohel* in Texas..."

He was right, I told him, and we would be flying in a *mohel* all the way from Los Angeles.

"That's going to cost a lot of money," he exclaimed.

"You are totally right," I told him, "but G-d willing, we will figure it out."

"Rabbi," he tells me, "I would like to have the honor of paying for the *mohel*."

Ultimately, he gave us enough money to cover the *mohel's* expenses and part of the *bris*. I thanked him profusely, and was feeling quite elated over the good news.

As I reentered the front office following the call, I noticed that the letter to the Rebbe had just cleared the fax machine and gone through.

It dawned on me, that I had just this very moment asked the Rebbe for a *bracha*, and immediately after hitting 'send,' without being delayed a single second, my answer had arrived. The entire deal had been sealed as the letter was being sent to the Rebbe. ⑦



7 TISHREI 5746, LEVI FREIDIN via JEM 267715

YOUR STORY

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VISIT WITH THE REBBE

Circa early 5723



During the New York gubernatorial elections of 1962 (5723), the Jewish Democratic candidate Robert M. Morgenthau came to visit the Rebbe and requested a *bracha* for his career.

Many people of influence and politicians would come meet the Rebbe, and the Rebbe would use the opportunity to encourage them to utilize their position and influence for the good of the community. Additionally, the Rebbe often spoke of pressing matters that were affecting the Jewish community at the time.

This *yechidus* took place shortly after the yom tov season of Tishrei.

Also present was New York City Mayor Robert Wagner; Milton Mollen, Chairman of New York City Housing and Redevelopment Board; members of the Rebbe's *mazkirus* and several Lubavitch *askanim*.

Among the topics spoken during this 30 minute *yechidus* was government aid to parochial schools, a measure the Rebbe was strongly supportive of, and an impending bill regarding Shabbos and *shechita*.

Mr. Morgenthau was ultimately defeated by the incumbent Governor Nelson Rockefeller. Yet he continued to hold high political positions in the State of New York for years after.

Photos courtesy of Rabbi Pinny Lew





לזכות
 החיילת בצבאות ה'
 חי' מושקא שתחי'
 לרגל הולדתה ביום י"ח תשרי ה'תשע"ז
 ולזכות הוריה הרה"ת ר' שניאור זלמן
 וזוגתו מרת רחל שיחיו צייטלין
 ולזכות
 החיילת בצבאות ה'
 יודתיה שתחי'
 לרגל הולדתה ביום י"א חשוון ה'תשע"ז
 ולזכות הוריה הרה"ת ר' שמעון ליב
 וזוגתו מרת דבורה שיחיו גארקין
 נדפס ע"י זקניהם
 הרה"ת ר' יהודה בנימן
 וזוגתו מרת חנה שיחיו ווייס





Derher**Letters**

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“I was thinking about them last night”

Dear Editors,

Following up on the article about the Rebbe's call that Yidden remain in the *shechuna* of Crown Heights [“Crown Heights” Derher 50 (131)], I would like to share an incredible story that took place:

As mentioned in the article, the first time the Rebbe spoke publicly about the welfare of Crown Heights and that Yidden cannot abandon a weakening Jewish neighborhood was in a long *sicha* at the farbrengen of Acharon Shel Pesach 5729.

The Rebbe asked for this *sicha* to be prepared for publication immediately following Acharon Shel Pesach and it was submitted to the Rebbe shortly after. The Rebbe edited it thoroughly, and Reb Yoel Kahn submitted it to the Rebbe for final editing. Surprisingly, the Rebbe gave no instructions about publishing the *sicha*, and the proofs remained with the Rebbe.

More than two months later, before *maariv* on the evening preceding 8 Tammuz, the Rebbe unexpectedly sent back the *sicha* to be printed, and instructed that specific letters of the Alter Rebbe and Mittler Rebbe on the teaching “after a fire one becomes wealthy” (with a distant connection to the *sicha*) be published as *hosafos* to the *sicha*. Furthermore, the Rebbe directed that it be published right away!

That same evening, a group of friends and I had traveled to Boston for the *chasuna* of our friend, Elchanan Geisinsky. The group

included: Leibel Kaplan א”ח, יבלח”ט Yossel Minkowitz, Sholom Ber Levitin, Hirshel Morosov, Shmuel Light, Shloma Majeski, Eli Hecht, Yosef Samuels and me.

Following the *chasuna*, the nine of us got into the station wagon and headed back to New York. In the wee hours of the morning, as we were slowing down at the exit, a large truck driving at seventy miles per hour hit the back of the car and a frightening car accident took place. The car caught fire, and three of the *bochurim* were caught in the blaze.

With great *nissim* we all survived the car crash, however some of the *bochurim* were injured seriously. The state trooper who arrived at the scene exclaimed that in his twenty five years of work, he had never seen a fire like this with everybody coming out alive.

Seeing some of our friends severely burned, I right away called Rabbi Hodakov's house even though it was five o'clock in the morning. Rabbi Hodakov said that I should first check with the doctors and if somebody's life is in danger, he would call the Rebbe to ask for a *bracha*. Otherwise, I should give him a report in the morning and he would speak to the Rebbe then. The doctors confirmed that nobody was in real danger and we informed Rabbi Hodakov of this.

When I came to 770 in the morning I gave over the details to Rabbi Hodakov and he proceeded to the Rebbe's room. When he came out, he was white as a sheet. “I've seen a lot of things while working for the

Rebbe,” he said, “but I rarely see open *ruach hakodesh* like this. When I told the Rebbe about your situation, he replied, ‘I was thinking about them last night.’”

That day after *mincha*, the Rebbe inquired more details about the crash and exclaimed:

”ווייזט זיך אויס אז גאר צוליב זיי האט מען געקטען
ביי נאכט ארויסגעגעבן די הוספות פון דער שיחה,
וואס דארטן רעדט זיך וועגען ענין השריפה.”

“It seems that it was for them [those in the crash] that last night we gave out the additions to the *sicha*, which address the subject of a fire.”

The Rebbe then instructed that proofs of the not-yet-published *sicha* be distributed to each of those involved in the accident.

At the Shabbos and Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengens following the accident, the Rebbe mentioned the shocking incident and clearly linked it with the release of the *sicha* with the additions that had gone to print that night. The Rebbe also said that the “שרופים”—those who were burnt, should say *l’chaim*.

Needless to say, with the Rebbe’s *brachos* and *horaos* over the next few months, even the *bochurim* that were severely injured enjoyed a complete and fast recovery.

Mayer Minkowitz
Brooklyn, NY



Historical Corrections

Dear Editors,

In regards to the article in the Cheshvan 5777 issue on Crown Heights [Derher 50 (131)], I would like to point out a few corrections. There were over 50 shuls in the area at that time (1950s-1960s). Of all the shuls there were actually only three “Litveshe” *minyanim*—the *Kolel minyan* on Brooklyn and Montgomery, the Chaim Berlin *Kolel minyan* on President between Kingston and Brooklyn, and Netzach

Yisroel on Eastern Parkway between Albany and Troy.

The shuls mentioned in the article as Litvish (Aguda, Novominsk, Kehal Chassidim) were all *heimeshe nusach Sefard minyanim*. There were about a dozen modern orthodox *nusach Ashkenaz minyanim*—Crown Heights Yeshiva-Rabbi Baumol, which was the largest modern orthodox shul in the area (Crown between Nostrand and New York), Young Israel of Eastern Parkway-Rabbi Kanatopsky (Eastern Parkway between Troy and Schenectady), Beth David Gershon-Rabbi Chait (New York between Montgomery and Empire), Chovevei Torah-Rabbi Avigdor and later Rabbi Rabinowitz, Yeshiva Reines (Troy between Empire and Montgomery), Maple St. and Albany Ave. Shul-Rabbi Rosenberg (Maple St.), *mizrachi minyan* (Crown and Kingston), Young Israel of Bedford Ave. (Carroll between Bedford and Franklin), and three more of which I do not recall the names—Lincoln Place and Eastern Parkway-Rabbi Spiegel, Troy Ave. (President and Union)—and to the best of my Knowledge these last two are the only ones that became churches—and Rogers Ave.-Rabbi Schwartz (between Montgomery and Crown).

All the other *minyanim* were Chassidishe or heimishe:

Yerushalymer Rebbe-Rabbi Auerbach (Eastern Pkwy between Kingston and Albany), Rabbi Harlig (Carroll between Rogers and Bedford), Doliner Shtiebel-Rabbi Rubin (Montgomery between Rogers and Bedford), Viener-Rabbi Strasser (Kingston and Lincoln), Modzitz (Crown between Schenectady and Utica), Frankel’s-Rabbi Frankel (President between Utica and Rochester), Gerer Shtibel (President between Schenectady and Utica), Gerer Shtibel (Montgomery bet. Albany and Troy), Belz (Eastern Pkwy between Brooklyn and New York), Bobov (St. Marks and Brooklyn), Kerestirer-Rabbi Gross (Eastern Pkwy and Brooklyn), Halayner (Eastern Pkwy and Schenectady, Narol-

Rabbi Shapiro (Eastern Pkwy between Albany and Troy), Sussnovitzer-Rhadzin-Rabbi Englard (Crown between Kingston and Albany), Neipest-Rabbi Goldman (Crown between Brooklyn and Kingston), Kosslover-Rabbi Rokeach (President between Kingston and Brooklyn), Skver (Kingston between Montgomery and Crown), Satmar (Kingston between Montgomery and Crown), Chenger-Rabbi Jungreis (Montgomery between Brooklyn and New York), Sadiger-Rabbi Friedman (Crown between Brooklyn and New York), Skulen-Rabbi Portugal (Crown and Brooklyn), Spinka-Rabbi Weiss (Crown between Brooklyn and Kingston), Kirahauser-Rabbi Teitelbaum (Crown between Brooklyn and New York), Vishnitz (Montgomery between Kingston and Albany), Rabbi Ungar (Montgomery between Albany and Troy), Chevra Shas-Rabbi Alperin (Kingston and Montgomery) Rabbi Teitelbaum (Lefferts between Albany and Troy), Rabbi Eisenstadt (Crown between Nostrand and New York), Nadvornier (Carroll St.), Chust (Montgomery St.), Ksav Sofer (Empire), Novominsk (Carroll St.), Kehal Chassidim (Carroll St.), Rhubashov (Crown St.), Aguda (Crown St.), Empire Shtibel (Empire), Rabbi Hager (Empire), Rabbi Shorr (Empire), Carroll St. (Kingston and Albany), Rabbi Vinnick (Troy bet. Union and President). There might be another few, but to the best of my memory these are the ones I remember, and last but far from least-Bais Chayenu-770 Eastern Parkway.

There were very few yeshiva buildings in the area (Crown Heights Yeshiva which later became Bais-Rivkah, Yeshiva of Eastern Parkway, Oholei Torah near Buffalo Ave., Bobov, Rabbi Levy's Bais Yaacov (Eastern Parkway near Howard Ave), and the Bais-Yaacov Seminary on Rogers and Montgomery. Unfortunately, the lack of major buildings to house *mosdos* and yeshivos was a contributing factor to the fast exodus of Yidden from Crown Heights.

There were about eight *mikvaos* in the area.

In regards to kosher stores mentioned, there were four Meal Marts—two on Utica, one on Nostrand, and one on Franklin Ave. Besides Meal Mart there was a Mauzone on Kingston, and Mermelstein's on Kingston. There were a grand total of three restaurants in the whole area—two fleishig (Kingston and President, and Albany and Eastern Pkwy), and one milichig (Kingston between President and Union). The very first kosher pizza store in Crown Heights (and I think possibly in New York) was Chaim's Pizza on Nostrand between Montgomery and Crown (early 60s). Later on there was one on Kingston (near Empire) and one on Utica (near Crown), and they were under the Chopsie & Naftali name. There were two bakeries on Kingston Ave. (Oberlanders near Empire, and Pinczewski near Union), the famous Lowens on Rogers Ave. between Montgomery and Crown (with a separate Pesach bakery store on Rogers near President), Albany Bakery, and a commission bakery on Utica Ave.

There were a few Judaica/*sefarim* stores. Flohr's, which was originally at 560 Empire and then moved to 382 Kingston; Miller's, which was originally on Eastern Parkway near Albany and later moved to Utica and Carroll; Ehrenreich's Central Hebrew Books, Kingston between Crown and Carroll; Sashitsky's, which was on Troy Ave. then moved to Kingston and Carroll and was taken over by his son-in-law Rabbi Shain and then moved to Kingston (between Union and eastern Pkwy), and was then sold to Mishulovin; and then Drimmer's, which opened in 1969 and became Judaica World in the 80s.

There is much more to write about our glorious neighborhood's past, and I hope this will give you a glimpse of days past.

S. Drimmer
Brooklyn, NY

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