

A Chassidisher **Derher**

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OF A CHOSSID



MENACHEM AV 5777
ISSUE 59 (136)

**"Svoy Brat -
One of Ours"**
REB BEREL JUNIK

**Greeting
the Campers**
MOMENTS

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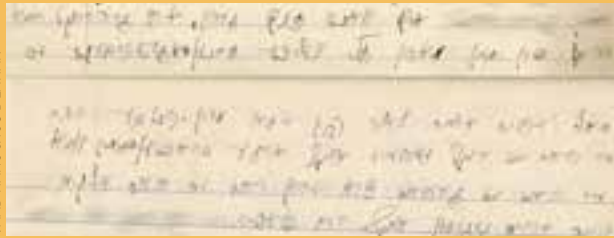
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DerherEditorial

In her personal diaries, Rebbetzin Chana, the Rebbe's mother records the final years of the life of her esteemed husband, Horav Levi Yitzchak, and his tragic passing.

She tells of his deep desire to share his never-ending wellsprings of innovative Torah thoughts with someone. Ultimately she enabled him to transcribe these thoughts on the margins of the few *sefarim* he had with him in exile.

Later, upon her arrival in the United States and in the comforting company of her son, the Rebbe, she longed for the remnants of this towering personality to finally be saved for posterity:

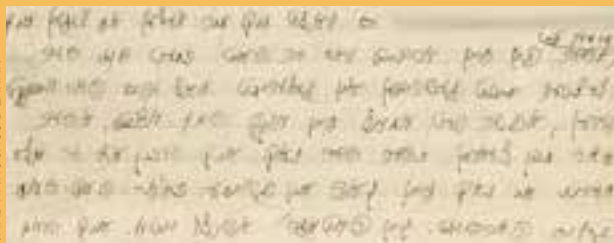


VAAD HANOCHOS B'LAHAK

איך ווינטש זיך זעהן אפגעדרוקט די ברייך פון מיין מאן ז"ל וועלכע זיינען דא געשריבענע. עס זאל עפעס ארויס לאור פון אזא מעין-הנובע, וואס ער האט גיט אויפגעהערט אויף א רגע טראכטן תורה, און וואו ער האט גיט געהאט צו רעדן, האט ער דאס חלקים ווייס ארויס געגעבן אויף דעם פאפיר.

I would like to make a wish that I will see publication of the letters of my husband z"l, which are available. Something ought to be published from such a personality, such a flowing "wellspring" of incessant Torah thought, never ceasing even a moment, one who, when he had no one to address, would write down his thoughts on paper in installments

(Reshimos Zichronos Installment 35)



VAAD HANOCHOS B'LAHAK

עס וואלט זיין מיר וועלן אז וועגן אים, דער מאן ז"ל, אדער פון זיין ארבעט וואס ער האט כמעט ביז די לעצטע מינוט געשריבן און געלערנט זאל עפעס פאראייביגט ווערן. אפשר וועט אמאל זיין אויף דעם א צייט אדער פאר מיין לעבן אדער דערנאך. איך רעכנ אז ער אלס מענטש, אי נאך זיין קאפ און גרויסע כחות האט דאס געוויס פארדינט.

I deeply desire that something be published to eternalize my husband z"l, either something about his life or some of

his scholarly work that he wrote and studied almost until his last moment. Perhaps a time will come for this, either during my lifetime or after. It is my belief that, as a great personage and because of his intellectual accomplishments and great abilities, he certainly deserved this.

(Reshimos Zichronos Installment 38)

When the remnants of his father's writings finally reached the shores of the United States, the Rebbe wrote a heartfelt letter to one of the people responsible for their rescue:

I thank you from the depth of my heart for your efforts and actions to rescue my father's *sefarim* of Zohar with his handwritten notes, which I just received in-hand... This is very personal for me... because I recall the toil and labor, as well as the enthusiasm, that my father invested in his Torah writings...

(Igros Kodesh vol. 19 p. 117)

Indeed, on Chof Av 5729, the Rebbe instructed that his father's writings be prepared for print.

Although in those years the Rebbe no longer personally wrote and signed the introductions to Kehos *sefarim*, here he made an exception.

In a rare display of affection, the Rebbe begins:

"Thank G-d, I was privileged to have the great, wondrous *zechus*, of receiving some of the writings of my father, as well as a few *sefarim* that my mother, Rebbetzin Chana bas HoRav Meir Shlomo, brought to him when she received permission to travel and join him in his place of exile – in some of which he wrote brief notes on the margins..."

As the Rebbe often instructed, that in connection with the *yom hilula* on Chof Av we should all study from the Torah of his father, this magazine includes a special overview on the nature of Horav Levi Yitzchak's Torah.

The existing writings that we have today are only a mere fraction of the thousands of pages written by Horav Levi Yitzchak over his lifetime. In fact, the Rebbe once concluded a *sicha* on this subject (Vov Tishrei 5750) with the *bracha*: *Yehi ratzon* that we will soon merit the fulfillment of "*Uva'u ha'ovdim be'erez Ashur*"—very soon these writings will be found and we will be able to study from them. In fact, our *hachlata* that we will study from them in due time actually hastens the time when we will be able to search for these writings and eventually find them!

The Editors

חג הגאולה, י"ב-יג תמוז, ה'תשע"ז



NO NIGLEH ON SHABBOS?

Before continuing a discussion on a hadran from a preceding farbrengen, the Rebbe takes the time to address the notion of studying nigleh on Shabbos, responding to individuals who may have thought it incorrect.

There are those of “*shpitz Chabad*” who complained that it is unfitting for us to discuss *nigleh* on Shabbos. They add that this is not an issue they made up themselves—going back many years, many senior Chassidim would follow this custom!

In response: First of all, the idea of not learning *nigleh* on Shabbos certainly does not include any set *shiurim*, as the prevailing custom is.

Secondly, and more importantly, if the one objecting to the study of *nigleh* was someone that utilizes every minute of Shabbos for learning Chassidus, there would be room for discussion. However, when the same person spends time on Shabbos talking about mundane matters, and when there is no one else around with whom to chat, he opens a newspaper...

All week he has no time to read because he's too busy with business, but when Shabbos comes, once he's already relaxed as much as he needs, and slept well (with the explanation that “*שינה בשבת תענוג*—Sleep on Shabbos is a pleasure”), he uses the few spare minutes—when nobody else will see him—to read the newspaper!

It is obviously “very” important that he be up to date with everything going on in Washington, or Beirut, with every detail of all the latest politics, etc., and therefore he simply must do so on Shabbos. He even has a *heter*—one can attend to public matters on Shabbos, and there is no more important matter of public concern than him being in the loop on what's going on...

When he later speaks *devarim*





לע"נ
הרב התמים ר' ניסן בן הרה"ח ר' יוחנן
ע"ה
נלב"ע ביום ל' כסלו ה'תש"נ
ולע"נ זוגתו
מרת שרה רוזא בת ר' אהרן ע"ה
נלב"ע כ"ח אדר ה'תשע"ז
ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

DEDICATED BY
MR. & MRS. LARRY
GORDON



beteilim, this person has no excuse. This is forbidden even during the week; on Shabbos there is the additional concern of “ממציא חפצך”, as discussed in Shulchan Aruch,¹ that on Shabbos one must be extra careful in the subjects he talks about. Despite all this, none of the above prevents him from talking *devarim beteilim* on Shabbos.

This is even worse when the individual is capable of learning, and knowledgeable in Chassidus (as evidence from his claim that we must exclusively study Chassidus on Shabbos), and yet he still sees fit to instruct and reprimand others regarding their conduct!

If he would use out every minute of Shabbos for learning Chassidus, then we would have to discuss the matter

with him reconcile the contradiction in Chassidus: in one place it says that one must learn Chassidus the whole day of Shabbos,² and elsewhere it says that one must learn Chassidus for two thirds of the day and a third of the day he should learn *nigleh*. If he was on that level, and already learned Chassidus for two-thirds of the day, we'd have to discuss what he should do in the final third. Unfortunately though, the questioner is not holding there, and so he does not require any explanation on this contradiction...

Then comes his next complaint: Why is *nigleh* being discussed in public?

Historically, our Rabbeim would in fact discuss *nigleh* in public on Shabbos, either before the meal or after, as is known

and discussed elsewhere.

Therefore, let this be his one and only “transgression” for the entire year; he'll listen to the *nigleh* being discussed here at the farbrengen. With that he will be *yotze*, instead of transgressing any other wrongdoings he would have committed over the course of the year—may this be his only “inappropriate” thing that he does...

About Torah the possuk says “לקח טוב נתתי לכם”—“I gave you good teaching.” This is said about both *pnimiyus haTorah* and *nigleh d'Torah*. **1**

Based on *sichas Shabbos Parshas Re'eh*, 5737

1. Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch, Orech Chayim 367:2.

2. Kuntres Eitz Chayim, Ch. 25.



לעבן מיט'ן רבי'ן

לזכות
לזכות שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר
בכל קצוי תבל להצלחה רבה ומופלגה
למעלה מן המשוער
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' דוד ומרת חנה
ויגלר
פאלם ביטש גארדענס, פלארידא



CIRCA 5702-5706, JE 128783

*"I felt that my father
had passed on"*

CHOF MENACHEM-AV 5704

In honor of Chof Av, yom histalkus of the Rebbe's father - HoRav Levi Yitzchok Schneerson, we present our readership with an account of the period surrounding Chof Av 5704 in the Rebbe's presence.

This narrative is based mostly on a description of these events in the book Yemei Melech vol 2, in addition to other sources.

It should be noted that the content of this article slightly differs from this column's usual style, in that the story takes place during the lifetime of the Friediker Rebbe.

STRENUOUS EFFORTS

As World War II was nearing its end in the winter of 5704, the Rebbe made numerous attempts in renewing contact with his parents, who were stuck in exile in Chi'ili, Kazakhstan, due to Harav Levi Yitzchok's 'counter-revolutionary activity' of spreading Yiddishkeit. Harav Levi Yitzchok was in extremely poor health at the time. After discovering their whereabouts, the Rebbe managed to send several food packages, to an extent easing their suffering. The Rebbe also tirelessly endeavored to arrange visas for their departure from the Soviet Union to Eretz Yisroel.

Meanwhile, Chassidim in nearby Alma Ata resolved to secure the Rav's release. They contributed thousands of rubles, giving up most of their wealth, in order to acquire the proper permits for their relocation. After six weeks fraught with setbacks and obstacles, they were finally able to obtain the release documents.

Immediately after Pesach, Harav Levi Yitzchok and Rebbetzin Chana left Chi'ili and arrived in Alma Ata. In this large city, their living conditions improved somewhat, yet, through the summer, the Rav's illness grew worse.

On Chof Av, Harav Levi Yitzchok's condition turned critical, and that evening he returned his pure *neshama* to its Maker.

DREADFUL NEWS

Several days after the *levaya*, a telegram arrived in Brooklyn, New York, informing the Rebbe of the heartbreaking news.

Reb Leibel Bistritzky a"h, a student in 770 at the time, later related the following account: The telegram informing the Rebbe of the grim news was initially delivered to the group of *bochurim* studying at 770. They decided to wait for the Rebbe's arrival to inform him, as he used to arrive every day at a set hour from his workplace. That day however, he hadn't arrived. Upon telephoning the Rebbe's home, the Rebbetzin relayed that he had left for work as usual. They proceeded to call the workplace, and were told that the Rebbe hadn't appeared that day. They then approached the Rebbe's room, noticing

Upon telephoning the Rebbe's home, the Rebbetzin relayed that he had left for work as usual. They proceeded to call the workplace, and were told that the Rebbe hadn't appeared that day.

the key in the hole, inserted from the inside. After they knocked, the Rebbe opened the door for them.

Upon hearing the heart-rending news, the Rebbe tore *kriah*. When asked why he hadn't gone to work that day, the Rebbe replied that: "When I woke up this morning, I felt that my father had passed on... I therefore remained in my room... I understood that the news will arrive sooner or later."

The Rebbe immediately telegraphed Colel Chabad in Yerushalayim with a message informing of his father's passing and asking that they say Kaddish and learn Mishnayos in his memory, and pray for his mother's wellbeing:



(Since its founding by the Alter Rebbe in 5548 (תקמ"ח), Colel Chabad has provided a Kaddish-recital service, as well as that of a *minyan* davening for someone's wellbeing, upon request, at Kever Dovid in Yerushalayim.)

CONSOLATION LETTER FROM THE FRIEDIKER REBBE

The Frierdiker Rebbe, who was then receiving medical treatment at the Aurora Health Resort in Morristown, New Jersey, was only notified about Reb Levik's passing after the *shiva*. Upon hearing the sad news, he immediately sent a letter to the Rebbe, dated 4 Elul 5704:

My dear and beloved son-in-law [the Rebbe's name] *shlita*...

I was just informed of the great tragedy that has befallen, with the passing of my relative and *mechutan*, your revered father. I share your great pain, *hamakom yenacheim eschem*...

The Frierdiker Rebbe then described the *minhagei aveilus* as observed by the Rebbe Rashab after his father's *histalkus*. This included his *sefer limud*, his *minhag* regarding *aliyos*, and the number of *kaddeshim* he would recite.

He then proceeded to relay an interesting anecdote from when the Rebbe Rashab was sitting *shiva* for his mother, Rebbetzin Rivka:

During the *aveilus* for my grandmother in 5672 (תער"ב), my father [the Rebbe Rashab] would *lein* from the Torah all throughout the *shloshim* period, up until Pesach, as long as he was outside of Lubavitch, after which he ceased to do so. He later intimated his regret on discontinuing this *minhag*.

The Frierdiker Rebbe then ended off with a *bracha*:

Hashem should strengthen the health of my *mechuteiniste*, your esteemed mother *tichye*, and may she experience sweet, good, long, and healthy days, *b'gashmiyus uv'ruchniyus*. And may Hashem strengthen your health, together with that of your wife *tichye*, *b'gashmiyus uv'ruchniyus*.

Your father-in-law, who loves you to no end, and blesses you with a *ksiva vachasima tova b'gashmiyus uv'ruchniyus*.¹

The following day, the Frierdiker Rebbe discussed the same subject (his father's conduct during *aveilus*) at greater length and shared several additional *hanhagos*. It can be assumed that this *sicha* was said to the Rebbe, who had just arrived at the health resort, following the *shiva*.²

MINIMAL CORRESPONDENCE

In the days that followed, the Rebbe abstained from penning and answering letters. In one letter dated 10 Elul 5704—the earliest we have following his learning of Harav Levi Yitzchok's *histalkus*—the Rebbe excuses himself for not responding earlier, as this was the earliest opportunity after his father's passing.

Over the course of the ensuing months, the Rebbe curtailed his responses to those who wrote

him. In a letter dated 23 Teves 5705, the Rebbe explains:

"For some time now, I haven't been answering your letters, as well as those of others, due to the tragedy that befell me, with my father's passing."

WRITE-UP BY THE MECHUTAN

Meanwhile, the Frierdiker Rebbe anonymously penned an obituary of sorts about his *mechutan*, Harav Levi Yitzchok, in *Kovetz Lubavitch*³ (booklet 4, p. 62). In it, he detailed the Rav's illustrious lineage, great scholarship in both *nigleh* and *pnimiyus haTorah*, and his dedication to *avodas haklal* under the [Frierdiker] Rebbe's auspices, ultimately leading to his exile and passing in Kazakhstan.

It seems that the reason the write-up was anonymous, with few details on the period toward the end of Harav Levi Yitzchok's life, was in order to protect Rebbetzin Chana from the attention of the authorities. She was still in *galus* behind the Iron Curtain, leaving only later that year on a roundabout journey through Moscow, Poland, France, and eventually, some two years later, the United States.

This was the Frierdiker Rebbe's first time hearing the Rebbe say kaddish for his father, and in the midst of it all, the two of them burst into tears.

A MOVING ENCOUNTER

Rabbi Yitzchok Dovid Groner a"h, who was studying in 770 at the time, related:

On Rosh Hashanah 5705, the Rebbe recited *chatzi-kaddish* following *krias haTorah* at the Frierdiker Rebbe's *minyán*. This was the Frierdiker Rebbe's first time hearing the Rebbe say *kaddish* for his father, and in the midst of it all, the two of them burst into tears.

HINTS AND INSIGHTS

Amongst the letters the Rebbe sent throughout the following year, many allusions as to his father's *histalkus* can be found. In a letter written in response to Reb Volf Greenglass's *nichum-aveilim*,



the Rebbe thanks him for his wishes, and explains the meaning of *nichum aveilim* according to Chassidus.

In his letter of *nichumin*, Reb Volf noted that the Rebbe's work in Machne Yisroel and Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, as well as the other tasks entrusted to him by the Friediker Rebbe, is essentially *techiyas hameisim*, reviving those who are "lifeless" without Chassidus.

To that the Rebbe responded that he'll "spice up" Reb Volf's words, penning a magnificent piece in which he explains the four levels in afterlife and *techiyas hameisim*, corresponding to the four missions the Friediker Rebbe entrusted him with: 1) Otzar HaChassidim (Chassidus), 2) Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch (Education), 3) Machne Yisroel, and 4) *Chevra kadisha*.

ONE MINUTE – LIKE AN ENTIRE YEAR

Throughout that year, the Rebbe davened at the *amud*.

Chassidim who spent the year of *aveilus* in the Rebbe's presence witnessed many noteworthy *hanhagos*:

1. The Rebbe would enter *shacharis* every morning at precisely nine o'clock.
2. Rabbi Leibel Posner recalls that when saying the *beraisa* of 'Rabi Yishmael,' the Rebbe could be heard mouthing the words מכלל ופרט ופרט ומפרט וכלל, the first with a 'fei' and the second with a 'pei,' as printed in the *siddur*.
3. Rabbi Posner continues that the Rebbe would only begin davening following the

gabbai's bang on the *bima*. The same was true with *chazaras hashatz*.

4. On weekdays (Mondays and Thursdays) the Rebbe would *lein* from the Torah.
5. Initially the Rebbe didn't *lein* on Shabbos, as noted by Reb Mottel Sharfstein a"h. However, Reb Berel Alenick a"h related that in the summer of 5705, the Rebbe began arranging an early *mincha minyan* following *seudas Shabbos* upstairs with the Frierdiker Rebbe, where he would *lein*.
The Rebbe later wrote⁴ that "due to a private reason, I *leined* from the Torah only at Shabbos *mincha*, as well as Mondays and Thursdays."
Rabbi Leibel Posner relates that several times, there was no *minyan* upon the Rebbe's entry in tallis and tefillin, at precisely nine o'clock. The Rebbe was extremely disheartened, telling the *bochurim* present: "Call me when there are ten *mispallelim*..." When the Frierdiker Rebbe heard about this, he conveyed that all should take care to begin on time, because with Ramash (as the Rebbe was called then), a minute is like a year!
A similar event transpired one evening, when the Rebbe entered *zal* and asked the *mashgiach* when *seder* will end for the night, as he wished to daven *maariv* with the *bochurim*. The *mashgiach* answered: "Ten to fifteen minutes after..." Upon hearing this, the Rebbe asked when *exactly* *maariv* would be, as five minutes are extremely precious to him!⁵
Reb Sholom Chaskind related that in the period following the *shiva*, the Frierdiker Rebbe voiced the following to his father, Reb Alter Dovber (Berel), upon the latter's visit in Aurora Health Resort: "Please see to it that he [the Rebbe] should have a punctual *minyan*, as he doesn't eat anything before davening."
6. The Rebbe did not attend any weddings throughout the entire *aveilus*.

DETERMINING THE EXACT DATE

On 23 Teves 5705, the Rebbe penned the following letter⁶:

"To the honorable administration of Colel Chabad in Yerushalayim, led by the esteemed *gaon*, Rabbi Shlomo Yehuda Leib Eliezrov..."

"I received your *nichum* letter, and awaited a response as to the possibility of determining the exact day my father מ"ה passed away, but alas, I haven't yet received any such information. The telegram was sent from there on August 12th, 23 Menachem-Av.

(The Rebbe's communication with his parents who were in exile was going through Eretz Yisroel, and they were also the ones to send the telegram with the grim news. The Rebbe continues:)

"I thank you from the depths of my heart for the set *seder* of Torah and *tefillah l'ilui nishmas* my father מ"ה, as well as that for my mother's health and welfare, may she live many long, good years."

The Rebbe then continued with an explanation of the above based on Chassidus, concluding with a postscript: "Please notify me of all the costs the above entailed."

Indeed, in a letter written later that year, the Rebbe writes: "B"H, 21 Menachem-Av, the day following my father's *yahrtzeit*, 5705."

In that same letter, the Rebbe requests to "please give, in connection with the *yahrtzeit*... one hundred dollars to Colel Chabad, and eighteen dollars to Yeshivas Toras Emes, I have deposited their equivalent here. Also twenty-five to the worldwide Tehillim society."

On that day, the Rebbe penned an additional, lengthy letter to the administration of Colel Chabad, in connection with the *yahrtzeit*, explaining the day's significance as related to the *neschama* of the *nistalek*, especially *tzadikim*.

The Rebbe ended off with a request to daven for his mother's health and wellbeing, and a *bracha*:

לאלתר לתשובה לאלתר לגאולה. Ⓣ

1. For full text of the letter, see *Igros Kodesh* Vol. 3 p. 7-8.

2. For the complete *hanacha*, see *Sefer Hasichos* 5704 p. 160-161.

3. See *Kovetz Lubavitch: Rebirth in a New World*, Derher Elul 5775.

4. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 17 p. 271.

5. As recorded by Rabbi Dovid Dubov.

6. Printed in *Igros Kodesh* vol. 2 p. 22-23.

7. For a comprehensive overview of this term, see Derher Adar 5775.



כתב יד קודש

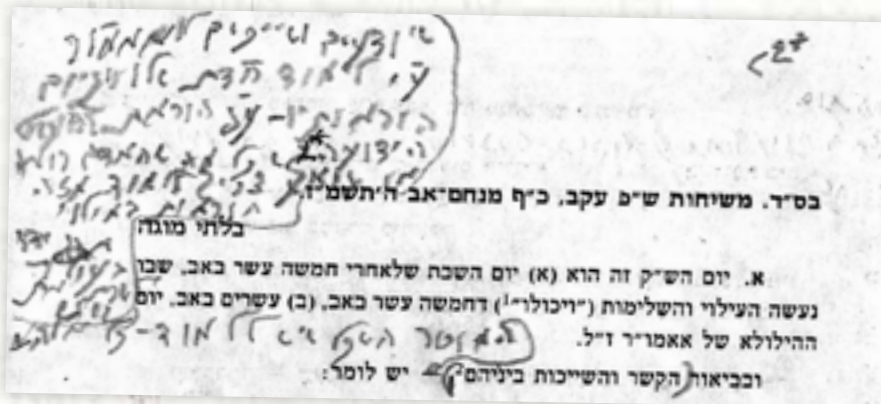
לע"נ
מרת רבקה דינה בת ר' זאב וואלף ע"ה
גייסינסקי
נלב"ע י"ג מנחם אב, ה'תשס"ז
תנ"צ'ב'ה'
נדפס ע"י משפחתה שיחיו



All Who Are Connected to My Father

This *ksav yad kodesh* contains corrections and additions the Rebbe placed on the transcript of *sichas Shabbos parshas Ekev*, Chof Av 5747.

In drawing the connection between *Chamisha Asar B'Av* and *Chof Av*, the Rebbe asserts that there is a special lesson to be learned for "all those who know of, and are connected to my father":



The lesson to be learned for all those who know of, and are connected to my father; by way of studying his *chiddushei Torah* and following his instructions. [This lesson is] based on the Baal Shem Tov's teaching that everything one sees or hears must serve as a lesson in fulfilling his purpose on earth: to serve his Creator.

(Teshura Rabinovich-Wolf 5772)

[וביאור] המוסר השכל שיש ללמוד—כל אלה שידועים ושייכים לאמו"ר ע"י לימוד חד"ת שלו וקיום הוראותיו—ע"פ הוראת הבעש"ט הידועה שכל מה שהאדם רואה או שומע צריך ללמוד מזה הוראה במילוי תפקידו בעולם לשרת את קונו...

DAYS OF MEANING

EXPLORING SPECIAL DATES
ON OUR CALENDAR

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15 AV

"לא היו ימים טובים לישראל כחמשה עשר באב..."

"There were no greater festivals for the Jewish people than 15 Av (Tannis 4, 8)."

From 5735 and on, the Rebbe farbrenged nearly every year on this date.

At these farbrengens, the Rebbe would expound on the uniqueness of this day (partial list):

- It is the day on which the last generation destined to die in the desert found out that the *gezeirah* had been nullified. This is the ascent (עליה) following the previous descent (ירידה), the punishment of the *meraglim* decreed on Tisha B'av (see farbrengen 15 Av 5735).
- The moon is full on 15 Av. This symbolizes שלימות (completion). On some occasions, the Rebbe explained how 15 Av even has an advantage over the other Yomim Tovim that fall out of the fifteenth of the month, Sukkos and Pesach (see farbrengen 15 Av 5736).
- The Shulchan Aruch tells us that this is the day upon which the nights begin to get longer, and therefore one can add in study of Torah at night starting on this date (see farbrengen 15 Av 5740).

20 AV

Histalkus of Horav Levi Yitzchok, the Rebbe's Father

On 20 Av 5704, the Rebbe's father, Hagaon Hamekubal Horav Levi Yitzchok Schneerson, was *nistalek* in Alma-Ata (today Almaty), Kazakhstan.

After four difficult years of exile in Chi'ili, Kazakhstan, Horav Levi Yitzchok arrived in Alma-Ata after Pesach 5704. While his living conditions improved there, unfortunately this brought about a negative result: A terrible illness which he had been suffering from for some time but hadn't been felt amidst the hunger and want of his exile, was now able to show itself, and it spread drastically. On Wednesday, 20 Av, his situation deteriorated. Towards evening, Horav Levi Yitzchok's soul left its body. He was 66 year old. The *levaya* took place the following day.

"After my father-in-law the [Friediker] Rebbe left Russia, [Horav Levi Yitzchok] was the only descendant of the Alter Rebbe, the Mittler Rebbe, and the Tzemach Tzedek left as a leader in Russia," the Rebbe said in a *sicha*. "Therefore, people turned to him for guidance (גם בענייני הדרכה). Because of his activities in spreading Torah and the wellsprings [of Chassidus], he was arrested and exiled, and he was *nistalek* in his place of exile." (Sefer Hasichos 5748 p. 587 - 588.)

In 5730, every Shabbos during the farbrengen, the Rebbe began explaining Horav Levi Yitzchok's *ha'aros* on Sefer Hatanya, from the newly published sefer "Likkutei Levi Yitzchok."

In 5731, the Rebbe began to explain Horav Levi Yitzchok's *ha'aros* on Sefer HaZohar, and teach a lesson from them in *avodas Hashem*. This continued for many years afterwards.



לזכות החתן
הרה"ת ר' משה דובער שיחי' בעגון
והכלה המהוללה
מרת נחמה מאשא תחי' ווילהעלם
נדפס ע"י משפחתם שיחיו

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

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

22 AV

Yechezkel Hanavi Stands Up

וְאַתָּה שָׁכַב עַל צִדְךָ הַשְּׁמָאֲלִי וְשָׁמַתָּ אֶת עֵינֶיךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל עָלָיו... שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת וְתִשְׁעִים יוֹם...
וְכָלִיתָ אֶת אֱלֹהֵי וְשָׁכַבְתָּ עַל צִדְךָ הַיְּמָנִי שְׁנֵית... אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם.

And you shall lie on your left side, and you shall place the iniquity of the house of Israel through it... three hundred and ninety days...

And when you complete these, you shall lie on your right side a second time... forty days...

(Yechezkel, 4,4-6)

22 Av was the day that Yechezkel Hanavi completed the number of days for which he was instructed by Hashem to lie down (Siddur Rav Yaakov Emden). The Gemara in Sanhedrin (39a) relates how a Tzedoki confronted Rabbi Avahu: "Hashem laughs at His *neviim*," he said, "First he tells the *navi* to lie down on his left side for so many days, and then on his right side for a much smaller and disproportionate amount of days." Before Rabbi Avahu answered the Tzedoki, a student of his asked him: "What is the rationale for *shemitta*?" Rabbi Avahu responded: "Now I will tell you something that answers both questions. Hashem told the Yidden, 'Plant for six years and rest during the seventh, so as to know that the land is mine.' The Yidden did not do so, but instead sinned and they were exiled. The way of the world is that if a physical king is angered by a country, if he is cruel, he kills all of the inhabitants; if he is merciful, he kills half of them; if he is most merciful, he causes the prominent people among them to suffer. So too, Hashem caused Yechezkel to suffer in order to cleanse the Yidden of their sins.

The Maharsha explains that the 390 days corresponds to the 390 years that the Yidden sinned, from when they entered Eretz Yisroel until the exile of the ten tribes, and the 40 days correspond to the 40 years that the Yidden sinned after the exile of the ten tribes, until the destruction of Yerushalayim.

When speaking about this Gemara at the farbrengen of Shabbos Eikev 5737, the Rebbe pointed out how each year on 22 Av, all undesirable things are wiped away (for that's when Yechezkel's days of lying down ended; the days that served to atone for the Yidden's sins), to the extent that the *mida* of *Din* can no longer accuse.

Tzaddikim in every generation accept suffering upon themselves, to the extent that they suffer the pains of exile, which are worse than death. This shows us the greatness of *tzaddikim*; they accept suffering in order to save Yidden from undesirable occurrences.

The Rebbe connected this with the *yahrtzeit* of his father, Horav Levi Yitzchok two days earlier on Chof Av, who was sent to exile because of his work in strengthening and spreading Yiddishkeit, eventually bringing about his passing.

(*Sichos Kodesh* 5737 vol. 2 pgs. 469-471)

{IN THE REBBE'S PRESENCE}

Every year on Chof Av, the Rebbe would daven at the *amud* and say *kaddish*, and hold a farbrengen. In the later years, these farbrengens were televised and broadcast live. When it fell out on a weekday, the Rebbe would make a *siyum* on a *masechta* in connection with the *yahrtzeit*.

On the 20th *yahrtzeit*, in 5724, the Rebbe established "Keren Levi Yitzchok," a fund named after his father. Its purpose was to loan money to educational institutions that taught *al taharas hakodesh* and to teachers who taught *limmudei kodesh*.

During the farbrengen on Chof Av 5740, the Rebbe made a call to establish *kollels* everywhere for Jewish seniors—"Kollel Tiferes Zekeinim." The Rebbe then added: "The suggestion is in connection with the *yahrtzeit* of my father and teacher, who gave his life for the spreading of Torah and Yiddishkeit in general, over there [in Russia]. He was arrested because of this, judged and sent away, and he is buried there, in exile. The *kollels* should be called "Kollel Tiferes Zekeinim Levi Yitzchok," and this will certainly give his soul *nachas*."

Broad Perception & Meticulous Precision

The Torah of HoRav Levi Yitzchak

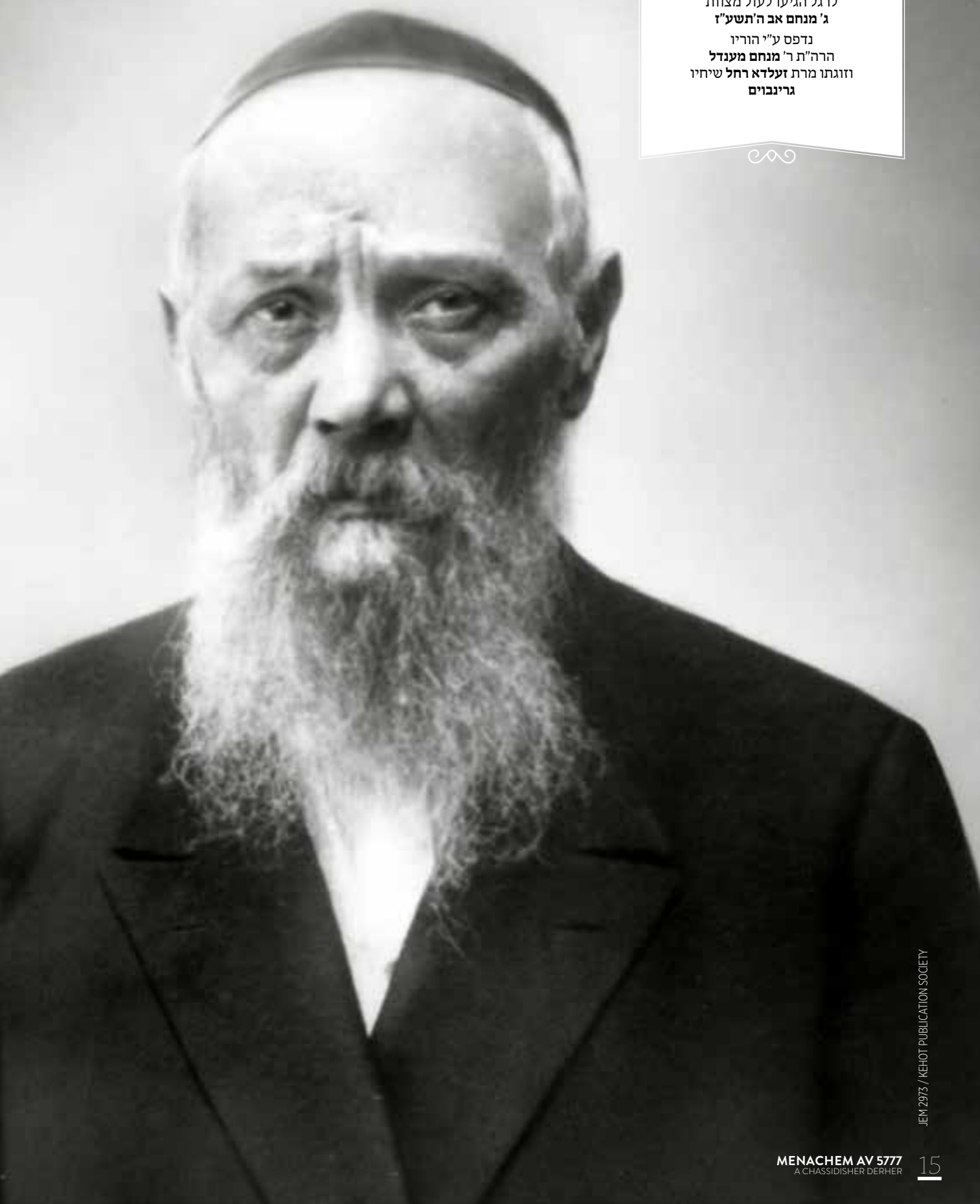
In the Av editions of past magazines, we have written about multiple aspects of Horav Levi Yitchok's life: his courageous years of *rabbonus*¹; his tremendous *mesiras nefesh* in the face of tyranny²; personal encounters with him³; and his final years in exile⁴.

In honor of this year's Chof Av, we endeavor to approach Horav Levi Yitzchak's life from perhaps the most challenging perspective of all: his Torah. Like their Creator, *tzadikim* instill their essence into their Torah, "*Anna nafshi kesavis yehavis*," and although the Rebbe told stories about his father on many occasions, the primary focus was always his father's Torah. The

Rebbe discussed this at almost every farbrengen from when it was published in 5730—an honor reserved for nothing else other than Rashi *sichos*, Pirkei Avos in the summer, and, in the later years, Rambam.

In this review, we have relied heavily on a series of articles and interviews published by Reb Yoel Kahan throughout the years; an overview of Horav Levi Yitzchak's writings by Rabbi Yehoshua Mondshine; and an exclusive interview with Rabbi Dovid Dubov, author of *Yalkut Levi Yitzchak Al Hatorah*, selections of Horav Levi Yitzchak's *pirushim* on the Chumash with notes and explanations.

לזכות
הת' שניאור זלמן שיחי'
לרגל הגיעו לעול מצוות
ג' מנחם אב ה'תשע"ז
נדפס ע"י הוריו
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל
וזוגתו מרת זעלדא רחל שיחיו
גרינבוים



What is a Gaon?

In his introduction to the articles he wrote shortly after Horav Levi Yitzchak's *sefarim* were published, Reb Yoel Kahan writes:

"I once heard from a *chassidishe* Yid the following: Before accepting the *nesius*, the Rebbe once spoke at a farbrengen in Riga about the meaning of the title "*gaon*." The Rebbe explained that regular people have no concept of what a *gaon* truly is. They assume that a *gaon* is someone whose mind is much greater than that of a regular person—a hundred times better, a thousand times better, or even more; but, in reality, the true meaning of a "*gaon*" is something completely different. His talents are not only immeasurably greater than those of a regular person—they are on an entirely higher level.

"It's not the type of intellect that can be measured against, or compared to, regular intellect, great or small. A regular person's mind is not only smaller—or much much smaller—than a *geone'she* mind, they simply cannot be weighed on the same scale.

"Thus," Reb Yoel writes, "it is difficult—or, better said, impossible—for a person with regular faculties to analyze or give any type of a review on the *geonus* that lies in the *sefarim* of true *geonei Yisroel*. These are the types of *sefarim* of...Likkutei Levi Yitzchak."⁵

Throughout his lifetime, Horav Levi Yitzchak wrote many works containing his innovative Torah thoughts, but, tragically, most of them were lost upon his arrest by the KGB.⁶ Despite the unspeakable pain and torment he underwent, he managed to transcribe hundreds of pages of Torah in the short period that he was in exile, with the assistance of his wife, Rebbetzin Chana.⁷ Using homemade ink prepared by Rebbetzin Chana—which is why they are written in many different colors—he wrote mostly on

the margins of the very few *sefarim* she managed to bring him from home, in addition to some other papers or notebooks. This constitutes the majority of Horav Levi Yitzchak's writings that are published today in 4 volumes.

Rabbi Dovid Dubov, author of *Yalkut Levi Yitzchak Al Hatorah*, explains: "Horav Levi Yitzchak would draw one or two tiny circles on top of the words that his *pirush* was discussing, and then he would begin writing on the margin of the page. When he inevitably ran out of room, he would generally go *backwards*, to the page *before*, and continue the *pirush*. (Presumably he went backwards in order to avoid filling the later pages and running out of room.) In order to show that it was a continuation of the other *pirush*, he would rewrite the last three words from where he left off, and continue on from there. For example: If the last words on page *reish daled* was וּכְמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב בְּלִקּוּטֵי תוֹרָה, he would rewrite on page *reish gimmel* וּכְמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב בְּלִקּוּטֵי תוֹרָה, and continue on from there.

"This could continue over many, many pages. Being that the margins were often full with previous writings, he would have to find every space available to squeeze in his new *pirush*. His longest single *pirush*, on the Zohar of parshas Tzav, fills *fifty-four pages* of the *published* version of Likkutei Levi Yitzchak—over a hundred pages of margins on the Zohar!

"Since he was such a *ma'ayan hamisgaber*, a gushing fountain of Torah, he would often delve into side-points, elaborating on various concepts at length—and then there were sometimes parentheses within parentheses—until he would finally write: "This is the end of the parentheses that began on page...; now, we will return to the original theme..."

Horav Levi Yitzchak only possessed a few *sefarim* in exile: a set of Zohar (an edition with unusually large margins); a Tanya; and a pocket-

...Regular people have no concept of what a gaon truly is. They assume that a gaon is someone whose mind is much greater than that of a regular person—a hundred times better, a thousand times better, or even more...

sized Mishnayos with Ikkar Tosfos Yom Tov. Of his five published *sefarim*, three were written on the margins of the Tanya and Zohar.

“People don’t realize this, but the utter *bekius* that Horav Levi Yitzchak reveals in his writings is mind boggling. We’re not even talking about the entirety of the Bavli, Yerushalmi, and Midrashim; right off his fingertips he could quote all types of seforim in *nigleh*, Chassidus and Kabbalah, as if he were sitting before a computer. This is clearly evident in his writings from exile, where he quotes or cites dozens upon dozens of *sefarim* that he clearly did not possess.”

The Rebbe’s father was known as a *gaon olam* in all circles of Yiddishkeit, both Chassidim and *minsagdim*. “For certain reasons, my father went to receive *semicha* from *olamische* rabbonim, including Reb Chaim Brisker, the Lodzer Rov, and others,” the Rebbe once related at a farbrengen. “Reb Chaim Brisker was aware that my father was ‘from the family’ [i.e the Schneersohn family]—and he was dressed as Chassidim did in those days—so he gave him a very hard time, trying to find a way out of giving him *semicha*. When, following all the tests, Reb Chaim was forced to give my father *semicha*, he pronounced: ‘Gevald Reb Leivik!

[You have] such a good mind—and what do you invest it in...?!’ He meant to say that my father had put his mind too much into Chassidus and Kabbalah...”⁸

Horav Levi Yitzchak’s method

But what, exactly, *is* Horav Levi Yitzchak’s approach? Being that his Kabbalah/*remez* approach is so different than the usual styles of learning most people are accustomed to, this question is somewhat shrouded in mystery.

To over-simplify, Horav Levi Yitzchak’s approach to learning is generally a mix of two levels of *limmud haTorah*: **sod** or kabbala; and **remez**. He quotes a passage of Torah—it could be a Zohar, a *sugya* in Gemara, a *possuk* in Tanach, a line of Tanya, or anything else—and asks a few questions. Then he explains the inner dimension of the passage according to Kabbalah—**sod**—and how every step and word in the passage is exactly accurate according to this explanation, showing how this resolves many more questions than he asked in the outset. Along the way, he zooms in and shows how this kabbalistic explanation works perfectly in the **remez** of the passage, how it’s reflected even in the most

Horav Levi Yitzchak’s writings are divided into a five volume set:

- Likkutei Levi Yitzchak-Haaros L’sfer Hazohar—Bereishis
- Likkutei Levi Yitzchak-Haaros L’sfer Hazohar—Shemos-Devarim —These were written on the margins of the Zohar that he possessed in exile.
- Likkutei Levi Yitzchak-Haaros al Sefer Hatanya —A small *sefer* originally written on the margins of the Tanya in exile.
- Toras Levi Yitzchak-Chiddushim Ubiurim L’shas Mishnah u’Gemara —These were also written in exile.
- Likkutei Levi Yitzchak-Likkutim al Pesukei Tanach u’Maamarei Chazal; Igros Kodesh —Including the letters and *reshimos* that were sent to the Rebbe.



minute details, in the words and expressions, in the *gematriyaos*—and even the *nekudos* and *trup*.

(It should be noted that these *remazim* and *gematriyaos* are not your run-of-the-mill, cute *vertelach*. The Ramban writes that it is forbidden for a person to concoct *gematriyaos* on his own. The *remazim* written by true *tzadikim*, like the Baal Haturim, are based on a very specific set of rules and guidelines, and only a true *gaon* who knows the truth of the concept is able to see how it is reflected in the words as well. For this reason, every single part of the *remez*—what type of *gematria* it is, whether it's the *roshei teivos*, *sofei teivos*; which word its in; and so on—is perfectly accurate to the theme, and this was sometimes the subject of the Rebbe's *sichos* on his father's Torah. A full treatment of this subject is far beyond the scope of this article.)

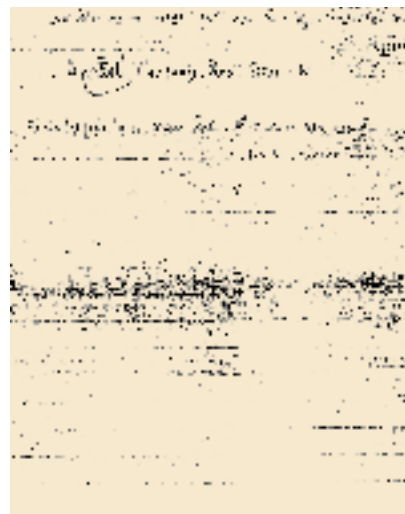
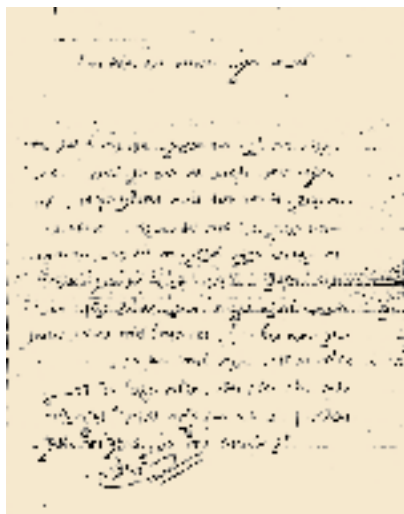
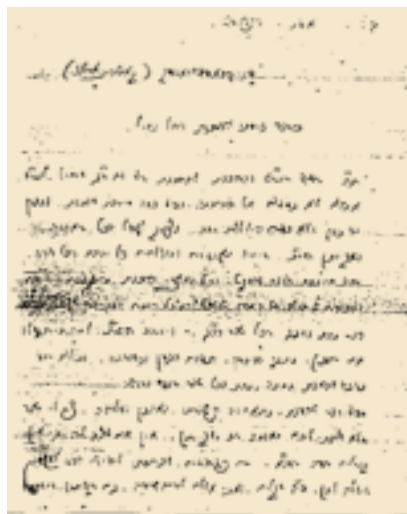
Now, Horav Levi Yitzchak's approach to innovating in Kabbalah was not an entirely new one. Rabbi Yehoshua Mondshine writes, "When we compare Horav Levi Yitzchak's *sefarim* with the famous Kabbalah *sefarim* throughout the generations, we find precedents to even his most innovative methods in explaining the earlier works." However, he took it further than anyone did before him. "These *sefarim* anticipated his writings in a general vein," Rabbi Mondshine continues, "but not in the breadth of explanation, in the way he explains even the most minute details. We find ourselves standing before a new phenomenon that has never been seen before."⁹

Take, for example, his works on the Zohar, where he analyzed it line by line, word by word, and even letter by letter, innovating stunning insights. He had many predecessors in this approach, including our holy Rebbeim, the Arizal and the other great mekubalim, and especially the Ramak, who, as one Kabbalah *sefer* records, "toiled in the Zohar to explain all its *remazim*, and analyzed its details literally like a *sefer Torah*."¹⁰

In fact, the Rebbe compared his father's method in Zohar to that of the Alter Rebbe's, and, as the Mittlerer Rebbe writes, the Alter Rebbe had profound reasons for learning Zohar in this manner. "I heard from his holy mouth... that the passage that says...'with this work *sefer haZohar*, the Yidden will go out of *galus*,' refers to studying Zohar with great intensity, depth, and toil; analyzing how each word is accurate according to the true wisdom of Kabbalah. This was the approach of the Arizal, and this is how he merited the revelation of Eliyahu and *ruach hakodesh*—by toiling greatly in the passages of the *Zohar hakadosh*."

But although there were many forerunners to analyzing the Zohar in such a manner in a general way, Horav Levi Yitzchak took this approach to an entirely new level.

Perhaps the most innovative of Horav Levi Yitzchak's Torah sections are his kabbalistic explanations on *sugyos* in Gemara. His approach is based on the cardinal precept that *nigleh* and *nistar* are not two separate fields of study—there are no two Torahs *chas v'shalom*—rather they



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASSIDEI CHABAD

A LETTER IN THE HANDWRITING OF THE REBBE'S FATHER HORAV LEVI YITZCHOK.

Why was Rebbi Yossi the one who was found thinking about worldly matters, and not any of the other tannaim? What does it mean that he lost a letter in his name? How is it possible that one of the greatest tannaim started thinking about worldly matters in the midst of a discussion about the secrets of the Torah?

are mirror images of each other, like body and soul. Just as the 613 limbs of the soul are bound with the 613 limbs of the body, *nigleh* and *nistar* complement and complete each other—one cannot be truly understood without the other. Under Horav Levi Yitzchak's hand, the utter unity of these two elements is revealed and illuminated—to the extent that they become one and the same: the *sugyos* in Gemara are illuminated by Kabbalah, and kabbalistic principles are learned from Gemara.

This method applies not only to the *aggada* section of Gemara—where “most secrets of the Torah are buried”—but also to pure *nigleh-sugyos*. In this arena, Horav Levi Yitzchak stands largely alone in history, as Rabbi Mondshine writes: “Although many *halachos* in Shas were explained according to Kabbalah, as the Arizal would do, I do not believe that there are any other *sefarim* like this—works that illuminate *sugyos* of Shas down to the very last detail, explaining every element of the back and forth of the *sugya*.”¹¹

Stunningly Innovative; Eminently Accessible

In all of Horav Levi Yitzchak's writings, one finds two elements. On the one hand, the *remazim* and *gematriyaos* are spectacular in their accuracy and detail; but one can appreciate the innovations on a much simpler plane as well. Even the layman can (often) understand the service he does to the *sugya*, how each twist and turn of the Gemara—which seemed problematic before—works perfectly according to the kabbalistic explanation. “Reb Yoel Kahan once told me,” says Rabbi Dubov, “that in the *reshima* on the *sugya* in Pesachim that begins *Reb*

Simlai—a nearly fifty-page *reshima* which Horav Levi Yitzchak sent to the Rebbe—he resolves a hundred questions on the *sugya*!”

The Zohar, for example, records many different types of stories and teachings from *tannaim*, and it is often difficult to comprehend what it's trying to say—it can seem repetitive, random, or simply strange. This is a vignette from the Zohar describing an event that occurred when Rashbi was learning with his *chevraya*:

...[Rebbi Shimon] saw that Rebbi Yossi was thinking about worldly matters [in the middle of learning]. He said to him “Yossi! Stand up and complete your image, for you are now missing one [letter in your name]!” Rebbi Yossi rose, and said original words of Torah, and stood before him. Rabbi Shimon looked at him, and said “Rebbi Yossi! Now you are complete before *atik yomin* and your image is complete.”

On the face of it, it's not a particularly difficult story to understand. But Horav Levi Yitzchak explains what it *means*, what the Zohar is *really* trying to say. Why was Rebbi Yossi the one who was found thinking about worldly matters, and not any of the other *tannaim* who were present? What does it mean that he lost a letter in his name? And, perhaps most importantly—how is it possible that one of the greatest *tannaim* started thinking about worldly matters in the midst of a discussion about the secrets of the Torah?

Horav Levi Yitzchak explains that this story is, in fact, far from mundane, and reflects the levels of the *neshamos* of these *tannaim*, whether they were connected to *malchus*, which must be plugged into the world, or to higher levels which are far beyond this mundane reality. The

explanation, though kabbalistic, illuminates the simple meaning of the Zohar in a stunning yet simple fashion, accessible even to the layman.

Hashem says “Teiku”

Horav Levi Ytizchak's method in learning, that every iota of Torah is of the highest level of accuracy, was based on his general approach to Torah, which he articulated in a striking letter to the Rebbe. “Do not imagine,” he writes, “that the learning, intellect, and analysis of the *chachamim* of the Mishnah and the Gemara—as well as those who studied Torah *lishma* in later generations—is at all comparable to the study and analysis of regular human intellect...There is no doubt whatsoever, that everything recorded in *Torah Shebichsav* and *Torah Shebaal Peh*, both in *halacha* and *aggada*, and all the *sefarim* authored by *chachamim tzadikim* who studied Torah *lishma*; and even the *halachos* that the Gemara itself calls a *bedusa*, a mistake—all of them were said by Hashem himself, and He said it exactly as it is written; Hashem himself said the *halacha* and He himself said that it is a mistake. [The same is true regarding] all the questions that remain in *teiku*, unresolved, and all the things that were refuted (a *tiyuvta*)—all of them were said by Hashem, and He also said the *teiku* or *tiyuvta*...”

A Status Unto Its Own

“In Lubavitch throughout the generations,” Reb Yoel Kahan says, “Chassidim would avoid studying Chassidus authored by other Chassidim. This included even the most respected *geonim* and *tzadikim* like Reb Aizik Homiler, Reb Pesach Molostovker, and so on. Even Reb Hillel Paritcher's writings, which Chassidim did read, were never really *studied*, and even this was only due to Reb Hillel's profound *hiskashrus* to the Tzemach Tzedek.

“This is because there is big difference between the Chassidus of the Rabbeim and the Chassidus written by Chassidim: The Rabbeim “saw” *Elokus*, and transmitted this light and brought it down for their followers through their *sichos* and *maamarim*. They are *divrei Elokim*

JEM 2968

chayim, words of the living *Aibershter*, and when a Yid learns the Rabbeim's Torah, the light of *Elokus* shines into him. It affects this person's *neshama*, bringing him closer to *Elokus* and inspiring him to *avodas Hashem*.

“Chassidim, on the other hand, no matter how lofty a level they may be, are physical beings



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with limited minds. They learn about *Elokus* through their intellect—but they cannot reach the light of *Elokus* itself.
“And yet—Horav Levi Yitzchak’s writings are the exception. I do not believe that there is any other *sefer*—other than the *sefarim* of the Rabbeim—that is treated in the same manner.

“The Rebbe spent countless hours delving into his father’s Torah at farbrengens, discussing them at great length. The Rebbe elaborated on his father’s words, explained their profound meaning in Chassidus, and showed how even a few words contained fundamental concepts in Chassidus. [The way in which the Rebbe taught

Every element, big or small, is worthy of scrutiny, to the extent that he focuses literally on every word—whether it is written in male or female tense, whether it is written with or without a yud—and even on such seemingly irrelevant details as the time and place where the passage was said.

and elaborated upon his father's Torah—thus creating a three-level structure leading from the Zohar or Gemara, to Horav Levi Yitzchak, to the Rebbe—is a fascinating subject for itself, well beyond the scope of this article, and will be included in a future article *iy”h*. –Ed]

“In fact, there are even *maamarim* where the Rebbe analyzes a single word from his father, and bases the entire *maamar* on it!¹² (Although all words of the Rebbe are utterly true and exact, a *maamar* is unique, as it is a time when *Shechina medaberes mitoch gerono*, the *Shechina* speaks through the voice of the Rebbe.)

“In addition, for many years, in the *maamarim* where the Rebbe would mention all the Rabbeim, he would also mention something from his father. I even remember a *farbrengen* on Chof Av where the Rebbe said that this is a time to connect to the *ilana dichaya*, the tree of life!

“All of this shows that the Rebbe saw something in his father's writings that goes far beyond the writings of a regular Chossid. I'm not sure what it means, exactly, but such matters are not for people like us to figure out. It is clearly evident, however, that Horav Levi Yitzhak's Torah has a very special status. [It is important to note that *Sefer Ha'archim*, the encyclopedia on Chassidus initiated and guided by the Rebbe, and authored by a team of Chassidim lead by Reb Yoel Kahan, incorporates topics and concepts from a very specific selection of sources - only the Rabbeim's Torah - and it also includes Horav Levi Yitzchak's writings. In fact, because Horav Levi Yitzchak innovated so many ideas in Kabbalah, many of the entries are based solely on his writings.]

“It is obvious that this cannot be explained by the fact that Horav Levi Yitzchak was the Rebbe's



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HORAV LEVI YITZCHOK UPON HIS RELEASE FOLLOWING HIS IMPRISONMENT, SHORTLY BEFORE HIS PASSING ON CHOF AV 5704.

father, simply because of *kibbud av*. In addition to the fact that this does not explain how the Rebbe could base a *maamar* on his father's Torah, there's a deeper point: The Rebbe once mentioned at a *farbrengen* that there are some who say that Rashi began his *pirush* with the words “Rebbi Yitzchak said” in order to mention his father, Rebbi Yitzchak. The Rebbe said that this explanation cannot suffice, for Rashi was a true, *p'nimiyisdike* Yid, and surely he would not use his *pirush* to hint to a personal matter. The same is very true regarding the Rebbe, especially considering the extent to which the Rebbe hid and covered up his personal life.”

in Depth

For a bit of a deeper perspective on Horav Levi Yitzchak's Torah, we bring an excerpt from an article by Reb Yoel Kahan:

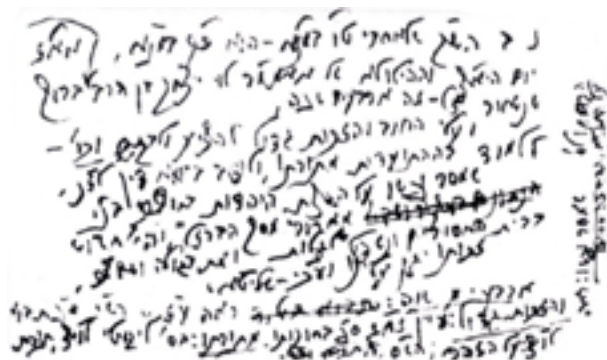
Overall, there are two fundamental ways to approach a subject in Torah. Many people use a mix of these two approaches in any given subject, but when you truly analyze all the various styles of learning, it boils down to these two:

1. **Prat/Element.** To emphasize and focus on the *prat*, every element on its own. Each element is analyzed and weighed, and even details that seem to have no direct connection to the central subject matter are investigated and scrutinized; the analysis will encompass even the wording and grammar of the *sugya*. Every distinct element adds to the comprehension of the overall subject matter—but the *emphasis* is on each element for itself.
2. **Klal/Overall:** To focus on the overall theme of the *sugya*, the crux of the subject matter. *How* this theme is brought out in the details of the *sugya* is not as important as understanding the theme *itself* and exploring its depths. When someone uses such an approach, he immediately discovers how each element is connected to the essential theme—not how it is on its own. [In the Mishnah of *shnayim ochazin*, for example, the focus will not be on the concrete example cited in the Mishnah—that two people are fighting over a tallis—and it definitely will not be on the *details* of the language—like why the Mishnah seems repetitive when recording the litigants' arguments. The attention will be on the essential theme of the *sugya*: the legal concept that *mamon hamutal besafek*, that money

whose ownership is in doubt must be divided.]

Just as a person can only be complete with both a body and a soul, true Torah-learning must include both of these elements: 1) The soul, the essential theme. 2) The body, all the many elements.

Anyone who gives even a cursory read to Horav Levi Yitzchak's *haaros*—which often span dozens of pages—is stunned by the vast range and infinite richness contained therein, how he uses a single concept to astutely explain so many disparate elements and details within a single



THE REBBE'S HANDWRITTEN POSTSCRIPT TO A LETTER DATED MOTZOEI TISHA-B'AV 5744, PERSONALLY REQUESTING OF CHASSIDIM TO MARK HIS FATHER'S YAHRTZEIT BY STUDYING OF HIS TORAH.

ג.ב.
הש"ק שלאחרי ט"ו במנ"א - הוא כ"ף במנ"א, יום היא"צ וההילולא של אאמ"ר לוי יצחק בן הרב אא"ז ברוך שניאור ז"ל - זה ארבעים שנה.
ועלי החוב והזכות גדול להציע ולבקש וכו' - ללמוד בהתועדות מתורתו, ולנדב ביומא דין לז"ג.
שמסר נפשו על הפצת היהדות בתוככי בני "מאחורי מסך הברזל", ועי"ז הי' חבשו בבית האסורים ונשפט לגלות ומת בגולה ושם מ"כ.
זכותו יגן עלינו ועכ"י - שליט"א.

P.S.

THE SHABBOS FOLLOWING THE FIFTEENTH OF AV IS CHOF-AV, THE YAHRTZEIT AND HILULA OF MY FATHER, HORAV LEVI YITZCHAK BEN BORUCH SCHNEUR Z"l - FORTY YEARS NOW.

I FEEL A RESPONSIBILITY AND A GREAT PRIVILEGE TO SUGGEST AND REQUEST THAT EVERYONE SHOULD LEARN TOGETHER FROM HIS TEACHINGS, AND TO CONTRIBUTE [TZEDAKA] ON THIS DAY IN HIS MEMORY; FOR HE GAVE UP HIS LIFE TO SPREAD YIDDISHKEIT TO JEWS BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN, RESULTING IN HIS IMPRISONMENT AND SENTENCE TO EXILE, WHERE HE PERISHED AND IS NOW INTERRED. MAY HIS MERIT PROTECT US, AMONGST ALL OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE, SHLITA.

maamer Razal, and, “on a side note,” many other *maamarei Razal* as well.

On the one hand, one finds a treasure of profound logic and intellectual breadth that knows no boundaries; the single concept that Horav Levi Yitzchak innovates is so abstract that it knows no intellectual limits, and can be applied across *sugyos* and disciplines. From this perspective, his Torah is all “*neshama*.”

But on the other hand, Horav Levi Yitzchak focuses his attention on the tiniest of details, to an extent that is difficult to find by other authors. Every element, big or small, is worthy of scrutiny, to the extent that he focuses literally on every word—whether it is written in male or female tense, whether it is written with or without a *yud*—and even on such seemingly irrelevant details as the time and place where the passage was said.

And the point here is not that Horav Levi Yitzchak’s style *encompasses* both approaches—a laser-focus on detail, *together* with an eye for the essential theme—which, by the way, would be innovative on its own. Rather, Horav Levi Yitzchok has a wholly different approach, where both approaches are fused together as one, meaning that while focussing on the tiniest of details, he reveals the ultimate breadth of the essential theme.

You might even say, Reb Yoel adds, that this is what happens when one finds the *nekuda atzmis*, the quintessential point of the subject matter—the level which transcends both *klal* and *prat*; body and soul; abstractness and concrete—where both approaches come together as one.

The Sefiros, Neshamos, the Hours, and the Numbers

In the following, we include one example from Horav Levi Yitzchak’s Torah, excerpted from an article by Reb Yoel Kahan.¹³ We cite it to show a little bit of why it is that anyone who delves into Horav Levi Yitzchak’s Torah comes away with descriptions bordering on the miraculous. The subject is the first Mishnah in Brachos (published in *Likkutei Levi Yitzchak, Likkutim Al Maamarei Chazal*, in the *haaros* to *Maseches Sukkah* p. 160), and it should be noted that only the lighter elements of Horav Levi Yitzchak’s writings on the subject were included in this

article; for the full treatment, the original should be consulted.

Before we begin: a basic concept in Chassidus and Kabbalah is that when the *tannaim* and *amoraim* have a difference of opinion in *halacha*, when one person rules leniently (*lekula*) and the other rules strictly (*lechumra*), their difference of opinion lies in the spiritual levels from which their *neshamos* come from. (See Horav Levi Yitzchak’s letter to the Rebbe in *Likkutei Levi Yitzchak*–Igros p. 263, for a fuller treatment on this topic.)

These levels are generally divided in three: *chessed*, *gevura*, and *tiferes*. The *neshamos* that come from the *sefira* of *chessed*, kindness, will lean towards leniency in their halachic rulings (*patur*, *mutar*, and so on); the *neshamos* that come from *gevura* (severity, discipline) will lean towards stringency. The most famous example is from Hillel and Shammai (as well as their students, Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel): in almost every single one of their arguments, Hillel, who came from *chessed*, was lenient, and Shammai, who came from *gevura*, was stringent.

Then there are the *neshamos* that come from *tiferes*, the middle-ground between *chessed* and *gevura*, and they rule down the middle.

Now to the Mishnah:

מאימתי קורין את שמע בערבית. משעה שהכהנים נכנסים לאכול בתרומתן. עד סוף האשמורה הראשונה דברי ר' אליעזר. וחכמים אומרים עד חצות. רבן גמליאל אומר עד שיעלה עמוד השחר.

From when may one recite Shema in the evening? From the time when the Kohanim go in to eat their terumah, until the end of the first watch—so says Rabbi Eliezer. And the Chachamim say: Until midnight. Rabban Gamliel says: Until the break of dawn.

The Mishnah cites three opinions about the time until when a person may recite *krias shema* in the evening. Rabbi Eliezer holds that one may recite it only until the end of the first “watch,” or section, of the night—which is either a third or a quarter of the way through the night. (This depends on an argument in a Beraisa whether the night is divided into three sections or four.) Rabban Gamliel holds that one may recite *krias shema* all the way until the end of the night—dawn. The *chachamim* hold that a person may recite it until *chatzos*, the middle of the night.

The result is that Rabbi Eliezer, who gives the least amount of time, is the most stringent, and Rabban Gamliel, who gives until dawn, is the most lenient. This works out perfectly with the level of their *neshamos*: Rabbi Eliezer comes from *gevura*—he was from the students in Beis Shammai (a “Shamuti”)—and he is therefore stringent in this case as well; and Rabban Gamliel was from *chessed*—he was a descendant of Hillel—and he was lenient in this case as well.



Horav Levi Yitzchak shows that this is hinted in a slight difference in the way the Mishnah records their opinions: when it records Rabbi Eliezer’s opinion it says “*divrei Rabbi Eliezer*” [so says Rabbi Eliezer], whereas by Rabban Gamliel it says “*Rabban Gamliel omer*” [Rabban Gamliel says]. The terms “*dibbur*” and “*amira*” are synonyms in Lashon Hakodesh for speaking or saying, but there is a difference between them. “*Dibbur*” connotes a harsh tone, while “*amira*” is softer.

This is what the Mishnah is emphasizing: the strict ruling of Rabbi Eliezer is derived from the fact that it is “*divrei Rabbi Eliezer*”—it comes from the harshness and strictness which is characteristic of Rabbi Eliezer in general. And Rabban Gamliel is lenient in this case because “*Rabban Gamliel omer*,” because he himself, as a person, leans towards *chessed*, leniency.

All this, Horav Levi Yitzchak writes in a few lines. But he mostly dwells on the middle opinion, of the *chachamim*, which corresponds to the level of *tiferes*.

It is explained (in the Mishnah and *mefarshim*) that the reasoning behind the *chachamim*’s opinion, that one must say *krias shema* by midnight, is this: They agree that according to Torah law, *midoraisa*, one is allowed to say *krias shema* until dawn. However, the *rabbanan* instituted a *gezeira* that one may

only recite it until midnight because people might push off *krias shema* and then forget about it and fall asleep.

Here we see something very interesting: If you consider the opinion of the *chachamim*—the middle ground in this Mishnah—you find that on the one hand it’s closer to Rabbi Eliezer, and on the other hand it’s closer to Rabban Gamliel. When you compare the opinions on a *theoretical* level, the opinion of the *chachamim* is almost identical to Rabban Gamliel’s, for they both agree on the fundamental Torah law that one may recite *krias shema* the entire night. The only difference is that the *chachamim* hold that there is a *gezeira* to recite it by midnight so that people wouldn’t push it off too much. In this, they completely disagree with the opinion of Rabbi Eliezer.

However, when you compare the opinions on a *practical* level—on the clock—the *chachamim*’s opinion is closer to Rabbi Eliezer. While the time of *chachamim* (midnight) is a full half of the night away from the time of Rabban Gamliel (dawn), it is only several hours away from the time of Rabbi Eliezer, the end of the first section of the night. (Depending on the opinions in the Beraisa, it’s either a sixth of the night or a quarter of the night away).

Horav Levi Yitzchak explains that this phenomenon can also be found in the relationship between *chessed*, *gevura*, and *tiferes*.

These three *sefiros* are expressed in the *avodas Hashem* of the *avos*, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov. The *avodah* of Avraham Avinu was *chessed*, which is expressed in *ahava*, love for Hashem; for this reason Hashem referred to him as “*Avraham ohavi*”¹⁴—Avraham who loves me. Yitzchak Avinu’s *avodah* was *gevura*, which is expressed through *yira*—fear of Hashem; for this reason it says “*pachad yitzchak*,”¹⁵ referring to Yitzchak’s fear of Hashem. The *avodah* of

This is what happens when one finds the nekuda atzmis, the quintessential point of the subject matter—the level which transcends both klal and prat; body and soul; abstractness and concrete



HORAV LEVI YITZCHOK'S TIGHTLY WRITTEN NOTES ON THE ZOHAR.

Yaakov Avinu was *tiferes*, which includes and unites *chesed* and *gevura*. It therefore says regarding Yaakov ¹⁶אֵלֶּי אָבִי אֶלְקֵי אֲבָרָהָם וּפָחַד־לִי, meaning that the *avodas Hashem* of “my father Avraham” and the *avodah* of “the fear of Yitzchak,” were there for him, they came together in his *avodah*.

Now, in *tiferes* we find two opposite characteristics. On the one hand, on an inner level *tiferes* has more of a connection to *chesed* than to *gevura* (as Chassidus explains). On the other hand, when it comes to the order of the *sefiros* and the way they are linked to each other, *tiferes* is closer to *gevura*.

This is expressed in the relationship between Yaakov (*tiferes*), Avraham (*chesed*), and Yitzchak (*gevura*). On a practical level, in the order of the *avos*, Yaakov was closer to Yitzchak—he was his son, whereas Avraham was his grandfather. But on a deeper level, Yaakov had more of a connection to Avraham. (This is why we find that in Yaakov’s dream, Hashem mentions both Avraham and Yitzchak, but while Hashem refers to Avraham as Yaakov’s father, Yitzchak is mentioned without a title¹⁷.)

And this is the same dynamic we see in our Mishnah: Rabbi Eliezer is stringent because of his connection to *gevura*—Yitzchok; Rabban

Gamliel is lenient because he is connected to *chessed*—Avraham; and the *chachamim* have the middle opinion because of their connection to *tiferes*—Yaakov.

And the similarities continue. On a practical level, the time of the *chachamim* is closer to Rabbi Eliezer's, just as *tiferes* is closer to *gevura*, just as Yaakov is closer to Yitzchak. But on a deeper level, in the *rationale* of the *halacha*, the *chachamim* are closer to Rabban Gamliel, just as *tiferes* is conceptually closer to *chessed*, just as Yaakov is to Avraham.



Horav Levi Yitzchak takes it even further. The connection between the Mishnah and the *sefiros*—and how it compares with the *avos*—isn't only true on a general level. It is reflected in the smallest details as well, and the explanation astounds the reader:

Horav Levi Yitzchak explains that the fact that Yaakov is closer to Yitzchak than to Avraham is reflected in the *gematria* of their names. The *gematria* of Yaakov is 182, Yitzchak is 208, and Avraham is 248. Obviously, 182 is much closer to 208 than 248.

But how much is the difference, exactly? The difference between Yaakov (182) and Yitzchok (208) is 26, which is the *gematria* of the *Shem Havaya*; while the difference between Yaakov (182) and Avraham (248) is 66, which is associated with the *Shem Adnai*—the *gematria* of which is 65, and when you include the *kolel*, the word itself as a whole, you get 66.

The result is that the distance between Yaakov and Avraham, which is connected with the name *Adnai*—65—is two and half times the distance between Yaakov and Yitzchak, which is 26, *Havaya*. ($2 \frac{1}{2} 26=65$).

This is exactly what we find in the Mishnah. The distance between midnight (the opinion of the *chachamim*—Yaakov) and dawn (the opinion of Rabban Gamliel—Avraham) is two and half times the distance between midnight and the end of the first section of the night (the opinion of Rabbi Eliezer—Yitzchak), as we will see:

As mentioned above, there are two opinions as to when, exactly, the “end of the first watch”—Rabbi Eliezer's time—is. According to one opinion, the night is divided into three sections. According to this, the time of Rabbi Eliezer is a third of the way into the night—which is a sixth

of the night before midnight. According to the second opinion, the night is divided into four parts—which means that “the end of the first watch” is a quarter of the way into the night—and a quarter of the night before midnight.

As we said earlier, the distance between midnight and dawn (Rabban Gamliel's opinion) is an entire half of the night. So when you compare the two distances (between “the end of the first watch” and midnight; and between midnight and dawn) the result is as follows: According to the first opinion, the second distance is three times as much as the first, because a half is equal to three sixths; and according to the second opinion, the second distance is two times as long as the first, since a half is equal to two quarters.

Since both of these opinions are true, and especially since the Gemara does not rule one way or the other, we must calculate the average of both opinions. When you average three times as much and two times as much, it comes out to two-and-half times as much. Thus, the distance between the time of Rabban Gamliel (dawn) and *Chachamim* (midnight), is two and a half times as long as the distance between Rabbi Eliezer (“the end of the first watch”) and *Chachamim* (midnight)—exactly the same difference as between the *avos*. **T**

1. A Chassidisher Derher Magazine Av 5776 (47).
2. A Chassidisher Derher Magazine Av 5774 (22).
3. A Chassidisher Derher Magazine Av 5774 (34).
4. A Chassidisher Derher Magazine Av 5773 (11).
5. Di Yiddishe Heim issue 46.
6. Rabbi Dovid Dubov counted over two hundred instances where Horav Levi Yitzchak cites an earlier work that is now lost.
7. See A Chassidisher Derher Magazine Av 5773 (11).
8. Sichos Kodesh 5711 p. 278.
9. Introduction to Likkutei Levi Yitzchok (published in Likkutei Levi Yitzchak on Tanya) p. 6.
10. See Ibid p. 8-9.
11. Introduction to Likkutei Levi Yitzchok (published in Likkutei Levi Yitzchak on Tanya) p. 9.
12. See, for example, sefer Hamaamarim Melukat vol. 4 p. 188.
13. Di Yiddishe Heim issue number 59 p. 4.
14. Yeshayahu 41,8.
15. Bireishis 31, 42.
16. Ibid.
17. Bireishis 28, 13.



NONVIOLENT REVOLUTIONS



In the months leading up to the year 5750, and throughout that year, a wave of nonviolent revolutions took hold in the USSR. The peoples of Poland, East Germany, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia protested en-masse against their respective communist governments. They demanded independence from the USSR and civil rights and freedoms for all citizens. These revolutions were wildly successful and not a single shot was fired.

On November 9, 1989, (11 Cheshvan 5750) thousands of jubilant Germans brought down the most visible symbol of division at the heart of Europe—the Berlin Wall. For two generations, the Wall was the physical representation of the Iron Curtain and the repression of the Communist Soviet Union.

On November 28, 1989 (Cheshvan 30 5750) a peaceful event occurred in Mongolia that sparked the non-violent people's revolution that brought about regime change there several months later.

All this resulted in the dissolution of the USSR and the end of a long and unfortunate era in the history of Eastern Europe. Regime changes and political transformations were occurring in India and China as well.

Several years prior, in the winter of 1986, a similar revolution occurred in the Philippines. Known as the Yellow Revolution, the people overthrew the authoritarian and repressive regime of then President Ferdinand Marcos, through peaceful demonstrations. This event made news headlines as “the revolution that surprised the world.” Most notably, to the credit of the deposed president, the revolution did not result in a violent civil war.

On Shabbos Parshas Toldos, 4 Kislev, 5750, a week after the third international Kinus Hashluchim, the Rebbe addressed the miraculous and unprecedented phenomenon of these nonviolent revolutions.

MIRACLES TAKEN FOR GRANTED

Many wonder why we emphasize the fact that the world is currently in a state of preparation for Moshiach and that we are at the “doorstep” of redemption. They argue that civilization in general continues to operate as usual.

It is puzzling and amazing that they do not notice the unfathomable changes occurring around the globe. During the last few years there are radical revolutions taking place in various countries. Entire governments are undergoing major internal transformations, to the opposite extremes of the ideological spectrum.

With Hashem's great kindness, these revolutions are occurring peacefully. The respective economies did not grind to a halt and, for the most part, the routine of life of the citizens of these countries is continuing undisturbed.

The most obvious and relevant revolution for us is the one occurring in Russia and the countries of the USSR. This is the birthplace of

לע"נ
מרת בינה
בת ר' יהודה אריה ליב
נלב"ע כ' מנחם אב ה'תשס"ה
תנ"צ'בה
נדפס ע"י בנה
הרה"ת ר' חיים צבי וזוגתו מרת חנה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
חנוכה



Lubavitch, from which the Frieddiker Rebbe was forced to emigrate due to the tyrannical governing style of the Communists. The seventy-year Soviet dictatorship was cruel and menacing. Merely expressing discontent with the government was sufficient to warrant slave labor in Siberia, or worse.

Suddenly, the entire empire has crumbled and former Soviet states are proclaiming independence and installing new governments in a relatively short amount of time. This is part of a wave of revolutions that have occurred and are currently taking shape in many more countries around the globe with populations of billions of people. It is accurate to say that the majority of the world's population is undergoing these transformations.

People do not realize how wondrous this all is. Up until the recent past, such revolutions sparked bloody civil wars that killed untold numbers of soldiers and civilians, wiped out the economies, dramatically disrupted the lifestyles of the citizens and brought terrible atrocities in their wake. A cursory review of the events of World War II and the October Revolution prove this all to be the case.

This situation is best described as אין בעל הנס מכיר בנסוי—We are unaware of the miracles occurring all around us!

THE JEWISH OBLIGATION

The purpose of a Yid in this world is to learn Torah and observe the mitzvos. Keeping updated on world events is not the concern of a Yid. However, based on the well-known directive of the Baal Shem Tov to derive a lesson in *avodas Hashem* from every experience, when you become aware of such happenings it is

important to appreciate their relevance and meaning for us as well.

It is an opportunity for us to meditate and ponder on the greatness of Hashem. In addition to developing an awe for Hashem through appreciating the powerful routine of nature, we must recognize the many miracles that occur as well. Such wondrous occurrences as these non-violent revolutions are only in the capacity of Hashem, who is “*kol yachol*.” We are obligated to offer thanks to Hashem for this unbelievable kindness.

This is also a motivation to strengthen our belief and expectation for the imminent arrival of Moshiach. Nations warring against other nations is one of the signs of the era immediately preceding the *geulah*.² The idea of war is a revolution or disruption in the world order. With Hashem's abundant kindness, these disruptions are now occurring in a non-violent fashion.

Most importantly, we must realize that everything that occurs with the nations of the world, results from the behavior of *bnei Yisrael*. The Torah states, “יציב גבולות עמים”—[Hashem] firmly established the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the descendants of Yisrael (Yaakov Avinu)³. This means that the stability (and lack thereof) of the nations of the world results from the stability of *bnei Yisrael*.

As Yidden continuously grow in their divine mission of learning Torah, observing mitzvos and influencing the

world to follow the *sheva mitzvos* of *bnei Noach*, this automatically results in increased stabilization of all the nations of the world.

This idea was on display a few days ago, when the shluchim gathered for the Kinus, representing the entire world. In truth, everyone is a shliach of Hashem. Yidden have the mission to affect a *dirah betachtainim* through observing the 613 mitzvos, and the gentiles do their part by observing their seven mitzvos. However, for most of the world, this sense of mission is not apparent. The mandate of the Shluchim is to reveal this reality by all. To “gather” (the idea of “*kinus*”) the numerous diverse details of our universe and inspire them to unite in fulfilling our common goal of *dirah betachtainim*.

V'yehi ratzon, *bnei Yisrael* should constantly increase in *avodas Hashem*, affecting more change for the better throughout the world, heralding in the ultimate and true *geulah* through Moshiach Tzidkeinu! **T**

1. Niddah 31a

2. Bereishis Rabbah 42:4; Pesikta Rabosi, Kumi Oiri

3. Haazinu 32:8



READ THE ORIGINAL SICHA:

Sefer Hasichos, 5750, Volume 1, Page 159.

Hisvaaduyos, *Toras Menachem*, 5750, Volume 1, Page 420.



לזכות
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל ומרת שושנה
ומשפחתם שיחיו שיינער
ולזכות
ר' ברוך ומרת רחל אהבה ומשפחתם
שיחיו ולדמן
נדפס ע"י הוריהם
ר' צבי וחנה שיחיו מאראנץ



Is it Befitting?

Proper conduct of a Chossid -
וואס פאסט; וואס פאסט נישט

מ'דארף אלעמאל געדיינקען, אז מען איז דעם רבינ'ס
מענטשן, און שטעלן זיך אליין די פראגע: איז דער
רבי צופרידן מיט מיר וואס איך טו אזוי? האב איך
גענוג אתכפא און אתהפא ווי עס פאסט פאר דעם
רבינ'ס א מענטש?

We must always remember that we are the Rebbe's
people, and ask ourselves the question: "Is the Rebbe
happy with what I am doing now? Do I have sufficient
iskafya and *is'hapcha* as befitting the Rebbe's person?"

Befitting for a Chossid

The Frieddiker Rebbe relates that once while
visiting in Vitebsk, his grandfather, the Rebbe
Maharash, was asked to say Chassidus. Instead, he
came out to the courtyard where the Chassidim had
assembled and began addressing them:

"In worldly matters, the expression is often used,
'This is befitting and this is unfitting' (דאס פאסט
(און דאס פאסט ניט). For a certain type of person such
behavior is befitting; for another type of person
such conduct is unfitting.

"For Yidden, and especially for Chassidim, there
are things which are spiritually fitting and those
which are unfitting:

For a Chossid it is befitting to learn a bit of
Chassidus every day;

For a Chossid it is befitting to occupy himself with helping another;

For a Chossid it is befitting to be joyful, and express gladness to others;

For a Chossid it is befitting to examine his own shortcomings while seeing his fellow's virtues;

For a Chossid it is befitting to view even the most simple Jew as being at higher standing than himself;

For a Chossid it is befitting to learn good character from everyone else;

For a Chossid it is befitting to have love and brotherhood with others.

On the other hand:

For a Chossid it is unfitting not to learn Chassidus;

For a Chossid it is unfitting not to occupy himself with helping another;

For a Chossid it is unfitting to be depressed;

For a Chossid it is unfitting to overlook his own shortcomings;

For a Chossid it is unfitting to see himself higher than the greatest;

For a Chossid it is unfitting not to learn anything from another;

For a Chossid it is unfitting to bring about strife and conflict, even if it is [supposedly] for the sake of strengthening *darkei haChassidus*.

"When my grandfather concluded his holy words, he stood up and returned to his room. The words had such a strong impact on the crowd that most of them broke out in a soft cry..."¹

WHO, ME?!

The story is told about a Chossid of the Alter Rebbe, Reb Mordechi of Lepiel, who successfully refrained from transgressing an *aveirah* by using the trait of *ga'avah*.

When the *yetzer hara* nagged at him and said, "Listen here, Mottel! Do it!" he would stand up tall and straight and scream, "Who me?! A Chossid of the Alter Rebbe, a wealthy man, a *maskil* and *lamdan*; I should transgress this *aveirah*?! No way! It does not befit my character (עס פאסט נישט)." (Sichas Simchas Beis Hashoeiva 5714)

Made of Different Stuff

With *toras haChassidus*, our Rabbeim wished to mold a Chossid that would be of an entirely different caliber. A Chossid's makeup is of refined character; his very being lives the ways of Chassidus and he acts accordingly.

To this effect, we find so many descriptions in the *sichos* and writings of our Rabbeim, expounding on the virtues of a Chossid. It is almost as if a Chossid naturally possesses these traits.

"Chassidim are by nature altogether different," the Rebbe Rashab said.

א חסיד איז בטבע א קלוגער, איז בטבע א תקיף בדעתו, א חסיד האט א ברען, א חסיד האט דעם כח הביטול, א חסיד האט חוש הריח...

"A Chossid is clever by nature; he is by nature a determined individual; a Chossid has passion; a Chossid possesses humility; a Chossid has a good 'sixth sense' [lit. a sense of smell]."²

In a *sicha* said shortly after arriving in America, the Frierdiker Rebbe relates how in his childhood, the question "What is a Chossid?" always occupied his mind. From speaking with elder Chassidim, the image of a "Chossid" finally began formulating in his mind. "A thinker, a davener, a person of good *middos*, a faster, a person who remains silent..."³

"A Chossid is always happy. If things are going well, he is happy. And if things are not going so well, he's still happy."⁴

The Rebbe Rashab related that in his youth, he also pondered upon the question "What is a Chossid?" along with his *chavrusa*, Reb Yaakov Mordechai [later the rav of Poltava]. His friend suggested that a Chossid is someone who is devoted to the Rebbe.

The Rebbe Rashab concluded: "Being *mekushar* to the Rebbe with the greatest sense of *hiskashrus* is still not enough. A Chossid needs to be devoted to carrying out the Rebbe's affairs..."⁵

Responsibility Included

With all these traits innately, almost naturally, in a Chossid's soul, we have a much higher standard to live up to.

"A Chossid must always feel the truth," the Rebbe writes in a letter. "Every Yid knows the truth, but a Chossid also *feels* it in his heart. This is the 'ונפלינו' of Chassidim..."⁶



Being a Chossid bears a major responsibility. As the Rebbe once explained to a group of *bochurim* leaving for Merkos Shlichus with the following story:

Reb Shmuel Munkes was once returning from a *farbrengen* with Chassidim, and they passed by the Alter Rebbe's courtyard. Reb Shmuel suddenly climbed upon the fence and hung himself from the gate of the courtyard. The Chassidim, who knew of Reb Shmuel's mischievous conduct, asked for an explanation of this strange behavior, and Reb Shmuel replied: "When you pass by a shoemaker's home, you'll see a shoe hanging. When you pass by a

glassblower's home, you'll see a piece of glass hanging on display. So when you walk past the Rebbe's house, there needs to be a Chossid on display! With that everyone will know that it's the Rebbe's home..."

Similarly, the Rebbe concluded, when you go as the Rebbe's *shluchim*, everyone will look at you as exemplary Lubavitcher Chassidim, "Chabadniks," *temimim*, *yeshivah bochurim*, *yirei Shamayim*. The way you act will set the tone for how a Chossid, a *tomim*, a *mekushar* should act. Remember that you carry an enormous responsibility!

A Chossid is expected to listen when he is spoken to, and have *kabolas ol*. "This necessity to understand



everything rationally is a fairly new phenomenon, completely foreign to Chassidim,” the Rebbe writes in a letter. “The *seder* always was: first they listened and only then did they try to understand as much as was allowed. And even if they didn’t understand, they still managed to sleep peacefully...”⁸

Get Out There

Last but certainly not least: a Chossid is charged with impacting his surroundings and spreading Torah and Chassidus to the world. The Rebbe writes in Hayom Yom (30 Adar I) “If a Chossid is not creating a positive atmosphere in his surroundings,

it’s time for him to check his own ‘baggage’ very carefully...”

As the Rebbe Rashab famously responded to someone who asked “What is a Chossid?”

“A Chossid is a lamplighter, he goes around with a long stick with a fire at its end. He knows that the fire is not his; it is his job only to kindle all the lamps with this fire...”

With that, concludes the Rebbe, we will succeed in lighting all the lamps, illuminating the darkness of *galus* and finally transforming the world into a *dira betachtonim*.⁹ ⑦

1. Sefer Hasichos 5700 p. 140
2. Sefer Hasichos 5687 p. 157
3. Sefer Hasichos summer 5700 p. 29
4. Ibid. p. 135
5. Ibid. p. 31
6. Igros Kodesh vol. 3 p. 419
7. Toras Menachem vol. 3 p. 224
8. Igros Kodesh vol. 5 p. 194
9. Sefer Hasichos 5701 p. 136; see also Sichas Yud-Gimmel Tammuz 5752

A STUDENT OF THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

Whoever carries the title of a “Lubavitcher Chossid,” whether an elderly Jew, a young man, or even a small girl, is responsible for upholding the integrity of all of Lubavitch. The outsiders look at him, not as a single individual, but as a member of the broader Lubavitch community. If he does something inappropriate, he causes a *chilul shem Lubavitch*, and a desecration to the name of the Lubavitcher Rebbe! Everyone will say, “Look at how a student of the Lubavitcher Rebbe acts!”

When the [Friediker] Rebbe came here to the United States, he began rebuilding the Lubavitch community because he trusted and believed that here too he’d succeed at educating a generation of true Lubavitcher Chassidim. So when a Chossid does something wrong, even with every excuse possible, the *chilul Hashem* is inevitable. All the other person sees is that a student of the Lubavitcher Rebbe behaves in this manner!

(Shabbos parshas Tetzaveh 5747)



In Exchange for a Soldier

Blood, death and suffering once again made its appearance in Asia.

It was the Russo-Japan war and all able-bodied reserves—those wielding the red cards—were now being summoned to come and support the war effort. Fathers, sons and brothers were being sent to the front in the thousands; each went with the knowledge that he may never live to see his family again.

With the harsh reality of battle clear to him, the Chossid Mendel Dovid made his way desperately to Lubavitch to secure a *bracha* from the Rebbe Rashab that he would be freed from this terrible situation. He was after all a husband and father with little children waiting for him at home.

The Rebbe Rashab heard his request and replied, “Hashem should free you from their hands.”

In those dangerous times, a *bracha* wasn’t enough for Mendel Dovid and he asked the Rebbe to give him a promise.

“I can’t make a promise,” replied the Rebbe, but the Chossid pressed further and said, “There is a story that your father, the Rebbe Maharash, made such a promise and it was fulfilled.”

The Rebbe Rashab’s face became red and he answered, “My father was able to do such a thing but I can’t.”

“Please Rebbe,” begged the Chossid, “For me even your ‘possibility’ is good enough.”

The Rebbe Rashab became serious once again and he repeated his *bracha* but this time he added a word of assurance, “Hashem will save you from their hands.”

Reb Mendel Dovid went home with joy as he

prepared for the day his draft notice would arrive.

All the men who were called up for duty would report to a central location, each with his pack in hand holding a few possessions. From there they would go to headquarters and then off to the battlefield. They did not need much training because all of them already had prior military experience.

There was an officer in charge who had a list of all the draftees that were supposed to be reporting that day. It just so happened that on the day that Mendel Dovid reported to duty, the head officer in charge of all the drafts was supposed to visit that very base.

However, moments before he made his grand appearance the officer in charge entered the mess hall and called out:

“Is there a Gurvitz, Mendel here?”

Mendel Dovid nervously stepped forward.

“You are free to go home,” declared the officer.

And with those few words he saw the Rebbe’s words fulfilled much faster than he ever expected. In fact, he had all the documents proving his release a mere few days later. Though he was confident he would experience a miracle, he thought it would be a lengthier ordeal; perhaps faking the medical examination or something like that.

Curious to what had been the reason for his salvation, he probed for an answer. He soon found out the most amazing story:

This officer had lived in the city of Viliz for many years in a rented apartment. The apartment belonged to a Yid in Riga and once every three years he would travel to Viliz and make the

לזכות החייל בצבאות ה'
יהושע תנחום שיחי
לרגל יום הולדתו העשירי
כ"ט מנחם אב ה'תשע"ז

נדפס ע"י הוריו
הרה"ת ר' לוי יצחק
וזוגתו מרת יהודית חנה
גייסינסקי



...BUT THIS TIME HE ADDED A WORD OF ASSURANCE, "HASHEM WILL SAVE YOU FROM THEIR HANDS."

necessary improvements to the apartment.

After the owner passed away, he left the property for his children as an inheritance. It so happened that this apartment was in high demand and there were some people so interested in it that they were willing to put up the price and outbid the current tenant.

When the owner arrived, he was presented with their offer and he was inclined to accept the added revenue.

Before he agreed, however, he approached the officer who was still the tenant and told him that he could either accept to pay more or to vacate the property.

The officer really liked his residence, which he had been in for many years, and he didn't want to leave but at the same time didn't want to pay more rent.

So he came with a different type of offer.

"If you let me stay in the apartment, for the same amount of rent," he proposed, "then I will promise that I will save one Yid from the draft." The Jewish owners accepted his promise and he stayed on in the house.

When the same officer, who was presiding over the drafts that day, saw on the list "Mendel Dovid from Viliz," he decided that here was his opportunity to save the one Yid he had promised years before. ①

*(P'nei HaKesser
vol. 2 p. 101)*



REB BEREL ASSISTS AS THE REBBE WASHES HIS HANDS FOR CHALLAH AT
THE SUKKOS RALLY FOR RELEASED TIME CHILDREN, 19 TISHREI 5737.

Svoy Brat

ONE OF OURS

REB BEREL JUNIK

Chossid, Teacher,
Meshamesh Bakodesh

לזכות
שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר לקאמפוס בקנדה,
שיצליחו בשליחותם הק'
מתוך הרחבה בגשמיות וברוחניות
נדפס ע"י חבריהם השלוחים
נשיא וועד השלוחים
הרה"ת ר' מרדכי
וזוגתו מרת נחמה דינה שיחיו
סילבערג
וחבריו השלוחים במדינת אנטריו





REB BEREL AS A BOCHUR
JUNIK FAMILY ARCHIVES

Berel Junik joined the masses of Lubavitcher Chassidim converging on the city of Lvov, on the Russian-Polish border. WWII had drawn to a close, and a tiny crack had remained open in the Iron Curtain. Eager to leave the country, a mass operation was set up to procure and distribute old and forged Polish passports which would allow passage over the border.

With passports in those days often being issued to entire families as units, the organizers of the escape rearranged families to fit the new aliases. Berel was assigned a passport which listed him as an only son traveling with his “mother.” He wasn’t aware at first, but he soon found out that the “mother” he was accompanying was none other than the Rebbe’s mother, Rebbetzin Chana.

For fear of being caught, no conversations were held during the actual journey¹. But those few hours in Rebbetzin Chana’s presence were the beginning of a long and special relationship between Reb Berel, Rebbetzin Chana, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, and the Rebbe himself.

Throughout his life, Reb Berel served as meshamesh bakodesh, fulfilling hundreds of tasks for the Rebbe, Rebbetzin Chana, and Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, in the most quiet and humble manner. This month, on 6 Menachem Av, Reb Berel would mark his 90th birthday. Presented in this article are some of the amazing encounters he had with the Rebbe and with beis harav; the outcome of his dedication and commitment.



Early Life

Reb Berel Junik was born in 5687 (תרפ"ז), in Pryluky, Ukraine, where his father Reb Naftali served as the local *shochet*. At a young age, his family relocated to Moscow, eventually fleeing east to Samarkand when the Nazis approached. Throughout all these years, Berel studied Torah in the underground *chadarim* and yeshivos of Tomchei Temimim.

After crossing the border to Poland in 5706 with Rebbetzin Chana, they continued on to Poking, Germany, where a Displaced Persons camp had been set up for refugees.

A short time later, Rebbetzin Chana continued on to Paris and eventually the United States. Berel meanwhile, remained in Poking, where he studied as part of Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim, under the tutelage of Reb Nissan Nemenov. Eventually the yeshiva moved to Brunoy, France.

During his time in Poking, he studied *shechita* as per the directive of the Frierdiker Rebbe. For a short period of time, he traveled to Dublin, Ireland, where he served as *shochet*, and then he returned to the yeshiva in Brunoy. One day, three years later, an opportunity arose for a group of

Had he postponed the voyage, he wouldn't have merited to see the Frierdiker Rebbe.

bochurim from Brunoy to join the yeshiva in 770. Four *bochurim* were part of the group: Shalom Marozov, Yitzchak Pewsner, Berel Junik, and *yblcht*"a Gedalia Korf.

Berel's parents, still living in Poking at the time, were scheduled to arrive in Paris in two weeks time. He thought to postpone his own voyage until their arrival, but Reb Nissan advised him otherwise. "If you have a chance to go to the Rebbe, go right away." In retrospect, that minor decision had a fateful outcome. Ten days after the *bochurim*'s arrival, the Frierdiker Rebbe was *nistalek*. Had he postponed the voyage, he wouldn't have merited to see the Frierdiker Rebbe.

Yechidus with the Frierdiker Rebbe

The small group of *bochurim* arrived on Ellis Island in New York on Rosh Chodesh Shevat 5710. Four days

later, they merited to be received by the Frierdiker Rebbe for *yechidus*.² As they entered the room, the secretary Reb Moshe Leib Rodshtein introduced each one of them to the Frierdiker Rebbe, who looked at them piercingly. The last one to enter was Reb Berel. When Reb Moshe Leib introduced him as "Berel Junik," the Frierdiker Rebbe continued to look at him. Reb Moshe then added "Naftali's son," and the Frierdiker Rebbe nodded, intimating that he knew who he was.

The Frierdiker Rebbe began by welcoming them, saying "*Boruch bo'achem tzleicha*." Although the Frierdiker Rebbe's speech was often hard to comprehend, the *bochurim* were able to decipher these words clearly; but for the duration of the *yechidus*, Reb Moshe Leib repeated the Rebbe's words for them.

The Frierdiker Rebbe told them, "*Heint zehen mir zich, fun zman lizman velen mir reiden*—we see each other today, and we will talk from time to time." He then inquired about their *seder*; when they said that they keep the same *sedarim* as in Brunoy—which had longer *sidrei Chassidus* than in 770—the Frierdiker Rebbe was clearly pleased. Before leaving, the Frierdiker



REB ZALMAN DUCHMAN JOINS A LIGHTEARTED MOMENT WITH THE BOCHURIM IN THE UPSTAIRS ZAL OF 770, CIRCA EARLY 5710S. REB BEREL IS STANDING FAR RIGHT.



TRANSCRIPT OF THE YECHIDUS WITH THE FRIERDIKER REBBE, 4 SHEVAT 5710.



JEM 286919

Rebbe reiterated, “*Mizman lizman vet yederer areingain bazunder, velen mir raiden*—from time to time you will each come in individually, and we will talk...”³

Less than a week later, the Frierdiker Rebbe was *nistalek*. Reb Berel was one of the *bochurim* sent by the Rebbe to the cemetery to prepare for the *levaya*.

Reb Berel would reminisce that during the *shiva* they overheard the Rebbe say that “*ba mir, hecher fun shver*

iz nito—for me, there is nothing higher than my father-in-law.” It didn’t take long for them to dedicate themselves to the Rebbe in a similar fashion...

“From time to time”

On 7 Iyar, a few months after Yud Shevat 5710, Reb Berel knocked on the Rebbe’s door. The Rebbe was leading and guiding Chassidim since Yud Shevat, but he hadn’t taken on the *nesius* and was therefore not accepting people for *yechidus* at that point.

The Rebbe invited him in and asked what he wanted. Reb Berel explained that in their *yechidus* shortly before the *histalkus*, the Frierdiker Rebbe had told them that “we will speak from time to time.” Now, Reb Berel said, he wanted to talk...

The Rebbe stood up, shut the blinds, sat back down by the desk, and burst into tears.

The Rebbe proceeded to answer his questions (and edited them later in writing).⁴

Later that year when Reb Berel came to the Rebbe for *yechidus* again, he placed his *pan* on the table, but the Rebbe corrected him; “*A pan, besser geb’n in hant*—it is better to give a *pan* by hand.”

During the *yechidus*, the Rebbe told Reb Berel, “*Eich hot der Rebbe genumen oif di pleitzes*—the Rebbe took you on his shoulders.”

In the *hanacha* that Reb Berel submitted of the *yechidus*, the Rebbe added, “*Uber m’darf alein tohn*—one must work on his own as well.”



THE REBBE’S HAGAHOS ON REB BEREL’S TRANSCRIPT OF A YECHIDUS.

JUNK FAMILY ARCHIVES

The Real Yom Huledes

Ten years after his first Yechidus, on 7 Iyar 5720, Reb Berel entered for *yechidus* together with his wife and children and in his *tzetl* he wrote that it was the tenth anniversary since his first *yechidus*.

Before leaving the room, the Rebbe told him with a smile to go to Rabbi Hodakov and reserve the date for the next round—in ten years from then. Needless to say, Rabbi Hodakov was quite baffled when he stated his request. His calendar wasn't scheduled so far ahead.

Ten years later, as instructed, the Junik family went into *yechidus* once more, this time with a larger family. The Rebbe looked at his *tzetl*, and told him that since it is his “birthday,” he should do all of the birthday customs. Although Reb Berel's birthday is in Av, the Rebbe acknowledged the time he first entered *yechidus* as Reb Berel's “date of birth.”⁵ Once again, the Rebbe told him to set up an appointment for the next anniversary, to take place in 5740.

During the *yechidus* of the thirtieth anniversary, this time with all their children and some grandchildren, Reb Berel told the Rebbe that he would like to set an appointment for ten years from then—in 5750. The Rebbe answered, “May Hashem fulfill your wishes and my wishes, but by then we will surely be in Eretz Yisrael with Moshiach.”

Ten years later, in 5750, Reb Berel asked the Rebbe if he would be able to enter *yechidus*, but the Rebbe answered that they should come by for dollars because that is the current form of *yechidus* [יחידות דעתה].⁶ Indeed, the entire family came by the Rebbe and the Rebbe gave them a special *bracha*.

You want everything for yourself! Why don't you leave something for others too?...

Meshamesh Bakodesh

The beginning of Reb Berel's “career” as a *meshamesh bakodesh* began right away after the Frierdiker Rebbe's *histalkus*. He would set up the Rebbe's place for farbrengens, and other small tasks. Before Pesach 5711, the Rebbe asked Reb Berel if he could help serve during the *seder* in the Frierdiker Rebbe's apartment.⁷ Reb Berel did so faithfully until his marriage in 5714.

During the first *seder*, the Rebbe asked him where his own *ka'arah* was, and he replied that he is relying on the Rebbe's *ka'arah*. Hearing that, the Rebbe told him: “If one relies on me for everything else, they can rely on me for this as well...”

The next year, his responsibilities grew. For the first time, the Rebbe held a farbrengen after the second *seder*, so he asked Reb Berel to find someone to accompany Rebbetzin Chana and Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka to their homes. Reb Berel replied that he would do so himself, and the Rebbe commented, “You do everything yourself...” On another occasion, the Rebbe said in a similar vein, “Another Mitzvah you got? You want everything for yourself! Why don't you leave something for others too?...”

Another time Reb Berel would prominently serve the Rebbe was during farbrengens. Reb Berel would go into the Rebbe's room before the farbrengen to bring out the Rebbe's *becher* and the *mashke* that the Rebbe would distribute during the



REB BEREL (RIGHT) AT A FARBRENGEN UPSTAIRS 770. SITTING TO HIS RIGHT IS REB DOVID RASKIN, REB MORDECHAI MENTLIK, AND REB EZRIEL ZELIG SLONIM.

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Farbrengen, and in the later years, the leftover *mashke* from previous farbrengens which the Rebbe used. He would also be the one to bring the Rebbe water to wash for *hamotzi* at the Yom Tov farbrengens, and pour the water for the Rebbe to drink. The watch the Rebbe had on the table in front of him during the farbrengens belonged to Reb Berel as well.⁸

Once, when the Rebbe's regular *sar hamashkim*, Rabbi Mordechai Mentlik,⁹ traveled to Eretz Yisrael, he asked Reb Berel to take his place. Because of that, years later, when Rabbi Mentlick felt too weak to continue in the post, Reb Berel did it in his stead. After Rabbi Mentlik passed away, Rabbi Hodakov officially appointed Reb Berel.

These are only a few of the many tasks which he did for the Rebbe. While he didn't hold an official position of *mazkir*, and carried a



REB BEREL EXCHANGES A FEW WORDS WITH THE REBBE DURING KOS SHEI BRACHA, MOTZOEI ROSH HASHANAH 5748.

Meir Junik

Reb Berel's brother Meir Junik was supposed to join the family in their journey over the border, but for various reasons he was held back, and instead planned to join the next train. When he tried to join the next train, he was arrested, and after a series of unfortunate events, he ended up in Siberia with a twenty-five year sentence.

On Acharon Shel Pesach 5712, in the midst of the farbrengen, the Rebbe was handing out matzah to various individuals and giving them *brachos*, and Reb Berel came over to the Rebbe and asked for a piece of matzah for his brother Meir. The Rebbe gave him a piece for his father and brother-in-law, and then he gave him another piece, saying, "*Dem bruder ibershiken*—send this to your brother."

After the farbrengen, he went back to the Rebbe to ask how he was supposed to send it to him, and the Rebbe told him, "Send it to him when he comes here. Not necessarily to the US; when he arrives in a country outside of Russia."

The Rebbe's words gave hope to Reb Berel and his entire family. Now they were sure that Meir would survive his exile and manage to leave some day...

A few years later, Reb Berel was in *yechidus*. He asked the Rebbe—in his father's name—for a clear promise, not simply a *bracha*, that his brother would manage to leave.

The Rebbe's answer shocked him. "Why do you have to pull my tongue? My father-in-law managed with bigger things; he will surely manage with this as well..."

With that, the Rebbe began to cry.

A short time later, they were notified that Meir had been released from prison—after serving for only eight years. Yet he was still stranded behind the Iron Curtain.

Years passed. Meir married, started a family, and built a *chassidishe* home in the Soviet Union. In 5731, Meir and his family received the much awaited exit visas. The Rebbe told him to move to North America.

On Chol Hamoed Pesach of that year, Berel traveled to Canada to meet his newly arrived brother. Full of emotion, he brought him the matzah that had been waiting for nineteen years.



LEVI FREIDIN via JEM, 12882

regular full-time job, nevertheless, his entire life revolved around the Rebbe.

Very Close Attention

The Rebbe paid close attention to every detail of Reb Berel's life and took care of him in all sorts of ways. Being that his parents weren't around in New York to physically care for him, the Rebbe especially looked out for him, and as he was often in the Rebbe's room for all sorts of tasks, he had a constant opportunity to speak to the Rebbe.

Before Shavuot 5712, the Rebbe asked him if he had bought a new suit in honor of Yom Tov. When he replied that he had not, the Rebbe took out a hundred dollars, and gave it to him to buy one, and to spend on his other needs.

The next time he was in the Rebbe's room, the Rebbe asked him if he was wearing the new suit. He said yes, so the Rebbe asked him to turn around

Rebbetzin Chana

A short time after arriving in the United States, the Rebbe told Reb Berel that Rebbetzin Chana would like to see him. From that first visit, Reb Berel became a regular at her home, usually visiting every Friday night, and it often occurred that the Rebbe would send him there on various missions.

Rebbetzin Chana paid special attention to everything that went on in his life. Once, she asked the Rebbe, "*Vos macht dein yunger bruder*—how is your younger brother doing?" referring to Berel, who had left Russia as her "son," thus being the Rebbe's "younger brother." In fact, the Rebbe also once called him "*svoy brat*," a Russian expression which means "one of us," but in literal terms, it means "a brother."

On Rosh Hashanah 5725, shortly before her passing, Rebbetzin Chana made a major effort to come hear *tekios* from the Rebbe on the first day of Yom Tov. Later that day, she told Reb Berel, that although it was very hard to go to shul, it was worth it, just to hear the Rebbe's *tekios*.

Then she told him, "*Ir veist nit vos ir farmugt*—you have no idea what you possess," referring to the Rebbe. She continued, "I am not saying this as a mother; I'm saying it because it's the truth."

Reb Berel noted that the Rebbetzin, then in her elderly years, often didn't feel in the best of health. Nevertheless, she always attempted to hide her situation from the Rebbe. She would tell Reb Berel not to breath a word about it to the Rebbe, saying that he should be told only *besuros tovos*, good news.

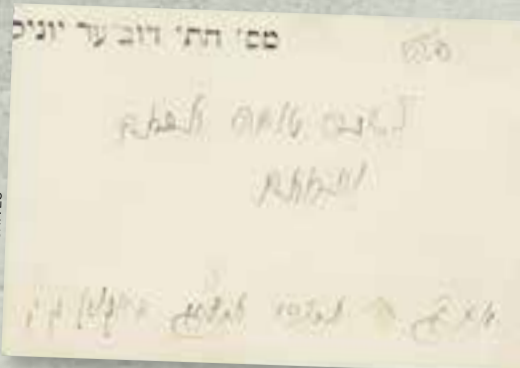
When Reb Berel became engaged to his wife, Fruma Pewsner, Rebbetzin Chana told him that she knew the *kallah*. Later he found out, that his wife had acted as the representative of Beis Rivkah in France, and had spoken before Rebbetzin Chana and the Rebbe during their stay there in 5707.¹¹

The Rebbe's mother attended their *tenaim* and their wedding. At the wedding, she asked the photographer to take a picture of her with the *kallah*, and then told him to take a picture of her alone. That picture is the famous image of Rebbetzin Chana (printed above).

After the wedding, the couple continued visiting Rebbetzin Chana often, later accompanied by their young children. The Rebbetzin would always be very welcoming to them, and on Chanukah she would give them Chanukah *gelt*.



REBBETZIN CHANA AT REB BEREL'S CHASUNA, 9 SIVAN 5714. JEM 112724



JUNIK FAMILY ARCHIVES

REBBETZIN CHANA'S HANDWRITTEN WISHES TO REB BEREL OF תוכתב ותחתם לטובה טובה תכתב ותחתם, DATED "TUESDAY, 4 TISHREI 5713, BROOKLYN, NY."

I don't mean to force you; you should be doing this on your own..."

YOSSI MELAMED via JEM 132283



REB BEREL RECEIVES LEKACH FROM THE REBBE, EREV YOM KIPPUR 5748.

and remarked, "I think it is a little bit too small..."

When Reb Berel once got involved in sensitive issues in *beis harav* that should not have been of his concern, the Rebbe lovingly reprimanded him. In his diary, Reb Berel writes what the Rebbe told him:

"...Reb Ber, come closer to the desk..."

"Why must you listen to *lashon hara*? The Gemara says that it harms the speaker, the listener and the person being discussed.

"You came to the yeshiva to learn; the [Friediker] Rebbe brought you here to learn *nigleh* and Chassidus, to grow in your *avodas hatefillah* and *ahavas Yisrael*, yet you pushed all that aside to deal with something that has nothing to do with you..."

The Rebbe then proceeded to give Reb Berel a *tikkun* as well as advice on how to distance himself from all the 'happenings.'

When he asked the Rebbe how to remain *mekushar* for the future, the Rebbe told him as follows:

"It depends on you; when you maintain yourself on these *daled amos*, you are located within a *keren orah*, and when you hold onto the *ilana d'chaya*, then you are *mekushar*.

"You need to eat normally, two or three times a day...sleep as much as you need to, and be joyful. When you will do all of these things, I will be joyful as well.

"Be joyful that you merited to be here, in the *keren orah*, and I want to see the joy on you tomorrow as well..."

On Acharon Shel Pesach 5712, the Rebbe told Reb Berel:

"My *shlichus* in this world, as I see it, is to accomplish the task *b'chesed uv'rachamim*, with kindness and compassion. I took it upon myself, and I asked that it be with *chesed* and *rachamim*.

"It is my function to ensure that you should be *b'simcha*, happy, and to make you into a Chassid. Your task is to daven, learn during the *sedarim*, and to increase in them as well. Now, go dance and channel your joy for the entire year."

Such yungerleit will bring Moshiach!

Shabbos Parshas Shemini 5712 was a historic Shabbos [people referred to it as Shabbos Hagadol]. During the farbrengen, the Rebbe said *l'chaim* many times, and the farbrengen was held in Simchas Torah style. Towards the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe asked for a Gemara to quote a specific piece from inside.

While the crowd waited around, Reb Berel ran to bring a Gemara. When he returned, the Rebbe held onto his beard, and said, "*Azelche yungerleit velen breingen Moshiach'n*—such young men are going to bring Moshiach."

The Rebbe continued to speak for some time, all the while holding onto Reb Berel's beard.

At that farbrengen, the Rebbe exhorted him to reach beyond his *hagbalos*, his limitations, to fully invest himself in being a *tomim*, and to do things *b'kabbalas ol*.

"When will we get Reb Junik to go out of his limitations? He needs to understand everything!

"...He needs to stop thinking about himself; when you think about yourself, even in *kedusha*, that is the biggest *yeshus* that could be..."

Marriage

When Reb Berel arrived in New York, he was already of marriageable

age. The Rebbe would speak to him and encourage him about *shidduchim*. In his diary, the first mention of it was early on in 5711; the Rebbe mentioned to him that his parents had written to the Rebbe, asking him to encourage him to begin looking for a *shidduch*.

Ultimately, it took another few years before he actually agreed to move forward, and then too, it was only with the Rebbe's urging.

In his diary, Reb Berel records the Rebbe's words to him on one occasion:

"Let's talk undiplomatically:

"...How do you think it is going to happen? ...Do you want the *Aibershter* to bring you a *kallah*, and you will close your eyes and say '*harei at mekudeshes?*'"

"...I feel a responsibility for the *bochurim*...I don't mean to force you; you should be doing this on your own..."

A few months later, the Rebbe nudged him once more on this topic:

"Nu, what excuse do you have today?"

When, close to a year later, Reb Berel finally became engaged, the Rebbe was intimately involved in all of the details of the meetings, the celebrations, and the wedding itself.

When the Rebbe noticed that he didn't receive an *aliyah* on the Shabbos morning after the engagement, he instructed at *mincha* that the Kohanim leave the room so that Reb Berel and his father Reb Naftali could both receive *aliyos*.

Even after his marriage, the Rebbe paid close attention to Reb Berel's life. At one point during an economically challenging time, Reb Berel experienced hardship in earning a livelihood. He already had three children and he had to leave his job. He asked the Rebbe how he should look for a new job, and the Rebbe directed him to seek advice from Reb Dovid Deitch of New Haven. During the conversation, the Rebbe asked

When Mrs. Junik gave birth to a son, they decided to name him Meir Shlomo after Rebbetzin Chana's father. Reb Berel called the Rebbetzin and asked for her permission. She said that she was very happy about the idea, but she asked him to wait before she gave them a final answer. It seems that she first wanted to consult with the Rebbe, and only then gave them the final go-ahead.

When Mrs. Junik visited with the young Meir Shlomo, Rebbetzin Chana played with him for quite a while, and showed extra care for his well-being.¹²

Passing of the Rebbe's brother

On Yud-Gimmel Iyar 5712, the Rebbe's brother, Reb Yisrael Aryeh Leib, passed away.¹³ The Rebbe went to great lengths to ensure that Rebbetzin Chana would not learn about the tragedy. The news was kept secret, and only a select few knew that the Rebbe was sitting *shiva*. To hide the fact from Rebbetzin Chana, Reb Berel painted the white soles of the Rebbe's sneakers black, so that the Rebbetzin wouldn't notice that anything was amiss when the Rebbe visited her (as he did on a daily basis).

To make sure that the Rebbe wouldn't spend too much time in her home, to lessen the possibility of her realizing, the Rebbe planned the following ploy with Reb Berel:

A few short moments after the Rebbe entered her home, Reb Berel went to a pay phone and called her. The Rebbe picked up the phone, told Rebbetzin Chana that he didn't want to disturb her phone call, said "a good day," and left. When he returned to 770, the Rebbe told Reb Berel that she hadn't noticed the sneakers.

Each day, the Rebbe did a similar trick to leave Rebbetzin Chana's home quickly, before she would be able to pick up that something was out of the ordinary.

The Rebbe also told Reb Berel to copy her mail key—which he did by hand—and to bring her mail to the Rebbe for "censorship," to remove all condolence letters, before they reached her.

*Her Histalkus*¹⁴

On Shabbos, Vov Tishrei 5725, Rebbetzin Chana was *nistalek*.

Throughout the entire day leading up to her passing, Reb Berel was intimately involved in everything; arranging doctors' visits, updating the Rebbe, and so on.

After the funeral, the Rebbe sat *shiva* (until Yom Kippur) in the Rebbetzin's home. With many people passing through the home within a short period of time, the Rebbe wanted to ensure that no items would be removed from the house, and Reb Berel took responsibility to make sure it would happen.

After the *shiva* concluded, the Rebbe gave Reb Berel an object that belonged to his mother. "Why shouldn't a Yid use it, especially somebody who merited to serve my mother. She will certainly have *nachas ruach* if you will use it," the Rebbe said, and began to cry.

him how long he hadn't been working for, and how much he usually earned. The Rebbe reached into his pocket, provided him with the money to cover the three weeks he hadn't been paid for, and told him to get more from Rabbi Hodakov if there was a need.

He did so, and later, when his finances were stabilized, he repaid what he had received.

Discreet and Faithful

In his diary,¹⁰ Reb Berel notes a fascinating anecdote that the Rebbe shared with him.

"The Rebbe Rashab had an attendant called Reb Mendel. Whenever he would leave the Rebbe's room, that Chassidim would ask him, 'What is the Rebbe doing?' but he would always reply 'I don't know.'"

The Rebbe continued:

"When someone asks you [about your work], you should answer 'I don't know,' or something similar. If you could forget altogether, that would be even better."

Reb Berel fulfilled this command to the utmost. Naturally a reserved person, Reb Berel went about his tasks quietly and faithfully, and no one knew what he was doing and how close he was with the Rebbe.

Although some tasks seemed minor and insignificant at times, he nevertheless valued them and held them precious; he insisted on doing it on his own, even at the price of losing out on other things.

Pure Dedication

Reb Berel is also remembered for his *shechita* classes. One time in the early years, the Rebbe expressed his desire for Reb Berel to teach the *shechita* classes for the *bochurim* in 770. For decades afterwards, three months a year, after a grueling day at work cutting diamonds in Manhattan, Reb Berel would stand and teach a two

Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka

Once, while visiting Rebbetzin Chana, Reb Berel met Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka. From then on, Reb Berel became a regular at the Rebbe's house as well.

During the summer of 5713, most of the *bochurim* traveled on Merkos Shlichus, and only a few people were left in yeshiva. Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka suggested that Berel come for meals to the Rebbe's house; almost every day, he would come to the Rebbe's house and eat a hot meal. One day, as he arrived in the house, he realized that the Rebbe was present as well. He overheard the Rebbe tell the Rebbetzin, "I will go into my room while you feed him; if he knows I'm here, he won't want to eat..."

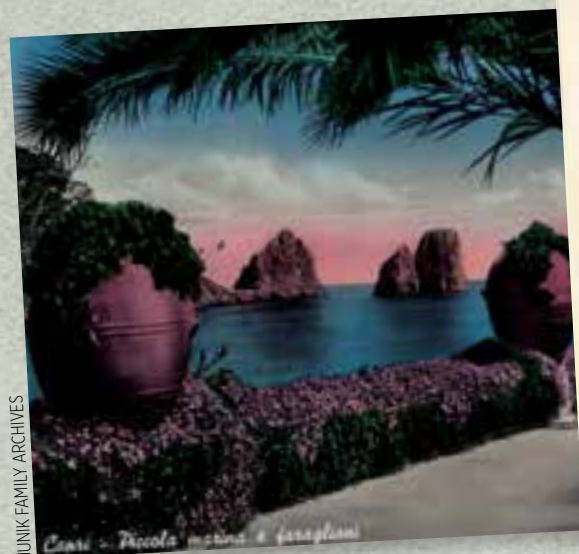
Some years after his wedding, Reb Berel presented a beautiful picture of the Rebbe at his *chupah* and brought it to the Rebbetzin as a gift for her fiftieth wedding anniversary. The Rebbetzin appreciated it very much, and placed it in the Rebbe's home library on the second floor. This—aside for two pictures of the Frierdiker Rebbe—was the only picture displayed in the Rebbe's home.

In the years after his wedding, Reb Berel would often visit the Rebbetzin on Shabbos with his children, and he would call during the week as well. Whenever he spoke with her, she displayed real interest in everything that was going on in his life; his *parnassa*, children, and so on.

On one opportunity, the Rebbetzin told Reb Berel that the Rebbe remarked "If Berel Junik says something, he can be relied on."

Once, the Rebbetzin described to him a farbrengen of her grandfather, the Rebbe Rashab. She said that the vision is so engraved in her memory, that with the proper thought, she could even tell him what the Rebbe Rashab had spoken about.

On a different occasion, she told him about the happenings on the night of the Frierdiker Rebbe's arrest. She described how the Rebbe had been accompanying her home when they noticed that strangely the entire house was



POSTCARD FROM REBBETZIN CHAYA MUSHKA TO REB BEREL, 5712.

lit up. She went inside to check out the situation, and when she saw what was going on, she surreptitiously told the Rebbe through a window that "Guests have come to visit." The Rebbe immediately ran to notify the other Chassidim.

Within a few minutes of the arrest, the Rebbetzin related, Chassidim were standing on all the nearby street corners to see which route the car would take.

Two Nights before

Reb Berel did all he can to help the Rebbe and Rebbetzin in every way possible. When the Rebbe and Rebbetzin began staying in the library each Shabbos, the Junik children would help prepare the library apartment beforehand,¹⁵ and Reb Berel was instrumental in its expansion, improving the accommodations. He was also the one responsible for building the Rebbe's sukkah at the downstairs entrance of 770, making it possible for the Rebbe to go in and out of the sukkah without exiting 770. The children would also assist with the Pesach cleaning, and many other things.

When Reb Berel's youngest son, Dovid, went to learn in yeshiva in London, the Rebbetzin was worried about the shy, *eidele* boy being so far from home, so she asked acquaintances in England, the Hager family, to look after him. The Rebbetzin also asked Reb Berel numerous times about his son's well being.

One Sunday night while in England, Dovid called the Rebbetzin's house. He usually called at a time he knew the Rebbe wasn't home, and the Rebbetzin would pick up the phone herself. This time however, someone else picked up the phone and said that the Rebbetzin wasn't available to speak at the moment.

He said, "Okay, please tell the Rebbetzin that Dovid Junik called."

The Rebbetzin then picked up and had an entire conversation with him, about his learning, *mitzvot* and everything else that was new in his life. Dovid asked for a *bracha* for continued success in everything he did, and the Rebbetzin *benched* him that he should be even more successful in his learning than he was until then, and ended off "*m'vet zich zeh'n*, we will see each other."

Two nights later, on Chof-Beis Shevat, the Rebbetzin was *nistalek*. A mere twenty four hours earlier, when she was in a very unpleasant physical state, she found it important to speak to a young boy who was far from home and to make him feel good.



THE PHOTOGRAPH OF THE REBBE AT REB BEREL'S CHASUNA WHICH HE GIFTED THE REBBETZIN, SINCE ON DISPLAY IN THE REBBE AND REBBETZIN'S HOME.



ELUL 5740, LEVI FREIDIN v/a JEM 193315

REB BEREL TEACHES SHECHITA.



ELUL 5740, LEVI FREIDIN v/a JEM 193310

hour class on *shechita*, finally arriving home after ten o'clock at night.

He would also—as per the request of Rabbi Hodakov—organize a *shiur* for working *bochurim* who couldn't handle a full day of rigorous yeshiva learning. He would call, cajole, and encourage them all to participate, and even if they were initially resistant, they would ultimately be swayed by Reb Berel's kind, non-judgmental personality.

In everything he did, he expressed simple *yir'as Shamayim*, *eidelkeit* and dedication. He preferred to travel to work by subway rather than in a private car, for it would be easier for him to utilize the time for learning; these examples go on and on.



Reb Berel passed away on 9 Iyar 5765, thus concluding a life of dedication and love for *beis chayenu*. **T**

1. See Derher Iyar 5776, "Early Steps," for Rabbi Avrohom Korf's description of the trip with Rebbetzin Chana. Rabbi Shimon Lazaroff was present on that train as well; see Derher Iyar 5777 "A Desert Blooms."
2. Dovid Raskin had arrived a week earlier, and also joined the group for the *yechidus*.
3. For a full description of their *yechidus*, see Yemei Bereishis page 56.
4. For more about this *yechidus*, see Yemei Bereishis page 147-8.
5. See Hayom Yom 30 Shevat, about keeping



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REB BEREL RECEIVES A MATZAH FROM THE REBBE, EREV PESACH 5751.

the anniversary of one's first *yechidus* as a birthday.

6. See Derher Tammuz 5775 "Yechidus" page 22.
7. For detailed descriptions of the Rebbe's *sefer*, see Derher Nissan 5772, "A Yiddish'n Seder", and Derher Nissan 5776 "The Rebbe's Seder."
8. In many videos, you can notice that the Rebbe waits for Reb Berel to take his watch back before leaving the farbrengen, so that it wouldn't be lost in the ensuing chaos.
9. Read more about Rabbi Mentlik, see Derher Teves 5775, "Mein Motele."
10. Excerpts of Reb Berel's diary were published in the Techayenu Magazine, Shevat 5777.
11. See Derher Shevat 5776, "Total Transformation" pg. 51 for a description of the Rebbe's visit to France in 5707.

12. For more about Meir Shlomo's relationship with Rebbetzin Chana, as well as the Rebbe's comments about his name, see Derher Supplement, Vov Tishrei 5775 pg. 14, and Derher Elul 5776 pg. 24.

13. For a short biography about the Rebbe's brother, and a detailed *yuman* of the events with the Rebbe following his *histalkus*, see Derher Iyar 5774, "The Rebbe's Brother."

An interesting story that occurred at the time is recorded in Rabbi Itche Meir Gurary's interview with the Derher, Iyar 5775 pg. 60.

For the Rebbe's *sicha* explaining the deeper meaning of his name, see Derher Iyar 5775, "Two Names Are One".

14. For a comprehensive *yuman* of those few days, see Derher Supplement, Vov Tishrei 5775, "Yoman Vov Tishrei."

15. This was described at length in Rabbi Menachem Junik's interview, Derher Shevat 5777 pg. 51.



The Need to Act

In every aspect of our lives, including our *avodas Hashem*, we tend to approach a given task systematically, adhering to a specific order. This organized approach is generally dictated by our *sechel*, our intellect, which demands that we only move to the next step once the current step is completed.

However, there are aspects of our *avodas Hashem*, that we need to approach head on, without intellectual reckoning and logical analysis. There are times that it is important to act, in all aspects of *avodas Hashem*, without regard for what we think is the logical and organized approach.

This is especially true during the last days of *golus*, in preparation for *geulah*, as it is explained in the teachings of our Rabbeim.

A LESSON FROM THE MELTING POT

In the introduction to Kuntres Umaayon there is a fascinating letter from the Rebbe Rashab. He writes to a rav who was very active in fighting the *haskalah* movement, but was feeling discouraged, claiming that “we don’t have the strength to overcome such a powerful adversary.”

The Rebbe Rashab writes: We do indeed have the strength to overcome, and the strength comes from the *etzem hanefesh*, the power of *mesiras nefesh*. Nowadays we need to approach every part of our *avodas Hashem* with *mesiras nefesh* using *kochos* that transcend *sechel*. We can’t rely on our *sechel* to determine which tasks we are likely to succeed in and which we are not. In the last days of *golus* the world in its entirety is in a state of confusion, so we really don’t have any idea what is likely to succeed and what is likely to fail.

In these last days of *golus*, we are dealing with the final *birurim*. The final *birurim* can be compared to food in a pot

לזכות
הת' אברהם אשר הכהן שיחי'
לרגל הגיעו לעול מצוות
ח"י מנחם אב ה'תשע"ז
נדפס ע"י הוריו
הרה"ת ר' שמואל הכהן
וזוגתו מרת בת-שבע שיחי'
קוגן

When we experience ahavas Hashem it is real and true, and it is the dream of Golus that makes our material drives possible at the same time

that is almost finished cooking. While the pot is boiling, all of the ingredients in it are being mixed around. There is no way to know what is cooked and what is still raw, or what came from the bottom and what came from the top. Likewise, the world nowadays is completely disorganized, and there is no order to which *birurim* we should deal with. We may imagine that a given task is very difficult to complete, when in truth it will be very easy.

We must therefore approach whichever *birurim* come our way with total devotion and *mesiras nefesh*. When a task comes our way we need to act immediately and do our part regardless of whether or not we think we will succeed.¹

OVERFLOWING WITH CHASSIDUS

The Rebbe quotes this letter in relation to our approach to learning Chassidus:

There are areas in Yiddishkeit where it is necessary to adhere to a specific measurement, and going beyond that measure is a negative thing. With regard to learning Chassidus, however, we need to learn as much Chassidus as possible, transcending any such calculations or limitations.

Although it says in Kuntres Ha'Avodah that one must be careful not to take on a *hidur mitzvah* that is beyond his reach, the Rebbe Rashab taught us that in these last days of *golus* we don't know the order of which *birurim* we are to deal with. Rather the approach must be "*chatof v'achol chatof v'ishte*"—grab and eat, grab and drink."² This means that we need to

grab all the *birurim* that come our way without any *cheshbonos*.

There is a *mashal* of a large barrel of water. How is one to know if the barrel is truly filled to the top? You need to add water until the barrel overflows, for until then you do not really know that it is full.

Similarly, we must add in our study of Chassidus, not a limited amount according to a careful *cheshbon*, but rather above and beyond all *cheshbonos*.³

DREAMING IN GOLUS

This theme is found throughout the Rebbe's *sichos*. Here the Rebbe explains it in terms of a dream:

Golus Mitzrayim was not just the first *golus*, it was also the source for every other *golus*. It is therefore a paradigm through which we can understand the idea of *golus* in general.

Among the events leading up to *golus Mitzrayim*, the Torah tells us about many dreams; the dreams of Yosef, the dreams of the winemaker and the baker in prison, and finally the dreams of Pharaoh.

Being that these dreams brought about *golus Mitzrayim*, it stands to reason that there is an inherent connection between the two.

What is the connection between the times of *golus* and a dream?

In a dream there can be a combination of opposites, for example, an elephant can fit through the eye of a needle. This is impossible to imagine while we are awake, however, our dream state makes the combination possible.⁴

Similarly, in our *avodah* during the time of *golus* we often experience opposites. A Yid may have *ahavas Hashem*, and nevertheless he can have physical and material drives. On the one hand he may be drawn towards *Elokus*, and on the other hand he may be drawn toward his own desires. These are in truth mutually exclusive, but the dream-like state of *golus* makes it possible for both to exist at the same time.

In Chassidus it is explained that this understanding can help a Yid in his *avodas Hashem*. We need not despair that we are "living a lie," *chas v'shalom*; rather, we must understand that when we experience *ahavas Hashem* it is real and true, and it is the dream of *golus* that makes our material drives seem possible at the same time.

Furthermore we can take a lesson with regard to the approach we need to take in our *avodah*:

Some people may think that the only way to serve Hashem is in an orderly fashion, with a steady progression from easier tasks to more difficult tasks. This approach would hold merit in a perfect world, where everything was in order. However, during *golus*, being that the world is in a dreamlike state, we do not need to reckon with the conventional approach to *avodas Hashem*. We need to approach whatever task comes our way without questioning if we are "up to it" or not.⁵

GRAB AND EAT, GRAB AND DRINK

The Rebbe explains the Mishna in Eiruvim⁶ with regard to learning Torah:

When it comes to learning Torah it is not necessary to make calculations or preparations before one begins to learn. We must “grab” what we can and learn as much as possible.

“Shmuel said to Rebbi Yehudah, grab and eat, grab and drink, for the world that we are going from is like a wedding feast.”

“The world that we are **going from**” refers to the level of *mehalech*, which means progressing in a radical way—making a jump in *avodas Hashem* from one level to another level far removed from the first.

Since we are talking about making a jump from one level to a far removed one, calculated preparations are unnecessary. What is important is that you “grab and eat” whatever you are able to.⁷

CHASSIDUS FOR THE UNINITIATED

It is interesting to note, that when a person feels that he can accomplish a task, he will apply himself to it diligently. Even if he knows that it will be very hard, so long as he thinks he can accomplish it, he will work day and night and toil endlessly because he knows at the end he will prevail.

When it comes to a task that a person doesn’t think is physically possible, he will not even begin. His thought is, why even try if I am bound to fail?

For example, if you tell someone to teach *alef-beis* to a Jew who does not have any Jewish education, he will gladly comply, for this is practically attainable. Even if you tell him to teach *nigleh*, he will comply for it is very understandable even to a novice—it

“makes sense.” But if you tell him that he needs to teach Chassidus even to the uninitiated, he will claim that it is impossible, it is just too hard to understand.

During these last days of *golus* such calculations have no place. We need to teach Chassidus to everyone, even the uninitiated.

We need to realize that as Chassidim we are to follow the teachings of our Rabbeim and ignore *cheshbonos* that hold us back from doing our *avodah*. The Rebbe spoke about how the Friediker Rebbe fought the Communist regime to spread Torah and mitzvos, regardless of the fact that it did not seem physically possible to prevail. And he demanded the same from each of his Chassidim.⁸

REACHING ANOTHER JEW

There is a *maamar Chazal* that says, “Adorn yourself first before adorning others.”⁹ Seemingly this means that one should not attempt to affect positive change in another Yid before first making sure that his own *avodah* is complete. How then is a Chossid supposed to approach shlichus, when he knows that he is lacking in many areas of his *avodas Hashem*?

The Rebbe’s answer is threefold:

Firstly, we have the abovementioned letter from the Rebbe Rashab, that in the last days of *golus* one must accomplish whatever task comes his way without making *cheshbonos*.

Second, if the Rabbeim gave you this mission then it cannot wait for you to complete your own *avodah*, rather you must strive to fulfill it immediately.

Third, and most important, is to realize that as a shliach, one has the *kochos* of the *meshaleiach*. The personal state of the shliach is therefore not as important as one might think. By following the shlichus he becomes “*kemoso*” like the *meshaleiach* himself.¹⁰

This is not limited to shluchim. Every single Yid who has the opportunity to have a positive influence on another Yid must rise to the occasion. Some people may claim that they are not cut out to be leaders, that they need to perfect themselves before helping others. However our Rabbeim have told us that in these last days of *Golus* we need to grab every opportunity that comes our way.

This means that if *hashgacha pratis* brought you to a situation where you can be *mashpia* on another Yid to bring him closer to Torah and mitzvos, you must grab the opportunity without any calculations.¹¹

In the *zechus* of our *avodah* now in these last days of *golus*, despite the redoubled darkness, may we be *zoche* to make the ultimate jump to the revelation of Moshiach, speedily in our days, now! ❶

1. Kuntres Umaayon, p. 22.

2. Eiruvim, 54a.

3. Toras Menachem vol. 18, p.166.

4. See Igros Kodesh vol. 3 p. 232.

5. Likkutei Sichos vol. 1, pp. 85-86.

6. Eiruvim, 54a.

7. Toras Menachem vol. 3, p. 130.

8. Sichos Kodesh 5731 vol. 2, p. 282.

9. Bava Metzia, 107b.

10. Sefer Hasichos 5748, vol. 1, p. 98.

11. Likkutei Sichos vol. 30, p. 168.



דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

לזכות
הרה"ח ר' לוי יצחק וזוגתו מרת
שפרינצא פערל
וילדיהם
מושקא, חנה, מנחם מענדל,
רבקה חי' הינדא שיחיו
שמוטקין

A Much Needed Transition

AS TOLD BY MENDY COHEN (RECHOVOT, ISRAEL)

As a computer engineer I worked at a certain IT business in town for several years and had not received any promotions. When a new manager was hired I requested a promotion and a raise. After several months of delaying a clear response, he notified me that he could not offer me a promotion and if I was really adamant I would need to find a job at a different company.

Disappointed, I started to search for work elsewhere with no success.

In addition to my work at the company, I teach computers at the yeshiva in Kfar Sitrin. Since I am very

satisfied with my teaching and developed a special connection with the students, I felt that it would not be appropriate for any new job to interfere with my teaching. This usually torpedoed the new job opportunities I was pursuing.

Two years passed and I was increasingly dissatisfied with my career.

This year, in honor of my son Levi Yitzchok's bar mitzvah, I travelled with him to the Rebbe for Yud Shevat. We arrived on Thursday, 6 Shevat, and we immediately went to the Ohel. As we exited the Ohel, Levi asked me if I



had requested a *bracha* for a new job. I had never written to the Rebbe about this and I told Levi that I was focused on so many other issues while at the Ohel that my job search had not crossed my mind.

“But you want a new job,” he insisted. “You must ask the Rebbe for a *bracha*.” I assured him that on Yud Shevat I will mention this at the Ohel.

As we waited in line to enter the Ohel on Yud Shevat, Levi reminded me several times to daven for a new job. During the short time we were in the Ohel, after a few *perakim* of Tehillim, I said, “Rebbe, I am in need of a new challenge at work. I am in the same position for nine years and I must move on.”

At 4 o'clock the next morning I was woken to the sound of my phone buzzing. I saw a Whatsapp message from my friend Yonatan Webberman. “Why is your phone off at this hour?” “I am not in Israel. I am by the Rebbe” I immediately replied. “Wake up and call me now!”

The CEO of a computer company was in Yonatan's office in search of a qualified computer engineer available for hire immediately. After a wonderful 20 minute conversation he asked me to join his company. I explained that I was currently in the US and would be returning to Israel in two weeks.

We concluded that upon my return to Israel we will discuss the matter further.

After a very special two weeks, we returned home and I reached out to the CEO of the new company. We soon met and he offered me a lucrative position in his company effective immediately. I happily accepted the position and assured him that I would make the transition to begin working as soon as possible.

When I submitted my resignation to my previous employers, they were in shock. It seems like they hadn't believed I would actually find another job. Over the years I had served as a “*shliach*” in the company, lighting menorah every Chanukah, building a sukkah and bring the *daled minim*, and I distributed matzah before Pesach. The CEO was adamant that I stay, and presented me a competing offer against the new company.

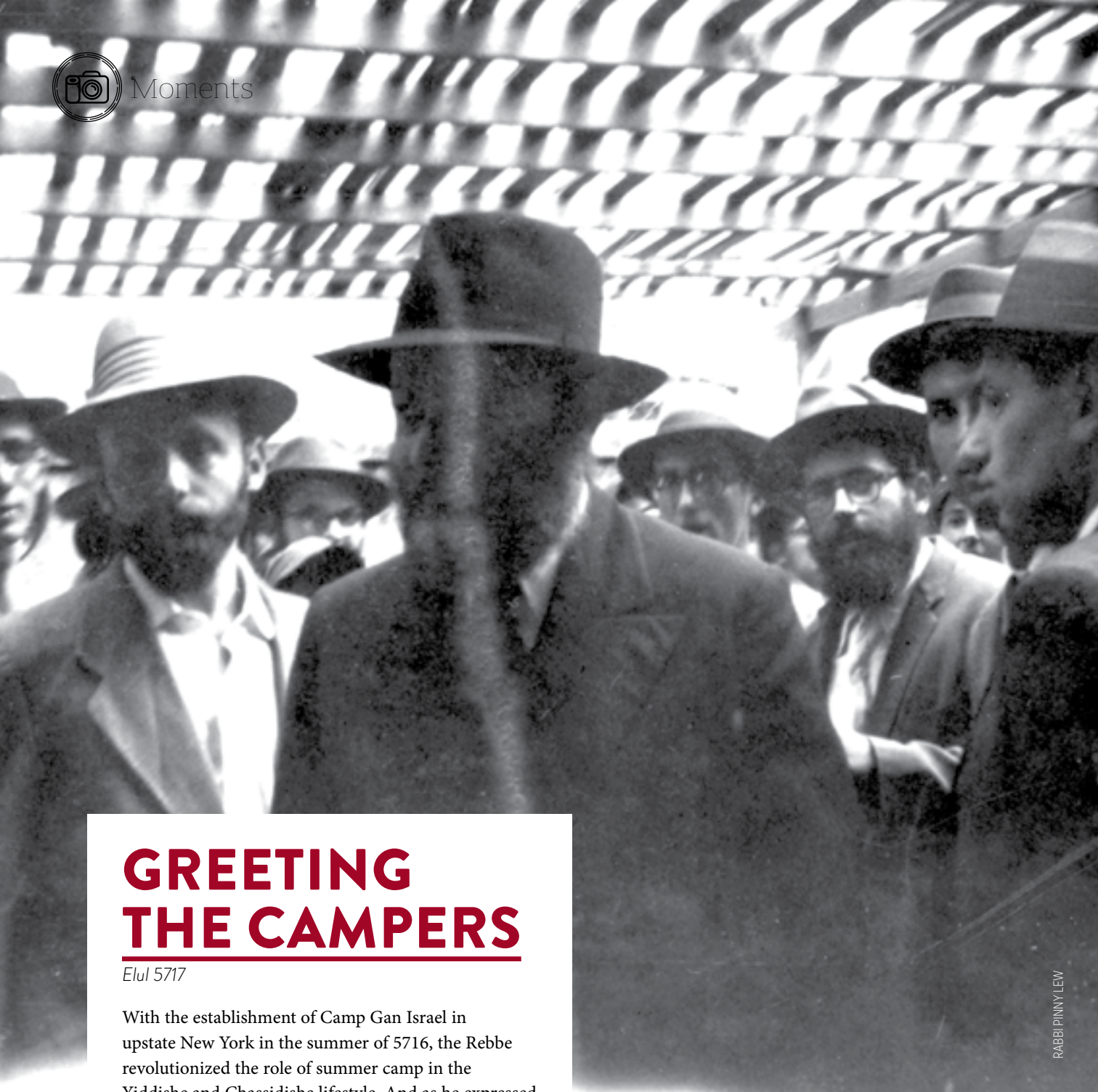
Since the new position came as a result of the Rebbe's *bracha* I was confident in the transfer as it would benefit my continued growth and development in the field as well. I shared my story with the CEO and he was initially incredulous, but eventually understood my position. He assured me that in the future I was always welcome to return to the company and I assured him that in the meantime I will continue all of the *mitzvot peulos* I had been doing in the company over the past nine years.

Last year our community arranged a trip to the Rebbe. We were a group of twelve and it was an amazing trip. Since Chanukah we have been discussing a trip for this year, but for a long time we had no clarity if the trip would actually happen.

After this story, I started to pressure my fellow *anash* that a trip must happen this year. I wanted to travel to the Rebbe to say thank you. *Boruch Hashem*, as a result of this strong motivation, we succeeded in arranging the trip with double the amount of participants. ①

YOUR STORY

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



GREETING THE CAMPERS

Elul 5717

With the establishment of Camp Gan Israel in upstate New York in the summer of 5716, the Rebbe revolutionized the role of summer camp in the Yiddishe and Chassidishe lifestyle. And as he expressed many a time, this new venture was most cherished.

The Rebbe's *sichos* regarding camp and his three visits to the campgrounds are well known and have been written about in the past.¹ Something a little less known is the welcome rally the Rebbe held for the campers as they arrived back home, following the summer season of 5717.

1. "In the Rebbe's Reshus" Derher issue 34, Av 5775.

1. As the bus with the campers and staff arrived to 770, the Rebbe came outside to greet them.

2. As all the children assembled in the *shalash*², the Rebbe entered with his *siddur* and *gartel* in hand. While children's rallies were held regularly over the coming years, in 5717 this was still considered a quite rare occurrence.



JEM 103274

2. The area between 770 and 784 Eastern Parkway was once a driveway that led into a courtyard. This area was known as the *shalash*, and was used as a makeshift hall where *tefilos* and *farbrengens* with larger crowds were held. Eventually the area was properly constructed, and is now part of the large shul of 770.

3. Usually the Rebbe would daven *mincha* and *maariv* in the small *zal* near the Rebbe's room, but in honor of this occasion the Rebbe davened in the *shalash*, where a special *bima* was erected.



JEM 104847



4. Following *mincha*, one of the camp staff addressed the children. The campers and staff then began a *freileche niggun*, as the Rebbe clapped along and encouraged the singing.



5. Amidst the joyous singing, all the campers filed by as the Rebbe looked on, greeting each child.



6. These post-camp rallies became an annual tradition, and beginning in 5737 the Rebbe also said a *sicha* to the returning campers.



Derher**Letters**

A forum for readers to send their feedback, add to, or ask any questions about articles. Submit your letter to feedback@derher.org.

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



From Tefilin to Kashrus

Dear Editors,

1) In the article about Yud-Aleph Nissan 5737 [“75 Years” Derher 55 (132) Nissan 5777], it describes the artist Mr. Dashevsky presenting his drawing to the Rebbe.

During those years, my great-grandfather Reb Boruch Bendet Schmerling was once in *yechidus* by the Rebbe. During the *yechidus*, the Rebbe told him that there is an artist, Vladimir Dashevsky, who recently arrived from Russia, and he is struggling with *parnassa*. The Rebbe wrote down Mr. Dashevsky’s address on a piece of paper, and asked that during his stay in America, my great-grandfather should go to this artist and see what drawings he has, and buy from him. He listened, and he bought a drawing of the Rebbe from him.

The Rebbe also sent other Chassidim to buy from him.

2) In the article about *mitvza tefillin* [“Reconnecting” Derher 56 (133) Iyar 5777], there is a story the Rebbe related about how putting on tefillin once affected someone to refrain from eating non-kosher food for dinner.

I heard from Rabbi Chaim Walkin (*mashgiach* in Yeshivas Ateres Yisroel in Eretz Yisroel), that his wife’s grandfather, Rabbi Dovid Tzvi Silberstein (a *rav* in Tel Aviv at the time), was once on a plane traveling from Eretz Yisroel to America (for a wedding). Sitting next to him on the plane was a non-religious man, who ate the non-kosher meal. In middle of the flight, a Lubavitcher came over and asked him to put

on tefillin, and he initially refused, but with enough nudging he finally agreed. Later on, when the flight attendants were distributing dinner, they gave him the regular non-kosher meal, as he had ordered. And he saw that the man returned it and asked for a kosher meal.

He was so amazed by this, that when he was in New York he told this story over to the Rebbe in *yechidus*, and that Shabbos the Rebbe said the story.

Menachem Schmerling

Tomchei Temimim-Morristown

”



Boston Students; the Rebbe on College

Dear Editors,

1) I recently saw the letter from Rabbi Yisroel Deren in the Deher magazine [“Letters”, Issue 57 (134) Sivan 5777] regarding a group of children that he brought to the Rebbe in Shevat 5741, and I would like to add a few points for historical accuracy:

The idea of using out the Eastern Airlines promotion for travelling to the Rebbe originated with Mr. Bernie Deutsch, a prominent businessman and activist who passed a few weeks ago. He told me about the Eastern Airlines offer for people travelling from Boston to NYC and from NYC to Washington and that he wanted the coupons. He suggested that I arrange for people to travel, and he would pay for the tickets. I then called Rabbi Deren for the yeshiva students from the Boston area and that’s how the trip came about.

I told the story at Bernie’s funeral and made a copy of the translation of the *sicha* (mentioned in Rabbi Deren’s letter) from Sichos In English, which I gave the family during *shiva*.

2) In the same magazine there was also a very insightful article about the Rebbe’s strong stance and reasoning on not going to college [“How to Make a Living”]. I would like to share some personal encounters from my childhood in this regard:

I grew up in Boston where my father was the *menahel* of the Lubavitch yeshiva day school. Many non-Lubavitcher parents sent their children to the school as well, though most of the *melamdim* were Chassidim. It was in those years when the Rebbe came out very strongly about college, and I recall how once when one of the *melamdim* came back from New York on a *yoma d’pagra* after attending the Rebbe’s farbrengen, he shared with us high school boys how the Rebbe had spoken a whole farbrengen about not going to college. I remember how one time, one of the parents came running to my father threatening that he would take out his kids from the school if these were the things they were being taught.

At one farbrengen which I merited to attend, the Rebbe spoke passionately on the subject, and he concluded by asking that everybody at the farbrengen should shout three times “no college!”

In those years, the *seder* was that the twelfth grade class which was graduating from high school would merit to go into the Rebbe’s room for a group *yechidus*. When my class graduated in 1961, the Rebbe spoke to us about plans for the following year, and strongly encouraged that everyone should go to a yeshiva. The Rebbe pleaded with the students that if they are considering going to college, they should at least postpone these plans for two years and attend yeshiva in the meanwhile.

Rabbi Kasriel Kastel
Brooklyn, New York