

A Chassidisher *Derher*

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The Building of an Empire

CHABAD'S
REVOLUTION
IN MOROCCO

Uniting. Uplifting. Transcending.

SIMCHAS TORAH
WITH THE REBBE

"חדש"
השביעי
שהוא
המושב
והמשביע
ברוב טוב
לכל ישראל
על כל השנה



TISHREI 5778
ISSUE 61 (138)



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About the Cover:

The Rebbe faces the crowd during "Hoshanos" on the second day of Chol Hamoed Sukkos, 18 Tishrei 5747.

Quoted is a *pisgam* in the name of the Baal Shem Tov "The seventh month (Tishrei) is itself sated, and satiates all Israel - with an abundance of good for the duration of the (coming) year." (Hayom Yom, 25 Elul)

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Derher**Editorial**

Thirty years ago; the festive month of Tishrei 5748.

Similar to this year, Rosh Hashanah, the first days of Sukkos, and Shemini Atzeres-Simchas Torah all occurred on Thursday-Friday, leading directly into Shabbos.

In those years, the Rebbe no longer held the practice of having *kiddush* recited at an Erev Shabbos farbrengen. So as the day of Simchas Torah drew to a close and Shabbos Bereishis approached, the Rebbe asked to announce that everyone at the farbrengen should not waste time and have a *l'chaim* before *shkia*. Soon it would be Shabbos and they'd be prohibited from drinking before *kiddush*.

Perhaps a bit carelessly, the *gabai* announced that *shkia* was approaching and people would no longer be able to say *l'chaim*.

But the Rebbe was not pleased by his words.

"It sounded from the announcement that we won't be able to say *l'chaim* after *shkia*," the Rebbe responded. "This is not accurate at all."

In a lengthy *sicha*, the Rebbe explained that they won't be able to drink wine with the *l'chaim*. But they sure will be able to say "*l'chaim*" and wish *brachos* to one another.

In fact, Hashem Himself is constantly saying "*l'chaim*," breathing life into all of the worlds and creating all beings with the words He speaks (as the Alter Rebbe explains in *Shaar Hayichud Vехаemuna*). We too must follow in the ways of Hashem and constantly say "*l'chaim*," blessing one another with life, and sustaining them materially with acts of *tzedakah*.

So, the Rebbe concluded, although we may not actually be drinking the physical wine, the *bracha* of "*l'chaim v'livracha*" is certainly pertinent.



Approaching the month of Tishrei thirty years later, the Rebbe's message becomes ever clearer:

In years past, the Rebbe showered us with a month full of extraordinary *giluyim*. Tishrei is the spiritual nerve center, and in the Rebbe's presence is where this is all most apparent—farbrengens, *tekios*, *lekach*, *hakafos*, and overall *brachos* for the new year.

And today as well: though we may not be able to drink the physical "*l'chaim*" with the Rebbe, the Rebbe continues to wish us "*l'chaim v'livracha*."

Because the Rebbe's "*l'chaim*" is never-ending.

May we speedily be *zocheh* to the *geulah*, and we will celebrate this Tishrei with the Rebbe in the physical sense as well, and together we will raise the cup—כוס ישועות אשא—and say,

"לחיים ולברכה!"

בברכת כתיבה וחתימה טובה לשנה טובה ומתוקה,

The Editors

תחלת אלול, ה'תשע"ז



TISHREI: HEAD START FOR THE WHOLE YEAR

*As the “head” of the year,
the nature of the month of
Tishrei is all-encompassing,
with a lasting joy on every
day of the year.*

Throughout the month of Tishrei, the theme “head” comes up repeatedly.

Firstly, the name ראש השנה means “Head of the Year.” Additionally, the word תשרי is an anagram of רשית—beginning. At the end of the month, after all the main Yomim Tovim are over, the first Shabbos afterwards (and invariably Shabbos Mevorchim Cheshvan) is called שבֵּת בְּרֵאשִׁית.

During this month, there is little time for “regular” mitzvos. On Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and the days in between them, we are occupied with davening and doing *teshuva*. Once that’s over—in the four short weekdays remaining before Sukkos —“this one is busy with his sukkah, another with his lulav,” as the Midrash says.

Even in the little spare time left, when doing mundane work, it’s not

the same as doing similar work during the rest of the year. Whether one’s work is in the style of Yissachar—sitting and learning—or in the style of Zevulun—in doing good deeds outside of learning—the work is different:

Usually, honest employment takes focus and energy. Obviously, a Yid must be careful not to allow his work to take over his entire being; nevertheless, under regular circumstances work takes effort. This category of *avodah* begins in Cheshvan, or even from after Shabbos Bereishis. However, during Tishrei everything is permeated with the effect of the *avodah* of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Aseres Yemei Teshuva, “the four days in between,” Sukkos, etc. Once it’s all over we begin the process of “unpacking” everything



לזכר נשמת
שיינא גאלדא ע"ה
בת יבלחט"א ר' מיכאל הלוי גוטלייזער
נדפס ע"י זקיניה
הרה"ת ר' יצחק מאיר וזוגתו מרת לאה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
שפאלטר



“acquired” in Tishrei. Only after all of this can one start dealing with the “regular, mundane” work of the year.

This notion was most apparent when the *Beis Hamikdash* stood:

In those days, Yidden would come from across the land to Yerushalayim for the *shalosh regalim*. When they came for Sukkos, Yidden stayed an extra day after the main Yom Tov was over to celebrate Shemini Atzeres, beginning their return journeys the next day. It would then take up to two weeks for everyone to get home, including those at the very end of Eretz Yisroel. So the return to regular “everyday” life only began during the month of Cheshvan.

Today as well, we can sense this difference between the *avodah* of Tishrei and that of the rest of the year.

Although we say on Yom Tov that “מפני חטאינו גלינו מארצינו”—Because of our sins we were exiled from our land,” nevertheless only the physical aspects of life were affected by *golus*. Spiritually, everything remains the same. This is why even today, when doing work in the month of Tishrei, it feels different from the rest of the year.

Similarly, according to *minhag Chabad*, we do not say *tachanun* even after Sukkos. As the Magen Avraham writes, this is “due to all the Yomim Tovim in [Tishrei].” Even the weekdays are special.

As mentioned, being that תשרי is made up of the same letters as רשית, it is in that sense the “head” of the entire year.

Let us hope, with Hashem’s help, that this should affect the rest of the

year: Even the mundane weekdays should be permeated with the רשית—the inspiration of Tishrei and all its Yomim Tovim. When a Yid feels this holiness, his regular work becomes less stressful and more successful, with a clear blessing from Hashem. The Shabbosim and Yomim Tovim will be enhanced by this extra meaning.

This *avodah* of ours brings a reciprocating attitude from Hashem, that His blessing will manifest in the festive spirit of Tishrei, in a joyous “Yom Tov’dike” manner.

With this joy, which “breaks all barriers,” all the *brachos* will be drawn down without any limitations. **1**

(Based on *sichas Motzoei Shabbos Bereishis* 5739)



לעבן מיט'ן רבין



לע"נ
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' אברהם דוב
בן הרב יהושע
נלב"ע כ"ד טבת ה'תשע"ג
ולע"נ
זוגתו מרת ליבא בת ר' ברוך
נלב"ע כ"א טבת ה'תשס"ד
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' אליהו וזוגתו מרת דליה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
העכט
לאורך ימים ושנים טובות ובריאות
ולהצלחה רבה ומופלגה בעבודת
השליחות
בגשמיות וברוחניות



RABBI PINNY LEW

Heaven On Earth

ROSH HASHANAH—YOM KIPPUR 5718



In honor of Tishrei—*chodesh hashvi'i*, we present the following account of Aseres Yemei Teshuvah 5718, sixty years ago, in the Rebbe's presence.

These stories were recorded by Reb Yitzchok (Itch'ke) Gansburg a"h, a *yungerman* at the time, who made the long trip from Eretz Yisroel to spend his first Tishrei with the Rebbe. The following are excerpts from letters he wrote during his stay and sent to his family back home.



EREV ROSH HASHANAH, 5718

The Rebbe's *shacharis minyan*, starting at precisely nine o'clock, went very swiftly. After davening, a bench was set up for a *minyan* of elder Chassidim, before whom the Rebbe recited *hataras nedarim*. Upon concluding, the Rebbe thanked the elder Chassidim, and wished them "a *gut yohr, shanah tova u'mesukah*." The Rebbe then went to his room, reappearing at his door an hour later to receive *panim*.

After receiving the *pan kloli* from the elder Chassidim, the Rebbe responded with a short *bracha* and then left 770 for the Ohel.

By the time the Rebbe arrived at the Ohel, I had already left. However, I heard a detailed description of the Rebbe's conduct from others who were present:

The Rebbe knocks on the door (as if requesting permission to enter), waits a moment, and proceeds to enter, standing facing the *matzeiva*. The Rebbe recites Maane Lashon, stopping where it instructs to light a candle.

The Rebbe then proceeds with the holy *avodah* of reading *panim*, an activity that may last hours on end. Although the Rebbe's lips move intermittently, his voice isn't heard. This time the Rebbe stood for five hours.

ROSH HASHANAH NIGHT 5718

All the Rosh Hashanah *tefillos* took place in the *shalash*.¹ I managed to secure a spot from where I had a good view of the Rebbe during *tefillos*. A crowd of hundreds was gathered.

At precisely eight o'clock, the Rebbe entered carrying a Siddur Torah Ohr with a *maamar* between the pages, as well as a Tehillim Yahel-Ohr, and ascended the *bima*; immediately sitting down to recite Tehillim. Several minutes later, the Rebbe closed the Tehillim and opened the *siddur*. This was the *chazzan's* cue to begin *Shir Hamaalos*.

A split-second after davening's conclusion, a path cleared through which the Rebbe walked, while in a hushed tone wishing all "Gut Yom Tov, *lshana tova...*" The Rebbe remained in his room for a long while.

TEKIOS

I managed to obtain the spot that I had the night before [near where the Rebbe davens] for *shacharis* as well. Others procured places near the *bima* [where the Rebbe is called to *maftir* and blows *tekios*], some standing there for hours beforehand. I decided to stay where I was, as the saying goes, one can't "dance at both weddings..."

However, following *shacharis* I changed my mind and I approached the *bima* in an attempt to secure a prime spot, which, with great efforts, I managed to do.

It was announced several times in the Rebbe's name that the assembled should not be standing

atop chairs, but one can imagine how many heard this announcement... In fact, the Rebbe paused before *maftir*, proclaiming that everyone should descend from the benches, as this puts one's fulfilling the mitzvah of shofar into question. Obviously, this announcement had an effect.

I, for one, procured a prime vantage point from where I could see the Rebbe's holy face.

When the Rebbe entered for *shacharis* earlier in the day, he was accompanied by Rabbi Leibel Groner, who was carrying two parcels of *panim*; one the size of my tallis bag, and the other slightly smaller. Both had wrapping paper on the outside, and were tied with cords. When the Rebbe was called up for *maftir*, he brought these bundles along.

Upon reaching *maftir*, the Rebbe removed a kerchief from his pocket containing three *shofaros*, each individually wrapped in its own kerchief, and placed them on the *bima*. Although the Rebbe cried during the *haftarah*, it didn't at all compare to what took place during *tekios*.

Following the *haftarah*, the Rebbe spread his tallis over the packages, and after a short pause, intense wails could be heard emanating from under the Rebbe's tallis. Some were able to make out tunes of *niggunim*. After standing somewhat more upright, the Rebbe again unfurled the tallis over the *panim*. Uncovering his holy face, the Rebbe recited the *brachos*, and proceeded to blow a black-colored shofar that had almost no curves.

Following *tekios*, the Rebbe returned to his place, and *musaf* began.

Following the haftarah, the Rebbe spread his tallis over the packages, and after a short pause, intense wails could be heard emanating from under the tallis. Some were able to make out tones of niggunim.

TASHLICH

After *mincha*, the Chassidim left for *tashlich*. Before leaving, all lined up in an orderly fashion. I estimate that around four hundred individuals stood in pairs, with another five hundred who weren't assembled in such order. Add to that



CIRCA 5722-5723. G. SCHUSTERMAN / VIA JEM 303111

the many children who walked at the front. All patiently awaited the Rebbe's arrival. Rabbi Hodakov appeared and relayed to Reb Dovid Raskin (organizer of the procession) in the Rebbe's name, that upon its return to 770 as well, the parade should proceed in an orderly fashion, with spaces between each line.

Many passersby, including Jewish men and women from the surrounding neighborhoods, gathered to watch the spectacle. The Rebbe appeared, wearing a coat, accompanied by Rabbi Hodakov. Upon his arrival, the Rebbe motioned to intensify the singing, while approaching the front of the procession.

After marching in song for close to half an hour, we reached a brook located within a big park.² Many people had already been waiting there.

After *tashlich*, all proceeded to march back in song and dance. Despite all the admonitions, never-

ending pushing and shoving ensued, this due to the fact that everyone, myself included, desired to see the Rebbe the entire time.

Upon the crowd's arrival at 770, the Rebbe went straight to his room, but not before encouraging the singing and dancing. Once in the room, the Rebbe opened the window shades, observing the dancing for a lengthy period of time.

Maariv commenced at exactly eight o'clock, and the next morning's *shacharis* at precisely ten o'clock. The Rebbe and Rashag recited *kaddish* during *maariv*, rumor has it that it's for the *yahrtzeit* of Rebbetzin Sheina, the Frierdiker Rebbe's daughter.

ROSH HASHANAH FARBRENGEN

On the second day of Rosh Hashanah at forty-three, I was already waiting in my farbrengens-place. The Rebbe arrived at around six. After washing his hands near the table, the Rebbe recited



Hamotzi. The Rebbe then said *Hagafen* followed by responding to *l'chaim* from the crowd, after which he drank a bit of water, and *bentched*. (Being that it was Erev Shabbos, the *seuda* was rushed, in order to finish before *shkiah*.)

Reb Zalman Duchman then announced that the Rebbe would distribute *kos shel bracha*, and all should approach from the right side, without pushing. After the assembled returned to their places and sang a *niggun*, the Rebbe proceeded with the *maamar* "תקעו בחודש שופר". During the final portion of the *maamar*, tears could be seen in his holy eyes.

The Rebbe then spoke a *sicha* on the specialty of this year's *kvi'us*, with Shabbos immediately following Rosh Hashanah. The Rebbe concluded with wishes for a *shanah tovah*.

Kabbolas Shabbos took place immediately following the *farbrengen*, led by Reb Itche Churgin.

Once in the room, the Rebbe opened the window shades, observing the dancing for a lengthy period of time.

FARBRENGEN – SHABBOS SHUVA, 3 TISHREI

Upon the Rebbe's exit from shul following *musaf*, it was made known that there would be a *farbrengen*. Tables were immediately set with tablecloths, and I was glad I had a good spot.

At exactly one o'clock the Rebbe entered. As the assembled said *l'chaim*, the Rebbe answered "*l'chaim v'livracha*. With the pushing more intense than usual, I hung "between heaven and earth." (As an aside, I witnessed how Reb Pinye Althoiz listened to *tekios* while grabbing onto the ceiling, literally hanging between worlds...) The Rebbe motioned

that I should say *l'chaim*, which I did. My heart thumps as I recall this, my first time...

After the assembled sang the *niggun hachanah*, the Rebbe recited the *maamar* "דרשו'ה' בהמצאו." The Rebbe's holy eyes again filled with tears toward the *maamar's* end, without actually crying.

Between *sichos*, Reb Pinye Althoiz related a story to the Rebbe (about the fact that ש"ת stands for שבת as well as שמחת תורה), to which the Rebbe smiled broadly. It's a real pleasure to see the Rebbe smile.

Upon the Rebbe's exit at three o'clock, Reb Yoel Kahan immediately sat down at the table to begin a *chazara*.

YECHIDUS

I merited to enter the Rebbe's holy chamber today, Wednesday, 7 Tishrei 5718, at 8:50 p.m.

The Rebbe began receiving visitors for *yechidus* at eight p.m. Many people were gathered, quietly awaiting their turn in their Shabbos attire and *gartlach*. Amongst those gathered I observed a certain couple from Eretz Yisroel with their sick child. They are returning to their home in Tel Aviv tomorrow, and they came to receive a *bracha*. The Rebbe handed the boy a golden dollar coin as a gift, telling him that it will surely be allowed into Eretz Yisroel.

I was number fifteen in the queue. Reb Peretz Mochkin was the first to enter, followed by Reb Chaim Tashkenter from Paris, and others.

Upon entering *yechidus*, I recited *שהחיינו*, to which the Rebbe answered "Amen." The Rebbe asked whether my trip here was with the complete consent of my family, to which I answered that it definitely was. After taking the letter I had prepared beforehand, the Rebbe scanned it for five seconds, and proceeded to answer my queries.

At the *yechidus's* end, I expressed worry that my words would remain rhetoric alone, not accomplishing anything. To that, the Rebbe asked me: "Were you at the Ohel?" I responded that my body had been there. The Rebbe countered: "And the *neshamah* was certainly there, therefore, why wouldn't you be able to actually accomplish?!"

I then asked if it would be worthwhile to stay here a while to earn the costs of my travel expenses. The Rebbe answered that I should return home after Shabbos Bereishis.

The Rebbe ended off by saying: "There's no need for melancholy. And if a question arises, write to me. If necessary, you can also telephone the *mazkirus*. *Chasima ug'mar chasima tova*."

8 TISHREI – ILL INDIVIDUALS

Lately, many people are under the weather, some even contracting fever, due to frigid temperatures.



RABBI PINNY LEW

Some of the guests couldn't even make it to *yechidus* due to their health. I pray to Hashem that this should pass over me, although I do have a bit of a cold.

Reb Shmuel Levitin spoke with the Rebbe today about the sick *bochurim*, and what they should do about *tevilah* in the *mikveh* tomorrow, prior to Yom Kippur. The Rebbe responded: "*Tevilah* has two components: 1—*tevilah* for *taharah*; and 2—*tevilah* after *teshuvah*. Thus, for *taharah*, they should study two *perakim* of *Masechta Mikva'os*; and for *teshuvah*—they should *tovel* in the *mikveh*, as the Baal Shem Tov promised that one *tevilah* won't do harm. However, they shouldn't *tovel* more than once."

The Rebbe then added: "The story³ of the Alter Rebbe on Simchas Torah is well known; here it should happen on Erev Yom Kippur." (The Rebbe was referring to when the Alter Rebbe cured sick individuals on Simchas Torah.) The Rebbe continued, "If all the *bochurim* are gathered in one location, I'll visit them tomorrow and distribute *lekach*."

The Rebbe then added: "The story of the Alter Rebbe on Simchas Torah is well known; here it should happen on Erev Yom Kippur."

EREV YOM KIPPUR

The Rebbe stood at the entrance of his room, distributing *lekach* to all who stretched out their hands. A line was formed, and people entered from one side and exited on the other, to the *chatzer*. When my turn came, the Rebbe put a piece into my outstretched arm. He then tipped his ear—as if waiting to hear for whom I'm asking. Taking my cue, I requested for my father, my father-in-law, my brother, and my uncle. Each time I said a name, the Rebbe handed me a slice for that individual. When I got to my uncle, the Rebbe motioned, as if to ask "Which one?" I answered "Moshe ben Nechamah," to which the Rebbe immediately responded "Dotlibov," to which I responded affirmatively, after which he handed me a slice for him.

As all this transpired, I was putting more and more pieces into my left hand, pondering how I'll manage to remember which is for whom. At that moment, the Rebbe turned to me and said: "It doesn't matter if you mix, regardless everyone will receive what he needs. *A gut yohr*."

Later in the day, a message was given through Rabbi Leibel Groner that whoever had not received *lekach* in the morning should line up, and they'll receive now. Several minutes later, the Rebbe's door opened again, and a small crowd passed by, each person receiving *lekach*. Upon seeing a girl stick the piece of *lekach* into her mouth, the Rebbe told her to recite the *bracha*, waiting until she finished.

At the distribution's end, the door was shut. Several minutes later, the Rebbe emerged. Trembling, the Rebbe closed his eyes and said "*A chasimah tovah*; a *g'mar chasimah tovah*; may it be drawn down in true and revealed good, below ten *tefachim*. Inasmuch as Yom Kippur is Shabbos, may there be protection from all damaging-forces. *A gut yohr*."

The Rebbe then closed his door, and made his way to *mincha*.

Due to the fact that many were not present during the *bracha*, Reb Shmuel Levitin and Reb Yerachmiel Benyaminson requested of the Rebbe to repeat it. The Rebbe responded "It was already given."

When the Rebbe was already wearing his tallis and *kittel*, prior to *Kol Nidrei*, the *bochurim* exclusively entered the Rebbe's room for a *bracha*. The Rebbe recited *birkas Kohanim*, in addition to some other words.

YOM KIPPUR NIGHT

Neiros neshamah were being sold in shul, and hundreds were lit in all its corners. At seven-thirty, the Rebbe entered with a stern look on his face, carrying a Siddur Torah Ohr and Tehillim. After reciting several *kapitlach* Tehillim, the Rebbe opened the *siddur*, this being the signal for *Kol Nidrei* to begin.

Before *Kol Nidrei*, the Rebbe was handed a small Torah; another was given to Rashag and I believe also to Reb Shmuel Levitin, as well as another to the *chazzan*, Reb Shmuel Zalmanov.

Following *maariv*, the crowd sat down to recite the entire Tehillim. The Rebbe remained, reciting it with the assembled.



RABBI PINNY LEW

IN THE FRIEDIKER REBBE'S APARTMENT.

SHACHARIS, MUSAF

Shacharis began at ten o'clock. The Rebbe could be seen reciting Tehillim during *chazaras hashatz*. Additionally, it seemed that the Rebbe recited *Al Cheit* alone, not waiting for the *chazzan*.

Reb Yossel Wineberg led *musaf*. The Rebbe's eyes are trained on Reb Yossel as he recites והנהנים והעם. Obviously, a path is immediately cleared between the Rebbe and the *chazzan*. When the *minyan* recited the *Asara Harugei Malchus*, the Rebbe recited, without interruption, *kapitlach* 78 and 56.⁴ When the assembled sang *Ki Anu Amecha*, chanting the entire *piyut* in the famous tune that the Rebbe taught the previous year, the Rebbe tapped along on his *shtender*, signaling his satisfaction.

NE'ILAH

Davening ended at 4:05 p.m. followed by a break. The Rebbe entered the shul again at five-thirty, and both *mincha* and *ne'ilah* were recited hastily. The Rebbe received *Maftir Yonah*, breaking out in tears in middle.

Reb Shmuel Zalmanov was *chazzan* for *ne'ilah*. It's amazing how the Rebbe davens without displaying any outward expression, even during the special times, including now, for example.

One doesn't have the slightest clue as to what is transpiring in the higher realms...

The shofar was blown before *Tiskabel* of the final *Kaddish*, after which the Rebbe motioned for the Chassidim to begin singing the march, which they immediately did, with the Rebbe tapping along on his *shtender*. Suddenly, the Rebbe pulled his tallis lower over his holy face. He then picked it up, turning to face the assembled while clapping enthusiastically. The Rebbe then motioned for the shofar to be blown again.⁵

The Rebbe's hat was brought to him for *maariv*, after which he returned to his room.

MOTZOEI YOM KIPPUR

On motzoei Yom Kippur, I was invited to join the *seudah* in the Frierdiker Rebbe's apartment upstairs. At the table's head is the Frierdiker Rebbe's chair. The Rebbe entered the *seudah* after all were already settled in their seats.

The Rebbe entered carrying his siddur. After washing and sitting down, the Rebbe made *Hamotzi*, cut the challah, and distributed the pieces. The Rebbe dipped some of his challah in honey.

The Rebbe barely spoke during the *seudah*, aside from encouraging the attendees to speak. Upon the Rebbe's request, Reb Pinye Althoiz spoke and sang, in addition to Reb Shmuel Levitin. The Rebbe constantly glanced in the direction of the Frierdiker Rebbe's chair, even shedding a few tears, but in a very quiet manner.

For the second part of the *seudah*, *bochurim* and guests stood on the side to observe. The Rebbe, however, acted as if he didn't see them.

When the Rebbe left, they pounced on the *shirayim*. After spending a short while in his room, the Rebbe went home. On his way to the car, the Rebbe was approached by someone who had once studied in Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch, and had since become quite distanced. The individual told the Rebbe: "Last year you gave me a small cup..." The Rebbe smiled, instructing one of the *bochurim* there to give him *l'chaim*. T

1. Today the rearmost portion of the big shul. See *The Heartbeat of Lubavitch, Part II*, A Chassidisher Derher Iyar 5775.

2. Brooklyn Botanical Gardens.

3. Likkutei Dibburim vol. 2 p. 486

4. See Otzar Minhagei Chabad Elul-Tishrei p. 229

5. Following the *minhag* to blow the shofar after the march. This was the standard practice in the later years, without blowing before the singing, and is what we follow today.

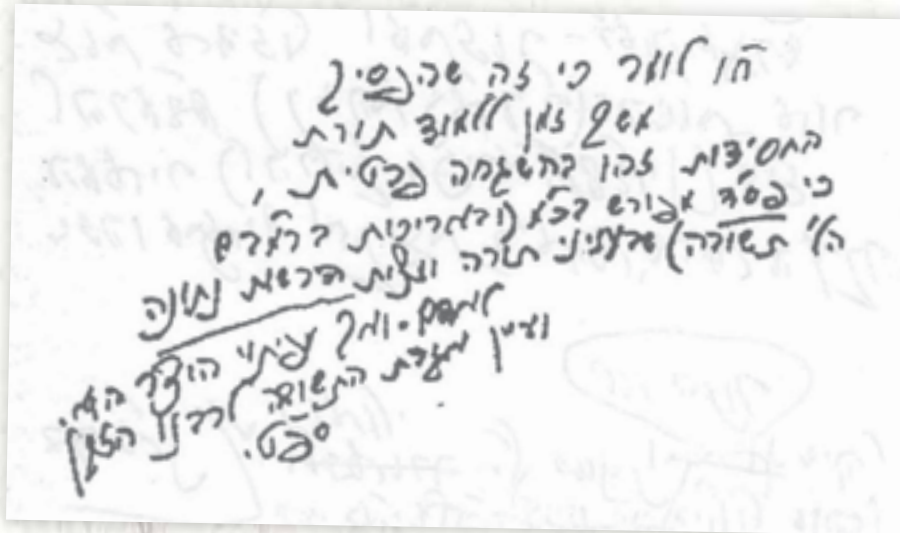


כתב יד קודש

מוקדש
לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' זאב וזוגתו מרת דבורה ליבא
ומשפחתם שיחיו
גולדברג
להצלחה רבה בכל אשר יפנו
בגשמיות וברוחניות



It's Up to You



Heaven forbid should you say that the fact you stopped learning *toras haChassidus* for a while is *b'hashgacha pratit*. The ruling is clear in many sources (as it is elaborated upon in Rambam Hilchos Teshuvah), that regarding matters of Torah and mitzvos, a person is given complete control over himself. This can only be a lure of the *yetzer hara*.

See Iggeres Hateshuvah of the Alter Rebbe, end of perek 9 [where he discusses the ability to do *teshuvah* by way of increasing and doubling one's Torah learning].

ח"ו לומר כי זה שהפסיק משך זמן ללמוד תורת החסידות זהו בהשגחה פרטית, כי פס"ד מפורש בכ"מ (ובאריכות ברמב"ם הל' תשובה) שבעניני תורה ומצוות הרשות נתונה לאדם. ואך מפיתוי היצר הוא.

ועיין אגרת התשובה לרבנו הזקן ספ"ט [סוף פרק ט']

Baal Shem Tov

During the 17th century, European Jewry was devastated by the Khmel'nitsky pogroms during the years of ת"ח-ת"ט. Entire communities were destroyed and the war displaced thousands. A short while later Shabtai Tzvi misled thousands of Yidden into believing that he was Moshiach. He eventually converted to Islam in תכ"ו, further demoralizing the Jewish world. During this time period the Baal Shem Tov was revealed to the world.

After receiving a blessing from Eliyahu Hanavi¹, Reb Eliezer (100 years old) and his wife Sarah (90 years old), from the town of Tloste², welcome their only child to the world on Chai Elul. The boy is named Yisroel.

The Baal Shem Tov travels together with a *tzaddik nistar* for two years. He is entrusted to the care and mentorship of the *tzaddik nistar* Reb Meir for a period of four years. During this time he joins the "Machane Yisroel," the group of *tzaddikim nistarim* under the leadership of Reb Adam Baal Shem.⁴

On his 16th birthday, Eliyahu Hanavi reveals to the Baal Shem Tov the preciousness of the *avodas Hashem* of simple Yidden. Thus begins the practice of inquiring about the well being of Yidden to cause them to respond "*baruch Hashem*."⁶

The Baal Shem Tov is hired as a *melamed* in the town of Brody by Reb Gershon Kitover and marries Reb Gershon's sister, Chana.⁸

On Chai Elul,¹¹ following intense pressure from Achiya Hashiloni and Reb Adam Baal Shem,¹² the Baal Shem Tov reveals himself and begins teaching Chassidus and performing many miracles.

תכ"ד

At the tender age of 5, the Baal Shem Tov is orphaned from his father and mother. Reb Eliezer's final instructions to him are: Yisroelik, fear no mortal or thing—only Hashem. Love every Yid with the depths of your heart and the passion of your soul, no matter who it is.³

תע"ב

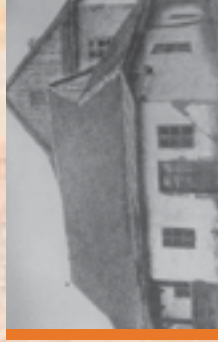
At the age of 14, the Baal Shem Tov introduces a new *shitta* of *ahavas Yisroel* to the *tzaddikim nistarim*. Reb Meir later blesses him with the *roshei teivos* of that year תע"ב - תבא עליך ברכה.⁵

תע"ו

The Baal Shem Tov is appointed *nossi* of the *tzaddikim nistarim*⁷ and instructs them to become *melamedim* wherever needed. He is hired as a *melamed* in Tloste.

תכ"ד-
תצ"ד

On Chai Elul,⁹ the Baal Shem Tov begins learning with Achiya Hashiloni.¹⁰



THE BAAL SHEM TOV'S
SHUL IN MEZIBUZH.

ה'ת"ק

The Baal Shem Tov settles in the town of Mezibuz which would serve as the capital of Chassidus throughout his *nesius*.

תק"ה

On Chai Elul, the Alter Rebbe was born to Reb Boruch and Rebbeztin Rivkah following a *brocha* from the Baal Shem Tov. The Baal Shem Tov was in a joyfully exalted mood, did not recite *tachanun* and announced at the *seudas mitzvah* that a *neshamah chadashah*—a new *neshamah* that's never been on earth before—descended to illuminate the world with *nigleh* and Chassidus.¹³

תק"ב

The Maggid meets the Baal Shem Tov for his first time and becomes a devoted *talmid*.¹⁵

ה'תק"ב
בשם ה' אלהינו
ה'תק"ב

THE BAAL SHEM TOV'S HANDWRITTEN SIGNATURE.

תק"ט

An imposter named Yaakov Frank proclaimed himself the successor of Shabtai Tzvi and attracted a group of believers called the Frankistim who caused much trouble for the Jewish community of Poland. The Baal Shem Tov participates in a highly publicized debate against them and is victorious. The day is proclaimed a Yom Tov.¹⁸

תק"י"ז

The Baal Shem Tov and his *talmidim* nullify a *cherem* proclaimed against them and issue a statement forgiving their opponents the following Erev Yom Kippur.¹⁶
The Baal Shem Tov is instrumental in annulling a decree forbidding the recitation of *Aleinu* in the city of Lvov.¹⁷

תק"כ

On the first day of Shavuot, the Baal Shem Tov was *nistalek*. The *kevurah* occurred on the second day of Yom Tov¹⁹ in the city of Mezibuz.²⁰

More details of the information provided in this timeline have been published in English in "The Great Mission" by Kehot Publications.

1. Sefer Hasichos 5697 p. 161.
2. In various sources Okup is referred to as the Baal Shem Tov's birthplace (Hatomim vol. 1 p. 14). The Rebbe Rashab explains that Tloste was a city that had once been surrounded by a protective wall. As the wall collapsed, it left behind it a trench—"okup" in Russian. The Baal Shem Tov's parents, who lived in abject poverty, could not afford housing within the city limits and were forced to live in these trenches.
3. Likkutei Dibburim vol. 3 p. 770. Sefer Hasichos 5703 p. 165.
4. Sefer Hasichos 5703 pages 165-168.
5. Igros Kodesh, Rebbe Rayatz, vol. 4 p. 292.

6. Sefer Hasichos 5703 p. 167.
7. Likkutei Dibburim vol. 3 p. 389.
8. Sefer Hatoldos, Baal Shem Tov, vol. 1 p. 35
9. Likkutei Dibburim vol. 1 p. 31.
10. See Hatomim vol. 1 pages 19-20 for a description of Achiya Hashiloni's first revelation to the Baal Shem Tov.
11. Likkutei Dibburim vol. 1 p. 31.
12. See Hatomim vol. 1 pages 12-18 for a lengthy description of this time period. See also Likkutei Dibburim

- vol. 1 pages 273-276 and Sefer Hasichos 5703 pages 191-192.
13. Sefer Hasichos 5705 pages 127-129.
14. Keser Shem Tov page 4. Toras Sholom page 113. Likkutei Dibburim vol. 2 page 618. Likkutei Sichos vol. 15 page 282.
15. Hatomim vol. 1 page 120.
16. Hatomim vol. 1 page 125.
17. Likkutei Dibburim vol. 4 page 1167-1170.

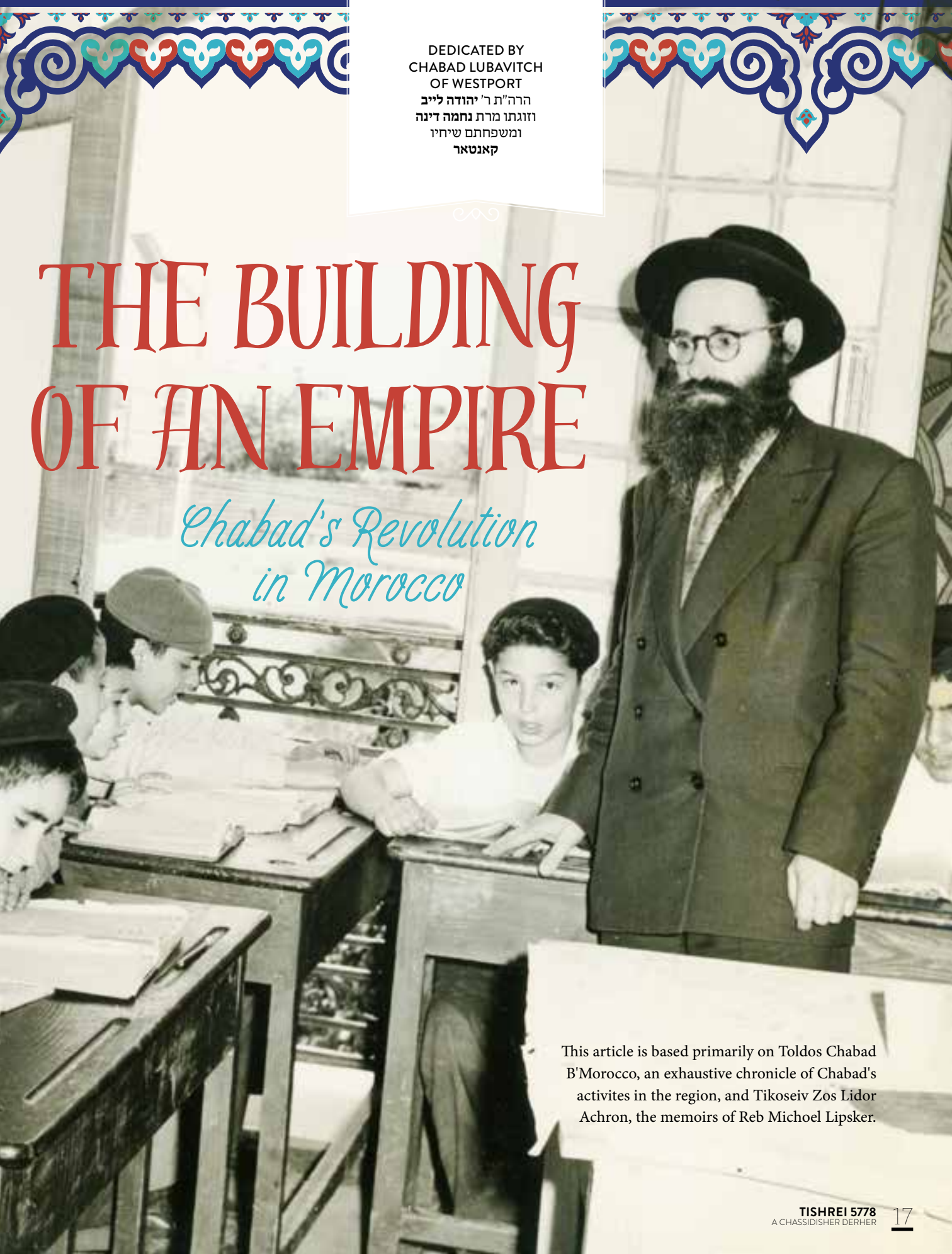
18. Hatomim vol. 2 page 558. Gimzei Nistaros, Bichovsky, #59. The Rebbe explains that since the *histalkus* of the Baal Shem Tov occurred before the first anniversary of this event, the Yom Tov was never properly established. Igros Kodesh vol. 19 p. 81. See also Hisvaaduyos 5742 vol. 4 p. 1909 for a discussion of the exact date of the Yom Tov.
19. Likkutei Sichos vol. 4 p. 1031. See Notes *29 and 30.
20. Hayom Yom 6 Sivan.



DEDICATED BY
CHABAD LUBAVITCH
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וזוגתו מרת נחמה דינה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
קאנטאר

THE BUILDING OF AN EMPIRE

*Chabad's Revolution
in Morocco*



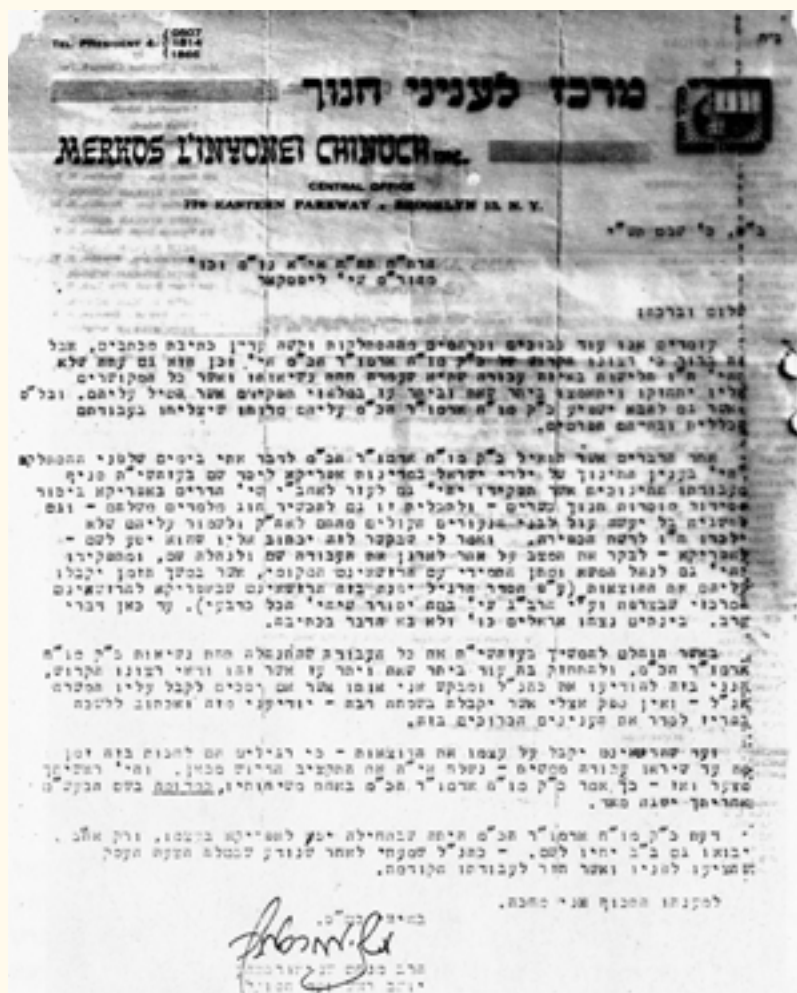
This article is based primarily on Toldos Chabad B'Morocco, an exhaustive chronicle of Chabad's activities in the region, and Tikoseiv Zos Lidor Achron, the memoirs of Reb Michael Lipsker.

It was during Shevat 5710. The Jewish world was reeling from the news of the unexpected *histalkus* of the Frierdiker Rebbe. At the time, many Lubavitcher Chassidim worldwide were still in a state of transition following the Holocaust and the mass escape from communist Russia; a sizable number resided in France where they had been awaiting further instructions from the Frierdiker Rebbe as to where and when they could finally set down roots. Now, after the *histalkus*, everything seemed up in the air.

Reb Michoel Lipsker was one of the Chassidim residing in France. One day, he came home to a letter from the Rebbe, dated 20 Shevat—a mere ten days after the *histalkus*.

“We stand bewildered and shocked from the *histalkus*,” the Rebbe began, “and writing letters is still difficult. However, it is clear that the holy wish of the my father-in-law the Rebbe was—and is—that there be no diminishment *chas veshalom* in any of the work that was under his leadership, and that all those connected to him should strengthen themselves and exert themselves above and beyond, *b’yeser se’is v’yeser oz*, in fulfilling the mission that he placed upon them. There is no doubt that my father-in-law the Rebbe will continue to be *mashpia* from his *ruach* that they be successful in their public work and their personal lives.

“One of the things that my father-in-law the Rebbe chose to speak with me about a few days before the *histalkus* was regarding the education of the Jewish children in Africa; to establish a branch of our educational work there, with Hashem’s help.”



LETTER FROM THE REBBE TO REB MICHOEL LIPSKER, SETTING IN MOTION THE SHLICHUS IN MOROCCO, DATED 20 SHEVAT 5710, A MERE TEN DAYS AFTER THE FRIERDIKER REBBE'S HISTALKUS.

The Rebbe continues, in very concise words, how the Frierdiker Rebbe had defined the role of Lubavitch on the continent:

- Establish a branch of the Lubavitch educational network.
- Assist the local Yidden in establishing and organizing *mosdos chinuch*.
- Train local teachers.
- Ensure that the youth emigrating to Eretz Yisroel do not fall into the trap of *kefir*.

“[The Frierdiker Rebbe] told me,” the Rebbe continues, “that I should write to you that you should travel there—to Africa—to oversee the situation on the ground, organize and manage the activities... Until this [point in the letter] is *divrei harav* [the words of the Frierdiker Rebbe]. Meanwhile, “the angels prevailed” [the *histalkus* occurred] and there was no time to write.

“Being that it has been decided that, with Hashem’s help, all the work under my father-in-law the Rebbe’s leadership will continue and be strengthened *b’yeser se’is v’yeser*

"...WRITING LETTERS IS STILL DIFFICULT. HOWEVER, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE HOLY WISH OF MY FATHER-IN-LAW THE REBBE WAS—AND IS—THAT THERE BE NO DIMINISHMENT CHAS VESHALOM IN ANY OF THE WORK THAT WAS UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP..."

oz, and certainly this is his holy will, I am hereby notifying you about the above. If you do agree to accept upon yourself this assignment—and I have no doubt that you will, with great joy—I request that you notify me, and I will correspond with the office [*Lishka*] in France about the arrangements...Your beginning will be small, and then—so said the [Friediker] Rebbe in one of his *sichos*, in the name of the Baal Shem Tov (I believe)—your end shall increase exceedingly...I await your immediate response.”¹

Reb Michoel immediately sent back a letter with his agreement. The Rebbe hadn’t indicated which specific country in Africa he should go to, but after some research Reb Michoel saw that Morocco was the right place. Within a few months, by the beginning of Sivan 5710, Reb Michoel was in Meknes, Morocco.

The Rebbe sent him a letter upon his arrival:

“...I sent a telegram yesterday saying: Begin working immediately, with *hatzlachah*. With blessing, Menachem Schneerson. [Now the Rebbe continues the letter:]... When Reb Binyomin Gorodetzky comes back [to New York]...I will discuss with him your proposals. Be that as it may, do not delay. Begin immediately, and may it be in a good and auspicious time, to fulfill the will of my father-in-law the Rebbe regarding spreading Torah and strengthening Yiddishkeit...”²

A CRISIS IN NORTHERN AFRICA

Although Morocco counted itself among the oldest Jewish communities in the world (some maintain that Yidden have resided there since the times of Shlomo Hamelech), their religious observance had declined terribly over the last generation. The *Alliance Universelle* (or כל ישראל חברים), a French organization dedicated to “modernizing” and “educating” the Jewish people, had taken advantage of the naïveté of the Jewish communities in Morocco, Tunisia, and other countries, and established a huge network of schools there. Though they ostensibly spent a few hours a week learning Jewish subjects, the main focus was on educating the children to be enlightened members of society, unconstrained “by the backwards customs of old.”

“Growing up in Casablanca,” former Chief Rabbi of Israel Rabbi Shlomo Amar writes, “I remember that there were several Jewish schools...in addition to the children who studied in the shuls as was the ancient custom. This continued until the people of Alliance came and established several schools of their own, where the study of Torah was trivialized, and worst of all, they studied on Shabbos as in the weekday...”

“The devastation caused by these schools was very great, and grew day to day. The masses were fooled into sending their children there, as they did not comprehend how terrible it was. They thought that their children would learn a profession and become educated, that they would be successful and also good, wholesome Jews; they did not imagine where it would lead to. Many people were led astray due to these schools, and there were even rabbonim who erred after them...”

“...At that time Hashem sent his messengers, through the holy man who carried the generation on his shoulders ‘as the nurse carries the suckling’—namely, the Rebbe of Chabad zy”a. The spirit of Hashem guided his steps...and he called his shluchim into action, sending them to places they and their fathers did not know, where they did not understand the language or the customs.”³

“BEGIN IMMEDIATELY!”

The Rebbe told Reb Michoel to hit the ground running [“Begin immediately”, the Rebbe had written], and that’s exactly what he did. As soon as he arrived, he went about establishing a yeshiva, with the help of Harav Baruch Toledano (who had also helped him arrange his visa). Everything was different in this new country, and as an Ashkenazi outsider, he had to navigate a delicate balance between

assisting the local Yidden and teaching them, while also ensuring that they should not feel like he was trampling on their local, Sephardic customs.

There were already a few students studying informally in Harav Baruch's shul under their teacher Rabbi Yitzchok Sabag, and this would serve as the basis for the new yeshiva. But the style was different from anything Reb Michoel had ever seen. They sat on wide benches with their feet tucked under them; one would read the Gemara and the teacher would explain. Reb Michoel immediately organized a dining room in a side-room of the shul, but he was afraid to start bringing in desks and chairs, lest he offend the local custom. But after the teacher confirmed that he would be happy with the new furniture, Reb Michoel immediately ordered new desks and chairs from a carpenter. It was already beginning to look like a school. Within a few weeks, the student-body had grown to forty children, and a new location was rented. The farbrengen of Yud-Beis Tammuz was celebrated with great fanfare.

As the summer vacation approached, Reb Michoel arranged a summer school for all the children of the city, including those in the other schools. It was blessed with unbelievable success, with about fifteen classes spanning all grades. In previous years, the youngsters had largely remained in the city during the summer, and were a source of frustration and grief for the parents. The people in the community were deeply appreciative to Reb Michoel for resolving this issue, and the success of the summer



18 ELUL 5715, JEM 103279

school—where many learned more Yiddishkeit than the entire year—made a deep impression on them, paving the way for future activities.

As the years passed, the yeshiva quickly outgrew its early facilities and became a huge organization with hundreds of students.

To appreciate what Reb Michoel accomplished, and what Lubavitch would continue doing throughout Morocco, it is important to realize

that these weren't regular students from middle class backgrounds, and the yeshivos weren't just there in order to teach them for a few hours a day. Many of the Yidden lived in utter squalor—the Jewish community of Morocco was perhaps the most impoverished in the world—and when the children came to the yeshiva, many of them were very sick from various illnesses. In addition to providing them with

"...AT THAT TIME HASHEM SENT HIS MESSENGERS, THROUGH THE HOLY MAN WHO CARRIED THE GENERATION ON HIS SHOULDERS, THE REBBE OF CHABAD. THE SPIRIT OF HASHEM GUIDED HIS STEPS...AND HE CALLED HIS SHLUCHIM INTO ACTION..."

a high-level Jewish education, the Lubavitcher schools took care of them on a physical level, with clean dormitories and food.

Reb Michoel wrote: "I will try to describe how it was without exaggeration, for there is plenty to tell about the situation as it was. The children from the small villages came dressed in their clothing, a cloak—*zelabia*—which was white/black; when they first put it on it was white, but it had become black... It seems that bathing and laundry did not exist in those deserts. The first thing we needed to do was shower them and provide them with new clothing. One time, when the children returned from the shower, one of them was crying and crying and no-one could calm him. Finally they figured out that he had come with his older brother, but he couldn't find him now. They showed him that 'he's right next to you!' but he did not recognize him, and continued crying. Finally, one of the teachers came up with an idea: he brought the older brother's old rags and told him to put them on, and the child calmed down upon seeing his brother..."

Reb Michoel took care of the *talmidim*'s health as well, both physical and mental—in some

cases saving children from lifelong disabilities.

SPREADING THE WINGS

As Lubavitch's educational initiatives in Meknes grew increasingly successful, it quickly spread elsewhere. Midlat, a small town near Meknes, had little in the way of schools and educational institutions; even the Alliance had only two classes. The community sent a message through Harav Toledano asking for Lubavitch's help in educating the hundreds of unattended to children.

"One day, I traveled there with Harav Baruch," Reb Michoel later wrote, "and as we entered the city, we met hundreds of children. We went to the home of the Chacham Harav Meir Abuchatzera, where the leaders of the community gathered, and after a short conversation, we arrived at the subject at hand. I asked them, 'How many children are there over the age of five, besides for those learning in the Alliance school?' Over the next few hours, they gathered hundreds of children in to Harav Meir Abuchatzera's shul—children with no spiritual sustenance whatsoever.

"After davening *mincha*, we returned to the home of the Chacham, where, in our honor, they had prepared tables filled with delicacies—meat, wine, and other foods, as is their custom.

"In the evening, we sat down for a practical discussion about opening a *talmud Torah*, where we discussed locations, teachers, and financial



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD

sources. I stood firm that they, too, help carry the financial burden, and it was agreed that they would pay 50% and we would provide the other 50%.

“We sat together until late at night; we drank *l’chaim* and wished *brachos* in honor of establishing the *talmud Torah*. The next day, they began signing up students, and they also decided to make an evening-yeshiva for the older youth. *Baruch Hashem*, there was great success.

“Once in a while, I would visit and see the results...It made a big impression on everyone when a ten-year-old child said *maftir* in the big shul, and the entire city was talking about it with great *nachas*. When I would come, they would literally kiss me with thanks and joy.”

BUILDING JEWISH INFRASTRUCTURE

Within a few months of landing in Morocco for the first time in his life, Reb Michoel had managed to

establish two schools and multiple afternoon programs. But there was no time to rest, as he went about strengthening every area of Jewish life.

One key program he began was Tiferes Bachurim, an afternoon program for *bochurim* and *yungelait* who worked for a living. They would gather in the evenings (and other times) to learn Shulchan Aruch and Chassidus, and they would also get together on Shabbos for a *seder niggunim*, followed by a *melave malka* and stories of *tzadikim*. This group formed the core of the Lubavitch activities in Morocco, including the *mitvzoim*, matzah baking, and so on, and many would become educators themselves.

Reb Michoel also began creating a Jewish infrastructure, by training *shochtim* and *sofrim*, establishing an institute for teachers, and so on. Believe it or not, some of these projects were controversial: People couldn’t believe that these

poor, lower class children from small villages were permitted to do such important jobs—doesn’t a *shochet* need to be from a family of *shochtim*?!—but as time went on, they began appreciating the value of what Lubavitch was accomplishing: re-establishing Jewish life on sturdy ground.

Reb Michoel focused on training his students in the ways and study of Chassidus, beginning every day with the Hayom Yom; setting up morning and evening classes in Chassidus in the yeshiva (though, as per the Rebbe’s directive in a letter, they were shorter than in regular Lubavitcher yeshivos); getting them involved in *hafatzas haTorah*; and so on. He also focused on spreading Chassidus throughout the city, holding major farbrengens, giving out the new *kuntreisim* of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *maamarim* as they came out, and such. He received special encouragement from the Rebbe in this regard. “It is very, very good that you utilize every opportunity to explain an *inyan* in Chassidus at all possible opportunities, and I await further updates on this. Without question, the *brachos* of the Rebbe my father-in-law are accompanying you in this work that it be with great success.”⁴

One of Reb Michoel’s most innovative projects was to address a severe shortage in *tashmishei kedusha*—tefillin, tzitzis, and so on. “The yeshiva grew and developed in quality and quantity,” he writes, “and we moved to a more spacious location...Day by day, visitors came to see it, and they all were stunned by the yeshiva and praised it. It continued growing and becoming ever more famous and admirable.



THE BEIS SEFER L'SAFRUS IN ACTION. THE ENTIRE PROCESS OF MAKING AND WRITING STA"TM HAPPENED HERE.



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD

REB MICHOEL LIPSKER LEADS A LAG B'OMER OUTING IN THE FIELD.

But I personally, saw a serious, fundamental lack in the education of the *talmidim*: There was a severe shortage of *tashmishei kedusha* in the city, and the entire country—and this was even more severe by the students. The vast majority of their tzitzis and tefillin were not only possibly *possul*...”

Reb Michoel did not suffice with diagnosing the issue. After consulting with the Rebbe,⁵ and with the assistance of Rabbi Binyomin Gorodetzky, he flew down a *sofer* from Eretz Yisrael to begin a training program in *stam*. The Rebbe directed that they study every aspect of the job, from writing to fixing the *klaf* and the *batim*, and that’s what they did. Dozens of students became

full-fledged *sofrim*, providing tefillin, mezuzos, and tzitzis for Morocco and far beyond. (They even completed a few *sifrei Torah*!) The institute lasted many years, and later on, these *sofrim* went on to become some of the best in Eretz Yisrael.

(Incidentally, Reb Michoel had managed to catch on to *safrus* himself, so when the *sofer* needed to return to Eretz Yisrael, he became the trainer until the job was passed on to Rabbi Sholom Eidelman.)

MIKVAOS OUT OF FAUCETS

Perhaps the best illustration for the situation of Yiddishkeit in Morocco at the time—a sincerity and dedication to Yiddishkeit but an utter lack of knowledge—was

the situation with the *mikvaos*. Reb Michoel quickly realized that most *mikvaos* were filled from a faucet! When he spoke about it with the chief *chacham*, he was nonplussed. The faucets come from the ground... The pipes are not considered real vessels... There are opinions to rely on, he said.

When he wrote about it to the Rebbe, the Rebbe wrote. “It seems from your letter that you mean literally, that they use water from a water fountain!” Then the Rebbe instructed him on how to deal with it. “Without making a big deal out of it, you should change it slowly but surely—either by changing it into a *mikveh* of rain water, or if there is no

rain in your area, perhaps you can arrange artificial ice.”⁶

Reb Michoel related: “I said to the chief *chacham* that the Beis Yosef says that in laws of the Torah (*d’oraisa*) one must be stringent! All we are discussing is building another cistern of rain water next to the first one!...I wasn’t asking for any money from them...for fifty dollars at the most a new cistern of rain-water could be dug.”

It took a long time and protracted arguments for the local leaders to finally relent and allow him to build a *mehudar’dike mikveh*, something that would have been self-understood in a regular Jewish community.

HOW TO BUILD A MOSAD

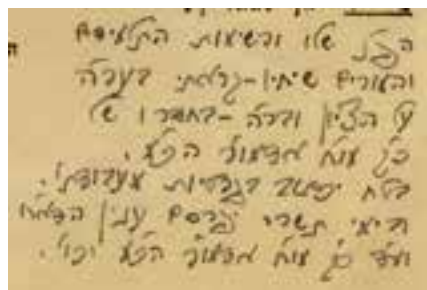
The Rebbe encouraged Reb Michoel to write often and in detail, and was intimately involved in guiding all minor and major decisions. “Surely you will continue writing in detail about all issues, as our sages have said, one should not be concise when elaboration is important.”⁷ Reading the Rebbe’s letters and directives to him, one receives a fascinating crash course in so many areas of shlichus, as Reb Michoel was confronted with challenges ranging from intense local politics; opposition from existing schools; the limits of community leadership; deference to local custom coupled with firmness on principles; financial independence; and so on. The Rebbe trained him on setting expectations; where to draw the line on any number of issues; and protocol for dealing financially with Merkos and the Lishka. Considering that he was the first shliach the Rebbe sent out



THE FIRST GROUP OF STUDENTS FROM MOROCCO WHO JOINED TOMCHEI TEMIMIM IN BRUNOY, FRANCE.

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A handwritten postnote to Reb Michoel Lipsker on a letter dated Erev Shabbos Shuvah 5711.



Your pan and the list of students and teachers sheyichyu - I read on Erev Rosh Hashanah at the Tziyun, and on Rosh Hashanah in the room of the [Friediker] Rebbe.

You will surely write in detail of your work.

In the days of Tishrei you should publicize about Chassidus and about the [Friediker] Rebbe etc.

הפ"נ שלו ורשימות התלמידים והמורים שיחיו - קראתי בער"ה על הציון ובר"ה - בחדרו של כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הכ"מ.

בטח יכתוב בפרטיות מעבודתו.

ובימי תשרי יפרסם ענין הדא"ח וע"ד כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הכ"מ וכו'.

after 5710, it is not far-off to imagine that the Rebbe was creating a sort of blueprint for the thousands of shluchim to come.

In one of the Rebbe’s early letters, he set down the tone for how the *mosdos* would operate. “I already gave the message that the name must be ‘Oholei Yosef Yitzchak Lubavitch,’ and under it (in parentheses?)

‘Named for and under the leadership of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.’ Besides for this general name, each specific *mosad* will have its name on its stationary, such as *Education Center for Teachers*, *Yeshiva*, *Tiferes Bachurim*, and the like. I hope that there will be no difficulties in having everyone agree on this, but whatever it is, the stationaries must have the

THE CHACHAMIM OF MOROCCO

The Rebbe had long-standing relationships with many *chachamim* and rabbonim in Morocco, including Harav Baruch Toledano, the Abuchatzera family (most famously Rabbi Yisroel Abuchatzera, later known as the “Baba Sali”), Rabbi Sholom Mashash and many others. The Rebbe became their go-to authority for all types of questions in Kabbalah, *halacha*, and personal matters, and their friendship assisted Lubavitch’s work greatly.



HARAV YITZCHOK SABAG, MOROCCO

LIPSKER FAMILY

name ‘Lubavitch.’

“Regarding what you write that a committee of five people was made, and from now on all questions will be sent to them, it is self understood that this must be done in a fashion that the spirit of the *mosdos* will be kept the same, and no foreign airs will mix in.”⁸

One significant saga was the establishment of a girls school. Reb Michael asked the Rebbe about it soon after he arrived, and the Rebbe gave him a framework for how to approach such a project. “It is difficult to give a detailed opinion from here, but the general point is this: there are many areas of *tznius* that the Sephardim have taken upon themselves for many generations, pertaining to women, teenage girls, and even little girls. So when it comes to the education of their daughters, you must be extremely cautious that they shouldn’t end up saying that ‘from when Lubavitch came to their country, we went from a higher *kedusha* to a lesser one.’ Thus, you must first investigate by the *charedim* and elders in the community as to what the *minhag* of their ancestors was. Even if certain changes are necessary, it must be done in a way that it won’t cause

gossip that this brought them to a lesser holiness.”⁹

Later on, the Rebbe gave him further instructions. After encouraging him to go ahead with establishing girls schools in Meknes and elsewhere, the Rebbe added: “It must not be together with the boys—not only shouldn’t they learn together in one room, but they shouldn’t even use the same entrance to the building. It would be even better if they were on separate buildings and separate streets, for the more careful you are in these matters, the better...”¹⁰ When the question arose whether they should teach secular subjects in the girls school, the Rebbe told them that there was no trial period for such things—if they began doing it, they would be forced to continue. “In such matters, it will be difficult to cease doing it—even if you want to.”¹¹ The Rebbe therefore advised them to do further research before coming to a final decision.

The school started with Reb Michael’s daughters, and it quickly blossomed. After a few years, it was a fully functioning school, with classes going all the way through high school. As it was the only Jewish high school in the area, even the children who went to other

elementary schools attended the Lubavitch high school, and the results were such that it grew and grew in popularity.

The Rebbe’s involvement wasn’t limited to the big picture, however. The Rebbe showed interest in individual students and families as well. In one letter: “The *pan* about [...] will be read at the *tziyun hakadosh*. Please ask, in an appropriate manner, whether she follows *tahara* as she should, and whether, in the period of their marriage, another girl was offended by him...Please let me know. Please let me know about the health of the student Moshe ben Pricha...”

ESTABLISHING AN EMPIRE

As the *mosdos* grew, the Rebbe sent more shluchim to assist in the work and develop it further, including Rabbis Shlomo Matusof, Nissan Pinson, Leibel Raskin, Sholom Eidelman, and others.

The first one was Rabbi Matusof, who arrived in the beginning of 5711. In addition to building the central organizations in Casablanca—arranging classes for the youth, establishing schools, and so on, essentially creating a second Lubavitch capitol in Morocco—he was the pioneer in spreading it out

further, to the small, primitive towns and villages throughout the country.

He later wrote: "With the situation of Yiddishkeit as it was, we didn't think about bringing just one family closer to Yiddishkeit, or to learn Torah with only one child. It

was clear that our job was to work in a broader arena."

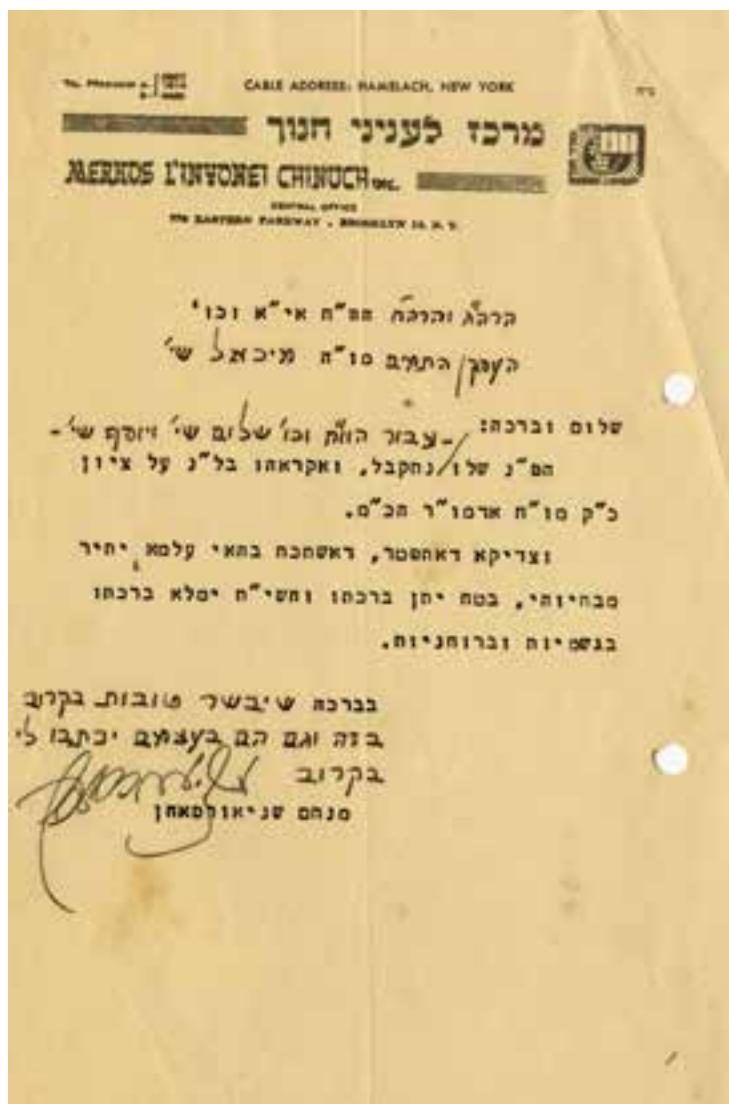
Today, when a shliach goes out to a city, he usually thinks in terms of building a *mosad* from the bottom up, starting off small and growing from there. Chabad Houses and especially schools take years to

establish. But Morocco was different, both because the need was so great, and because the Yidden were so eager to take anything they could get.

So Rabbi Matusof didn't focus on building one school or two schools, or even ten schools. He traveled from village to village setting up one school after another. When he arrived in a village, he would gather the children to ascertain how many there were, find teachers for them, and within literally hours or days a new school was up and running! Then, it was on to the next village.

Some of these villages were so far-flung and primitive that they were not accessible by standard vehicles, and Rabbi Matusof found himself travelling by donkey to reach

In this letter, the Rebbe responds to a *pan* from a student in Morocco; being that they weren't able to read the typical cursive, the Rebbe writes his handwritten additions in block letters.



"SEE THE
SICHA OF 13
TAMMUZ FROM
WHICH YOU CAN
DRAW CHAYUS,
INSPIRATION,
AND STRENGTH
IN YOUR WORK
IN YOUR PLACE
NOW. FROM
THERE YOU WILL
SEE, THAT IT
IS UNDERSTOOD
EVEN IN THE
HUMAN MIND
THAT THERE IS
NO PLACE FOR
THOUGHTS OF
LONELINESS
CHAS
VESHALOM..."

them. The following is his report about one of these tiny villages:

TINDZAD

A small and piteous community, very few people; 9 families, 53 people in total. Twenty of them are children who need a teacher, and, sadly, some of the adults do not even know what a Hebrew letter looks like. There are only some who learn in the Muslim school. They also lack a shochet

and a shliach tzibur, and until we arrived, for many weeks they hadn't davened in their shul whatsoever. We arranged someone to daven for them. If there is a talmid in the yeshiva [in Casablanca]...who is learning shechita as well, maybe it would be good to arrange to bring him.

"It was tremendous work," he would later write. "We needed to find a proper place for them to learn and teachers among the local people.

We also needed to choose a director in each location to be directly responsible for the *talmud Torah*, and to arrange monthly salaries for them all. When that was taken care of, we immediately advertised the new school. Later on, I would return to test the students, resolve various issues, and ensure that everything was okay. It was a lot of work, but this is how we established the great chain of education 'Oholei Yosef Yitzchak Lubavitch of Morocco."

In other towns and villages, where another Jewish school already existed and he could not open one of his own for one reason or another, he convinced the existing schools to cease their *chillul Shabbos*, sometimes applying pressure to ensure it happened. In addition, Reb Shlomo established summer-schools in many villages, with hundreds of students.

Reb Shlomo was forced to spend the entire week traveling in order to establish and manage the chain of schools, but the success was staggering. In the first year, fifty schools were opened throughout Morocco! They ranged greatly in style and size—some schools, located in bigger towns, had hundreds of students; others were in tiny villages and the small schools were located in the side-rooms of the shuls. The numbers he was dealing with were mind-boggling; thousands of students learning in a chain of schools that had been established *in the course of a single year!* And this wasn't done with an army of Lubavitchers from New York—everyone, including the teachers, principals and directors, were locals, and they were all managed by a single shliach, Rabbi Matusof.

NEVER ALONE

The Rebbe showed Reb Michoel tremendous *kiruvim* on a personal level: encouraging him in his work, asking about his family, and the like. In one particularly powerful letter, the Rebbe responded to a letter where Reb Michoel had written that he felt lonely, and that "a great weakness was falling on his work."

The Rebbe replied: "This is the advice of the *yetzer*, who attempts to weaken every person in fulfilling his shlichus by using the appropriate language for this particular shliach. The *pisgam* of the Rebbe my father-in-law is known, that Chassidus accomplished that *m'iz nit elent*—a person is not lonely. Wherever we are, the Rabbeim are there. This is especially true regarding the Rebbe my father-in-law, who himself wrote regarding the *histalkus* of his own father that the shepherds of the Yidden will not abandon their flock...Now that the physical boundaries have been removed, they [the Rabbeim] are together with every man and woman who has a connection to them, in whichever place they may be—especially in places that they were sent to in order to fulfill a shlichus—and even more so in places where they were sent on shlichus to spread the wellsprings of the Baal Shem Tov to the outside—which is a preparation for the coming of Moshiach and *tehiyas hameisim*, when *yakitzu viyranenu shochnei afar vehu besocham*.

"See the *sicha* of 13 Tammuz 5709, published in *kuntres* 12 Tammuz 5710, from which you can draw *chayus*, inspiration, and strength in your work in your place now. From there you will see, that it is understood even in the human mind that there is no place for thoughts of loneliness *chas veshalom*, and there is surely no reason for weakness in your work. *Halevai* that *anash*, and especially the *temimim*, would carefully study the words of my father-in-law the Rebbe, even in the *sichos*, and especially from 5710 and the previous year..."



JEM / MATUSOF-FAMILY

REB SHLOMO MATUSOF LEADS A CLASS FOR SCHOOL-BOYS.



LIPSKER FAMILY

A GROUP OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE JOINT POSE WITH REB MICHOEL LIPSKER ON AN INSPECTION VISIT TO MOROCCO.

As time went on, many of these students were sent to the yeshivos in Casablanca or Meknes, and when they returned they became leaders in their communities. Later on, when the Rebbe began working to establish the Lubavitch chain of schools in Eretz Yisroel (known as the *Reshet*), it was as a continuation to this chain of schools in Morocco.

THE JOINT

All of these projects costed tremendous amounts of money—something that was in low supply in Morocco and Lubavitch at large. The “American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee,” commonly known as the Joint were the main benefactors. In fact, from the Rebbe’s first letter to Reb Michoel, we see that this was the Friediker Rebbe’s plan

from the very beginning. Quoting the Frierdiker Rebbe, the Rebbe writes that, over time, the Joint would “shoulder the expenses,” and adds in parentheses “(according to typical protocol, the Joint of Africa will ask the central Joint in France, and with the help of Reb Binyonim Gorodetzky, it will surely be set up satisfactorily).”

As the premier Jewish relief organization, the relationship between the Joint and Lubavitch had begun many years earlier, during the *nesius* of the Frierdiker Rebbe. Recognizing that the Frierdiker Rebbe was the leader of Soviet Jewry, the Joint had distributed huge monies through the Frierdiker Rebbe to the Jews behind the Iron Curtain, and they continued supporting Chabad's efforts in Europe and elsewhere following World War II. Now that Lubavitch was opening schools for children in Morocco, the Joint was a natural partner in the endeavor.

Getting the Joint to finance so many huge projects took time and effort, however, and it is the subject of many letters between the Rebbe, Rabbi Gorodetzky, and the shluchim in Morocco. Although it didn't happen overnight, within a few months the Joint agreed to start their financial support, and they essentially became the underwriters for Lubavitch's work in Morocco. In fact, this became one of the Joint's largest projects worldwide.

But perhaps the most interesting aspect of this unique partnership is where it grew complicated, where it wasn't so smooth, because it touches at the heart of Lubavitch's mission in Morocco and perhaps throughout the world.



A JTA PRESS RELEASE ABOUT THE WORK OF LUBAVITCH IN MOROCCO.



AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE ARCHIVES

JEM 286804

"THEY WEREN'T READY TO TAKE THIS TYPE OF PEOPLE, FOR THEIR GOAL WAS TO CREATE GEDOLIM, EDUCATED PEOPLE, AND ALSO IN SECULAR SUBJECTS. RABBI...ONCE TOLD ME THAT IF HE DOESN'T MANAGE TO BRING THE BEST PROFESSORS AND CREATE TRULY EDUCATED STUDENTS AND SO ON— HE ACHIEVED NOTHING..."

DEALING WITH THE LOWER CLASS

As seen above, the work of Lubavitch could be divided in two categories: the central yeshivos

and schools in the big cities, like Casablanca and Meknes; and the string of dozens of schools throughout the small villages in Morocco. While the Joint was happy to invest their money in the

big cities, where the students had a chance at becoming rabbonim and prominent community leaders, they were adamantly opposed to Lubavitch's involvement in the primitive villages. One of the Joint's officials was once arguing with Reb Shlomo, saying, "We are giving you a million. Why must you spread yourselves throughout the entire Morocco, to more than fifty places? Use this money for ten locations, and there you will be able to do it well. The way you're operating in the village of Sidi Rahcal is a complete waste."

The Joint was loathe to sponsor schools where the students sat on the ground in cloaks, or where the food wasn't prepared in a modern kitchen. Although the shluchim



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD

tried to slowly develop the schools into more modern institutions, it was a delicate matter for the locals; as seen above, they were protective of local custom.

A similar type of issue came up in the bigger cities as well. As time went on, other organizations followed Lubavitch to Morocco—but they weren't ready to deal with the lower class people. "They weren't ready to take this type of people", Reb Michoel writes, "for their goal was to create *gedolim*, educated people, and also in secular subjects. Rabbi...once told me that if he doesn't manage to bring the best professors and create truly educated students and so on—he achieved nothing."



But for the goal of what Lubavitch was trying to do—reinvigorate Yiddishkeit—these concerns were not relevant at all. The shluchim had no interest in "modernizing the primitives" nor in changing local custom. They created many institutions dedicated to practical Yiddishkeit, and put a strong emphasis on teaching Shulchan Aruch and practical *dinim* to the students and community members.

If the focus in the big cities wasn't on creating the next big professor but on teaching Yiddishkeit, this was equally important in the villages, if not more so. But although the officials from the Joint were very satisfied with the work in the major cities, they were upset at Lubavitch's use of their resources in primitive villages, and the shluchim—with the Rebbe's guidance of course—refused to cease their activities saving Yiddishkeit. The issue remained.

Finally, after a long periods of circling discussions, it seemed that the Joint would finally cut off their funding to the villages. And so, the Rebbe wrote a long letter to the chairman of the religious board of the Joint, Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu (Leo) Jung, a great *askan* and *talmid chacham* who, among other things, was instrumental in assisting the Frieddiker Rebbe escape Russia. "Knowing your esteem for my father-in-law...I am certain that you will continue your support for his work and his institutions." The Rebbe relayed to him the problem, and how the Joint was near to ceasing their support for this work.

After a considerable back and forth, Rabbi Jung promised Rabbi Gorodetzky that he would take a trip

to Morocco to see the situation with his own eyes. Shortly afterwards, the Joint representative in Morocco was replaced by a *frum* person, Rabbi Yisroel Shif, and from then on everything was smoothed over.

Over the following decades, the work of Lubavitch in Morocco grew by leaps and bounds, under the leadership of the shluchim, most notably Rabbis Michael Lipsker, Shlomo Matusof, Leibel Raskin, and Sholom Eidelman. Although the majority of the community later emigrated to other parts of the world, there are hundreds of thousands of Yidden throughout the world today who grew up in the Lubavitch schools in Morocco, and kept their Yiddishkeit due to the *hatzalas nefashos* the Rebbe undertook through the shluchim.

"We had tremendous success and *hashgacha pratis* at every step of the way," Reb Michoel later wrote. "This was unmistakable, and evident to the eye. It was only with the strength of the *meshaleiach*, with all the explanations that the Rebbe gives, to the extent that the *meshaleiach* himself creates wonders at every turn." T

1. Igros Kodesh vol. 3 p. 237.
2. Letter on 2 Sivan 5710.
3. Rabbi Amar's letter in *Toldos Chabad B'Morocco*.
4. 5 Cheshvan 5711, Igros Kodesh vol. 4 p. 23.
5. See letter 23 Teves 5711, Igros Kodesh *ibid.*, p. 132.
6. 3 Sivan 5712, Igros Kodesh vol. 6 p. 95.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Letter 11 Kislev 5711, Igros Kodesh vol. 4 p. 67.
9. *Ibid.*
10. 10 Iyar 5712, Igros Kodesh vol. 6 p. 32.
11. 3 Sivan 5712, Igros Kodesh vol. 6 p. 95.



לזכות
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל הלוי
וזוגתו מרת שולמית ומשפחתם שיחיו
גערבער
להתברך בכל מילי דמיטב
בגשמיות וברוחניות גם יחד



Joyous Tremble

The Avodah of Rosh Hashanah

עיקר ענין קבלת עול מלכות שמים הוא בראש השנה, והיא בפנימיות נפשו ממש, שנותן א"ע בכל עצמותו בהתגלות ממש. ולכן הנה בב' הימים דר"ה צ"ל בזהירות יתירה בכל הענינים. . לפי שבר"ה הוא המסירה ונתינה לאלקות בכל עצמותו בהתגלות ממש, אז עס איז גארניט פאראן קיין אנדער ענין.

Kabbalas ol malchus Shamayim, accepting the yoke of Heaven, is primarily done on Rosh Hashanah. It should come from the depths of one's soul, giving himself over to Hashem completely and visibly.

Therefore, over the two days of Rosh Hashanah one must be vigilant in all areas [of conduct]. For Rosh Hashanah is when we dedicate ourselves to *Elokus*, totally and openly, declaring that there is nothing else in the world!

(מאמר ד"ה א"ר אבהו תרצ"א)

What's It All About?

"It was Sunday, Erev Rosh Hashanah 5631," the Rebbe Rashab relates. "My father [the Rebbe Maharash] had just returned from a visit to the Ohel of my grandfather [the Tzemach Tzedek], and I went into his room to ask him what is the *avodah* of Rosh Hashanah."

The Rebbe Maharash explained to his son:

The *avodah* of Rosh Hashanah is *kabbalas ol*; to accept upon yourself the yoke of Torah and mitzvos. Much like a soldier accepts the command of his superiors who tell him how to behave.

"These few words were sufficient for me," the Rebbe Rashab later said. "I requested his *bracha* and left the room to begin saying Tehillim..."¹

Chazal tell us that on Rosh Hashanah we crown Hashem as King. With our *avodah*, Hashem becomes "*Melech Yisroel*," King of the Jewish people, and with that He becomes "*Melech al kol ha'aretz*," King of the entire world.

The way to crown a king, the Rebbe explains, is by accepting his leadership and submitting to his will—through *kabbalas ol*.²

For this reason the *avodah* of Rosh Hashanah, even for the greatest and most accomplished people, is all about the "simple" act of reciting Tehillim. One should also refrain from sleeping too much on both nights of Rosh Hashanah, and avoid speaking *dvarim b'teilim* **at all costs**. We behave like slaves who don't have even one moment's rest from their master's work; or like a child who is preoccupied with the joy of greeting his father.³

Solemn Joy

Rosh Hashanah, like every Yom Tov, is a time for *simcha*; except that on Rosh Hashanah the joy is coupled with solemnity, as the *possuk* says "וגיל ברעדה."

The Alter Rebbe once said that the *avodah* on Rosh Hashanah must be done with joy. Later, the

Tzemach Tzedek and Reb Nochum (the Mittler Rebbe's son) came into the Alter Rebbe's room and asked, "If the *avodah* of Rosh Hashanah is supposed to be carried out with *simcha*, why are you crying?" The Alter Rebbe explained: "These are tears of joy!"⁴

As the Rebbe describes in the Reshimos: "Chassidim [in Lubavitch] would break out in a dance even on the first night of Rosh Hashanah!"⁵

MILLIONS OF WORDS!

From the time he was young, the Alter Rebbe would spend the entire first day of Rosh Hashanah reciting Tehillim; from after *mincha* of Erev Rosh Hashanah until *maariv* of the second night. This conduct he observed by his father, Reb Boruch. He continued this practice into adulthood as well.

The Alter Rebbe taught his children and grandchildren to do the same, and this is how our Rabbeim conducted themselves throughout the generations.

(Sefer Hasichos 5702 p. 1)

Many members of *anash* wished to join [the Frierdiker Rebbe for *seudas Yom Tov* on the second day of Rosh Hashanah], but he was quite displeased by this. He said: "This time could be used to add many more millions of words to *sefiras haMalchus*..."

(Sefer Hasichos 5705 p. 10)

The Shofar

Chassidus explains that the sound of the shofar is the simple cry from the depths of our hearts, calling out to our Father in heaven.

The *mashal* is given of a valuable utensil that was defiled or even broken. Firstly, we cry for the loss. Then we wash it out, and then we attempt to put it back together and make it usable once more.

Rosh Chodesh Elul is the time of *cheshbon hanefesh*. At *selichos*, we cleanse the "utensil," washing it with tears. And on Rosh Hashanah we fix the utensil and put it back together with our *kabbalas ol*.

Then, at *tekias shofar*, we do a complete *teshuvah* calling out from the depth of our hearts. As the Baal Shem Tov put it, it's like a child who cries out "אבא אבא אבא הצילני—Father, father, have mercy; father, father, save me!"

The *machzor* says that at this point we are מתוודה בלחש—confess silently. This is an expression of our great longing for our father. The earlier *teshuvah*, with clamor and noise, is an expression of regret for our wrongdoings. But at this point we have reached the innermost longing to our father—and this we express with the יתוודה בלחש.⁶

Head to Head

In a letter to the Mezritcher Maggid, the Baal Shem Tov writes: "On the two days of Rosh Hashanah, before blowing the shofar, envision my face and the face of my teacher—whom you once merited to see..."⁷

Indeed, Chassidim interpreted the meaning of יתוודה בלחש as envisioning the Rebbe's face.

The Rebbe often repeated the idea that since Rosh Hashanah is the "head" of the year, the way to connect the "head" with the rest of the year for good, healthy operations throughout the year is by connecting with the "head" of the Jewish people.

In the course of the *maamar* on Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe would specifically mention each of the Rabbeim, and during the *farbrengen*, a *niggun* of each Rebbe was sung.

The Rebbe once explained the reasoning behind this custom, based on a story told by the Frierdiker Rebbe how his father, the Rebbe Rashab, was sure to mention something from each of the preceding Rabbeim on Rosh Hashanah. Because mentioning the Rabbeim, an act of *hiskashrus*, assists us in our everyday *avodah* of Torah and mitzvos, especially in the *avodah* of Rosh Hashanah.⁸

Following in the ways of our Rebbe will be the channel by way of which we'll receive the *bracha* for a כתיבה וחתימה טובה לשנה טובה ומתוקה, for all good materially and spiritually, on Rosh Hashanah and for the rest of the year.⁹ **T**

1. Igros Kodesh RaYYaTZ vol. 3 p. 489.

2. Likkutei Sichos vol. 9 p. 450.

3. Igros Kodesh RaYYaTZ vol. 10 p. 425.

4. Toras Menachem vol. 2 p. 4.

5. Reshimas Hayoman p. 338.

6. Likkutei Diburim vol. 1 p. 100.

7. Hatamim vol. 1 p. 121.

8. Rosh Hashanah 5746; Hisvaaduyos 5746 vol. 1 p. 28.

9. Igros Kodesh vol. 3 p. 468. See "Pidyon Nefesh" Derher 24 (101), Tishrei 5775.



A Tale of Two Zalmans

With a determined expression on his face, Avrem'ke started out on his journey to Lubavitch, though he had in fact just returned from there.

Logic wasn't dictating the actions of this wealthy man, rather he was being steered by the sheer desperation that pumped in his heart. He was childless and although he had asked the Tzemach Tzedek countless times for a *bracha* in this matter, he had never actually received one. This painful situation was the source of much suffering for him and his wife and on this trip he wanted it all to change.

He decided, once and for all, that if the Rebbe didn't grant his wish he would then ask for permission to divorce his wife and have the chance to raise a family with someone else.

Once inside the room, the Tzemach Tzedek read

and reread Avrem'ke's *pan* and finally turned to him with a question, "What is the name of your wife's illness?"

"In the medical world it's called '*kumintzia*,'" he replied.

"And in Gemara terminology?"

"In Gemara I believe it's called '*durktis*.'"

"If so," concluded the Tzemach Tzedek, "What do you want me to do? Change nature?! How do you expect her to bear a child?"

He was completely broken when he heard this response and begged the Rebbe to at least allow him to divorce his wife and marry someone else so he wouldn't leave this world childless.

The Tzemach Tzedek thought for a moment and then asked Avrem'ke if he recalled in which *maseches* it discusses this sickness.

"In *Maseches Kesubos*² and *Nida*,"³ he replied.

"If so, why don't you go and bring a Gemara so we can look into it."

Avrem'ke left the room confused and dizzy. He entered the *beis midrash* and began searching for the correct *sefer* but his mind and heart were somewhere else. After a long while of walking around aimlessly he still hadn't found it. A short while later the Tzemach Tzedek walked in, opened up the right Gemara and began learning the relevant part out loud.

The Gemara⁴ mentions that someone who marries a *durkti* is lucky. The Tzemach Tzedek argued this logic but Avrem'ke pushed back and didn't want to accept it because ultimately he wanted children.

At last the unusual *yechidus* ended leaving Avrem'ke stunned, broken and utterly confused. He

saw in front of him a bleak future coupled with the horrifying reality that he had just had the nerve to have a debate with his Rebbe.

Once he had composed himself, Reb Zalman,⁵ one of the Tzemach Tzedek's sons, approached him and offered him an idea.

"The next time you go to my father for *yechidus*, I will write your *pan*, and you should include silver coins in the value of the Hebrew word '*hirayon*' (pregnancy). They should specifically be silver because that represents *chesed*.⁶ If you do this I hope you will then receive a *brocha* for a child."

A few weeks passed and Avrem'ke returned to Lubavitch. As planned, Reb Zalman wrote the *pan* which Avrem'ke then copied and included the money with it.

The Tzemach Tzedek read the *pan* carefully and

then exclaimed, “Why have you come a second time? Who wrote this *pan* for you? Have you come to waste my time again, after we already went through this and spent much time on this?”

I gave you my *brocha* and let you know my opinion on this. What else can I do?”

“Rebbe,” cried Avrem’ke, “A *brocha* isn’t enough for me. I want a promise.”

“A *brocha* isn’t enough?! Do you know what a *brocha* is? The meaning of a *brocha* is drawing down from the concealed into reality. This is what Yaakov [Avinu] did and this is what I have blessed you with.”

Avrem’ke began crying loud and bitter sobs, “Rebbe save me, give me a promise!”

The Tzemach Tzedek, however, remained adamant and he returned the *pan* and the money. As he was about to leave the room he said, “Only Hashem can help you.”

Once outside, he cried and cried so much that he almost fainted and nothing at all could calm him down.

A short while passed and Reb Zalman said to him, “Calm yourself, I will personally go to my father and ask on your behalf.”

After spending a long time inside the room with his father, Reb Zalman came out with a joyful expression and excitedly told Avrem’ke, “Don’t worry, you will have children.”

He invited him over for *melave malka*, which was a

welcome gesture because Avrem’ke hadn’t eaten or tasted a morsel in a long time. They sat together and discussed Chassidus and shared stories of previous generations.

During the meal Avrem’ke turned to Reb Zalman and said, “We have a tradition passed down from the Alter Rebbe that what a Rebbe can accomplish through his spirituality, a Chossid can achieve through genuine feelings of *teshuvah*.”

“Where did you hear this from?” asked Reb Zalman.

“I heard this from an elderly *melamed* who heard it directly from Reb Shmuel Munkes.”

Reb Zalman was very happy when he heard this and he confirmed that it was indeed true. “What do you want from me?” he asked.

Avrem’ke replied, “I am not suggesting you are a Rebbe, but a Chossid you certainly are.”

“So you want me to have thoughts of *teshuvah*?” Reb Zalman then put his head on the table and began singing the Alter Rebbe’s *niggun*. He sang in a soft tone for over half an hour. When he concluded the *niggun*, he picked up his head and his face was full of tears. He then turned to Avrem’ke and said, “Nu, you will have a son and when he is born bring him here and we shall see what name to give him.”

Some time went by and indeed his wife gave birth to a boy. His joy knew no bounds and he immediately dispatched a messenger to Lubavitch to find out what the name of his son should be.

Reb Zalman heard the news and replied that the boy should be called Zalman. When the messenger heard this he was startled and thought to himself, “How can the baby be named Zalman if his maternal grandfather has that name? Perhaps he has passed away...”

Catching him in mid thought, Reb Zalman said, “Wait and I will ask my father.”

The Tzemach Tzedek told his son that the boy should be called Schneur and he passed this on to the messenger.

A few weeks later Avrem’ke himself was able to make the trip to Lubavitch and he brought some *mashke* and cake that he had picked up in Vitebsk. He was abundantly grateful to Reb Zalman and wanted to bring him something as a sign of thanks and gratitude.

Reb Zalman, however, had his doubts about the *kashrus* of the cake and brought out *mezonos* and *mashke* that were produced in Lubavitch.

After greeting him warmly, he asked Avrem’ke, “Do you know why I told you to name him Schneur? Firstly because this is

the name of my [great] grandfather the Alter Rebbe, who was certainly a good Jew. Secondly because the name Schneur means two lights—you will have another son, *iy”h*.”

And so it was; he was blessed with another son.

In midst of the celebrations and after consuming his fair share of wine, Avrem’ke asked Reb Zalman to bless him with a daughter. This, however, he didn’t agree to and in fact he had a third son.

Avrem’ke’s three boys all grew up to be strong and successful but for their father it was a different story.

He had indeed merited to have children but he lost all his wealth and was left to traveling from town to town collecting money and saying over *maamarim*, with meager earnings to take home.⁷ **T**

(Based on *Shmuos V’sippurim* vol. 2 p. 179)

1. Generally this is a woman who has difficulty bearing children, and rarely have any, let alone many.
2. 10b.
3. 64b.
4. Kesubos ibid.
5. Reb Chaim Shneur Zalman. After the Tzemach Tzedek’s *histalkus* he became Rebbe in Liadi.
6. See Tanya perek 50.
7. See *Kuntres Uma’ayan*, Maamar 19



THE TRUE SHLICHUS



**RABBI YITZCHOK
DOVID GRONER**

Tammuz 5733

The answers given by the Rebbe in yechidus emanate from his yechidah sheb'nefesh—the innermost part of his neshamah. Being in yechidus forms the deepest connection possible with the Rebbe.¹

The Rebbe's every word is important and holds layers of meaning. In addition to the Rebbe's Torah communicated at farbrengens, the Rebbe taught countless lessons and gave much insight, guidance, and hora'os while conversing with individuals in yechidus. Transcriptions of these conversations are unique, taking a much more personal nature than the way the Rebbe spoke to a crowd and in a public venue.

This new column features excerpts of conversations with the Rebbe in yechidus.

Rabbi Yitzchok Dovid Groner a"h (5686 - 5768) was sent as the Rebbe's shliach to Melbourne in 5718. Rabbi Groner served as the rov of the Chabad community, and founder of the Chabad mosdos.

It should be noted that generally, when going into the Rebbe's room for yechidus, one would write a tzetl—a note containing one's questions, which was given to the Rebbe upon entering the room. The Rebbe would read it and answer the questions.

REB YITZCHOK DOVID'S TZETL:

5 Tammuz, 5733

כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א

I tried very hard to persuade several young couples [to move on shlichus to Australia]. As I'm told, what's holding them back is the physical distance.

Since the new building will, *iy"H*, be built as a Lubavitch center for girls, should we look into purchasing a [separate] house for the activities of Tzeirei Agudas Chabad?

There was a choir made up of the yeshiva students this year. We have not yet begun, but there was a question whether we should make a tape.

My planned travel arrangements are that I depart from New York to Belgium Sunday night, 15 Tammuz, firstly, because the ticket is cheaper, and secondly, I have to visit Rabbi Kreiswirth² with regards to a couple: the husband left his wife and is in Melbourne; I have to speak with the wife's parents. From there, I will go to Paris for a day, from there to London, where I'll stay until after Shabbos Parshas Pinchas. On Monday, I will travel to Eretz Yisroel, and depart from there on Wednesday morning, 10 Menachem Av, passing through Athens and Manila, arriving in Melbourne, G-d willing, on Erev Shabbos Nachamu. We ask the Rebbe's *brachos* for the success of the *mosdos* in Australia; great success and a good trip.

התלמיד יצחק דוד בן מנוחה רחל

לזכות
החיילת בצבאות ה'
חנה תחי'
לרגל הולדתה בשעתומ"צ
טו"ב תמוז ה'תשע"ז

נדפס ע"י הורי' שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע
למאנטעווידיעא, אורגוויי,
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל
וזוגתו מרת ח' מושקא שיחי
שם טוב

THE YECHIDUS

In his diary, Rabbi Y.D. Groner records the *yechidus*:

I went into yechidus on the eve of 6 Tammuz. The Rebbe read the tzetel and then proceeded to take the duch and read a bit of that too.

The Rebbe then began to speak:

A recording is a good thing to make, but make sure that it's written when it [may] be listened to, as well as [writing] *baruch Hashem* [in Hebrew] or in English.

The other things that you wrote about, I will mention at the *Tziyun*. Regarding the young couples, as I understand, you write that the shortcoming is the distance. I don't see it [that way]. It used to be that people traveled once in their lives. Today, people travel for every *simchah*; a bar mitzvah, *chasunah*; from here to Eretz Yisroel, from Eretz Yisroel to Australia. The only place where people don't travel to is Russia, because they don't allow people in. Distance—one takes a plane and is there in a day. Perhaps the standard of living is lower, or the furniture, or the homes [are different], but distance is no reason. And shlichus—Australia is the right [and true³] shlichus.

The Rebbe continued in this vein and said that we should find out the real reason why they don't want to go, and then we can try to fix this.

The Rebbe continued: **Regarding shlichus, people here are fighting over (רייסט מען זיך) going to S. Diego, S. Francisco.**

Regarding buying buildings, since I'm in a mode of expansion, if it's with the *baalei battim* [i.e. with their support], you should purchase a building. Regarding the recording I answered you [already].

Regarding the journey, the Rebbe asked whether what I had to see Rabbi Kreiswirth about was something rabbinic; I answered. The Rebbe asked whether I know him, I said only by phone.

The Rebbe: It's worthwhile to meet him. Visit him and give him regards from me, and it's truly like that. Thank him for what he did for [the campaign of] "Who is a Jew" [מיהו יהודי]. It is still a binding law. I am of the approach that, "One who has 100 wants 200," and therefore he must do more influence and *rabbanus*...

And in these two places—Athens and Manila. Manila is a ruin. There was once a chaplain [there]. He arranged

***kashrus*. Now they want to expel the American military, and it's frightening there. You learned with the one who came from Shanghai, Bukiet knows him, he lives in Far Rockaway, he has a brother-in-law there. You should meet with the community [in Manila] and be active [with them].**

In Athens, too—you should speak to Rabbi Hodakov; they have been working towards building a *mikveh* for three years, but nothing came of it. [Your brother] Leibel [Groner] and Yudel Krinsky know the Jewish committee, who's who in the community, and a book is published there about the activities, so it will be advantageous for Australia and for them—meaning to say that they will certainly print something about the visit, and send telegrams liberally: a person well-acquainted with Australian Jewry is visiting.

...Also in Eretz Yisroel, ask if you can be of use—a "new and unfamiliar face" (פנים חדשות) from Australian Jewry. Australia has a large role there, because Australia sends an inordinately large amount of money to Eretz Yisroel. And regarding what you wrote that you're raising money for them [Eretz Yisroel⁴—if they don't know this, you should publicize it.

And visit Shazar, if he will be back [from his travels⁵], and encourage him, bring him my regards.

The Rebbe spoke about Zalman Shazar's loneliness after completing his term as President.

The Rebbe ended off with a *brocha*: You and your wife should attain the innermost point [נקודה הפנימית], *nachas*; *chassidishe nachas* from your children, etc. Great success in community work. ①

1. See *Yechidus—The Ultimate Bond* Derher 33 (110), Tammuz 5775.

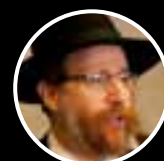
2. Rabbi Chaim Kreiswirth served as the longtime Chief Rabbi of Congregation Machzikei Hadass Antwerp, Belgium.

3. R. Yitzchok Dovid wrote "אמת" - "True" in parentheses because he didn't recall with certainty whether the Rebbe said that.

4. Rabbi Groner would speak each year at the dinner of the UIA - "United Israel Appeal." A fund that mobilizes support for Eretz Yisroel from Yidden in the diaspora.

5. He visited the Rebbe the following week on 12 Tammuz, on the way back to Eretz Yisroel. See *The Desert Blooms—Interview with Rabbi Shimon Lazaroff* Derher 56 (133), Iyar 5777.

Uniting. Uplifting. Trans- cending.



SIMCHAS TORAH with the Rebbe

The Zohar teaches us that there are seven *Ushpizin* who grace us with their presence on each of the seven days of Sukkos. The Friediker Rebbe added that we are also visited by the seven “*Chassidishe ushpizin*,” the Baal Shem Tov, the Maagid, the Alter Rebbe and so on.

The Rebbe added that regarding the day of Shemini Atzeres, the day belongs to the Friediker Rebbe. “We don’t find the word ‘*ushpiza*’ used about this day. That’s because the [Friediker] Rebbe does not come merely as an *ushpiza*—a guest, but as a *baal-habayis*. For he is the *nossi hador*—and he is ultimately the *baal-habayis* over the whole generation!”¹

It follows that Simchas Torah is the day belonging to the Rebbe, *our nossi*. Indeed, Chassidim will recall how on this day the Rebbe’s face shined with extraordinary brightness. The *giluyim* on this day were exceptional, and they swept the Chassidim off to a higher world.

In honor of Simchas Torah, A Chassidisher Derher spoke with three Chassidim who shared their memories of unforgettable Simchas Torahs in the Rebbe’s presence: Rabbi **Yosef Gopin** shliach to West Hartford, CT, Rabbi **Chaim Shapiro** menahel of the yeshiva in Morristown, NJ, and Rabbi **Alter Tenenbaum** shliach to Irvine, CA.

מוקדש
לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר
נדפס ע"י ולזכות
הרה"ת ר' שמואל אהרן וזוגתו מרת חנה
ובניהם
שניאור זלמן, מנחם מענדל,
דוד, אליהו, שיחיו
נובק



MOTZOEI SIMCHAS TORAH 5748, LEVI FREIDIN via JEM 16849

MOTZOEI SIMCHAS TORAH 5750, YOSSEI MELAMED via JEM 123502

Building Up

Rabbi Tenenbaum: Every day in the Rebbe's presence was an experience; *mincha*, *maariv*, or any other opportunity was always special. The feeling grew stronger on special occasions; Shabbos, farbrengens, *yomei d'pagra*, there was always something to learn and to experience.

This all came to a head in the month of Tishrei, the head of the year. Spending Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkos in the Rebbe's presence was an experience like no other. Each Yom Tov took on new meaning.

Guests from around the world would come to spend this festive month with the Rebbe, and as the month went on, the crowds began to swell. Simchas Torah was the crescendo; this was the Yom Tov that nobody wanted to miss.

Rabbi Shapiro: From the year 5741, the Rebbe would say a *sicha* every night of Sukkos, dwelling on the *ushpizin* of the day; each night, the Rebbe would encourage the *simcha* to grow, and the momentum would build up towards Simchas Torah.

As stated, Chassidim have associated the day of Simchas Torah with the Rebbe himself. In truth, the *giluyim* that we saw from the Rebbe on Simchas Torah were unparalleled; nothing compared. On every level, this was “the” Rebbe's day.

Hoshana Rabbah

Rabbi Tenenbaum: Erev Simchas Torah—Hoshana Rabbah—was a special day in its own right. At night, the Rebbe would say a *sicha*, and at one o'clock in the morning, the Rebbe would enter the shul for Tehillim.

In the morning, *shacharis* took a couple of hours, and later in the day, the Rebbe would give out *lekach* to women, children, and any men who didn't receive on Erev Yom Kippur.

Meanwhile, the *gabbaim* would frantically try to clear the shul to clean up and set up for *hakafos*; they would turn the lights on and off, shouting at people to leave—it was always an amusing sight.

The *gabbaim* would clear out the shul, and begin to set up. All of the benches were removed, and in the middle of 770 they would create a “*ches*”—a square enclosure where the *hakafos* would take



HOSHANA RABBAH 5750, LEVI FREIDIN via JEM 153046



place, surrounded by metal tables to ensure that the crush of people wouldn't overrun it.

At the front of 770, the Rebbe's place was brought a bit closer to the *aron kodesh*, leaving a narrow space near the south wall for the elder Chassidim to stand, away from the crush of people.

Rabbi Shapiro: In the later years, the Rebbe's place was raised to double the height, and an additional *bimah* was placed inside the *ches*, so that the entire crowd, even from the back of 770, would be able to see the *hakafos*.

Connecting the Rebbe's *bimah* and the *ches* was a *shvil*, a pathway protected by tables, for the Rebbe to reach the middle of the shul during his *hakafos*.

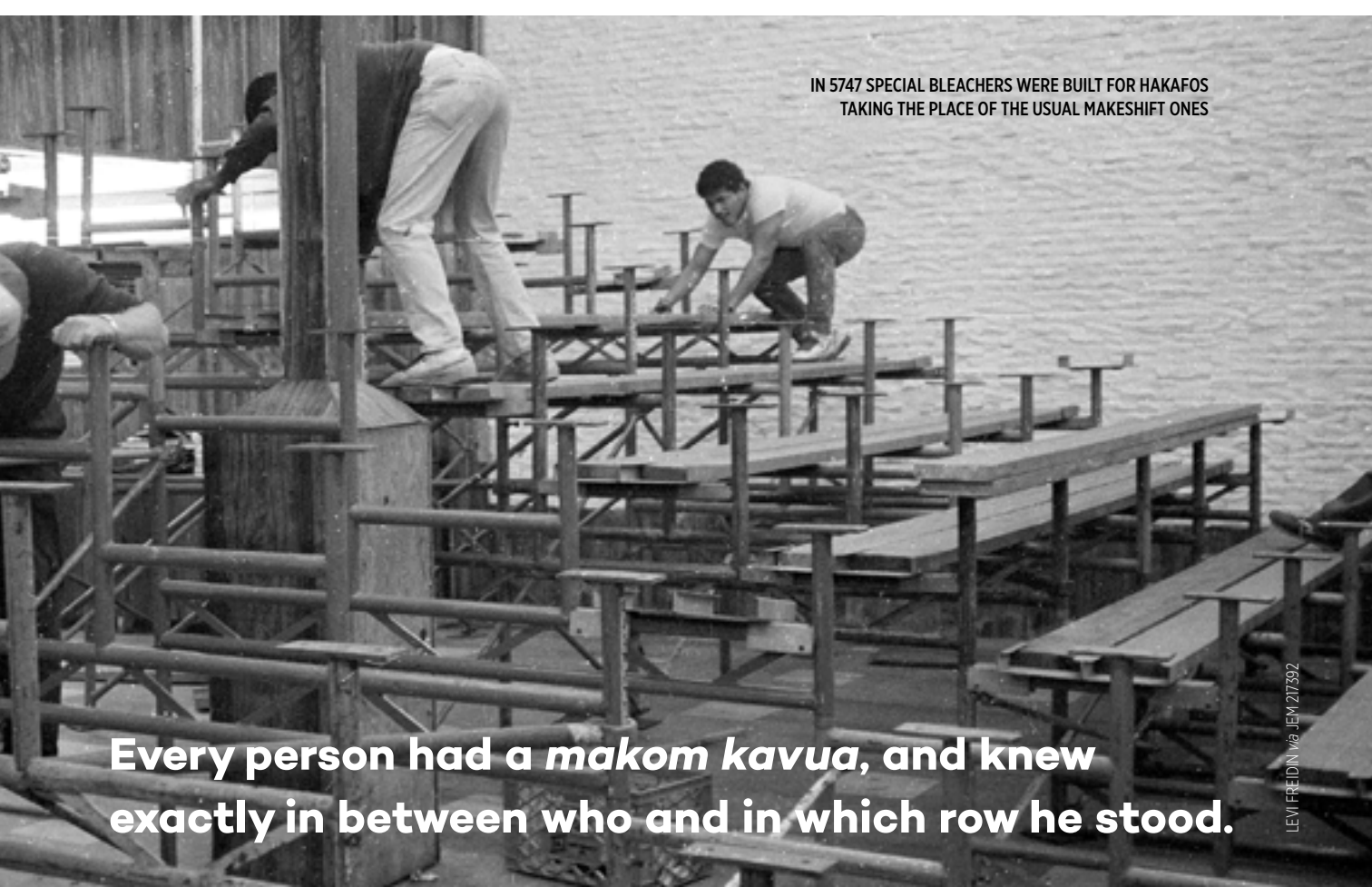
The walls of 770 were lined with bleachers built of tables and benches. Certain spots on the bleachers were reserved for people from specific locations—France, England and so on. California stood on the bleachers on the right side of the *ches*, and Miami was to the left. Many *anash* communities

would struggle with a *minyan* on Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah, as so many traveled to be with the Rebbe.

The floor space looked empty, but every inch was accounted for. Every person had a *makom kavua*, and knew exactly in between who and in which row he stood.

Simchas Torah was the most packed day of the year in 770. During the Rebbe's *tekios* on Rosh Hashanah, the area in front of the *bima* was full, but now every inch of 770 was taken. Extra air-conditioning units were brought in, and the noise they emitted made it very difficult to hear the proceedings.

The building of 770 remained locked until about half an hour before *licht bentchen*. Once the doors opened, people flooded inside and grabbed their places to ensure they would be able to have a good view of the Rebbe. As 770 filled up, excitement filled the air. Here and there you heard a *Simchas*



IN 5747 SPECIAL BLEACHERS WERE BUILT FOR HAKAFOS
TAKING THE PLACE OF THE USUAL MAKESHIFT ONES

Every person had a *makom kavua*, and knew exactly in between who and in which row he stood.

LEVI FREIDMAN/JEM 217392



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Torah'diker niggun, and there was a palpable anticipation for the Rebbe's entrance to maariv.

Maariv

At the designated time, the Rebbe would join the crowd for maariv.

Rabbi Shapiro: Upon entering the shul for *maariv* on Shemini Atzeres, the Rebbe would be greeted to the sound of a resounding *niggun*, usually the tune of *kesivah vachasima tovah*.²

By this time, the atmosphere of *hakafos* was already in the air. When the Rebbe reached his platform, he would lay down the *siddur*, turn around to the crowd and begin to dance, clap, and encourage the singing with both arms. It was with this spirited song that you felt that Simchas Torah had really begun.

The *chazzan* would then proceed with *maariv*, which was lead with the *nusach* of *Yamim Noraim*. The Rebbe would encourage the various tunes very strongly.

Rabbi Tenenbaum: After *maariv* concluded, before *Aleinu*, the Rebbe would leave the shul, and those who wished had a chance to make *kiddush* in the sukkah.

One year in the early 5730s—I was still a child at the time—leaving *maariv*, the Rebbe went down the pathway that led to the *ches* of *hakafos*, and upon reaching the tables at the end of the *ches*, the Rebbe saw that it was completely closed from all sides; there was no way to proceed. I remember watching as the Rebbe sat down on the table, swung his feet over, and continued on. It was such a Simchas Torah moment. The Rebbe never goes back, he never retreats.

Hakafos Entrance

At 9:00 p.m. the Rebbe would return to the packed shul for hakafos.

Rabbi Gopin: The first *hakafos* I was present at was Shemini Atzeres 5730. I had just arrived then as a *bochur* from Eretz Yisroel. A friend of mine gave me a place to stand; it was a high perch on the bleachers, where I had a clear view of everything.

That year the Rebbe began *hakafos* on a special note. After entering the shul and reaching his place, the Rebbe turned around and began singing “*Ki Anu Amecha*” (the slow, “*baal teshuvah*” version).³ It was a very unique moment; the *simcha* of Simchas Torah paired with the solemnity of the *niggun* created a very special atmosphere.

Another year, we sang “*Ata V’chartanu*” as the Rebbe entered the shul, and the Rebbe encouraged the singing in such a special way that the *bochurim* in 770 sang it throughout the next year.

Rabbi Shapiro: During the years that I was present (from 5741 and on), when the Rebbe returned to the shul for *hakafos*, the crowd would already be singing the same *niggun* as before *maariv*. Here too, the Rebbe would put down his *siddur* and begin vigorously encouraging the singing. The *lebedikeit* in the air is indescribable. You can watch videos of the Rebbe encouraging the *niggunim* at weekday farbrengens, but nothing compared to Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah.

Ata Hareisa and Niggunim

Rabbi Tenenbaum: After a few minutes of encouraging the singing, the Rebbe would turn back to his place, and 770 would immediately quiet down (as much as was physically possible).

At that moment you would hear the *gabbai* announce, “*Iz men mechabed, k’vod k’dushas, adoneinu moreinu v’rabeinu, mit’n ershten possuk Ata Hareisa.*”

The Rebbe would remain at his *shtender*, and we would hear the Rebbe’s voice, “*Ata hareisa lada’as, ki hashem hu ha’elokim, ein oid, milvado.*” The entire 770 would roar with the response, “*Ata hareisa...*”

This was always one of the special moments by the Rebbe. Chassidus says⁴ that Sukkos is the revelation of everything that occurred during Rosh Hashanah; here it felt as if it was the culmination of the *pesukim* that the Rebbe recited before *tekios* on Rosh Hashanah.⁵ On Rosh Hashanah we recited them with heartfelt seriousness, and now they came out with a resounding *simcha*.

Another special moment was when, at the end of all three rounds, the Rebbe would say the *possuk* “*V’haya zar’acha...ufaratzta*” three times.

Rabbi Shapiro: The Rebbe would be honored with the first and last *possuk* of *Ata Hareisa* (for the first and third round) and on Simchas Torah he would say *all* of the *pesukim* of the first round as well.


As customary, all the *pesukim* would be sold to the highest bidder. On Shemini Atzeres, the proceeds would go to Merkos L’inoyonei Chinuch, and on Simchas Torah night and day they would go to Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim. This was an arrangement that existed since the times of the Friediker Rebbe.

Rabbi Gopin: The Rebbe usually didn’t get involved in who recited the *pesukim*, but sometimes he would instruct the *gabbai* to honor a specific person or group. I recall how in 5730, the Rebbe told the *gabbai* to give a *possuk* to Reb Bentzion Shemtov, but being that Reb Bentzion would always hide from the Rebbe, it took a while until they managed to locate him.

Each Ata Hareisa would be followed by a lively niggun.

Rabbi Tenenbaum: Let me give some background and explain how *hakafos* worked. The Rebbe would stand for most of the time at his regular place at the front of the shul. However, for the first and last *hakafah*, he would dance in the

You would hear the Gabbai announce, “*Iz men mechabed, k’vod k’dushas, adoneinu moreinu v’rabeinu, mit’n ershten possuk Ata Hareisa.*”



Chassidim would take the opportunity to wish the Rebbe, “*Derlebn iber a yor.*”

20 TISHREI 5751, LEVI FREIDIN via JEM175659

middle of the shul where there was no *bima* (until the last few years).

So there were two choices for the best location. You could stand closer to the front and have a good view of the Rebbe's place, but you would miss the Rebbe's own *hakafos*. On the other hand, standing near the *ches* meant that you would be farther away during the bulk of the time.

Every *bochur* had his own *hergesh* and explanation. I chose to stand closer to the *ches* where I could see the Rebbe dancing with Rashag, and I was able to see the Rebbe at his place, albeit from a distance.

Rabbi Shapiro: After each round of *Ata Hareisa*, the Rebbe would turn around and begin a *niggun*; the first one was usually the famous *niggun simcha* the second was usually “*Al Hasela Hoch*” (without the words). In 5751 and 5752, the Rebbe started the tune of “*Zol shoin zein di geulah*” instead. The third would be *ufaratzta*, right after reciting the *possuk* of “*V'haya zar'acha...ufaratzta.*” I remember noticing that the Rebbe would say *uparatzta* with a *pei*.

The uniqueness was that the Rebbe himself began these *niggunim*, unlike most *niggunim* during *hakafos*. This was a sight I didn't want to miss for anything, so I would always position myself right near the Rebbe's place. Just as before “*Ata Hareisa*,” the Rebbe would turn around and clap and dance with unbelievable energy. Sometimes the Rebbe would clap at a pace we simply couldn't keep up with, or move his arms round and round, they looked like they were spinning. With each round again, the entire 770 would thunder with the sound of the *niggun*.

Rabbi Gopin: At my first *hakafos*, as I said earlier, I stood on the bleachers in the back of 770 (which wasn't so large at the time). Although I saw everything, I felt like a spectator, and I felt that in order to really experience *Simchas Torah* I needed to be closer to the Rebbe. The next year, I positioned myself at the front, at the Rebbe's feet, literally. There, I was able to watch the Rebbe dance with his hands and feet, with his whole being. Those *hakafos* were a whole different experience.



When the Rebbe would go to his *hakafos* in the middle of the shul, we would jump onto the Rebbe's *bima*, and thus be able to see those *hakafos* as well.

Down the Shvil

The time for hakafos had arrived and the sifrei Torah were now taken out of the aron.

Rabbi Tenenbaum: The Rebbe would receive the small *sefer Torah*⁶ and begin making his way to the middle of the shul.

This was always a very special moment. The Rebbe would slowly make his way through a *shvil* lined with metal tables and heavy chains, and, especially older, Chassidim would take the opportunity to wish the Rebbe, “*Derlebn iber a yor—*next year once more.” The Rebbe would look at each person, and answer, “*Gam atem—you too.*”

Rabbi Shapiro: The Rebbe's face was shining and those standing nearby felt a sort of closeness with the Rebbe at that moment. People would ask the Rebbe for *brachos*; it was well known that

this moment was an *eis ratzon* to ask for anything you need, and in general, everyone wanted the opportunity to kiss the Rebbe's *sefer Torah*. The *shtuperei*, the pushing around the *shvil* was very intense.

It was such a close feeling that I remember even young children wishing the Rebbe “*Derlebn iber a yor,*” and the Rebbe responded with a “*Gam atem!*” just as he responded to the *eltere* Chassidim.

The Rebbe's Hakafa

Throughout the years, the first hakafa was known as “the Rebbe's hakafa.”

Rabbi Tenenbaum: The Rebbe would arrive at the *ches* followed by the other *sifrei Torah* (carried by *mazkirus* and a few others), and he would begin reading the *pesukim* of the *hakafos*. Upon concluding, he would hand the *siddur* to Reb Leibel Bistritzky, and proceed with the *hakafa*.

After circling the *bima*, the other people holding *sifrei Torah* would move to the side and the Rebbe



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would place his hand on Rashag's shoulder. Now the real *hakafa* would begin. In that one split second, 770 was transformed.

Rabbi Gopin: When the *niggun* began, the *simcha* took on new proportions. You could feel that something just changed. The entire shul was *derhoiben*, uplifted, in a way that cannot be described in words. The feeling was from a different world.

I came from Kfar Chabad, where *hakafos* were always an exciting event, possibly even the highlight of the year. Yet nothing could have prepared me for

the Rebbe's *hakafos*. The Rebbe's face shone with an otherworldly glow; his face radiated *simcha*.

Rabbi Tenenbaum: Although the Rebbe danced with Rashag, he would look around and connect with every person there. The Rebbe would even look under the tables of the *ches* (where there were usually children) and to all directions and corners of 770 to see every single person, twenty, thirty rows back. Everyone felt included.

If you didn't make eye contact the first time, you could wait for the Rebbe to circle around once more. With his eyes, the Rebbe drew every single

person into the dancing, and every single person felt uplifted.

K'vakoras ro'eh edro, the Rebbe, like a shepherd, looked after each and every one of us.

The crush around the Rebbe's place was unbearable. People would come armed with pillows and cushions so they wouldn't be crushed from the mass of people converging towards the *ches* around the Rebbe's *hakafos*.

Rabbi Gopin: In truth, this amazing *tziyur* of what went on during the Rebbe's *hakafa* is simply indescribable!

One Shemini Atzeres night, I noticed the Rebbe looking at a certain individual standing on the bleachers. It was an Israeli *bochur* who was a bit troubled and couldn't "find himself" spiritually. During every round, the Rebbe looked at him directly.

The following night, the *bochur* made sure to stand close, near the *ches*; members of the *vaad hamesader* wanted to throw him out, but he stubbornly held on tight and refused to budge. When the Rebbe came to the middle, the Rebbe acknowledged him with a nod of his head, and over time, the *bochur* stabilized in his Yiddishkeit.

Rabbi Tenenbaum: As Rashag grew older, dancing at *hakafos* became very difficult for him, yet he made incredible effort to be present and keep the *hakafa* going for as long as he possibly could. Nevertheless, the Rebbe kept the *hakafa* short so as not to strain him; not longer than two-three minutes.

One year, in 5741, Rashag was ill, and he wasn't at *hakafos*. We all wondered what the Rebbe would do. How would *hakafos* look? This had never happened before.

When the Rebbe arrived at the *ches*, he recited the *pesukim*, and then proceeded to dance on his own. It was an unbelievable sight. The Rebbe held the *sefer Torah* by the two *atzei chayim*, and rhythmically danced with it to the song, lifting it and lightly pointing it out towards the Chassidim.

Instead of making quick circles, the Rebbe remained in one place, slowly turning from side to side and "dancing with" each side of 770. The Rebbe danced with his hands, feet, with his whole being; it was an amazing, uplifting sight.

This *hakafa* lasted much longer than usual; without rushing, the Rebbe looked out in every direction, and "gave" the Torah to every single person present. This *hakafa* was truly different from any previous year.

Rabbi Shapiro: After that year, Rashag again participated in all of the *hakafos*, until 5748. From that year onward, the Rebbe once again danced on his own just as he had in 5741. Once again, the *hakafa* lasted much longer than usual; in 5748, it lasted 15-20 minutes.

As mentioned earlier, in the last few years, a high *bima* was erected within the *ches* and the Rebbe would go up after concluding the *pesukim*. Then, nobody was left out; everyone was able to see and participate.

Middle Hakafos

Then, following the hakafa, the Rebbe would return to the front of the shul.

Rabbi Tenenbaum: During the middle *hakafos*, the Rebbe would turn around to the crowd and encourage the singing with his arms. Each *hakafa* was full of *simcha*; the Rebbe danced up and down, swinging his hands in all directions and clapping to the *niggunim*. The Rebbe would keep everyone going with a *moirediker shturem*.

In general, the Rebbe would often encourage the *ziknei hachassidim*. As mentioned earlier, they would stand in a narrow area that would be opened only on Simchas Torah between the Rebbe's place and the south wall, where they had their own benches and bleachers. The Rebbe would turn to them often and encourage them to dance stronger and stronger (although they were elderly, many of them were actually younger than the Rebbe himself.)

There were times when the Rebbe would single out special groups to receive a *hakafa*; for example, in 5732 the Rebbe honored all of the new Russian immigrants, and in 5737 the Rebbe gave a *hakafa* to the guests from Chevron. However, these were exceptions, as usually the Rebbe was not involved in distributing the *hakafos*.

Rabbi Gopin: From his place at the front, the Rebbe would look around the entire room; he would pay attention to every corner and look at

every single person. Everyone danced with the same enthusiasm and inspiration, being totally transformed by the Rebbe's *simcha*.

Rabbi Shapiro: From my place at the front of the shul, you couldn't hear the regular *hakafa* proceedings. The honorees would begin a *niggun*, and then the Rebbe would turn around to the crowd and once again encourage the singing.

The Rebbe would dance very lively, and he would often urge and encourage specific people. For example, I remember the Rebbe motioning to Reb Yisroel Duchman, intimating that he looked sleepy. The Rebbe put his hand to his face and shook his face back and forth, as if he's sleeping.

After 5738, Dr. Ira Weiss would receive special attention quite often. The Rebbe would stretch out his arm while holding his pulse and smiling, as if to reassure him that his health was alright.

One time, there was a prominent person from the Jewish Theological Seminary at *hakafos*, and he was positioned right near the Rebbe's place. The Rebbe gave him a lot of attention; at one point, he asked the Rebbe why there was such a *balagan*, and the Rebbe replied that it was always like that in Lubavitch during *hakafos*.

On Simchas Torah night, some people would say *l'chaim* to the Rebbe as well.

With the Children

In 5741, the Rebbe announced the founding of Tzivos Hashem⁷ during Sukkos, and throughout Yom Tov, he had given the children special attention. On Shemini Atzeres, this all came to a head. At the fifth *hakafa*, the Rebbe announced that all children should come into the middle of the shul, and he would conduct the *hakafa* together with them.

Children began streaming from all sides of 770 to the *ches*. The Rebbe came with his *sefer Torah* and began dancing among the children, and often lowered the *sefer Torah* to give us the opportunity to kiss it. The Rebbe's face radiated; he was beaming and smiling, it was an amazing sight.

For the younger children (including myself), it was a very intense experience. We were crushed by the older kids, and many of us felt quite lost; a number of children were crying. But still, it was an

amazing *hakafa* and the Rebbe repeated it the next night as well.

During *Aleinu*, back at the front of the shul, the Rebbe motioned to us but I didn't understand what he wanted. The Rebbe turned to Rabbi Groner and asked that all children join him on the *bima* for the rest of davening, and that is what we did.

The Seventh Hakafa

Before the seventh hakafa, the gabbai would once again announce that they are honoring the Rebbe and the Rebbe would be given the sefer Torah.

Rabbi Tenenbaum: The seventh *hakafa* was similar to the first. The Rebbe would make his way to the middle where he would dance with Rashag, and in the later years, himself.

At his *hakafos*, the Rebbe would sing the famous *hakafos niggun*. (In the later years the Rebbe started Harav Levi Yitzchok's *hakafos niggun* instead. –ed)

Once again, 770 would be electrified; the singing and dancing grew stronger and stronger, and the Rebbe would face each direction and “dance” with every single person present. If the spirit of the middle *hakafos* was a bit less than earlier on, now the uplifting feeling returned in full force.

Rabbi Shapiro: The most memorable *hakafos* in my recollection is Shemini Atzeres 5748. The Rebbe was extraordinarily *b'simcha*, and his *hakafos* lasted very long. As he returned to his place at the conclusion of the seventh *hakafa*, we suddenly learned that it wasn't over yet. The Rebbe turned around holding the *sefer Torah*, and began three separate *niggunim*, in essence adding a full eighth *hakafa*. The Rebbe was jumping and dancing with tremendous enthusiasm as we all tried to keep up.

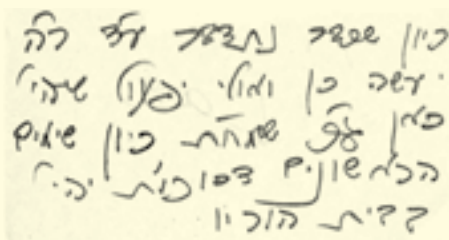
While Shemini Atzeres *hakafos* usually lasted until about 10:30 (they began at nine o'clock), that year it lasted until 12:30 a.m. I remember someone that had been present at *hakafos* since 5713 saying that he never experienced a *hakafos* like that in his life.

Aleinu L'shabeiach

Rabbi Shapiro: When the Rebbe returned to his place at the conclusion of *hakafos*, the crowd would



Stay Here for Simchas Torah



TEXT OF THE REBBE'S RESPONSE IN HIS HOLY HANDWRITING TO A BOCHUR WHO WROTE THAT FOR ROSH HASHONAH AND YOM KIPPUR HE WILL REMAIN IN YESHIVA, NEAR THE REBBE, AND FOR SUKKOS HE PLANS TO BE AT HOME:

“כיון שכבר נדבר ע”ד [על-דבר] ר”ה [ראש-השנה] יעשה כן ואולי יפעול שיהי’ כאן ג”כ שמח”ת [גם כן שמחת-תורה]. כיון שימים הראשונים דסוכות יהי’ בבית הוריו.”

“SINCE YOU ALREADY HAVE COME TO A CONCLUSION REGARDING ROSH HASHANAH, YOU SHOULD DO SO [AS YOU HAVE DECIDED]. PERHAPS YOU CAN ACCORD TO BE HERE FOR SIMCHAS TORAH AS WELL, SINCE FOR THE FIRST DAYS OF SUKKOS YOU WILL BE AT YOUR PARENTS’ HOME.”

sing *Aleinu* and *Al Tira* in camp style, still on a high from *hakafos*.

I recall how once before *Aleinu*, the Rebbe told Chazan Moshe Teleshevsky to sing the “*Yehi Ratzon*” preceding *Sheyibaneh Beis Hamikdosh*. He told the Rebbe that there was too much noise, but the Rebbe motioned with his hands, as if to say, “It doesn’t matter, do it anyway.”

In 5742, as the Rebbe was leaving *hakafos*, he stopped at the bottom of the steps and announced, “*Daloy golus*, enough golus,” three times.

Rabbi Gopin: *Hakafos* were over, and the Rebbe would leave to the song of *V’samachta*. The elation at that moment cannot be described in words. The feeling that the Rebbe’s *hakafos* left us with was one that didn’t allow you to leave. When the Rebbe left the room, nobody moved; everyone continued singing and dancing, and we felt that the Rebbe brought us into a higher world. This wasn’t a feeling that only the *bochurim* felt; even regular *baalei batim* and older folks felt this way. The dancing would continue through the rest of the night.

If you weren’t dancing, you were participating in a farbrengen. I remember Reb Mendel Futerafarbrenge throughout the night. The atmosphere was from a different planet.

Each year was a different Simchas Torah. No two *hakafos* were the same; each year had a special *koch* and uniqueness.

The thought that the Rebbe had invested so much effort and revealed so much for his Chassidim simply put us in a different world.

Simchas Torah Night

Mincha on Shemini Atzeres would take place earlier than usual as most of the Chassidim would then leave on tahalucha.

Rabbi Tenenbaum: On the night of Simchas Torah, the *hakafos* were preceded by *tahalucha*⁸ and the Rebbe’s farbrengen, which occurred simultaneously. Every *bochur* knew that his place was at the *tahalucha*, but nevertheless it was a very painful concept, a real *mesiras nefesh* (which the Rebbe acknowledged as well).

Maariv would be held in the *zal* upstairs due to the very small crowd, and the farbrengen would begin at nine o’clock, lasting until around twelve. Some *bochurim* would go to nearby shuls to return quickly, but the Rebbe called them “smart boys”⁹ (not in the positive sense). Most of us were only present at the last hour or so of the farbrengen.

These farbrengens were very special, held in the spirit of Simchas Torah leading up to *hakafos*. The Rebbe would say deep and *geshmacke sichos*, often explaining the deeper meaning of the *pesukim* of *Ata Hareisa*.

Rabbi Shapiro: In 5752, the Rebbe stood up to dance while we sang “*Zol shoyn zein di geulah*,” for over ten minutes!¹⁰

When the Rebbe would explain *Ata Hareisa*, he would read them out of the enlarged copies that he used during *hakafos* (in the later years). Although in general the Rebbe didn’t often cry openly in the later years, I clearly remember a Simchas Torah night farbrengen when the Rebbe reached the *possuk* of “*Vayehi binsoa ha’aron*,” and he stopped, and began to cry.

“*Vayehi binsoa ha’aron vayomer Moshe*,” the Rebbe said. “*A Yid zol vis’n zein, az vu a Yid geit, geit mit em der aron*—Every Jew should know that wherever he goes, the *aron* goes along with him.”¹¹

That powerful image has remained with me until today.

Rabbi Gopin: In 5730, Reb Heishke Gansburg's wife passed away on the second day of Sukkos, leaving him with five orphans. He was a *baal menagen* and he would begin the *niggunim* at the Rebbe's farbrengen, but at the beginning of this farbrengen he wasn't present.

He arrived towards the end, and after the *sicha*, he began to sing "Iy vadye..." which means "We will not be deterred, whether by fire or water." The Rebbe jumped up and pushed his chair back, and danced with a *moirediker chayus*. The atmosphere was electrifying.

At the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe would tell the *gabbai* to announce the *seder*, and he would often comment and correct him, all in the Simchas Torah style.

Then, as soon as the Rebbe left, the shul would be emptied and they would begin reorganizing the room for *hakafos* once again.

The *hakafos* would begin at one thirty (in the later years, at one o'clock) in the morning, and usually, they were more *lebedik* than the *hakafos* of

Shemini Atzeres. The Rebbe was in a more serious mode on Shemini Atzeres, whereas on Simchas Torah he was extremely *b'simcha*.

Rabbi Shapiro: One unique feature of that night was the delegation from the Israeli consulate. They didn't keep the second day of Yom Tov, so they would drive to 770 and the Rebbe would speak to them, sometimes before *Ata Hareisa*, often for quite a long time. Standing together with them would always be Reb Gershon Ber Jacobson and several others.

Daytime Hakafos

Hakafos on Simchas Torah night would usually end at about 3 in the morning, leaving only a few hours until another uplifting hakafos...

Rabbi Tenenbaum: The day-time *hakafos* had a special feel to them, because much fewer people were present. This was certainly the case when the Rebbe entered the shul for *shacharis*; only a few hundred people would be present, and there was a very *heimishe* feeling. I remember times when

Every bochur knew
that his place was at
the tahalucha, but
nevertheless it was a
real *mesiras nefesh*.





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specifically those *hakafos* turned out to be the most *lebedik*. This time, the Rebbe would be dancing in his tallis, which often needed to be readjusted, and the sight was similar to that of Napoleon's March on Motzoei Yom Kippur, a very special *tziyur*.

Aside from the fact that only one *hakafa* was held, the *hakafos* were the same as the night before. The Rebbe would recite the entire first round of *Ata Hareisa*, and in between each round he would turn around and begin a *lebediker niggun*.

Rabbi Shapiro: Before and throughout *hakafos*, people would be saying *l'chaim* to the Rebbe. The *chazzan* for *shacharis* was usually Reb Yisroel Duchman, and he would "open the festivities" with a grand *kiddush* on *mashke*, announcing his "*shehakol nihya bidvaro*" with a bang.

Once, Reb Yisroel was walking with the *sefer Torah* while quite inebriated, and the Rebbe called out, "*Mach pavolye, du haltzt doch a sefer Torah—*

walk slowly, you are holding a *sefer torah*." He didn't hear what the Rebbe said, so the Rebbe repeated himself with a wide smile.

When taking out the *sifrei Torah* for *kriah*, Reb Yisroel would hold the Torah facing the crowd and announce, "*Echad Elokeinu*," then he would turn towards the Rebbe and declare with a flourish, "*Gadol adoneinu...*"

This was the type of thing that could only occur on Simchas Torah. The Rebbe would look around and talk to certain people; the atmosphere was one in which the Rebbe showed a closeness that we didn't see throughout the year, and Chassidim reciprocated the feeling.

For the actual *hakafa*, the Rebbe would go to the middle of the shul with Rashag once again. In the later years when Rashag wasn't present, the *hakafa* could last quite a while—ten or fifteen minutes straight. Also, when they would return the *sefer*



Torah to the aron and sing the customary “*Sisu V’simchu*,” the Rebbe would encourage the singing very strongly while continuously adjusting the talis.

At *krias haTorah* the Rebbe would always receive *chosson Bereishis*, together with the Frierdiker Rebbe. The custom was that the *gabbai* would say the Rebbe and Frierdiker Rebbe’s names in addition to the regular “*Ya’amod adonenu moreinu v’rabeinu*.” The fact that the Rebbe and Frierdiker Rebbe would be called for an *aliya* together always made it a very special and emotional time. You could hear a pin drop in 770 at that moment.

Rabbi Gopin: During *krias haTorah*, it is customary that every person receive an *aliya*. In the early years, I remember times when the Rebbe personally directed people to receive *aliyos*. (When the crowd grew too large, each person would remain in his place and have his neighbor call him up to the Torah instead.)

The atmosphere was very *heimish*, as mentioned before. I remember once, when *krias haTorah* was being disturbed by the *balagan*, the Rebbe called out “*Sha, shtiller...*” three times.

Daytime Farbrengen

Simchas Torah was not over. A few hours after davening, the Rebbe joined the Chassidim once again for a long farbrengen.

Rabbi Gopin: *Mincha* would again be held upstairs in the small *zal*, as the large shul was being arranged for the farbrengen, but even that was held in the Simchas Torah atmosphere.

In 5733, the Rebbe walked in, jumped onto his chair, and began encouraging the *niggun* “*Al Haselah Hoch*.”¹² That was the general atmosphere of Simchas Torah; the Rebbe’s entire *hanhaga* was different, in a way that is difficult to describe in words.

After an exhilarating forty-eight hours in the Rebbe’s presence, Simchas Torah would conclude with a farbrengen. These were long, *geshmake* farbrengens; the Rebbe’s *sichos* were profound, and the *niggunim* would be conducted with a *Simchas Torah’ diker* atmosphere. This farbrengen was always a long one, lasting from before *shkia* until around one o’clock in the morning.

When Simchas Torah would occur on Erev Shabbos, the Rebbe would stop eating and saying *l’chaim* from *shkia* time, and when the farbrengen would conclude, we would proceed with Kabbalas Shabbos. The next day, the Rebbe would hold two farbrengens, one as the regular Shabbos Mevarchim farbrengen, and the second, close to *shkia* time, as a continuation to the Simchas Torah farbrengen. At this farbrengen’s conclusion, (following *birkas hamazon*, *maariv*, and *havdala*), the Rebbe would distribute *kos shel bracha*.

Keeping in mind that we also attended the regular *tefillos* and *Tehillim* for Shabbos Mevarchim, we would ultimately be in 770 for 20 hours straight (until the wee hours of the morning), aside from a short break or two to grab a bite. Over the three days, the Rebbe spent literally dozens of hours with Chassidim.

Rabbi Shapiro: After *bentching*, the Rebbe would daven *maariv*, recite *havdala*, and distribute *kos*

Over the three days, the Rebbe spent literally dozens of hours with Chassidim.

shel bracha. This wasn't the only occasion that the Rebbe held *kos shel bracha* distributions, but it was definitely the longest and most *lebedik*. The Rebbe would also give out bottles of *mashke* to certain individuals (until 5749 or 5750), and the *chaluka* would often last until three or four in the morning.

Shacharis the next morning would be only a few hours away. Reb Pinyeh Korf would ask us, "Were you by *shacharis* of Isru Chag?" That was a special achievement.

Rabbi Gopin: In conclusion, it would not be a stretch to say that over the forty eight hours of Simchas Torah, the Rebbe came down to our level and lifted us to a higher plane. This was, in essence, a period of *hamelech basadeh*, the king in the field, when every Chossid felt a closeness and connection that we didn't feel any other time of the year. The *chizuk* and *hashpa'a* that we received then was unparalleled.

The Rebbe's *hashpa'a* on Simchas Torah was a spiritual force, which brought an elation and a feeling that transcended time and space.

About Moshe Rabbeinu it is said: "*maasei Moshe nitzchiyim heim*—the work of Moshe is everlasting." The Rebbe, our *nossi* is *nitzchi*, and all of his *inyonim* are *nitzchiyim*.

It is clear that the Rebbe continues to celebrate *hakafos* with us. Simchas Torah is the Rebbe's *ushpiz*, and is our opportunity to reconnect and lift ourselves higher, just as we were then.

And it's our job not to keep the inspiration for ourselves; we bring the Rebbe's *ruach* to the *hakafos* wherever we are. In my Chabad House, the first and last *hakafos* are dedicated to the Rebbe; we sing the Rebbe's *hakafos niggunim*, and I attempt to share with them a bit of the Rebbe's Simchas Torah.

The Rebbe writes that the power of memory is such that by reawakening occurrences in one's mind, it can transport the person to the original place and



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time of the occurrence.¹³ Hearing and sharing these stories of Simchas Torah with the Rebbe have the power to uplift us above and beyond the confines of the *gashmiyus'dike* world, until we realize that today as well—we dance with the Rebbe on Simchas Torah. And the Rebbe, for his part, showers us with all the *brachos* and *hashpa'os* of his special day.

May we merit to dance with the Rebbe on this Simchas Torah—in the physical sense as well—*l'mata meiasara tefachim*, with the *geulah shleima teikef umiyad Mamosh!* **1**

1. Sichas Leil Hoshana Rabba 5752.
2. The words *kesivah vachasima tova* were added to the tune in 5749. Until then, it was sung without words.
3. See Derher Tammuz 5776, p. 58.
4. See Likutei Torah Nitzavim 48b.
5. For more about Rosh Hashana by the Rebbe, see "*Rosh Hashana by the Rebbe*" Derher Tishrei 5777.
6. To read the fascinating story of the Rebbe's small *Sefer Torah*, see "*The Rebbe's Sefer Torah*" Derher Tishrei 5773.
7. See "*On the Front Lines*" Derher Adar 5777.
8. For more about *tahalucha*, see "*Tahalucha*" Derher Sivan 5776.
9. Shavuot 5744. Hisvaaduyos 5744 vol. 3 page 1932.
10. For a description of this Simchas Torah, see "*Leben Mitten Rebben*" Derher Tishrei 5775.
11. Leil Simchas Torah 5751, Hisvaaduyos 5751 vol. 1 page 183.
12. For a vivid description of this occurrence from Rabbi Meir Shneur, see Derher Tishrei 5776 p. 16.
13. Michtav Kloli 11 Nissan 5713.



להביא לימות המשיח

Inside the Number

Discovering Geulah in the Roshei Teivos of the Year

לע"נ
מרת בראנא שיינא דייטש ע"ה
בת ר' אברהם צבי הלוי
נלב"ע י"ג תשרי תשע"ה

נדפס ע"י בנה
הרה"ת ר' שלום דובער זזוגתו מרת חנה
שיחיו ומשפחתם
דייטש

“...When an explanation, a lesson, or a custom and the like increase love and fear of Hashem, then even if it's not explicitly written in *sefarim*, there is room for it. What's more, it is appropriate and proper to utilize it in order to increase love and fear of Hashem, especially since through this, Torah and mitzvos as a whole will be increased.

...In this vein, the explanation that is widespread among many Yidden, that the number of this year, תש"ו, stands for “תהא שנת ניסים” [“May it be a Year of Miracles”], can be understood to be a proper thing, since it increases love and fear of Hashem, and Torah and mitzvos in general.”¹

With these words, on Rosh Hashana 5750, the Rebbe explained the validity and significance of the *roshei teivos* (acronyms) based on the numerals of that year. This annual tradition had begun some eight years earlier, on Yud-Aleph Teves 5742, exactly three months before the Rebbe's 80th birthday. That day, the Rebbe went to the *mikveh*, but did not go to the Ohel afterwards. Upon returning from the *mikveh*, he sent out a note (to be added to the biography of the Rebbe in “*Shalshelas Hayachas*” of Hayom Yom) regarding the significance of the year: “...In many *sefarim*, the year 5742 is the year of the *ketz* [the end of *golus* and beginning of *geulah*]. ותא חזי מאי עמא דבר אומר שהוא ר"ת: תהי שנת ביאת—משיח—Come and see what the ordinary folk are saying: that it [this year] is *roshei teivos* of ‘תהי שנת ביאת משיח’—‘May it be the year of the coming of Moshiach.’”

From then on, the Rebbe would introduce *roshei teivos* of the year's number nearly every year, usually connected with the coming of Moshiach. The Rebbe viewed these acronyms as an indication of the year's distinguishing character and identity.

The following is a list of these *roshei teivos*, and some of the Rebbe's explanations of them.

תשמ"ב - ביאת משיח

"May it be Hashem's will that very soon we will merit the fulfillment of the prophecy hinted to in the acronym of שנת ביאת משיח 'May it be the year of the coming of Moshiach,' meaning that we will go out of *golus* and go forth to greet our righteous Moshiach."²

תשמ"ג - גאולת/גילוי משיח

"Drawing down a good and blessed year physically and spiritually... and this *brocha* is drawn down into the midst of the land, and there a *shturem* is made in honor of תהי שנת גאולת "משיח" ["May it be the year of the redemption of Moshiach"], which is the acronym of 5743, similar to the acronym of 5742, "May it be the year of the coming of Moshiach." Obviously, the intent is not merely that Moshiach should come, but more importantly, that Moshiach should be revealed ["גילוי"], and redeem (גאולת) the Jewish people, with the true and complete redemption speedily in our days, literally."³

תשד"מ - דברי משיח

"There's already been talk about this: now that the *roshei teivos* of תשמ"ג and תשמ"ב were well received, what will be the *roshei teivos* of this coming year—something on the subject of Moshiach, whose name is Menachem (like the name of the Tzemach Tzedek). The order of the letters was changed, as mentioned, to תשד"מ, the ד before the מ. This is because it is an acronym for תהי שנת דברי משיח ["May it be the year of the words of Moshiach"]—learning Moshiach's Torah from Moshiach's mouth, speedily, in our days."⁴

תשמ"ה - מלך המשיח

"And in a straightforward way: The allusion of this year will be fulfilled—

ה'תשמ"ה—the year 5745, including the letter ה for the five millennia] ה—the ה that specifies השנה [this year], ת—תהא [will be], ש—שנת [the year of], מ—מלך [the king], ה—המשיח, [Moshiach], speedily in our days, in our time."⁵

The Rebbe did not discuss an acronym for 5746.

תשמ"ז - זו שנת משיח

"May this be the year of Moshiach"—a year of Moshiach in a way of תהא ["May it be"]—may it [always] remain in its state (בהוויתו תהא), and "זו" ['this']—in a revealed manner, [like] one who points with his finger and says, 'this one.'"⁶

תשמ"ח - תשמה - חירות (ע"י) משיח

Unlike many other years, the Rebbe began the year without announcing a specific roshei teivos, but instead discussed the meaning of the actual letters "תשמה":

"The numbers of the year emphasize and announce: תשמה—[be joyous]! This is a command, as well as an assurance for the present, for every Jew—that they must be joyous.

...Still, some people have asked for a specific *remez*, an allusion in the number of the year that hints to Moshiach. The answer is that the letter 'ח' amounts to the number 8—which is very much connected to Moshiach."⁷

תשמ"ט - תשמט ידיך/מעשים טובים/ שנת משיח טובה

This was the first year that the Rebbe unveiled multiple forms of roshei teivos. The Rebbe also explained how the name of the year itself also contained a lesson.

"The allusion for the coming year ואשר'—*possuk*—תשמ"ט And that of your brother's which will be yours, remove [תשמט] your hand"—is a reference

to the fact that Hashem removes all of the debts that the Yidden have ('Your brothers'—for [the Yidden] are called brothers of Hashem), and when the cause of *golus* (the debts of the Yidden, 'our sins') is removed, the effect—*golus*—is removed, and the true and complete redemption arrives, immediately, on Shabbos Rosh Chodesh Elul (even before the beginning of the year תשמ"ט)⁸

"The year תשמ"ט also alludes to: ש"ט -, ת', or תהא - ת', תשובה a good Moshiach year. The letters מ"ט can also stand for מעשים טובים, good deeds. *Teshuvah* makes one's actions become good and luminary deeds. And they together can make this year into a 'good' Moshiach year. For in a year of Moshiach itself, there is good, and there's better."⁹

תש"ן - שנת ניסים

תהא שנת ... is The year's acronym... [may it be a year of miracles]! For immediately, in this year (5749), Moshiach will come, and as a result, the coming year (5750) will be a year of miracles."¹⁰

The Rebbe also mentioned the roshei teivos of תהא שנת נשמה (a year of the neshamah) and תהא שנת נחלה (a year of inheritance), as well as תהא שנת נתינת (a year of giving tzedakah).

תשנ"א - תנשא מלכותך - אראנו נפלאות

הי' תהא שנת ... The year stands for תהא שנת ... [may it be a year of 'I will show wonders']—great miracles... even compared to the נסים [miracles] of the year תשנ"א. The allusion is 'I will show miracles' or in the *possuk*'s words, 'I will show wonders.'"¹¹

תשנ"ב - נפלאות בינה - נפלאות בה - נפלאות בכל מכל כל

Before the year began, the Rebbe was asked by the shliach Reb Leibel Raskin

which roshei teivos to use when printing his yearly calendar and the Rebbe gave him a written response: תהא שנת נפלאות בכל.

In sichos, the Rebbe expounded on this point and mentioned other roshei teivos as well.

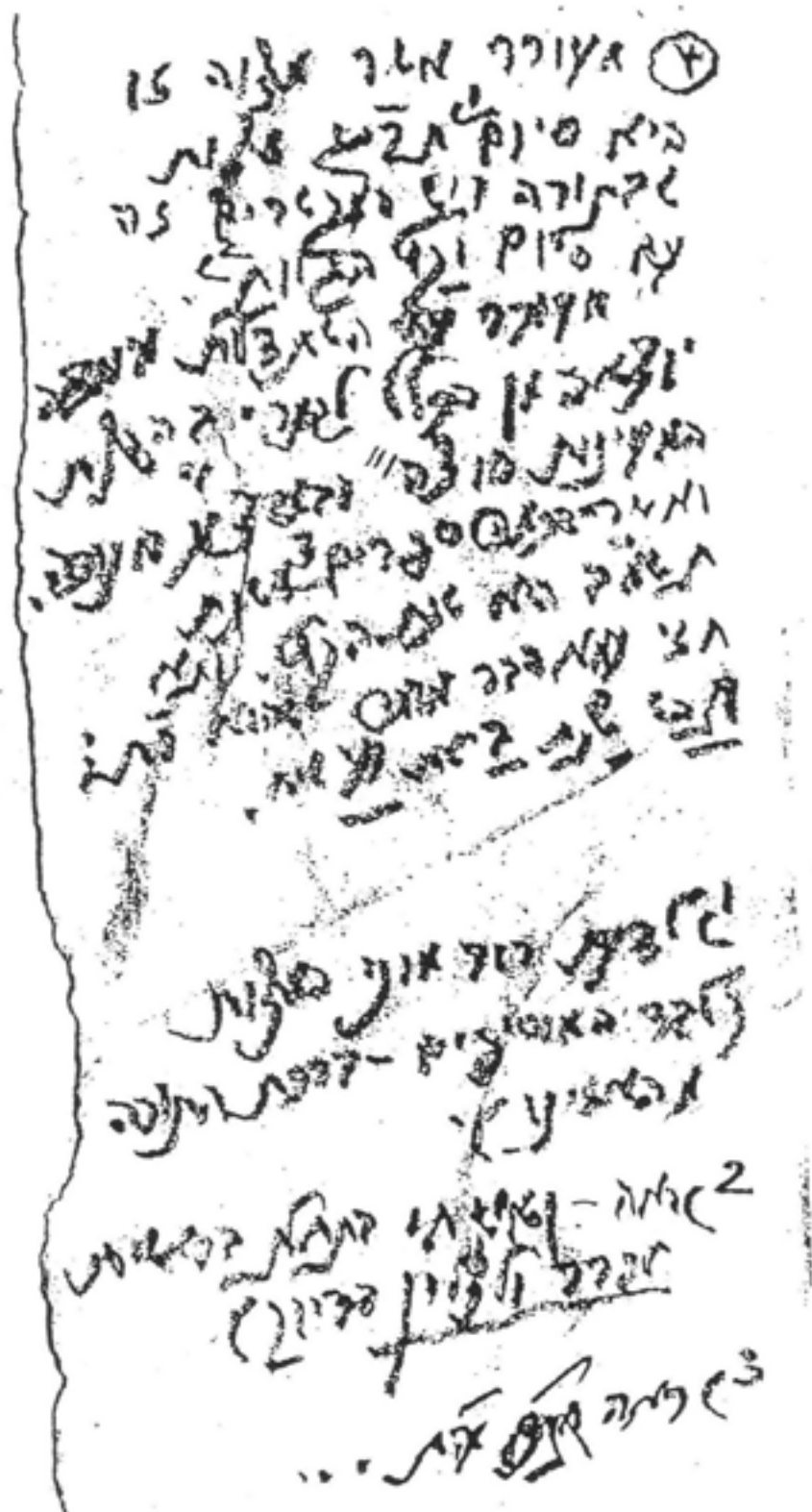
“... This year stands for תהא ... This year [may it be a year of miracles in everything]... this means that the miracles aren't merely specific things, but 'miracles in everything,' in an unlimited way...”¹²

The Rebbe also mentioned that adds up to the gematriya of קבץ—the ingathering of the exiles.¹³

תשנ"ג - שנת נפלאות גדולות;
תשנ"ד - שנת נפלאות דגולות

In the summer of 5752 and 5753 respectively, Reb Leibel Raskin wrote to the Rebbe asking which roshei teivos to use for his calendar and the Rebbe agreed for 5753 on שנת נפלאות—*a year of great wonders*, and for 5754 on שנת נפלאות דגולות—*a year of outstanding wonders*. **1**

1. Farbrengen Rosh Hashana, 5750.
2. Second day of Shavuot, 5742.
3. Erev Rosh Hashanah of 5743 - 29 Elul 5742.
4. Erev Rosh Hashanah 5744 - Hisvaaduyos 5743 vol. 4 p. 2074.
5. Erev Rosh Hashana 5745 - 29 Elul 5744.
6. Erev Rosh Hashana 5747 - 29 Elul 5746.
7. Shabbos Shuvah 5748, second farbrengen - Hisvaaduyos 5748 vol. 1 p. 81.
8. Shabbos Parshas Re'eh, 1st day of Rosh Chodesh Elul 5748.
9. Sichos 8, 9, 11 Tishrei and Simchas Torah 5749.
10. Shabbos Parshas Bamidbar 5749.
11. 7 Elul, 5750.
12. Shabbos Parshas Va'eschanan 5751.
13. Erev Yom Kippur 5752.



THE REBBE'S HANDWRITTEN ENTRY INTO THE היחס OF SHALOM YOM, ABOUT THE ACRONYM OF THE YEAR תשנ"ב.

eight facts MIVTZOIM

1

Women and girls, swept up by the fervor that *mitvza tefillin* had created, also wished to take part in it. The

Rebbe responded by providing them with their own sort of participation by either sponsoring a pair of tefillin or covering the expense of having them checked.

2

There are many initiatives and directives the Rebbe gave us but there are only 10 *mitvzoim*. Interesting to note is that three of these ten were introduced at the very same farbrengen. At the Shavuot farbrengen in 5734 the *mitvzoim* of Torah, tzedakah and *bayis malei sefarim* were launched; quadrupling the number from one to four in a single farbrengen.

3

There was nothing glamorous about the filthy Russian prison, crowded with Jew haters and criminals of the worst kind. Yet despite this grave danger, the

Friediker Rebbe, while incarcerated in Shpalerka, made sure to have with him a *siddur*, Tehillim and Tanya.

Later on, in the actual cell he made sure to receive a Chumash as well.

The Rebbe related this story in connection with *mitvza bayis malei sefarim*. Surely we can make the effort to have a *sefer* with us wherever we are.

4

In an effort to boost the availability of kosher food, as a part of *mitvza kashrus*,

the Rebbe on occasion encouraged some individuals to request kosher airline meals when flying to show the companies that this was in demand and would therefore become more readily available (and tasty!).

Rabbi Moshe Feller recalls how he had asked Prof. Velvel Greene, before he was frum, to eat only kosher on a flight from Minnesota to New York. He explained to the professor that besides the mitzvah aspect, it also helps personally because then the airline will see more demand. Velvel agreed, though, comically, the food never actually arrived!

5

Too young for *Mivtzoim*? Think again.

Involvement in the ten *mitvzoim* is not limited to a particular age group.

The Rebbe made this clear when he announced that any child under bar or bas mitzvah who participates in *mitvzoim* will receive a coin. In America it would be American currency and if the child lived abroad they would receive the equivalent in their own currency.

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

6

One doesn't usually give a birthday gift on his own birthday, but on 10 Nissan 5732, the Rebbe did just that.

The Rebbe announced that if someone goes out on *mitvza tefillin* the next day, Yud-Aleph Nissan, and encounters a Yid who needed a pair of tefillin, he should take down the address and the Rebbe will send that individual a free pair at his own expense. However, in order that it not be taken for granted, the Rebbe instructed that a dollar be taken from the Yid as his share in the payment.

7

"Since this will have an effect on kosher observance in many Jewish households, it needs to be beautiful externally as well, even if it will cost more to create. Surely, you'll consult cookbooks that are already sold in stores."

With this response, the Rebbe charged the women on the "purple cookbook" committee to see their publication as the future bible of the kosher culinary world. Initially the now famous "Spice & Spirit" cookbook was going to be like any run of the mill community publication, but the Rebbe saw things differently.

Sensing a need and opportunity to make kosher more understood and followed, the Rebbe used this revolutionary cookbook as a vehicle in making this a reality. Indeed, it is still a trusted authority in the world of both kosher cooking and of proper kosher observance.

8

The goal: 4,000 Tanyas printed and each one in a different city.

This was an objective set by the Rebbe to Rabbis Leibel Zajac and Zalman Chanan who had travelled from city to city in Russia printing Tanyas and had successfully brought the total number to 3,899. Now the Rebbe wanted another 101. At the *yechidus* in which they reported their progress, the Rebbe exclaimed, "Surely there are 100 cities left and for the last one, you should build a city just to print a Tanya in it."

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1 6 Tishrei 5728 | 6 Shabbos Parshas Tzav 10 Nissan 5732 |
| 2 Shavuot 5734 | 7 How One Purple Book Revolutionized Kosher Cooking, chabad.org |
| 3 As heard from Prof. Velvel Greene | 8 "Tanya to the World"—Derher Magazine 42 (119), Adar II 5776 |
| 4 12 Tammuz 5734 | |
| 5 15 Sivan 5734 | |



דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

לזכות
הרה"ר יוסף יצחק
וונגער מרת ח' שצער
ומשפחתם שיחיו
שפאלטר

The Shabbos Deal

AS TOLD BY ROSH LOWE (MIAMI BEACH, FL)

I grew up in Westchester, NY in a very secular environment. As children we had minimal exposure to the basics of Yiddishkeit.

In 1987 my family was going through a very difficult time and one Sunday Rabbi Reuven Flamer showed up at our home. Upon hearing my father's tale of woes, he drove him to 770 to receive a dollar and a *brocha* from the Rebbe. This meeting with the Rebbe had an indelible impression on my father and he started to grow in his commitment to Yiddishkeit and encouraged us to connect as well.

I was a child actor on Broadway and after graduating high school I moved to Los Angeles hoping to pursue a career in Hollywood. I married shortly after I arrived but

my acting career did not take off as I had planned. My father encouraged me to visit the Chabad House in S. Monica and at the Shabbos dinner we experienced there, the first seeds of our return to Yiddishkeit were planted by Rabbi Levitansky *a"h*.

After college I attended the Columbia School of Journalism and got my first job as a news broadcaster in Naples, FL in 1997. At the time there was one Reform Temple in Naples and that year I decided I would attend Rosh Hashanah services. My wife and I arrived at the Temple on Rosh Hashanah morning and we were greeted at the door by a man with a portable credit card machine.

He asked us if we had tickets to attend the service and we answered in the negative.

“Not a problem,” he said. “You can purchase your tickets right now. \$350 each ticket. It includes Yom Kippur services as well.”

My salary at the time was quite small and I did not have \$700 to dish out on a whim.

“I cannot afford the tickets,” I told him.

“Well, without tickets you cannot pray here today,” he replied.

We walked away deeply insulted and hurt, but it was the greatest blessing. I started to become hungry for greater involvement in Yiddishkeit and I resolved to move to a larger Jewish community where I could get more.

There was one problem. I was working in a second-tier news station in Naples and all the large Jewish communities are located in the highest media markets in the country. It is nearly impossible to transfer to the higher markets in such a short time. I needed a miracle.

My father went to the Ohel and requested a *brocha* on my behalf. This is what he wrote:

Dear Rebbe. Please bless my son Roshie with a job at WSVN in Miami. In exchange, Roshie will not work on Shabbos.

WSVN is one of the top news stations in the country and it is located ten minutes from The Shul of Bal Harbour. My father wanted me to live in close proximity to the community best suited for my growth in Yiddishkeit and to have a great career. He was so sure that the *brocha* would materialize that he sent me a copy of the letter.

At first I was flabbergasted. How can I agree to not work on Shabbos in the 24/7 television business? But I figured that the odds against me actually landing the job at WSVN were quite high, so I agreed to the deal.

Six weeks later I was asked to join the team at WSVN! This was an incredible leap up from the second-tier station in Naples, and I kept my part of the deal. It was very tough but I strongly believe that my career successes since then are due to my commitment to Shabbos.

For years, my wife and I struggled to have children and we finally decided to send a letter to the Ohel requesting a *brocha* for healthy offspring. Our son Yeshaya was born, hearty and healthy, nine months later!

The Rebbe's leadership continues. I am a big believer that when you attach yourself to a righteous person, miracles can happen. I've seen that in my own life. **T**



YOUR STORY

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



לזכות
הרה"ת ר' צבי הירש
וזוגתו מרת חנה ומשפחתם שיחיו
באקמאן



MOTZOEI YOM KIPPUR

The twenty-five hour period of Yom Kippur is one of the most awesome and intense times a Chossid can experience with the Rebbe. It is a combination of the holiest day, being spent in the holiest place, together with the holiest person, our Kohen Gadol. It is the climax of what began in Elul, and continued to intensify until this day.

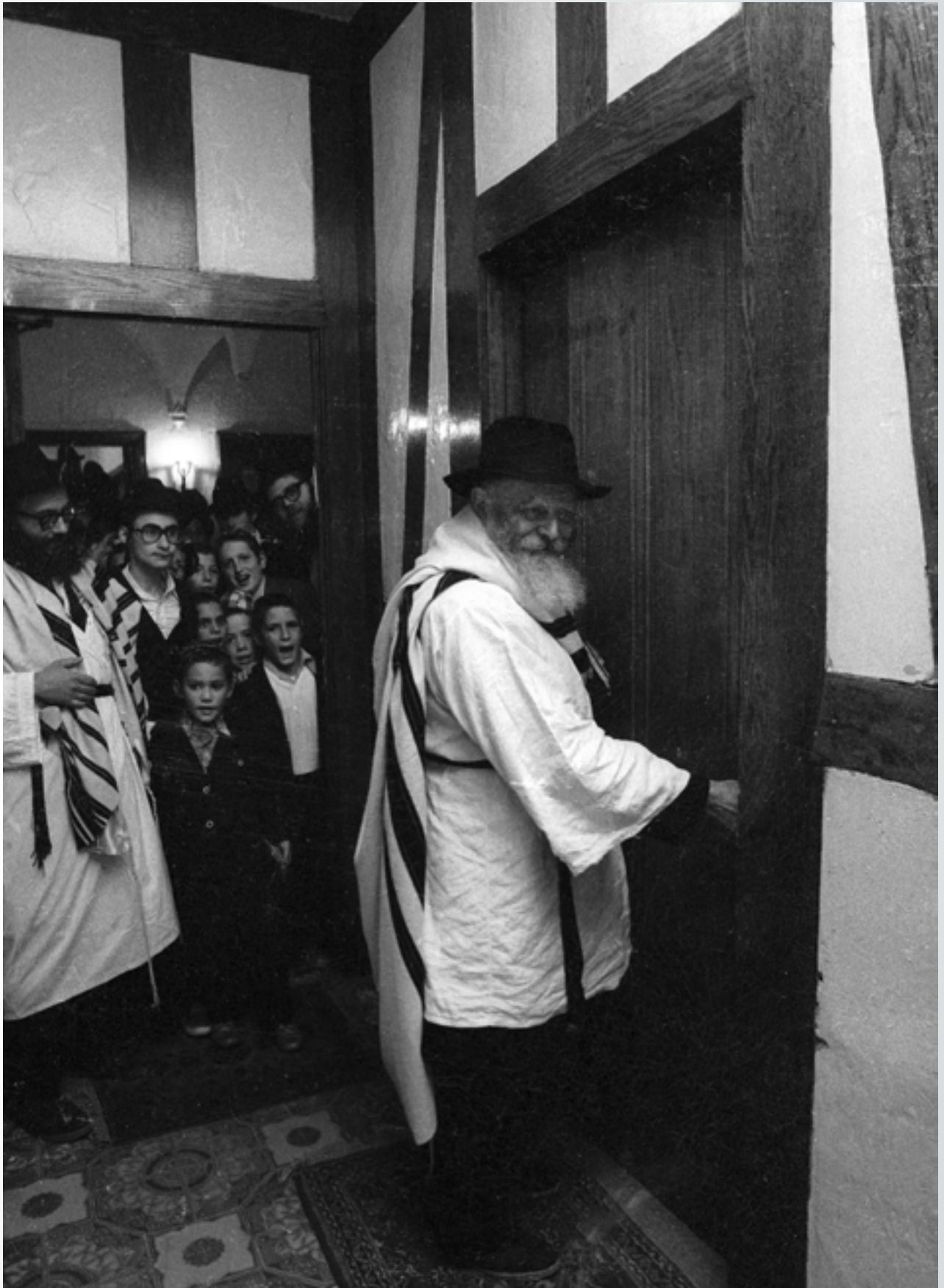
The Rebbe was visibly serious and often cried during the *tefillos* of Yom Kippur. Then this solemn mood was shattered during the singing of Napoleon's March, as the Rebbe turned to face the crowd, strongly encouraging the joyous singing. The shofar was sounded, and the joyous days of Sukkos—זמן שמחתינו—have arrived.

1. Following *maariv* the Rebbe turned around and joyously wished the assembled “*Gut Yom Tov! Gut Yom Tov! Gut Yom Tov!*”



2. The Rebbe returns to his room to make *havdallah*, emerging moments later to the outdoors for *kiddush levanah*.







5746, LEVI FREIDIN VA JEW 260977

3. Until 5732, the Rebbe would first go upstairs to the Frierdiker Rebbe's apartment for the breakfast *seudah*, and only afterwards go outside for *kiddush levanah*.



5729, CB HALBERSTAM via JEM 306766



4. Amidst joyous singing, the Rebbe returns home.

The Rebbe occasionally announced the words of the possuk in Koheles (9:7)

“לך אכל בשמחה לחמך—Go eat your bread with joy and drink your wine with a merry heart, for Hashem has already found your deeds favorable.”





5746, LEVI FREIDIN via JEM 268986

