

A Chassidisher **Derher**

א חסידישער דערהער

אט גייט אריין
נשיא דורנו און גיט
א קוק וואס טוט
זיך מיט זיינע
חסידים און מיט
זיינע תלמידים.
—ש"פ ווארא ה'תשנ"ב



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4 SWAN 5747, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 5667



- 4 **Gradual Miracles**
DVAR MALCHUS
- 6 **"His Own Business"**
LEBEN MITTEN REBBE'N -
TAMMUZ 5711
- 10 **It's not about you!**
KSAV YAD KODESH
- 12 **Breakthrough!**
WHAT MODERN TECHNOLOGY
IS REALLY ALL ABOUT
- 18 **The Friediker Rebbe**
TIMELINE
- 20 **Our Miracle!**
YECHIDUS
- 22 **A Taste of Reality**
THE REBBE'S FARBRENGENS,
THEN AND NOW

- 44 **Saying Chassidus**
EIGHT FACTS
- 46 **What a Contradiction!**
MOSHIACH
- 48 **A Loving Father**
INTERVIEW WITH
RABBI YISRAEL DEREN
- 60 **The Birthday Miracle**
DER REBBE VET GEFINEN A VEG
- 63 **Farbrengens Yud-Beis**
Tammuz 5743
MOMENTS
- 69 **Derher Letters**



About the Cover:

Quoted on the cover is an excerpt of a sicha from Shabbos Parshas Va'era, 5752:

"...Any minute now, the Nossi of our generation will arrive in our midst and observe what is going on with his Chassidim and talmidim..."

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Derher**Editorial**

There comes a time when a Yid may find himself in a desert, devoid of *kedusha*, where *Elokus* is not apparent.

It makes for a rather difficult situation.

“In days gone by,” he says, “we had *nesi'im*, great leaders who tended to us, guiding our each and every step. But today, in the last moments before Moshiach’s arrival, when the *nesi’ei Yisroel* are not visible to the physical eye, how can we know which path to take? How can we go alone finding the true way to Hashem?”

The answer, says the Rebbe, is that *tzaddikim* are likened to their Creator.

Hashem sends the *neshamas* down into this world to fend for itself in the spiritually dark and cold world of materialism. How is it expected to manage this challenge on its own?

For that, Hashem gave us the Torah. By studying the Torah we can constantly connect with Him and feel His presence in our midst. Hashem has placed His very essence within the Torah. The first word of the *Aseres Hadibros* attests to this: “אנא נפשי כתבית יהבית” (*roshei teivos*, “I have placed Myself within my Writings”).

Similarly, *tzaddikim* and *nesi’ei Yisroel* can be found within the writings they gave us. Their guidance and instruction continues even after their physical life here on earth. When we carefully and diligently study the Torah they taught us, we can connect to them on the deepest of levels.

The Torah tells us that before Moshe Rabbeinu passed away, he asked Hashem to appoint someone who would lead the Yidden after his *histalkus*. Even when they are about to leave this world, *tzaddikim* care only about their flock, says Rashi.

We find a similar sentiment expressed by the Rebbe Rashab in the moments before his *histalkus*: “אֵיךְ גִּי אֵין הֵימֶל אֹן דִּי כְּתִיבִים לֹאז אֵיךְ אֵיךְ—I am ascending to heaven and my writings I leave with you...”

His only worry at the time of his *histalkus* was to ensure that his *talmidim* be able to continue living in the way he taught them and have all the spiritual tools needed to do so.

In a deeper sense:

When the *nossi* says, “I’m ascending to heaven,” he is essentially explaining the reason for his ascent: to assist his flock from a higher place. As the darkness of *golus* gets thicker, the Yidden need even greater power to overcome the challenges, and so the *nossi* ascends on high to offer the added strength from a higher source. In turn, his flock receives everything that it needs, both in *gashmiyus* and in *ruchniyus*.

Where do we have the physical manifestation of the *nossi*’s continued provision after his *histalkus*?

It is found in the Torah that he leaves here in this world. “My writings I leave with you...”

(Based on *sichas Acharon Shel Pesach* 5717)

As we approach Gimmel Tammuz, the Rebbe’s words in this *sicha* speak for themselves.

The Rebbe’s Torah is more accessible today than ever before. Whether in *seforim*, in audio, or video, tens of thousands of pages and thousands of recorded hours of the Rebbe’s *farbrengens* are here to guide and instruct our lives.

In an interview we published in an article in this magazine, one of the *shluchim* we spoke to offered a unique perspective:

Today we have such a gift. We have the tapes and videos of the Rebbe’s *farbrengens*. This is unprecedented in history: From Moshe Rabbeinu until the Frierdiker Rebbe, we don’t have comprehensive recordings of a single one of the *nesi'im*. But the Rebbe wasn’t only speaking to the people in 770 at the time—he was speaking to those who would listen and learn the *sichos* until today and beyond.

Living with the Rebbe in this way will ensure that we too will feel the Rebbe’s presence in our midst, until we will be *zocheh* to a new *farbrengen* from the Rebbe, “תורה חדשה מאתי תצא” (“A new Torah will emerge from me”).

May it be *teikef umiyad Mammosh*.

The Editors
ט"ו סיון ה'תשע"ח



GRADUAL MIRACLES

For 18 days, world Jewry held its breath. The Lubavitcher Rebbe was arrested by the brutal Soviet regime, his fate unknown. Finally, the news was released that he would not receive a prison sentence. Instead, on Gimmel Tammuz 5787, the Frierdiker Rebbe was sent to exile in the remote village of Kostrama for three years.

At first, people didn't know what to make of this development. While less limiting (and dangerous) than prison, a multi-year exile was still quite severe. The isolation would be hard and there was always the possibility that the Soviets would change their minds.

Ten days later, Chassidim received the good news that the Rebbe would soon be released completely. Retrospectively, it became clear that

Gimmel Tammuz was in fact the first step to his redemption. Later still, it was revealed that the sentence of exile was itself a commutation of sorts—the original proposed sentence was capital punishment *r"l*.

As the leader of Yiddishkeit in Russia, this would have far-reaching implications. It wasn't just about one person's life; the fate and future of Yiddishkeit, and especially Chassidus, was at risk. The reprieve allowed the Rebbe to continue in his holy work. This is why this day is celebrated every year.

However, this begs the question: Why the various stages in the order of events?

Releasing a prisoner, in particular of this level, was not something

the Soviet government would do in natural times; the Rebbe's freedom was a clear miracle. Therefore, when Hashem made this miracle, why was it in stages? Why was there first a partial release on Gimmel Tammuz, and only later the full release?

More specifically, the Rebbe was notified on Yud-Beis Tammuz that he would be released. However, for bureaucratic reasons he was only allowed to leave on the next day, Yud-Gimmel Tammuz.

And as we know, in a broader sense, the story was far from over on Yud-Gimmel Tammuz. The Rebbe was banished from Russia shortly afterwards. More importantly, many of the restrictions against religion remained in place for a long time

to come. Some of them have only recently been abolished—60 years later! (1927-1991, תרפ"ז-תשנ"א)

Nothing in the world is random, and certainly not that which happens with the *nossi hador*, especially as it affects his communal work. This all brings us back to the question—why the gradual miracle rather than a one-time, full and permanent change?

Over three millennia earlier, on the same day that the Frierdiker Rebbe was sent to exile, *b'nei Yisroel* were at war. They had finally reached Eretz Yisroel and were conquering the land under the leadership of Yehoshua. At one such battle, the fight went on for hours and the sun began to set. The Yidden had the upper hand, but nightfall would give the enemy time to regroup and attack or escape. Yehoshua commanded the sun to stop in place, and it did. The daylight continued for as long as was necessary, until the Yidden won. Only then did the sun set.

Another miracle related to this day is in the *parsha*, when Aharon's leadership was challenged. Hashem instructed the leaders of each *shevet* to place a stick in the *Mishkan*, "and the one whom I choose, his stick wil sprout" [Bamidbar 17:17]. The next morning Aharon's stick miraculously "brought forth sprouts, produced blossoms and borne almonds" [Ibid. 17:23]. Although for this effect it would have been enough for there to suddenly appear almonds on a stick, Hashem instead orchestrated that things should grow in the natural order (just greatly sped up—what usually takes a long period of time occurred overnight).

In all three of the above stories, there seems to be a reluctance to simply break the rules of nature. Hashem instead adjusted the rules of nature themselves to allow the

goal to be reached without absolutely contravening the natural rules.

The Mishna in Avos [6:11] says, "Everything that the Hashem created in this world, He created only for His honor." The purpose of everything's existence is in order to honor Hashem. This is especially understandable based on the famous revelation of the Baal Shem Tov, that the world is constantly being recreated. Creation was not a one-off event, and now Hashem is passive in creation—rather, for every thing to exist right now it must be created again.

The significance of this, and possibly the reason why the world was created this way, is so that we should realize that our actions really matter. When we do a mitzva, besides the fact that we are doing what Hashem wants, we are actually achieving something tangible. If creation would have been a one-off, our actions would seem less important.

When you have a drink of water and make a *bracha*, the water itself expresses the idea of Hashem's power in the world. When, a while later, you have another cup, it reveals this concept anew. Because creation is constant, the differences of time and space have an effect.

Just as things are orchestrated this way in the natural order of the world, Hashem does the same with miracles.

Rather than *ignoring* the protocols of nature, Hashem utilizes them to fit that which is needed at the time.

Instead of making almonds suddenly appear on Aharon's stick, they grew in the natural order (blossoms, then buds, and finally fruit); just in a sped up process. Rather than Yehoshua avoiding the war entirely, Yidden had to go and fight. They were miraculously assisted by the extra hours of sunlight, but the battle still had to be won with physical effort.

מוקדש
לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר

נדפס ע"י ולזכות
הרה"ת ר' שלמה יהודה הלוי
וזוגתו מרת שטערנא שרה
וילדיהם מנחם מענדל הלוי,
ראובן הלוי, חיה מושקא,
יוסף יצחק הלוי, ומרים מארייאשא
ליצמאן

ולע"נ חמיו ואביה
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' שמחה ירחמיאל
בן ר' מרדכי שכנא ע"ה
צירקין
גלב"ע כ"ד תמוז ה'תשע"ה



This is possibly also why the release of the Frierdiker Rebbe had to be in stages. Although definitely a miraculous event, it had to have some hold in nature as well. The ones who arrested the Rebbe were the very same ones who ultimately "realized" that they must let him go. But for them to realize this "on their own" took some time. First they had to understand that capital punishment *r"l* was not correct, and eventually that even exile was wrong.

Even after all this, the same government and its policies remained largely in place for several decades to come. Only in the last few years has there been major policy change.

In the past few days, there was even a vote on whether to rename the city where the Rebbe was arrested from Leningrad (named after a leader of Communism) back to its original name of Petersburg (named for the Czar in power when the city was built). Although Jewish life in Czarist Russia had its challenges, it cannot be compared to the organized campaign against Yiddishkeit waged by the Communists. The fact that they are now deliberating a change to the original name is a further step in the Frierdiker Rebbe's triumph, and a *geula* for all Yidden at large. ①

(Based on *sichas Rosh Chodesh Tammuz and Shabbos parshas Korach* 5751; *Sefer Hasichos* 5751 vol. 2, p. 649)



לעבן מיט'ן רבין

לזכות
הרה"ת ר' אלחנן משה
וזוגתו מרת חנה זלאטא
ומשפחתם שיחיו
טענענבוים
להצלחה רבה ומופלגה בשליחותם הק'
בנאפה וואלי, קאליפורניא

“His Own Business”

TAMMUZ 5711



Reb Yoel Kahn boarded a ship in Eretz Yisroel bound for New York on Sunday, Yud-Alef Shevat 5710, unaware of the Friediker Rebbe's *histalkus*.

Arriving several weeks later, he was swiftly appointed the Rebbe's *chozer* and transcribed and prepared the Rebbe's *sichos* for publication and distribution. In those early years, he sent letters to his father, Reb Refoel (“Foleh”) Kahn, describing the goings on in 770, for the benefit of the Chassidim in Eretz



REB YOEL KAHAN
AS A BOCHUR.

Yisroel. They are a unique treasure of information (from a *bochur's* perspective) about those early years of the Rebbe's *nesius*.

SUNDAY PARSHAS CHUKAS 5711

As I ponder how to begin my letter, I recall that the *bochurim* learning here from Brazil relate that a boy in Brazil was recently in need of an operation. One of the *bochurim's* parents suggested that his mother send a telegram to the Rebbe requesting a *bracha* and to ask whether her son should undergo the operation. (This woman knows almost nothing

about Yiddishkeit.) The Rebbe instructed them not to operate and the child recovered.

A local Portuguese language newspaper reported that “a *tzaddik* in Brooklyn” advised contrary to the recommendations all the doctors—who were unsure themselves that the surgery would have a positive outcome—“and the child became healthy.” Now the *bochurim* are trying to convince the parents that this boy needs to come to New York to learn in Tomchei Tmimim near the *tzaddik*. Perhaps they will succeed.

In general, the Rebbe is very *ba’alshemske* [i.e. performs open wonders and miracles]. As the Rebbe always says that everything is the accomplishment of the Frierdiker Rebbe through him, he once said in connection with the statement of the Zohar that after the *histalkus*, the *tzaddik* is present more than he was during his lifetime: “Now—after the *histalkus*—the Rebbe is very revealed. Miracles are happening every step of the way.”

On Shabbos Parshas Shelach the Rebbe said a *maamar* ד"ה שלח לך and then a twenty minute *sicha*.

(The Rebbe said to someone that he only wants to say *maamarim* in a farbrengen setting. In general, on Shabbos Mevorchim it is apparent that the *maamar* is the main focus of the farbrengen.)

The theme of the *sicha* was Eretz Yisroel. Shevet Efraim failed to reach Eretz Yisroel because it is only possible to do so with the mandate of Moshe Rabbeinu. (This idea was explained more broadly in the *maamar*.) In conclusion, there is an extension of Moshe Rabbeinu in every generation and immigrating to Eretz Yisroel is permissible only if the Moshe Rabbeinu of this generation sends you...

The Rebbe also spoke about the *bittul* one must have to the Rebbe and then related that once, in conversation in learning with a *misnaged*, the man proposed a *svara* contrary to the Rishonim. He rationalized that he was not at fault for being born several hundred years late. After all, he is identical to the Rishonim in everything other than time...

YUD-GIMMEL TAMMUZ 5711

Yesterday (Yud-Beis Tammuz) we were at the Ohel together with the Rebbe. We gave our *panim* to the Rebbe to be read at the Ohel, as we do every time.

Last night there was a short farbrengen in the Frierdiker Rebbe’s apartment, in the room he would always farbreng (known as the *stalova*). The Rebbe

“Now—after the *histalkus*—the Rebbe is very revealed. Miracles are happening every step of the way.”

was there and we sang many *niggunim*, including the Alter Rebbe’s *niggun*, *Daled Bavos*, but no words were spoken.

Since the Rebbe will farbreng soon in the main *beis midrash*, I will conclude my letter tomorrow. Everyone is resting now so that we can be fresh and alert for the farbrengen. We have not slept for two nights since we farbrenged with Reb Shmuel Levitin. He farbrenged very well, but in general the farbrengens here in America are quite “*pareve*.” If only it would be possible to farbreng the first two nights [of Yud-Beis Tammuz] in Tel Aviv and then be here tonight for the Rebbe’s farbrengen, that would be very good.

By the way, Reb Shmuel said that he heard from the Frierdiker Rebbe that he did not recite *tachanun* on Gimmel Tammuz. The Frierdiker Rebbe also said (on a separate occasion) that the *nesi’ei* Chabad would not recite *tachanun* on Zayin Adar, and explained that regarding Rashbi we know only the day of his *histalkus*, however about Moshe Rabbeinu (the ‘father’ of the Rabbeim) we know the day of his birth as well.

I will now conclude my letter that I started writing yesterday.

[During the farbrengen] the Rebbe said a *maamar* for about twenty minutes and then two *sichos*. The Rebbe said much *lchaim* and was very *behisgalus*. He spoke in wondrous terms about the Frierdiker Rebbe—that his *mesiras nefesh* was greater than Avraham Avinu’s. Rabbi Akiva searched for the opportunity for *mesiras nefesh*. Avraham Avinu was committed to his *avoda* to the point that if *mesiras nefesh* was necessary he was ready for it. However, the Frierdiker Rebbe approached his *avoda* with the perspective that it was “his own business.” [See next paragraph].

In connection to this, the Rebbe related the well known episode [that occurred during the *asifas harabbonim* in 5670¹. The Rebbe Rashab was placed under house arrest for resisting the demands of the Czarist government for reforms in traditional Jewish education. Harav Chaim Brisker visited the Rebbe Rashab and saw him sobbing]. Harav Chaim Brisker exclaimed, “Lubavitcher Rebbe, we did

“You should grow to be a true Chossid, a maskil in Chassidus and an oved...”

everything we could! [Why are you crying?]” The Rebbe Rashab replied, “We did not accomplish what needed to be done...” The Rebbe concluded that not only was the Frierdiker Rebbe ready to do whatever it takes—even *mesiras nefesh*—he did more than what was demanded of him, since it was “his own business.”

The Rebbe emphasized that now (after the *histalkus*) is the same as before; the Frierdiker Rebbe continues to lead and therefore all of the *peulos* are successful in an unnatural way. It is the merit, as well as the obligation of every Chossid “to throw

himself and his family” into the Rebbe’s work. In addition to the great *zechus* of participating in these important *peulos*, this will serve as a proper vessel to receive all of the Rebbe’s *brachos*.

At the conclusion of the *farbrengen*, the Rebbe distributed *mashke* to everyone. To ensure proper decorum, everyone stood in line. When it was my turn, the Rebbe poured *mashke* into my cup and said to me: You should grow to be a true Chossid, a *maskil* in Chassidus and an *oved*...

The distribution continued for two and a half hours since there was a very large crowd, and then we davened *maariv*. After *maariv* the Rebbe said: “Before the Frierdiker Rebbe accepted the *nesius* from his father (the Rebbe Rashab) he made a condition, that [the *nesius*] should be *בחסד וברחמים*—in a kind and merciful manner... May it



be a healthy summer, physically and spiritually. We should hear good tidings from each other about the strengthening of the Rebbe's work. Continue to farbreng in good health. Gut Yom Tov!"

Since the Rebbe said we should continue to farbreng, someone put a bottle of *mashke* on the table (although no one said *l'chaim*, it was already after 3 o'clock in the morning) and we reviewed the *mammar* and a little bit of the *sichos*. By 6 o'clock we went to sleep and continued *chazara* later that day.

In the evening I was told that someone had secretly arranged a recording of the entire farbrengen. (It is probably better not to publicize this anecdote in Eretz Yisroel...) He lives three hours drive from New York, so together with Mordechai Dubinsky and another *bochur*, we rented a car and drove to his home on Wednesday, 14 Tammuz.

As could be expected, the car broke down on the way and with much heartache we finally arrived. Once we got there, the fellow denied that he had made a recording because he was worried Rabbi Hodakov would find out... We spent an hour convincing him that we needed to hear it so that the transcripts of the *maamar* and *sichos* would be accurate. Eventually he relented and we spent the night there. The next day we spent several hours fixing the car, miraculously arriving back to 770 in the late afternoon.

EREV SHABBOS PARSHAS PINCHAS 5711

During these weeks, the *bochurim* are all going out on Merkos Shlichus to various communities to spread Yiddishkeit. There is a big emphasis on selling Merkos publications. Two shluchim that set out on Tuesday, returned before Shabbos with \$75 (which reflects on the large amount of *sefarim* they sold). Most importantly, they brought with them to the yeshiva two young men in their early twenties who until now did not wear tefillin every day.

Yesterday (Thursday) the *bochurim* who are scheduled to go out on Merkos Shlichus next week entered the Rebbe's room to receive a *bracha*. Upon our request, the Rebbe edited the short *sicha* and it will soon be published.

*As could be expected, the car
broke down on the way and
with much heartache we finally
arrived.*

A small excerpt of the *sicha*: "You should relate my warm regards and tell everyone you meet that although we are now in middle of the "Three Weeks" and afterwards approaching the month of Elul—the month of *teshuva*—and the *Yomim Noraim*, there is no need to be frightened. It says עבדו את ה' בשמחה וגילו ברעדה—serve Hashem with fear, and rejoice with quaking. The Rebbe *der shver* says that Moshiach "is standing on the other side of the wall" and we need to prepare for his arrival with *ahavas Hashem*, *ahavas haTorah* and *ahavas Yisroel*. If you will say this as a matter of fact, people will accept it and it will strengthen their Torah learning, mitzvah observance, and *ahavas Yisroel*. פארט געזונטערהייט—go in good health.

"Since you are going on the Rebbe's shlichus you will surely succeed. You need only ensure not to ruin things..."

Yesterday was the bar mitzvah celebration of Reb Shmuel Levitin's grandson (Reb Binyomin Gorodetzky's son). Upon Reb Shmuel's request, the Rebbe participated and said a twenty minute *sicha*, speaking extensively about *mesiras nefesh* and said several times, "We need to be Jews of *mesiras nefesh*, but to use it out in a good way."

The Rebbe also spoke about the famous *asifas harabbonim* of 5670 when the Rebbe Rashab displayed unbridled *mesiras nefesh*. At one point the Friediker Rebbe could not contain himself and said to his father: It is your *mazel* that *mesiras nefesh* is not discussed in Shulchan Aruch. Otherwise, there would be rules and regulations. Now you can have unlimited *mesiras nefesh*. **T**

1. See *No Backing Down*, Derher 64 (141), Teves 5778.





כתב יד קודש

לע"נ
התינוק ישראל נח ע"ה
בן יבלחט"א הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל
גלב"ע אדר"ח תמוז ה'תשס"ה
נדפס ע" הוריו
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל
וזוגתו מרת חנה ומשפחתם שיחיו
קארנפלד



It's Not About You!

The following is a small section of a long response written by the Rebbe to a girl who was experiencing psychological and emotional challenges during her teen years and turned to the Rebbe for help.

In this section, the Rebbe explains one of the causes for these issues (a recurring theme throughout the Rebbe's *sichos* and letters).

The full *ksav yad kodesh* can be found in *Igros Kodesh* vol. 27, p. 34.

*Courtesy of Kehot Publication Society. Special thanks to
Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook of Vaad Hanochos B'Lahak.*



Another reason for your [disturbing] feelings (and this is also evident from your letter):

In all the pages [you sent me], there is not one word mentioned—not even an allusion—about your **sacred obligation** to help others. Especially those who did not merit to have parents that raised and educated them in the ways of Torah and mitzvos, teaching them what Yiddishkeit is, etc. [You seem to have neglected this duty] even though they are **screaming** for help, as discussed at the farbrengen.¹

This is how far the *yetzer hara's* persuasion has succeeded with you, prevailing that you should only be concerned with yourself and your own feelings!

When you begin to help save those individuals, and with joy and enthusiasm (due to the amazing *zechus* and capabilities you've been given in this regard), your mood will certainly improve.

עוד סיבה להרגשתה וכו' (וג"ז נראה במכתבה עצמה): בכל העמודים לא נזכרה אף תיבה אחת וגם לא ברמז - ע"ד **חובתה קדושה** לעזור להזולת ובפרט לאלה שלא זכו שהוריהם יחנכו בדרך התומ"צ, יודיעום מה זה יהדות וכו' - אף ש(כמדובר באריכות קצת בהתועדות) הם זועקים לעזר -

עד כ"כ הצליח היצה"ר לפתותה שתתעניין אך בעצמה והרגשותי וכשתעשה בהצלח הנ"ל - עכ"פ בדרך המיצוע - ומתוך חיות ושמחה (על זכותה הנפלאה ויכולת שניתנה לה בזה בודאי שתוטב ההרגשה וכו'.

1. As the manuscript is undated (only bearing the year 5735), we don't know for certain which farbrengen the Rebbe is referring to. However, this was an oft-discussed theme at countless farbrengens in those years. The Rebbe maintained that the youth were in rebellion (hence the "hippie movement" and so on) because they were never offered true, unadulterated Yiddishkeit. In truth, it was their *neshamos* screaming out for help! See sichos Yud-Tes Kislev 5728; Yud Shevat 5733, and others.

לזכות החיילת בצבאות ה'
 ליבא רבקה תחי'
 לרגל הולדתה ח"י כסלו ה'תשע"ח
 ולזכות הורי' השליח
 הרה"ת ר' מנחם יצחק
 וזוגתו מרת רינה פריידל שיחיו
 טרקסלער
 נדפס ע"י זקיני'
 הרה"ת ר' משה
 וזוגתו מרת שושנה שיחיו
 טרקסלער



BREAKTHROUGH!

**WHAT MODERN TECHNOLOGY
 IS REALLY ALL ABOUT**



THE WLCC OFFICE IN 770, FROM WHERE HOOKUPS
 TO THE REBBE'S FARBRENGENS WERE MADE
 AVAILABLE TO COMMUNITIES WORLDWIDE.

SARAH YACOV / GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE

...די גאנצע וועלט מיט אלץ וואס געפינט זיך אין איר איז באשאפן געווארן "בשביל התורה ובשביל ישראל", "וכל מה שברא הקב"ה בעולמו לא בראו אלא לכבודו"; איז פון דעם פארשטאנדיק אז דער תכלית ושלמות הכוונה פון יעדער באשעפענער זאך איז אין דעם וואס זי ווערט אויסגענוצט דורך אידן אין עבודת ה'...
און אזוי איז עס אויך בנוגע צו די חכמות העולם, אז די כוונה אין דער התפתחות פון די חכמות העולם איז בלשון התניא "להשתמש בהן לעבודת ה' או לתורתו..."

The entire world and everything in it was created "for the Torah and for Yidden." [As the Mishnah states,] "Everything Hashem created in His world was only created for His glory." Obviously then, the ultimate purpose of every creation is to be utilized by the Yidden to serve Hashem.

The same holds true about the sciences: The ultimate purpose of all the recent discoveries is, as the Tanya says, "to be used for serving Hashem and studying His Torah..."

(Likutei Sichos vol. 15 Noach 2)

Can the evil forces of *sitra achara* create something tangible? Is it possible that there are things in this world that are irreparably evil?

Impossible, says the Rebbe.

Even if everyone in the world would come together and join forces, they would never be able to create even one small mosquito and breathe life into it.

The power to create lies solely with Hashem Himself.

That said, everything in this world relates to the words of the Mishnah: "כל מה שברא הקב"ה בעולמו לא בראו אלא—Everything Hashem created in His world was only created for His glory..."

It is on this premise that the Rebbe teaches us to embrace the recent discoveries of modern technology.

At the same time that we staunchly oppose worldly values and shun modern culture ("הנחות העולם") in and of itself, they must be channeled and used as tools for *avodas Hashem*, spreading Yiddishkeit and *hafatzas hamaayanos*.

While other *frumme* Yidden saw television, radio, and other modern inventions as products of *sitra achara*, the Rebbe was insistent that these were all really meant to be used for the glory of Hashem.

In a previous article, we have already explored the Rebbe's approach

to technology in general, and how it revolutionized the way Yidden see things in the modern world.²

In this article, we will explore some examples of how the Rebbe set his philosophy in motion, by using modern devices as mediums spreading Yiddishkeit or by deriving lessons in *avodas Hashem* from the way they function.

[It should be noted that, obviously, the Rebbe fiercely opposed embracing modern technology in and of itself. In fact for decades, the symbol of a Lubavitcher home has been one without a television.

In a famous *yechidus* on this subject, the Rebbe spoke sharply about the dangers of television. "Even the non-Jews have come out against television and the damage it does to

the young minds of children," the Rebbe said. "How sad it is that the Yidden need to learn values from the non-Jews..."³]

Radio

Everything in this world was created by Hashem for a purpose. Yet, in order to maintain free will, Hashem did leave the option open for individuals to corrupt the system and misuse the things created for other purposes; nevertheless, that does not detract from the original plan.

Just because there are those who worship the sun as *avoda zara*, is not a reason for Hashem to remove it from the sky. *Chazal* tell us that the world was not worthy of having gold; it was only created for the *Beis Hamikdash*. Nevertheless, it existed for twenty six



RABBI JJ HECHT HOSTS HIS RADIO SHOW.

NCFJE ARCHIVES

generations before the *Mishkan* was constructed, during which time it was even used for *avoda zara*!

The same could be said about the radio, a phenomenal power that was discovered in recent years.

In addition to the tremendous potential of good that can spread through the radio, the whole idea of a radio gives us a special glimpse into some of the deepest concepts of Chassidus:

When Hashem created the world, He needed to constrain His infinite light in order to leave room for created beings to feel themselves as independent entities. That's why *Elokus* is so hidden in this world; Hashem's light was hidden in one layer of *tzimtzum* after another, until there is only the bare minimum left in this lowly world.

The ultimate purpose is that we, as Yidden, reveal Hashem's light slowly but surely; beginning with the lower levels of light and then reaching higher and higher, until we can bring down Hashem's *Atzmus* into this world, thereby creating a *dira b'tachtonim*.

In order for a Yid to be able to reach beyond all the *tzimtzumim*, to tap into true G-dly light and reveal it in this world, he needs to have a connection to *Elokus* that is beyond this world, higher than time and space. Indeed, every Yid has a part of Moshe Rabbeinu inside himself, enabling him to access this level of *Elokus* that is entirely higher than this world.

In order to remind the Yidden of this tremendous power we possess, Hashem created the radio. Studying the technology of the radio, we see a physical gadget capturing words spoken in one location and transmitting them above the confines of time and space. A *dvar Torah* shared over here can reach the other side of the world instantaneously!

This reminds us that by connecting to the innermost levels of *Elokus*



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RABBI JJ HECHT NARRATES A FARBRENGEN FROM THE WLCC OFFICE FOR A LIVE AUDIENCE LISTENING VIA RADIO.

Further Your Reach

The Rebbe's call to unite Yidden during the year of *Hakhel* is well known and has already been extensively covered in a previous issue (Tishrei 5776).

In 5748, the Rebbe instructed that methods of modern technology should also be utilized for this purpose. Just like the *Kohanim* in the times of the *Beis Hamikdash* would blow their trumpets to gather the Yidden, today we can use the telephone and radio to reach Yidden in the furthest corners of the globe.

In fact, the radio waves can reach even further than our world, all the way up to the moon!

When it comes to matters of business and livelihood, everyone already uses these devices in order to earn an extra dollar. As soon as *havdalah* is concluded, they all run to their phones to try and make more money.

A Yid needs to trust in Hashem that He will provide the necessary livelihood. Instead, use the telephone and radio to reach more Yidden and bring the idea of *Hakhel* to the furthest places possible...

(Fourth night of Sukkos 5748)

Setting It Right!

Just because there are others who use technology the wrong way, does not mean that we shouldn't use it at all.

The Torah tells us that the Yidden created the *egel hazahav* because they had an excess of gold. Nevertheless, the Torah instructs us to build a *Mishkan* that contains gold! The Torah doesn't tell us to avoid gold. On the contrary; it was through building a *Mishkan* out of gold that the Yidden gained atonement for the sin of the *egel hazahav*!

(Shabbos Parshas Ekev 5748)

which can be found deep in our own *neshamos*, we too can reach above and beyond the confines of this lowly world and bring down Hashem's presence, making a *dira b'tachtonim*.⁴

Television/Radio

The Zohar teaches us that in the final years of the sixth millennium (from the year 5500 and on), the gates of spiritual, heavenly wisdom will be



THE LAG B'OMER PARADE OF 5750 IS BROADCAST ON LIVE TELEVISION.

opened, and the fountains of wisdom of the lower worlds will also spring forth. Both will serve as a preparation for the time of Moshiach in the seventh millennium.

The Rebbe explains:

One of the ways that the “fountains of lower wisdom” (i.e. recent discoveries of modern technology) serve as a preparation for the time of Moshiach, is that they give us a glimpse into what will be when Moshiach comes.

The *possuk* tells us that “ונגלה כבוד ה'—וראו כל בשר יחדיו—The glory of Hashem will be revealed and all flesh will see...”

In recent years, we have the ability to sit in one corner of the world and hear and see every move on the other side of the world. This gives us an appreciation for the words of the Mishnah that Hashem has an “עין רואה—An eye that sees and an ear that hears” the actions of each and every individual.

This is an example that we can all see with our physical eyes. It helps us relate to *Elokus* in a very real and tangible manner, something we did not have in previous generations. This serves as a preparation for the



SATELLITE EQUIPMENT IN FRONT OF 770 FOR CHANUKAH LIVE.

revelation of *Elokus* that will be when Moshiach comes, when “...all flesh will see...”

Additionally, when we use the radio to spread words of Chassidus, this is almost like the fulfillment of the *possuk* about the times of Moshiach, “ומלאה הארץ דעה את ה' כמים לים מכסים—The earth is filled with knowledge of Hashem like water covers the seabed.” When Chassidus is transmitted over the airwaves, the *entire* world is (potentially) filled with knowledge of Hashem, and in a very tangible way.⁵

Satellite

With the advent of satellite broadcasting, the Rebbe took this concept one step further:

We all know that at its essence, the world is really one. Everything was created by Hashem, and it is His words that sustain all of life in every world. Yet there seems to be so much difference and disparity in the world we live in. How can we consider the fact that at the core, it is all one single unit?

Addressing the world-wide crowd at the Chanukah Live broadcast in 5752, the Rebbe explained:



ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE REBBE'S YUD-TES KISLEV FARBRENGEN LIVE ON TELEVISION.

In order for us to better relate to this concept, Hashem has allowed the discovery and invention of the satellite. When a small child sits in a room in one corner of the world and kindles a light of the Chanukah menorah, his light can instantaneously be seen and enjoyed by people all over the world.

Not only can we speak to people who are thousands of miles away from us, but we can actually affect and impact their lives in the most significant ways, without having to move an inch.⁶



THE REBBE WATCHES THE LIVE BROADCAST OF CHANUKAH LIVE, 5751.

Computers

One of the discoveries of recent years has resulted in the invention of the computer; a gadget used very often to achieve all sorts of tasks.

The function of a computer is very interesting: The computer itself does not come up with any new ideas that we ourselves would not be able to figure out. It merely processes information uploaded onto it, and makes calculations that would take a regular person many long, painstaking hours to do on his own. Another advantage of having a computer is: With a long and grueling calculation, it is almost inevitable that a human will err and not necessarily draw the proper conclusion. The computer, on the other hand, is guaranteed to always process the information correctly and have all the correct answers.

The lesson we can learn from this is:

When speaking with a fellow Yid about the importance of putting on tefillin or keeping Shabbos, he might say, "First I want to learn and understand what this is all about; only then will I do the act. Since we are certain that all of the Torah's laws are true, the result of my research will certainly bring me to the conviction

that I must indeed fulfill the mitzvah. But please, let me understand first!"

But now we are able to provide him with the example of a computer:

Why would one use a computer at all? Can't you use your own head to process the same information and come up with all the correct results?

Obviously, no person would entertain such a thought. Once the scholars and scientists have already figured out the method and integrated

it into the computer, there's no need for each individual to waste time reinventing the wheel. We can rely on them that they did a proficient job in their research and development, and there is no longer a need for us to do the same. We can use our mind for bigger and better things.

The same is true with Torah and mitzvos:

Our *chachamim* painstakingly toiled for a course of thirty generations, meticulously defining how a Yid must put on tefillin, keep Shabbos, and so on. All that's left for us it to do the act.⁷

Faster than a Computer

Another important lesson from a computer was highlighted by the Rebbe in this response to a report from the regional Kinus Hashluchim in South America, at the end of Cheshvan 5747:

נתקבל ות"ח ואזכיר עה"צ [=על הציון].
ואין הזמן גרמא לקרות אפילו - אבל
הנתינה כבר בשלימותה ובכל הפרטים כפסק
דין תורת אמת.

Uforatzta!

At the farbrengen of Vov Tishrei 5731, the Rebbe elaborated on the fact that the words spoken here are transmitted simultaneously to Eretz Yisroel. "This is the true meaning of ופרצת ימה וקדמה וצפנה ונגבה", the Rebbe said. "Hashem told Yaakov Avinu that he'll spread forth to the west, east, north, and south, which was said more specifically about Eretz Yisroel."

The Rebbe added that the fact that we can say "*lchaim*" to them and they will hear us is a manifestation of this *possuk*. "Surely soon will come a time when we will be able to hear them respond "*Lchaim v'livrachta*" as well," the Rebbe concluded.

At the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe was told that all the technical arrangements have been made, and it would now be possible to hear the response from Eretz Yisroel on the hookup as well!

When technical difficulties ensued, the Rebbe instructed that the *possuk* "ייהי נועם" should be recited. "It says in *Achronim* that when the shofar wouldn't blow, this *possuk* was recited and everything went smoothly..." The *possuk* was recited and indeed the Chassidim in Eretz Yisroel could be heard excitedly responding "*Lchaim v'livrachta*!"



HUNDREDS WATCH A FARBRENGEN AT AN EVENT IN DETROIT, MICHIGAN MARKING GIMMEL TAMMUZ 5777.

להקל ההבנה גם לאלו וְכו' הראו דווקא בזמנינו דוגמא בולטת ושעל פיה עושים בפועל ואפילו בענינים הכי עיקריים והכי גדולים, שאפילו בדומם - ביכולת בני אדם לפעול כהנ"ל: ברגע שמכניסים לקאמפיוטר ה-DATA-ברגע כמימרא יודעים כל המסקנות ופסקי דין לפועל ממש.

וכשמוסרים - מזכירים על הציון (דכ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר) הרי זה כפשוטו ביתר שאת ועד לאין ערוך - ממסירה לדומם הנ"ל, להבדיל באין ערוך.

Your letter was received with great satisfaction and I will mention it at the *Tziyun* [of the Frierdiker Rebbe].

The shortage of time does not allow [me] even to read it—but it has already been placed there completely, to the last detail, as dictated by *Toras Emes*.

In order to simplify the logic behind this idea for those [who need further explanation] etc.: Specifically nowadays, we have been shown a most evident example [of this concept], something that people rely on for their greatest and most important matters: The moment one uploads data into a computer, at that very instant one is aware of the results and may draw conclusions based upon them.

And so, when one gives over or mentions something at the *Tziyun* (of

my father-in-law), it is obviously all the more so, and even incomparably greater—to uploading it to the abovementioned lifeless [computer], *l'havdil*.

“Lebedike Pictures”

Perhaps the most important of all of modern technology for us as Chassidim is the ability to see and hear the thousands of hours of audio and video of the Rebbe, allowing us to relive the moments with the Rebbe exactly the way they occurred, and to learn Torah from the Rebbe himself by watching the recorded farbrengens.

In this regard, there is an interesting *vort* from the Rebbe at a children's rally in 5751:

The rally of 13 Av 5751 took place shortly after the fall of Communism in the former Soviet Union. Speaking to the children from the local day-camps, the Rebbe said that they should serve as a living example for other children who unfortunately never had a chance to learn about Yiddishkeit, by excitedly reciting the *pesukim*, and then showing the pictures of this rally to the children in faraway places. “Real, live pictures,” (“לעבעדיקע פיקשערס”) the Rebbe said.

Later, while leaving the shul, the Rebbe met a member of *anash* who was leaving on a trip for Russia and he requested the Rebbe's *bracha*. The Rebbe instructed him to take along a video of that day's rally and show it to the people there!⁸

Today as well, we may seem far away from the Rebbe in a physical sense and far from *beis chayeinu*—the source of our life as Chassidim.

But the Rebbe is essentially giving us practical advice: use the pictures and videos—the *lebedike pictures*—to enliven even those who are physically distant, until we will be able to see the Rebbe again. May it be *bekarov mammash!* ❶

1. See *The Real World—Darkei Hachassidus*, Derher 49 (126), Tishrei 5777.
2. *Chassidus on the Front Lines—Tanya on the Radio*, Derher 38 (115), Kislev 5776.
3. Rosh Chodesh Elul 5714; *Toras Menachem* vol. 12, p. 190.
4. This is a brief overview of the Rebbe's *sicha*. For a detailed review, it is recommended to study the original *sicha*, *Likutei Sichos* vol. 26, p. 359.
5. *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 42.
6. *Sichos Kodesh* 5752 vol. 2, p. 438.
7. *Sichos Kodesh* 5735 vol. 2, p. 311.
8. *Hisvaaduyos* 5751 vol. 4, p. 108; 114.

The Frieddiker Rebbe

On Monday, Yud-Beis Tammuz, the Frieddiker Rebbe is born in Lubavitch to the Rebbe Rashab and Rebbetzin Shтерна Sara.

ת"מ

On 11 Tammuz, the Frieddiker Rebbe begins putting on *tefillin* privately.²

ת"נ"א

That summer the Frieddiker Rebbe is arrested for the first time (of seven times in total)³ while defending a Yid from a police officer.⁴

On י"ג אלול, the Frieddiker Rebbe marries Rebbetzin Nechama Dina, daughter of Harav Avraham Schneerson of Kishinev, a grandson of the Tzemach Tzedek.⁶
On ט"ז אלול, at the *sheva brachos*, the Rebbe Rashab establishes Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim⁷

ת"נ"ז

The Rebbe is born on 11 Nissan.⁹

ת"ס"ב

On Beis Nissan, the Rebbe Rashab is *nistalek*. The Frieddiker Rebbe accepts the *nesius*.

ת"פ

The Frieddiker Rebbe related: "After the [Rebbe Rashab's] *histalkus*, persecution against Torah and *frumme Yidden* began. In ת"פ"ב¹⁰, students from Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim gathered in Moscow. I was the tenth [person in the gathering].

We all swore to be *moser nefesh* for Torah until the last drop of blood. We split up the work, scattering around the country.

This had a tremendous influence on the country. Hundreds of *talmud Torahs* and *chadarim* were established..."¹¹

ת"פ"ב

On Yud-Gimmel Tishrei the Rebbe Maharash is *nistalek*.¹

ת"מ"ג

The Frieddiker Rebbe begins his involvement in communal activism as personal *mazkir* to his father, the Rebbe Rashab.⁵

ת"ה

The Frieddiker Rebbe is appointed as *menahel poel* of the yeshiva.⁸

ת"נ"ח

On Chof-Hei Adar, the Frieddiker Rebbe's middle daughter, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka is born in Babinovitch (near Lubavitch).

ת"ס"א

The Communists come to power in Russia.

ת"ע"ז

The Frieddiker Rebbe arranges for the communal effort to strengthen Torah and Yiddishkeit in Russia. The Frieddiker Rebbe founds the Warsaw branch of Tomchei Temimim.

ת"פ"א

As a result of slander by the infamous *Yevsektzia*, the Frieddiker Rebbe is compelled to leave Rostov, settling in Leningrad, and is involved in strengthening Torah and Yiddishkeit; putting in place rabbonim, *chadarim*, yeshivos, *shochrim* and *maggidei shiurim*, building *mikvaos* and establishing a special committee to help manual laborers keep Shabbos. Agudas Chabad in the United States and Canada is established.¹²

ת"פ"ז

לזכות הרב"ת
ר' חיים דניאל שיח'י
פיעקארסקי

The Frieddiker Rebbe establishes the yeshivos in Bukhara.

On 15 Sivan, the Frieddiker Rebbe is arrested and incarcerated in the infamous Spalerno prison. On 4 Tammuz, the Frieddiker Rebbe is exiled to Kostrama.

On Yud-Beis Tammuz, he is informed that he has been released, and on Yud-Gimmel Tammuz he goes free. The authorities change the Frieddiker Rebbe's place of residence to Malakhovka, near Moscow.¹³

On 9 Adar II, the Frieddiker Rebbe arrives in New York, settling in Brooklyn, and begins his efforts to rescue his students. He establishes the Central Yeshiva Tomchei Temimim, as well as the Machne Yisroel organization.²⁰

The Frieddiker Rebbe establishes the village of Kfar Chabad on the site of the village of Safiriya, near Tel Aviv. The village is settled by Jewish refugees from Russia.²³

The Frieddiker Rebbe calls for the founding of a committee to preserve the Jewish education of children who are emigrating to Israel via the transit camps. The committee is formed.²⁴

On Shabbos, Yud Shevat, the Frieddiker Rebbe is *mistalek*; his holy resting place is in New York.²⁶

For more information in English, see "The Heroic Struggle" published by Kehot.

1. *Sefer Hatoldas* (from the Rebbe), p. 21.
2. *Sefer Hasichos Kayitz 5700* p.152.
3. *Igros Kodesh Rebbe Rayatz* vol. 3 p. 80.
4. *Hatomim* vol. 2 p. 701 (choveres 7 p. 65).
5. *Sefer Hasichos 5705* p. 78.
6. *Igros Kodesh Rebbe Rashab* vol. 1 p. 194.
7. *Sefer Hasichos 5701* p. 104.
8. *Hayom Yom* p. 17 (Shalshetes Hayachas).
9. *Hayom Yom* p. 20
10. *Hayom Yom* p. 18 (Shalshetes Hayachas).
11. *Sefer Hasichos 5702* p. 154.
12. *Hayom Yom* p. 18 (Shalshetes Hayachas).
13. *Reshimos Hamaasar*, (Shalshetes Hayachas).

On Isru Chag of Sukkos, the Frieddiker Rebbe leaves Russia and settles in Riga, Latvia, establishing a yeshiva there.¹⁴

In תרפ"ח and תרפ"ט¹⁵, the Frieddiker Rebbe sends large quantities of matzah to Russia.¹⁶

The Frieddiker Rebbe visits Eretz Yisroel¹⁷ and the United States.¹⁸

The Frieddiker Rebbe establishes Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch and the Kehot Publication Society.²¹

The Frieddiker Rebbe establishes Lishkas Ezra L'fleitim V'siduram, an organization to help refugees resettle. The Frieddiker Rebbe establishes Shaloh, an organization providing Jewish study material for public school students.²²

In the weeks before the Frieddiker Rebbe's *histalkus*, he establishes the framework for the efforts of strengthening Torah in North Africa. As a result, there exists today in North Africa a *beis midrash* for teachers, a yeshiva, a *yeshiva ketana*, a *talmud Torah* for boys and a *talmud Torah* for girls, all named Oholei Yosef Yitzchak Lubavitch.²⁵

17. *Sefer Hasichos 5688-91* p. 18 (of the preface).
18. *Hayom Yom* p. 18 (Shalshetes Hayachas).
19. *Igros Kodesh Rebbe Rayatz* vol. 2 p. 172.
20. *Ibid.*
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Ibid* p. 19.

23. *Ibid.*
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.* See A Chassidisher Derher, Tishrei 5778: "The Building of an Empire: CHABAD'S REVOLUTION IN MOROCCO".
26. *Ibid.*



OUR MIRACLE!

A GROUP OF STUDENTS

8 Adar 5720

On 8 Adar 5720, a group of college students gathered in the Rebbe room for a yechidus. During the yechidus they asked the Rebbe many questions about Chassidus, kiruv, Eretz Yisroel and a number of other topics. The Rebbe answered them in great detail. Included below are a few selections of that yechidus edited by the Rebbe in English. The full transcript can be found at chabad.org/392177, or in Hebrew in Toras Menachem vol. 20, p. 394.

The Rebbe started off the *yeichidus* with a short *sicha*, saying that the meeting is taking place in an auspicious time—the year of the Baal Shem Tov’s 200th *yahrtzeit*. The Baal Shem Tov taught, in word and by example, the importance of educating Jewish children. He would teach young children that Hashem isn’t an abstract concept, but that Hashem is near to each and every person, and every person can bring him or herself close to Hashem.

The Baal Shem tov lived in a time when the Yidden were in despair, following the pogroms of Chmielnicki *ym*’s. The Baal Shem Tov showed them how to live a life of Torah and mitzvos, notwithstanding the persecution.

In our time, too, the Rebbe said, following the terrible Holocaust, during which Hitler *ym*’s wiped out one-third of the world’s Jewry, we must all reach out and spread Torah and the observance of mitzvos around the world.

The students proceeded to ask a number of questions, and the Rebbe answered each question after it was asked.

Question: The Rebbe said that one should spread Torah. How and in what manner is this to be done?

The Rebbe: Everyone must do as much as possible in his immediate surroundings by speaking with other people in a way that shows his certainty and confidence in the matter, for confidence is a characteristic of the youth specifically. An older person is often beset with doubts and hesitations, while the young are sure of themselves. It is this characteristic that we must utilize in spreading Torah and Mitzvos, and everyone must work at 100% capacity.

Every means must be employed: the newspaper, the radio. But, above all, the most vital is the personal example we set in our everyday living.

Question: What was the role that the Baal Shem Tov played in the Chasidic movement?

The Rebbe: We can understand what the Baal Shem Tov did by the simile of the relationship of an electric powerhouse with a lamp that is connected to it by a wire. In order to light his lamp, one must find the right switch, or push the correct button. The soul of every Jew is a part of and is connected with G-d Almighty, but in order for one to enjoy the great benefits of it, the correct switch must be found or the proper button pushed. It was the Baal

נדפס לזכות הורינו
 ר' פסח ושרה יהודית שיחיו נוסכונים
 בקשר להתחלת
 שנת הארבעים לנשואיהם
 ביום בד"ח תמוז, ה'תשל"ט

נדפס ע"י ילדיהם
 ר' עקיבא לייב וזוגתו רבקה מלכה ומשפחתם,
 ר' חיים יהושע, ר' יוסף יצחק וזוגתו לאה
 ר' דוד שמחה וזוגתו מרים ומשפחתם
 איטא חנה ברכה
 ובעלה ר' אברהם יעקב הלוי ומשפחתם לוי
 הת' זאב וחי' מושקא שיחיו נוסכונים



Shem Tov's mission to explain and proclaim that every Jew without exception is connected with "the powerhouse," and every one of them has a switch in his innermost being, that will be found if searched for.

So too, every one of us in our own work in strengthening Judaism, must try to find the switch in the soul of every Jew. One can never know what will make the connection, perhaps one word. But by this, you open up the well or inner fountain of his soul.

Question: Why is Chabad so successful in its activities?

The Rebbe: Today everyone tries to understand before he does something. I am not discussing whether this is good or bad, but only stating a fact. Everyone requires proofs and understanding. Chabad Chasidus provides it. It explains aspects of Judaism so that they can be understood by the intellect. As a Chabad Chasid I have a more categorical answer: I have no doubt that Chabad Chasidus is the Truth and Truth must be successful.

Question: What is the function of a Rebbe?

The Rebbe: As was said earlier, to find the switch in every Jew and help him become connected with the power house.

Question: How far does the power of the Rebbe extend in natural law? Does the Rebbe have preferred status as regards prayer?

[Someone added that what is meant is whether the Rebbe can perform miracles.]

The Rebbe: This world is not separate from the higher worlds but is another step, the last one, in a long chain of worlds.

Everything in this world comes from and is influenced by the higher ones. A miracle is something that happens which you could not have calculated. When a Jew connects himself through his Divine spark with G-d through fervent

prayer, Torah, and Mitzvos, he can affect things in this physical world "from above"—that means by a way which is beyond calculation. This power is not the prerogative of one Jew but of every Jew.



Rabbi Gurewitz, of the Brooklyn Hillel Foundation, thanked the Rebbe for the interview and started to leave, but then the Rebbe said:

Now I want to ask you a question, and at the same time try to perform a miracle.

Everything has a purpose. What was the purpose of our coming together here tonight? Certainly it was not merely to ask questions and receive answers, good or bad. Rather it was to achieve something.

All of us here are young, myself included, and have tens of years yet before us. Since six million of our people in Russia, Poland and Hungary have been lost to us through Hitler, we have a special task to accomplish—the work that they could have done, at least a major part of it.

Everyone counts. No Jew is expendable. We all must work to the fullest capacity, every one of us. In our day-to-day life we must use our full strength to add to the side of good, and by this we will gain a life of happiness and harmony—and all this can be done only through a life of Torah and Mitzvos tested by our 3,500 year history. This obligation lies upon every Jew and G-d has given him the power to carry this through successfully.

And if each of us, beginning tomorrow, should add in his own personal life more Torah and Mitzvos and influence the environment in the same direction, if we all will do this, myself included, this indeed will be our miracle. **T**

A Taste of Reality

The Rebbe's Farbrengens, Then and Now

“The Rebbe’s *hashpa’a* came through the farbrengens; both the *hashpa’a* to the Chassidim as well as to the world.

“This is where the Rebbe addressed current events, in the Jewish world and beyond, and where he introduced all the major *mitzvot* and initiatives throughout the years. It is where he addressed the President of the United States as well as a lonely *Yid* in Russia....

“The Rebbe lives on a higher plane—Yiddishkeit is a *reality*, Hashem is a *reality*, Moshiach is a *reality*—and when you experience the farbrengens you are uplifted to that reality...”



מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע

נדפס ע"י
הרוצה בעילום שמו



The story of the Rebbe's farbrengens cannot be told in a single article, nor in a shelf of books. Farbrengens were the setting at which the Rebbe taught us everything we know, where he addressed the world, and revitalized world Jewry. The transcripts of these farbrengens fill hundreds of *sefarim*, and the audio recordings fill thousands of hours.

A farbrengen is something that truly cannot be captured in words, only experienced. Today, as before Gimmel Tammuz, generations of Chassidim continue to find nourishment and energy from listening to and watching the Rebbe's farbrengens, as they are educated by the Rebbe just as Chassidim before them were.

We present the following collection of tidbits, anecdotes, and reflections about the Rebbe's farbrengens, in the hope that this will provide something of a taste for our readership. May we be *zoche* to a new farbrengen with the Rebbe himself, now!

The First Farbrengens – תש"ז

The Rebbe first began holding farbrengens during the *nesius* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, many years before he accepted the *nesius*. The first was held during Tishrei of 5960 (תש"ז), when the Frierdiker Rebbe traveled abroad to the United States, temporarily parting from the Chassidim in Riga.

Although he was of Chassidic royalty, the Rebbe had a quiet, muted demeanor and few knew him personally. When he began conducting farbrengens, people were astonished by his breadth of knowledge and infectious vitality and energy.

In a letter to the Frierdiker Rebbe, Rabbi Eliyahu Chaim Althois, a senior Chossid, described the scene. "He spoke words of Chassidus for several hours without pause, and they were mixed and spiced with *midrashim* of our sages and Kabbalah... Sweet were his words on the ears of the listeners, and all those gathered were amazed."

Rabbi Althois added that present at one of the farbrengens was a Mr. Vekslir—"a very quiet man, very critical, and a great thinker (by his own estimation)"—who came to see for himself what everyone was talking about. He stayed with the Chassidim until two o'clock in the morning, and left greatly excited. "In my entire life, I've never seen or heard anything like this!" he exclaimed to Rabbi Althois. "Happy is she who bore him!"



THE REBBE FARBRENGS WITH CHASSIDIM IN PARIS DURING HIS 5707 VISIT.

Shabbos Mevorchim Farbrengens

Shortly after the Rebbe arrived in America in 5701, he was approached by several members of the shul in 770 to begin leading the farbrengen on Shabbos Mevorchim—until then they had sufficed with enjoying a *kiddush*-buffet and singing *niggunim*—but he refused.

The *gabbai* of the shul, Reb Meir Roth, wasn't ready to give up so easily. At some point during that period, he went to visit the Frierdiker Rebbe at a health resort in Morristown, New Jersey, and requested that he ask the Rebbe to agree to farbreng. "I will give you three dollars to buy *mashkeh* for the *kiddush*", the Frierdiker Rebbe replied, "and my son-in-law will not be able to refuse."

Indeed, from that point and on, the Rebbe began farbrenging on every single Shabbos Mevorchim, a practice that withstood decades of fundamental change. Throughout the next fifty years, the Rebbe never missed a Shabbos Mevorchim Farbrengen (!), a stunning display of his unconditional dedication to the Frierdiker Rebbe.



VOV TISHREI 5744, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 194932



CIRCA PURIM 5725

Farbrengen Schedule

Major Farbrengens: There were the official farbrengens on major milestones, which were broadcast throughout the world by hook-up (starting in 5730), and later shown on television (starting in 5740). They attracted very large crowds, far beyond Lubavitch, and this was where the Rebbe would speak about topics applicable to a wider crowd and address current events. The major farbrengens were:

- Vov Tishrei (from 5726 and on, the year after the *histalkus* of the Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Chana)
- Yud-Tes Kislev
- Yud Shevat
- Purim (this farbrengen was not broadcast on television)
- Yud-Alef Nissan (between the years 5731-5745)
- Yud-Beis Tammuz
- Chof Av

Yomim Tovim: The Rebbe farbrenged for many hours during each of the *yomim tovim*, though there were variations depending on the *yom tov*:

- Second day of Rosh Hashanah
- Second day of Sukkos (until 5730)
- Chol Hamoed Sukkos, a farbrengen geared to *talmidei hayeshiva* (until 5724)
- Simchas Torah evening, before *hakafos*
- Simchas Torah day
- Second night of Pesach, after the Seder (until 5730)
- Second day of Shavuot

In the earlier years, the schedule of farbrengens was fairly set, and there were few exceptions. The Rebbe hardly farbrenged on Shabbos unless it was Shabbos Mevorchim or a special *yoma d'pagra*. But as the years went on, the Rebbe began farbrenging more frequently, and for longer durations. Now there were often farbrengens on "minor" occasions, like Chof Cheshvan (the birthday of the Rebbe Rashab), Yud Kislev (the *chag hageulah* of the Mitteler Rebbe), Chof-Daled Teves (the *histalkus* of the Alter Rebbe), 15 Shevat, Lag Bomer, and so on.

“I never saw the Rebbe’s eyes as I did then...”

Dr. Yitzchak Block was a young *bochur* just becoming close to Lubavitch when he experienced his first farbrengen. He related:¹

My first farbrengen was Yud-Beis Tammuz 5712, and it took place in the small *zal* upstairs. There were approximately 80 *bochurim*, and another 50-60 *baalei batim*.

People were standing on the stacked benches, with their heads almost touching the ceiling, and the whole place was steaming... The windows were open but it didn’t help very much. It was so hot; you could literally see the sweat dripping from the ceiling.

The Rebbe spoke in Yiddish, and I hardly knew Yiddish at all, so I didn’t understand a word of what was going on. But there were two things that had a tremendous impact on me. One was the singing of the *niggunim*; then there was the Rebbe’s eyes. I never saw eyes like that. Even when I was in *yeichidus*, it wasn’t the same thing. I never saw the Rebbe’s eyes as I did then... I cannot describe it or give an explanation for it, but it had a very great, moving effect upon me.

The Rebbe noticed me, and sort of shook his head toward me. Then, right in the middle of the farbrengen, the Rebbe picked up a piece of cake, looked at me and said in English, “Have you had cake yet?” Everybody looked at me. I’m a very polite southern boy, and I said “Thank you very much, I had cake already.”

The whole room goes “Huh...?” I didn’t know that I had said anything wrong. I thought I had said something very polite. (I actually

hadn’t, but I felt embarrassed that the Rebbe was making a whole thing out of me...) The Rebbe smiled, and put the cake back on the plate.

At the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe called over Rabbi Zalman Posner [the shliach who had initially met Dr. Block in Tennessee and brought him to New York. –Ed.] and gave him two pieces of cake. After the farbrengen was over, Rabbi Posner comes over to me and says, “Yitzchak, the Rebbe wants you to have this piece of cake. I suggest that you make a *bracha* and eat it.” I ate it, and that was it. I forgot about the entire episode.

Fast forward about thirty years. By that time I was already in London, Ontario and had nine children. I was already an *eltere chossid*, from *ziknei anash kayn ayin hara*... On a certain occasion, Rabbi Posner came over to me and says, “Yitzchak, I want to tell you something now that the Rebbe told me thirty years ago, but I never told it to you before. Do you remember your first farbrengen, when the Rebbe gave me a piece of cake for you?” I said, “Sure, I’ll never forget that.”

He said, “Well, the Rebbe told me to tell you something which I never told you: ‘*Zolt ir em zoggen sof sof vet er verren ah chossid, er darf nit farshpuren di tzeit.*’—You should tell him that, sooner or later, he is going to become a Chossid. There’s no reason to waste time.”

He was afraid to tell me at the time, so I never knew...

CIRCA 5716





Early in the Morning

In the early 5720s, being that the Shabbos farbrengens were held relatively infrequently, people didn't have specific places where they would stand, and because the room was so small, having a good place to hear the Rebbe was essential.

"Every *bochur* had a set bench upon which he would stand," Rabbi Leibel Shapiro says, "but as far as who would get the closer spot on the bench itself—that depended on when you arrived in 770 in the morning. Whoever arrived in 770 first would get the closer place. You didn't have to stand the entire time in your place, but by coming to 770 you 'took' your spot. The next person who came to 770 was behind you, and so on. Eventually, this evolved into every person having a '*makom kavua*,' a set place. But originally we used to come to 770 very early in the morning, 5:00 or 6:00 a.m., to get a good spot."



VOV TISHREI 5744, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 194932



Lessons in Time

The first two or three *sichos* of the farbrengen usually focused on the message of the time, on the lesson of the *parsha*, day, the month, or the *yom tov*. At almost every single farbrengen, the Rebbe quotes—with newfound energy, as if he was saying it for the first time—the Torah of the Baal Shem Tov that every occurrence in the world is *b'hashgacha pratis*, and one must certainly learn from the *parsha* and the calendar. The *parsha* isn't just a base from which one can find a nice *drasha*; *Toras Emes* and *Toras Chayim* [the True Torah and the Living Torah] has a message that it is teaching us *now*.

In traditional Jewish thinking, the cycle of the *parshiyos* and the months is largely a side note to the regular constants of living a Jewish life. One Shabbos is basically the same as another. By the Rebbe, days don't simply pass by—they *happen*. He elevates the seemingly passive passage of time, the seemingly insignificant schedulings of the year, to the realm of *events*. Every Shabbos and every Yom Tov—whether it's Parshas Shelach or Parshas Korach—is an entirely different experience.



The Highlight of the week

“The farbrengen was the highlight of our week,” says Rabbi Zushe Greenberg, shliach in Solon, Ohio. “Even people who didn’t understand Yiddish and couldn’t necessarily follow the farbrengens were excited when a farbrengen was announced, and they looked forward to being there. If there was a surprise farbrengen, the joy went through the roof. The farbrengen would transport you into a different world—it was where the Rebbe was sharing himself with the Chassidim, where he was educating us. The rest of the week—at a davening or by a *haftarah*—we would see how the Rebbe conducted himself. During *yechidus*, the Rebbe would be speaking to people on *their* level. But the farbrengen is where the Rebbe expressed what *he* was coming to say, where the Rebbe was truly revealed.

“The Rebbe would speak every word with such fiery energy, it is an experience that I cannot put into words. Even people who didn’t really understand what was going on—somehow they, too, were transported to a higher place at the farbrengens. It was electrifying.”

Dr. Velvel Greene was becoming closer to Yiddishkeit when he experienced a farbrengen for the first time. He later related: “The Rebbe spoke in Yiddish, so I understood the words, but I didn’t have enough Jewish knowledge to comprehend most of it. The whole event amazed me: There was the Rebbe—educated in math and science himself—who spoke of the ‘soul’ as something real, not just an idea. And listening to his every word were a thousand Chassidim, working guys, just like me. But for them, everything the Rebbe said had critical importance for their lives today. A famous Jewish poet wrote about standing on the threshold of existence, looking into the depth of the Jewish soul. That’s what I did at that farbrengen. It was my epiphany.”



CHOF AV 5734, V SCHILDKRAUT VIA JEM 108665

The Rebbe's Hand Motions

Watching the farbrengen from the front, you only see the Rebbe's movements as he was speaking; his hands were kept under the table. But those few people whose place was on the *bima* behind the Rebbe saw that he was moving his hands vigorously, hidden under the tablecloth. Some *sichos* would get more and more fiery, and one could often see the tablecloth jumping up, as the Rebbe's hand movements become increasingly animated and pronounced. On very rare occasions, the Rebbe spoke with his hands over the tablecloth, and one could see how the Rebbe moved his hands the entire time.

"As children, we would sit under the Rebbe's table during farbrengens," says Rabbi Shmuly Metzger, shliach in Manhattan. "We could see the Rebbe's hands moving strongly as he said the *Rashi sichos*—*fregt Rashi, entfert Rashi* (Rashi asks, Rashi answers)—there was a lot going on behind the scenes."

A New Revelation

The range of topics at the farbrengens are as broad as the scope of the Rebbe's *nesius*.

First and foremost, the farbrengens are the venue where the Rebbe taught Torah to the world, beginning with Torah's message for *now*, and continuing with a vast range of subjects in *nigleh* and Chassidus. This is also where the Rebbe addressed current events, in the Jewish world and beyond, and where he introduced all the major *mitzvot* and initiatives throughout the years. It is where he addressed the President of the United States as well as a lonely *Yid* in Russia. Although we use the term "farbrengen," the Rebbe's farbrengens really cannot be described using any single term.

"The Rebbe's *hashpa'a* came through the farbrengens," Rabbi Shlomo Zarchi says, "both the *hashpa'a* to the Chassidim as well as to the world. When the Rebbe 'arranged' things in the heavens to save the Jews of Russia by taking down Stalin—that was at a farbrengen. When there was a new *mitzva* to announce to the world, the Rebbe often called surprise farbrengens where he gave the details and made a *shturem* about it. When there was a major global issue, the Rebbe's response came at a farbrengen, whether it was on a practical or on a spiritual level.

"This was true on a more personal level as well. The Rebbe would come to the farbrengen no matter what—with a fever, colds, and so on—and he expected the same of the Chassidim. When Rabbi Chaim Gutnick

came to to the Rebbe for the first time, the Rebbe asked him why he had missed a farbrengen. He replied that he had been sick. When a person is sick, the Rebbe told him, *darf men ersht zein baim farbrengen*, that's when you should certainly be at the farbrengen! Farbrengens are the source of the Rebbe's *brachos*!

"In the earlier years, it was not uncommon for the Rebbe to finish answering someone's questions from *yechidus* at the farbrengen. Later on, after private *yechidus* was discontinued, the Rebbe said that farbrengens are the *yechidus* of today—for those who want it."

On a practical level, the announcement that the Rebbe would be coming down to farbreng brought about tremendous excitement to Chassidim.

"Growing up as a child in Crown Heights," Rabbi Metzger says, "even before I was able to understand anything, we all knew if there was going to be a farbrengen. As kids, we had a tremendous love for the Rebbe. It wasn't religious in nature, it was just this great love and admiration, and there was an urgency in the air before farbrengens, people were running in the streets..."

"Farbrengens with the Rebbe are of my fondest memories," adds Rabbi Yosef Wolvovsky, shliach in Glastonbury, Connecticut. "Walking from our home to 770 with my father for the Rebbe's farbrengens was always exciting; I can still feel the bounce in my step..."



4 SIVAN 5747, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEW 5696



Location

For the first few years of the Rebbe's *nesius*, the small upstairs shul in 770 (barely) sufficed for the farbrengens.

"When the farbrengens were held in the small *zal* upstairs," Rabbi Shlomo Zarchi relates, "the setup was similar to how it was later on, but on a much smaller scale: The Rebbe's table was set upon a small *bima* on the right (south) side of the shul, where the window to the *cheder sheini* is today.

"In those years, if a boy under the age of bar mitzvah had a birthday during the week—you have to remember there weren't so many children of *anash* hanging around then—the child would go over to the Rebbe to say *l'chaim*. Because the room was very small and the middle part of the room was full with people sitting, the only way to get to the Rebbe was by coming through the door behind the Rebbe's table which led from the *cheder sheini*. I remember having this opportunity to go over and receive a *bracha* for my *yom holedes* as a small child."

As Lubavitch grew and the Rebbe's farbrengens became increasingly famous in circles far beyond the Chassidic world, it became impossible to fit everyone into the room. From 5714, the major farbrengens that were during the winter were held in various halls in the Crown Heights area, while in the summer they took place in the courtyard adjacent to the building, known as the *shalash*. Shabbos farbrengens during the summer took place in the *shalash* as well. (It was too cold to farbreng there during the winter.)

There were a number of halls in and around Crown Heights that were used for the large winter farbrengens: The Franklin Manor, the Baltimore Hall, the Gayheart Hall, and the Albany Manor. Before every farbrengen, there would be a notice published in the Jewish newspapers announcing where it will be held. The Rebbe was driven to the farbrengen in a private car or taxi, and the Chassidim would come with busses from 770. Many special farbrengens throughout the years took place in these halls, including the famous farbrengen of Purim 5718. In fact, Chassidim recall that it was sometimes difficult to book the same hall twice in a row, because the management wasn't accustomed to this type of singing and dancing...

The following years saw a series of expansions in 770: In 5720, the *shalash* was built into a permanent room, with all farbrengens relocated there. In 5727 and 5733, the two buildings next door, 784 and 788 Eastern Parkway, were purchased. By removing the first floors of these buildings and tearing down the walls between them and the former *shalash*, the downstairs shul of 770 was created. Usually, it was set up as a shul, with benches, tables, and a *bima*. When it came time for a farbrengen, it was transformed into a mini-arena. [Read more about the expansion of 770 in Derher Nissan and Iyar 5775].



Signs of a Shabbos farbrengen

There were many Shabbosim when no one knew until Shabbos itself whether there would be a farbrengen. There were several signs from the Rebbe that one would be held:

- Beginning in 5725 (until 5748), the Rebbe would discuss a Rashi at every Shabbos farbrengen. [See *Revolution in Rashi A Chassidisher Derher*, Vov Tishrei and Shevat 5775.] During certain years, before every farbrengen the Rebbe would notify which Rashi he would be discussing. If the Rebbe did so, it meant that there would be a farbrengen.
- If the Rebbe would encourage the singing during Ha'aderes V'haemuna, that meant there would be a farbrengen. (In the earlier years, if the Rebbe would encourage the singing during Hu Eloikeinu, that was also a sign; but later Hu Eloikeinu was sung every Shabbos so it was no longer an indication.)
- If after davening, the Rebbe would walk out of shul before the *gabbai's* announcements, that also meant that there would be a farbrengen.

There were several occasions throughout the years that a farbrengen was announced after *musaf*, completely unexpectedly, and many of the Chassidim were out of town (for example at Yarchei Kalla in Gan Yisroel). These surprise Shabbos farbrengens was held with very few people in attendance, giving it a very warm, *heimishe* atmosphere. The Rebbe related at one such farbrengen that the Chassidim had asked if they should leave Crown Heights for Shabbos—but they hadn't asked if there would be a farbrengen...

My Questions on Rashi

Rabbi Yosef Wolvovsky relates: “A special memory that I have is when the Rebbe chose to address a question in Rashi that I asked! (This actually happened three times). The way it worked was that each week numerous *kuntreisim* of *chidushei Torah* and *ha'aros* were printed. These booklets would usually include a section on “*pshuto shel mikra*” which was mostly questions and comments on Rashi, based on the way the Rebbe taught Rashi.

“The Rebbe would often choose to address a question printed in one of these *kuntreisim*. Our teacher in eighth grade, Rabbi Feitel Levin, encouraged us to publish our own *kuntres*. You can imagine the ‘deep’ questions our group of twelve-year-old boys came up with... And you can imagine our surprise when the Rebbe chose to discuss our questions! (One of these times I am actually not that proud of: The Rebbe admonished us—me!—for not looking to see if the question was already addressed on a previous occasion...)”



TI SIVAN 5747, LEVI FREDIN VIA JEM 6606



YUD-TES KISLEV 5747, YOSSEI MELAMED VIA JEM 119419

Moshiach as Reality

Perhaps the biggest constant in the farbrengens throughout the years was the Rebbe's relentless focus on Moshiach, which steadily grew in intensity as the years progressed. The Rebbe introduced the practice of completing almost every single *sicha* and *maamar* with a wish for Moshiach, starting from the very first *maamar* of Bassi Legani. Many farbrengens finished with the song *Sheyibaneh Beis Hamikdash*. The farbrengens are where the Rebbe taught us his approach to all matters regarding Moshiach—there are countless *sichos* and *maamarim* expounding upon the chapters in Rambam discussing Moshiach and the *Beis Hamikdash* and lays out the fundamentals for how to approach these subjects that had been under-examined for so many centuries.

Perhaps most significantly, in the farbrengens the Rebbe drives home the fact that Moshiach is a *reality*. As the Rebbe himself commented, many people couldn't understand how the Rebbe can speak about Moshiach with such urgency and immediateness—“These are wild words!” they would say—but the Rebbe shakes us from our *galus* stupor and uplifts us to the realization that Moshiach truly is “just behind the wall.”

“Go Into the Farbrengen”

Rabbi Shmuly Metzger relates: One Shabbos afternoon, when I was a young child, we were playing in the yard near the library during the farbrengen. The Rebbetzin came to the window and said, in English, “You kids should go into the farbrengen.”



6 TISHREI 5731, Y MINKOWITZ

Absorbing the Farbrengen

“The scene in the room after the Rebbe would leave the farbrengen made a great impression on me as a child,” Rabbi Shmuly Metzger says. “Everyone was passionately discussing the *sichos*, and I have this vague memory of Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda Hecht standing on a car rallying everybody about something the Rebbe had said. We lived near 770, so after the farbrengen the *bochurim* would come to my house for *seudas Shabbos*, *chazzer* the farbrengen and argue about it. No one was sitting around Shabbos afternoon. It was a different world.

“We once asked our *mashpia* Rabbi Berel Lipsker, who the Rebbe was referring to in a certain *sicha*. He told us, ‘When you’re listening to a farbrengen, you have to know that the Rebbe is talking to you. If the Rebbe’s talking about someone doing something incorrectly—you’re the one he’s referring to!’”



Farbrengens *Then and Now*

A Roundtable Discussion

We are fortunate to have hundreds of thousands of pages of the Rebbe's Torah. These include Likkutei Sichos, Igros Kodesh, Reshimos and many more. What is unique about listening to and watching the Rebbe's farbrengens?

Rabbi Zushe Greenberg: The Rebbe often quoted the Gemara where Rabbi Yehuda Hanassi says that his superior wisdom came from seeing Rabbi Meir from behind as he taught Torah, and that if he would have seen him from the front, he would have known and understood much more.² Hashem gave us the Torah face to face, פנים בפנים דיבר ה' עמכם, and that is how one truly learns Torah—by seeing and listening.

The Rebbe lives on a higher plane—Yiddishkeit is a *reality*, Hashem is a *reality*, Moshiach is a *reality*—and when you experience the farbrengens you are uplifted to that reality.

We saw this *emes* by the Rebbe himself. The Rebbe spoke about everything with such a *fire*, with such *energy*, like he never said it before! The Rebbe speaks about issues like the safety of Eretz Yisroel or *mihu Yehudi* over and over and over again, with such passion and with such concern—you get swept up in it! These were things that spanned decades, yet he spoke about them for years and years without getting tired, without ever giving up! This was a *real* thing by the Rebbe!

Rabbi Yitzchak Goldshmid (Valley Stream, NY): When you spend time listening to farbrengens, the Rebbe educates you how to *think*.

On a very simple level, when you learn *sichos* in Likkutei Sichos, you learn how to analyze something, how to take an idea apart. The more you learn the Rebbe's *sichos* and *maamarim*, the more you adapt to the Rebbe's way of thinking. This is true both on an intellectual level, and also in *emuna*—how to approach an idea of Torah like the Rebbe does; every word in Torah is precise, true, and infinite.

But when you *listen* to and *watch* the farbrengens, it brings this to a whole new level. You absorb the finer inflections of *how* the Rebbe discusses something: When the Rebbe smiles about something or when he particularly enjoys a certain *svara*; what the Rebbe accepts as logical and what is invalid.

Whether you realize it or not, the more we listen to the Rebbe, the more we absorb the Rebbe's approach. We don't even realize how much we,

as Lubavitchers, are affected by the Rebbe's style and education. As radical as it sounds to say that we, simple people, can be educated by the Rebbe himself—the fact is that it's true. And the more you listen and watch farbrengens, the more it affects you."

Rabbi Zalman Teitelbaum: When I was a child, I was *zoche* (thanks to some incredible friends) to constantly be near the Rebbe. This included being close *bgashmius*, at times close enough to reach out and kiss the Rebbe's tzitzis, and to be able to hear every word at the farbrengens—and I yearn every day for that again. However, I have never felt as close as now, listening to the farbrengens and following the *tochen*, the feeling, the inspiration, the atmosphere, each week.

The Rebbe is not only teaching Torah, or giving a *shiur*—he's farbrenging! It's one thing to learn a *sicha* inside a *sefer*, but it's an entirely different experience when you hear *how* the Rebbe is saying it—the concern he has in the question, the *geshmak* he has in the answer, *how* the Rebbe tells a story. You're being *taken* somewhere.

In addition, when you're listening, every line the Rebbe says has so much power. When you read something in a *sefer*, you're usually left with the general point of the *sicha*; each line individually has less of an impact. But when you hear every line with such *emphasis*, as the Rebbe says it—you can farbreng the whole week on a single *vort*!

Do you have any tips that you can share with our readers?

Rabbi Zushe Greenberg: As the Rebbe said countless times, paraphrasing the *possuk* "ראשיכם משבטיכם...מחוטב עציך ועד שואב מימך",



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An amazing way to channel the latest technologies to allow the Rebbe's holy words to guide our everyday lives, no matter where we may be.



the farbrengens are directed towards every level of people, the simplest of the simple as well as the greatest of the great. The Rebbe brings down the topics in such a way that anyone who knows basic Yiddish is capable of understanding them. At the same time, the *mehalech*, the build of the *sicha* and *how* everything fits together—that is something that takes time and practice. The Rebbe's every word is precious and counted, and a beginner may find it difficult, at least at first, to follow an entire *sicha* at a time.

It's important to keep in mind that even if you cannot (yet) understand or follow the entire flow of the *sicha*, or if you are in a situation where it is difficult to focus completely, that doesn't take away from the value of listening to and watching farbrengens. Beyond the spiritual effect of hearing the Rebbe's voice and watching

him, the Rebbe's *sichos* are said in such a way that you can absorb individual points regardless of your comprehension of the entire build-up.

Rabbi Yosef Wolvovsky: When I was a child, I did not understand that much, definitely not the flow of the *sichos*. Still, I was taken by the general environment and by the *niggunim*—especially when the Rebbe would encourage the singing (or even stand up)! I vividly remember holding up my little *l'chaim* cup and waiting for the Rebbe to turn in my direction and nod his blessings. What a jolt!

With time and concentration, I did begin to grasp more of the Rebbe's words. From an early age, I began to take notes during the weekday farbrengens. On Sundays, our class in Oholei Torah would dedicate a period to "*chazzara*." This review exercise definitely encouraged our listening memory and recording skills.



10 NISSAN 5739, YOSSEI MELAMED VIA JEM 127849



In addition to the Rebbe's words, we would recap any special moments or "*tenu'os*" of the Rebbe. (We were all eager to participate when the Rebbe spoke a "sharp" *sicha* about a "controversial" matter...) Even when I was not at the actual farbrengen—listening by hookup at home or camp—I would try to take notes.

Today, I will sometimes listen to a farbrengen at home or at the Chabad House. Most often, however, I am listening in the car. In our *makom hashlichus* we do a lot of driving, so listening in the car works well. You know the feeling of arriving somewhere but needing to finish a phone call or something else you are listening to? Imagine if it's not "something else," but the Rebbe's voice. There are times when I simply can't bring myself to stop listening...

Like all important things, this takes effort. There are always other things to do or listen to. Personally, I try to listen to the Rebbe's voice in the morning – before other things come up and before I can make any phone calls. It takes discipline, but it is so very important – and well worth it. It also takes concentration, and I will often listen to the same *sicha* two or three times.

Rabbi Zushe Greenberg: Just as learning Gemara doesn't come naturally to anyone, listening to a farbrengen takes practice and work. You have to learn the style. I came to the Rebbe in the beginning of 5746, but it took me until about a year and a half later, that I felt like I truly "got" how to follow a *sicha*. It's not that I wasn't understanding the *sichos* beforehand: I was listening to the farbrengens and attending *chazzara*, and I remember many *sichos* from then. But it took me a full year and half until I truly understood how to follow and *chazzer* an entire *sicha*. I remember that I was reviewing the farbrengen together with a *bochur*

who was a bit older than me—and you know when something just *clicks*?—something clicked."

Personally, I wouldn't recommend for people to read over the *sicha* before they watch it, because then you are entering the farbrengen with expectations, with a preconceived notion of what is being discussed. It's not a *live* experience. You have to come to a *sicha* totally open.

Rabbi Zalman Teitelbaum: Here are some tips that worked for me to be able to listen and follow the Rebbe's farbrengens. For background, throughout all of the years I had never been able to walk away from a *sicha* remembering/knowing anything of what was said. This includes being at the actual farbrengens or listening to the hook-ups, and in recent years, listening to recordings and videos.

Every person is different, but these are tactics that helped me, and perhaps others will find them useful as well.

There are three basic things that come to mind: 1) focus, 2) grasping the flow, and 3) the time.

Two years ago, I learned the *maamar* Basi Legani 5716 before Yud Shevat. The *maamar* discussed the humility of a *talmid*, a student. There was one thing the Rebbe said that I didn't quite understand: when you're listening, you have to just listen, without even thinking about what's being said. I really didn't understand what that meant.

Later, the Derher published an article regarding the *chazzara* of the Rebbe's *sichos*.³ Rabbi Simon Jacobson said that while the Rebbe was talking, you couldn't think even for a second about what the Rebbe was saying—you just had to listen. If you thought, even for a second, how to explain the point or how to apply it, you would completely lose track of the *sicha*.

This was a very revealing point to me. Every time I would hear a point in a *sicha*, I would always think about



27 ADAR 5737, CHUCK FISHMAN PHOTOGRAPHY

what would be a good way to explain it or what a great explanation it is for some other point—and at that point I would immediately lose track of the rest of the *sicha*.

[As a side point, I never had this problem by any other speech or lecture. Typically in a speech you can predict what a person is going to say for the next couple minutes, or if you catch it in the middle you can figure out what was said before. By the Rebbe's *sichos*, it seems that every second is precisely chosen, and can't be replaced by listening better before or after.]

So tip number one is to listen, and really not think of anything else at all.

—There are a couple of things that help me keep focus. One is to translate out loud while I'm listening. This is very helpful when someone is actually there, for example when I'm giving someone a ride in the car, but I find it helpful even without anyone there.

—The other one is to take notes afterwards and share them with others. I find that this helps both in the responsibility to focus the whole way through, and also in the next tip of keeping with the flow of the questions and answers.

The second tip is to be mindful of the theme and the topic, and what it is that the Rebbe is "teaching" in a given *sicha*. This is not as intuitive as it sounds. For example, the Rebbe may begin a talk discussing how this is the third day of the week or month, and go into an explanation about the value of "three." At that point it's hard to see whether this is the introduction of a central theme of the *sicha*, or an anecdotal thought that will give way to an entirely different topic once the theme begins.

This possibility exists also in the middle of a *sicha*, where the Rebbe may explain a detail in the central theme with an entire explanation, or

story, etc. but in the broader context of the *sicha*, it is anecdotal. [We see from the way the Rebbe treats such points in the previous Rabbeim's *maamarim*, where he often deduces entire themes from the placement and order of such seemingly "anecdotal" points, and that they are definitely much more and deeper than this. However that would seem to be a point for much deeper study.]

So the important thing is to constantly keep mindful of the questions that are asked and the points being brought up, to mark them against the general flow of the *sicha*. (This could sometimes contradict what I wrote before, but since it's on the very points of the *sicha* itself, it usually doesn't). One tip that I seem to remember from the article in the *Derher* was to try to remember points on your finger, and as the Rebbe makes new points, to try to associate each one with another finger.

The last, but certainly an important tip, is time. We know the Rebbe said that time belongs to Hashem and that we can make time for what we need, but I personally find that I need to almost force myself into situations that work.

It really does take focus. I don't know if I've ever focused so much in my life like I've focused on the Rebbe's farbrengens in the last few years. But once you take everything else out of your mind and just focus—it's not hard at all; it's given to you on a silver platter.

Any concluding words?

Rabbi Zushe Greenberg: Today we have such a gift. We have the tapes and videos of the Rebbe's farbrengens. This is unprecedented in history: From Moshe Rabbeinu until the Friediker Rebbe, we don't have comprehensive recordings of a single one of the *nesi'im*. But the Rebbe wasn't only speaking to the people in 770 at the time—he was speaking to those who

would listen and learn the *sichos* until today and beyond.

Yechidus cannot be experienced as it was then; *tekios* cannot be experienced as before—but farbrengens are there for us to listen to and watch. The Rebbe's farbrengens give us the ability to be true Chassidim *today*. The Rebbe gave us forty years of recordings and videos, starting from the very first farbrengen of the *kabbolas hanesius*. A lifetime of a person cannot cover everything! I believe that everything else, like stories of the Rebbe and listening to the experiences of Chassidim—all that is secondary to being educated by the Rebbe himself.

True, unlike before Gimmel Tammuz, when you could experience the farbrengen just by being there, whether or not you understood anything, today you have to invest in understanding the *sichos*. But when you do so, the *sichos* uplift you and you have the ability to become a Chossid who is educated directly by the Rebbe.


Rabbi Zalman Teitelbaum: Listening to farbrengens has had a real effect on my daily life. On the most

practical level: When you're listening to farbrengens, you always have a hundred things to say to anyone who you're talking to—a *geshmake vort*, a story, a deep insight. You're brimming with Chassidus.

But it's much more than that. I must say that no matter how close it felt to see the Rebbe's smile and love when I was growing up in 770, it does not compare to this. There is a special closeness of being drawn in to the Rebbe, with the questions, the concerns, the excitement as the Rebbe weaves a full farbrengen in *tochen*, depth, practical challenges, emotion, and more. Honestly, since I started listening on a regular basis, I've felt a much deeper and more emotional *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe. It's a different ballgame.

Rabbi Yosef Wolvovsky: For me, listening to farbrengens—hearing the Rebbe's voice first hand, singing along with the *niggunim*, experiencing the atmosphere in 770—is a primary way of maintaining *hiskashrus*. How could it not affect you? You just experienced a farbrengen with the Rebbe!

Aside from the inner feelings that these farbrengens evoke, there is a real tangible impact that they leave. When I just heard something from the Rebbe, my own *geshmak* is increased exponentially. This *chayus* comes across to my wife and my children, as well as to our community members. (At times, I will write up a concept that I just heard and disseminate it. The Rebbe simply makes everything so real and relevant). It is truly alive!

May our focus on the Rebbe's farbrengens be the *keili* to finally bring about the big farbrengen with the Rebbe himself, now! 

1. Unpublished interview with Jem's "My Encounter" team.
2. Eruvin 13b
3. *Retaining Chassidus—Part II*, Derher 42 (119), Adar II, 5776.



12 TISHREI 5748, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 14998

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Permission

The Mittler Rebbe put in place strict guidelines when a *yungerman* was allowed to come to the Rebbe and for how long he was allowed to stay.

One of the basic conditions and expectations with which a Chossid received permission to visit the Rebbe was that he would stop in towns on his way home and repeat Chassidus to those communities.

(*Hatomim* vol. 1 p. 36)

eight facts SAYING CHASSIDUS

Say The Truth

Where are you from?

In years gone by, when Russia was still the seat of the Chabad movement, *bochurim* were afraid to answer that question honestly. Saying you were from Lubavitch can make some have reservations.

“Nowadays,” says the Rebbe, “when *bochurim* go to the shuls to say over Chassidus they should say with confidence and conviction that they are from Lubavitch. Tell them the truth, that you have come on the Rebbe’s shlichus. Tell them we had and have a Rebbe. Talk strongly but not impolitely...”

(*Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim-Vayelech* 5710)



Just Chazzer

In 5712 the Rebbe began the initiative of making sure that all *bochurim* would go visit shuls to *chazzer* Chassidus.

On one occasion, the Rebbe received a list of *bochurim* who had participated and there were only 20 names on the list. The Rebbe expressed his surprise that out of 75 *bochurim*, only twenty had participated.

The Rebbe suggested that if there were not enough shuls for everyone to go to, they should gather in the yeshiva or in 770 and *chazzer* Chassidus among themselves, preferably with a *minyan*. This way every *bochur* can say over Chassidus throughout Shabbos.

(*Toras Menachem* vol. 4, p. 237; *Yoman of Elya Gross*)



It's not about you!

“Wow, I am good at this!” These were the thoughts of a talented Chossid of the Mittler Rebbe who was exceptionally gifted at remembering and giving over the *maamarim* he had heard. He was honestly afraid that because of this special ability, he would develop and nurture his ego. With this concern in mind he wanted to stop sharing the Chassidus he knew. He relayed this fear to the Mittler Rebbe who replied, “[Even if] you should become like an onion, you must still repeat Chassidus!”

When repeating the story throughout the years, the Rebbe offered several explanations why specifically an onion is used to portray the inflated ego. But the lesson was always the same: No matter what may become of you, a Chossid must always teach Chassidus to others.

(See *Toras Menachem* vol. 13, p. 313; vol. 12, p. 143; et al.)



Great Practice

Who benefits from the *chazzering* of Chassidus?

Both the listeners and the one *chazzering*.

How do the ones who are saying the *maamar* benefit?

1- In order to *chazzer* Chassidus one must review it many times and know it very well.

2- It teaches the *bochur* how to speak in public, to feel comfortable with speaking, and to choose words that are appropriate for the audience.

(24 Teves 5712;
Toras Menachem vol. 4 p. 253)



Smart choices

On another occasion the Rebbe detailed what type of *maamarim* should be *chazzered*. The

Rebbe stressed that complicated *maamarim* should not be chosen as this would be difficult for the listeners. Additionally, the Rebbe urged that the *mashpi'im* should be consulted about which *maamarim* to choose and the way they should be said.

The Rebbe concluded, "As long as there is a will, you will carry out the task and be successful!"

(Toras Menachem vol. 4, p. 238)

Pamphlets

When the Rebbe began talking about *chazzering* Chassidus in shuls, a *vaad* was formed to serve this purpose and was called Vaad Hamesader Chazzaras Dach.



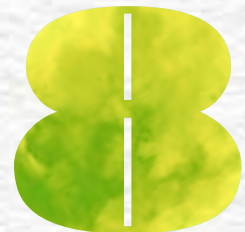
Two of the members, Rabbi Nachman Sudak and Rabbi Leibel Raskin (who were *bochurim* at the time), had a bold idea. They asked the Rebbe to review *sichos* from previous years so the *bochurim* would have what to relay in the shuls. To their great delight, the Rebbe agreed. These weekly pamphlets were the forerunners of the first volumes of Lekutei Sichos. This is very telling; the entire project of Lekutei Sichos was started because of the *bochurim* who were *chazzering* Chassidus on Shabbos.

Even before this, the Rebbe would often times point to certain concepts and ideas discussed at farbrengens and say that this was something that should be repeated in the shuls by the *bochurim*.

(See for example: Chai Elul 5711;
Shabbos Parshas Chukas-Balak 5712)

Help Him Come

While in a *yechidus* with the members of the *hanhala* of Tomchei Temimim on 5 Teves 5725, the *mashpia* Reb Shmuel Levitin told the Rebbe that "the *bochurim* are doing *hafatza*."



The Rebbe responded:

"You expect me to be satisfied with that? From the year 5715, the doors are open for Moshiach's arrival. He told the Baal Shem Tov that he will come when the *maayanos* are spread forth, but there is no one to deal with this!"

Reb Shmuel told the Rebbe that there were hundreds of *yungeleit* at the farbrengens, seemingly in an attempt to suggest that the *maayanos* were indeed getting out.

The Rebbe replied, "If those hundreds would go out afterwards and teach Chassidus in the shuls, then Moshiach would come. Every shul allows it, there are no more *menagdim*. Even in the yeshivos they allow it! We need only to go out and spread Chassidus to the furthest *chutza*! Then Moshiach will come and it will all be good..."

(Yoman Rabbi M.M. Wolf, 5725)

לזכות
החתן הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל
והכלה המהוללה מרת חי' מושקא שיחיו
טאראן
לרגל חתונתם כ"ב סיון ה'תשע"ח
נדפס ע"י הוריהם
הרה"ת ר' משה יוסף
וזוגתו מרת רבקה ומשפחתם שיחיו
טאראן
סינסנאטי, אהיו
הרה"ת ר' יוסף יעקב
וזוגתו מרת מלכה בינה ומשפחתם שיחיו
מאראס
ס. אנטוניו, טקסס





לזכות

הילד אברהם דוד שיחי'

ליום הולדתו י"ב שבט

וליום הכנסו לבריתו של אאע"ה,

י"ט שבט ה'תשע"ח

ולזכות אחיו מאיר שלמה שיחי'

נדפס על ידי ולזכות הוריו

הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל

וזוגתו מרת חי' מושקא שיחי'

בעגון

ולזכות זקניו שיחיו



What A Contradiction!

"Why did everyone stop?"

"Well it seems like the cloud stopped which means Hashem wants us to camp here."

"Okay, but what's all that commotion coming from up ahead. I hear banging and schlepping, what is that?"

"If you take a closer look you will notice that it is coming from the Levi'im camp which probably means they are erecting the Mishkan."

"Putting together the Mishkan? You mean over 40 huge wooden pillars, tens of silver sockets, huge woven draperies, and pegs and curtains to go around?! That is a tremendous amount of work. I guess we will be here for a couple of weeks at the very least, if not months."

"That is not necessarily true! Hashem has not told Moshe how long we will be camped here for; but regardless, Hashem wants the Mishkan set up at every stop. It could be just overnight... We may very well see the cloud lift up in the morning and everything they set up today will be dismantled until next time."

Although this conversation is fictitious, it is not hard to believe that such discussions were taking place in

WHY ARE YOU BUILDING THAT CHABAD HOUSE?

the desert as the Yidden made their way towards Eretz Yisroel.

It does seem surprising that Hashem wanted the whole *Mishkan* erected at every stop along their journey, no matter how long they would be there, even if it was just overnight.

This answers a burning question about our behaviour in *golus*.

If we are so firm in our faith and proclaim with confidence that Moshiach is coming at any moment, why should we build more institutions and do more “*golus*” things?

The Frierdiker Rebbe addressed this and instructed us to learn from the *Mishkan*. Even though the desert was not their final destination, Hashem wanted them to have it all ready. So too, explains the Frierdiker Rebbe, we have to set up our *Mishkan*, which is Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim.

The Rebbe responded to a similar quandary regarding Tzivos Hashem. In 5741 the Rebbe began Tzivos Hashem and urged everyone to recruit as many children as possible to help the fight to end *golus*. Bringing more Yidden into

the ranks of Tzivos Hashem will end *golus* **now**, even one second earlier.¹

At a farbrengen in 5752, the Rebbe laid out the two sides of this contradiction and gives us advice on how to approach it.

Every Yid needs to be aware that although this paradox exists—on one hand our belief in Moshiach’s imminent arrival and on the other our mission to continue the *avoda* in *golus*—we have to look to our leaders and the *nesi'im* clarified things for us.

The Frierdiker Rebbe was already asked the same question:

How can you publicize “לא לתור לגאולה—לתשובה לא לתור לגאולה—immediate *teshuvah* will bring immediate redemption,” on the one hand; and on the other hand send out shlichim to open up schools and yeshivos here in the United States? Sending out these shlichim entailed raising exuberant funds and even loaning money, along with much hard work. The shlichim will only reach their posts in a few days’ time, by which we are certain that Moshiach will already be here!

The Frierdiker Rebbe responded that we’ve already seen similar conduct

in previous generations, all the way back to Moshe Rabbeinu.

Moshe knew that he’d lead the Yidden in the desert for forty years. Nevertheless, he was prepared at any moment to enter into the Eretz Yisroel.

When Moshe Rabbeinu went up on Har Sinai for the second time, he knew that the full forgiveness for the sin of the *egel hazahav* would only come at the end of the third set of 40 days. Nevertheless, this did not discourage him or diminish the way he davened during the middle forty days.

This encourages each one of us to eagerly await Moshiach’s imminent arrival and to do our work in the most complete way possible.

The Rebbe concluded with a powerful line, “This includes sending shlichim out on shlichus even though they will only be in their city for a few moments...”² **T**

1. 15 Shevat 5741; Sichos Kodesh vol. 2, p. 262.

2. Shabbos Parshas Ha’azinu 5752; Sichos Kodesh vol. 1, p. 99.

לזכות החתן
הרה"ת ר' אברהם יונה שיחי' קאראליין
והכלה המהוללה
מרת זעלדא תחי' נעמאנאוו
לרגל חתונתם בשעתומ"צ
כ"ד סיון ה'תשע"ח

נדפס ע"י הוריהם
הרה"ת ר' יואל גרשון וזוגתו מרת רבקה
ומשפחתם שיחיו קאראליין
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל וזוגתו מרת חנה
ומשפחתם שיחיו נעמאנאוו



A Loving Father

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH
RABBI YISRAEL DEREN

Rabbi Yisrael and Vivi Deren have served as the Rebbe's shluchim for over forty years. Their remarkable life story has been an inspiration to many.

In this interview, Rabbi Deren and his wife share the stories and the hadracha they received from the Rebbe in their youth, in marriage, and on shlichus.



MARKO DASHEV PHOTOGRAPHY

A large, rustic wooden menorah stands in a snowy city square. Two men are on a white lift bucket, working on the upper branches of the menorah. One man, wearing a dark coat and a hat, is pointing towards the structure. The other man, wearing a light-colored coat and a hat, is also working on the branches. The menorah is made of thick, dark wood and has a triangular base. In the background, there is a large, classical-style building with columns, identified as the Springfield City Hall and Courthouse. The ground is covered in snow, and there are some bare trees and benches in the square. The entire image has a red tint.

THE SPRINGFIELD
MENORAH,
ERECTED BY RABBI
DEREN NEAR THE
SPRINGFIELD
CITY HALL AND
COURTHOUSE.



G SCHUSTERMAN VIA JEM 303075

THE REBBE STANDS UNDER THE CHUPPA OF AVROHOM AND SARAH RIVKAH SASSONKIN, 10 TAMMUZ 5722. AN ELEVEN YEAR-OLD YISRAEL DEREN STANDS WITH HIS FATHER REB YECHESKEL DEREN ON THE RIGHT.

Background

My family has had the merit of being in the United States from the Rebbe's earliest days in America. My father, Rabbi Yechezkel Deren, grew up in Poland in a Lubavitcher family, and was enrolled in Tomchei Temimim after his bar mitzvah. Shortly after the war broke out, he escaped with the Lubavitcher yeshiva to Shanghai, and arrived in America after the war.

My maternal grandfather was Reb Sholom Posner, who was sent by the Friediker Rebbe to America in 5689 (תרפ"ט). When they arrived, they saw the dismal spiritual state and my grandmother was very concerned for her children's future. When the Friediker Rebbe came to America in 5690 (תר"צ), she asked him in *yechidus*, "How will I ever raise Jewish children here?"

The Friediker Rebbe laughed and said, "*Du vest ois'hodeven feine*,

frumme, chassidishe kinder—you will raise fine, *frum, chassidishe* children."

Later, the Friediker Rebbe instructed them to move to Pittsburgh and open a Jewish day school. After my parents married in Kislev of 5710, they joined my grandparents in Pittsburgh. That's where I grew up.

By The Rebbe

My earliest memory of seeing the Rebbe is when I was seven years old. Although Pittsburgh is not so distant from New York, travel wasn't as easy and cheap as today, and we didn't—especially as children—go to New York very often. When I was seven years old, my father sent me along with a group of bar mitzvah students for the Purim farbrengen of 5718. The farbrengen was on Thursday night, and on Shabbos the Rebbe farbrenged again. The following day, on Sunday, we went into *yechidus*.

I remember another few short visits like that. When I was eleven years old I came to the Rebbe for Simchas

Torah for the first time, and merited to be present when the Rebbe taught a *niggun*.

One special childhood memory is coming to New York for the *chupah* of my aunt, Sarah Rivkah Sasonkin. The Rebbe was *mesader kiddushin*, and then the entire wedding party flew to Pittsburgh. While in New York before the *chupah*, my family was granted a *yechidus*, and prior to that we went to visit the Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Chana.

In Rebbetzin Chana's home, a few of the children were misbehaving and taken out, but I remained quiet and well-behaved and was allowed to remain. When Rebbetzin Chana noticed that, she rewarded me with a story. She told me how a professor in Yekaterinoslav had brought a question to her husband, Harav Levi Yitzchok in mathematics which they had been toiling on for a long time, and when the Rebbe saw the question he answered it on the spot.

I learned in the school in Pittsburg until I was twelve years old, and then I came to New York to study at the yeshiva on Bedford and Dean, where I remained for four years. Each Shabbos, I would stay by Reb Zalman Shimon Dvorkin in Crown Heights, and I merited to be in the Rebbe's presence, and join the Shabbos Mevorchim farbrengens. (Soon afterwards, the Rebbe began to farbreng every week, after the *histalkus* of Rebbetzin Chana.)

In Yechidus

From my bar mitzvah onward, I merited to be in *yechidus* with the Rebbe before each birthday. The first *yechidus* was in honor of my bar mitzvah, when I went in with my parents. The Rebbe tested me on my *pilpul* on the topic of carrying tefillin on Shabbos.

The Rebbe asked, how can the *chachamim* permit tefillin to be worn on Shabbos, if that constitutes carrying which is an *issur d'oraysa*. I was puzzled, not understanding how it could be an *issur d'oraysa* if the Alter

Rebbe permits it. I remained silent, and the Rebbe explained, "Because it's *derech levush*, it's like wearing a garment."

The Rebbe also asked when we would celebrate the bar mitzvah, and my father answered that they were discussing different dates, so the Rebbe commented that the Zohar says "*miyom yom holadito*," it should be celebrated on the *yom huledes* itself.

In yeshiva, I, of course, wanted to be (or at least be thought of as) a *chassidishe bochur*. There was a particular thing many *chassidishe bochurim* were doing (the particulars are not relevant to the story) and I wanted to do so as well. My parents did not think it was a good idea. I wrote to the Rebbe and asked if I could do the same. The Rebbe answered, "אם בתוקף יחליט - If you will make a firm decision to"—and then gave me quite a difficult condition to fulfill—"יעשה כן והשם יצליחו - you should do so and Hashem will grant you success."

I called my parents and they felt that I couldn't fulfill the condition as the Rebbe had given me. In my

fourteenth birthday *yechidus*, I asked the Rebbe what to do.

The Rebbe read my *tzetel* to the end and then without looking up said to me "*Ich hob dir shoin g'enfert*, I already answered you, *vest dos tohn tzu nisht?* Will you do it or not?"

The Rebbe continued looking down at my *tzetel* waiting for my response.

I stood frozen for what felt like hours, although it was probably not more than a few seconds, and finally, with tremendous effort, I very hesitatingly gave the Rebbe a barely perceptible nod. The Rebbe looked up with a smile, and said, "*Nu, az du vest gedeinken az du host mir tzugezogt, vest du zicher kenem*—if you will remember that you promised me, you will surely be able to accomplish it." Those words carry me till today, every time I run into a difficulty in my shlichus; "*Az du vest gedeinken az du host mir tzugezogt, vest du zicher kenem*."

At another *yechidus*, when I asked about concentration in *davening*, the Rebbe instructed me to always look in a *siddur*. "*Osiyos me'iros*," the letters in the *siddur* will help me concentrate on the meaning of what I was reciting.

The Rebbe's Farbrengens

When I was seventeen years old, the yeshiva bought the dormitory at 749 Eastern Parkway; I moved in there and I was right across the street from 770 and the Rebbe. In those days, 770 had a small crowd, where everyone knew everyone. Nevertheless, Lubavitch was rapidly growing, and the farbrengens attracted a large crowd, which filled the entire shul (downstairs 770 in its initial form, before the expansion into the adjacent buildings).

I vividly remember the first time I understood a *sicha* from the beginning until the end. I was thirteen years old, and the Rebbe spoke about the mitzvah of *Hachodesh hazeh lachem*, of setting a calendar according to the



A LOCAL PHOTOGRAPHER FROM THE SPRINGFIELD UNION CAPTURES A MITZVAH MOBILE WITH BOCHURIM VISITS THE STREETS OF DOWNTOWN SPRINGFIELD, SUMMER 5734. RABBI DEREN (CENTER) HELPS A MAN LAY TEFFILIN.



RABBI DEREN (RIGHT) WITH SENATOR TED (EDWARD) KENNEDY AT A CHABAD DINNER IN AMHERST MASSACHUSETTS. RABBI SHOLOM POSNER IS IN THE CENTER.

moon. The Rebbe noted the difference between the sun and the moon: the sun always remains the same, while the moon constantly changes, growing and shrinking, again and again. The *hora'a*, the Rebbe said, was that when a Jew is climbing in his *avodas Hashem*, he might fall and think that it's the end of it; he'll never be able to recover. But Jews are compared to the moon, and the moon teaches us that there is always another round.

Now, at that fabrengen, I had been a bit down. Something was happening in my life; I don't remember exactly what, perhaps a difficult test or the like, which caused me to feel, in my thirteen year old mind, that my life was already a total failure. Being able to understand and fully grasp that *sicha* was an amazing inspiration. I felt that the Rebbe was talking directly to me. After *mincha* and *maariv*, I remember walking home and looking up at the bright moon, and thinking how my life had just been given back to me by the Rebbe.

When I was 17, I went to learn in Newark for two years (that was the *seder* in those years). The Mashpia was Reb Meilach Zweibel *a"h*.

Our Shidduch

When I was nineteen years old, my parents were in *yechidus*, and the Rebbe brought up the matter of a *shidduch* for me. A year later, when my parents were in *yechidus*, the Rebbe suggested that my parents speak to me about a *shidduch* “*eider a tzveiter vet tzu ehm tzugein*—before someone else approaches him. *Ich mein nisht davka heint bay nacht, men ken varten biz morgen in der fri*—I don't necessarily mean tonight, you can wait until tomorrow morning.”

I was not even twenty years old at the time and my mother said, “*Er vil noch lernen*—he wants to continue learning.” The Rebbe smiled and with a wave of his hand said, “*Er vet lernen noch di chasuna*—he will learn after the wedding.”

In general, when people would write to the Rebbe about *shidduchim*, the Rebbe would answer, “*Nachon hashidduch*” (it is a proper *shidduch*) or “*Tov hashidduch*” (it is a good *shidduch*) or “*Azkir al hatziyun*” (I will mention it at the Ohel). In our case, when my wife and I wrote to the Rebbe that we agreed to get married, we merited a special *bracha*. The

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“THE REBBE IS
COMING IN!”

Rebbe wrote, “*Nachon hashidduch, vetov, v'yehi bshaa tovah u'mutzlachas, azkir al hatziyun*” (it is a proper and good *shidduch*, may it be in a good and auspicious hour. I will mention it at the Ohel).

Usually the Rebbe encouraged very short engagements, but in our case, because I was still very young, the Rebbe allowed us to stretch our engagement for eight months, during which I could obtain *semicha*.

Before our wedding, we went into *yechidus*, and the Rebbe told us something very powerful, which continues to guide us until today. The Rebbe said, “*Ir vet machen lichtig un varem ba andere, un der Aibershter vet machen lichtig un varem ba eich*—you should bring light and warmth to others, and the *Aibershter* will bring light and warmth to you.” That *bracha* and *havtacha* is what keeps us going until today.

Kollel and Shlichus

After our wedding, I joined the *kollel* behind 770 for two years.

Once, while I was there, the Rebbe surprised us with a visit. It was in middle of a random day, when suddenly someone rushed in breathlessly, “The Rebbe is coming in!”

Luckily, most of the *yungeleit* were there, and a few *bochurim* present jumped out of the window before the Rebbe saw them. The Rebbe walked in, looked around the room, and also went upstairs to see the apartment that was there (apparently that was the main reason the Rebbe came to see the *kollel*).

Although the attendance was alright, the Rebbe was very unhappy about the *bilti seder*. Every *sefer* he saw opened was a different one; no one was learning the same thing. The Rebbe wrote to Reb Zalman Shimon that the whole concept of a *kollel* was a *chiddush* in Lubavitch, and without a proper *seder*, the Rebbe said he would shut it down.

Shlichus in those years was already becoming a norm. Everyone knew that the Rebbe wanted Chassidim to move on shlichus, and the apprehension of the earlier years had already dissipated.

During the two years I spent in *kollel*, I received many offers for shlichus opportunities. In those years, the Rebbe didn't generally send out shluchim to new locations; new shluchim were usually hired to join existing *mosdos*. Many *mosdos* at the time were looking for extra hands, and many shluchim called us with offers.

When my wife and I were in *yechidus*, we told the Rebbe that we wanted to go on shlichus. The Rebbe told us to go into Merkos and speak to Rabbi Hodakov to hear suggestions. Rabbi Hodakov told me that there was a suggestion for a shliach to move to Amherst, Massachusetts, so I immediately said, "We'll take it." He smiled and explained that the recent norm was to come with a list of suggestions and choose the best one.

Being that I had received many proposals, I wrote up all nineteen of them, and we asked the Rebbe to choose. The Rebbe replied, "The *seder* now is that we don't send out shluchim anymore; you should choose a place yourself, *b'makom shelibo chafetz*, according to your heart's desire, *v'al yeshaneh adam mibno mitoich banav*, a person shouldn't differentiate among his children."

I remember being disappointed; I wanted the Rebbe to choose our place. Reb Binyomin Klein saw my

disappointment, and said, "The Rebbe just called you his own child!"

Mrs. Deren: I wrote a letter to the Rebbe, explaining that our *libo chafetz*, our heart's desire, was to go where the Rebbe himself would send us. This time, the Rebbe circled three of the nineteen options, and said to look into those places and get more details. After we did so, the Rebbe chose Amherst.

During that same *yechidus* regarding our shlichus, the Rebbe said, "*Bichlal zolt ir zehn az s'zohl zein gut b'gashmius. Hagam az ruchnius iz der ikar, az s'iz gut b'gashmius, ken men hob'n koach oif ruchnius*—In general, you should ensure that you have are physically comfortable; although spirituality is the main thing, when you will be comfortable physically, you will have strength for spirituality."

Amherst

Mrs. Deren relates: Our shlichus was unique in those days in the fact that we weren't based in an established Jewish community. Although most

shluchim dealt with students, they were usually based in a large Jewish community, where they would be able to find financial support. Nevertheless, we moved there with the Rebbe's *brachos*, and began working with students.

At first, we found a tiny house, almost a bungalow, where one room served as our shul, kitchen, dining room, office, and more. We began holding Shabbos meals, *minyanim*, and classes, and many students made real progress in their Yiddishkeit. As our crowds grew, we moved into a larger space, and within a few months, with the Rebbe's *brachos*, we were fortunate to be able to buy a beautiful facility, large enough for all of our activities.

Rabbi Deren: We decided to celebrate the *chanukas habayis* for our Chabad House with a grand concert. We obtained a hall and organized everything, but to our consternation, as the date approached almost no one bought tickets. We thought the event would be a colossal failure.



THE CHABAD HOUSE IN AMHERST.

The Shabbos before the concert was probably the worst Shabbos of my life.

I went up to the second floor of the Chabad House from where you could actually see the concert hall, and as I looked at it, I was thinking to myself, “Yisrael, you see that building over there? Tomorrow that’s going to be the scene of your downfall.” I don’t recall if I was literally crying, but inside, I was sobbing.

As I was standing there, I was reminded of a story that I had heard about Reb Mendel Futerfas. One time, when at a low point in jail, he had the idea of sending a letter to the Rebbe in his mind. He imagined making all the preparations, writing the letter, and posting it. A week later, his family in England received a letter from the Rebbe addressed to Reb Mendel. It began with the words, “In response to your telegram...” I thought to myself, “If only I was on the level of Reb Mendel, if only I could do something like that, I would send a letter to the Rebbe in my mind. I would write, ‘Dear Rebbe, You sent me here to make a *kiddush Hashem*, and I am about to do the opposite. Rebbe, please save me!’”

The next day, I braced myself for the worst. But then, to our shock (and delight), as we approached the hall, we saw huge lines of people. The concert was an unbelievable success.

Right after the event, my grandmother went to New York, where she was scheduled to enter in for *yechidus*. She had been at the concert in Amherst, so the Rebbe sat back, and he started asking questions about every detail of the concert. Did politicians attend? Was it covered by the press? Did I make an appeal? Were my parents there?

Finally, the Rebbe asked, “Nu, and how many people were there?” My *bubbe* replied, “Over one thousand.”

To which, the Rebbe responded, “Over a thousand?! And yesterday Yisrael was so worried...”

Other Shlichus’n

Mrs. Deren: As our activities grew, we brought down more shluchim to help with the work.

A few years after moving on shlichus, I was asked to come join the faculty of Achei Temimim in Springfield which was going through a difficult period. Springfield was

the closest Jewish community to Amherst, and my husband was there fundraising almost on a daily basis, so we considered the move.

We asked the Rebbe what to do, and he answered, “*Kfi sheyisdaber b’Malach*—as you will discuss with Merkos.” After a consultation with Rabbi Hodakov, we received the green light, and began spending the week in Springfield and Shabbos we would move into the Chabad House in Amherst.

Rabbi Deren: In 5748, having already placed shluchim in Hartford, and having been given responsibility for other areas in Connecticut, I realized that Stamford needed a shliach. I wrote to the Rebbe asking if I should open a center in Stamford and if the answer was yes, should I do it myself and hire a shliach to take my place in Amherst, or should I stay in Amherst and hire a new shliach for Stamford. The Rebbe answered that a Chabad center should be opened, but I should be the one to decide whether to do it myself or to bring a new shliach. We moved to Stamford, and *baruch Hashem*, with the Rebbe’s *brachos*, our work has met with great success.

The Rebbe’s Guidance

Throughout our years in Amherst, Springfield, and Stamford, we were always *zoche* to the Rebbe’s guidance. Although, in those years, the Rebbe didn’t always answer letters, and the *maanos* were often very short and concise, we always felt that the Rebbe was with us, guiding us through the good times, and through the not-such-good times.

One particular moment stands out in my memory:

One year, while living in Springfield, my wife gave birth shortly before Pesach. We would usually spend Pesach living in the Chabad House in Amherst, but that wasn’t possible with a new baby, so



HEBREW SCHOOL IN SPRINGFIELD.



RABBI DEREN (LEFT) IS JOINED BY THE THEN MAYOR OF SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS TED DIMAURO AND RABBI URI POSNER AT THE OPENING OF THE SUKKAH ERECTED IN DOWNTOWN SPRINGFIELD, CIRCA 5742.

“OH, YISROEL, IT’S GOOD THAT YOU CALLED. THE REBBE JUST TOLD ME TO SEND YOU A CHECK FOR YOUR PESACH EXPENSES...”

we arranged for others to run the *sedarim* in two locations in Amherst. In addition, we also organized a large public seder for the Russian immigrants in Springfield, and the costs were astronomical.

I was in a real bind. We didn’t own a single Pesach dish. I had no way of having Pesach in our home; our finances were very tight, and I didn’t have the means to now buy everything necessary for Pesach for ourselves, on top of our regular expenses.

I sat in my office very dejected; I remember feeling very sorry for myself. Here I was, worrying about the seder for so many Jews, people were coming to me with their *shaalos* and requests and I was caring for so many

people, yet no one seemed to be caring for me.

As I was sitting there, a woman called my office. Her daughter was sick, and she wanted me to pray for her. I immediately noted their Hebrew names, and called *mazkirus* to pass it on to the Rebbe.

As Rabbi Krinsky picked up the phone, he said “Oh, Yisrael, it’s good that you called. The Rebbe just told me to send you a check for your Pesach expenses...”

I remember another time we received a special *kiruv*:

There was a couple who began to come to our Chabad House. The husband was making strides in his Yiddishkeit, but unfortunately his wife

was very antagonistic about it. When matters really started getting serious, she gave her husband an ultimatum. She would come to ten Torah classes with Mrs. Deren. If Mrs. Deren managed to convince her, good. If not, she wanted a divorce.

She began attending, but by the fourth class my wife saw that her efforts didn’t seem to be successful. She wrote to the Rebbe, asking what to do, and the Rebbe replied, “*B’signon v’kaasiyasa ad achshav*—continue doing as you have been doing until now.”

Ultimately, we weren’t successful and the marriage ended. Naturally, my wife was very broken about it.

A short time later, we joined a *pegisha* weekend in Crown Heights, where my wife and I spoke at various workshops. During the Shabbos farbrengen, the organizers of the *pegisha* went up to receive a bottle of *mashke* from the Rebbe and the Rebbe told them, “Deren iz oichet doh, Deren is also here.”

I came up to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe gave me *l’chaim*, and then gave me a piece of cake, “*Un dos iz far di missus deineh*, this is for your ‘missus.’” I felt that the Rebbe was encouraging us after that story.

Mrs. Deren: Shulamit Aloni, an anti-religious Knesset member at the time, spoke in a college in Amherst, and we called *mazkirus* to ask if we should go to the speech. Rabbi Klein told me that we should go, and that I should introduce myself and say that we are from Chabad.

When I told her that I was from Chabad, her eyes opened wide. “Chabad? Here?”

She said, “*Kol hakavod l’Chabad*. I like Chabad. They don’t force; rather, they try to persuade.”

Rabbi Klein later told me that when he passed on the report to the Rebbe, he couldn’t remember where we lived. He began saying to the Rebbe, “Deren

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from...” The Rebbe asked, “Pittsburg?” He said, “No, Yisrael Deren,” and the Rebbe finished off, “Amherst.”

Rabbi Deren: One time, when we went for dollars in 5751, the Rebbe gave me a second dollar, “*Dos iz far di rabbonus deineh*—this is for your rabbonus.” Then the Rebbe gave my wife a second dollar, “*Doz iz far ayer hilf tzu ayer man in di rabbonus zeineh*—this is for helping your husband in his rabbonus.” Then the Rebbe gave me a third dollar with a smile and said, “*Dos iz far dir aftzu helfen ir helfen dir*—this is for your helping her helping you.”

Personal Guidance

Mrs. Deren: The Rebbe’s encouragement was always felt, also on a personal level. We went through some very challenging times, and we merited some very beautiful answers from the Rebbe.

I once wrote to the Rebbe asking for general direction for our situation. The Rebbe wrote: “ע”פ שו”ע כולל בטחון” (Live) according to Shulchan Aruch, including *bitachon* in Hashem and joy in serving Him.”

Another encouraging answer we received was when our son Mendel was a baby. I wrote to the Rebbe that he wasn’t growing at a normal pace; he was still very small. The Rebbe wrote, “ויקויים בו זה הקטן גדול יהיה—may it be fulfilled in him [the prayer] ‘This small one will grow to be great.’” That was



RABBI DEREN TEACHES A CLASS IN STAMFORD.



RABBI DEREN BRINGS THE KEY TO THE CHABAD HOUSE IN AMHERST TO THE REBBE, YUD SHEVAT 5735.

fulfilled (in a spiritual sense) in an unbelievable way.

Before Tishrei 5752, I pressured my children to come home for the first days of Sukkos. I understood that for Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Simchas Torah there was nothing to talk about, as they wanted to be by the Rebbe, but I wanted them to join us for at least one Yom Tov. I felt that my children were an integral part of

our shlichus, and that they could have a strong impact on the people that would be joining us in our home for Yom Tov.

My son Yossi was eighteen, and he wasn’t very excited about the prospect, but because I insisted, they remained home. After Yom Tov, we phoned Crown Heights and heard about all the amazing things that had occurred. The Rebbe had watched each person *bentch*



MENDEL DEREN STANDS BY SHORTLY AFTER RECEIVING HIS FIRST ALIYA AT 770, 5 TISHREI 5748.



THE GROUNDBREAKING OF THE CHABAD CENTER IN STAMFORD, YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5763. THEN MAYOR DANIEL MALLOY (CENTER) JOINS IN THE CEREMONY.

lulav, over a duration of six hours, and my children had missed out on the opportunity. Needless to say, they were extremely disappointed.

After Yom Tov, we received a letter from one of our guests, where they thanked us for hosting them and wrote about the impact that we had on them. One thing jumped out at me: They wrote that the biggest impression was from our teenage children.

My son Yossi wrote the story in a *duch* to the Rebbe. Some time later, Rabbi Groner called him and showed him the Rebbe's answer. The Rebbe wrote: "נת' ות'ח ת"ח (2) אזכיר עה"צ. (1), I received your letter, thank you very much, I will mention it at the Ohel."

Shlichus Haklolis

When the Rebbe first said to hold a Kinus Hashluchim in the USA, I was

one of the people involved in the early organization. After the first Kinus, in 5744, the Rebbe said that we should create a *vaad l'milui hachlatos*, to bring the discussions into reality. The *vaad* consisted of myself, Rabbi Yossi Groner, and *ybch"lch* Rabbi Daniel Moscovitz *a"h*.

Throughout the years that I dealt with general shlichus matters, I felt that the Rebbe was very happy about our work. In those days, I often did not receive answers from the Rebbe when writing a report pertaining to my own shlichus, but in the case of the *vaad*, or a situation that benefited all the shluchim in general, I almost always received an answer.

Hiskashrus

Sometimes, when I speak to *bochurim* about my experiences by the Rebbe and the like, I hear the same complaint repeated. *Hiskashrus* today isn't possible anymore. You lived with the Rebbe on a daily basis, and you therefore had an easy route to *hiskashrus*; but a young *bochur* today doesn't have the ability to be a real *mekushar*.

I answer that they are suggesting that the Chassidim in Soviet Russia, who showed exemplary *mesiras nefesh* and raised generations of Chassidim, weren't true *mekusharim*. After all, they too had no contact with the Rebbe.

The reason this question is raised is because of a misconception. The *hiskashrus* that they are thinking of isn't real *hiskashrus*. What they are thinking of is a facade that the *yetzer hara* pulls over true *hiskashrus*.

Genuine *hiskashrus* is achieved in ways that the Rabbeim made clear time and time again. Through learning the Rebbe's *sichos* and *maamarim*, fulfilling the Rebbe's directives—that's the way to be a *mekushar*, and that hasn't changed one iota since Gimmel

Tammuz. If anything, it has become easier to accomplish.

The real difference in this aspect of a Chossid's *avodah* today and a Chossid's *avodah* before Gimmel Tammuz, is regarding a superficial *hiskashrus*:

In those days, it was easy to *feel* like a *mekushar*. You could attend farbrengens, watch the Rebbe by davening, “hang around” 770, and you felt like the biggest *mekushar*. But that *hiskashrus* was superficial; it didn't necessarily become part of you.

My uncle, Reb Zushe Posner, often pokes fun of the concept that some individuals are derisive of *tzugekumene* Chassidim. He says, if you're not *tzugekumene*, you are not a true Chossid! Your father may be a Chossid, but that is not a insurance policy for you. To be a Chossid, something has to change in *your pnimius*, it doesn't come from hanging out and just being around Lubavitch.

It is true; we no longer see the Rebbe *b'gashmiyus*, we cannot go to farbrengens and we don't merit dollars and davenings. But the essence of *hiskashrus* hasn't changed at all.

Today, it's not harder to be *mekushar*; it's just harder to convince yourself that you're a *mekushar*—when in fact all you have is *chitzoniusdike hiskashrus*. It's harder to convince yourself that a superficial *hiskashrus* is enough. The difficulty is on the part of the *yetzer hara*: at one point in time, he could easily fool you into thinking that you are a *mekushar*, while today his job has become many times more difficult.

Guidance

The complaint about *hiskashrus* is often accompanied with another issue: Today, many feel that we can no longer receive clear guidance from the Rebbe. After all, that is an important part of *hiskashrus*—following the Rebbe's directives. At one time, the



5 TISHREI 5745, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEW 212181

Rebbe guided us on every step; in every situation and at every fork in the road, the Rebbe gave you direction. Suddenly, we are at a point in time where we sometimes feel lost; we no longer have whom to turn to.

The truth of the matter is like we said regarding *hiskashrus*: The change is only on the part of the *yetzer hora*.

What does this mean?

Before Gimmel Tammuz, the Rebbe made his *ratzon* very clear on many issues. Everyone knew that the Rebbe wanted Chassidim to move on *shlichus*, for example; there was no doubting that. We all knew the Rebbe's opinions on *chinuch*, *shlichus*, Eretz Yisroel, and so on.

However, throughout the generations, Chassidim knew that “*Vi men fregt, azoi entfert men*—the Rebbe

will answer you in the manner that you asked.” When push came to shove, sometimes those concepts weren't so comfortable for some individuals, and they chose not to go in that direction. Moreover, some people would write to the Rebbe about their decisions, even if deep down they knew the Rebbe doesn't approve. They would ask for the Rebbe's *haskamah ubracha*, and often they received it.

In other words, the foundations of the Rebbe's guidance are clear. We know exactly how to be *mekushar*, and through learning the Rebbe's Torah, we know exactly how to conduct ourselves. The answers that we are missing are the answers the *yetzer hora* wants to hear. Our *Nefesh Elohis* has no doubts; the Rebbe gave us instructions that are as clear as day.

TRUE *HISKASHRUS* GROWS OUT OF THAT DEDICATION.

As Chassidim, we can be sure that the Rebbe provided us with everything we need to cope with in our current situation. In the *sicha* of Beis Adar 5748, the Rebbe gave clear guidelines in how to go about a case of doubt. Whether through a *mashpia*, *yedidim mevinim*, or *chassidishe rabbonim*, the Rebbe's *horaos* are as clear as day.

I'm very comfortable stating that when I walk into a yeshiva today, I see the *chassidishe bochurim* are on a higher level than the *chassidishe bochurim* of our day. Not necessarily because they know more, or because they have a more *chassidishe tziyur*; it is because the superficiality is not there. Today, a *chassidishe bochur* is an honest, *pnimiusdiker* one; he won't be swayed by *chitzonius* as we were.

The Gemara says, "*Mah zar'o bachayim af hu bachayim*" (just as his children are alive, he too is alive). We see that the Rebbe lives in the fact that a *bochur* in Chicago, Toronto or Kfar Chabad truly lives with the *chayus* that he takes from the Rebbe. That is the Rebbe's life, that is *hu bachayim*. That hasn't changed, that was the Rebbe's life before Gimmel Tammuz and that is the Rebbe's life today.

Work At It

In our day, the *yetzer hora* has convinced many people that *hiskashrus* is a hard task, it's too difficult for regular people.

The truth is that *adam l'amal yulad*. Doing the Rebbe's work was never meant to be easy, the Rebbe made that very clear in the first *sicha* that he said after the *maamar Basi Legani*. The Rebbe said that each person must still fulfill his *avodah*; the fact that we have a Rebbe doesn't remove any responsibility from us.

This morning I happened to see the *maamar V'eleh Hamishpatim* from Kuntres Chof-Beis Shevat 5752. One *nekudah* that the Rebbe speaks about is carrying *olah shel Torah*, the yoke of Yiddishkeit with joy and pleasure.

The fact that something is difficult to obtain doesn't mean that it is beyond our reach altogether. And it also doesn't mean that it wasn't meant for us. There is no room for a negative attitude.

On the contrary; Chassidim sometimes viewed a *kiruv* from the Rebbe as a *richuk*. The reasoning was simple: if you would be a true Chossid, the Rebbe wouldn't have to go out of his way to encourage you to do something. Obviously your *avoda* is lacking.

In other words, a Chossid's task is to dedicate himself to the Rebbe entirely, without being asked and without being patted on the back. No matter how difficult the task, a Chossid tackles it head on.

True *hiskashrus* grows out of that dedication. If you want to be a *mekushar*, do it when you *don't* feel like it. Go to the Ohel, learn the Rebbe's *sichos* and *maamarim*, learn Rambam,

go on *mitvzoim*—and suddenly you will discover that you are connected to the Rebbe.

When I was in yeshiva, we would complain to the *hanhalah* that we don't have a *chayus* in learning. They would respond, "Obviously not, because you're not learning!" A *chayus* in anything in your life will always come as an outgrowth of dedication to that ideal, whether learning *nigleh* or Chassidus, or the concept of *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe.

My grandfather once asked a Jew to put on tefillin. The Jew responded, "Rabbi, how can I put on tefillin if I don't believe in G-d?" My grandfather answered him, "How can you believe in G-d if you don't put on tefillin?" A real connection will only grow once you actually do it.

It may always be difficult, but as the Rebbe once wrote to us, your life must be centered around "Shulchan Aruch, including *bitachon* in Hashem and joy in serving Him." Doing the Rebbe's work is the biggest merit one could ever ask for. Being the Rebbe's shliach means that every part of your day, everything you do, is an expression of the *meshaleach*, the Rebbe. Although at times it might be difficult, if you are mindful of the fact that you are the Rebbe's shliach, that thought will carry you through. **T**



RABBI DEREN LAYS TEFILLIN WITH A STUDENT.



דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

לזכות
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל שיחי'
גורארי'
העוסק לילות כימים במסירה
ונתינה במוסד JEM
נדפס ע"י
ידידו הרה"ת ר' דוד שיחי'
ויסמן
והשליח הרה"ת ר' יחזקאל שיחי'
ראטמאן

The Birthday Miracle

AS TOLD BY RABBI MENACHEM KUTNER
TZACH ERETZ YISROEL - CHABAD TERROR VICTIMS PROJECT

On 7 Cheshvan 5773, Captain Ziv Shilon, a platoon commander in the Givati Brigade, was leading his battalion on a routine patrol near the wall on the Gaza border, when they noticed a suspicious package. As the commander, Ziv approached the package alone to investigate. The bomb detonated as soon as he touched the package and he was severely wounded. He lost his left arm on the spot and his right arm was crushed.

After several minutes, he managed to evacuate himself to his fellow soldiers in the waiting jeep while carrying his severed left arm. After emergency treatment by the

dedicated army medic, he was airlifted to Soroka Hospital in Be'er Sheva in critical condition and the doctors valiantly fought for his life. Several days later and after many surgeries, his condition stabilized but, sadly, they were unable to reattach his left arm and his right arm seemed damaged beyond repair.

Ziv was eventually transferred to the Rehabilitation Hospital at Tel Hashomer (in Tel Aviv) and the doctors continued to work on saving his right arm. To their frustration, the numerous operations accomplished nothing. To make matters worse, they realized that Ziv's

lifeless right arm was becoming a life threatening liability to the rest of his body and they recommended that it be amputated.

Ziv adamantly refused to consider this option. “As doctors you need to do your job to heal,” he said. “The fact that I lost my left arm at the border, that was not in my control. Under no circumstances will I willingly consent to have my right arm amputated. I have the strength to endure any amount of surgeries and procedures you need to do to save my right hand.”

They tried to explain to him that he really had no choice in the matter and the debate continued for several weeks.

In the capacity of my shlichus in the “Chabad Terror Victims Project” department of Tzach I work with the “*Metzuyanei Tzahal*” (wounded soldiers of the IDF) and on occasion we arrange a “trip of a lifetime” for them. They are treated to a full week of fun and sightseeing in New York City. I would regularly visit Ziv during his long months of rehabilitation and was aware of the agonizing decision he was facing. I suggested he join our trip to get a break from the painful reality of the hospital and his medical decisions.

He was delighted with the idea. “This is exactly what I need right now!” he said.

The group of ten soldiers had a blast in New York for a full week. Friday was designated for the spiritual part of the journey. We visited 770 and had the *zechus* to daven in the Rebbe’s room and to see the entire building. Touring Crown Heights and observing the vibrant *chassidische* lifestyle in the heart of New York made a deep impression on them.

The next part of the trip was a visit to the Ohel, and on the bus ride, I wanted to share with them the significance of this visit. I described how a Chossid prepares to enter *yechidus*, the procedure of writing a *pan* and how important it is to prepare a *keili* to receive the Rebbe’s *bracha*. I then offered each one to wrap tefillin as a preparation to entering the Ohel.

They all sat in the large tent with a pen and paper and I guided them in writing the opening line of the *pan* and they continued on their own. I told them that I would wait for them in the Ohel and as they enter I will recite with each one their *perek* in Tehillim.

The entire group was very serious and they spent close to an hour writing their *panim*. With his prosthetic arm, Ziv wrote a *pan* to the Rebbe.

When Ziv entered the Ohel, he told me that he is twenty-five years old and we recited Perek Chof-Vov. As we finished the *perek* he told me that he made a mistake. “I will be turning twenty-five next week. Right now I am twenty-four.” Without missing a beat I turned to Perek Chof-Hei and recited it with him. He then read his *pan* and tore it with his prosthetic arm and his teeth.



On the bus ride to Manhattan, where we were to spend Shabbos, there was a very special and uplifted atmosphere. The soldiers felt the Rebbe’s love for them and one of them told me that he left the heavy burden of his troubles in the Ohel. There was much singing and celebration during that ride.

I noticed that Ziv sat in the back of the bus deep in thought and was not participating in the good cheer.

That night, Ziv requested to sit next to me for *seudas Shabbos*. After *kiddush* and *hamotzi* Ziv turned to me and said, “Listen, Rav Menachem. The Rebbe made me very upset.”

“What happened?” I asked, shaking.

He proceeded to tell me that at the Ohel the major issue on his mind was his ongoing debate with the doctors about his right arm. As he was writing his *pan* he suddenly had the following thought: If the *perek* Tehillim he recites in the Ohel will have three references to a hand, he will take it as a sign that his hand is salvageable. If there is no mention



of “hand” he will take it as a sign that he will lose his right arm as well.

As we read Perek Chof-Vov together he was elated and relieved to read three references to “hand” and even the right hand! In *possuk vov*: אֲרַחֵץ בְּנִקְיוֹן כָּפִי --I washed my hands with cleanliness. In *possuk yud*: אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדֵיהֶם זֶמָה וַיִּמְנוּם --in whose hands are plots and whose right hands are full of bribery.

But then he realized that we said the wrong *perek* and as we said Perek Chof-Hei he was saddened that he did to find any reference to hands whatsoever.

“Rav Menachem, the Rebbe’s message to me is that I will lose my right arm as well...”

I sat there thunderstruck, and for a few long moments I could not even breathe.

Suddenly, I had an idea. “Tell me, Ziv. When you say that you are turning twenty-five next week, are you referring to your birthday on the secular calendar?”

“Correct.”

“Do you know the Jewish date of your birth?”

“Of course. Chof-Gimmel Iyar.”

I jumped out of my chair. “Ziv! Today was your real birthday! As you were standing in the Ohel your real *perek* in Tehillim was Perek Chof-Vov, not Perek Chof-Hei!”

Needless to say the joyous atmosphere in the room reached a fever pitch and we celebrated the clear *bracha* Ziv merited to receive from the Rebbe.

On Tuesday, as we were touring the city, Ziv started to feel sensation in his right arm. He ran over to me and excitedly showed me how he was able to curl his fingers!

“I can’t believe it! This is the first time I have feeling in my arm since the terrorist attack!” He was overwhelmed with gratitude at the open miracle.

Upon returning to Eretz Yisroel, the doctors were shocked at the miraculous development and intensified their efforts to restore full functionality to his right arm.

On Erev Chanukah, Ziv had a surgery. That night, when I visited him at the hospital to light Chanukah menorah, I lit the *shamash* and handed it to him. In front of our eyes, the miracle occurred. Ziv lifted his right arm, held the *shamash* in his hand and lit the first candle on the menorah. ❶

YOUR STORY

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



Moments

נדפס ע"י
ולזכות הרה"ת ר' דובער
וזוגתו מרת רחל ומשפחתם שיחיו
מאטשניק

ולעילוי נשמת גיסו
השליח הרה"ת אריאל ע"ה
בן יבלחט"א ר' שאלתיאל זאב שיחי'
רבנוי

גלב"ע ח' שבט ה'תשע"ה
לרגל יום הולדתם המשותף
"ארבעים שנה"
ביום כ"ז תמוז ה'תשע"ח



FARBRENGEN YUD-BEIS TAMMUZ 5743

YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM 140070



Jews from all walks of life and backgrounds are in attendance.



YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM 125331

YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM 125334

YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM 125328




The *chozer* Reb Yoel Kahan stands in his spot to the Rebbe's right.

Children are an integral part of the farbrengen as well.



YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM 140075



A cameraman sits atop a platform, capturing the farbrengen for live television and for posterity. At this farbrengen the Rebbe spoke about the national issue of “A Moment of Silence” and education in America.

YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM 140064



YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM 125329

Many dignitaries and officials are in attendance. The Rebbe thanked the United States government for their help in the Frierdiker Rebbe's miraculous escape from war-torn Europe in 5700.

At the conclusion of the farbrengen, the Rebbe repeated the story how at the moment of Friediker Rebbe's liberation in Kostrama, Chassidim broke out into a dance, singing (while telling the story, the Rebbe himself began the song), "*Nyet, nyet, nikavo...*"



YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM 125341

Derher**Letters**

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

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



“He Wears A Full Beard”

Dear Editors,

In regard to the article entitled “Tzelem Elokim” [Issue 68 (145), Iyar 5778], I feel that it is important to add an interesting point that the Rebbe said during the farbrengen of 24 Teves 5741. The Rebbe spoke about the signs of those who received a *chassidisher chinuch*, and he said as follows: “When one sees a boy who just became bar mitzvah putting on two pairs of tefillin... and hears [*derhert*] that he is scrupulous about *tzitzis kaful shmona*, as well as welcoming Shabbos early and ending it late, and he wears a full beard and does not touch it to begin with (”עַר רִירַט אִיר, עַר גִּאגִנֶּצֶע באַרד, טראַגט אַ גאַנצע באַרד, מלכתחילה נִיט אַן”), based on this, one assumes that he received a *chassidisher chinuch*.”

Here the Rebbe expresses what he expects of a *chassidisher chinuch*.

Shalom Greenberg
Morristown, NJ



Proclamation from Alaska

Dear Editors,

In continuation to your article about Education Day, with the many *sichos* and stories from the Rebbe on this subject [“Education Day, U.S.A.” Issue 67 (144), Nissan 5778], I will share a personal story about this topic:

In the summer of 5744, my friend, and I were on Merkos Shlichus to the state of Alaska. This was before Rabbi Yosef Greenberg moved as a permanent shliach to the state. It was our second summer visiting Alaska on Merkos Shlichus.

During the time that we were there, we visited many Yidden in the area and were very much assisted by two brothers, Mr. Jerry and Mr. Perry Green, who were and still are great friends of Lubavitch. One of the Green brothers was very close with the governor of Alaska and he offered to arrange for us to have a meeting with the governor.

Of course, we took him up on the offer, and we decided that we would use the opportunity to try to get him to dedicate a day to the Rebbe—Education Day—in Alaska. Before our visit, we sent the governor a booklet with information about Education Day and a copy of the proclamation that was signed by the President. Although we had intended for it to be called Education Day, as was done in Washington, the governor thought it was more appropriate to give it the name “Rabbi Schneerson Day” out of respect to the Rebbe.

Being that it was many months away from Yud-Aleph Nissan, we had to pick a day during the summer. We called the Merkos office and they advised us that Chai Elul would be a good day for the proclamation. When we pointed out that it was Shabbos, we were told that it shouldn’t be a problem. We had a line added to the proclamation encouraging people to give charity before Shabbos.

We met with the governor and all went well. The following week, we finished the shlichus and returned to New York. Upon our return on Monday, 13 Elul, we submitted the proclamation to the Rebbe along with a short *duch* of our trip.

The following morning I came about a half hour late to Chassidus and my friends in the *zal* told me that Reb Binyomin Klein was looking

for me and said he would be back at nine o'clock. I waited for him at the front door of 770 and at nine I saw him coming towards 770 while motioning with his finger that I am in trouble. He brought me into the *mazkirus* office, locked the door and took out a folded paper. On the outside of the paper, it read מהיר—**urgent** and there was a *ches* which stood for “חשאי—**Confidential**” underlined two times (it was already copied down in his handwriting).

The Rebbe's answer to what we had submitted read as follows:

כנראה אין רואים כלל דבר הכי בולט! -

והמדובר שמירת שבת בפרהסיא הכי גדול!

מה הכריח לקבוע ביום שאסור לטלפן, לנסוע לאסיפה, לכתוב פר"כ [פרטי-כל] או ברכה וכו' וכו'.

אלא שנזכרו להציע שיתנו הצדקה בעש"ק! והרי 99% דפערולות דיום מיוחד בארצה"ב - אסורות בש"ק!!

וההבהלה הכי גדולה היא -

שכ"ז בא אך מהעדר מוחלט דשימת לב ולגמרי - למה שעושים (ובשם כל ליובאוויטש - ובתור מרכז לחינוך בני"י)

וה' הטוב יכפר וכו'.

Evidently they have not realized something so obvious!

It is a case of Shabbos observance in the most public forum possible!

What compelled them to arrange [an "Education Day"] on a day that it is forbidden to use the telephone, to travel to a meeting, to write minutes or [to write] greetings, etc. etc.?

True, they did remember to suggest that the money for charity should be given on Erev Shabbos. But 99% of all activities done for a specially "proclaimed" day in the United States are forbidden on Shabbos!!

The most shocking of all:

*This is all done out of a complete lack of awareness for what they are doing! (And this is done on behalf of the whole Lubavitch movement and by a central organization for **Jewish** education!)*

May the merciful G-d atone [for all of the above] etc.

I asked Reb Binyomin what I should do and he advised me to talk to Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky and Rabbi Sholom Ber Levitin—head shliach of the Pacific Northwest (including Alaska), as to how to proceed. Rabbi Krinsky told me to call the governor's office and ask them to reissue the proclamation for another day. I did as he said and the office told me that they would take care of it.

The next morning, a new proclamation arrived in the mail. The new version had an added note saying that since this day occurs on the holy day of Sabbath, all matters honoring the day that violate the Sabbath should be done on Friday beforehand. We sent out a new press release with this correction, and of course, we submitted this to the Rebbe, but we never received a response.

That day until we received the new proclamation was a terrifying day for us. I didn't know how I would make it through the day after receiving such an answer from the Rebbe... I remember how I saw Rabbi Moshe Hersen in Rabbi Krinsky's office and he comforted me. "When a father loves his child," he said, "the father gives him a *patch*."

It only shows us how much we ought to be careful in everything we do when representing the Rebbe as his shluchim. We were held accountable for our actions as the shluchim of Merkos.

Anonymous

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Behind the Scenes - Lag B'omer 5730

Dear Editors,

Thank you very much for your article about Lag B'omer 5730 ["K'Halacha!" Issue 68 (145), Iyar 5778].

I thought your readers would be interested to know a bit of the "behind-the-scenes" story

of that year's parade, part of which I was privileged to have been involved in.

Rabbi J.J. Hecht, the coordinator of the parade (in his capacity as chairman of the NCFJE), was having an extremely difficult time garnering the support needed to arrange the huge event. He used to host a weekly radio program on Friday mornings on the Jewish station WEVD. On Friday, 9 Iyar, just nine days before Lag B'Omer (which is on 18 Iyar), Rabbi Hecht announced on his radio show that the Lag B'Omer parade had been cancelled!

I was teaching that year in Crown Heights, when one of my friends from the *kollel* told me about the sad news of the cancellation. We all knew how much the parade meant to the Rebbe, and to cancel it was unacceptable.

And so, some of us who were involved in coordinating a Lag B'Omer parade in Montreal a few years earlier, in 5727, decided that we would do something to reverse the situation.

First of all, we needed money. We didn't have much of our own, but we immediately pledged and gave more than we could afford.

Then Reb Mendel Bartfield stood up to the plate. He took upon himself to recruit every member of *anash* to contribute \$100.

That Shabbos afternoon, at the end of the Rebbe's *mincha minyan*, Rabbi Shmuel Butman got up at the *bima* and announced that after Shabbos there will be an emergency meeting for all of *anash* about the parade.

That night, at the insistence of Rabbi Shmuel Fogelman, we spread out in pairs knocking on every Lubavitcher's door. Rabbi Dovid Raskin *a"h* asked for volunteers. He opened up the Tzach office and had people calling Lubavitchers in Boro Park, Manhattan and other places in the NYC metro area.

The meeting was brought to order at 11:30 p.m. and 770 was packed like for a farbrengen. It was unbelievable! Every member of *anash*, pledged and immediately gave \$100, and regardless of age, every member of *anash* was drafted to help with the parade.

Of course, we wanted to make sure that the Rebbe would come out and speak at the parade. So we asked Reb Yoel's advice on how to go about getting the Rebbe to agree to come out. Reb Yoel said that we should ask Rabbi Hecht to ask the Rebbe. "If you want the Rebbe to come out, you are going to have to ask Rabbi Hecht to ask the Rebbe and for him to translate the *sicha*. If not, I assure you the Rebbe will not come out."

We asked Rabbi Hecht, who in turn asked the Rebbe, and the Rebbe indeed agreed to join. (I just want to add here, that I later realized that such a devoted soldier of the Rebbe, as Rabbi Hecht was, would not have made that announcement on the radio without first asking the Rebbe.)

We worked tirelessly and against many odds (the preparations did have their "bumps" on the road), but it turned out to be a beautiful success.

One thing was that I felt that we should introduce into the parade was actual marching bands. Of course I was aware that on such short notice, it could only be with non-Jewish music. But my feeling was that if it happens that year, in the future we could get marching bands playing Jewish music.

I made telephone calls and was able to get five marching bands to volunteer and come to the parade (Army, Navy, etc.). Originally I had called a sixth band as well, but we had to dismiss them for various reasons.

The Rebbe actually asked why only five had come, and we explained what happened. So the Rebbe smiled and said, "By now the first band already reached the end of the parade route; perhaps they would agree to come back and march again." I immediately ran to the park and told the one in charge of the first band that the Rebbe enjoyed their music so much and had asked if they would go another round. Of course, he was quite happy to come for another round.

Arranging entertainment for a crowd of 10,000 children at the last minute proved to be a challenge.

So I came up with another idea: I asked three of my friends to dress up as clowns and mix in the stands with the children to keep them entertained. They were quite reluctant, to say the least. I explained that obviously I was not asking them to do this in front of the Rebbe at the parade itself, I was only asking them to do it in the park.

Little did we know, but on the way to the Ohel after the parade, the Rebbe asked to be driven to the park. As soon as everyone realized that the Rebbe was on the field, everyone ran to the car, except for the three *bochurim* dressed as clowns—they dove under the benches to hide. I had to hide from them for some time afterwards...

(Interestingly, while trying to cut corners, we approached Reb Zalman Shimon Dvorkin and asked if we could use *mezonos* rolls for the sandwiches, thereby avoiding potential chaos at the park. Reb Zalman Shimon was adamantly against the idea. He said, “The whole idea of the parade is for *chinuch*, so you want to do away with washing the hands, making *hamotzi* and bentsching?!” As it turned out, all the elder Chassidim stood at the park in lines of two: one washing the hands and the other making *brachos* with the 10,000 children who showed up. It is impossible to describe this beautiful scene.)

Another innovation of that year was the “float.”

When we ran the parade in Montreal in 5727, we introduced a beautiful float. We wanted to do the same by the Rebbe in 5730, but the “traditionalists” weren’t giving us an easy time. But we didn’t pay attention and secretly built our float (led by the talented Elya Dovid Borenstien) the night before the parade. It was on an 18 wheeler flatbed truck artfully depicting the theme of Shabbos.

When the float rolled by, I especially ran back to 770 from the park because I wanted to see the Rebbe’s reaction. What I saw then, is what I believe has kept my *chayus* throughout my years of shlichus. This awesome Shabbos float was coming down the street. The first one on the Rebbe’s stage to see it was Rabbi Hecht. He was so excited and overwhelmed he could not speak. The Rebbe was looking the other way, speaking with someone, and Rabbi Hecht caught the Rebbe’s attention immediately to show the Rebbe the beautiful innovation.

Rabbi Hecht was speechless. He pointed for the Rebbe to look at what was coming down the street. The Rebbe turned to where Rabbi Hecht was pointing with a look on his face wondering what could possibly get Rabbi Hecht so flabbergasted.

What happened next is really something very difficult to describe. When the Rebbe saw the Shabbos float, the Rebbe became visibly excited. The *nachas* we saw with the Rebbe’s expressions at that moment is difficult to describe. And then the Rebbe broke into applause. Although the Rebbe many times clapped while singing, never had we seen the Rebbe applaud something until then. It was only years later that the Rebbe would applaud at Tzivos Hashem rallies.

Over the years on shlichus, I have thought back so many times to that moment when I noticed the incredible *nachas* on the Rebbe’s face. I have never ever seen that kind of reaction from the Rebbe, never before and never since.

That evening when the Rebbe returned from the Ohel, he announced a surprise farbrengen. (The Rebbe generally did not farbreng on Lag B’Omer in those years.) He began the farbrengen with the words, “This is a special thank you farbrengen for the tremendous *nachas* that you caused today!”

Rabbi Yitzchok Meir Lipczy

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