

A Chassidisher **Derher**

א חסידישער דערהער



We Haven't Even Begun!

THE REBBE'S SHTUREM ABOUT
THE STUDY OF RAMBAM

Better Than the Best Father

AN INTERVIEW WITH
RABBI ZALMAN LIPSKER

Panim - Erev Rosh Hashanah

MOMENTS



ELUL 5778
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About the Cover:

This month we celebrate the Siyum of the 37th cycle of the daily study of Rambam, 3 perokim per day. Our cover features the Siyum Harambam at the Rambam's house in Fez, Morocco, 18 Nissan 5748.

Photo: Raskin Family Archives

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Editors

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Design

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Contributors

Rabbi Yanky Bell • Rabbi Yossi Bendet • Rabbi Koppel Chaiton • Rabbi Levi Dubov • Rabbi Tzemach Feller • Rabbi Levi Greenberg • Rabbi Menachem Mendel Greenberg • Rabbi Mendy Greenberg • Rabbi Zevi Kaplan • Rabbi Levi Katz • Rabbi Levi Levertov • Rabbi Shmuly Levertov • Rabbi Mendel Misholovin • Rabbi Yaakov Raskin • Rabbi Mendy Shemtov

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Derher**Editorial**

The story of the Rebbe's acceptance of the *nesius* is well known. It took a full year of Chassidim and Yidden around the world pleading with the Rebbe to take upon himself to be their *nossi*, until the Rebbe ultimately agreed.

Nevertheless, there were gradual milestones in this regard throughout the entire year, as it started to become clear that the Rebbe would eventually indeed accept the *nesius*. One of the important ones was in the month of Elul, 5710, when the Rebbe wrote the first of what would later become known as the *michtav kloli*—an open letter to the whole of *klal Yisroel* with a special message for each and every Yid.

In that first *michtav kloli*, the Rebbe conveys a message that in a sense lays the groundwork for everything the Rebbe taught for years and decades to come (the following is a selection of the letter as it was originally published in English; note the style is different than usual):

On the threshold of the New Year, every one of us, man and woman, pauses to draw up a balance sheet of one's record in the past year. We resolve to better ourselves and pray for a happy year, materiality and spiritually.

Our Sages say that giving Tzedoko (charity) to the needy opens the way for our prayers to bring us good health, prosperity and happiness.

Man possesses a body and a soul. And just as there is material poverty (in food, clothing and shelter), so there is spiritual poverty, where the deficiency is in spiritual things: knowledge of the Torah, the observance of the Mitzvot and the practice of good deeds...

...When we are about to appear before the Supreme Judge on Rosh Hashanah, we must take stock, each one according to his own yardstick - the possibilities and opportunities one has as to how well we have practiced both material and spiritual deeds of charity and kindness.

Even as the poorest among the poor has opportunities to practice acts of kindness towards his fellows, so has the spiritually poor man opportunities to benefit others through exercising good influence upon his friends and neighbors in the observance of the Torah and Mitzvot.

And naturally, the materially wealthy and spiritually rich, among the latter the spiritual leaders, Yeshiva students, etc., must be lavish in their acts of Tzedoko, in money and time, in behalf of their brothers and sisters who are less fortunate than they, to save them, heal them, and strengthen them, body and soul...

From then on, the *michtovim kloli'im* became common practice of the Rebbe at least twice a year, each time elucidating and conveying the "call of the hour"; the important message for each and every Yid at that specific moment in time.

Over the years, these letters have developed into a treasure-trove of Torah from the Rebbe with important *hora'ot* for our everyday lives. Alongside the regular articles you'll find in each magazine, we present herein an overview on the Rebbe's *michtovim kloli'im* as well.

Wishing you all a *shana tova* and *metuka*,

The Editors

ט"ו מנחם אב, עש"ק נחמו ה'תשע"ח



ELUL—OUR OWN TIME

There is a famous *mashal* from the Alter Rebbe, comparing Elul to the time when a king travels through the field on the way to his palace. Most of the year, the king is secluded in his palace, and access is strictly controlled. When passing through the field though, anyone can approach the king and be greeted warmly.

This is written in Likkutei Torah in response to a question: A *yom tov* is defined as a time when there is a special revelation of holiness only accessible in this specific time. In Elul, Hashem's 13 *middos harachamim* are revealed; this begs the question—why is Elul not a *yom tov*. To this the Alter Rebbe responds with the above *mashal*.

He doesn't spell out the connection between the two and what the answer therefore means. It is implied, however, as follows: Generally, on *yom tov* there is a revelation that is beyond the capabilities of this world,

higher than *asiyah*. This holiness is incompatible with the mundane, so we must avoid doing *melacha*. But during Elul, the 13 *middos* are revealed. These are unaffected by the state of the recipient—every Jew, no matter where he is spiritually, can connect with them. There is no need to avoid contact with the world in order to benefit from the Elul revelation.

This explains why we are allowed to do *melacha* during the month of Elul and it does not interfere.

What about the other aspect of *yom tov*—the extra joy? On all other *yom tov* we are commanded to be extra joyous, but why is there no record of such an instruction for Elul?



There are several preconditions to doing any mitzvah, none of which are counted as *mitzvos* themselves. Namely:

1) Practical preparations of the tools and materials needed

for this specific mitzvah (leather for *tefillin*, knife for a *bris*, etc.).

2) Educating children how and why to do *mitzvos*.

3) *Kabbolos ol malchus shamayim*; accepting Hashem's yoke.

The simple explanation would be that since we are commanded to wear *tefillin*, for example, and in order to do that the three above conditions are necessary, there is no need to specifically command us about it. It is self-understood that we must do those things in order to fulfill the main mitzvah.

On a deeper level however, we see that (the second and third conditions) have a significance independent of what they lead to; they sometimes even exceed the mitzvah itself. For example, the Gemara¹ talks about the greatness of schoolchildren reciting verses of Torah.

According to this, why is there no separate mitzvah for children

לזכות
הרה"ת ר' דובער שיחי גרליק
והכלה המהוללה מרת הענא תחי' גארדאן
לרגל חתונתם בשעטומ"צ
ט' אלול ה'תשע"ח
נדפס ע"י הוריהם
הרה"ת ר' לוי יצחק
וזוגתו מרת חנה ומשפחתם שיחי גרליק
הרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק
וזוגתו מרת רחל מאטל ומשפחתם שיחי
גארדאן

PHOTO: JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 104489

to learn [or be taught by adults]?

Chinuch (and *kabbolas ol*) are entirely different than other *mitzvos*. As we've said above, they technically have to happen earlier chronologically—because without them it makes no sense to do *mitzvos*. But there is a much bigger difference though: most *mitzvos* are our *response* to Hashem's *command*. When we accept Hashem's yoke it is from our own initiative. It cannot be from top-down; this must come from within ourselves.

So where does it actually come from? From deep within our essence—revealing our natural connection with Hashem.

Chinuch is not just a drill of how to perform various actions. It is educating children to follow the positive and holy soul within them and what it leads them to do and not to do. Once they've been raised with these values and come of age, they will continue with *kabbolas ol*, doing the *mitzvos* that they were commanded.

Crowning Hashem as king on Rosh Hashanah is like the *kabbolas ol* for *mitzvos*. Elul is like the years of training before then. This may be why

there are no rules specific to Elul in Gemara and *rishonim*. Blowing *shofar* every day, saying *Ledovid Hashem ori*, etc. are later *minhagim*. Just like for children, there are no top-down rules, only customs created by *our initiative*.

This relates back to the Alter Rebbe's example: when the king is in his palace, the environment is awe-inspiring and intimidating, generating distance. When the king is in the field, greeting everyone with a smile causes his subjects to reciprocate and want to connect with the king.

Similarly, there is no specific *mitzvah* that all our mundane actions be *leshem Shamayim*. The entire reason we were created is to serve Hashem. Therefore we don't need a specific commandment—it [should be] self-understood. This is emphasized in Elul: *Ani Ledodi* means that the purpose of “*Ani—I*” is to serve “*Dodi—Hashem*.” Devotion like this is expressed primarily when interacting with the world in mundane activities, rather than in the ascetic rhythm of Shabbos and Yom Tov.

Now we can explain why we are not commanded to be happy during Elul:

The joy a Yid has when realizing that his essence is bound with the essence of Hashem—and that Hashem greets him warmly—does not need a command. On a *yom tov*, the joy comes from the extra revelations happening then, and is therefore limited and defined. Elul—celebrating our deep connection with Hashem—defies any description and prescription.

This has an important lesson for us:

Yiddishkeit has many *mitzvos*, *halachos* and *minhagim*. However, there are still many things during the day where we have a lot of leeway [to determine on our own how to conduct ourselves]. This shouldn't be a cause for concern, or to start looking around for more rules. These are the places where we can show our own initiative in how to best serve Hashem in mundanity.

Similarly in bona-fide *mitzvos*—beyond the basic rules, it is up to us to choose how to perform each *mitzvah* in the most beautiful way we can. ¹

(Based on *sichas Shabbos Parshas Shoftim 5748*)

1. Shabbos 119b



לעבן מיט'ן רבין

מוקדש
לחזוק ההתקשרות
לנשיאנו כ"ק אדמו"ר
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' אברהם שמואל
ומרת ח' צפורה
בניהם ובנותיהם
מושקא, מנחם מענדל,
נעכא, יוסף, שיחיו
מאן

"We Are His Shluchim!"

ELUL 5710



After the *histalkus* of the Friediker Rebbe on Yud Shevat 5710, Chassidim worked tirelessly for the Rebbe to accept the *nesius*. Although the Rebbe finally agreed to accept the *nesius* only a year later, throughout the year of *aveilus*, there were many developments and stages leading to that point. During the month of Elul, the urgency by *adas haChassidim* worldwide intensified and the Rebbe filled certain roles unique to a Rebbe.¹

MONDAY, 15 ELUL

Rabbi Yerachmiel Benjaminson (known as the Zhlobiner Rov) arranged for a *minyan* of elder and younger Chassidim to travel together to the Ohel. They read a *pan kloli* on behalf of all *anash*, requesting that the Friediker Rebbe instruct the Rebbe to accept the *nesius* of Lubavitch.

On the same day, a delegation of elder Chassidim in Eretz Yisroel davened at the *mekomos hakdoshim*

in Meron, Tzfas and Teveria, for the Rebbe to accept the *nesius*.

Hatomim Elya Gross was in *yechidus* together with a *bochur* that had been drafted to the U.S. Army. The Rebbe inquired if he had already passed the physical exam and then said that the (Frierdiker) Rebbe wrote a letter to all Jewish soldiers serving in the army, explaining that people experience much in life, but everything is temporary. The only thing that is permanent and eternal is Torah and *mitzvos*. A Jew must always be connected to Hashem through observing *mitzvos*. The (Frierdiker) Rebbe suggests soldiers recite certain *kapitelach* of Tehillim.

The Rebbe instructed the soldier to be sure to wear *tefillin* every day, to say Tehillim, to learn a *possuk* of Chumash with Rashi and to read Jewish content in English.

“In the merit of all this may Hashem protect you wherever you may be and return you home peacefully. Since it is the month of Elul, I wish you a *ksiva vachasima tova*.

“Surely you will send letters to [Elya] Gross or to me from wherever you will be.”

Upon leaving the *yechidus*, Rabbi Hodakov gave the young man the booklet the Frierdiker Rebbe had sent to Jewish soldiers during World War II.

A *bochur* was in *yechidus* last night for his birthday. Today, the Rebbe handed him a letter of *bracha* in honor of his birthday and mentioned that he was looking for him in order to give it to him before *shkia*. The entire letter was written in the Rebbe’s holy handwriting and the Rebbe apologized it not being typed, explaining that this was because the secretary was not in that day.

Recently, Hatomim Tzvi Hirsh Gansburg was in *yechidus* and requested that the Rebbe accept the *nesius*. The Rebbe instructed him to ask a *rov* what has changed now from before... Upon leaving *yechidus*, he saw Rabbi Meir Ashkenazi (known as the *rov* of Shanghai) and told him what the Rebbe had said, to which Rabbi Ashkenazi responded that now, Chassidim are requesting. He immediately re-entered the Rebbe’s room to give over Rabbi Ashkenazi’s answer and the Rebbe smiled.

In recent weeks the *bochurim* started reciting the Rebbe’s Kapital in Tehillim, Perek 49.



THURSDAY, CHAI ELUL

Today was the first time the Rebbe wrote a *michtav kloli*² (a public letter). It was addressed “To all the sons and daughters of Israel in every place.”

This is also the first time that the Rebbe included footnotes with sources in a letter.

Anash and *temimim* lined up to give the Rebbe *panim* before going to the Ohel with everyone at 1:45 p.m.

The barrier around the *tziyun* was nearly complete to allow the *kohanim* to be in closer proximity. (See sidebar “Building the Ohel”) The Rebbe often reminds the *kohanim* of their restrictions and many assist them by creating human barriers around them so that they may come closer to the *tziyun*.

The Rebbe instructed numerous times that before going to the Ohel one should not eat (drinking is permitted). It was recently related that the Rebbe told a *bochur* that ate before going to the Ohel, “I have pity (*rachmanus*) on you.”

The Rebbe returned from the Ohel at 4:30 p.m. and immediately davened *mincha*. Before starting *chazaras hashatz* the Rebbe turned around and asked (with a hand motion) whether *tachanun* is recited. Several Chassidim responded in the negative and *tachanun* was not recited.

After *maariv*, the Rebbe entered the *zal*, filled with an overflowing crowd, for the *farbrengen*. During the *farbrengen* the Rebbe mentioned the fact that the twelve days from Chai Elul to Rosh Hashanah correspond to the twelve months of the past year.

“It follows that Chai Elul corresponds to this past Tishrei, which we all merited to spend together with

the (Frierdiker) Rebbe. Everyone must know that the Rebbe is with us now just as before!”

In another *sicha* the Rebbe mentioned that when someone thinks *machshavos zaros* during davening it is comparable to one who knocks on the king's door and goes away just as the king opens the door.

“Today, we were all in the mikvah and gathered together to farbreng. This was always the Rebbe's wish. So we all ‘knocked on the Rebbe's door,’ especially since we are gathered in the Rebbe's *daled amos*. We must be sure not to ‘walk away’ in middle. We must connect with the Rebbe...”

Speaking about the importance of *hiskashrus*, the Rebbe explained that through observing the instructions of the Moshe Rabbeinu of the generation one will be connected to him until the coming of Moshiach.

“Some fantasize that when Moshiach will come there will be a new Rebbe. No! When Moshiach comes we will have our Rebbe! It will be the same Rebbe and the same Chassidim!”

The farbrengen continued until 12:30 a.m. and afterwards there was *chazara* until 2:00 a.m.

This evening in Eretz Yisroel there was a countrywide *kinus*³ of all *anash* and *temimim* in

the courtyard of the Lubavitch yeshiva in Lod.

The newspapers publicized that the purpose of the gathering was to officially crown the Rebbe as the *nossi* of Lubavitch. Reb Chaim Schneerson, an elder Chassid, suggested that a telegram be sent to the Rebbe on behalf of all the participants of the *kinus* with wishes of “*mazel tov*.”

A grand farbrengen followed the *kinus* and Reb Shmaryahu Sassonkin spoke passionately about the Rebbe's greatness and his ultimate *bittul* to the Frierdiker Rebbe. He shared with the crowd that he merited to be together with the Rebbe in Paris in 5707 when a letter from the Frierdiker Rebbe arrived. The Rebbe became very serious, put on a hat and *gartel* and after reading the letter with tears he said, “The Rebbe is ready for Moshiach. He is waiting for us.”

SUNDAY, 21 ELUL

Today the Rebbe wrote a *michtav kloli*⁴ to all yeshiva *bochurim*.

TUESDAY, 23 ELUL

Kuntres Rosh Hashanah was published containing the Frierdiker Rebbe's *maamar* תקנו



BUILDING THE OHEL

The Rebbe's instructions for the construction of the Ohel around the Friediker Rebbe's *tziyun*:

- (א) חלק הגג שמצד הקבר בלי מכסה כיון שגם כהנים באים להתפלל, ואהל מביא הטומאה (שו"ע יו"ד סימן שעא).
(ב) מחיצה סביב הקבר כדי שיוכלו כהנים לעמוד בסמיכות אליו (עד ד' טפחים) ולא בריחוק ד' אמות (שם סעיף ה').
(ג) האהל והמצבה בפשטות בלא קשויים וכו' (ברית עולם הובא בעיקרי הד"ט ליו"ד הל' קבורה סי' יט).
(ד) למעט – עד כמה שאפשר – בבנין האוהל במיני מתכות מתכות מטמא ביותר בטומאת מת (רש"י פסחים י"ד, ב, ראב"ד הלכות טומאת מת פ"ה ה"ג)

1) The portion of the roof above the *tziyun* should remain open for the benefit of the *kohanim* that will come there to daven.

2) A barrier should be constructed around the *tziyun* so the *kohanim* can come within four *tefachim* (and not need to remain four *amos* away from the *tziyun*).

3) There should be no decorative engravings on the Ohel or on the *matzeiva*.

4) Minimize (as much as possible) the amount of metal used in the construction of the Ohel, because metal is very problematic with regards to *tumah*.

בחדוש שופר תרצ"ד, a *reshima* of what the Friediker Rebbe spoke on Erev Rosh Hashanah 5710, and a collection of *minhagei Chabad* for Elul and Tishrei.

In the preface of the *kuntres* the Rebbe explains at length the well known concept in Chassidus that the Yom Tov is called "Rosh Hashanah"—the head of the year—since it functions as a head of the entire year just as the head controls and directs all the limbs of the body.

"One of the ways to enable and assist the *avoda* of Rosh Hashanah is to strengthen the *hiskashrus* to the *roshei alfei Yisroel* (the "heads of the multitudes of Yisroel") whose *neshamos* are the "heads" of all the *neshamos* of their respective generations. Strengthening our *hiskashrus* to the (Friediker) Rebbe will lend a great assistance in the *avoda* of Rosh Hashanah."

In a footnote the Rebbe writes: The (Friediker) Rebbe said on Rosh Hashanah 5704, that from the year 5654 the Rebbe Rashab would mention, during the 48 hours of Rosh Hashanah, each one of the Rebbeim, starting from the Baal Shem Tov, briefly repeating a story or a Torah from each one of them.



THE BLACK SHOFAR THAT BELONGED TO THE REBBE RASHAB, GIVEN TO THE REBBE BY RABBI BEREL CHASKIND.

FRIDAY, 26 ELUL

Rabbi Berel Chaskind returned from Eretz Yisroel and brought the Rebbe a black *shofar* that had belonged to the Rebbe Maharash.

This is the story of the *shofar*: There was a Chassid in Yekatrinslav, Reb Yehuda Gourarie, who received this *shofar* from his father. When Rebbetzin Chana prepared to join Horav Levi Yitzchok in exile in Chile, Kazakhstan, she asked Reb Yehuda to give her the *shofar* so that she can bring it to her husband.

Rabbi Yaakov Yosef Raskin merited to be in Alma Ata during the few months that Horav Levi Yitzchok and Rebbetzin Chana lived there and was very helpful to them during that time. He was also very instrumental in all the arrangements necessary after the *histalkus* of Horav Levi Yitzchok, and Rebbetzin Chana gave him this *shofar* in appreciation for all he had done.

In a letter⁵ dated 21 Elul 5710, the Rebbe requested Rabbi Raskin to send the *shofar* with Rabbi Chaskind. (The Rebbe brought this *shofar* to *tekios* every year and used it many times.⁶ –Ed.)

SHABBOS PARSHAS NITZAVIM, 27 ELUL

During the *farbrengen* the Rebbe instructed the Chassidim and *temimim* to visit the neighborhood shuls on Rosh Hashanah to speak about the Friediker Rebbe's directives, especially in relation to proper *chinuch*.

"When you go to the shuls you must speak openly. We *had* a very big Rebbe and we *have* a big Rebbe. We are coming as his shlichim!

"We all want to see the Rebbe. Through fulfilling this shlichus we will merit to see the Rebbe as he

is in a *guf gashmi* and the Rebbe Shlita will bless us with a *shana tova u'mesuka!*"

MONDAY, 29 ELUL, EREV ROSH HASHANAH

After *shacharis* an announcement was made on behalf of the Rebbe. Everyone should include in their *pan*: 1) Whether he has set times to learn the Friediker Rebbe's *maamarim*. 2) Which *masechte* he chose in the *chalukas haShas* (to be completed before the upcoming Chof-Daled Teves).⁷ 3) The amount of money he gave throughout the past year for *maamed*. 4) The amount of money he gave throughout the past year for Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch.

Everyone handed their *panim* to the Rebbe before boarding the busses to the Ohel.

The Rebbe stood at the Ohel for close to three hours in the pouring rain. Hatomim Moshe Kazarnovsky held an umbrella above the Rebbe as he read all the *panim* that were received from Chassidim around the world.

At one point the Rebbe called over a *bochur* and asked him if his younger brother had only one name. It turned out that the boy had two names. Later Chassidim learned that the Rebbe had been present at this boy's *bris* in Paris.

Throughout the entire time that the Rebbe was at the Ohel, over a dozen Chassidim and *temimim* stood there as well. When the Rebbe

finished reading all the *panim*, it was very late and the cemetery gate closest to the Ohel was already locked. The Rebbe said, "Everything is here. A minyan, etc. All that is missing is a *shofar*..."

Opening the gate was impossible so the Rebbe and the entire group walked to the main entrance of the cemetery to board the bus back to 770. On the way, Rabbi Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky approached the Rebbe and asked for a special *bracha* for the group that they not become ill *chas veshalom* from standing in the rain for so many hours. The Rebbe responded: "Good!"

(On Tzom Gedalya the Rebbe asked Rabbi Kazarnovsky if all the members of the group were healthy and he responded that, *baruch Hashem*, they were all well. Reb Dovid Raskin related that during that period many people had fallen ill due to the changing weather but none of those that remained together with the Rebbe at the Ohel were affected.)

1. The following is based on Yemei Bereishis pages 229 - 243.

2. Igros Kodesh, vol. 3, p. 462.

3. The Rebbe sent a telegram addressed to the participants in the *kinus*. Ibid page 445.

4. Ibid page 466.

5. Ibid page 382.

6. See *Rosh Hashanah with the Rebbe*, Derher Tishrei 5777.

7. See Derher Kislev 5776 "Behind the Picture" for the timeline of when the *chalukas haShas* was changed back to Yud-Tes Kislev.



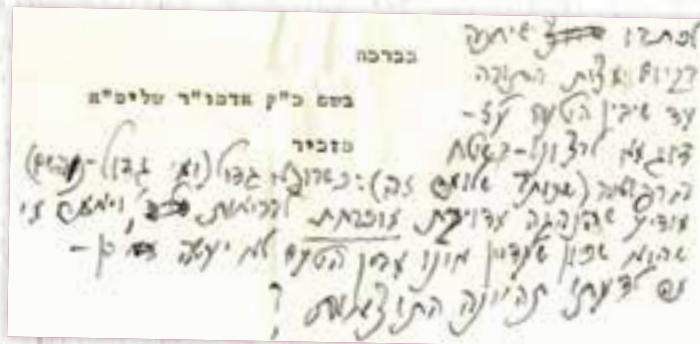


כתב יד קודש

לזכות
הרה"ת ר' גד דוד ומרת שירה
וילדיהם
נתנאל חיים, נחמה אסתר, חוה מזל,
מנחם מענדל, נעמי חנה, משה אליהו
שיחיו
סבג

Is 'Why' Important?

The following ksav yad kodesh was written as
a postscript to a letter dated 18 Sivan 5735:



Regarding what you write that you'd like to wait with fulfilling the *mitzvos* of the Torah until you understand the reasoning—

An example of this notion can be cited from the field of medicine (which, as you write, you are now studying):

A great doctor (and who is as great as Hashem) notifies someone that in order to be healthy he must follow a specific order of conduct. But the patient says that since he doesn't yet understand the reasoning, he will not follow the orders.

What, in your opinion, would be the results?

לכתבו שיחכה בקיום מצות התורה עד
שיבין הטעם ע"ז -

דוגמא לרצונו - בשטח הרפואה (שכותב
שלומד זה): כשרופא גדול (ומי גדול-
כהשם) מודיע שהנהגה מדויקת מוכרחת
לבריאות, ויאמר מי שהוא שכיון שעדיין
אינו מבין הטעם לא יעשה כן -

מה לדעתו תהיינה התוצאות?

Horav Levi Yitzchak

Horav Levi Yitzchak is born on 18 Nissan to Rabbi Boruch Schneur (Zalman) Schneerson and Rebbetzin Zelda Rochel, in the town of Dobryanka (also known as Podobranka) near Homel. He is a fifth-generation direct descendant of the Tzemach Tzedek, and is named after his grandfather.¹

תרי"ח

תרי"ח

Rebbetzin Chana is born on 28 Teves to Rabbi Meir Shlomo and Rebbetzin Rochel Yanovsky in Romanovka.²

Horav Levi Yitzchak studies Torah under the tutelage of his great-uncle, Horav Yoel Chaikin, rav of Podobranka. His tremendous wisdom and genius is apparent from a young age, as the Friedriker Rebbe related: "From the dawn of Horav Levi Yitzchak Schneerson's life, exceptionally great capabilities were apparent."³

תרי"ט

תרי"ט

On 11 Sivan, at the suggestion of the Rebbe Rashab, Horav Levi Yitzchak marries Rebbetzin Chana,⁴ in Nikolayev. Horav Levi Yitzchak is supported by his father-in-law for a number of years, regularly studying 18 hours a day.⁵

The Rebbe is born on 11 Nissan⁶ and Horav Levi Yitzchak receives six telegrams from the Rebbe Rashab, with *brachos*, instructions, and guidance.

תרי"י

Horav Levi Yitzchak plays a large part in the procurement of matzah for Jewish soldiers fighting in the Russo-Japanese war.⁸

Horav Levi Yitzchak begins participating in conferences on communal matters organized by the Rebbe Rashab.⁷

תרי"א

Horav Levi Yitzchak is ordained by the leading Torah authorities of the time, Rabbi Chaim Soloveitchik of Brisk and Rabbi Eliyahu Chaim Meizel of Lodz.¹¹

תרי"א

Horav Levi Yitzchak's second son, Reb Dovber is born.⁹ The Rebbe Rashab forms a committee that would raise funds and implement resolutions designed to strengthen the Chabad community in Chevron as a bastion of Chassidus and Torah study. The Rebbe Rashab appoints Horav Levi Yitzchak to a crucial role on the committee.¹⁰

תרי"ב

Horav Levi Yitzchak begins his tenure as chief rabbi of Yekaterinoslav, Ukraine, a position he holds for approximately 30 years, until his arrest and imprisonment by Communist government.¹²

תרי"ג

Horav Levi Yitzchak is called upon to contribute to the defense of Mendel Beilis.¹⁵

The Rebbe Rashab is involved in Horav Levi Yitzchak's appointment, also encouraging him to take the position.¹³

תרי"ד

Horav Levi Yitzchak and Rebbetzin Chana play leading roles in the communal effort to provide aid to war refugees.¹⁶

Horav Levi Yitzchok's third son, Reb Yisroel Aryeh Leib, is born on 16 Sivan.¹⁴

לזכות
הרה"ק ר' גד יעקב
חוגתו מרת חנה
ומשפחתם שידיו
בליזנסקי

When the provisional government comes to power in March 1917, Reb Chaim Ozer Grodzinski of Vilna and Horav Levi Yitzchak work with other leading rabbis to establish a united rabbinic congress to represent the Jewish people, and both travel to Moscow in the summer of that year for deliberations.¹⁷ The Russian Civil War begins, resulting in the Communists coming to power.

The Frieddiker Rebbe leaves Russia. Horav Levi Yitzchak is the only descendant of the first three Lubavitcher Rebbeim remaining in Russia, serving in a sense as the “*noss*” of the Jewish community there.²⁰

Horav Levi Yitzchak takes great risks to ensure that Yiddishkeit is kept alive in Russia, even inviting a Jewish NKVD informant to serve as the tenth man in the *minyán* for a *chasuna*.²²

At the end of the month of Kislev, Rebbetzin Chana is informed that Horav Levi Yitzchak had been tried in Moscow and sentenced to five years of exile in Central Asia.²⁶

The journey from Khar'kov to Chi'li, Kazakhstan, takes a month.²⁷

After much effort, friends²⁸ of Horav Levi Yitzchak secure his release from Chi'li.

On 27 Nissan, he and Rebbetzin Chana arrive in Alma-Ata,²⁹ where he becomes the *rav* of the community.³⁰

After a prolonged illness, Horav Levi Yitzchak is *nistalek* on 20 Av. His sacred resting place is in Alma Ata (now called Almaty).³¹

ת"פ

The Rebbe Rashab is *nistalek* on 2 Nissan in Rostov¹⁸ and the Frieddiker Rebbe becomes Rebbe.¹⁹ Horav Levi Yitzchak fights to keep *Yiddishkeit* alive under the Communist regime, building *mikvaos*, making *brisim*, weddings, and much more.

ת"כ"ט

While the wedding of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin is taking place in Warsaw, Horav Levi Yitzchak and Rebbetzin Chana celebrate in Russia (as they are barred from leaving the country) with a large community celebration in their city of Yekaterinoslav.²¹

ת"צ"ט

The government conducts a census, and asks whether the person believes in G-d. Many *Yidden* are afraid to answer yes. Horav Levi Yitzchak publicly opposes any statement of atheism.²³

Horav Levi Yitzchak arranges (with great *mesiras nefesh*, and eventually with the permission of the Soviet government) the baking of matzah to be done at the highest level of *kashrus*.²⁴

On 9 Nissan, four NKVD agents burst into the home of Horav Levi Yitzchak at 3:00 a.m., arresting him.²⁵

ת"ע"ז

ת"פ"ח

ת"צ"ה

ת"ש"ט

תש"ד

1. Toldos Levi Yitzchok p. 72.
2. Hayom Yom p. 43.
3. Toldos Levi Yitzchok p. 59.
4. Early Years p. 3.
5. Toldos Levi Yitzchok p. 59.
6. Ibid p. 20.
7. Kovetz Lubavitch 62.
8. Ibid.
9. Memories of Rebbetzin Chana no. 37.
10. See Igrot Kodesh p. 151.
11. Toldos Levi Yitzchok p. 60.
12. Hayom Yom p. 42.
13. Toldos Levi Yitzchok p. 151.
14. Hayom Yom p. 43.
15. Kovetz Lubavitch 62.
16. Hisvaaduyos 5745 vol. 1 p. 138.
17. Arkiyon Levi Yitzchak, pages 21-22.
18. Hayom yom p. 17.
19. Ibid. p. 18.
20. Hisvaaduyos 5748 vol. 4, p. 158.
21. Memories of Rebbetzin Chana no. 10, vol. 2, p. 448.
22. Toldot Levi Yitzchak vol. 1, p. 167.
23. Toldot Levi Yitzchak vol. 1, p. 169.
24. Toldot Levi Yitzchak vol. 1, p. 181.
25. Toldot Levi Yitzchak vol. 2, p. 448.
26. Memoirs of Rebbetzin Chana no. 4.
27. Ibid. no. 5.
28. Ibid. no. 18; 19.
29. Ibid. no. 19.
30. Ibid.
31. Hayom Yom p. 42.

לזכות
החתן הת' מנחם מענדל שיחי' גראסבוים
והכלה המהוללה מרת גיטל תחי' פרידמאן
לרגל חתונתם בשעתומ"צ
ר"ח אלול ה'תשע"ח

נדפס ע"י הוריהם
השליח ר' שניאור זלמן
וזוגתו מרת טויבא לאה ומשפחתם שיחיו
גראסבוים
ר' אברהם אבא
וזוגתו מרת טויבא יונה ומשפחתם שיחיו
פרידמאן

The Michtovim Kloliim

THE REBBE'S MESSAGE FOR
THE JEWISH NATION

In the preparation of this article we were greatly assisted by Rabbi Tuvia Blau, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Gurevitch, Rabbi Mendel Misholovin, and Rabbi Leibel Shapiro. Much of the information in this article was culled from the foreword to Igros Melech of Rabbi Peretz Blau. זכות הרבים תלוי בהם.

THE REBBE DISTRIBUTES A MIGHTAV-KLOLI FOR CHILDREN
AT THE TZIVOS-HASHEM RALLY, 19 TISHREI 5741.



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 189985

"It was the evening of Lag Baomer 5737," says Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Gurevitch, shliach and *mashpia* in Migdal Ha'emek. "I was traveling with a friend on a bus from Yerushalayim to Meron, and we happened to be sitting next to the Rebbe's secretary Rabbi Nissan Mindel, who was visiting Eretz Yisroel at the time, and his brother, who lived in Yerushalayim. We spent the entire ride talking about his work with the Rebbe, and one of the things he told us was how precise one must be when translating the Rebbe's words from one language to another. You have to have a good comprehension of the original text and you have to know how to translate that into the other language. To illustrate this point, he told us the following story:

"Usually, twice a week, Monday and Thursday, he would go into the Rebbe's room to work, from after *mincha* until *maariv* (from about 3:30 until 7:15 p.m. in the winter). One of his tasks was to translate the *michtav kloli* from Yiddish into English, and he would leave it on the table when he was done.

"One time, after he had finished translating the *michtav kloli* and went home, he received a phone call from Rabbi Leibel Groner: The Rebbe had asked him to call Rabbi Mindel to relay the message that a certain part of the letter hadn't been translated well. Rabbi Mindel had the original Yiddish letter in his possession, so he told Rabbi Groner that he would think it over again and give him a new translation. Sure enough, Rabbi Groner called him back, and he relayed to him the new translation.

"A little while later, the phone rang again. The Rebbe still wasn't satisfied with the translation. They went through the process again—Rabbi Mindel thought it over again, and relayed a new translation—and, yet again, the Rebbe didn't accept it. I do not remember whether this happened a third time or not. Finally, Rabbi Mindel told Rabbi Groner: 'It seems that I am not translating correctly because I am not fully comprehending the text. Could you go to the Rebbe and ask, in my name, to elaborate more on the content of the letter?'

"Rabbi Groner agreed, and after the Rebbe explained the letter, Rabbi Mindel was able to write a translation that satisfied the Rebbe. The next time he went into the Rebbe's room, Rabbi Mindel told us, he said to the Rebbe that many people would probably make the same mistake in understanding the original letter as he had—perhaps the Rebbe should write it in a way that everyone would understand it?

"The Rebbe told him the following words: 'כדי צו מסביר זיין: דאס איז א מכתב כללי. דעם בריוו, דארף איך אנשרייבן א ספר כללי—און אויף דעם האב איך נישט קיין צייט. This is a general [i.e. all-inclusive] letter. In order to explain this letter, I would need to write a general *sefer*—and I don't have the time to do that.'

"Rabbi Mindel pointed out that the Rebbe had said that even the *sefer explaining* the letter would need to be 'a *sefer kloli*,' a regular *sefer* wouldn't be enough to adequately explain the letter. I remember how Rabbi Mindel gave a *geshrai*, as he got heated up about the topic. 'The Rebbe's words are like the *rishonim*,' he said. 'Like the Rashba and the Ritva, and one must be *midayek* in every word and every letter.'"

TO EVERY SINGLE JEW

Two times a year, leading up to Tishrei and leading up to Pesach, the Rebbe would send a *michtav kloli*, a “general letter,” addressed to all sons and daughters of Israel, wherever they may be. This began in Elul 5710, a few months after the *histalkus* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, and it continued throughout the *nesius*. What began as a single letter twice a year eventually became a series of letters,¹ occasionally at other special times as well.

“The *michtovim kloli'im* are the Rebbe’s message for the entire *klal Yisroel*,” Rabbi Tuvia Blau says. “More than the *sichos*, more than the private letters, more than the *maamorim*—more than anything else. Even a *sicha* can be mostly applicable to certain types of people, and the same is certainly true regarding the private letters. But a *michtav kloli* is where the Rebbe expresses what he wants to

say to the entire *klal Yisroel*, all six-hundred thousand *neshamos*—men and women, children and adults. Furthermore: This is where the Rebbe told us Hashem’s message for *now*, for this time of year in particular; Moshe Rabbeinu of the generation is giving us Hashem’s *current* message for every person in the generation, without a single exception.

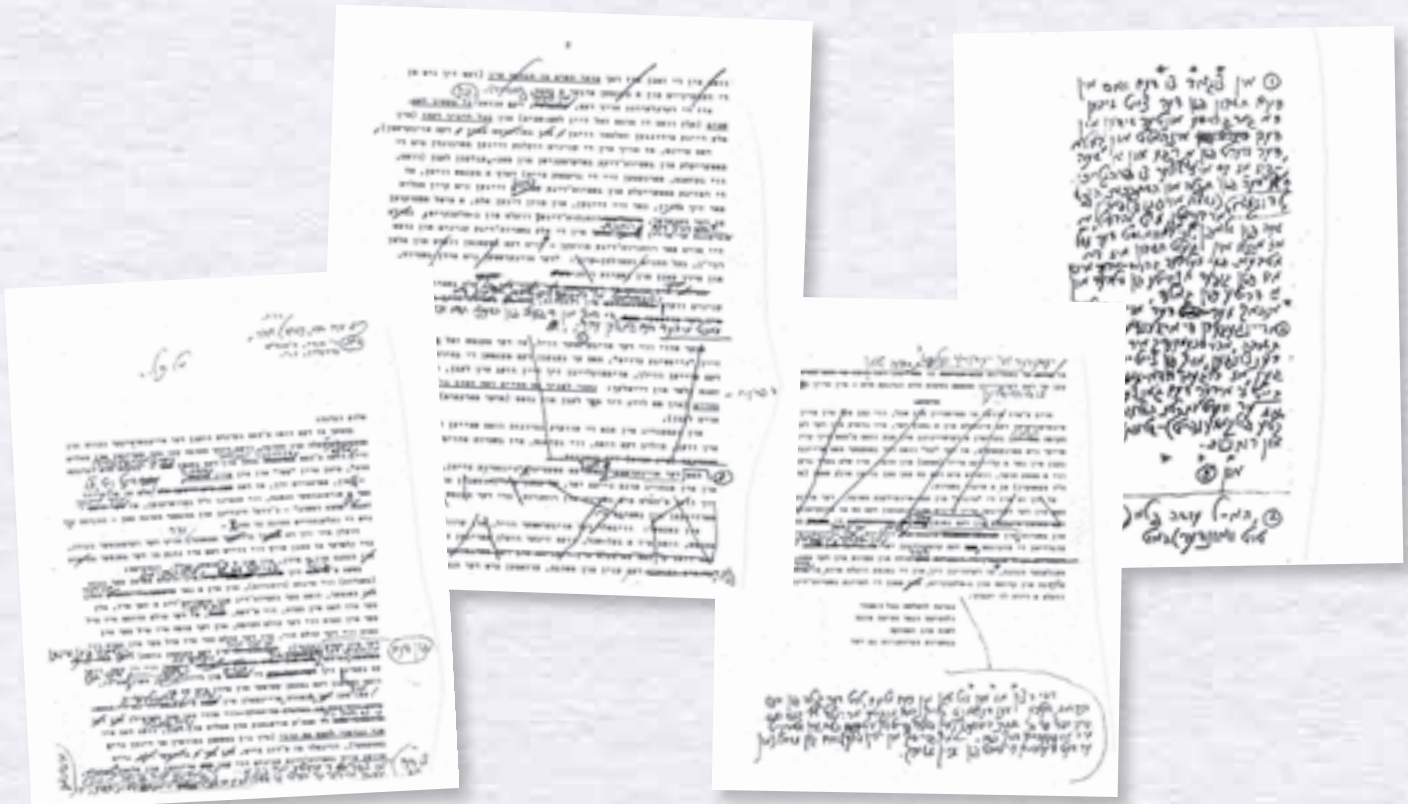
“Every person has his personal part in Torah, as it says in Tanya, but the *michtovim kloli'im* is where the Rebbe gives Hashem’s message to the entire *klal Yisroel* applicable for this point in time—whether it’s *shmita*, *hakhel*, a year that begins with Shabbos, and so on. There’s no other way for every Yid to receive what he needs.

“This is why the Rebbe put such a focus on translating the *michtovim kloli'im* into many languages (I had the *zechus* to translate them into Hebrew), and disseminating them through every

means possible. The Rebbe made sure that they went into the Israeli newspapers, and not only the religious ones like Hamodia, but also the most secular ones like Haaretz and Yediot Acharonot. The Rebbe paid thousands of dollars to do so, because even the type of person who would only open Haaretz—he too needed to read the letter.

“In my opinion, this is a part of the Rebbe’s Torah that is unfortunately not made use of enough. Every Yid must make a time to learn it himself and spread it to others.”

“The *michtav kloli* was the *hora'a* of the *yom tov*,” Rabbi Leibel Shapiro says. “That was the *avoda* that was needed at that time. Rabbi Dovid Raskin would farbreng the entire night of Shvi’i Shel Pesach—everyone stays up the entire night, but there isn’t a special *sefer* of what to learn, so Reb Dovid would farbreng every year;



AN EXAMPLE OF THE REBBE'S EXTENSIVE HAGAHOS ON THE MIGHTAV KLOLI, VOV TISHREI 5739.

even Rabbi Hodakov would stand and listen. He would always farbreng about the content of the *michtav kloli*. There was one specific letter that spoke about the *korban Pesach* being fully roasted—that the fire permeated it אדורך און אדורך, all the way through—and he would always farbreng alot about this *vort*, that the fire must permeate you אדורך און אדורך!

“The *michtav kloli* was the focal point of the *yom tov*—that’s what we lived with!—especially Pesach-time: There are many *maamarim* that explain the significance of Rosh Hashanah and Tishrei, but the *michtovim kloli'im* are where we find illumination and meaning in Pesach.”

“The letter is addressed to every Jew,” Rabbi Blau continues. “From ראשים שבטיים, the leaders and greats of the Jewish nation, to שוואב מימר, the most simple and unsophisticated. Even an uninitiated person can read the letter and comprehend it—you

won’t find Kabbalistic language there, or difficult academic subjects—but at the same time, there is tremendous depth condensed into every word, as is alluded to and included in the *he'aros*. There are sometimes full *maamarim* or *sichos* in a few words of a *he'ara*! A *lamdan* can find greater and greater depths, while even the simplest person can appreciate and understand it.”

THE EXPERIENCE

The study of *michtovim kloli'im* has few similarities in all of the Rebbe’s Torah. Closer to a poem or sermon than a formal academic write-up, the *michtav kloli* sweeps you along for an emotional journey. Like the tide of a river, felt only as a gentle tug before it sweeps you up in its roaring intensity, the *michtav kloli* draws you into an emotional experience of the *yom tov*. Studying and focusing on the letter itself (studying the notes and sources separately afterwards), paying close attention to the words, you’ll

be inclined to *listen* to the Rebbe’s message.

There is a very specific cadence and rhythm unique to the *michtovim kloli'im*. The letters are usually split into four or five parts, divided by pauses with those iconic three dots, causing the message to reverberate in the mind long afterwards.

After a short introduction, it usually starts off with a question or an interesting observation—if the first day of the year (Rosh Hashanah) is on Shabbos, the day of rest, does that mean that the year should be a year of vacation?³ If Yom Kippur’s theme is to daven and connect with Hashem, as the highpoint of the year, why does the physical act of fasting take precedence to davening?⁴

The Rebbe will then introduce the theme of the letter, a clear, potent message that has universal application.

With rich language and vivid imagery, the Rebbe makes the message of the *yomim tovim* come *alive*—whether it is describing the intimate feeling of overwhelming awe one feels when crowning our King on Rosh Hashanah, as we personally beseech Him מלך על העולם כולו painting a vivid picture of the desperation of a Jewish slave who sees no end in sight to hundreds of years of exile, as he is surrounded by hostile nations, assimilated brethren, and an inescapable regime;⁶ or describing the scene of the sixth day of creation, as all of creation came to bow down to Adam Harishon and he brought them all to bow down to Hashem—בואו נשתחוה ונכרעה נברכה לפני ה' עושינו.⁷

At the end of the letter, the Rebbe gives his *bracha* to the Jewish nation.

The Rebbe’s writings are generally straight and to the point, understated and condensed. But the *michtovim kloli'im* are loaded with emotion. Whether it’s in the tense buildup of a moment, as the Rebbe describes how the Yidden were reaching higher

A *lamdan* can find greater and greater depths, while even the simplest person can appreciate and understand it.

I WROTE TO YOU MANY TIMES

ובמה שכתב שאיני כותב (עונה) לו כ'—כמה וכמה פעמים בשנה כתבתי לו (וכן לזוגתו תי') ובארוכה באמצעות המכתב שהתחלתם "אל בני ובנות ישראל בכל מקום שהם" שכמה וכמה מהם הגיעו אליהם (וקויתי שיגיע כפי' הלקו"ת ריש פרשת שמני)—שמצורף בזה בכללם—ואף פעם לא הגעתי ידיעה מהם בתוכן מכתבי אלו. וכששאלתי מן הצד—המענה גם כן "איני יודע."

You write that I don’t write (or respond) to you—I wrote to you **many** times throughout the year (and also to your wife), and **at length**, by way of the letter that begins “To the **sons and daughters** of Israel, **wherever** they may be.”

Many of these letters have reached you (and I hope that they will “reach” also in the sense used in Likkutei Torah in the beginning of parshas Shemini [that it will affect you]). This includes the attached letter as well.

And not **once** have I received news from you regarding the subject-matter of these letters. When I’ve asked others about this—the response was “it is unknown.”

THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO WRITE IN A MIGHTAV KLOLI

In one *michtav kloli*², the Rebbe discusses how important it is to conduct a *cheshbon hanefesh* of the preceding year. This is evidenced by the sheer amount of opportunities that we are given to do so:

- The month of Elul
- The twelve days from Chai Elul to Rosh Hashanah, which correspond to the months of the year
- Rosh Hashanah itself
- The Ten days of Teshuva, specifically the seven days in between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, which correspond to the days of the week
- Yom Kippur

In a letter, Rabbi Leibel Groner asked the Rebbe that if he was listing all the opportunities for *cheshbon hanefesh*, why hadn't he included another significant time-period—the days of *selichos*?

The Rebbe answered that it would be impossible to do so:

(בלקו"ת—שזהו חודש אלול)—בכלל אי אפשר לכתוב זה במכתב כללי כיון שעל פי חסידות כל אחד ואחד צריך לנהוג במנהגו וכמה מנהגים בזמני אמירת סליחות (משא"כ הענין דח"י אלול נתגלה בחסידות אבל כנראה שייך לכל).

“(In Likkutei Torah [it is implied that *selichos* are] included in the month of Elul)—In general, it is impossible to write that in a *general* letter, because according to *Chassidus*, each person must follow his own custom, and there are many customs regarding the times of saying *selichos* (whereas Chai Elul is something that was *revealed* by Chassidus, but it seems that it is relevant to all”).

In other words, the Rebbe wouldn't put anything in a *michtav kloli* that is only *minhag Chabad*! (The Rebbe's answer was later included in the footnotes of the letter, where he expounds in greater length.)



and higher levels as they left Egypt, from the overwhelming experience of *krias Yam Suf* to the yearning and counting of the *omer* to the arrival at the mountain to the final preparations for the Divine revelation;⁸

Or in the quiet, beautiful description of a child coming to shul on the eve of Rosh Hashanah, singing Mizmor L'Dovid and Lecha Dodi together with the rest of the shul—and how this child's simple breath is what reaches Hashem and causes Him to accept his coronation as the king.⁹

In applying his message to the Jewish nation as a whole, the Rebbe

does not shy away from pointing to specific issues that needed immediate fixing—parents who allow “the destroyer” into their homes by holding onto foreign ideals;¹⁰ leaders utilizing the spiritual awakening of Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur to speak about world-issues, scoring cheap emotional points and absolving themselves and their congregants from personal action;¹¹ or individuals who felt that Judaism should be taken in small doses on special occasions (which the Rebbe compared to someone who wants to be healthy only on certain occasions).¹²

Over the years of the *michtovim kloli'im*, the Rebbe expounded upon every aspect of Rosh Hashanah (as the beginning of the year) and Pesach, making them the go-to source to find the Rebbe's profound insight on every aspect of the Yom Tov. There is a tremendous variety in the types of subjects the Rebbe chose as the central subject of his letter—it can be in the *halachos* of the *yom tov*, the various *pesukim* that are recited at the time, the special type of year, the unique calendar-scheduling of the year, and more. For example, for Rosh

“I was able to see the Rebbe’s clear *ruach hakodesh*; the Rebbe’s letter was expressed in world events in the following year...”

Hashanah, the Rebbe discusses, among other things:

- The centrality of man to creation, and the mission that comes along with it
- Reflections and perspectives for every person’s *cheshbon hanefesh* as we enter the new year
- The experience of crowning Hashem as our King
- The true meaning of *teshuva*
- Why *tachanun* isn’t recited on Rosh Hashanah
- The significance of the *tefillah* “*zochreinu lchaim*”
- The various reasons for blowing the shofar

It is in these letters that one can find some of the clearest articulations of the Rebbe’s foundational perspectives on Yiddishkeit, as he tackles the most profound subjects using unusually compelling and concise language. In addition to the academic depth which the Rebbe brings to every subject he touches upon in the letters—which can usually be explored through the *he’aros* and *marei mekomos*—there is tremendous depth to be found in the words themselves, in listening to the Rebbe’s *neshama*-call to every Yid, in how he inspires and invigorates us to rekindle our own intimate, personal connection.

THE TIMES

In addition to the fact that the letters generally focus on the message of the time of year, one also finds hints—some less and some more explicit—to major world-events that were occurring at the time. In 5728,

as the counterculture revolution was catching fire in America, one finds a profound reflection on the seeming contradiction between the prevailing zeitgeist of individuality and freedom, and accepting the *kabbalas ol* of Yiddishkeit;¹³ in 5732, shortly after thousands of Russian Jews had been freed from behind the Iron Curtain, one finds a letter addressing the heart-rending question: why would Hashem put someone in a situation where he has no ability to fulfill Torah and *mitzvos*?¹⁴ Shortly after the Gulf War in 5751, there is an entire letter talking about the revealed miracles that had occurred, and how this must bring us to the recognition that this is the final preparation for the *geula*.¹⁵

“More than once,” Rabbi Blau says, “I was able to see the Rebbe’s clear *ruach hakodesh* in the *michtav kloli*, as the Rebbe’s letter was expressed in world events in the following year, exactly as was written there. This happened many times.”

On the evening leading into Erev Yom Kippur 5734, the Rebbe suddenly decided to add another piece to that year’s *michtav kloli* for Vov Tishrei. Now, the overall letter¹⁶ discusses how the strength of the Yidden is a spiritual one, and that it is Hashem who gives the Yidden the strength to have power over the rest of the world as well. As an example, the Rebbe mentioned the kingdom of Shlomo Hamelech, which represented the apex of the Jewish nation. Even then, the Yidden were the smallest in quantity among the nations, yet Shlomo Hamelech’s G-dly wisdom was heard in the furthest corners of the earth, and the G-dly example of the Jewish nation

ועד"ז היה כו"כ פעמים בדברי ימי ישראל (ע"י כי להוי' מצוקי ארץ גו'), וכנבואת חנה (הפטורת יום א' דר"ה)—שירה זו על מלכי או"ה ועל כנס": עלץ לבי בהוי' וכפי' התרגום בארוכה (הובא בקיצור ברד"ק שם): "בימי שמואל כו' ועד "וירם קרן משיחו"—מלך המשיח.

A similar thing happened many times in the history of the Yidden (through [the power of Hashem, as the *possuk* says] “the pillars of the earth are Hashem’s¹⁸) and as it says in the *nevua* of Chana (the *haftarah* of the first day of Rosh Hashanah)—whose song refers to the kings of the nations and of the Yidden: My heart has rejoiced through **Hashem**, and as the Targum explains at length (brought down in the Radak briefly): “In the times of Shmuel, etc., until [the end of Chana’s prayer, where it says] ‘and raise the horn of the anointed one’—the King Moshiach.”

brought peace between them and their neighbors. The Rebbe goes on to say that this applies in *galus* as well, and to every individual on a personal level.

But then, on Erev Yom Kippur, the Rebbe suddenly added a very brief footnote, which, upon closer inspection, seems a bit out of place in the context of the letter. The Rebbe writes (see sidebar for the original text with translation) that a similar phenomena to what happened during the times of Shlomo can be seen many times throughout Jewish history—that Hashem’s strength brought the Yidden supremacy over their neighbors. The Rebbe goes on to say that in the *haftarah* of the first day of Rosh Hashanah we recite the song of Chana, which alludes to the



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 189978

future kings of the *goyim* and the Yidden, with each stanza referring to another victory that Hashem gave the Yidden over their foes, from the time of Shmuel and his victory over the Pelishtim, up until the times of Moshiach.

The next day, the Yidden in Eretz Yisroel were attacked by their neighbors from all directions. They were fighting for their survival, and though they were small in number, it was Hashem's miracles that gave them victory.¹⁷

PRECISENESS IN EVERY DETAIL

The preciseness of the letters extends even to the most seemingly external details, like the date at the

beginning and the *bracha* in the signature, and the Rebbe allows us a small glimpse into this depth by way of the copious footnotes at the bottom of each letter.

A certain *rov* in Eretz Yisrael once publicized the *michtav kloli* for Pesach,¹⁹ in which the Rebbe had quoted the *maamar Chazal* that the Yidden in Mitzrayim were distinct in their dress, their food, and their language. However, the classic version of this *maamar Chazal* does not mention anything about food, and so the *rov* had decided to omit that word.

The Rebbe quickly responded. After giving the *rov* some general pointers about how to approach variant versions—and pointing out that if a non-classic version was quoted, it

could be assumed that there was a source for it—the Rebbe explained that there was a reason why he had specifically cited this version:

“I cited the version that mentions food because of the recent battles on this issue specifically, which has taken painful and shameful forms, and more so in Eretz Yisroel...”²⁰

The Rebbe asked him to publish a correction of his mistake, which would provide an opportunity to explicitly highlight the issue.

This is just one example where the Rebbe explains how with a single extra word—in the context of a quote that most people probably wouldn't even realize is different than usual—the Rebbe had been referencing a burning issue in current events.

...The next day, the Yidden in Eretz Yisroel were attacked by their neighbors from all directions.

5 NISSAN 5751, CB HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 70005



5 NISSAN 5751, CB HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 69992



THE REBBE DISTRIBUTES MICHTAVIM KLOLI'IM ALONG WITH THE MATZOS BEFORE PESACH 5751.



RABBI MORDECHAI MENTLIK, THE ROSH-YESHIVA AT 770, TEACHES AN IN-DEPTH SHIUR ON THE MICHTOV-KLOLI, ELUL 5737.

LIVING WITH THE LETTER

When the *michtav kloli* was released for the first time, it was an *event* in 770. Chassidim would pore over the letter individually and in groups, and Rabbi Mentlik would give his iconic *shiur* on it, often spending hours explaining the nuances of every word.

“I remember times when the entire life in 770 stopped because we were waiting for the *michtav kloli* to come out,” Rabbi Hirshel Raskin says. “In

fact, there was one time in 5749 when *selichos* was a half hour later than usual (instead of 7:00 a.m. it was closer to 7:30 a.m.). Somehow we found out that it was because the Rebbe had been working on the *michtav kloli* the entire night—in fact, when he came in the morning, he handed in the *michtav kloli*.

“The *tekufa* of the *yom tov* started when the letter came out. In fact, the Rebbe himself would sometimes

refer to the letter at the *farbrengen*, elaborating on the content or answering questions on it—whether on the letter itself, or the footnotes.”

“During Chanukah one year,” Rabbi Leibel Shapiro relates, “the Rebbe walked by a certain veteran Chassid’s home and saw that he had lit a menorah on his second floor window. At the *farbrengen*, the Rebbe spoke about the fact that it is halachically questionable to light the menorah at



LEVIFREDIN VIA JEM 21687

the window if it's not on the ground floor, and added that the halachic complications caused by this may be one of the reasons that it's not *minhag Chabad*. Following the farbrengen, the Rebbe said that this part of the *sicha* should be written up concisely, and after editing he added it as an addition to the *michtav kvoli* that came out for Chanukah.” **T**

1. Beginning from 5732.

2. Chai Elul 5730, Likkutei Sichos vol. 9 p. 457.
3. Chai Elul 5732.
4. Erev Shabbos Selichos, 5745.
5. Chai Elul 5745
6. 11 Nissan 5725
7. 25 Elul 5719
8. Yemei Hagbala (days leading to Shavuot) 5743
9. Third day of Selichos 5746
10. 11 Nissan 5730.
11. Yemei Haslichos 5723.
12. Yemei Haslichos 5714.

13. Yimei Haslichos 5728.
14. Bein Kesse Le'asor (between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur) 5732.
15. 25 Adar 5751.
16. 6 Tishrei 5734.
17. For more information, see: www.chabad.org/2327444.
18. Shmuel Alef, 2,8
19. 11 Nissan 5717.
20. Igros Kodesh vol. 15 p. 117.
21. Igros Kodesh vol. 15 p. 83
22. Yud Shevat 5720; Sichos Kodesh 5720 p. 181-182.

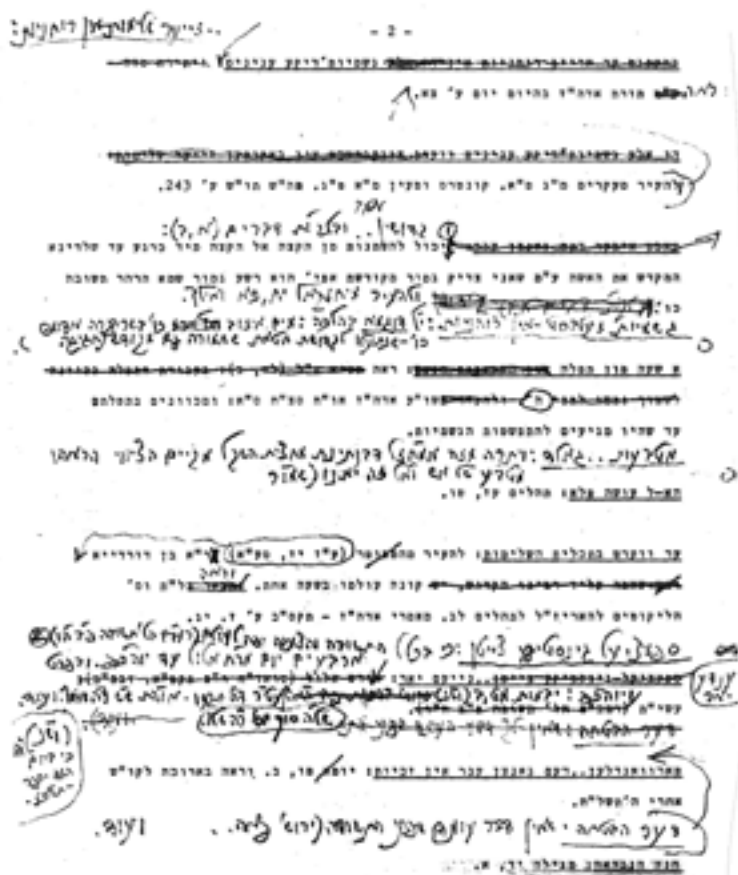
Precision

CARE AND ATTENTION TO THE LAST DETAIL

THE FOOTNOTES

One of the most unique elements of the *michtav kloli* is the lengthy footnotes, which often run longer than the letter itself, and which constitute a fascinating area of study in and of themselves.

“The Rebbe’s custom was that he would never write down a source without checking it up,” Rabbi Hirshel Notik says. “One time, I believe it was in Elul 5735, I saw the Rebbe going home with the pages of the *michtav kloli*, and he also brought with him the two volumes of *Likkutei Sichos* where the previous years’ *michtovim kloli’im* had been published (volume 4 and 9). Presumably, the Rebbe was bringing them in order to copy footnotes and sources to the new letter.”



TRANSLATIONS

In the very first years, the Rebbe would write the *michtovim kloli'im* in Yiddish as well as *lashon hakodesh*. From 5715, however, the official letter was written in Yiddish, and Rabbi Uriel Tzimer was tasked with translating it into Hebrew. This continued until his passing in 5722.

“Towards the end of 5722,” Rabbi Tuvia Blau relates, “the Rebbe spoke to me in *yechidus* about translating the *sichos*.”

“Then, on 25 Elul 5722, that year’s *michtav kloli* came out from the Rebbe—and for the first time, there was no one to translate it into Hebrew, as this was the first letter after Rabbi Tzimer passed away. About an hour later, Rabbi Groner told me that the Rebbe had instructed that I translate it. Rabbi Groner said the translation needed to be in *lashon hakodesh* but also *punktlech*-exact (implying that terms of *Ivrit* could be used as well).

Rabbi Nissan Mindel would translate it into English, and from there it was translated into many other languages. We find several letters from the Rebbe encouraging shlichim to arrange it to be translated into their local language. To Rabbi Shlomo Matusof, for example: “If there is a way to translate my *michtav kloli* into the local language (and that it will be a quality translation, i.e. that it will be accurate to the original and also written in a style that will make a good impression on the readers) then you should certainly work on it, even if it will cost.”²¹

The Rebbe would often edit the translations of the *michtovim kloli'im*—whether in *lashon hakodesh*, English, and even Russian—and a clue for one to tell if it was edited by the Rebbe or not can be found on the letter itself: if it says *targum chofshi*, or *free translation*, that (usually) means that the Rebbe did not review it. But if it simply says *targum* or *translation*, that means it is edited.



THE REBBE'S HAGAHOS ON THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE MIGHTAV-KLOLI OF YEMEI HASLICHOS 5723.



A FEW OF THE REBBE'S EDITS ON THE DATE OF THE MICHTAV-KLOLI.

THE DATE

The way the date on each letter is written—how exactly to refer to the *parsha*, how to label the day of the week, and so on—is carefully customized, and one can easily find five or six footnotes explaining the significance thereof.

Even the smallest nuances contain significance. The Rebbe once spent an entire *sicha*²² explaining why—in a letter before Yud Shevat—he had written the date of 6 Shevat as *Shishi B'shvat* instead of *Vov Shevat*.

The Rebbe explains that even this detail is precise: the number six corresponds to the *sefira* of *yesod*, which is the sixth *sefira*. The letter *vov*, on the other hand, has two meanings. The numerical value of *vov* is six, which refers to *yesod*. But its long shape corresponds to *tiferes* (as is explained in Chassidus and Kabbalah).

The letter was written before Yud Shevat, the *yom hilula* of the Friediker Rebbe, whose life's work corresponds to the *seifra* of *yesod* (as the Rebbe explains in the *sicha*), which is why the Rebbe wanted to hint unequivocally to *yesod*. And this, the Rebbe said, is the reason that he wrote out the number six instead of writing a *vov*.

GETTING IT OUT

In addition to efforts on the part of Chassidim to publicize the Rebbe's letters far and wide, the Rebbe himself took steps in this regard, sending it as attachments to personal letters—which he would do even after the *yom tov*-season had passed, writing that the message was relevant year-round—and having it published in journals and *sefarim*. In addition, the Rebbe would personally give it out on various occasions, when *talmidim-hashluchim* and shluchim went out on shlichus, and when he gave out *matzos* to the shluchim.

Rabbi Hirshel Raskin relates: "Every shliach would receive the *michtav kloli*, and, growing up in Morocco, I remember that there was so much *simcha* when the *michtav* would arrive."

בכבוד ובברכה להשלחה בכל האשור
ובברכה חג המסח כשר ושמה 1/17

בכבוד ובברכה להשלחה בכ"ז
ובברכה כתיבה וחתימה טובה

בכבוד ובברכה

בברכה כתיבה וחתימה טובה
לשנה טובה ומתוקה
בגשמיות וברוחניות גם יחד

A FEW EXAMPLES OF THE REBBE'S SIGNATURE ON THE MICHTOVIM-KLOLIM

THE BRACHA AND SIGNATURE

The final part of each letter would conclude with the Rebbe's *brachos* to the Jewish nation, with the ultimate *bracha* of bringing the *geula*. In the signature, the Rebbe would sign off—almost always using his full name (unlike his usual custom of signing his first name with an abbreviation)—before which he would often add a short few handwritten words of *bracha*. Each time this *bracha* was unique.

One example where this is especially visible is the series of letters in connection with Tishrei 5751, as each *bracha* builds on the next one:

The first letter finishes off: לשנה טובה ומתוקה.

The next letter: לשנה טובה ומתוקה בגשמיות וברוחניות גם יחד.

And in the next: לשנה טובה ומתוקה בגשמיות וברוחניות גם יחד. בטוב הנראה והנגלה.

In the *he'aros u'biuruim* that were published at the time, explanations were offered as to how each of these *brachos* were pertinent to the content of each letter.

THE KAPITEL

The Rebbe would (almost always) include a *possuk* from that year's *kapitel* and incorporate it in the *michtav kloli*. Rabbi Notik says, "The Chassidim who were planning the *niggun* for Yud Alef Nissan always waited to find out which *possuk* the Rebbe would include in the letter, which *possuk* would be the one that the Rebbe would 'koch in' the rest of the year, so that they could use it in the *niggun*."

אברהם הכהן אברהם אבינו
היה רבינו אברהם אבינו
אברהם אבינו אברהם אבינו
אברהם אבינו אברהם אבינו
אברהם אבינו אברהם אבינו
אברהם אבינו אברהם אבינו
אברהם אבינו אברהם אבינו
אברהם אבינו אברהם אבינו

A LIST IN THE REBBE'S KSAV YAD KODESH OF THE TORAH OF THE REBBEIM INCLUDED IN A MICHTAV-KLOLI.

MENTIONING THE REBBEIM

In every *michtav kloli*, the Rebbe would mention the following sources, in the letter itself or in the footnotes: Bavli, Yerushalmi, Zohar, and all of the Rebbeim from the Baal Shem Tov and on, as he would on other special occasions, like the annual *maamar* on Rosh Hashanah and the annual *Basi Legani maamar*. From 5730 and on, he would also mention his father, Horav Levi Yitzchok.

Rabbi Notik says, "I have a copy of a list that the Rebbe made of all these sources, and when he was editing the *michtav kloli*, he made checks by each one to ensure they were included. If they weren't, he would then add something to the letter."

WHERE TO READ THE MICHTOVIM KLOLI'IM

All the Hebrew *michtovim kloli'im*—those originally written in Hebrew and those translated from the Yiddish—are published in the two-volume set, *Igros Melech*.

The original Yiddish letters take a bit more work to find. As a general rule, they are printed in the back of the volume of Likkutei Sichos that corresponds to that time of year: the Tishrei letters are printed in Devorim volumes; the Pesach letters are printed in Vayikra; and the other letters (for Chanukah, Yud Shevat, Lag Ba'omer, Shavuos, and other occasions) are printed in their respective times of the year. From 5747 and on, all the letters are printed in the back of the Sefer Hasichos set. In addition, all the Pesach letters are included in the expanded edition of the Rebbe's Haggadah Shel Pesach, volume 2.





JEM194239

RESHET OHOLEI YOSEF YITZCHOK

Tishrei 5718

Reshet Oholei Yosef Yitzchok is a network of Chabad-Lubavitch educational institutions in Eretz Yisroel. It includes tens of schools and preschools, educating thousands of Jewish children. In Tishrei 5718, Rabbi Yitzchak Gansburg, who served as a director of the school in Zarnoga at the time, was privileged to go into yechidus. Rabbi Gansburg transcribed the details of the yechidus:

I entered into *yechidus* at 8:50 p.m. The Rebbe usually davened *maariv* at 9:30, but that time came and went, and the *yechidus* continued. The bell rang, over and over, but the Rebbe continued speaking until 10:15.

In my *pan*, I asked numerous questions, in matters both private and communal:

1. I asked [for advice] regarding my mother's health.
2. I discussed our summer camp; it had resulted in a small deficit, which Rabbi Aharon Mordechai Zilberstrom committed to collecting for in Yerushalayim. I told the Rebbe about the camp and included several photos. The Ministry of Education was pleased with our camp, which we had held in shuls, and agreed to help us by providing courses for counselors, which would enable us to expand the camp in coming years. I asked the Rebbe whether it was worth the effort and investment to create permanent campgrounds.
3. Before my trip to New York, I met with Mendel Drizin, Yeshavam Segal, Berel Karasik, and Mr. Moshe Cohen, who is the officer in command of *Gdudei Noar*—a military preparatory program—for religious youth. He explained the purpose of the school, and how he intends to have religious staff. They asked me to ask the Rebbe whether the Rebbe wishes for *anash* to join as staff; being that their role would be primarily military, they would be able to draw a large following, and influence many people in *Yiddishkeit* as well.

The Rebbe read my *pan* and began speaking:

Regarding my mother, the Rebbe mentioned and wrote down (in Latin) the name of a medicine. The Rebbe then told me to go to Dr. Seligson, who would be able to tell me whether this medicine could be obtained in Eretz Yisroel, as well as its name in English and French.

Regarding the military preparatory program, the Rebbe said that since it is mixed-gender, it is not okay, and even if the boys and girls are separated, if they meet even once or twice a day it is not acceptable. Totally separating the boys and girls would require an additional budget, which the government would not give.

לזכות
הבחור הנעלה התמים מנחם מענדל שיחי'
לרגל יום הולדתו העשרים
כ"ט סיון ה'תשע"ח
לחיוזק התקשרותו לכ"ק אדמו"ר,
ושיצליח בלימודו, לימוד הנגלה
ולימוד החסידות

נדפס ע"י הוריו
הרה"ת ר' שניאור זלמן
וזוגתו מרת דבורה שיחיו
קפלן

When I mentioned that we were considering leaving Zarnoga, the Rebbe asked why. I answered that I had done as much as I could, and there was nothing more that I could accomplish there. The Rebbe asked why that was so. I answered that there wasn't much that could be accomplished with the type of people who were there. The Rebbe said, "If so, then on the contrary, you must expand the network to make at least 10 or 15 schools; the *Reshet* is Tomchei Temimim—though you don't necessarily need to announce that. True, they learn *limudei chol*, as mandated by the government, but when they're learning *limudei kodesh*, it is truly Tomchei Temimim.

Yes, Tomchei Temimim did not historically include girls, but today it does. You must ensure that the network grows and thrives, and bring in students to the yeshivos.

You don't need to focus only on Zarnoga; rather, new enthusiasm and encouragement should affect other directors to open new schools as well.

It is clear to me that a [*Reshet*] school prepares a place for Chassidus to be introduced. The school makes [Chassidim] a familiar face in town, that they are not a novelty.

Don't pay attention to the detractors, just act. With *mesiras nefesh*, more places can be opened...

You can even begin with just 30-40 students; you don't have to start with 200. Establish one location and then move on to the next, and the remainder of your time you will spend working for Tzeirei Agudas Chabad. Many initiatives started in Eretz Yisroel, and even took their first steps, but were not seen through. All of Eretz Yisroel could be transformed; that's clear to me, without question."

I said that I wasn't part of the administration of the *Reshet*, and the Rebbe said, "You are one of the directors [of the schools], so you should care about the entire organization, to which you are connected."²

I took the opportunity to ask whether the teachers had to be specifically Chabad Chassidim. The Rebbe said they didn't specifically have to be, that we "could bring in someone from outside, and after a few months, the person will be a Chassid. We have seen that it's already like that

in the *Reshet*. This is especially true since you're not taking people who are old [and inflexible] or opposed to you."

I voiced my concern that my words would not result in concrete action. The Rebbe asked if I went to the Ohel. I replied that my physical body had been there. The Rebbe said, "Your *neshama* was there even before your body was, so you have the power. Why wouldn't you be able to actualize these things?"

I then said that I believed I could accomplish more in Tzeirei Agudas Chabad than in the *Reshet*. The Rebbe said, "In any case, don't stop educating; work for Tzach after school hours. You probably finish school at 1:00, 2:00, or 2:30. In your work for Tzach, make sure not to step on anyone's toes. For example, there are people whose job is to edit the journal; leave them to their work."

I mentioned the difficulties we had with transportation for Tzach, and asked whether it would be worthwhile to try and bring a car from the U.S. The Rebbe said, "You should certainly try; perhaps even two cars. Arrange with the Consul and the American government that the taxes [on the cars] not be too expensive."

I then asked if I should stay in the U.S. and raise money to cover the costs of my trip. The Rebbe said that I should travel back after Shabbos Bereishis.

Regarding the summer camp, the Rebbe said, "In general, you should work on it, and you will surely have an estimate of the projected expenses several months or half a year beforehand. If you need thousands, that's not available, but several hundred is available."

The Rebbe concluded the *yechidus* by saying, "You don't need to be so glum; if you have a question, write, and if necessary, phone. *Chasima u'gmar chasima tova.*" T

1. Zarnoga was a Jewish settlement. Today, Kiryat Moshe, near Rechovot, stands on the site. Several *ma'abarot*—immigrant camps—were established there.

2. The Rebbe's words were: "אבער איך זייט א מנהל וואס דארף אייך הארץ אלעס" - "But you are a director, so it should matter to you as a detail that affects to the entire matter."

In honor of the 2nd birthday
of our son
Levi Yitzchok שיח'ל
Backman
3 Menachem Av 5778

By his parents
Bruce and Rochelle
and **Family**



WE HAVEN'T EVEN BEGUN!

THE REBBE'S SHTUREM
ABOUT THE STUDY OF RAMBAM

In previous issues, we've explored the story behind the Rebbe's *takana* of *limud haRambam*, the story of some of the most notable *siyumim*, and what the Rebbe says on the importance of this *mivtza*.¹

In honor of the *siyum haRambam* this month, we present this collection of short insights, anecdotes, and *kisvei yad kodesh* related to the *takana*.

Living Rambam

The Rebbe's intention with the *takana* of Rambam is not that we should merely **learn** the text, but to **live** with it. Much like the Alter Rebbe's demand that we should "live with the times"—not just learn the weekly *parsha* but actually live it, the Rebbe similarly asked that we live with the daily study of Rambam:

"The Rambam tells us that when we learn *Torah Shebiksav* and then study his compilation, we will know the entire Torah!" the Rebbe explains. "Just like we need to live with the weekly *parsha*, we also need to live with today's *shiur* in Rambam."²

In this spirit, the Rebbe encouraged people to learn lessons in *avodas Hashem* from the daily *shiur* in Rambam. "The fact that we always try to find a *hora'a* from the day's *shiur* in Rambam is not merely a way of showing a '*kuntz*' that we can find one," the Rebbe says. "The real reason is: according to the Torah there is a real lesson that needs to be learned from the day's *shiur*. That's why, when *rabbonim* or featured speakers are looking for something to say at a *drasha* or a *farbrengen*, in addition to speaking about timely topics, they should try to teach a lesson from the daily *shiur* in Rambam..."³



19 KISLEV 5745, YOSSEI MELAMED VIA JEM 23951

The Dream

The Rebbe wished for this new initiative to spread across the whole world. In fact, the Rebbe referred to this as his "dream":

"*Yehi ratzon* that this 'dream' of uniting all the Jewish people through the study of Rambam, which has already taken off and is constantly spreading and gaining new adherents each day, should be completely accomplished. Then all the Yidden wherever they may be will be united in a complete manner ('*shleimus*') by completing the Torah in its entirety ('*b'shleimusa*')."⁴

Don't Just Try!

The Rebbe doesn't want us to merely "try" to fulfill this *takana*. He wants us to actually do it! This is evident from the following edit in the Rebbe's *ksav yad kodesh*, commenting on the Rebbe's biographical sketch printed at the beginning of Hayom Yom. The compiler had written that in 5744, the Rebbe suggested that everyone should begin a daily study of Rambam, and try to learn three *perakim* every day.

The Rebbe crossed a line through "try" ("להשתדל").



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASSIDEI CHABAD

SIYUM HARAMBAM AT THE RAMBAM'S KEVER IN TVERYA, 5745. AMONG THE ATTENDEES IS SEFRADI CHIEF-RABBI MORDECHAI ELIYAHU.

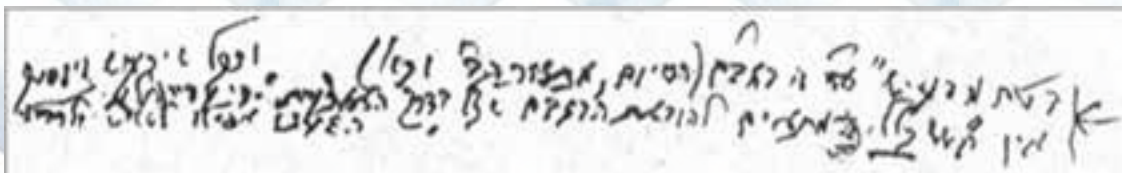
We Need You!

The Rebbe placed great emphasis on the importance of *siyumim* on Rambam, asking everyone to get involved in hosting and attending them:

"Don't think that just because there will be plenty of other people there, you yourself don't have to attend as well," the Rebbe said. "You think it's a waste of time and energy, you won't be able to contemplate on your studies properly and so on. And you'll also have to greet other people and respond to their '*shalom aleichem*' with an '*aleichem shalom*' (so as not to be considered a thief, as the Gemara asserts). I will just stay home," you say.

"But it's important for each and every individual to attend, as the *possuk* says בָּרַב עַם הַדָּרַת מֶלֶךְ—the king's glory is in a multitude of people..."⁵

We can glean at least a glimpse into the broad scope of *siyumim* and publicity the Rebbe expected from this handwritten note to Rabbi Adin Even Yisroel (Steinzaltz):



בטח "מרעיש" ע"ד הרמב"ם (הסיום, מחזור הב' וכו') וככל שירעיש ויוסיף אין חשש כלל המתאים להוראת הרמב"ם שצריך להיות בדרך האמצעית" כי עדיין לא הגענו אפילו לשליש ולרביעי.

You are certainly "creating a tumult" about Rambam (the *siyum* [on the first cycle, the start of] the second cycle, etc.). No matter how much you increase in the tumult [publicity and fanfare], you need not worry whether this is in line with the Rambam's ruling that one should [always] take the "midpoint path,"⁶ because we have not yet even reached a third or a quarter [of where we need to be].

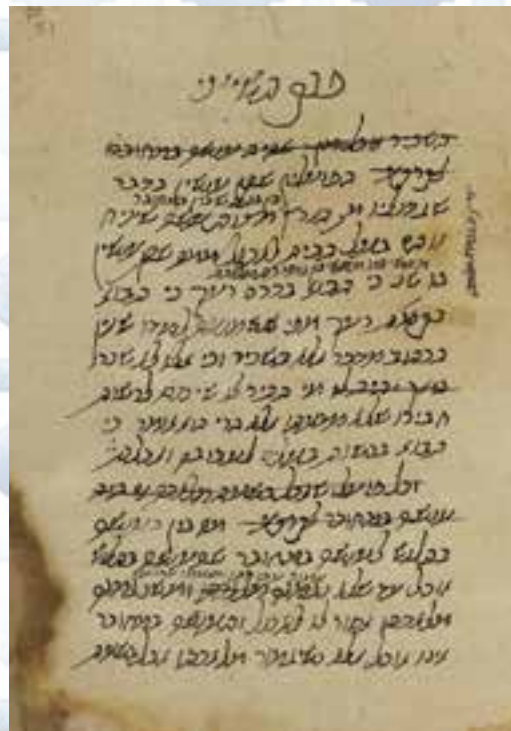
The Rebbe urged everyone to influence others to join in as well. "When you feel a sense of *achdus Yisroel* connecting you with Yidden all around the world, you will naturally want to connect with them even more by all studying the same *halachos* each day."⁷

Nightly Study in 770

The following is an account as recalled by Reb Zelig Wallman, one of the students in Tomchei Tmimim 770 in the year 5709:

“A friend of mine and I would sit together each night during the evening *sefer* to learn Chassidus in the main *zal*, and we noticed a most phenomenal thing. Just before *maariv* the Rebbe (“Ramash”, as he was then known) would come in, take a volume of the Rambam’s Mishneh Torah off of the shelf, and study from it for a while.

“It was quite clear that he was slowly studying through the entire Mishneh Torah, one *sefer* at a time, although we were unable to determine exactly how much he covered per day.”⁸



Best You Could Be

As we know, the Rebbe set up three tracks of Rambam study: Three *perokim* a day, one *perek* a day, and Sefer Hamitzvos.

The Rebbe once explained:

“It is important to remember that those who learn *perek echad* each day should not feel dejected *chas v’shalom*. Firstly, because dejection is the antithesis of Torah study: Torah must be learned with an open mind. Additionally, if one is at the level where he can only learn one *perek*, then it is just as good as learning three *perokim*. On the other hand, if one has the ability to learn three *perokim*, he does not fulfill his obligation by only learning one. And more so: learning one *perek* can be considered *bittul Torah* for this individual!

“Obviously, it is better to learn one *perek* than not to learn any at all, *rachmana l’tzlan*. But still, he will not fulfill his obligation by learning only one *perek*.”⁹

The Rebbe connected the study of Rambam with many blessings. A shliach once wrote to the Rebbe that he accumulated much debt and asked for a *bracha* to be relieved of it. The Rebbe responded: By paying up your “debt” of not-yet studied Rambam, you will be able to pay off the monetary debt as well.

There are 83 sets of *halachos* in Rambam, the Rebbe pointed out. The word for illness in the Torah is “מחלה”, which has the *gematriya* of 83. By studying Rambam, we will be healed of all sicknesses; to the extent that, as the Torah says, “לא אשים עליך”—the sickness never even begins.¹⁰





THE REBBE THANKS SEN. BOSCHWITZ FOR HIS ROLE IN THE SIYUM HARAMBAM IN MINNESOTA DURING THE FARBRENGEN OF CHOF AV 5745.



RABBI MOSHE FELLER WITH SEN. RUDY BOSCHWITZ.

19 KISLEV 5745, YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM 23951

Evergrowing Effect

Ever since meeting Rabbi Moshe Feller in the early 5730s, Senator Rudy Boschwitz became tremendously instrumental in assisting the activities of Chabad both in his field and beyond. He helped Lubavitch of Minnesota raise large sums of money as well as offering practical help to get through the red tape of bureaucracy whenever needed.

Perhaps most notably, Senator Boschwitz fought very hard to uphold the Rebbe's view on the travesty of the so-called Zero Population Growth,¹¹ and despite fierce opposition, he was able to sign a bill into law about this.

In 5745, Rabbi Feller planned to hold a grand first *siyum haRambam* with dignitaries and distinguished individuals, and Senator Boschwitz helped facilitate the preparations, both financially and logistically.

A few months later, at the farbrengen of Chof Av 5745, Senator Boschwitz visited the Rebbe for the first time, after years of actively supporting the Rebbe's endeavors. He was given a seat on the dais, and between *sichos* had an opportunity to approach the Rebbe.

Rabbi Feller listened in closely to see how the Rebbe would address the man who had been a pioneering force amongst supporters of Chabad.

However the Rebbe turned to Senator Boschwitz, and zeroed in on one particular item:

The Rebbe turned to him with a warm smile and exclaimed: "Thank you very much for the *siyum haRambam*! Rabbi Feller told me about it..."

To the Rebbe, despite the myriad of other areas of concern, what was of utmost importance was the *siyum haRambam*.

The Rebbe: Thank you very much for [your participation in] the *siyum* of the Rambam. I heard from Rabbi Feller [the Rebbe pointed in his direction] that it was very successful. And certainly you will influence many people around you.

Mr. Boschwitz: I hope so...

The Rebbe: ...Then and also now. Everyone will rave about your speech and about your participation, and I hope that this will add to your appetite to do all these things, many times more.¹²

1. See *The Global Initiative*, Derher Shevat 5774.

2. Hisvaaduyos 5746 vol. 1, p. 207.

3. Hisvaaduyos 5749 vol. 1, p. 309.

4. Hisvaaduyos 5744 vol. 4, p. 2222.

5. Hisvaaduyos 5748 vol. 2, p. 252.

6. Rambam Hilchos De'os, 1:4.

7. Hisvaaduyos 5744 vol. 3, p. 1961.

8. Yemei Melech vol. 2, p. 626.

9. Hisvaaduyos 5745 vol. 2, p. 1326

10. Hisvaaduyos 5746 vol. 2, p. 246.

11. Maintaining a population size by limiting the number of live births.

12. Video recording of Farbrengen, Chof Menachem-Av 5745, released by JEM.

1

Dire Need

The declining spiritual situation of the Chassidim weighed heavily upon the shoulders of the Rebbe Rashab. He describes his feelings in great detail, with expressions like “My heart is pouring blood...” and he was greatly pained by the spiritual coldness and wellbeing of his precious followers.

These sentiments led him to finally put in place a solution to the problem: Tomchei Temimim.

“It was in the summer of 5656,” he explains, “that I had the merit to visit the resting places of all the Rebbeim.” His trips included the Ohel of the Baal Shem Tov and the Maggid and concluded with a visit to the Ohel in Lubavitch.

“It was with their *bracha*,” he continues, “That I started arranging the yeshiva. It will be a place where we can educate Chassidim to refine their *middos* and have *mesiras nefesh*.”

Source: Based on a Sichra of the Rebbe Rashab
- Acharon Shel Pesach 5666

And the name is...

The mood was joyous and festive, and in a loud voice the Rebbe Rashab announced, “The name of the yeshiva will be “Tomchei Temimim” and those who learn in it and act in accordance with its message will be called “*temimim*.” Hashem should bless them and those who support it both physically and spiritually.”

But this did not occur before the yeshiva started, or even within the first few days of its inception. The yeshiva received its name more than a year after its founding, on Simchas Torah 5659. The Rebbe Rashab had been leading *hakafos* with electrifying *simcha* and after reciting the words of the seventh *hakafa*, including “*Tomech temimim hoshe’a na*,” (lit. supporter of the sincere—or complete—ones, deliver us). The reason for using this as the name is: by learning *nigleh* and Chassidus, the study becomes a learning of *temima*—perfection.

Source: Hatomim Choveres 1 p. 24

A Special Day!

The date is 15 Elul 5657, two days after the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *chasuna*.

Three days later, on the auspicious day of Chai Elul, the learning began.

The Rebbe Rashab chose 18 *talmidim* and they went to Zemin for a year with Reb Gronem as the newly appointed *mashpia*. During that year another ten *talmidim* joined.

One year later, on the yeshiva’s first anniversary—Chai Elul 5658—they returned to Lubavitch and had the merit to go into *yechidus*.

Source ‘Hatomim’ vol. 1, p. 24

eight facts TOMCHEI TEMIMIM

Purpose

Can you explain the purpose of Tomchei Temimim in one sentence?



The Rebbe Rashab summed it up by saying that the purpose of founding this yeshiva was so that they would remember the *nosen haTorah*—the giver of Torah.

This was accomplished through the help of *mashpi'im* who gave the *temimim* a structured formula with which to study Chassidus. The first Chassid appointed for this mission was Reb Gronem. The students would spend one year under his guidance and during that time they would each undergo a drastic personal transformation to the extent that they would be unrecognizable. Reb Gronem would also farbreng with them twice a week and many times this lasted through an entire night and day.

Source: Reshimas Hayoman p. 245



Timing and Seder

The original schedule of Tomchei Temimim may strike you as familiar. For the most part, it resembles the regular schedule of *yeshivos* today.

On weekdays, *seider Chassidus* in the morning would be from 7:30 to 9:30 with tea and *mezonos* available beforehand.

Shacharis would begin at 10:00, followed by lunch. The main *seider* of the day was *nigleh*, from noon through 7:00 p.m. During the winter months there would be a short break during the day for *mincha*; in the summertime they would daven at a quarter to seven in the evening. Following *nigleh* was an hour break for supper until 8 o'clock, and in the summer the *bochurim* were given an additional half hour so they could bathe in the river. Reb Gronem would give a *shiur* on Tanya each day from 8:00 to 9:00 p.m., which was followed by Chassidus until 11:00. Depending on the time of year, *maariv* was either before supper or after Chassidus.

Source: Lubavitch Vechayoleha p. 81

Don't mix in

During the years 5665-5666, a fervor swept through the *bochurim* to apply themselves diligently to the study of Chassidus. To keep the inspiration alive, a special committee was formed. However, despite their best efforts the excitement cooled off.

In response to this, the Rebbe Rashab called in fifteen *temimim* and told them that this had occurred because they were lacking in their *bittul* to the *mashpi'im*.

The Rebbe Rashab then handed them a written *maamar*.

Source: Halekach V'halebuv
Vol. 2, page 212

My Responsibility

During the Russian revolution against the Czar, a group of rebels had been active in Lubavitch and tried influencing many *bochurim* of their cause. Though largely unsuccessful, they did manage to influence one of the *bochurim* to join them.

When the Frieddiker Rebbe heard about it, he ordered a group of strong *bochurim* to hide the *bochur* from the rebels. The rebels stormed into the Frieddiker Rebbe's room and demanded that he hand him over, claiming that he belonged to them. To emphasize their point, they brandished the weapons they were carrying.

The Frieddiker Rebbe replied, "Your weapons don't scare me! Regarding the welfare of this boy, I personally told his father that I take responsibility for him and it is my obligation to care for him both physically and spiritually."

A short while later they returned with a group of two hundred people, surrounding the yeshiva and shooting inside.

The Rebbe had the *bochurim* lock the doors and windows. He then instructed them to take metal sticks and bed posts and chase them out of the courtyard.

When the intruders saw what was coming their way, they fled for their lives.

Source: Source Reshimos Devorim vol. 2, p. 131

A parent figure

The *mashpia* is a central figure in the Tomchei Temimim yeshiva. He serves as a mentor, guide, teacher and even caregiver for the *bochurim*.

Reb Shmaryahu Sasonkin related:

"... We then learnt under the guidance of Reb Michoel Bliner. He cared for each and every *bochur* like a mother cares for her children. He didn't only show this concern to the *talmidim* in his class but to every single one.

"...It was an absolute pleasure to hear him explain Likutei Torah. On many occasions, tears would pour from his eyes as he explained parts connected with *avodah*. This was something that would always happen when he reached a specific part of the Elul *maamar*—Ani Ldodi."

Source: Bit'a'on Chabad issue 9

Better Than the Best Father

AN INTERVIEW WITH
RABBI ZALMAN LIPSKER

Rabbi Zalman Lipsker has served as the Rebbe's shliach to Philadelphia, PA, for over fifty years. Throughout his shlichus, and earlier, as a bochur learning in 770, Reb Zalman merited the Rebbe's constant guidance and direction.

In this exclusive interview, he shares with us his stories and experiences.



לזכות
שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר בכל אתר ואתר
שיצליחו בגשמיות וברוחניות,
וימלאו שליחותם בפועל 'לקבל פני
משיח צדקינו' באופן של 'ופרצת',
ובאופן ד' ואתם תלוקטו לאחד אחד'
עדי נזכה לגאולה שלימה
ונשיא דורנו בראשינו

נדפס ע"י
בית חב"ד מעקוואן, ויסקנסין



My Early Childhood in Russia

I was born in Kutaisi, Georgia, on the night of Chof Kislev 5699 (תרצ"ט), to my parents, Reb Leibel and Malkah Lipsker. My parents hosted the Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen that night in our home; a number of famous Chassidim were present. After she served the *shvartze kashe* (as is customary¹), she went into labor, and a few hours later, while the farbrengen was still going on, I was born. So my birth was in the midst of a chassidishe farbrengen.

Throughout my childhood, I was an "undocumented citizen." Although we were a family of seven children, none of us were registered with the government, for fear that we would be forced to attend a Russian public school. Each year, when the local authorities would make rounds to register children for school, we would escape our home through a passageway in the attic, and my mother would delay opening the door until we had all made it out safely.

For our Torah education, we had a *melamed* by the name of Reb Shmuel, a *tomim* from Lubavitch, who taught us *kriah*, Chumash, *tefillos* and more. The *cheder* was a private affair; we learned in our attic, with only four or five boys.

Kutaisi at the time was considered one of the better places to live as a Yid. The intense persecution of Judaism that took place in mainland Russia didn't really make it to Georgia, and the local Jews were able to maintain many aspects of Jewish life.

Kutaisi even had a fully functioning shul, which my father would attend. However, for us children, things were more complicated. Because of our legal status, our family could never be seen walking outdoors together, so we seldom attended shul, and when we did, we would take separate routes. I remember attending the shul only



REB ZALMAN, THIRD FROM LEFT IN THE FRONT ROW, IN A TALMUD-TORAH IN SCHWÄBISCH HALL, GERMANY.

Throughout my childhood, I was an 'undocumented citizen.' Although we were a family of seven children, none of us were registered with the government.

once or twice before we left Georgia, when I was six years old.

Because of the better religious climate, an underground Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim functioned in the city. I remember *bochurim* such as Shalom Marosov, Heschel Tzeitlin, Chatzkel Brod, Folke Wilschansky, Sholom Mendel Kalmenson and others.

After the war was over, in 5705, our family left Kutaisi towards the Russian-Polish border, with hopes of leaving the Soviet Union. Moving around from country to country even within the Soviet Union was illegal without the proper documentation. For the first leg of our journey, from Kutaisi to Samtredia, Georgia, my father bribed a nurse to take us in an ambulance. We spent Pesach on the road, on a train that had been originally built for cattle. My father obtained machine matzah for us children; he himself ate onions the entire Pesach.



REB ZALMAN'S FATHER, REB ARYEH ZEV.

When we arrived at the border city of Lvov, we joined the many Lubavitchers who had gathered there to illegally cross the border posing as Polish citizens.² While waiting, my mother gave birth to a baby boy, and my father honored Leibel Motchkin, the *bochur* running the underground operation, with *sandakaus*.



A GROUP PHOTO OF THE TALMUD-TORAH IN SCHWÄBISCH HALL, GERMANY. REB ZALMAN IS STANDING ON THE LEFT THIRD ROW FROM THE TOP.

Our final destination was a Displaced Persons Camp in Germany, where we waited for instructions from the Frierdiker Rebbe on how to proceed. During our stay, my father organized a *cheder* for boys and a Beis Rivkah for girls.

The Frierdiker Rebbe first instructed us to come to America, so we arranged the papers and sent over our belongings, but suddenly we received a second letter, telling us to move to Eretz Yisroel instead: “אתה—ובניך יהיו נרות להאיר בארצנו הקדושה—you and your children will be an ‘illuminating light’ in our Holy Land,” the Frierdiker Rebbe wrote.

After moving to Eretz Yisroel, my father immediately got to work once again; he was one of the founders of the new yeshiva in Lod, which later became the central Chabad yeshiva of Eretz Yisroel.

Life in Eretz Yisroel

The most difficult experience I witnessed in my childhood was the *histalkus* of the Frierdiker Rebbe. When the news arrived on Sunday

morning, 11 Shevat 5710, in Eretz Yisroel, I watched as my father ran into Shul with tears running down his cheeks, crying “Oy Rebbe!”

All the Chassidim sat *shiva*. After the *shloshim*, they began talking about appointing the Rebbe, and writing a *ksav hiskashrus*. Reb Shlomo Chaim Kesselman, Reb Shmerel Sasonkin and Reb Moshe Gurary wrote a letter which everybody signed.³

I also remember how a few months after the Rebbe accepted *nesius*, we received a tape recording of the Yud Shevat farbrengen, which caused a huge sensation throughout Eretz Yisroel; the concept was totally novel.

I arrived in New York on 27 Elul 5717. It was a year after the Rebbe had sent the *bochurim*-shluchim to Eretz Yisroel following the terrorist attack in Kfar Chabad. They had generated a huge amount of excitement and inspiration, and in the wake of their visit, we *bochurim*, learning in Tomchei Temimim in Lod, decided that we wanted to go to the Rebbe.⁴

Together with my brother Eli, I traveled to the Yeshiva in Brunoy,



REB ZALMAN AS A BOCHUR.

France. From Brunoy, we wrote to the administration of the yeshiva at 770 asking for documents to allow us to travel to the US, but they answered with a message from the Rebbe that we should remain in Brunoy. Permission to come to America would be given only following a positive report from the *hanhala* about our progress there. Other classmates of mine went through a similar process; Mottel Chein, Avremel Sasonkin, Leibel Alevsky,⁵ and others.

We were in Brunoy from 15 Shevat through Elul 5717. Reb Nissan Nemanov was very demanding of us. He knew we desired to continue on to New York, and he took full responsibility to make sure that we would truly deserve the merit.

When we received permission to come to 770, we collected money for the ship voyage. My uncle, Reb Sender Menkin, gave a bit, the *meshpia* Reb Yisroel Noach Belinitzky gave some, and soon we had collected the full amount. The ship was to leave from Marseille, about an hour-and-a-half from Brunoy, and Reb Yisroel Noach accompanied us for the entire train ride. “If I can’t travel to the Rebbe myself, I will at least accompany you to the ship,” he said. We were very

moved by the gesture of this elderly Chassid.

Arriving in New York, we were greeted at the pier by three *bochurim*: Gershon Mendel Garelik, Itche Springer, and Yisroel Friedman, who whisked us to *mincha*, where we saw the Rebbe for the first time.

Arriving in 770

I will never forget that first experience of spending Rosh Hashanah in the Rebbe's presence. Watching the Rebbe's cries under his tallis before *tekios*, the *pesukim*, the *tekios* themselves—you were literally able to see how the Rebbe invested his entire being for the sake of *klal Yisroel*. The image of the Rebbe crying over the bags of *panim* was unforgettable.⁶

Later that day, I joined the march to *tashlich* in Botanical Gardens. That was also a very impressive sight; the Rebbe walked at the front with Rabbi Hodakov, while everyone lined up behind in pairs, singing *niggunim* along the way. Large crowds of people



would come out each year to see the Rebbe on this walk.

My first *yechidus* was during *Aseres Yemei Teshuva*, a short time after I arrived. During that *yechidus*, I brought the Rebbe a picture of our family. We knew the Rebbe wanted pictures of the families of Chassidim, so my father had arranged that we take a family picture before we left Eretz Yisroel.

At the *yechidus*, the Rebbe looked at the picture and asked that I list my siblings names on the back of the photo, and tag them on the picture itself; *alef* on the picture would refer to the name tagged as *alef* on the list, etc. The Rebbe said that I should bring the picture to Rabbi Hodakov once I had done this.

I was new in town, and I didn't understand why the Rebbe would instruct me to bring it to Rabbi Hodakov. Why shouldn't I bring it to the Rebbe himself? Seeing my confusion, the Rebbe explained to me that giving something to Rabbi Hodakov was just like bringing it to him; Rabbi Hodakov would pass it on to the Rebbe.

I settled down in yeshiva in 770, where I spent the next five years, until my wedding in Kislev 5723. Those

years in close proximity to the Rebbe were the best years of my life.

The yeshiva was small in those days, and we each merited to receive personal attention from the Rebbe. To us, the Rebbe was better than the best father could ever be.

Sometimes we would meet the Rebbe walking to and from his house. As soon as the Rebbe would come into sight, we would stand reverentially on a side, and wait for the Rebbe to pass. Once, shortly after Pesach, the Rebbe noticed me walking without a coat and said, "*Ah! Noch nisht azoi hais; uhn a mantel?*" It isn't yet so hot; why are you without a coat?"

Although we felt this sense of closeness, it didn't detract from the reverence, the *yir'as haromemus*, we had in the Rebbe's presence. We felt this way, to an extent, maybe even more than some Chassidim in the later years.

We dreaded the thought of the Rebbe looking at us. Often, after *mincha* or *maariv* in the *zal*, the Rebbe would turn around and scan the crowd, so we would always try to find positions where the Rebbe wouldn't see us. We didn't want the Rebbe to see our "unrefined faces."

On Simchas Torah 5723, in the wee hours of the morning, the Rebbe taught the *niggun* "*Stav Ya Pitu*."⁸ In the earlier years, the Rebbe would stand on a crate when he taught the *niggun*, but by then the Rebbe had a regular *bima* for the farbrengens, so he stood on that *bima*, while we stood on the floor. Near the Rebbe stood the *ba'alei menagnim*; Heishke Gansburg, Yoel Kahn, my brother Eli Lipsker, and others.

As the Rebbe taught the *niggun*, the crowd was working on picking up the Russian words, and suddenly the Rebbe said, "*S'iz doh noch einer vos ken Rusish, Lipsker fun Eretz Yisroel. Un er hot a shtikel chush in negina oich*. There is someone else who knows Russian,

Ask a Rov

One Erev Shabbos Chol Hamoed Sukkos, the Rebbe arrived from his home a bit earlier than usual. On his way into 770, he asked me if there was an *eruv* from the building to the sukkah. I went outside, looked around, and came back to report (through *mazkirus*), that indeed, there was an *eruv*.

When I came to *mincha* that afternoon, I was told that the Rebbe had asked for me. I went over to Rabbi Hodakov's office to find out what it was about, but he hadn't heard anything from the Rebbe. Later, Rabbi Hodakov told me that the Rebbe had wanted to know if a *rov* had checked the *eruv*.

Lipsker from Eretz Yisroel. And he also has some musical talent..." The Rebbe pointed at me.

Another unique *zechus* I had was to be counted among the *shiv'as knei hamenorah*, or as they were known in short, the *kanim*. The *kanim* would spend extra time learning their respective subjects, either *nigleh* or Chassidus, and would also rotate in giving a *pilpul* each week on what they learned. I was a *kan* for Chassidus, and among our privileges was two special *yechidusen* we had with the Rebbe.⁹

Stories from Yechidus

Each year before my birthday (Chof Kislev, as I mentioned earlier), I merited to go into *yechidus*. Most of what occurred during those *yechidusen* is not for public knowledge; the very definition of the word *yechidus* means it is something personal, something private, and *nogea* to myself alone. I never share what the Rebbe told me during those moments.

However, there are a few directives and stories that I will share with you. In fact, there was actually one *yechidus* where the Rebbe gave me a *hora'a* which I should pass on:

The Rebbe said that Rabbeinu Tam's tefillin must be put on immediately after davening, so as not to make a *hefsek* from the *bracha*; this was a *hora'a* the Rebbe said I could and should pass on, whether in his name or not.

Another time, in 5719, the Rebbe said I should approach him during the upcoming Yud-Tes Kislev Farbrengen, remind him that it is my birthday, and receive *l'chaim*. In earlier years this had been a common occurrence, but by then it was no longer the norm.

Another directive: When my birthday was on Friday, the Rebbe said I should be *mal'avir sedrah* before Shabbos, on my birthday itself.

Another episode from my *yechidusen*:



"There is someone else who knows Russian, Lipsker from Eretz Yisroel. And he also has some musical talent..."

I would give a weekly Chassidus *shiur* in the Mir Yeshivah of Brooklyn. One week, as I entered their building, two of my "students" stopped me. To my consternation, they said the *shiur* would need to end, because the *rosh yeshiva* Rabbi Kalmanovitch would not sanction its existence.

A week later, I entered into *yechidus* for my birthday, and I included this episode in my letter to the Rebbe. The Rebbe read the story and asked, "Velcher Kalmanovitch, der alter tzi der yunger? Which Kalmanovitch, senior or junior?"

I didn't know the answer, and the Rebbe continued, "Er hot zich noch nit oisgelernt—he still hasn't learned?"

The Rebbe suggested that we should move it to a nearby shul, Young Israel of Ocean Parkway. That is what we did.

Moving On

In Kislev 5723, I got married to Feige Chaya Einbinder. On the day of my wedding, as was customary, I received the Rebbe's *siddur* before *mincha*. The Rebbe told me, "Nem

dem siddur, tu uhn a gartel, daven mincha, zog al chet, un bet zach ois ale gute zachen far dem gantzen leben— Take this *siddur*, put on a *gartel*, pray *mincha*, say *Al Chet*, and ask Hashem for all good things for your entire life."

After our wedding, I became part of the founding group of the *kolel* that the Rebbe had decided to establish. Rabbi Hodakov called me and informed me that he had arranged for my father-in-law to support me in part while the *kolel* would provide some support as well, and that way I could join and learn with peace of mind.

The members were myself, Reb Arele Serebransky, Reb Yosef (Asa) Deitch and—*ybchl*"ch—Reb Arele Chitrik *a"h*. We learned in the *ezras nashim* of 770, and Rabbi Zalman Shimon Dvorkin would give us occasional *shiurim*.

We were also tasked by the Rebbe with putting together *mareh mekomos* for Likutei Torah. We split up the different tasks, and each week, on Motzei Shabbos, one of us—by rotation—would go into the Rebbe's room to present our work from that

Tefillin at Six A.M.

At the end of the summer of 5721, when I returned from my Merkos Shlichus, I showed up in 770 at one in the morning. It was a Thursday night, right before Chof Av. The *zal* was deserted; I was exhausted from the long trip and the heat, and I put my head down on a table and fell asleep.

Suddenly I felt a hand tapping my shoulder. At first I ignored it, but the person was persistent; he continued shaking me until I looked up in annoyance. I suddenly realized that it was Rabbi Hodakov.

I jumped up, and he inquired as to where I had returned from and when. I answered, and he asked if I was ready for another shlichus. Obviously, I immediately responded in the affirmative.

We went into his office, and he handed me a pair of *tefillin*.

"There is a Jew named Louie Shelder who lives in Long Beach, about an hour from here," he said. "You need to be at his door at six in the morning; not a minute earlier or a minute later. Teach him how to put on *tefillin*, and leave the pair with him."

I headed out to Long Beach with ample time, and waited outside his door until the clock struck six, and I knocked on his door.

Mr. Shelder opened the door, and looked quite surprised. I explained that I was sent by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and I had come to teach him how to put on *tefillin*. He immediately invited me inside. I put the *tefillin* on him, and showed him exactly how to fulfill the mitzvah.

When we finished, I prepared to leave, but Mr. Shelder invited me to accompany him on his ride to work. On the train, he told me the background to this story.

"Your Rebbe is a wise man," he said. "At midnight last night, I had a private audience with the Rebbe. We began talking, and the Rebbe began asking about my family and about my work. The Rebbe also asked whether I put on *tefillin* each morning, and I answered that I do not. The Rebbe didn't comment further on this topic; we continued speaking about other issues.

"A few minutes later the Rebbe asked, 'And why don't you put on *tefillin*?'"

"I told the Rebbe that I didn't even own *tefillin*..."

"Again, the Rebbe continued the conversation. He asked me about my daily schedule, when I wake up, what time I leave to work, what I do during the day, etc.

"Fifteen minutes later the Rebbe asked, 'If you did own a pair of *tefillin*, would you put them on?'"

"I don't even know how to put on *tefillin*," I answered.

"Had you known how to wear them, and you owned a pair, would you put them on?" I answered that I would be willing to do so.

"The Rebbe acted very wisely. He threw the questions at me in a manner that didn't show where he was going, and after an hour and a half, at two in the morning, I left the *yechidus*.

"As you see, when the Rebbe heard that I would be willing to put on *tefillin*, he discovered where and when exactly it would be possible to meet me, and sent you a mere four hours later, at exactly six in the morning, to put on *tefillin* after I awoke but before I left to work."

I was blown away by the story. Mr. Shelder wanted to pay me for the *tefillin*, but I obviously refused to take money from him.

He insisted; "Will you at least take a bottle of *mashke* to the Rebbe?"

I answered that I could bring the *mashke* to *mazkirus* and they would pass it on to the Rebbe.

Rabbi Hodakov later told me that the Rebbe wanted to know if I had returned in time for *seder Chassidus*. "I told the Rebbe that you hadn't made it, and the Rebbe said, 'Nu, he's still on shlichus...'"



29 ELUL 5739, LEVI FREDIN VIA JEM 195739

week. I merited to go into the Rebbe's room in this manner three or four times.

Usually, it was very brief; we just entered and gave the Rebbe the pages of work from the past week. One time, I asked the Rebbe's permission to ask a question. At that moment, the Rebbe's expression changed; his holy face took on a "yechidus expression," he listened to my question and answered it briefly.

During my studies, I also began looking into options for shlichus. We were offered a number of positions by Rabbi Hodakov; one idea was Stockholm, Sweden, another in Queens, and a third in Philadelphia. The Rebbe chose Philadelphia.

The initial job was to be a *melamed*. In *yechidus*, I mentioned to the Rebbe that they had offered \$4,400 for a year's salary, and the Rebbe said that I shouldn't agree for anything under five thousand.

In that *yechidus*, the Rebbe said about our shlichus: "*M'darf machen Philadelphia a frumme shtot, s'iz a shverer job, uber dos iz dein shlichus*—You need to make Philadelphia a *frum* city. It is a difficult job, but this is your mission."

On Shlichus

When we moved to Philadelphia, I began teaching in the school, and each afternoon I would visit Jewish

homes and make connections with people. At first, it was difficult going; we shluchim were a strange sight in town with our beards and *peyos*, but over time the ice broke and we began making real inroads.

One of the special moments as a teacher would be when I had the opportunity to bring my students to the Rebbe. I would bring groups to Crown Heights for Shabbos, and they would have the merit of participating in the Rebbe's *farbrengen*. The Rebbe would say *l'chaim* to them, and the Shabbos would make a powerful impact on them. Many of those students went on to become observant Jews.

The Two Kings

My first *yechidus* after moving on shlichus was when I returned for Yud-Tes Kislev 5724. The Rebbe asked, “*Vos hert zich in Philadelphia vu shnei melachim mishamshim b’keser echad?* How is it going in Philadelphia, where two kings reign with one crown?”

I was utterly confused.

“*Ich mein di shnei melachim hamishamshim b’keser echad, Harav Yolles and Harav Novoseller.* The ‘two kings’ I’m referring to are Rabbi Yolles and Rabbi Novoseller.” Rabbi Efraim Yolles—a well-known Chossid of the Rebbe¹⁰—was considered the chief rabbi of the city, while Rabbi Dovid Shlomo Novoseller was the chief *dayan*. They sometimes had their differences.

“*Du darfst ze’en zein mit beideh gut*—see to it to be on the good side of both,” the Rebbe instructed me. From then on, I made an effort to build a relationship with these and other *rabbonim* in town.

After one trip, the Rebbe wrote to me, “התוצאות? What are the results?” From then I began writing to the Rebbe about the effect these Shabbosim were having on them.

Chabad House for Dovrei Ivrit

After a few years of balancing teaching and *hafatza*, I began doing *hafatza* full time, and opened a Chabad House for Israelis, which proved, with Hashem’s help, to be very successful.

Throughout all the stages of our shlichus, we received constant guidance from the Rebbe, often through Rabbi Hodakov. In the later years, the Rebbe would often give me a second dollar, “*Far gantz Philadelphia*—for the entire Philadelphia.”

When I began working with Israelis, many of them had stores or stalls in the local malls that would remain open on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, not to mention every Shabbos. I would often encourage them to close, but with only minimal success. One year, I decided that come what may, this year everyone will close their stores over the Yomim Noraim.

I spoke to them, encouraged them, cajoled and argued, and in the end, prevailed. One shopkeeper even paid five hundred dollars to his Korean partners as compensation.

The day after Yom Kippur, the chief of police told me how astonished he was. “Not a single store opened, Rabbi. How did you pull that off?”

Needless to say, I reported to the Rebbe about the success, and the Rebbe responded, “ת”ח על הבשורה—Many thanks for the good news.”

One time, I brought a group of *mekuravim* to the Rebbe for dollars. While we were there, the Rebbe told me to explain to them the meaning of the word Philadelphia. I didn’t understand what the Rebbe meant, so the Rebbe explained that Philadelphia in Latin means *ahavas chochmah*, the “love of wisdom,” and because the greatest wisdom is Torah, the wisdom of Hashem, they should take part in Torah classes to strengthen their love of Torah.

Later that night, I received a call from *mazkirus*. The Rebbe had said that I was probably still confused, and therefore explained: Phia has the

After one trip, the Rebbe wrote to me, “התוצאות? What are the results?”

same root as “philosophy,” and the beginning of the name, Phila, means love.

Gemach Lubavitch of Philadelphia

In 5737, as per the Rebbe’s *hora’ah* then to open *gemachs*, we founded a free loan society for any Jew in Philadelphia in need of a loan. Over the years, we have helped countless local Jews and many *anash* as well.

The Rebbe was very happy about the *gemach*, and was interested in knowing what type of people were borrowing from it. For 15 years, the Rebbe sent a letter to our annual *melaveh malkah* each year, and always enclosed a check or cash.

During one of our early years, I sent the Rebbe pictures of an event, and received the following answer:

שתי תמונות נלקח

כדאי שבתמונות העיקריות לכה"פ יהי

נראה אם ע"י שלט וכו' את תוכן המאורע.

“Two pictures were kept here [for the Rebbe’s collection]. It would be appropriate, at least in the main pictures, for the theme of the event to be evident, whether through the sign or the like.”

One of our dinners honored a very prominent individual, and we invested a lot more into the dinner than usual in his honor. When the Rebbe saw the numbers, he wrote, “היתכן? ההוצאה חמישית מהכנסה? Why is the expenditure a fifth of the income...?”

In Conclusion

Let me tell you two things that I have always put a great emphasis on in my own shlichus; these have brought me amazing *brachos* and I suggest that others do the same:

First of all, I always make sure to carry *tefillin* and even *mezuzos* with me wherever I go. You never know who you might meet and in what situation you may have the opportunity to affect another Jew. I have countless stories about seemingly random occurrences which led to a person becoming seriously closer to Yiddishkeit.

The second is even more important.

From the day I moved on shlichus, I have endeavoured to bring people to the Rebbe. In the earlier years I would bring them to Shabbos farbrengens, later I would bring them to dollars, and since then, in our unfortunate state of *galus*, I have been bringing them to the Ohel.

Over the years, I had the *zechus* of bringing thousands of Jews to the Rebbe. I cannot overstate the immense impact these visits have made on them. There is nothing I could say to these people and nothing I could do, to equal the experience of being by the Rebbe. There were people who I least expected to be affected, yet they walked out with changed lives. With some I saw an immediate difference, with others it was more gradual, but nobody leaves unmoved.

In my opinion, this is the main goal of our shlichus: To connect another Yid to דורנו. **ט**

1. See Sefer Hasichos 5698 p. 251.

2. For more about that great escape, see *Derher Iyar* 5776 pg. 38.

3. See *Yemei Bereishis* p. 116.

4. For more about the shluchim's trip to Eretz Yisroel, see *Derher Sivan* 5774, pg. 32 "Transforming Tragedy."

5. See *Derher's* interview with Rabbi Leibel Alevsky in *Derher Iyar* 5778, pg.42, "My Years in 770."

6. To read a full description of Rosh Hashanah by the Rebbe, see *Derher Tishrei* 5776 pg. 20 "Rosh Hashanah with the Rebbe."

7. A similar event was related to us by Rabbi Alevsky. See *Derher Iyar* 5778 pg. 57.

8. For the full description of this event, see *Derher Tammuz* 5776 pg. 66.



Don't Just Print

In the summer of 5734, several months after the Yom Kippur War, I did an afternoon round in downtown Philadelphia. A *mekurav* of mine introduced me to his son-in-law, a young man named Danny Aleksandrovich, who had recently arrived from Eretz Yisroel. When he heard that my name was Lipsker, he was surprised. "I was a second lieutenant in the military, and during the war my brigade commander was Colonel Tzvi Lipsker..." That was my older brother.

We put on *tefillin*, and he began to tell me about the *lebedike hakafos* my brother had led on Simchas Torah, about the poignancy of lighting the Chanukah candles near the battlefield, and about the special feeling the soldiers had when they printed the Tanya in Fayid, Egypt.¹¹

I wrote to the Rebbe about our encounter, and some time later he joined me in 770 for the Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen.

During the farbrengen, the Rebbe looked at him a number of times and told him to say *lchaim*.

Later, when we passed by the Rebbe, the Rebbe told him, "I understand you were in Fayid when the Tanya was printed there." Danny nodded, and the Rebbe continued, "The Tanya isn't only supposed to be printed; you need to study it too..."

9. For more about the *shiv'as knei hamenorah*, see *Derher Iyar* 5778, pg. 48.

10. For more about Rabbi Yolles, see *Derher Nissan* 5775, pg.74 "A Tradition of Old."

11. The printing of the Tanya in Fayid was a

unique *hora'a* from the Rebbe, several years before the Rebbe announced the *mitvza* to print Tanyas all over the world. For a full overview of this *mitvza*, see *Tanya to the World*, *Derher Adar II* 5776, p. 46.



להביא לימות המשיח

It's Not About You

לזכות החתן
הרה"ת ר' ישראל שיחי' ניו
והכלה המהוללה
מרת הדסה אסתר תחי' קראסניאנסקי
לרגל חתונתם בשעתומ"צ
כ"ז מנחם אב ה'תשע"ח

נדפס ע"י הוריהם
הרה"ת ר' ראובן וזוגתו מרת אהובה יהודית
ומשפחתם שיחי' ניו

הרה"ת ר' יצחק וזוגתו מרת פערל
ומשפחתם שיחי' קראסניאנסקי



One million dollars, two million dollars, another luxury car and another five-star vacation. This is the life for someone who has worked hard and managed to take care of himself. Each dollar earned is a dollar of deserved spending. If one works hard and doesn't get to enjoy the fruits of the labor, it may seem unfair and unjust. What good is a retirement if you can't sleep a few extra hours each day?

It seems like a pretty fair deal; work hard and then reap the rewards.

But what if it means delaying the coming of Moshiach so you have time to enjoy the toil of your labor?

"We have been in *golus* for over 1900 years, don't I deserve the opportunity to relax and enjoy? Of course I want Moshiach, but can't he wait just a little longer until I have finished experiencing the pleasures I have worked so hard for?"

Sounds absurd. Indeed it is, but such a person also needs a motivation and reason with which to beseech Hashem to end this *golus*. So, the Rebbe explains, even this individual with such an absurd and outlandish

stance is addressed and answered in Torah.

At the Lag B'omer farbrengen of 5738, the Rebbe quoted a puzzling teaching of Rashbi in Gemara:

"Rashbi said: Come and see how beloved the Yidden are before the Holy One, Blessed be He. To every place they were exiled, the *Shechina* went with them. They were exiled to *Mitzrayim*... They were exiled to *Bavel*, and the *Shechina* went with them, as it is stated... So, too, when they will be redeemed in the future, the *Shechina* will be with them, as it is stated: 'Then Hashem your G-d will return your exiles.' It does not state: He will bring back, i.e., He will cause the Jewish people to return, rather it says: 'He will return,' which teaches that the Holy One, Blessed be He, will return together with them from among the various exiles."

The Rebbe asked a number of questions and a particularly strong one on the last part of the Rashbi's statement.

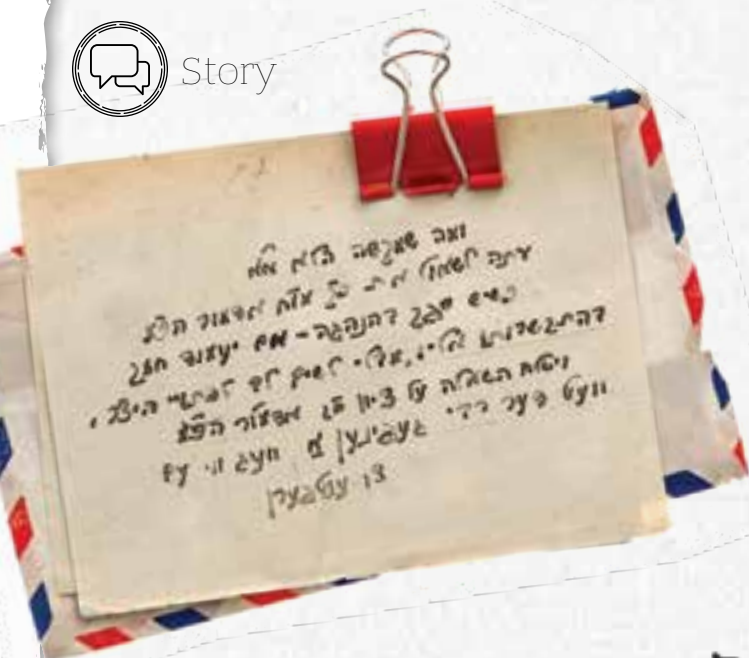
The whole *chiddush* of the *Shechina* also being in *golus* is only because the Yidden are in *golus* as well. If so,

why do we need to state that when the Yidden are redeemed the *Shechina* will also leave? Isn't it obvious? Additionally, with the proof that is cited, the question becomes even stronger. It seems as though it would have been logical to think that the *Shechina* will remain in *golus* and only with an explanation of this *possuk* do we now know that the *Shechina* will be set free when the Yidden are redeemed.

The Rebbe explains that this is all in order to address the concerns and way of thinking that we described earlier.

Such an individual who is happy and content in *golus* for the time being needs a motivation for Moshiach to come. Rashbi lets him know that even if you are okay to stay a bit longer, your delay is keeping the *Shechina* in *golus* as well, so even if you don't beg for Moshiach for your own sake, do so because the *Shechina* is suffering every moment that the Yidden are still in *golus*. **1**

(*Sichos Kodesh* 5738
vol. 2, p. 334-336)



דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

Quality and Quantity

AS TOLD BY RABBI CHAIM BORUCH OIRECHMAN (BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA)

Our shlichus in the high-end neighborhood of Puerto Madero in Buenos Aires, Argentina, began in 5765. It is the wealthiest area in the city, with skyscrapers filled with luxury condos and hotels, banquet halls, global corporate offices and international banks. Expansive parks dot the landscape and a beautiful promenade runs between the River De La Plata and the Port of Buenos Aires. La Casa Rosada—The Pink House, the executive mansion and office of Argentina's president, is located there as well.

Naturally, purchasing a building or property for a proper Chabad House is very difficult and for the first few years we operated out of a small office space. For *yomim tovim* and other events we rented halls and larger spaces, always careful not to disturb the neighbors and tourists.

As the *peulos* grew and the weekly *minyanim* attracted more people, we realized that finding a suitable home for Chabad of Puerto Madero was a top priority, and that it needed to be in a central location with easy access. Our repeated inquiries turned up the same answer: All real estate available for sale in the area were earmarked for constructing multi-storied buildings and skyscrapers. A shul or Chabad House that we envisioned was out of the question.

Among the dozens of skyscrapers, the only two-story house in the entire area caught my attention and whenever I passed it I would think to myself or mention to others that it would be perfect for our needs. But I was aware that it was wishful thinking.

One day, one of our *mekuravim* shared with me that my “dream house” belonged to the city and is designated as a historic landmark. Since it cannot be demolished, it will always stay its current size and it was currently not being used for any purpose. “We must do everything to get this house for Chabad,” he said.

During that time period, the governor of Buenos Aires was forced to resign due to a humiliating ethics scandal and his Jewish deputy, Mr. Jorge Telerman, was installed—several days before Purim—as interim governor for two years until the next election. My father-in-law, Rabbi Tzvi Grunblatt, head shliach to Argentina, and I visited Mr. Telerman on Purim and we had a spirited and warm conversation during which we mentioned our wish to secure a proper location for a Chabad House in the Puerto Madero district.

We shared with him the story of the Megillah and how Mordechai implored upon Esther to do all in her power to save the Jews by pointing out to her that “perhaps this is the reason you have been elevated to royalty...”

He understood the message very well and committed to allocating government property for the purpose of building a shul and a community center under the auspices of Chabad. We would need to gather hundreds of signatures from local residents, investors, hotel owners and others stating that use of the property by Chabad would be a great benefit for the Jewish community.

The manager of the government properties offered us two properties to choose from. The house I had been eyeing for some time was small (less than 500 square feet indoors) but was in a prime location. Another property was much larger (several thousand square feet to build on) but not in such a good location. I was unsure about how to proceed.

I wrote a detailed letter to the Rebbe describing the two locations and requested a *bracha* that I make the correct choice between the quantity of space or the quality of location. To my amazement, after sending the letter to the Ohel, government officials started contacting me about the smaller house as if we had already chosen that one over the other property and even started the necessary paperwork to allow us to begin collecting signatures.

I understood this to be a clear sign that in this case quality outweighs quantity.

After two years of intense work, during Chanukah 5768, the government allotted the property to us. To my surprise, I was notified that in addition to the two-story house, the entire property was being allocated for Chabad use. Upon seeing the official maps of the property, I realized the magnitude of the Rebbe’s *bracha* and the great miracle we merited to experience. The entire property measured over



50,000 square feet and we were allowed to build on it as we wished!

Over the years, we succeeded in constructing a larger building adjacent to the original two-story house. Five years later, in Shevat 5773, the new governor reissued the property to us and during Sivan 5777 the Congress passed legislation allocating the property for Chabad use indefinitely.

This is one of numerous examples where we see clearly how the Rebbe guides us in every area of our shlichus. The Rebbe ensured that we secure a prime location (quality) coupled with previously unimaginable ability for massive expansion (quantity)! **T**

YOUR STORY

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



לע"נ
ר' מנחם זאב בן ר' פנחס ע"ה
נלב"ע כ"ה אלול ה'תשנ"ט
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה'

נדפס ע"י בנו
הרה"ת ר' פנחס מרדכי
וזוגתו מרת הלנה אילנה נורית
ומשפחתם שיחיו
הרמן



PANIM

At the “head” of a new year just before Rosh Hashanah, Chassidim reconnect themselves with the “head” of the Jewish people, the Rebbe, recommitting our *hiskashrus* ahead of the forthcoming year. One of the ways of doing so is by writing a *pan*.¹



29 ELUL 5747, YOSSEI MELAMED VIA JEM131312



Every year on Erev Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe would stand at the door to his room and receive *panim*. This was a tradition through many generations of our Rebbeim, and the Rebbe started this in 5710, even before accepting the *nesius*.

Thousands of people would file by as the Rebbe would personally accept the *panim* and wish each passerby, "כתיבה וחתימה טובה" "לשנה טובה ומתוקה."



29 ELUL 5737, YOSSEI MELAMED VIA JEM128880





In the earlier years, the Rebbe would receive *panim* on Erev Rosh Hashanah, but from 5739 and on the Rebbe would start a few days earlier. As the years went on, *panim* in Elul would begin even earlier. Only those who weren't yet in town prior were allowed to go on Erev Rosh Hashanah.

29 ELUL 5739, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 193788

From the Chassidim's perspective, the *pan* of Erev Rosh Hashanah is considered in higher regard than the *panim* throughout the year.



29 ELUL 5749, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 223477



29 ELUL 5749, YOSSEI MELAMED VIA JEM 117756

In the year 5693, the Frieddiker Rebbe resided in Riga (after having left the Soviet Union five years earlier). The Frieddiker Rebbe's *mazkir* Reb Chatche (Yechezkel) Feigin writes of the many piles of letters arriving at the Frieddiker Rebbe's address during the month of Tishrei, noting: "[The letters are] mainly from Russia; throughout the year they are afraid [of the Soviet government and refrain from writing] but this month, they all send a *pan*".

29 ELUL 5737, YOSSIMELAMED VIA JEM 23293



29 ELUL 5742, YOSSIMELAMED VIA JEM 140012





28 ELUL 5741, LEVI FREDIN VIA JEM 199968

At the conclusion of *panim*, elderly Chassidim would gather in *Gan Eden Hatachton* to give the Rebbe a *pan kloli* on behalf of *klal Yisrael*. The Rebbe would read the *pan*, and follow with a *bracha*.

Shortly afterwards, the Rebbe would bring these *panim* to the Ohel. Many of these *panim* were brought back to 770, and the Rebbe would keep them near him under his *tallis* during the *tekios* on Rosh Hashanah.

1. See *Pidyon Nefesh*, Derher Tishrei 5775.

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.



Wedding Pictures

Dear Editors,

In connection with the article that you printed about Reb Uriel Tzimmer [“Devoted Chassid, Man of the World”, Issue 69 (146), Sivan 5778], let me share two anecdotes from *yechidusen* that Reb Uriel had with the Rebbe as I heard them from Rabbi Dovid Dubov, shliach in Princeton, New Jersey.

1) The “*malachim*,” as they called themselves, were a group of Chassidim that had a shul in Williamsburg. Their parents had been Chassidim of the Rebbe Rashab but because of their opinions on certain matters, they later veered off the Lubavitch path. They were a small group that had come from Russia in the 5600s and later, a number of them became Chassidim of the Rebbe. These included Rabbis Eliezer Zirkind, Zalman Blesofsky and others. Reb Uriel was close with the “*malachim*.”

In one *yechidus*, the Rebbe told Reb Uriel:

מען דארף זען זיי מקרב זיין, בריינגען זיי צו פארבריינגען, גישט ווייל עס פעלט מיר מענטשען ביים פארבריינגען, גאר, ס'איז א רחמנות אויף די יונגעלייט דארט.

“It would be a good idea to be *mekarev* them and bring them to the *farbrengen*, not because I need more people at the *farbrengen*, rather, it is a *rachmanus* on them [that they don't participate].”

2) As is known, in the 5710s, the Rebbe would be *mesader kiddushin* at the weddings of *anash*. When the Rebbe stopped this custom, Reb Uriel was in *yechidus* and asked the Rebbe why he was no longer doing this. The Rebbe responded:

די געלט וואס מען גיט אויס פאר פיקטשערס, קען מען אויסהאלטען א חדר אין מאראקא פאר זעקס חדשים. פארוואס זאל איך האבען א חלק אין דעם!?

“The money that people spend on pictures [at the weddings] is enough to cover the costs of a *cheder* in Morocco for six months. Why should I take part in this!?”

Yitzchak Cohen
Brooklyn, NY

”

Tzelem Elokim and a New Parnassa

Dear Editors,

Let me share an amazing story that I witnessed recently as a result of an article in your magazine.

I have a close friend with whom I learn each week for the last nine years. One of his biggest challenges is *parnassa*. He used to be very well off, but at one point he lost everything and has been struggling ever since. Although he is not currently *frum*—he has been on and off with his *frumkeit*

over the years—he is always receptive and is in to Chasidishkeit and the Rebbe.

About two months ago, I was on a flight to New York and I was reading the article about זקן פנים הדרת in the recent magazine [“Tzelem Elokim”, Issue 68 (145), Iyar 5778]. As I was reading about the Rebbe’s *brachos* to people in their *parnassa* as a result of growing a beard, it dawned on me that this is something I failed to mention to my friend all these years. It never occurred to me that maybe I should encourage him along these lines. So I decided there and then that when I returned to Florida, I will mention this to him.

The next time we got together, I brought this up and encouraged him to be more careful with the *inyan* of growing a beard. Being the person that he is, he was open to a change in this regard, at least partially.

The next week he called me and he told me that a few days earlier he had received a job offer. As he weighed the pros and cons of the offer, he decided that it was not ideal and that he would turn it down. After making the decision, he began taking concrete steps to bring his *hachlata* of being more careful with a beard to actuality. After doing that he wrote an email to the company that had offered him the job that he will be declining.

The next morning my friend got a frantic call from the company. “Did you see the email we sent you?” they asked. “No,” he responded; he had just started his day. “We really want you for the job and are offering you a much larger salary, as we feel that you will be a great asset to the company.” He took the job, and now he tells me that he sees a much brighter future with his new *parnassa*.

Mendy Boas
Aventura, Florida

”

Acharon shel Pesach Farbrengen

Dear editors,

Thank you for this month’s magazine. I’m sitting on the plane reading and enjoying it.

In the farbrengen article [“A Taste of Reality”, Issue 70 (147), Tammuz 5778] on p. 27, you list all the *yomim tovim* that the Rebbe farbrenged. It seems that you accidentally omitted Acharon Shel Pesach—the *seudas Moshiach* by the Rebbe throughout the years.

Yankee Raichik
Los Angeles, California

Correction:

In a previous edition, we published the diaries of Reb Zalmon Jaffe (*An Example From Manchester - Shavuot 5728, Derher Sivan 5778*), and failed to credit the original source of the material. The diary was compiled, published, and copyright by Reb Zalmon’s grandson, Rabbi Pinny Lew, available in the book, *My Encounter with the Rebbe*, vol. 1.

We offer our sincere apologies for the error.