

Derher

A Chassidisher

ערהער

Memalei Mekomo

THE STORIES OF
KABOLAS HANESIUS

The Lamplighter from Lubavitch

REB YITZCHOK DUBOV

**Bochurim
Remember**

והחי יתן
אל לבו

Chof Beis Shevat



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20 **Memaleh Mekomo**
THE STORIES
OF KABBALAS
HANESIUS



36 **The Lamplighter from Lubavitch**
REB YITZCHOK DUBOV

12 **והחי יתן אל לבו**
BOCHURIM REMEMBER CHOF BEIS SHEVAT

In every issue

4 **Lessons For Shevat**
DVAR MALCHUS

6 **"May We See Each Other Again"**
LEBEN MITTEN REBBE'N -
SHEVAT 5738

13 **A Question?**
KSAV YAD KODESH

30 **Reb Avrohom Chaim Rosenbaum**
THE LIFE OF A CHOSSID

32 **How Can I Connect?**
YECHIDUS

46 **The Saving Angel**
A CHASSIDISHER MAISE

47 **Dor Hashvi'i - What We're All About**
PART 2: HISKASHRUS

61 **What Came First?**
DER REBBE VET GEFINEN A VEG

65 **Yud Shevat - 5720s**
MOMENTS

71 **Derher Letters**

> The Rebbe's View
> Mitzvas Hador

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לזכות
הרה"ת ר' שלום וזוגתו מרת שרה
וילדיהם ישראל, ריסא, חי' מושקא,
אמונה מלכה, ויעקב יהודה שיחיו
אייזיקוביץ

בקשר עם יום הבהיר יו"ד שבט ויום ההילולא כ"ב שבט

Derher **Editorial**

The special inherent qualities that a *nossi* possesses are already there at the moment of his birth. The Midrash tells us that Moshe Rabbeinu was always destined and ready to be a *nossi*. “ומשה הי' רועה-מתוקן לכך.” —“And Moshe was a shepherd,” always ready and prepared for the “position” [of shepherding *bnei Yisroel*].

A *nossi*, a leader of the Jewish people is born a *nossi*... (Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayera, Chof Cheshvan 5743*).

Furthermore, the Gemara explains the meaning of the *possuk* “זרח השמש ובא השמש”—the sun shines and the sun sets”: Before the sun sets in one generation, the sun of the new generation already shines. Before the *histalkus* of the *tzaddik* of one generation, the light of the *tzaddik* of the coming generation already shines (Kiddushin 72b).

However, there were generations when the “transition” of the *nesius* to a new *nossi* was not openly apparent right after the *histalkus*. It took some time and often also what seemed like “persuasion” from the Chassidim until the *nossi* would officially accept the *nesius*.

In our generation, the story of the Rebbe's acceptance of the *nesius* is well known. On one hand, the Rebbe refused to openly accept the *nesius* for a full year, until Yud Shevat 5711*. Nevertheless, the Rebbe guided the Chassidim with care and concern, farbrenging, sending letters, and even receiving people for *yechidus* throughout the year.

In honor of Yud Shevat—the day marking the start of the Rebbe's *nesius* and the dawn of *dor hashvi'i*, we present a fascinating overview of the stories how each of the Rebbeim accepted the *nesius* of their time.

As we approach this special day of Yud Shevat, let us recommit ourselves to the mission the Rebbe gave us on this day—to finally and completely bring the *shechina* down to this world. Then we will merit, as the Rebbe concludes the *maamar*:

ונזכה זעהן זיך מיטן רבין דא למטה אין א גוף ולמטה מעשרה טפחים והוא יגאלנו!

The Editors

ט"ו טבת ה'תשע"ט



לזכות
החיילים בצבאות ה'
מנחם מענדל שיחי'
ראדא זעלדא רחל תחי'

נדפס ע"י הוריהם
הרה"ת ר' מתתיהו
וזוגתו מרת נחמה גאלדע שיחי
דעווילין



MERIT OF THE WOMEN

The ultimate heights of “*shir*” (song) will be reached with the *geula*, when the third *Beis Hamikdash* will be built, may it happen speedily. At that time, we will also have the unique advantage of joining together with all of the Yidden—the Jewish people in its entirety; across all generations. [Yidden from previous generations will be there as well,] “Those who dwell in the dust will arise and sing,” beginning with the wives of the *nesi'im* for women have a unique merit in bringing the *geula*.

The Arizal explains that the generation of the *geula* is the *gilgul* of the generation that went out of Mitzrayim. Just as *Chazal* tell us about *yeti'as Mitzrayim*, that “the Jewish people went out of Mitzrayim in the merit of the righteous women of that generation,” so it is in regard to our *geula*: it will come in the merit of the righteous women of our generation (who are the [gilgul of] the very same righteous women of the generation [of *yeti'as Mitzrayim*]).

This concept is also emphasized in the *shiras hayam* in this week's *parsha*: after the men sang *shira* with Moshe, the women sang *shira* led by Miriam. The order in which things happen in the Torah is a part of [the teachings of the] Torah. This means that the women's *shira* has a unique perfection—that's why it comes after the completion of the men's singing.

The meaning of this is as follows:

“Miriam” refers to the *merirus*—bitterness felt by the Yidden because of the *galus*. It says regarding Miriam, “His sister stood at a distance to know what would become of him.” The same is true of the Jewish people, beginning with the four *imahos* (and the three *avos*): they stand and wait to see “what will become of him”—*ad mosai, ad mosai, and ad mosai!* How long can the Jewish people be kept in *galus*!?

Their *shira* was accompanied by “tambourines and dancing” because it is specifically through their bitterness that they will go out of *galus* speedily, and the “darkness will be changed to light, and bitterness to sweetness.” Through the “bitterness,” a higher level of “sweetness” is achieved.¹

HIDDEN TREASURES

Now is the time to raise awareness about arranging *farbrengens* wherever possible on Rosh Hashana L'Ilanos, which is connected to the *shivas haminim* that Eretz Yisroel features. In these *farbrengens*, it should be explained that every Jew is an *eretz chaifetz* [“a desirable land”] and contains within himself “wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates.” These are seven methods of *avoda*. In general, each of these methods has a time and place, but every Yid has the power to rise above any limitation, and thus contain all seven at once!

This tremendous elevation affects the Yid in his mundane state, just as 15 Shevat is a mundane day.² At the same time, however, the day is unique in comparison to ordinary days, which is why a number of things that are needed



PHOTO: JEW THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 104489

BEATING THE SWORDS

One of the signs of the times of Moshiach in general, and particularly the coming of Moshiach with the true and full *geula*, is as it is written, “And they will beat their swords into plowshares... nation will not raise up a sword against another nation...”

Swords—weapons—are turned into plowshares—articles connected with agriculture; with farming the land “from whence bread comes.” We heard yesterday⁴ (during the day, and the announcement was continued earlier today) that the President announced openly that a portion of the defense budget—earmarked for weapons—would be canceled entirely. The idea was nullified “like the dust of the earth;” it was “beaten.” Instead, some of the money that was thus saved was earmarked for good things, beginning with providing food (“plowshares”). This is also connected with *parshas Mishpatim*; the nations of the world too are acting in accordance with the Torah, as human logic comprehends it.

Since “the law of the land is the law [of Torah],” the same applies to the government of the “Country of Kindness”—the United States—in which we find ourselves. True, we are in *galus*, but the *galus*, too, is in a way of kindness. When the President announces openly what he did and it is immediately accepted by all (or a majority) of the elected representatives of all the country’s citizens, men and women, Jews and non-Jews, it becomes a Torah law with all the implied legitimacy!

It is therefore clear that everyone must learn a lesson from this event, especially in regards to one’s relationship with his fellow Jew:

Even if until now one had a reason not to get along with his fellow (representing “swords”), all the more so those about whom the Alter Rebbe writes in Tanya “I hated your enemies”—at the same time there must also be “love the **creations** and bring them close to the Torah.” There is a mitzvah to love them as well because they are “creations of Hashem.”

Some amount of this (love and tzedakah amongst the creations of Hashem) exists among the nations of the world. Although it’s not part of the *sheva mitzvos b’nei Noach*, they still have an obligation to the mitzvah of tzedakah in general, as has been mentioned many times.⁵ **T**

throughout the year aren’t needed on 15 Shevat. *Tachanun* isn’t said on 15 Shevat because on this day *tachanun* isn’t needed to atone for negative things, for they have no impact on this day. *Teshuva* on this day is only done in the way that *tzaddikim* will do *teshuva* when Moshiach comes. Such *teshuva* is free of negativity; if a *beinoni* is one who “never sinned all his life,” a *tzaddik* is definitely so [meaning, his *teshuva* is surely free of any trace of sin]. This applies all the more so to someone who Torah calls a *tzaddik*, as it says, “And your nation are all *tzaddikim*,” to the extent that Hashem glorifies Himself with them, as the *possuk* continues, “[They are] my handiwork, to be prideful of.”

This is the lesson that should be taught to everyone: Even if right now the person sees only one of the “*shivas haminim*,” he should know that he has a tremendous “treasure,” which includes all seven *minim*. In that case, it would be a shame [not to make use of] such a valuable treasure. Indeed, through a small amount of effort and toil every Yid can reveal all seven *minim*, including “[date] honey,” which represents the secrets of Torah.

This should be explained to everyone, even small children, for even they can understand that they have this treasure, and must therefore use it all!³

1. *Shabbos Parshas Beshalach*, 13 Shevat, 5752.

2. I.e. not a *yom tov* on which work is forbidden etc. - ed.

3. Ibid. See also the *sicha* of 15 Shevat, 5752, in which the Rebbe explains at length each of the seven *minim* as it relates to *avodah* — *Sefer Hasichos* 5752, p. 323.

4. This seems to refer to the 1992 State of the Union Address, in which President George H. Bush announced enormous cuts in defense spending, a month after Communism had fallen in Russia.

5. 25 Shevat, 5752.



לעבן מיט'ן רבי'ן

לע"נ
מרת שרה ע"ה
בת הרה"ח יעקב אפרים הכהן
שם טוב
גלב"ע ז' אלול ה'תש"ע
ת"נ צ"ב ה'
נדפס ע"י נכדיה
הרה"ת ר' שלום דובער
וזוגתו מרת פייגא ומשפחתם שיחיו
כהן

12 TAMMUZ 5738, YOSSIMELAMED VIA JEM 131027



”מען זאל זיך זעהן נאך א מאל...”
“May we see each other again...”

SHEVAT 5738*



This account of the week of Yud Shevat 5738* with the Rebbe is based on the *yomanim* of Rabbis Lipa Brennan, Michael Seligson and Yitzchak Meir Sossover, all *bochurim* learning in 770 at the time.

MONDAY, 8 SHEVAT

Many guests arrived from around the world to be with the Rebbe for Yud Shevat. Among the guests from Eretz Yisroel were Reb Zushe “Partizan” Wilimovsky and one of the *bochurim shluchim* to

Yerushalayim, Hatomim Sholom Duchman.¹ Many of the guests *bentched hagomel* during *krias haTorah* this morning.

TUESDAY, 9 SHEVAT

The guests from Eretz Yisroel waited outside for the Rebbe, who arrived to 770 at 10:15 a.m. Seeing Reb Zushe Wilimovsky, the Rebbe smiled and told Reb Zushe to start a *niggun*. Reb Zushe began to sing together with the other *orchim*, and the Rebbe encouraged the singing with his hand. As the Rebbe entered his room, the Chassidim began a joyous dance in the hallway.

As every year on Yud Shevat, the Rebbe davened at the *amud*, and Maariv took place in the shul downstairs. Certain things were different this year (as a result of the Rebbe's heart attack on Shemini Atzeres earlier this year). The Rebbe davened in a slightly lower tone than usual. In addition, the *vaad hamesader* made sure that the Rebbe would have enough air. Every other year, large bleachers were set up so people can see and hear the Rebbe. This year, no bleachers were set up at all. Those who stood close by were able to both see and hear the Rebbe's davening but those who were further away were only able to hear but could not see.

After Maariv the Rebbe smiled to Reb Zalman Jaffe from England. The *gabbai* announced that everyone should go to the dinner benefiting Machon Chana which will be held in the "Young Israel Hall."

When the Rebbe came upstairs, he said "*Bruchim haba'im*" to Reb Yisroel Duchman for his son Sholom, who just arrived from Eretz Yisroel. The Rebbe also wished him *mazal tov* for his son Yossi who just became a *chosson*. Rabbi J.J. Hecht who heads Machon Chana was waiting for the Rebbe outside *Gan Eden Hatachton*. When the Rebbe saw Rabbi Hecht, he gave him a bottle of wine and 100 one-dollar bills as participation in the dinner. Thereafter the Rebbe left for home. The *bochurim* and *shluchim* farbrenged together in the upstairs *zal* of 770 until about 3:00 a.m.

WEDNESDAY, YUD SHEVAT

The Rebbe came to 770 at 9:15 a.m. After the quiet *shemoneh esreh*, Rabbi Leibel Groner handed the Rebbe a note saying that there was a *chosson* in the shul so there was no *tachanun*. The Rebbe looked at the note and put it in the back of his

siddur. After reciting *chazaras hashatz* the Rebbe turned around and seemed uncertain if he should say *kaddish* or *tachanun*, as he didn't see the *chosson*. When they showed the Rebbe where the *chosson* was, he said *kaddish*.

After davening everyone went to the Ohel. A special room was recently built over the place where the Rebbe stands whenever he goes to the Ohel. The room has two moving doors on either side and a window facing the Ohel so the Rebbe could drop the *panim* inside.

All of the mitzvah tanks came to the Ohel, carrying the many *bochurim* who made a stop at the Ohel on their way to *mitvzoim*. The "*tankistin*" (those who do *mitvzoim* on the mitzvah tanks) stayed at the Ohel for a short while and headed out in the tanks to various destinations with joyous *Chassidishe niggunim* blaring through the speakers. They returned to 770 in time to daven Mincha with the Rebbe.

The Rebbe came downstairs for Mincha, and noticing Dr. Ira Weiss, the Rebbe nodded to him. After Mincha Reb Zushe Wilimovsky began to sing, and the Rebbe encouraged the singing with his



THE REBBE AT THE OHEL, 29 ELUL 5738*. THE SPECIAL ROOM WAS BUILT FOLLOWING THE HEART ATTACK ON SHEMINI ATZERES OF THAT YEAR.

YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM 130655

hand. Once the Rebbe left the shul, they began to rearrange the tables for the farbrengen.

This afternoon we were notified that tomorrow the Rebbe will receive the guests for *yeichidus* in a manner similar to the way it was held after Simchas Torah (the week after the Rebbe had a heart attack). This means that the guests will pass by the door of the Rebbe's room and each person will hand the Rebbe his *tzetel*.

During the Yud Shevat farbrengens throughout the years, shluchim would come up to the Rebbe's table during the farbrengen and give the Rebbe various gifts. We were just notified that this year all the shluchim are requested to refrain from giving their presents to the Rebbe during the farbrengen and should instead give them to (the Rebbe via) the *mazkirus*.

The Rebbe came downstairs for the farbrengen at 9:00 p.m. In the first two *sichos* he spoke about the lesson we should learn from the way the Friediker Rebbe worked to spread Yiddishkeit. The Rebbe then said a *maamar Basi Legani*, primarily based on *ois ches* of the original *maamar*. In the *sicha* following the *maamar* the Rebbe spoke about the decision that was made in Eretz Yisroel to teach Arabic in the schools. The Rebbe said that people should make a tumult against it and that this will revoke the disastrous decision. In between the *sichos* the Rebbe smiled to Doctors Weiss and Resnick and motioned to many different people to say *l'chaim*. An Israeli television station came to 770 to take a video of the farbrengen. Rabbi Simcha Elberg approached the Rebbe and spoke with the Rebbe a number of times during the farbrengen.



During the farbrengen, the Rebbe announced that he would once again be sending a group of *bochurim* and *yungeleit* to Eretz Yisroel.

At the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe opened his *siddur* and requested that the *niggun Lechatchila Aribet* be sung. The Rebbe then asked to sing “*Utzu Etza*” and “*Hoshia es Amecha*” and sang along during the *niggunim*. As the Rebbe was about to leave, he smiled to Reb Yoel Kahan and told him to begin the *niggun* “*Ve’haharikosi Lachem Bracha*.”

On his way out of the farbrengen, Rabbi Flakser came over to speak with the Rebbe. Rabbi Flakser is the Rosh Yeshiva of the Gerrer Yeshiva in Eretz Yisroel and a member of the *beis din* of Agudas Harabbanim. The Rebbe requested of him to publish an ad in the newspapers in Eretz Yisroel opposing the new law of teaching Arabic in the schools.

A crowd of people waited at the entrance of 770 thinking that the Rebbe would leave for his home shortly after, but instead they were told that the Rebbe would spend the night in 770.

THURSDAY, YUD-ALEF SHEVAT

After Maariv, the Rebbe sat at the door of his room and the guests passed by for “*yechidus*.” Each person handed the Rebbe his *tzetel*. The Rebbe read some of the *tzettelach* and spoke with various people who passed by. For the most part the Rebbe placed the *tzettelach* in the box that was on the table. The Rebbe also gave a dollar to each person saying that it is “*mitzvah gelt*” for them to give to *tzedakah* in their cities.

When Rabbi Shlomo Cunin passed by, the Rebbe gave him 10 dollars and told him to do with them as he sees fit. When Rabbi Cunin got back to California he gave one dollar to each of the 10 *talmidim hashluchim* who arrived in Los Angeles a few weeks earlier.

To a number of guests, the Rebbe said, “*Men zol zich zen noch amol*—may we see each other again.” The *yechidus* lasted half an hour.

After the *yechidus* the Rebbe spoke with Reb Yankel Katz from Chicago for a half hour. Reb Yankel was by the Rebbe this past Tishrei and wanted to go in to the Rebbe for *yechidus*. At the time there was no regular *yechidus* so he could not go in, but he wrote to the Rebbe that he had two things he wanted to show the Rebbe. Now the Rebbe asked him, “Reb Yaakov, you told me that

you have two things to give me.” Reb Yankel took out a picture from his pocket and showed it to the Rebbe saying that the Rebbe knows the person in this picture very well. The Rebbe asked him who the person is and Reb Yankel answered that it is the Rogatchover. The Rebbe stood up from his place and said, “*Ich hob em gekent! Ich fleg bai em araingain un aroisgain!*—I knew him! I used to visit him frequently!” The Rebbe then added that it is apparent from this photo that his face changed considerably in his later years.

Reb Yankel then took out a tape recorder and began to play a recording of a person singing. The Rebbe said, “*Dos iz Reb Michael Dvorkin. Men zol dos mefarsem zain bepirsum hachi gadol*—This is (the voice of) Reb Michael Dvorkin. This recording should be publicized as much as possible.” The Rebbe asked Reb Yankel if he could have the picture of the Rogatchover, and Reb Yankel gave the Rebbe both the picture and the tape.

The Rebbe didn’t go home tonight either, rather staying in 770 (there was a fierce snowstorm outside).

The Rebbe stood up from his place and said, “Ich hob em gekent! Ich fleg bai em araingain un aroisgain!—I knew him! I used to visit him frequently!”

FRIDAY, 12 SHEVAT

We were just notified that the Rebbe will farbreng this Motzei Shabbos. There is also a *chasuna* taking place on Motzei Shabbos so the farbrengen was called for 6:30 p.m, earlier than the regular time. The Rebbe wrote to the *chosson* and *kallah* that they need not worry about the farbrengen taking away participants from the wedding, since the farbrengen will be a short one.

Later in the afternoon, we were notified about another surprise: the Rebbe will wash for bread and give out *kos shel bracha* at this farbrengen as well!² (Being that it was already so close to Shabbos, it was too late to order *challos* for the participants.)

The Rebbe davened *Kabbalas Shabbos* with the *minyán* of the *bochurim* in the small *zal* at 8:00 p.m. Many of the *orchim* were also present. After



davening ended, the Rebbe motioned to Reb Zushe Wilimovsky as if to say, “Nu? What are you waiting for?” at which point Reb Zushe broke into a song with the Rebbe encouraging the singing with his hand.

After davening ended, the Rebbe motioned to Reb Zushe Wilimovsky as if to say, “Nu? What are you waiting for?”

MOTZEI SHABBOS, YUD-GIMMEL SHEVAT

A rather joyous farbrengen began after Shabbos at 6:30 p.m. The *challos* were set up in front of the Rebbe’s place and the Rebbe cut and partook from one of them.

The Rebbe turned to Rabbi Mentlik and said that since Rabbi Teleshevsky who usually makes the announcements is not here, Rabbi Mentlik should announce about everyone washing their hands for bread. With a shaky voice, Rabbi Mentlik started making the announcement, but the Rebbe was unsatisfied. “*Mit’n gantzen nusach!*” the Rebbe said, “Make the announcement with the whole *nusach!*” The Rebbe then turned to Rabbi Piekarski, “You are a neighbor (of Rabbi Teleshevsky),³ so make the announcement in his stead.”

During the course of the farbrengen, the Rebbe asked Rabbi Groner to bring the bottles of *marshke* from his room to be distributed. The Rebbe gave *l’chaim* and bottles to the *menahel* of the Chabad *mosdos* in Tzfas, Reb Leibel Kaplan, and to Reb Zushe Wilimovsky as representative of Colel Chabad in Yerushalayim. The Rebbe told him that he should hold on to the bottle until the shluchim to Eretz Yisroel are chosen. The Rebbe also gave bottles to Reb Zalman Shimon Dworkin as a representative of the Kotel here in Brooklyn, to Reb Shlomo Cunin from Los Angeles and to Rabbi Gutnick from Australia, referring to him as “*Hakohen michatzi kadur hatachton mitzafon ledarom*” (—the Kohen covering the entire Lower Hemisphere, from north to south.)

The Rebbe also told Reb Yankel Katz to say *l’chaim* on a full cup. The Rebbe blessed Rabbi Gutnick that he should have “*Hatzlacha meruba* infinitely more than until now.” The Rebbe added, “You think that I am satisfied?! You should know

that I am *not* satisfied!” Rabbi Gutnick said that he hopes he will be able to give the Rebbe more *nachas ruach* the next time around to which the Rebbe replied, “*Halevai!*”

The farbrengen ended at 8:30 pm. The Rebbe led the *bentching* and then distributed *kos shel bracha*. This *kos shel bracha* was far more joyous than any other. The Rebbe clapped a lot to the *niggunim*, asking numerous times that people should whistle and he whistled himself as well. During the distribution, the Rebbe gave the second *challa* from the farbrengen to the above-mentioned *chosson* for his *chassuna* tonight!

The Rebbe poured a large cup for Rabbi Shusterman from Chicago to pass on to Dr. Ira Weiss. The Rebbe also gave a large cup to Rabbi Sholom Ber Hecht for a member of his shul in Queens.

Rabbi J.J. Hecht was not present at the beginning of *kos shel bracha*. The Rebbe asked where he was, and when he arrived the Rebbe called him over and spoke with him. The Rebbe poured him a full cup for the *chasuna* taking place tonight. There were a number of other people who also spoke with the Rebbe during *kos shel bracha*. One of them was Mr. Aryeh Naor, Cabinet Secretary of the Knesset.

A large number of *bochurim* didn’t go by to receive *kos shel bracha*. One of the doctors also mentioned that the Rebbe isn’t feeling so well. *Kos shel bracha* ended at 9:15.

Before leaving, the Rebbe announced about a *bracha acharona*, adding that everyone should get some rest in order to be well energized in time for the next farbrengen. Everyone realized that the Rebbe was implying that there would be a farbrengen on Chamisha Asar B’Shevat as well, and so it was.

SUNDAY, YUD-DALED SHEVAT

A member of the *hanhala* in Morristown asked Rabbi Groner if the *bochurim* should travel back to yeshiva today; Rabbi Groner replied that he can’t give a definitive answer and that it could result in a waste of *Yiddishe gelt*. From his response it was understood that there will be a farbrengen on Chamisha Asar B’shevat.

Today the Rebbe sent out a *tzetel* saying that whoever wishes can sign up to be part of the third group of shluchim to Eretz Yisroel (which the Rebbe announced on Yud Shevat). Only those



who are willing to go on a shlichus for two years to sit and learn studiously without any distractions should sign up. The *mazkirus* office was filled with people all day and many people signed up for this special shlichus.

MONDAY, CHAMISHA ASAR B'SHEVAT

The Rebbe went to the mikvah and then set out for the Ohel accompanied by Dr. Lev.

Rabbi Groner instructed the *vaad hamesader* to set up the tables for a farbrengen, at which point it was clear that a farbrengen will undoubtedly take place.

After Mincha, Rabbi Hodakov entered the Rebbe's room and upon exiting, he announced that Maariv will be followed by a short farbrengen. In middle of the farbrengen, the Rebbe asked that the *tankistin* come up to the *bima* and the Rebbe will give dollars to each *tankist* to distribute to the participants of the farbrengen.

Towards the end of the farbrengen the Rebbe asked for a few different *niggunim* to be sung and the Rebbe's face was very serious during the singing. The Rebbe then began to sing "*Tzama Lecha Nafshi*." After singing the words "*Kein bakodesh chazisicha*" the Rebbe said a few words which were indecipherable by the crowd. The second time around though the Rebbe sang the words the way they are written in the *possuk*. The Rebbe left the farbrengen to the *niggun* "*Ufaratzta*," encouraging the singing with much vigor. ①

1. He was among the shluchim sent by the Rebbe to Eretz Yisroel in 5736. More about this later on in this article. For an extensive account of this special shlichus, see Derher Adar 5778, "The Historic Mission: The Shluchim to Eretz Yisroel."
2. Usually, the Rebbe gave out *kos shel bracha* only four times a year at the end of *yom tov*.
3. Or perhaps the Rebbe's intention was: since Rabbi Piekarski is sitting next to Rabbi Mentlik, he should make the announcement.



TISHREI 5738, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEV 21730

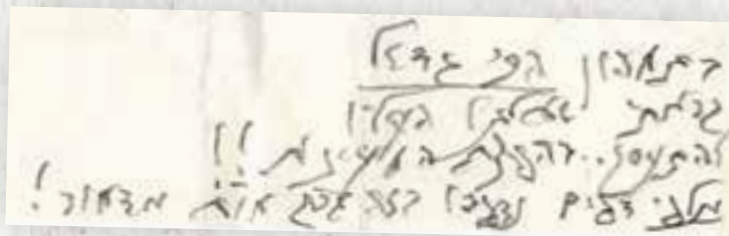


כתב יד קודש

לע"נ
אבינו הרה"ח הרה"ת
ר' יוסף מנחם מענדל
ב"ר יצחק ע"ה
ולע"נ אמנו מרת זיסל דבורה
בת ר' אלי' הכהן ע"ה
טענענבוים
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה'

A Question?

The following is part of a response from the Rebbe to an individual who wrote (amongst other things) that he had been successfully active in *hafatzas hamaayanos* in another neighborhood in Brooklyn, but he felt dejected at times because his reports to the Rebbe did not all get answered in writing:



With the **greatest** astonishment I read your question, about whether you need to be active with... *hafatzas hamaayanos*!!

Thousands of pages have been printed from my father-in-law, the Rebbe [affirming] in this regard!

(21 Cheshvan 5749*; Published by Vaad Hanachos B'Lahak)

בתמהון הכי גדול קראתי שאלתו העליו
להתעסק... בהפצת המעינות!!

אלפי דפים נדפסו בזה מכ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר!

לזכות
הו"ח א"א נר"נ
ר' יואל ראובן שיחי'
דרו
לרגל יום הולדתו השבעים לאורך ימים
ושנים טובות
יום הבהיר יו"ד שבט ה'תשע"ט
נדפס ע"י בתו וחתנו
הרה"ת ר' צבי גרשון
וזוגתו מרת דבורה לאה
ובנם מנחם מענדל שיחיו
פלברבוים



MEMMALEH MEKOMMO

The stories of *kabbalas hanesius*

What defines a Rebbe? Is he a *tzaddik*? A *baal mesiras nefesh*? A *rav*?

One of the Rebbe's early letters discusses this topic. The answer, the Rebbe writes, is none of the above. A Rebbe could include all of these descriptions, but that is not his defining term. A Rebbe is a *nossi hador*, the leader of the generation. He is "*lev kol kehal Yisroel*"—the heart and focal point of all the Yidden in his times; the intermediary who elevates the Yidden and connects them with the *Aibershter*.

Every Rebbe is different. A quick perusal of the *maamarim*, *sichos*, and letters of each of the Rebbeim shows a vast difference in style. The Mittlerer Rebbe is known as *rechovos hanahar* (widely flow of a river¹) due to his long and detailed explanations of Chassidus; the Tzemach Tzedek is known for his combination of Chassidus with *nigleh*; while the Rebbe Rashab is called the Rambam of Chassidus, for his systematic approach to *nistar*.

The styles of leadership and circumstances were also different. The Alter Rebbe dealt with teaching deeper elements of Torah to the Yidden; the Mittlerer Rebbe sought to find jobs for his Chassidim; while the Friediker Rebbe battled to keep basic Yiddishkeit alive.

The periods of the *kabbalas hanesius* of the Rebbeim has always been a fascinating subject. Witnessing the passing of the torch from one generation to the next was always an extraordinary and intense experience for everyone who witnessed it. At times, many months or even years could pass before the next Rebbe fully accepted the *nesius*.

Yet, the Rebbe explained on numerous occasions, there is really no gap between the *histalkus* of one Rebbe and the ascension of the next. Although there were times that the new Rebbe didn't immediately agree to become Rebbe, and many months could have passed before he would begin reciting *maamarim* or accepting *panim*, the *nossi hador* existed nonetheless. Being a Rebbe isn't a job description that necessitates doing something specific. All of his actions are merely an extension of who he is by simply existing—the *nossi hador*.

In terms of Chassidus, a Rebbe is *ma'or*, or *etzem*. While *giluyim* change with time and circumstances, the *etzem* always remains the same. Thus, the Rebbe explained, all the Rebbeim are really one united entity. A common saying of the Rebbe was that a *memaleh makom* is a real term. The term is freely translated as "successor," but the literal meaning is "the one who fills the place." Each Rebbe fully and completely filled the place of all his predecessors, and added another component of his own. Each Rebbe is a manifestation of all the Rebbeim before him, and through our *hiskashrus* to our Rebbe, we connect with all of the Rebbeim—all the way back to the Baal Shem Tov.

The Rebbe would also add that, in line with the dictum of *maalin bakodesh*—everything in holiness must grow—this *etzem* and *ma'or* also grows constantly, and therefore each Rebbe added his own unique contributions and additions.

In honor of Yud Shevat, the day our Rebbe became Rebbe, we present a short description of the *kabbalas hanesius* of each of the Rebbeim.

FROM BODY TO SOUL

THE BAAL SHEM TOV

RESTORED REPLICA OF THE BAAL SHEM TOV'S SHUL IN MEZIBUSH.

The story of the Baal Shem Tov's "*kabbalas hanesius*," or, better said, his *hisgalus* (revelation of his greatness), takes place with the backdrop of terrible times for the Jewish people.

Born only 50 years after the horrors of *Tach V'tat*, when hundreds of thousands of Yidden were slaughtered by Ukrainian Cossacks, the Jewish community was in tatters. People were miserably poor, barely eking out a minimum to live; all of their time and energy was expended on procuring food for their next meal.

The spiritual state was no better. The *lomdim* remained closeted among themselves, occupied with their personal spiritual pursuits, while the simple and ignorant were deemed unworthy of their attention. Generations of Jews—although devoutly pious—were raised to feel

secondary and unimportant due to their ignorance.²

It was due to this situation that the Baal Shem Tov revealed himself on Chai Elul 5494*, when he was 36 years old.

His previous 10 years had been spent under the tutelage of the *novi* Achiya Hashiloni, who would teach him Torah. Achiya had begun their studies by teaching him Parshas Bereishis on Chai Elul 5484*, and upon concluding the entire Torah, the revelation took place.³

From age 22, the Baal Shem Tov had been part of the *Chevraya Kaddisha*, a society of hidden *tzaddikim* who sought to better the welfare of their fellow Jews. This group was, in essence, the forerunner to Chassidus. At one point, its leader, Reb Adam Baal Shem, gave over the reigns of the secret leadership to the Baal

Shem Tov, and by the time the Baal Shem Tov was 33, Reb Adam began to urge him to reveal himself. He wrote to the Baal Shem Tov that Eliyahu Hanavi had revealed to him that his time for revelation had arrived.⁴ After three years, his efforts were successful.

After the revelation, the work of the *Chevraya Kaddisha* changed dramatically. Previously, their work had been primarily "to help the Jewish body"—they dealt mainly with the simple folk, encouraging them and helping them, but after the Baal Shem Tov revealed himself, they began to focus on the *talmidei chachamim* as well, bringing them the warmth of Chassidus.⁵

THE HEAVENLY ENTOURAGE

THE MEZRITCHER MAGGID

THE OHEL OF THE MEZRITCHER MAGGID, IN ANIPOLI.

When the Baal Shem Tov was *nistalek* on Shavuot 5520*, after 26 years of leadership, the bereft Chassidim naturally turned to his son, Reb Tzvi, for guidance. Initially, Reb Tzvi accepted the mantle of leadership, and he began to follow in his father's footsteps.

However, the Baal Shem Tov's *talmidim* were worried.

The mounting pressures on the new movement necessitated a leader who could properly nurture and defend it from the *misnagdim* who were constantly seeking to delegitimize it; someone who was blessed with a strong character.

The answer came on the Baal Shem Tov's first *yahrtzeit*, when the *Chevraya Kaddisha* came to Mezhibuzh and gathered around the table of Reb Tzvi throughout the Yom Tov of Shavuot.

During the *seuda* of the second day of Yom Tov, after concluding his Torah, Reb Tzvi stood up and announced:

"Today, my father appeared to me and said, 'The heavenly entourage that always accompanied me has moved today to accompany the holy and awesome Reb Berenyu ben Reb Avraham. Therefore, pass the leadership to him in the presence of the entire *Chevraya Kaddisha*. He should sit in my place, and you, my son, should sit in his. Know that you will be successful; *u'pi shnayim b'rucho* (double the spirit of his predecessor).'"

Saying this, Reb Tzvi turned to the Maggid, wished him *mazal tov*, and gave him his cloak and his place.

The Maggid seated himself at the head of the table, and the *Chevraya Kaddisha* immediately stood on their feet, ready to hear Torah from their

new Rebbe. The first Torah was on the *possuk* "*Mar'eihem u'maaseihem*," which was later printed in *Torah Or Parshas Yisro* (in the style of Chassidus Chabad).

Within a short period of time, the centers of Chassidus throughout Europe were reenergized. Originally, the news had spread that the Baal Shem Tov's work was falling apart, but now the efforts to spread Chassidus doubled and tripled, with the Maggid's *talmidim* spreading far and wide. The Maggid set up his *talmidim* in places where he knew they would have maximum influence, and Chassidus even made significant inroads in the *misnagdishe* strongholds of Lithuania.⁶

CHASSIDUS CHABAD

THE ALTER REBBE



The Mezritcher Maggid passed away on Yud-Tes Kislev 5533*, almost 13 years after the *histalkus* of the Baal Shem Tov.

Following his passing, all of his *talmidim* returned to their hometowns where they began to lead the local Chassidim, while the Maggid's senior *talmid*, Reb Mendel Horodoker, was viewed as the primary leader of Chassidus. However, there was a general consensus among the *talmidim* that one person should be appointed as the head of the *vaad* to energetically defend Chassidus from the *misnagdim* and to actively lead the campaign to spread Chassidus. The person chosen to head the *vaad* was the Alter Rebbe.

The Alter Rebbe had already begun formulating his special brand of Chassidus, called Chassidus Chabad, before the Maggid's *histalkus*. Now, he

returned to his hometown of Liozna and founded a *cheder*—a place for superior *talmidim* to gather and study Torah in an organized fashion—unlike the *yoshvim* that existed in Chassidic centers until then. Streams of Torah scholars gathered to Liozna and became the founding nucleus of the Alter Rebbe's Chassidim. He would also travel throughout the area (often with Reb Mendel Horodoker) to visit the *batei midrash* and bring the light of Chassidus to their *lomdim*.

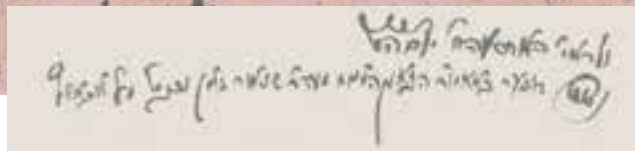
A few years later, in 5536*, the Mezritcher Maggid's *talmidim* held another *asifa*, where it was decided that Reb Mendel Horodoker would journey to Eretz Yisrael. His position as *nossi* of the Chassidim in Lithuania and White Russia was to be filled by the Alter Rebbe.⁷

Even then, the Alter Rebbe always deferred to Reb Mendel Horodoker as the final authority. In letters, the Alter Rebbe often mentions “Rabboseinu in Eretz Yisroel,” and for all intents and purposes had accepted him as his Rebbe. It was only when Reb Mendel Horodoker passed away 12 years later that the Alter Rebbe agreed to remain the final authority of Chassidus.

The first *maamar* that the Alter Rebbe said when openly accepting the *nesius* over Chassidus Chabad was on the verse “*Gadol Hashem u'mehulal me'od b'ir Elokeinu*.” (This fact was said by the Rebbe in the name of the Frierdiker Rebbe, but they didn't clearly explain if it was referring to the time after the *histalkus* of Reb Mendel Horodoker or perhaps a time before then.)⁸

EACH GENERATION TO ITS OWN

THE MITTELER REBBE



SIGNATURE OF THE MITTELER REBBE.

The Alter Rebbe passed away on Chof-Daled Teves 5573*, while on the road fleeing from Napoleon and his army (see “The Battle of Good vs. Evil,” Derher Teves 5779). The Mittler Rebbe was in Kremenchug at the time, where the Alter Rebbe had sent him to see if they could settle there.

Upon notification about the *histalkus*, the Mittler Rebbe began a journey to rejoin the family and Chassidim. This journey spanned several months, and the Mittler Rebbe stopped off in many cities and towns where he spoke Chassidus and accepted the local Chassidim for *yechidus*. Many Chassidim requested that the Mittler Rebbe stay in their town, but he ultimately decided to settle in the town of Lubavitch.

During the lifetime of the Alter Rebbe, the Mittler Rebbe had been appointed to fulfill numerous tasks for his father. When he was just 16 years old, he was appointed to guide the younger Chassidim, and later, some four years before the Alter Rebbe’s *histalkus*, the Alter Rebbe began sending Chassidim to him when they had questions in *avodas Hashem* (with the Alter Rebbe himself only answering questions on material matters).

Before receiving people, the Mittler Rebbe would enter the Alter Rebbe’s room for a short while, and if someone requested a *bracha*, he would

return to consult with the Alter Rebbe on that specific issue.

The Alter Rebbe also tasked the Mittler Rebbe with saying Chassidus; he would recite his father’s *maamarim*, with additional explanations in his own specific style (more on this later). There were instances when the Alter Rebbe and the Mittler Rebbe would both say a *maamar* on the same Shabbos! Sometimes, the Alter Rebbe himself would listen in to these recitals.

After the Alter Rebbe’s *histalkus*, many Chassidim felt that it was only natural that the Mittler Rebbe assume the *nesius*. However, some Chassidim felt that the *nesius* should be passed on to a *talmid* of the Alter Rebbe, not a biological son, just as had occurred after the passing of the Baal Shem Tov and the Maggid. (It should be noted that the Maggid’s son, Reb Avraham Hamalach, passed away shortly after his father’s *histalkus*.)

Those Chassidim chose to follow Reb Aharon Strasheler, who had been the most prominent of the Alter Rebbe’s *talmidim*, and whose style closely resembled the Alter Rebbe’s, unlike the Mittler Rebbe, who had a unique style.

There are two extant letters of prominent Chassidim answering these claims; one from Reb Yehudah Leib, the younger brother of the Alter Rebbe, and the other from Reb Pinchas Reizes of Shklov.

Reb Yehudah Leib related a story:

Once, the Alter Rebbe heard that the Mittler Rebbe had revealed something in one of his *maamarim* that the Alter Rebbe wouldn’t have allowed to be made public. The Alter Rebbe’s reaction was, “What can I do? *Dor dor dorshav*, each generation has its teachers. Perhaps his generation has reached a level where they are worthy of it.”

Reb Pinchas Reizes related another story, which highlights this idea even more clearly:

Four years earlier, when the Mittler Rebbe’s daughter married Reb Yaakov Yisrael Cherkasser, the son of Reb Mottel Chernobiler, the Alter Rebbe had called Reb Pinchas and the Mittler Rebbe into a room and closed the door.

He explained that being that the Mittler Rebbe’s entire life is dedicated to spreading Chassidus and teaching and guiding the Chassidim, he requests that Reb Pinchas see to it that after his passing the *pidyonos* be given to the Mittler Rebbe and no other.

“Upon hearing his words, we were both deeply frightened and we remained deathly silent, for we understood the implication of his words. The Rebbe would be taken from us; he was wanted in the heavenly realms.

“...Due to the recent circumstances, I feel obligated to publicize these words.”⁹

A PROOF FROM TORAH

THE TZEMACH TZEDEK

Following the passing of the Mittlerer Rebbe, on Tes Kislev 5588*, the leading Chassidim held a meeting, where they decided to crown the Mittlerer Rebbe's son-in-law and nephew, the Tzemach Tzedek, as the new Rebbe. They publicized their choice to all of the Chassidim, far and wide.

A delegation of Chassidim, including Reb Hillel Paritcher, Reb Aizik Homiler and Reb Peretz Chein, were dispatched to the Tzemach Tzedek to tell him about their decision. To their consternation, the Tzemach Tzedek refused to accept the *nesius*.

The uncertain state of affairs continued until Pesach of that year. Then it was decided that the issue would be resolved during Shavuot, when many of the prominent Chassidim were due to visit Lubavitch.

Shavuot was quickly approaching, and no progress had been made.

When asked, the Tzemach Tzedek said they should turn to the Alter Rebbe's son Reb Chaim Avraham or the Mittlerer Rebbe's son Reb Nochum.

On Erev Yom Tov, Reb Peretz Chein gathered a *minyan* of Chassidim, including Reb Aizik Homiler, and they paid a visit to the Tzemach Tzedek. When he once again refused to accept the mantle of leadership, Reb Peretz exclaimed, "The Rebbe's (i.e. the Alter Rebbe's) grandson must be the Rebbe. And I have a proof from Torah that you are the one:

"The *possuk* says, איש מזריע תחלה (when the man seeds first, a female will be born), which refers to your mother (Rebbetzin Devorah Leah, the Alter Rebbe's daughter) and אשה מזרעת תחילה יולדת זכר (when the woman seeds first, a male will be born), referring to you."

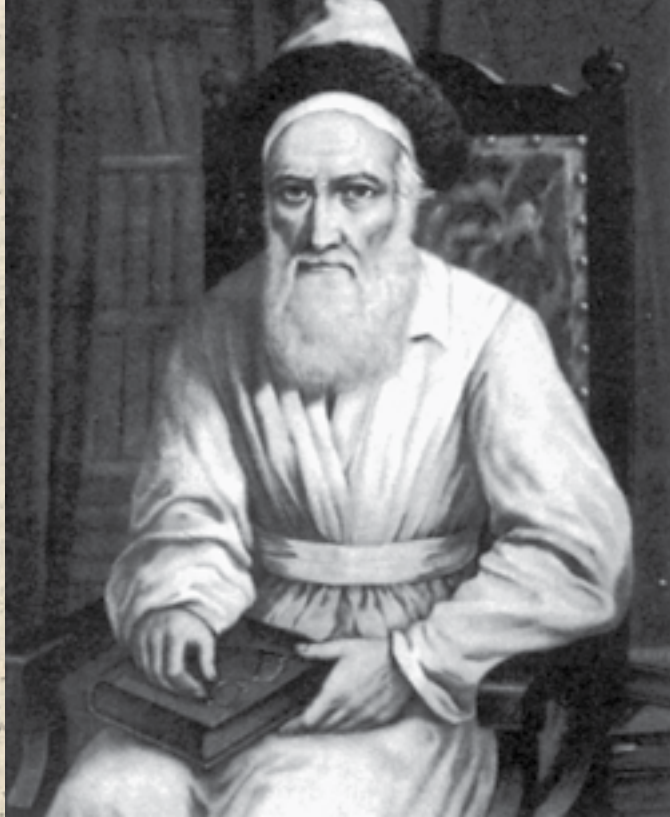
Hearing these words from Reb Peretz, the Tzemach Tzedek leaned his

head on the cushion and went into a *dveikus*. Reverently, the delegation of Chassidim left the room.

Some time later, the Tzemach Tzedek left his room garbed in a white *sirtuk* and a white *shtreimel*, which he had inherited from the Alter Rebbe, and entered the large *beis midrash* of the Mittlerer Rebbe, and he recited the *maamar* "*Al shloscha devarim*."

When he concluded the *maamar*, he returned home, while the Chassidim broke into a joyous dance, celebrating their new Rebbe.

The elder Chassidim decided to encourage the younger folk to become *mekushar* to the Tzemach Tzedek. To do so, they each committed to travel around during the upcoming year, and they divided among themselves all of the Chassidishe communities. Reb Hillel Paritcher traveled to Cherson, Reb Aizik Homiler to Shklov, Mohilev, Zhlobin, and Homil, and other Chassidim took up postings as well.¹⁰



KEHOT PUBLICATION SOCIETY

THE FIRST MAAMAR.

As a young child, the Tzemach Tzedek's mother passed away, and the Alter Rebbe took responsibility for the upbringing of the young orphan. Often, Chassidim would see the Tzemach Tzedek running around the room with his toy tefillin fashioned from potatoes, and the straps would become tangled around the legs of the Alter Rebbe's table. The Alter Rebbe would bend down and free the straps, and the Tzemach Tzedek would continue playing.

Once, a select group of Chassidim entered the Alter Rebbe's room to hear a *maamar*. One youngster among them was Reb Aizik Homiler. The Alter Rebbe began to recite the *maamar*, and, intently concentrating on the Rebbe's words, Reb Aizik suddenly felt movement near his legs. Looking down, he saw the Tzemach Tzedek pushing his way through the crowd.

Reb Aizik bent down and whispered, "Reb Mendele..."

The Alter Rebbe abruptly stopped the recital, and interjected.

"*Loz em, er hert, du vest vissen az er hert*. Leave him be, he is listening; you'll know [one day] that he is listening."

And the Alter Rebbe continued the *maamar*.

Many years passed. The Alter Rebbe, and then the Mittlerer Rebbe, were *nistalek*, and Reb Aizik was now one of the elder Chassidim, beseeching the Tzemach Tzedek to accept the leadership.

When the Tzemach Tzedek finally agreed and recited the first *maamar*, Reb Aizik trembled when he heard the opening words. The *maamar* was the same as the one he had heard from the Alter Rebbe so many years earlier, "*Al shloshe devarim*."

"*Loz em, er hert, du vest vissen az er hert*," the Alter Rebbe had said, "Leave him be, he is listening; you'll know that he is listening..."¹¹

NO REVELATIONS

THE REBBE MAHARASH

About half a year before the Tzemach Tzedek's *histalkus* on Yud-Gimmel Nissan 5626*, he instructed his youngest son, the Rebbe Maharash, to begin saying Chassidus. This may have come as a surprise to many of the Chassidim. The Rebbe Maharash was the quietest of the Tzemach Tzedek's seven sons. While others, such as the Maharil, were well known to the Chassidim, the Rebbe Maharash had never taken an active part in leading Chassidim or demonstrating his talents and knowledge in Torah.

Along with the Tzemach Tzedek's instructions came a message for the Chassidim: "אליו תשמעון, כאשר שמעתם אלי, Listen to him, just as you have listened to me."

Another letter of the Tzemach Tzedek, this one directed to the Rebbe Maharash himself, also seems to be from that period of time. In it, the Tzemach Tzedek writes that he had read the Rebbe Maharash's Chassidus, and that it was good in his eyes. "Ani somech os'ha b'smicha rabbah," ("I offer

you ordination with great joy") the Tzemach Tzedek writes, and includes many *brachos* in the letter.¹²

After the *histalkus*, many Chassidim didn't know which of the Tzemach Tzedek sons to turn to, and many visited each one separately. One account tells of a Chossid who davened each day in the presence of a different brother to witness their unique *avoda*.

The Chossid related that the Maharil was known for his *hispa'alus* during davening; once he began davening, he would lose track of time and space and would pace around the room davening slowly, totally oblivious to the fact that he was the *chazan*. Once, he agreed to be tied to the *amud* to help him remain aware of his surroundings, but even then, he simply dragged the *amud* around the room.

Another brother, the Maharin, was known for his intense crying. Everyone participating in his *minyán* would be swept along in his tears; no one would be able to retain their

composure. When a few young Chassidim decided to pinch each other so that they wouldn't cry, nothing changed. The first *yungerman* began to cry, and when they pinched him, it only strengthened his sobs. Soon enough, everyone was crying along with him.

The Rebbe Maharash's *minyán* was entirely different. His davening was simple; no cries, no ecstasy, no length. The only thing they noticed was that before *Ashrei* and *Uva L'tziyon*, he would pull his tallis over his head and do something.

A certain young Chossid brazenly peeked under the tallis to see what he was doing, and the Rebbe Maharash flicked his nose. The *yungerman* later told his friends, "While I did get a flick, I also got to see what he was doing." The Rebbe Maharash was changing his head tefillin from Rashi to Shimusha Rabba.¹³

During that period, most of the Tzemach Tzedek's sons began saying Chassidus, and Chassidim went from



A MANUSCRIPT OF A MAAMOR OF THE REBBE MAHARASH.

one son to another to try to decide whom to accept as a Rebbe.

One Friday night, the Rebbe Maharash said the *maamar*, “*Az Yashir... Ali Be’er*.” The next day, Shabbos morning, his brother the Maharil repeated the *maamar* with an addition of his own. On Motzei Shabbos, the Rebbe Maharash repeated the *maamar* with an addition of his own. This repeated itself a number of times, until Tuesday evening, when the Rebbe Maharash said the *maamar* for the fifth time, again adding something new. With that, the Maharil came to him and said, “This time, our father said it, and I don’t want to stand up against father.”

One of the young Chassidim at the time, Reb Shmuel Gronem Esterman, went to consult with Reb Shmuel Ber Barisover, a distinguished Chossid, regarding whom he should accept as Rebbe. Reb Shmuel Ber advised him as follows:

“We cannot distinguish between the Rebbe’s sons, since they are all *tzaddikim*, and so I cannot advise you.

What I can say is I will travel to the youngest son [the Rebbe Maharash].”

Rabbi Shmuel Ber explained why.

“I was recently in Lubavitch. The Tzemach Tzedek said Chassidus, and among other things, he referred to something that seemed to contradict the *sefer Eitz Chaim*. I thought about this and found no solution.

“On Motzei Shabbos, I went to one of the Tzemach Tzedek’s sons and presented this question. He began to explain it to me, but I didn’t accept his answer. I went to a different son and presented my question, and he said it was a strong question and began to resolve it; but for some reason his explanation also didn’t sit well with me...

“Suddenly, I saw that the house of the youngest son was lit up. I said to myself, ‘I’ll go to him and ask him my question.’

“I peeked through the window and noticed to my excitement that he was studying the very passage in *Eitz Chaim* that had bothered me. I tried opening the door, but it was locked.

“Who’s there?’ He asked.

“Shmuel Ber,’ I answered.

“Just one second.’

“When he opened the door, I saw only newspapers spread across the table.

“Yes, Reb Shmuel Ber, how can I help you?’

“I told him that I had a question on the *maamar* that had been said on Shabbos.

“He looked at me and said, ‘Reb Shmuel Ber, they say you are a smart man. Why are you coming to me about this?’

“I told him, ‘I saw that you were studying *Eitz Chayim* a moment ago. If you don’t help me, I will tell everyone what I saw.’

“Hearing that, he began to smile, and we spent the rest of the night in discussion.”¹⁴

THE EMPTY SEAT

THE REBBE RASHAB



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASSIDEI CHABAD

The Rebbe Maharash passed away on Yud-Gimmel Tishrei 5643*, after 14 years of *nesius*, when he was only 48 years old. The Chassidim felt especially bereft, taking into account that the Rebbe Maharash's children were still quite young; the Rebbe Rashab was 22 years old, and the youngest child, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, was just eight years old at the time.

The first *maamar* the Rebbe Rashab recited was on the second day of Sukkos, titled “*Kesser yitnu lecha*.” Although we know the *dibbur hamaschil*, no known transcript of the *maamar* exists. The Rebbe Rashab continued saying Chassidus, doing so once again on Shabbos Chanukah, and he would also accept *panim* to be read at the Rebbe Maharash's Ohel; however, he still refused to accept the *nesius*. During the year of *aveilus*, he closeted himself in the *yechidus* room of the Rebbe Maharash, where he davened, ate, slept, and studied, and he refused to answer Chassidim or guide them.

When the next Tishrei approached, many Chassidim were doubtful if they should travel to Lubavitch for Yom Tov at all. Reb Shmuel Gronem Esterman related that he brought his doubts to Reb Avraham Zhembiner,

who had been a Chossid of the Tzemach Tzedek, and he told him in no uncertain terms that he should travel to Lubavitch as always.

As the years passed, not much changed. The Rebbe Rashab would sometimes answer questions, but still refused to accept the *nesius*, and spent much of those years traveling out of the country for health reasons and for *askanus haklal*. The numbers of Chassidim visiting Lubavitch dropped drastically during those years, and that period of time has been remembered as “*churban Lubavitch*.”

Seven years later, in 5650*, a slight change became evident. The Rebbe Rashab stopped his long journeys and remained in Lubavitch, where he began to accept Chassidim for *yechidus*. However, his official position remained the same. In shul, the Rebbe Maharash's place—to the south of the *aron kodesh*—was still unoccupied, and the Rebbe Rashab continued sitting in his regular seat, two seats down—after the seat of his older brother, the Raza.

Over the next few years, the flow of Chassidim to Lubavitch began to grow once again, where they would come hear Chassidus from the Rebbe Rashab and enter for *yechidus*. In the summer of 5652*, two weddings took

place in *beis harav*; the Rebbe Rashab's sister Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka married Reb Moshe Horenshtein, and his brother Reb Menachem Mendel's wedding took place as well. Thousands of Chassidim streamed to Lubavitch for the occasions.

For Tishrei of 5653*, which coincided with the tenth *yom hillula* of the Rebbe Maharash, many hundreds of Chassidim arrived. The shul was packed to the rafters, and many were left to daven outdoors. The Rebbe Rashab said two *maamarim* on Rosh Hashanah, and the Chassidim reviewed them throughout the three-day Yom Tov. That Rosh Hashanah was a turning point; Chassidim felt that the sun had begun to shine once more, and the long wait was finally over.

It took one more year for the last vestige of “not accepting the *nesius*” to change. On Erev Rosh Hashanah 5654*, the Rebbe Rashab spent a long time at the Ohel of the Rebbe Maharash and the Tzemach Tzedek. Later that night, upon entering the shul for Maariv, the Rebbe Rashab walked right past his usual place, and took the place of his father, the Rebbe Maharash. The long wait of 11 years was finally over.¹⁵

FACING AMALEK

THE FRIERDIKER REBBE



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASSIDEI CHABAD

When the Rebbe Rashab was *nistalek* on Beis Nissan 5680*, Russia was in deep turmoil. Four years earlier, during World War I, the Rebbe Rashab had fled Lubavitch due to the approaching German army, and had settled in the city of Rostov.

When the war finally came to an end, a vicious civil war broke out in Russia. The Czar was overthrown, and the Bolsheviks and the anti-Bolsheviks fought bitterly for control over the country. With the state of war came extreme danger for Yidden throughout Russia. With no law enforcement to control the streets, anti-semites vented their frustrations freely on any Jew they caught, and roaming the streets became a deadly venture for the Jewish community. News traveled very slowly, and it took many months for the Chassidim to hear about the Rebbe Rashab's *histalkus*.

As the Bolsheviks consolidated their control over vast areas, they immediately began implementing their Communist agenda, and gatherings were outlawed, private assets were seized, and religion as a whole was persecuted.

The continuation of Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim, the life-work of

the Rebbe Rashab and the Frierdiker Rebbe, was in dire peril. The *yeshiva* was scattered in different locations, and financial support was non-existent.

It was in this climate that the Frierdiker Rebbe began his *nesius*.

In his will, the Rebbe Rashab commanded the Frierdiker Rebbe to continue leading Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim, and also to teach Chassidus (i.e. say *maamarim*) and advise Chassidim and guide them. Fulfilling the Rebbe Rashab's wish, the Frierdiker Rebbe recited his first *maamar* before the conclusion of the *shiva*. The event is described in *Ashkavta D'Rebbi*, written by Rabbi Moshe Dovber Rivkin:

"It was after Mincha on Shabbos Parshas Tzav, the last day of the *shiva*. The Chassidim were all waiting for Maariv in the dining room near the study of the Rebbe Rashab, and the Rebbe *shlita* [the Frierdiker Rebbe] was in the study alone. One of his

attendants called for me, and as soon as I entered he said with a broken heart: 'My father, after all, ordered me to speak words of Chassidus to *anash*. But who am I, and how can I bring myself to stand in front of the Chassidim and deliver *maamarim*?'

"In his humility, he wanted to continue, but I interrupted him by saying that I would rather not hear further words in this vein.

"He continued: 'Nevertheless, since my father gave me an order, I would like to deliver a *maamar* of Chassidus for you. In that way I will have fulfilled my father's holy instructions.'

"I of course agreed. He did not want to be seated; instead, we walked about in the study, and he recited for me the last *maamar* that the Rebbe of blessed memory delivered publicly—the *maamar* that begins, "*Reishis Goyim Amalek*." The wording was identical to that of the original *maamar*, except that he interspersed many explanations of his own.

“When it came to an end and I was about to leave, he held me back for a moment and asked me not to reveal to anyone what had transpired.

“‘Why not?’ I asked. ‘In fact, I would very much like to let people know,’ and so on.

“He earnestly repeated his request and I remained silent. When I left the study, however, I shared my information ‘as a secret’ only with the elderly chassid, Rabbi Shmuel Gurary. Since he had not been ordered to keep it a secret, he promptly passed it on. Within a few minutes, by word of mouth, the news had spread throughout the whole of the Chassidic brotherhood, to whom it served as a measure of consolation.”¹⁶

Similar to the Rebbe Rashab, the Frierdiker Rebbe spent much of the first year after his father’s *histalkus* closeted in the Rebbe Rashab’s *yechidus* room. From time to time he would send out fiery letters to the Chassidim, encouraging them to remain strong and to dedicate their lives to keeping Yiddishkeit alive. During those months the Frierdiker Rebbe began planning the network of *chadarim*, *yeshivos* and underground Jewish institutions that would keep Yiddishkeit alive in the Soviet Union over the next 70 years.¹⁷

The fight for Yiddishkeit began in full swing. Once, while the Frierdiker Rebbe was davening Shacharis at the *amud*, a group of policemen burst into the room to arrest him. Keeping his cool, the Frierdiker Rebbe told them to return when he was finished davening, and then he accompanied them to the police station. It was during this “warm encounter” that the Frierdiker Rebbe said his famous statement that “the little toy” (i.e. the gun lying on the table) can frighten a person with one world and many gods, but not someone with one G-d and two worlds.

THE SEVENTH IS BELOVED

THE REBBE

Following the Frierdiker Rebbe's *histalkus*, Chassidim's eyes turned towards the Rebbe in the hope that he would agree to be *memaleh makom*. However, the Rebbe adamantly refused to accept the *nesius*, insisting that the Frierdiker Rebbe continues to lead the Chassidim.

Yet when *anash*, and especially *temimim*, approached the Rebbe to ask his holy advice, the Rebbe would reply to their queries. Even when pressed to give advice on material matters, the Rebbe would say his opinion, adding that the advice did not come with the title of "Rebbe" attached.

Nevertheless, Chassidim began to pressure the Rebbe to formally accept the *nesius*. In letters, and one-on-one, the Rebbe always refused to change his *hanhaga* from before the *histalkus*. "I didn't hear anything from the *shver*," the Rebbe once said.

Nonetheless, changes did happen. In Iyar, the Rebbe began accepting people for *yechidus* with a *gartel*, and on Lag B'omer, the Rebbe accepted *panim* to be read at the Ohel. On Chai Elul, the Rebbe wrote a *michtav klali* for the first time, addressed to world Jewry—yet another indication that the Rebbe was willing to accept the *nesius*.

The new year's beginning brought with it much positive change. On Simchas Torah, when the Rebbe received *Chosson Bereishis*, the *gabbai*, Reb Berel Chaskind had the courage to call up the Rebbe with the title "*Adoneinu Moreinu V'rabeinu*." This was the first time that the Rebbe had been called to the Torah this way publicly, and everyone present was filled with emotion.

In general, from the beginning of the new year (5711*), many signs pointed to the Rebbe's willingness to accept the *nesius*.

- The Rebbe established a schedule for *yechidus*, receiving people three times a week—



A NEWSPAPER REPORT OF THE LEVAYA OF THE FRIERDIKER REBBE.

Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday nights, starting at 8:00.

- From Simchas Torah onward, the Rebbe was called to the Torah as "*Adoneinu Moreinu V'rabeinu*."
- On *yomei d'pagra*, the Rebbe always farbrenged.
- Also during this time, the Rebbe authorized the official establishment of "*Va'ad L'hafatzas Sichos*."

On 26 Teves, articles appeared in the New York Jewish newspapers reporting that the Lubavitcher Chassidim had crowned a new Rebbe on the 24th of Teves, and that the official acceptance of leadership would soon take place on Yud Shevat. When

the Rebbe saw this, he instructed Rabbi Hodakov to have the elder Chassidim contact the newspapers' editorial staff to deny the previous reports.

Rabbi Kazarnovsky, Rabbi Jacobson and Reb Shmuel Levitin entered the Rebbe's room and begged him to reconsider. Reb Shmuel argued that the newspapers had not written that the Rebbe had accepted the *nesius* but rather that the Chassidim had accepted the Rebbe as their leader, something that could not be denied. In the end, the Rebbe agreed not to contact the newspapers.

When Yud Shevat finally approached, many Chassidim felt that

the Rebbe would finally accept the *nesius*.

Following Shacharis, Reb Meir Ashkenazi presented the Rebbe with a "*ksav hiskashrus*" on behalf of all the Chassidim, and he asked the Rebbe to take on the *nesius* in order to hasten Moshiach's arrival. The Rebbe

responded, "Yes, but you must see to help me out."

While at the Ohel, the Rebbe was given a *pan kloli* addressed to the Frieddiker Rebbe, asking him to ensure that the Rebbe accept the *nesius* and have success in his role as Rebbe. Initially, the Rebbe refused to read it,

but when he finally did so, he shed bitter tears.

The Rebbe entered the farbrengen that night at 9:45 p.m. About an hour into the farbrengen, Reb Avraham Sender Nemtsov stood up and announced, "Everyone wants to hear a *maamar*. The *sichos* are good and



fine, but we want to hear Chassidus.” The shul fell completely silent. All eyes locked onto the Rebbe’s holy face. The people waited, their hearts trembling with excitement and anticipation.

It was 10:40 PM; the Rebbe opened the Friediker Rebbe’s *maamar* and began, “In the *maamar* that the Rebbe

distributed on the day of his *histalkus*, he begins with *Basi l’gani...*” Then, the Rebbe began to speak in the tune of a *maamar*.

Excitement spilled over in 770. People began pushing. And then a deep hush descended on the room and the Rebbe continued the *maamar*. The

Rebbe spoke about the *avoda* of *dor hashvi’i* and cried profusely. When he completed *se’if gimmel*, he said, “We will now take a break and say *l’chaim*.”

Rabbi Nemtsov jumped up onto the table and cried out, “We must say *Shehecheyanu*. Hashem has helped us: we have a Rebbe!” He then recited the *bracha* of *Shehecheyanu* with Hashem’s name and all present responded with a thunderous “Amen.” The Rebbe smiled and asked Rabbi Nemtsov to come down from the table. Following the *maamar*, Rabbi Nemtsov, in the name of the Chassidim blessed the Rebbe—in honor of the *nesius*—with *banei, chaye, umezonei*, and everyone again answered, “Amen.”

At 12:55 a.m., the Rebbe initiated the singing of *ki v’simcha*, and left the shul. The Chassidim continued to sing the *nigun* as they danced with great joy for a long while. T

1. See Igeres Hakodesh siman 15.
2. Sefer Hatoldos Rabbi Yisrael Baal Shem Tov, p. 3.
3. Ibid., p. 41.
4. Ibid., p. 37.
5. Ibid., p. 4.
6. Hatomim, p. 140-142.
7. Sefer Hatoldos Admur Hazaken, vol. 2, p. 303.
8. Sefer Hatoldos Admur Hazaken, vol. 1, p. 252.
9. Otzar Sipurei Chabad vol. 16, p. 19-22.
10. Otzar Sipurei Chabad vol. 6, pp. 104-8. With corrected details from Reshimas Hayoman pp. 247-9.
11. Reshimas Hayoman, pp. 247-9.
12. Sefer Hatoldos Admur Maharash, pp. 13.
13. Otzar Sipurei Chabad vol. 8, p. 6.
14. Ibid., p. 8-10.
15. Sefer Hatoldos Admur Harashab, p. 26-35.
16. Translation by Sichos in English, “An End to Evil, Reishis Goyim Amalek.”
17. Otzar Sipurei Chabad vol. 11, p. 126.



The Life of a Chossid

Reb Avrohom Chaim Rosenbaum

Born: Circa 5600*

Passed away: 25 Kislev 5675*

Chossid of: The Tzemach Tzedek, Rebbe Maharash, and Rebbe Rashab

Born in the town of Pleshznitz, in the Minsk region, around 5600*, Reb Avrohom Chaim Rosenbaum was a Chossid of three Rebbeim: The Tzemach Tzedek, Rebbe Maharash, and Rebbe Rashab. A *lamdan* in *nigleh*, *maskil* in Chassidus, and *mehader b'mitzvos* to the tee, Reb Avrohom Chaim was beloved and respected by his fellow townspeople, due to his wisdom and many talents. When sitting with *anash*, they would drink in his every word. He was also fluent in several languages including Russian and German, gaining him access to government officials, for the benefit of the Yidden. After the *mashpia* Reb Hendel Kugel moved from Pleshznitz to Lubavitch, Reb Avrohom Chaim assumed a leading role in guiding the local Chassidim.

Tehillim B'dveikus

Once, as the Tzemach Tzedek was davening Shacharis in a locked room, Reb Avrohom Chaim noticed the chimney sweeper's ladder leaning against the outside wall. After climbing the ladder and leaning near the opening of the chimney, he could hear the Rebbe chanting in a sweet tune: הודיעני ה' קצי ומידת ימי מה היא, אדעה מה חלל אני¹. His bliss was abruptly cut short, as he heard Rebbetzin Rivkah shouting: "Have you no shame? Where are you climbing? You've never witnessed a Yid davening?" Needing no further prompts, Reb Avrohom Chaim quickly took off. The *tenuah*, however, stayed with him for the rest of his life, and he would always recite the *possuk* with that tune.²

The Rebbe's Tallis

When one of the *shadarim* received a tallis from the Tzemach Tzedek that the Rebbe himself had worn, Reb Avrohom Chaim resolved to acquire it. Once he bought it, however, he wore it only once, for Kol Nidrei. After that, the

mere thought of wearing it would cause him to tremble. He decided that he would only wear it after 120... Yet several years later he wrote in his will that he fears being buried in a tallis that's not really his, in the world of truth. Instead, he sent the tallis to the Rebbe Rashab.

Hiskashrus

Immediately following the Tzemach Tzedek's *histalkus*, the Chassidim of Pleshznitz accepted the Rebbe Maharash's *nesius*. Reb Avrohom Chaim was very much *mekushar* to the new Rebbe and would often travel to Lubavitch.

Clever Wit

Following a Pesach that Reb Avrohom Chaim spent in Lubavitch, the Rebbe Maharash embarked on a trip to Petersburg to deal with pressing government matters. The Chassidim accompanied the Rebbe for the first leg of his trip. When they reached a frozen river, the Rebbe asked that the Chassidim check whether the ice could support a wagon. Reb Avrohom Chaim was the first to rush across the ice, and upon returning, wittingly told the Rebbe: "Don't rely on the fact that we were able to safely cross the river; after all, *chazal* say that where *ba'alei teshuva* stand, *tzadikim gemurim* cannot..."

Amused by his words, the Rebbe Maharash took the cake the Rebbetzin had baked for the way, ate some, and handed the rest to Reb Avrohom Chaim.

Town Commissioner

In the town of Pleshznitz lived both Chassidim and *misnagdim*, and they did not always get along. Initially, the Chassidim did not have a shul of their own, despite many attempts to open one. Their opponents would not hear of it, to the point that they weren't even able to rent a house in which to daven, thus forcing the Chassidim to attend the *misnagdim's* shul, which was quite unpleasant.

Now, in the town there was a Jewish commissioner of sorts who had government authority to issue passports, permits, and other legal documents. After much effort, the Chassidim succeeded in having Reb Avrohom Chaim appointed to that position. At long last, the Chassidim were finally able to build their own shul.



REB AVROHOM CHAIM ROSENBAUM.

Imprisonment

Not wanting to waste his time in the government office, Reb Avrohom Chaim delegated most of his responsibilities to his Jewish assistant. Included in that was the authority to sign documents in his name. In an effort to exempt local Jewish boys from the military draft, the assistant signed false papers. When one of his adversaries caught wind of this, he promptly informed on Reb Avrohom Chaim, leading to his, as well as his assistant's, arrest.

After awaiting trial for a year, Reb Avrohom Chaim was sentenced to two years' labor in a prison camp in Smolensk. Initially he faced trying labor conditions. It was only after the Rebbe Rashab dispatched his brother, Raza, to intercede with local officials, that Reb Avrohom Chaim's predicament changed for the better. Ultimately, he gained their respect to the point that the jailer would release him on furlough at every *yoma d'pagra*, to farbreng with the local Chassidim. On their part, Smolensk's Chassidim greatly enjoyed these Chassidishe farbrengens.

So great was his *hiskashrus* that as his sentence was nearing its end, Reb Avrohom Chaim requested his family's permission to travel straight to Lubavitch upon his release. His troubles were far from over, however. Soon after returning home, the *misnagdim* informed on him once again, and a new case against him was in the works. Luckily, the investigator, who was his friend, secretly informed Reb Avrohom Chaim that he was set to be arrested the day after Simchas Torah. Reb Avrohom Chaim dared not share this information with anyone else, instead, he held a grand

לע"נ
שד"ר רבותינו נשיאנו
הרה"ח הרה"ת
ר' מנחם שמואל דוד הלוי ע"ה
רייטשיק
נלב"ע ח' שבט ה'תשנ"ח
תנ"צ'ב'ה'
נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו

farbrengen on Simchas Torah for all the Chassidim. When night fell, Reb Avrohom Chaim vanished from the town, as if the earth had swallowed him. After leaving Russia, Reb Avrohom Chaim sojourned in several European cities. Ultimately, he was forced to settle in New York with his wife and two children.

Continued Hiskashrus

Once there, he received a letter from the Rebbe Rashab encouraging him to arrange set times to study Chassidus with his fellow *anash*. When his brother, a *shadar* for Tomchei Tmimim, visited him in America, Reb Avrohom Chaim assisted in raising funds and sent letters to the Chassidim extolling the yeshiva's greatness, encouraging all to give generously. Reb Avrohom Chaim would also gift the Rebbe Rashab with *seforim* and *kisvei yad*. Before his passing, Reb Avrohom Chaim instructed his children to send \$1,500 to the Rebbe Rashab.

Reb Avrohom Chaim left behind many Torah manuscripts spanning from *halacha* and *dikduk*, to *hashkafa*, Kabbalah, and Chassidus.

This article is based on the sefer Toldos Avrohom Chaim, published by Kehos, which, together with his biography, includes his chidushei Torah. ❶

1. Tehillim 39:5
2. Niggun 13 in Sefer Haniggunim

Quick Facts

- During his imprisonment, Reb Avrohom Chaim wrote a letter almost entirely in Aramaic, due to fear of censorship!
- In Pleshznitz, Reb Avrohom Chaim owned a store that sold manufactured goods. In America, he dealt in diamonds and jewelry.
- After winning a lottery in the United States, Reb Avrohom Chaim sent a fifth to the Rebbe Rashab. He then received two letters from the Rebbe, thanking him, and advising him how to invest the money.



HOW CAN I CONNECT?



**RABBI SHMUEL
LEW**

Rabbi Shmuel Lew is a shliach of the Rebbe to London, England, where he serves as headmaster of the Lubavitch Girls' School and a mashpia to many.

13 SHEVAT 5720*

In advance of his 20th birthday—Rabbi Lew merited a yechidus with the Rebbe. The following day, he sent in his transcript of the yechidus, asking the Rebbe to remind him of what he may have omitted due to the late hour of the yechidus. The Rebbe made a number of additions and corrections, which are shown in parentheses:

The Rebbe: Regarding what you wrote¹: try to think about it as little as possible. Recite the beginning of *perek mem-alef* of Tanya by heart, until the word “*hamelech*” on the following page. There it speaks about Hashem standing over the person and examining his innards and heart, [to observe] whether he is serving Hashem properly. It would be better that it be recited word-by-word; from time to time you should say it verbally, or at least in thought.

You are the one who brought Chassidus into your house—Chassidus Chabad and Chassidus in general. You had a connection to Chassidus, afterwards your brothers went to Camp [Gan Yisroel] and your mother was *niskarev* (etc.), so your behavior will be reflected in the house—they will see what Chassidus can accomplish.

The main thing is that you should think these idle or forbidden thoughts as little as possible. When such a thought falls into your mind, remove your mind from it; don't fight it. Think about (a concept in Torah or even, *lehavdil*) about the weather or politics; as long as it's not those thoughts. Pick up a Likkutei Dibburim or another *kuntres* or *sefer*, and the thoughts will go away on their

own... See to it that you recite the beginning of *perek mem-alef* of Tanya by heart.

Regarding your birthday: You should ask for an *aliya* on the Shabbos of your birthday. On Erev Shabbos you should give *tzedakah* before Shacharis and Mincha. On the Shabbos of your birthday you should learn extra Chassidus on whichever subject you like.

May Hashem bless you until then, and afterwards, in Torah-study and observing *mitzvos* scrupulously. May Hashem increase His blessings to you many times over and grant you success. You will see that it's not as hard as you imagine it to be.

I had asked the Rebbe whether he was answering both of my questions. The Rebbe said:

([It's an answer to] all of the things we discussed).



13 SHEVAT 5721*

Rabbi Lew relates: “I entered yechidus with my tzetel as well as that of my mother, who was concerned about weakness in my eye and wanted to know whether perhaps it would be good to seek medical care.” Once again Rabbi Lew asked the Rebbe to remind him of what he may have omitted due to the late hour of the yechidus, and once again the Rebbe made a number of additions and corrections.

The Rebbe: Regarding your eyes: See a specialist—Dr. Castroviejo²—who just returned to New York, for a diagnosis, to clarify the various opinions in ophthalmology.³

Dedicated In honor of
my wife
Rivka ריבקה
And my children
Menachem, Laya, Bayla, Devori,
Nechama, and Yossi מנחם, לאה, בילה, דבורה,
נחמה, ויוסי
By **Danny Fishman**

“Regarding *hiskashrus*: The way to accomplish this is... to learn what I learn... I learn *nigleh* and Chassidus.”

Regarding your [unwanted or forbidden] thoughts: you should know the beginning of *perek mem-alef* by heart as I told you before, and learn several *perakim* of *mishnayos* and Tanya by heart, which you should review in your mind when you're walking down the street, or between *sedarim* in *nigleh* and Chassidus, and in your free time. A little bit of light dispels much darkness.

Regarding “disturbing” thoughts: remove your mind from them. Removing your mind means not to think about it. Instead, think about something else; thinking about Torah is ideal. If that's not possible, think about something else, so long as you don't think about the unwanted or forbidden thoughts.

Regarding davening: Your *hisbonenus* should be in whatever will give you the most *chayus*; whether it's the *maamar* you studied before davening, or the meaning of the words of davening. The main thing is that it should be with alacrity. (The Rebbe also clarified that the *maamar* in which to contemplate in does not necessarily need to be a *maamar* learned that day.)

Regarding what you write that everything is missing *emes*⁴: The first step is to do the things; even if they're not done with *emes*, they still have to get done. The Gemara and the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch rule that it must be done even without the proper intent. Later, when you become accustomed to doing it, the proper intent will follow.

Regarding *hiskashrus*: The way to accomplish this is as it is written in Hayom Yom, and to learn what I learn. It says in Tanya that this unification is wondrous and unrivaled. Of course, you must learn *Chitas* and, most importantly, keep the *sedarim* of *yeshiva* so well that it will influence others

too. You should have a fixed study schedule in *nigleh* and Chassidus; it doesn't matter what [you learn specifically within *nigleh* and Chassidus]. As it says in Likkutei Torah *parshas Bamidbar*, the difference between Torah and *mitzvos* is that each *mitzvah* corresponds to a specific limb in the body, while Torah is likened to the blood which is everywhere in the body equally. If you learn Torah, it will affect your entire body [thus it doesn't matter what you learn specifically].

Regarding your birthday: you should write [to me] sometime beforehand. You should get an *aliya* the Shabbos before your birthday. On your birthday you should give *tzedakah* before Shacharis and Mincha and learn extra *nigleh* and Chassidus. These things must be done even without the proper intent, for it is one of the deceptions of the *yetzer hara* to think that one shouldn't do something if it's not with the proper intent. The truth is that by doing it without the proper intent, you will end up doing it with the proper intent. May it be with alacrity.

Rabbi Lew asked the Rebbe: “The Rebbe said that I should learn what the Rebbe learns.”

The Rebbe answered: I learn *nigleh* and Chassidus.⁵ **T**

1. “I asked about thought, speech, and action which are idle or forbidden, and about davening.” - Rabbi Lew.
2. Dr. Ramon Castroviejo (1904-1987) was a renowned Spanish and American eye surgeon.
3. Rabbi Lew notes that he scheduled an appointment for 12 Nissan, for the doctor was unavailable earlier than Adar.
4. I.e. not doing things for the proper reason.
5. Printed in “*Osef Yechiduyos*” — Teshura Vigler-Lew, Adar I, 5763.

לע"נ
 חיה מוסיא ע"ה בת יבלחט"א
 הרה"ת ר' משה הלוי שליט"א
 לוי
 נלב"ע י"ט טבת ה'תש"ס
 ת"נ צ'ב"ה

נדפס ע"י אחיה
 הרה"ת ר' שלום דובער
 וזוגתו מרת רבקה רחל
 ומשפחתם שיחיו
 לוי

ESSEL EYEWEAR

The Lamplighter from Lubavitch

REB YITZCHOK DUBOV

Reb Yitzchok Dubov is remembered amongst the most distinguished Chassidim of *dor hashvi'i*.

From his childhood in Lubavitch to his involvement in the Rebbe's *hachtara*, Reb Yitzchok was always dedicated to the Rebbeim above and beyond the expected.

A Chassidisher Derher would like to thank Rabbi Dovid Dubov, Shliach to Princeton, New Jersey, for sharing with us his vast knowledge about his grandfather's life. The first part of this article is based on his interview.



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ליובאוויטש
770 איסטערן פארקוויי
ברוקלין, נ.י.

ב"ה, ימי הסליחות, ה'תשס"ו
ברוקלין, נ.י.

הרב [הרה"ח הו"ח אי"א נר"נ כו'
מו"ה יצחק שי']

THE REBBE ADDS THE TITLE
[הרב הגאון] הרה"ג
TO REB YITZCHOK, DATED SELICHOS 5716.



Years of Bliss

Reb Yitzchok Dubov was born in a small town named Yokshitz near Babroisk in 5647*. From a young age, his father would bring him along on his trips to Lubavitch, and on one such trip, he decided to leave young Yitzchok to study in the *cheder* there. He was a young child of nine or ten years old at the time.

From that day until his marriage, Reb Yitzchok had the merit to be in constant and close proximity to the Rebbe Rashab and Frierdiker Rebbe. Even during his younger years when he was too young to understand the *maamarim* of the Rebbe Rashab, he was profoundly impacted by his presence.

Young Yitzchok and his *cheder* friends would often spend their breaks standing unobtrusively behind the Rebbe Rashab's wall. The structure was thin and sounds easily carried through, so the children were able to listen to the Rebbe Rashab's davening, which was often conducted at great length, accompanied by many *dveikus niggunim*. (Once, as they were standing there in the bitter cold, Rebbetzin Rivkah shooed them back indoors.) On one occasion, Reb Yitzchok later recalled,¹ the Rebbe Rashab spent 45 minutes reciting just from the word *echad* until the end of *Baruch sheim!*

At the age of 14, Yitzchok joined Yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim. Six blissful years passed for Reb Yitzchok in the yeshiva, studying *nigleh*, Chassidus, and davening under the tutelage of the legendary *marshpi'im* Reb Shmuel Gronem Esterman and Reb Michael Blinner.

He excelled in his studies, and as a product of Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim, was a considerable *gaon* in both *nigleh* and Chassidus by the time of his marriage. Later on, he would receive *semicha* from the Rogatchover



REB YITZCHOK IN HIS YOUNGER YEARS AS RAV IN RIGA.

Gaon, and when the Frierdiker Rebbe lived in Riga in 5688 (תרפ"ח), the Frierdiker Rebbe told members of *beis harav* that, "*Alle shaalos zol men fregn by Reb Yitzchok*, all halachic inquiries should be referred to Reb Yitzchok."² The Frierdiker Rebbe once referred to him as "*Mibechirei talmidei Lubavitch*, one of the best students of Lubavitch."³

In addition to his Torah scholarship, Reb Yitzchok was an *oved* and a powerful *baal tefillah* and *baal menagen*, and a member of the Rebbe

Rashab's choir. He retained many of the *niggunim* he learned in Lubavitch, and in many cases, was the only link transmitting those *niggunim* to Chassidim of our day.

Alef Beis and Likutei Torah

As a *bochur*, Reb Yitzchok had the opportunity to see the Rebbe on two occasions, when he visited Nikolaev, the town where the Rebbe was born.

The first time was in 5663*, when the Rebbe was a year-and-a-half old.

During that visit, he held the Rebbe on his lap, and opened a *siddur* with him, showing him the *alef-beis* in a playful manner.⁴

The second occasion was just a few years later, in 5668*. Reb Yitzchok was a close friend of Reb Asher Nikolayever's son, Shmuel. One time while they were in Nikolayev, Reb Asher visited the Rebbe's father, Horav Levi Yitzchok, and he brought his son and Reb Yitzchok along. As they approached the house, they were greeted by a surprising scene. Reb Levik was sitting on his lawn with the Rebbe, age 6, and his brother Reb Berel, age 3, reading the *chassidishe parsha* in Likutei Torah to them. Reb Asher asked incredulously, "You are teaching them Likutei Torah? Do they actually understand?"

"Ask them," the Rebbe's father responded.

To their utter disbelief, the Rebbe repeated the entire column of the *maamar* Reb Levik had been teaching...⁵

Escape

In 5671*, Reb Yitzchok married and accepted a Rabbinic post in Penza. Over the next 11 years, he served as *rav* in several Russian cities.

One story about his *rabbanus* demonstrates Reb Yitzchok's strong character:

Reb Yitzchok once received a *shaila* regarding an animal's *kashrus*. The *shochet* felt that there were grounds to disqualify the animal, but the butcher feared a major loss, and threatened to slander Reb Yitzchok to the government if he ruled against him.

This was no empty threat. Nonetheless, Reb Yitzchok picked up a handful of the animal's innards and threw it at the butcher.

Fearing retribution, Reb Yitzchok fled to Lubavitch, where Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah gave him a room in the Rebbe Rashab's home. While

lodging there, Reb Yitzchok overheard Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah retell the story to the Rebbe Rashab, and the Rebbe Rashab said a complimentary comment with a smile, expressing his *nachas* from the fearless conduct of a Lubavitcher *tomim*.⁶

His final post was in a Russian city bordering Latvia. Those were the early days of Communist oppression, yet Reb Yitzchok wasn't deterred from administering to his community.

One day in 5682*, while in a back room of his home, he heard a knock at the front door. Listening closely, he heard a police officer ask the person who opened the door if Yitzchok Dubov was home. Immediately, he jumped out the back window and hid in a barn for several days, while the secret police combed the city searching for him. After the Soviets lessened their surveillance, several of his dedicated congregants managed to smuggle him over the border into Latvia.

In the Free World

For the next seven years, Reb Yitzchok lived in Riga. There, he served as the *rav* of the "Russian minyan."

In 5687*, Reb Yitzchok had the opportunity to be involved in the Frierdiker Rebbe's release from Soviet Russia. It was shortly after Yud-Beis Tammuz and Chassidim understood that the Frierdiker Rebbe was still in grave danger and needed to leave the Soviet Union immediately.

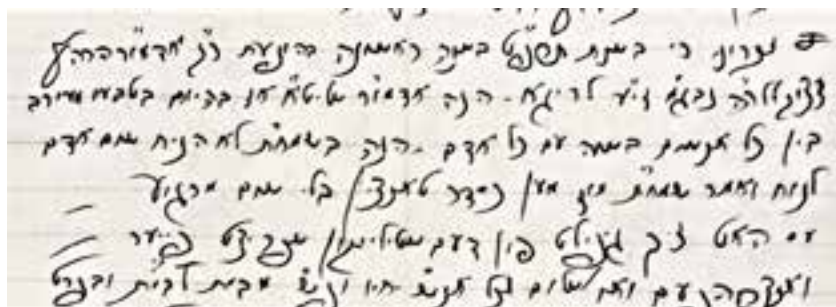
Reb Mordechai Dubin, a Chossid and prominent member of the Latvian parliament, was leading the rescue efforts in Riga. He attempted to arrange a visa for the Frierdiker Rebbe to immigrate to Latvia but was faced with various challenges. At one point, he had an idea to have all the local *rabbanim* invite the Frierdiker Rebbe to serve as their chief rabbi. Reb Yitzchok was the one who made it happen. From morning to evening, he ran from one *rav* to the next, requesting, cajoling and convincing them all to sign the letter. Ultimately, their efforts bore fruit and the Latvian government agreed to issue this visa.

With the Frierdiker Rebbe now in Riga, Reb Yitzchok merited to be in close proximity to him regularly, and even served as the *rav* of *beis harav*. During that period of time, he also became close with the Rebbe. They would often speak in learning together, and the Rebbe showed a great friendship towards him.

He spent the entire Tishrei 5689* together with the Rebbe. In a letter about that month, he described how the Rebbe did not allow anyone to rest on Simchas Torah.

"The Rebbe displayed a pleasant disposition and communicated with everyone. But when Simchas Torah came, he didn't allow anyone to rest, declaring, 'On Simchas Torah, one needs to dance continuously, with no respite!'

"It felt as though the quiet one was spouting fire (see image)."⁷



REB YITZCHOK'S DESCRIPTION OF SIMCHAS TORAH 5689* WITH THE REBBE IN RIGA.

"PLEASE SEND
REGARDS TO
YEDIDEINU
HAGADOL, OUR
GREAT FRIEND, THE
RAMASH SHLITA."

Throughout the coming years, although he lived far away, he maintained a constant correspondence in Torah learning with the Rebbe. When his son learned in New York, he wrote to him, "Please send regards to *yedideinu hagadol*, our great friend, the Ramash *shlita*" (this was before the *histalkus* of the Friediker Rebbe). In fact, one of the scholarly letters written by the Rebbe in the "Teshuvos U'biurim" section of Kovetz Lubavitch,⁸ a deep treatise on the concept of tefillin, was written to Reb Yitzchok.

In one letter from the later years, the title for Reb Yitzchok had been typed out as "Harav Hachossid," and the Rebbe added in his holy handwriting, "Harav Hagaon."

The Rebbe's Sheva Brachos

Reb Yitzchok was a talented *baal menagen*, and he passed on many unique *niggunim* from previous generations.

For the occasion of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's wedding in Poland in 5689*, Reb Yitzchok wasn't able to participate, but he was present during the *sheva brachos* farbrengen which the Friediker Rebbe held on Yud-Tes Kislev in Riga.

During the farbrengen, the Friediker Rebbe asked him to leave the room and formulate a *niggun* on the words "*Yehi Hashem Elokeinu imanu, ka'asher haya im avoseinu...*" He left the room, and a short time later returned with his composition. He had attached the words of the *possuk* to a *freilicher niggun*.⁹ When the



A DELEGATION OF LUBAVITCH CHASSIDIM GREET RABBI YITZCHAK HERTZOG, CHIEF RABBI OF ISRAEL. R-L: REB SENDER NEMTZOV, REB SHMUEL REIN, REB BENTZION SHEMTOV, RABBI HERTZOG, REB YITZCHOK DUBOV, REB SHMUEL GROSSMAN.

Friediker Rebbe heard the *niggun* he had chosen, he noted that according to the Alter Rebbe, this was a *niggun* that "scrubbed the *neshama*."

This occurrence later became a tradition. Whenever Reb Yitzchok would come to visit 770, the Rebbe would ask him to sing a *niggun* during the first farbrengen where he was present. This occurred every time without fail.

Manchester

During Chanukah 5689*, Reb Yitzchok traveled to Manchester as a *shadar* to raise funds for Tomchei Temimim. Travel was a very difficult endeavor, and he was uncertain when he would be able to return to see the Rebbe. As can be imagined, it was very difficult for him to depart. At the close of his farewell *yechidus* before his trip, the Friediker Rebbe told him, "*Mir velen zich noch zehen*, we will yet meet again."¹⁰

In Manchester, the local families asked him to remain and join their community. Reb Yitzchok became the *baal tefillah* of the Nusach Ari shul, and later, after their *rav* Rabbi Menachem Tzvi Rivkin passed away

in 5708,* he became the *rav* of the Chassidim in Manchester.

In addition to his communal responsibilities, Reb Yitzchok assumed the role of a *mashgiach* in Manchester Yeshiva, a Litvisher yeshiva in the city. It was through the yeshiva where Reb Yitzchok made his most lasting impact.

Respect

"He was a gifted *baal nigleh*," says Rabbi Chaim Rapoport who grew up in Manchester. "He was a diligent *masmid*, and his dedication to learning went a long way with his students. He would deliver a '*fartzeitische shiur*,' where he focused on Gemara, Rashi, Tosfos, and basic *mefarshim* like Maharsha and others. The *bochurim* enjoyed it immensely."

Reb Yitzchok didn't allow his role to remain in the realm of *nigleh*. He constantly utilized his relationships with the *bochurim* to teach them Chassidus and to connect them with the Rebbe. He maintained a daily *shiur Tanya* with the *bochurim*, and used every opportunity to teach them messages of Chassidus. On Erev Rosh Hashanah, many of the *bochurim* of the yeshiva would send



REB YITZCHOK STUDIES TANYA WITH TWO BOCHURIM IN MANCHESTER, CIRCA 1964.



REB YITZCHOK (STANDING BEHIND THE REBBE) SINGS A NIGGUN UPON THE REBBE'S REQUEST AT THE 3:30 AM FARBRENGEN UPON THE ARRIVAL OF THE CHARTERED GROUP FROM ENGLAND, 21 TAMMUZ 5721*.

the Rebbe *panim* with Reb Yitzchok's encouragement.

There was once a *bochur* who needed some extra help in *nigleh*, and Reb Yitzchok would tutor him each afternoon for a half hour.

"Don't tell the Rosh Yeshiva," Reb Yitzchok told him somewhat in jest, "but we are going to learn Likutei Sichos," he said as he took out the first volume of Likutei Sichos, which had recently been published. Those sessions in Likutei Sichos and Tanya—and Gemara as well—had lasting implications, and this *bochur* later became a Lubavitcher Chossid.

Many others followed a similar path. Several large Lubavitch families in England today attribute their connection with the Rebbe to Reb Yitzchok, and a number of the Manchester *bochurim* later went on to study in 770 and become shluchim of the Rebbe.

Even those who didn't continue on to Lubavitch harbored a profound respect for their distinguished *mashgiach*. "Even the Manchester *rosh yeshiva*, Rabbi Segal, studied Tanya with Reb Yitzchok on a daily basis," says Rabbi Avraham Jaffe. "And until



A LETTER THE REBBE SENT TO THE BOCHURIM IN THE YESHIVA OF MANCHESTER, DATED YEMEI HASLICHOS 5726*, IN RESPONSE TO A PA'N THEY SENT BEFORE ROSH HASHANAH.

Should you want additional explanations, you can surely get them from the dears of your Yeshiva, and friends, particularly the Mashpia in Chassidus Rabbi I. Dubov, whom I know personally, and your friend Shemtov. I trust you say some kapitlech Tillin every day. Wishing you success in your Tora studies with Yiras Shamain, and hoping to hear good news from you in any language you find most convenient,
With blessings *m. Shmerlson*

"...THE MASHPIA IN CHASSIDUS RABBI I. DUBOV, WHOM I KNOW PERSONALLY".
A LETTER FROM THE REBBE, DATED 23 TAMMUZ 5712*.



REB YITZCHOK SPEAKS WITH REB NACHMAN SUDAK.

this very day, Reb Yitzchok's former (Litvisher) *talmidim* arrange a *minyán* at his gravesite each year on his *yahrzeit*, to honor his memory."

"The key to his relationship with the local *misnagdisher* community was respect," says Rabbi Chaim Rapoport. "In addition to his authenticity and his *avodas Hashem*, Reb Yitzchok was a warm person who showed respect to everyone he encountered, never belittling or demeaning anyone, no matter how much he disagreed with them."

From the Rebbe

The Rebbe greatly appreciated Reb Yitzchok's work. On one occasion, Reb Aharon Cousin, one of Reb Yitzchok's *talmidim*, wrote to the Rebbe that he

had been invited to Reb Yitzchok's home for Sukkos.

The Rebbe replied, "I was glad to learn that you have been invited to Rabbi Dubov's home for Sukkos: I am sure you will find it a real 'Zman Simchaseinu.'"¹¹

"I once visited Reb Leizer Nannes," recalls Rabbi Rapoport, "and he related that the Rebbe once instructed him to take a layover in Manchester on his way to Eretz Yisroel. Reb Leizer was puzzled, so the Rebbe explained: 'A kuk ton oyf Itche Yokshitzer iz oichet a inyan, to see Itche Yokshitzer (Reb Yitzchok's nickname) is also significant.'"

When the Rebbe's brother Reb Yisroel Aryeh Leib passed away in Liverpool in 5712*, the Rebbe asked the Chassidim in England to handle

the funeral arrangements. The Rebbe appointed Reb Yitzchok Dubov to take care of the *tahara*. "*Zolst firen mit di tahara vi a benon shel kedoshim*—you should conduct the *tahara* as befitting a person of holy lineage," the Rebbe told them.¹²

"We were *bochurim* learning in Manchester at the time," Reb Berel Futerfas relates, "and Rabbi Dubov asked Avremel Shemtov, Sholom Ber Gurkov and myself to take part in the *tahara*."

Reb Moshe Gurary of Tel Aviv was asked by the Rebbe to travel to London and bring Reb Yisroel Aryeh Leib's *aron* to be buried in Eretz Yisroel. The Rebbe told him that the *chelek haruchni*, the spiritual part, has been accomplished, and all that's left to be done in Eretz Yisroel is the *chelek hagashmi*, the physical element.

The Conduct of a Chossid

Reb Yitzchok's conduct made a lasting impression on his congregants and students.

"He would lead a *seudah shlishis* each week, where he would sing *Mizmor L'Dovid*, *Bnei Heichala*, and review Chassidus," says Rabbi Chaim Rapoport. "Each Yud-Tes Kislev, he would gather all the *rabbanim* of the city for a *farbrengen*."

"He was a *daykan* in everything. He never compromised on a single detail in *halacha*. He insisted, until his last day, on every nuance in *minhagei Chabad*. He was even insistent on the way *niggunim* were sung. I remember him correcting us on nuances in the Alter Rebbe's *niggun*, as he had heard it from the Rebbe Rashab himself."

"Each Shabbos, he would learn Chassidus for many hours, and begin davening after *krias haTorah* (he served as the *baal koreh* in the shul). He would remain in one place for many hours, sometimes davening until eight o'clock in the evening."

PINNY LEW

“He continued doing so until the Rebbe wrote to him about it. Although he could find support for his conduct in *halacha*, the Rebbe wrote, ‘*Betach bimachano yesh l’hischashev b’ma yomru habrios*—surely, in his location, one should take public opinion into consideration.’⁷³

“Then he began davening a bit earlier.”

“He also would relate many stories, and give us a ‘*chassidishe lachluchis*,’” explains Rabbi Avrohom Jaffe. “He would regale us with stories of Lubavitch; he would talk a lot about the ‘Bubbe Rivka’ (the Rebbetzin of the Rebbe Maharash) and others he merited to know.”

“Reb Mendel Futerfas once said,” says Rabbi Rapoport, “that in the yeshiva in Lubavitch, there were some *bochurim* who loved studying *nigleh*, others focused on Chassidus, while others put their efforts into davening *b’avodah*. Reb Yitzchok, he said, was different. He always did exactly what was expected of him at that moment.

“Indeed, we saw in him a perfect balance. He studied *nigleh* assiduously; he also learned Chassidus for hours each day, and his davening was an example for every Chossid.”

The Fateful Visit

During the years leading up to World War II, Reb Yitzchok never had the opportunity to visit the Friediker Rebbe, and later, when the Friediker Rebbe came to the United States, he was even farther away. An opportunity to come visit the Friediker Rebbe didn’t materialize for many years.

In 5710*, Reb Yitzchok’s son, Leibel was scheduled to get married on 7 Shevat in New York. Reb Yitzchok initially didn’t plan to be at the wedding, but he received a letter from Reb Moshe Leib Rodshtein, encouraging him to come. “In addition to participating in your son’s wedding,” Reb Moshe Leib wrote, “this



THE LETTER FROM REB MOSHE LEIB RODSHTEN, URGING REB YITZCHOK TO COME TO NY FOR HIS SON’S WEDDING, DATED 16 TEVES 5710*.



THE REBBE JOINS THE KABALAS PANIM AT THE WEDDING OF REB YITZCHOK’S SON, REB YEHUDA LEIB, 7 SHEVAT 5710*.

REB YITZCHOK, HE SAID, WAS DIFFERENT. HE ALWAYS DID EXACTLY WHAT WAS EXPECTED OF HIM AT THAT MOMENT.



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASSIDEI CHABAD

REB YITZCHOK ADDRESSES A KABOLAS PONIM FARBRENGEN HELD IN THE UPSTAIRS ZAL OF 770 IN HONOR OF A GROUP FROM ENGLAND VISITING THE REBBE FOR SHAVUOS 5723*.

is an opportunity to visit the Rebbe *shlita*; many years have passed since you have merited to see him. I am confident that if you will contemplate the matter, you will decide to come...”

Reb Moshe Leib Rodshtein later told Reb Yitzchok's son that the Rebbe had asked him to write to Reb Yitzchok encouraging him to come. The Rebbe said that Merkos was even willing to pay his ticket, and if he was worried about the responsibilities he held in Manchester, Merkos would arrange a replacement from among the Chassidim in Paris.¹⁴

It was very important to the Rebbe that he come visit.

Ultimately, he decided to make the trip. On the night before the wedding, he went into *yechidus*. It was the first time he had seen the Frierdiker Rebbe in over 20 years, and the difference in the Frierdiker Rebbe's appearance shook him to his core.

He asked the Frierdiker Rebbe, “*Vos macht der Rebbe*, how is the Rebbe?”

The Frierdiker Rebbe answered, “*M'darf zein tzufriden*, we must be happy. May Hashem help that we only hear good news about Yidden.”¹⁵

He told the Frierdiker Rebbe that he regrets that the Shabbos *sheva brachos* will be in Williamsburg, a far walk from 770. But the Frierdiker Rebbe picked up his hand, “*Vest gornisht farfelen*, you won't miss anything.”¹⁶

The next day was his son's wedding. The Rebbe participated in the *kabbalas panim* and was honored with *brachos* at the *chupa*. Reb Yitzchok asked him to participate in the wedding meal as well, however, the Rebbe declined. Every Wednesday night, the Rebbe explained, he had a study session with the Frierdiker Rebbe. “*Ich vel dos kein mol nisht avekgeben*, I will never give that up.”¹⁷

That Shabbos, the Frierdiker Rebbe was *nistalek*. The Frierdiker Rebbe's *bracha* to Reb Yitzchok 20 years earlier, “*Mir velen zich noch zehn*, we will yet meet again,” had come to fruition just three days before the *histalkus*!

Reb Yitzchok rushed over on Motzei Shabbos, and was present throughout the *tahara* (in which only *temimim* from Lubavitch were

permitted to participate) and the preparations for the *levaya*.

Amidst the pain of the terrible loss, Reb Yitzchok immediately began thinking about the future. During the first three days of the *shiva*, he was glued to the Rebbe, watching his conduct and davening. He constantly observed him, and was puzzled by three *hanhagos*.

First, he noticed that the Rebbe didn't bang his fist over his heart when reciting “*slach lanu*” in Shmoneh Esreh. Secondly, he wondered why the Rebbe paused before reciting the last *kaddish* of davening, and thirdly, he noticed that the Rebbe walked back to his room without putting on Rabbeinu Tam's tefillin in shul. Knowing that *halacha* says to put them on as close to each other as possible, he wondered why the Rebbe chose to do it in his room.

On the fourth day of the *shiva*, the Rebbe sat down on a bench, and told Reb Yitzchok, “*Zetz zach*, have a seat.”

The Rebbe proceeded to tell him a number of stories about the Frierdiker Rebbe, while everyone present crowded around to listen. All



THE REBBE FARBRENGS FOR THE GUESTS FROM ENGLAND AT 3:30 AM, 21 TAMMUZ 5721. REB YITZCHOK SITS BEHIND THE REBBE, SECOND FROM LEFT.

these stories were later edited by the Rebbe and printed in the *hosafos* of Likutei Sichos volume 2 and in Toras Menachem.

Listening to the stories, Reb Yitzchok was shocked to discover that the Rebbe had answered all three questions.

The Rebbe explained that when one doesn't recite *tachanun* (for example, during a *shivah*), he doesn't bang his fist over his heart for "*slach lanu*" either. Additionally, the Rebbe related, when the Frierdiker Rebbe was in the year of *aveilus* after the *histalkus* of the Rebbe Rashab, he would lean over and say something quietly before the last *kaddish*. The Rebbe added that he does the same and recites a few lines of Tanya. Thirdly, the Rebbe spoke about the tefillin of Shimusha Rabba and Raavad, adding quietly to Reb Yitzchok that as per the Frierdiker Rebbe's instruction, he puts on the additional pairs of tefillin privately. (Shimusha Rabba is worn together with the *shel yad* of Rashi, before switching to Rabbeinu Tam, and the Rebbe would therefore return to his room.)

Reb Yitzchok was flabbergasted. He had just witnessed open *ruach hakodesh*.¹⁸

He shared his experience with other elder Chassidim that day, and asked them to join him that evening in asking the Rebbe to accept the *nesius*.

When Reb Yitzchok went in, the Rebbe said, among other things, that he hadn't received a directive from the *shver*, from the Frierdiker Rebbe. (The Rebbe also mentioned this answer in a letter to Chassidim in England in response to their *ksav hiskashrus*.)

Additionally, the Rebbe said, "*Ba mir der Rebbe lebt*—for me, the Rebbe is alive."

Reb Yitzchok answered, "In 5680*, I'm sure the Rebbe Rashab was alive for the Frierdiker Rebbe, and nevertheless the Frierdiker Rebbe accepted the *nesius*."¹⁹

The Rebbe didn't respond.

Several days later, Reb Yitzchok returned to England. Upon landing in London before dawn, he proceeded immediately to the home of Reb Bentzion Shemtov. After a long conversation, they both gathered the

anash of London, and wrote the first *ksav hiskashrus* to the Rebbe.

Reb Yitzchok continued to urge many other Chassidim to do the same. He would speak publicly and privately, writing letters to many as well, describing the "open *gilui Elokus* I witnessed," and encouraging everyone to commit themselves to the Rebbe.

"In my opinion," he wrote in one letter, "all the Chassidim outside of America should crown him as Rebbe, and then it will automatically come, even if he doesn't want it."

Hiskashrus

Reb Yitzchok's next visit to the Rebbe was for Simchas Torah 5716*. In a letter, he happily described the state of affairs in 770. Reb Moshe Leib Rodshtein told him, he writes, that the youth are attracted to the Rebbe like bees to honey.

Reb Yitzchok's *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe was unwavering. He had an incredible love for everything from the Rebbe. When the first volume of Likutei Sichos was published, he kissed it when it arrived in the mail, and decided that he would study it every week along with being *maavir sedrah*.

For many years, Reb Yitzchok would visit 770 at least once each year. He was no youngster; these trips took place through his seventies and eighties, but he was never too tired to make the trip.

During farbrengens that he was present, the Rebbe would show him many *kiruvim*, and usually ask him to begin a *niggun*. On his first Simchas Torah, he brought a *niggun* which became very popular, and the *bochurim* continued to sing it by the Rebbe's farbrengens throughout the year. On that Yud Shevat, the Rebbe himself began this *niggun*.²⁰

"On Yud-Alef Nissan 5722," relates Reb Shlomo Zarchi, "the Rebbe farbrenged in honor of his birthday

for the first time. The Rebbe's new *kapitel* of that year included the *possuk*, 'Yomim al yemei melech tosif.' During the farbrengen, spontaneously, Reb Yitzchok Dubov began singing the well-known tune to those words. That was the first time we sang a *niggun* to the Rebbe's *kapitel*."

Ben Tish'im

As Reb Yitzchok progressed in age, his eyesight began to fail him. Once when he was in New York, his son approached the Rebbe during a farbrengen and asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* on his behalf. The Rebbe said that he would deal with it in their *yechidus* the following night.

The next night, the Rebbe told Reb Yitzchok that he won't begin

seeing immediately because everyone is waiting outside to see the *bracha* materialize and they will say that this is the only reason you came here. But one morning, the Rebbe said, Reb Yitzchok would wake up and his eyesight would be restored and he would be able to start davening from the *siddur* again three times daily...²¹

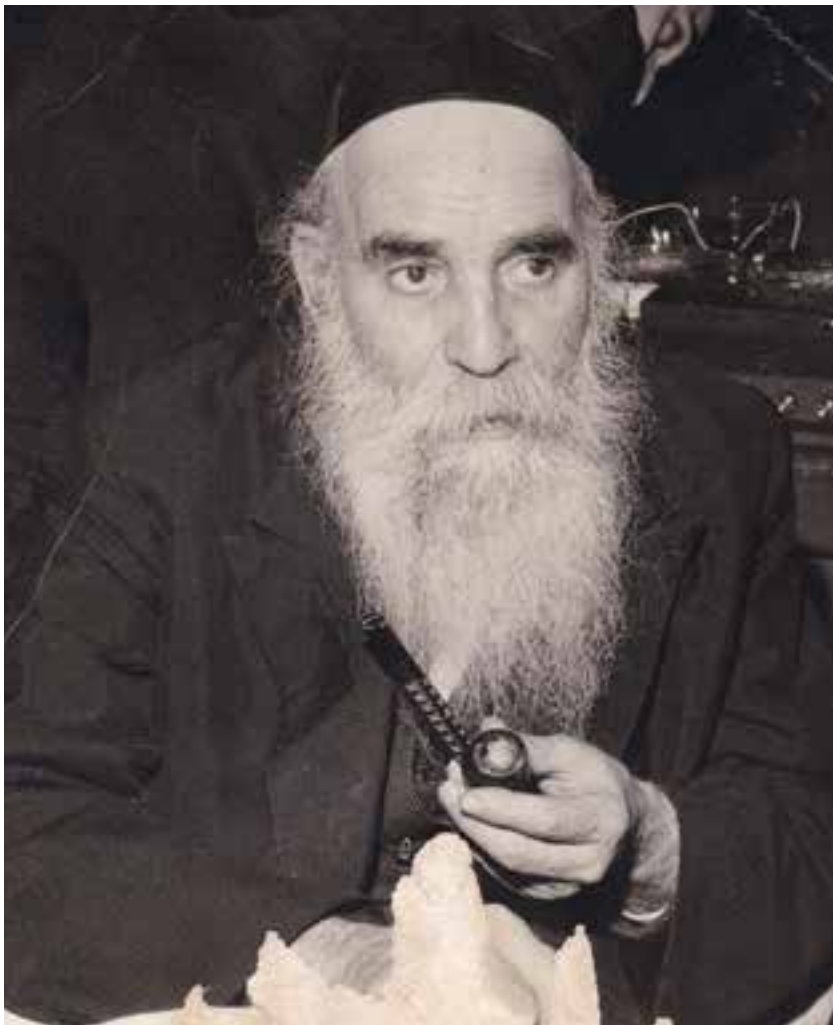
During his last visit to the Rebbe for Yud Shevat 5735*, he was quite weak and the Rebbe asked him to sit during the *yechidus*. For Reb Yitzchok, sitting during a *yechidus* was unthinkable. He told the Rebbe that he wouldn't sit; if he needed support, he would lean on the Rebbe's desk.

Reb Yitzchok's eightieth birthday fell out during a visit to New York.

During a farbrengen, he approached the Rebbe and shared that he had reached 80 years of age, and the Rebbe blessed him to become a "*ben tishim*," to reach 90 years as well.

Indeed, Reb Yitzchok passed away on Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av 5738, several days before his 91st birthday.

The day before his passing, he related that there are two merits that he is bringing along to the next world. First, that he helped bring the Frierdiker Rebbe out of Soviet Russia, and second, that he had a hand in the *hachtara* of the Rebbe. **1**



1. Reb Dovid Dubov.
2. Ibid. As he heard from Reb Sender Liberow.
3. *Igros Kodesh Admur Harayatz* vol 13 pg. 255.
4. Heard by Reb Dovid Dubov from *anash* in Manchester.
5. Ibid.
6. Heard by Reb Dovid Dubov from Reb Shalom Ber Gurkov, a talmid of Reb Yitzchok.
7. *Early Years* pg. 298.
8. For more about that periodical, see "Kovetz Lubavitch," *A Chassidisher Derher* Elul 5775.
9. Rabbi Dovid Dubov (who heard this story from Reb Zalman Gurary) seems to remember this as the *Niggun Hisvaadus Someach*, *Nichoach* vol. 16.
10. Heard by Reb Dovid Dubov from his father Reb Leibel a"h.
11. *Teshurah Dubrowsky-Cousin* 5758 p. 2.
12. As heard by Rabbi Tzvi Telsner of Melbourne.
13. *Igros Kodesh* vol 5, p. 312.
14. Heard by Reb Dovid Dubov from his father Reb Leibel a"h.
15. *Yemei Breishis* p. 59.
16. As heard by Reb Dovid Dubov from the Kaplan family.
17. *Mekadesh Yisroel* p. 72.
18. *Yemei Breishis* p. 92.
19. Rabbi Dovid Dubov. *Yemei Breishis* p. 84.
20. *Nichoach* vol. 12 *Niggun Simchoh* #3. Reb Yoel Kahn relates that this is a *niggun* Reb Yitzchok would sing frequently.
21. *Sichos Kodesh* 5726, p. 629



The Saving Angel

Reb Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky related:

The Frierdiker Rebbe once sent me on a shlichus to Toronto together with his son-in-law, Rashag. Our journey was interrupted due to a heavy snow storm and strong winds, so we were forced to spend some time in a hotel. During our wait many individuals came to visit us. Among the guests was a certain *rav* who shared with us a fascinating story:

“One of my *baalei batim* became sick with a severe infection in his feet and was taken to the hospital. When I became aware of his situation I went over to the hospital to visit him. He wasn’t doing well at all and it had even affected his hearing.

“In an adjacent room sat his despondent family who let me know that I could not go in the room at the moment. In the meantime, while I was waiting to see him, they shared with me the details of his illness.

“At one point, when the sick man heard my voice, he requested that I be brought in. Once I was inside he said to me, ‘I heard that the [Frierdiker] Lubavitcher Rebbe came to America. Please write to him and ask what I can do to get better and free myself of this sickness.’

“I immediately sat down, wrote the letter and sent it off by express mail. Much to my surprise I received an answer very quickly. The Frierdiker Rebbe wrote, ‘Tell the patient that we are now building a yeshiva (Tomchei Temimim) in Montreal and he should donate \$1,000 towards it. Explain to him that the angel of 1000 is greater than that of 100...’

“When I received this response, I hurried over to the hospital and met some of the family members. His wife asked, ‘Did you already receive a response?’ ‘Yes,’ I replied and went on to share the details. Standing nearby was her sister, the

sick man’s sister-in-law, and with a note of mockery in her voice said, ‘They’ve already come to squeeze us for money... I know the way you people work!’ I ignored her comment and rushed into the room where he was laying. Standing next to him was his son, and I repeated the Rebbe’s answer to him. When the father heard what I was saying, he turned to his son and commanded, ‘My son, I want to live! Take \$1,000 dollars and rush over to Montreal.’ Not wasting a moment, his son carried out his instructions.

“A few days later the doctor came to check the patient but quickly stormed out of the

room in a rage. ‘Who gave anyone permission to bring in a different doctor to administer other medications?!’ he demanded. The family members were taken aback by his accusations and assured him that no one had done anything of the sort.

“If so,’ he cried out, ‘this must be a miracle from Heaven. In just another few days he will be ready to go home.’ Sure enough, the man got better and was able to leave the hospital with crutches. A short while later he was completely healed.” ¹

(*Shmuos V’sippurim*
vol. 1, p. 218)



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASSIDEI CHABAD

What We're All About

*Discovering Moshiach
in every detail of
the Rebbe's nesius*

Part Two: Hiskashrus

A central theme of the Rebbe's Torah in the early years of the nesius is “hiskashrus.” Never before had this topic been presented and clarified to Chassidim from any Rebbe so thoroughly and succinctly. The igros and sichos of those years present a clear and concise formula how a Chossid can and must achieve a true *hiskashrus* with the Rebbe.

Clearly, the limbs of the body receive their life and energy from the head and nothing can be attributed to the limbs independently. The same is true about the life and energy of the people of every respective generation: They receive everything through the nossi hador.

*When the Yidden in the desert desired meat, and it was impossible for Moshe Rabbeinu to provide it for them due to his elevated spiritual status, Hashem instructed him to gather 70 elders so that “I will bestow upon them **your** spirit.” Only through Moshe's spirit, flowing through the elders, was it possible for the Yidden to receive meat. This is because everything needed to come to bnei Yisroel through Moshe Rabbeinu—even meat.*

The same is true in every generation, with their respective Moshe Rabbeinu.¹

On 24 Iyar 5711*, the Rebbe was the sandek at a bris and during the seuda he explained the specific need for *hiskashrus* in our generation:

A Rebbe is a מחבר המוצע—a connecting intermediary between a Yid and Hashem, as Moshe Rabbeinu proclaimed “וביניכם” אנכי עומד בין ה' וביניכם.”

*Specifically today when we find ourselves in the extreme darkness of the final galus, it is absolutely vital to have “a special *hiskashrus*” [the Rebbe said these words in English. –ed.] to the Rebbe. This will give us the ability to always be connected above and not to be affected by any circumstances.²*

The fact that *hiskashrus* serves as the vehicle through which every individual Chossid remains connected with the source of life and receives all of his spiritual and physical needs, was relevant in all generations. However, on numerous occasions the Rebbe explained how the need for proper *hiskashrus* is particularly emphasized in our generation since it is intertwined with Moshiach on many levels. In the following sections we will discuss how *hiskashrus* is: (a) necessary to bring Moshiach, (b) crucial to destroying all vestiges of *galus*, (c) an integral element of preparing the world for *geula*, and (d) a taste of the era of Moshiach.

Only Real Soldiers Will Bring Moshiach

Before drafting a soldier to fight a war, he needs to be “fit to serve.”

The same is true of a spiritual war. As the Rebbe Rashab proclaimed: כל היוצא למלחמת בית דוד כותב גט כריתות לאשתו.

He who goes out to war in Dovid Hamelech’s army [to bring Moshiach] must divorce himself from all concerns. The only thing in his world must be the orders of the commanding general...

When it comes to winning the war, nothing else matters!

If the soldier is concerned about anything else other than his mission... he should go home and eat cholent...

There is a story recorded in Shivchei HaArizal which, as a part of Torah, serves as an eternal lesson for us today.

Every Shabbos evening, the Arizal and his students would go out to the field to be mekabel Shabbos. One time, the Arizal asked them if they would like to go to Yerushalayim to be mekabel Shabbos.

Although there was no natural way for them to travel from Tzefas (where the Arizal lived) to Yerushalayim before the onset of Shabbos, the students had no doubt that the Arizal had his ways of accomplishing this...

However, since going to Yerushalayim meant they would be away from their homes for the duration of

Shabbos, some of the students commented that they had a halachic obligation to notify their wives of the plan.

The Arizal was immediately crestfallen, remained in Tzefas and said that had they all immediately agreed to follow him to Yerushalayim unquestioningly, they would have succeeded in bringing Moshiach.

How can the Arizal’s students’ hesitation, rooted in halacha, be a hindrance to Moshiach’s arrival?

*While their concern was legitimate, they were unworthy of winning the war! It is impossible to bring Moshiach when, upon hearing an instruction from the Arizal, one takes out the Shulchan Aruch and asks a rav to justify that it is in accordance with halacha. **It is impossible to bring Moshiach with this behavior!***

This concept is so obvious even in the realm of nigleh. Since they had received an instruction from the Arizal, who was a great gaon in nigleh as well, it should have been clear to them that they can trust his halachic judgement and that he would never cause them to behave contrary to halacha, chas veshalom.

*And if one doubts his Rebbe’s instructions, clearly he is lacking in hishkashtus... **One must primarily have a strong hishkashtus and follow the Rebbe’s instructions... The same is true in every generation!***

*...Imperfect hishkashtus does not only negatively affect a Chossid personally, it impacts all of klal Yisroel! We see this from the story of the Arizal. **Since then, 400 painful years of galus have passed—all due to the imperfect hishkashtus of the Arizal’s talmidim!***³

What We're All About

Only Moshe Rabbeinu Can Win the War

The need for *hiskashrus* in the context of fighting the spiritual war of *galus* and the battles of *avodas Hashem* we face on a daily basis is rooted in the famous story of *milchemes Amalek*. In response to Amalek's unprovoked attack, Moshe Rabbeinu instructed Yehoshua to choose a select group called *anshei Moshe*—Moshe's men, to repel the vicious attack. They were victorious in battle only when Moshe Rabbeinu's hands were raised in prayer.

Chassidus explains at length that Amalek represents the essence of *kelipa*, capable of challenging *kedusha* and the awareness of—and *bittul* to—Hashem. The ultimate obliteration of Amalek on every level is the final phase in the conclusion of *galus* and the beginning of the *geula*.

...Perhaps this is the reason the topic of Amalek and the war against it was explained by every single Rebbe in every generation, and repeated every year. As long as we are still in galus, notwithstanding the great strides taken in avodas Hashem, Amalek is still here... It is beyond human capacity to vanquish Amalek, and we need a special power from Above.

*This power comes to us through our Rebbeim in their maamarei Chassidus... Just as the first battle with Amalek was won through anshei Moshe and the unique power of Moshe; likewise, during the times of Purim, Haman was destroyed due to the great connection the Yidden had with Mordechai Hatzaddik, and the same is true in every generation—we receive the power to eradicate Amalek from the Moshe Rabbeinu of the generation, [the Rebbe]... And through the *hiskashrus* with the tzaddik, and by us doing our part to destroy*

Amalek, we hasten the realization of the ultimate destruction of Amalek with the coming of Moshiach.⁴

The same idea is expressed in Torah when Moshe Rabbeinu is appointed as Hashem's messenger to Pharaoh and is given the power to afflict him even while he was still the superpower of the world. As a result, every Yid in every generation receives the ability to overpower anything that conceals *kedusha*, through the Moshe Rabbeinu of the generation.

This is the answer to those who wonder how it is possible to fulfill the demand of our Rebbeim to bring the wellsprings of Chassidus to every place, especially when they are so brutally challenging.

They must know that there is a Moshe Rabbeinu in every generation... Specifically regarding our generation, דרא דעקבתא דמשיחא, the Arizal writes that we are a gilgul of the dor hamidbar, so we certainly have all the components of that generation.

Through being connected to the Rebbe, there is no reason to be intimidated by the challenges of galus, because we have the Rebbe's strength to be victorious.⁵

Preparing the World for Geula

The Baal Shem Tov was informed that Moshiach will arrive לכשיפוצו מעיינותיך חוצה. The Rebbe explains that in addition to the fact that Chassidus must be disseminated so broadly that it be available to all of humanity, this three worded message also describes the function of Chassidus in uniting the “essential spring of life”—the innermost core of truth—with every facet of reality. Uniting every layer of Torah, every facet of the *neshama* and every level of *klal Yisroel* is crucial to preparing the world for the *geula*.

The “heads of the Yidden” are compared to the “maayan.”

Before the revelation of Chassidus it was standard for the spiritual leaders to be secluded from the people. Although they certainly affected the klal through their Torah teachings or by setting examples, personally they were on a separate plane.

The standard of "יפוצו מעיינותיך חוצה" changed all of that. The leaders are no longer secluded and on a separate plane. Rather they (the tzaddikim, the "maayan") are now in the "chutza" together with those lacking proper insight and they must teach them on their level and in their language.

Moreover, since the maayan must reach every detail of reality, the leaders must now be involved in the physical and material needs of am Yisroel as well.⁶

Hiskashrus is not only necessary to bring Moshiach. The novel chemistry developed through *hiskashrus* is an expression of how the *maayan* reaches the *chutza*, an integral step in preparing the world for *geula*.

A Taste of Things to Come

The eleventh *bracha* of Shmoneh Esreh begins "Restore our judges as in former times, and our counselors as of yore." This expression is based on the *nevu'a* of Yeshaya (1:26), "ואשיבה שופטיך כבראשונה ויועציק כבתחילה,"—in the days of Moshiach, our judges and counselors will be restored.

During the *farbrengen* of Shabbos Parshas Shoftim 5751* the Rebbe explained at length the difference between a *shofet* (judge) and a *yo'etz* (counselor) and the respective role each plays in influencing Yidden to behave according to the instructions of Torah. The overwhelming power of a judge represents the ability of Torah to inspire a Yid beyond his limits, while the counselor represents the fact that Torah must be absorbed by everyone on their level. A *novi* (prophet) is similar to a *yo'etz* (counselor) as the function of prophecy is to reach the people on their level.

Both elements are critical to enveloping a Yid in *kedusha* inside and out, which will be the reality in the era of *geula* through Moshiach, who will fill the role of *shofet* and *yo'etz/novi*.

Focusing on the novelty of the most recent generations, the Rebbe explains that although these roles were filled by the *gedolei Yisroel* throughout history, Chassidus also revealed the unprecedented function of these roles as they were expressed by the Rebbeim.

Since we are currently in the final moments of *galus* and we must begin living in a *geula* fashion, *It is incumbent upon each and every one of us to strengthen our resolve to fulfill the instructions and the guidance we receive from the Rebbe, the shofet, yo'etz and novi of our generation... Doing so heralds the beginning of the fulfillment of the Tefillah: "השיבה שופטינו כבראשונה."* ויועצינו כבתחילה" T

Living a life of genuine *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe is the way we begin experiencing the *geula* reality today.

בעמדנו בשבת מברכים שבת, כולל ובמיוחד בעשירי בשבת - צריך כאו"א לקבל על עצמו להוסיף ביתר שאת ויתר עוז במעשיו, תורתו ועבודתו של בעל ההילולא, כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו, אשר הורנו מדרכיו ונלכה באורחותיו נס"ו, ובפרט בהביטול וההתקשרות אל כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר נשיא הדור, "הנשיא הוא הכל", שבכאו"א - מציאותו וכל עניניו, בכל מכל כל, נעשים קדוש לנשיא הדור, עי"ז שמלאים וחדורים בקיום שליחותו של נשיא הדור - משה רבינו שבדור, גואל ראשון הוא גואל אחרון - שענינו העיקרי "להביא לימות המשיח" בפועל ממש. משיחת ש"פ וארא, מבה"ח שבת תשנ"ב - ספר השיחות תשנ"ב ע' 266

The next installment of this series will focus on the Rebbe's emphasis on the importance of *chinuch al taharas hakodesh* and its relevance to Moshiach and *geula*.

1. Toras Menachem, vol 1 page 128.
2. Toras Menachem vol. 3, p. 105.
3. Toras Menachem vol. 22, pp. 290-297.
4. Likkutei Sichos vol. 26, pp. 227-228.
5. Likkutei Sichos vol. 16, pp. 77-78.
6. Likkutei Sichos vol. 15, pp. 283-284. See footnote 32.
7. Sefer Hasichos 5751 vol 2 pages 780-795.

וזה חלי יתן אל לבו

BOCHURIM REMEMBER
CHOF BEIS SHEVAT





Chof-Beis Shevat 5748* was the *histalkus* of the Rebbetzin. Most people didn't meet the Rebbetzin or see her regularly, yet her *histalkus* changed the lives of Chassidim forever.

Although the memories of those days are seared in the minds of all who were there, those who were there at all hours of the day and night and truly lived each and every moment with the Rebbe were the *bochurim*.

With the approach of Chof-Beis Shevat, the Derher has collected diaries and memoirs and conducted interviews with *bochurim* at the time. These include Rabbi **Asher Farkash** of Buenos Aires, Argentina; Rabbi **Sholom Gottlieb** of Nikolaev, Ukraine; Rabbi **Mordechai Mishulovin** of Beitar, Eretz Yisroel; and Rabbi **Eliezer Zaklikovsky** of Monroe Township, NJ. זכות הרבים תלוי בהם for sharing their precious memories with our readership.¹

LET'S BEGIN WITH THE WEEKS AND MONTHS PRIOR TO CHOF-BEIS SHEVAT.

Rabbi Gottlieb: 5748* was my *kevutza* year in 770. As young *bochurim*, we didn't realize it at the time but it was a pivotal year in the history of Lubavitch and *dor hashvi'i*, completely changing the way Chassidim relate to the Rebbe.

Already in Elul of 5747*, the Rebbe announced that the coming year of תשמ"ח would be called "*shnas tismach u'tisamach*," a year of abundant joy.

That year was also a *shnas hakhel*. In every *sicha* and at every *farbrengen* of Tishrei the Rebbe went deeper and deeper into the theme of *hakhel*. At every opportunity, the Rebbe would demand that more be done in the realm of *hakhel*. No Chossid could remain indifferent about *hakhel*. Our every thought that Tishrei and throughout the following months was focused on how we could fulfill the Rebbe's wish in making *hakhel* gatherings. I think it's possible to say that for those of us who were *bochurim* then, *hakhel* is in our DNA.

Rabbi Zaklikovsky: It was clear from the beginning that this would be an unusual and special year in many ways. For starters, Tishrei stuck out as very unique, especially Simchas Torah which was extremely joyous even compared to a regular Simchas Torah. Then, after Tishrei, the Rebbe began holding a *farbrengen* almost every Shabbos.

On Rosh Chodesh Kislev the first International Kinus Hashluchim took place. It was also 10 years since Rosh Chodesh Kislev 5738, when the Rebbe went out to the Chassidim for the first time since the heart attack on Shemini Atzeres. The Kinus that year was filled with incredible joy.

If this was not enough, on Beis Kislev, during the Kinus Hashluchim, the *seforim* were returned to 770. The court case, which had caused the Rebbe so much pain, was finally behind us.

Then came Hei Teves, the first anniversary of the court victory, and the Rebbe made a *shturem* about the day and it became an official *yom tov*. It felt like it couldn't get better than this. Everything was perfect and Lubavitch was at the peak. We were all on a high.

Then suddenly, like a thunderstorm out of the blue, came Chof-Beis Shevat.

We knew that the Rebbetzin was a bit weak but nobody imagined that such a thing could happen.

“For those who were *bochurim* then, *hakhel* is in our DNA.

THE HISTALKUS

Rabbi Zaklikovsky: Chof-Beis Shevat was Tuesday night. It was a late hour and we were getting ready for bed in the Hadar Hatorah dormitory on Eastern Parkway when a *bochur* came in and said that everyone is running in the street, there must have been an accident. I ran outside to see what happened, when suddenly I heard someone shouting that the Rebbetzin was *nistalek*.

I immediately got dressed and ran to 770. It was shockingly quiet there, none of the usual commotion. People were whispering to each other, where is the Rebbe, where is the Rebbetzin, nobody knew any details. In the upstairs *zal* there were *bochurim* saying Tehillim quietly. The whole atmosphere was somber and silent.

We said Tehillim for a few minutes and then went outside. Someone whispered to me that the Rebbetzin was *nistalek* in the hospital and the Rebbe was at his home. Together with a friend, we walked over to the Rebbe's house. When we got there, we saw Reb Berel Junik and Reb Meir Harlig standing outside and they told us to leave. We moved away and stayed on the sidewalk.

Rabbi Mishulovin: At 2:00 a.m. Rabbi Leibel Groner came to 770 and told the *bochurim* to make a raffle for a rotation that would do *shmira* in the Rebbe's house. Every hour 10 *bochurim* would go into the house to say Tehillim. The raffle was done in the upstairs *zal* which was packed.

Meanwhile everyone started streaming to the Rebbe's house on President Street. It was freezing cold, in the height of winter, but no one was paying attention to the weather. We stood and waited outside the house.

THE CAR ARRIVES

Rabbi Zaklikovsky: Around 5:00 a.m. the car with the Rebbetzin arrived at the house. The atmosphere was frightening and tense. Nobody moved, we were all standing silently on the sidewalk waiting.

Suddenly the door to the Rebbe's house opened and the Rebbe walked out wearing his coat, with his head bent.

The street was dark, the only light was coming from the light on the Rebbe's porch. The Rebbe went down the stairs slowly, holding onto the railing. Meanwhile the *chevra kadisha* took the stretcher out of the car. The Rebbe walked over to the car and turning to the *chevra kadisha*, he said, "Ah *groisen yashar koach*."

The Rebbe then followed the stretcher up the stairs to the house. His face was so serious, so broken, it's hard to describe; it was like nothing we had ever seen before.

At the top of the stairs were double doors, like there are on many houses. Usually only one door is used, but they needed to open the second one as well. Apparently it hadn't been used for a while, and it took them a couple minutes to get it open. All the while the Rebbe was standing there and watching.

Once the doors were finally opened, it almost felt as if we were invading. The Rebbe's personal life was suddenly on display. It was a terrible feeling for us.

TEHILLIM NEAR THE REBBETZIN

Rabbi Mishulovin: The first *minyan* in the *shmira* rotation ended up staying only 20 minutes. After that, every few minutes a new *minyan* would be allowed in and the previous one would leave out the back door.

At close to 6:00 a.m. more people started waking up and learning about the *histalkus*. The crowd outside the Rebbe's house grew as everyone wanted the *zechus* to go inside and say Tehillim.

A line formed and they started letting people in to say Tehillim for shorter periods of time. As more *anash* woke up and heard the news, the line got longer until it stretched all the way to New York Avenue.

It was hard to digest what was happening. Until then the Rebbe's house had been symbolic of his and the Rebbetzin's personal life. Only the handful of people who worked there and an occasional guest ever went inside. We were even afraid to walk on the side of the street where the Rebbe's house was and would cross the street even if the Rebbe wasn't home. Now, we were actually going into the house

At 7:00 a.m. the Shabbos siren went off, informing the last few people who didn't know.

"The Rebbe came to the car and said to the *chevra kadisha* 'a *groisen yashar koach*.'"

From 7:00 a.m. the police were already closing off President Street from Kingston Avenue until New York Avenue.

At 9:30 a.m. the Rebbe came down to the bottom floor of the house where a *minyan* was waiting and the Rebbe said *kaddish*. None of the *bochurim* were present.

At 10:30 a.m. a large meeting was held in 770 where we were told how the *levaya* would proceed.

THE LEVAYA

Rabbi Zaklikovsky: At a quarter to twelve, the Rebbe came downstairs to the dining room of the house. The room was full of people with the *aron* in middle. The Rebbe said that whoever is not part of *chevra kadisha* should leave.

Rabbi Tzvi Hirsh Fuchs of the *chevra kadisha* started the *kria* as is customary, after which the Rebbe said the *bracha* of *dayan ha'emes* and finished the tear. At this point, the *chevra kadisha* left, leaving the Rebbe alone with the Rebbetzin's *aron*.

After a few minutes the Rebbe left the house for the *levaya*.

Every inch of the street and sidewalk was packed, even the rooftops were full with people.

As the Rebbe began walking toward 770, it looked like a royal procession. First was an escort of police motorcycles, followed by the *aron*, followed by the Rebbe. Behind the Rebbe walked the *mazkirim* and distinguished *rabbanim*. Behind them was the Rebbe's car driven by Rabbi Krinsky, and behind the car was the rest of the crowd. Above the *levaya* were police and news helicopters.

The Rebbe looked extremely serious, walking slowly, and looking down. It was so frightening, yet regal.

When the *levaya* reached Eastern Parkway the Rebbe got into the car and followed the *chevra kadisha* car to the *beis hachayim*.

I got into one of the many waiting buses that followed the Rebbe's car. By the time we arrived at the *beis hachayim*, the gate was already closed. Only the first few cars after the Rebbe had been allowed in but some *bochurim* found a way to hop over the



fence and we were able to sneak in all the way to the *kevura*. Peeking from the sides of the *matzeivos* we were hiding behind, we were able to see the Rebbe perfectly.

The Rebbe was standing near the *kever* and his holy face was filled with grief as he watched the *aron* being lowered into the ground. One of the *mazkirim* then handed the Rebbe a paper with *tziduk hadin* and the Rebbe read it slowly with

a broken voice. Everyone who stood there was crying.

Rabbi Mishulovin: During the entire *kevura* the Rebbe was looking at the *kever*. During *kaddish*, before the word “*veyis’hadar*,” the Rebbe paused and you could hear him crying. The whole *kaddish* the Rebbe said with his voice shaking and tears in his eyes.

The Rebbe then changed from his regular shoes to *shiva* shoes.



Rabbi Farkash: I was learning in Montreal at the time. We were asleep when our *mashpia*, Rabbi Itche Meir Gurary, ran through our rooms, crying that the Rebbetzin was *nistalek*. Upon hearing the news we immediately went to mikvah and started saying Tehillim, while a bus was arranged. At 2:30 a.m. the bus left Montreal with the whole yeshiva and many of *anash*.

By the time we pulled in to New York, the Rebbe was already at the *beis hachayim*. We jumped the



CHASSIDIM ARRIVE AT THE BEIS HACHAYIM.



fence but the *kevura* was already over and we only managed to catch a glimpse of the Rebbe entering the car.

We arrived back in Crown Heights in time for Mincha at the Rebbe's house. Of course most people were not able to go in for Mincha and we davened nearby on the street.

Rabbi Gottlieb: After Mincha the Rebbe said a *sicha*. When it came to the *hora'a bavodas Hashem* the Rebbe used the expression from Koheles, "*Vehachai yitein el libo*—and the living will take to heart."

From that moment on, this phrase took on a life of its own. At every farbrengen and *sicha* of that year, the Rebbe spoke in terms of "*vehachai yitein el libo*."



THE REBBE COMES DOWNSTAIRS FOR DAVENING IN THE YEAR FOLLOWING THE REBBETZIN'S HISTALKUS.

For me, this phrase became synonymous with the memory of the Rebbetzin. Until today I cannot hear these words without thinking about the Rebbetzin and her connection with *maase bipoel*.

"*Vehachai yitein el libo*" carried with it a sense of urgency; it became a motto that demanded that you do something to get the job done. An untold number of *hachlotos* were taken, *mosdos* were opened, and *mivtzoim* were done, under the banner of "*vehachai yitein el libo*."

THE SHIVA

Rabbi Farkash: After the *sicha*, the Rebbe's house was opened to the public and we were able to pass by the Rebbe and say *hamakom yenachem*.

At that point the Rebbe's house still somewhat looked as it had the day before. I felt like it wasn't respectful to look around, but I did notice some odds and ends like you would find in any private home. Later on everything was moved out.

The hardest part was the actual *nichum aveilim*. The Rebbe was sitting there with tears in his eyes, looking at each person as we said "*Hamakom yenachem*." It was very difficult to see.

Rabbi Zaklikovsky: Usually when you passed by the Rebbe there was some kind of activity. Either the Rebbe was pouring *kos shel bracha*, taking *panim*, giving dollars, etc. Here the Rebbe was

“On Thursday, the second day of shiva, four people named their baby daughters Chaya Mushka by *krias haTorah*.

sitting and looking at you, waiting for you to say "*Hamakom yenachem*."

Every few seconds, the Rebbe responded "*Amen*" to the passersby. Besides for the sound of people shuffling by and whispering "*Hamakom yenachem*" and the Rebbe's quiet "*amen*," the room was totally silent.

On Thursday, the second day of *shiva*, four people named their baby daughters Chaya Mushka at *krias haTorah*. The Rebbe looked pleased by this.

After Shacharis and Mincha the Rebbe again sat for *nichum aveilim*. Among the visitors was Rabbi Aaron Soleveichik from Chicago, who sat down and spoke with the Rebbe. After Maariv, Mr. David Chase came and the Rebbe spoke with him in English. The Stoliner Rebbe also came that night.

Rabbi Mishulovin: Life in Crown Heights resumed, but with the Rebbe not there, 770 felt empty. Although *seder* in yeshiva restarted, we felt like we couldn't just sit and learn Gemara like nothing happened. Instead we started learning the



THE REBBE LEADS THE MINYAN FOR TEFILLOS IN THE YEAR FOLLOWING THE REBBETZIN'S HISTALKUS.

mesechtos for the *chalukas haShas* in memory of the Rebbetzin.

Until Friday afternoon the Rebbe looked serious and pained. Whenever he began speaking to someone the Rebbe started crying. On Friday after Mincha we saw the Rebbe smile for the first time to the Israeli ambassador to the U.N. Mr. Benyamin Netanyahu.

THAT SHABBOS

Rabbi Zaklikovsky: The question on everyone's mind as Shabbos was approaching was, "Will there be a farbrengen?" This coming Shabbos was Shabbos Mevorchim, and for over 40 years the Rebbe had not missed a single Shabbos Mevorchim farbrengen. We were all anxious to know what would happen. Will the Rebbe spend Shabbos in 770?

Rabbi Farkash: One of my strongest memories from those days was the transition from Friday to Shabbos.

By Mincha the Rebbe appeared clearly in *aveilus*, with his eyes still red from crying, but when it came to Maariv, the Rebbe entered 770 full of *simcha*. By *Lecha Dodi* the Rebbe encouraged the singing perhaps even more than on a regular Shabbos.

The changes in the style of the Rebbe's farbrengens started right away that Shabbos.

Usually every farbrengen followed a similar pattern: Two or three *sichos*, followed by a *maamar* and then a *sicha* on Rashi, Rambam, and Likutei Levi Yitzchok. But already that Shabbos, the Rebbe changed the *seder*. For example, the farbrengen started right away with a *maamar*, as well as many other differences. At the time we thought it was a one time thing, but later we saw that this was the beginning of a permanent change in the style of the Rebbe's farbrengens.

Although there is no *aveilus* on Shabbos, the Rebbe did not ignore the *histalkus*.

In the *maamar*, which was about Parshas Mishpatim and Parshas Shekalim, the Rebbe talked about how the scales that were used to weigh the *shekalim* go up and down on either side, like a *neshama* that comes down and goes back up. The Rebbe also cited the Zohar on Parshas Mishpatim that discusses *gilgulim*.

The Rebbe then spoke about opening new *mosdos* in the Rebbetzin's memory. During that very farbrengen a number of people went up to the Rebbe and upon receiving a bottle of *mashke* announced the establishing of new *mosdos*.

Similar to the change from Friday to Shabbos was the change on Motzei Shabbos. The Rebbe immediately returned to a mode of *aveilus*, and his face looked as it did on Friday.

Rabbi Zaklikovsky: The *seder of nichum aveilim* after every *tefillah* continued until Monday, with many public figures, *rabbanim*, and politicians coming to pay their respects.

On Tuesday, when the the Rebbe got up from *shiva*, it was a very emotional scene. Reb Zalman Gurary gave the Rebbe a *bracha* in the name of the Chassidim and Rabbi Chaim Gutnik said *birchas kohanim*.

After Mincha the Rebbe distributed dollars for about five hours. President Street looked like 770 on a Sunday. There were thousands of people, babies, strollers, separate lines for men and women, etc.

After dollars, before Maariv, the Rebbe turned to the *gabbaim* of 770, Reb Yehoshua Pinson and Reb Zev Katz. Handing them a hundred dollar bill, the Rebbe said, "As is customary, there should be a farbrengen in her memory. It should be a grand farbrengen, with many people, the more the better. We should merit *hakitzu viranenu shochnei afar*. The farbrengen could be at a more convenient time, but it should at least begin today."

After Maariv, Rabbi Pinson announced that the farbrengen would take place in 770. The Rebbe stopped him and said that it should not be in 770, rather in the house. Rabbi Pinson then said that

the farbrengen would start in the house and finish in 770. Later, Rabbi Groner came and said that the Rebbe wanted the entire farbrengen to be in the house.

The farbrengen was very uncomfortable. It felt strange to be sitting in the Rebbe's house and farbrenging, especially considering that the Rebbe was right upstairs.

THE FOLLOWING WEEKS

Rabbi Farkash:

The whole next *tekufa* was full of confusion. We didn't know if the Rebbe would be home or in 770; everything was announced at the last minute and was often inaccurate.

For Purim that year we all came in not knowing if there would be a farbrengen or not. In the end there was no farbrengen and we were allowed in to the Rebbe's house for just one *tefillah*.

At the usual farbrengen time, 770 was packed as if the Rebbe would come in. We sat and sang *niggunim* for a long time and it was a very depressing atmosphere. What was Purim without a farbrengen?

Rabbi Gottlieb: Right after Chof-Beis Shevat, the "nerve center" of Lubavitch moved from 770 to the Rebbe's house. Our daily lives revolved around



the Rebbe's house. The *tefillos*, dollars, *sichos*, answers from the Rebbe, new *hora'os*—everything came from the house.

On a practical level, the *bochurim* began spending more time with the Rebbe than ever before. This was not just seeing the Rebbe pass by; every *tefillah* was davened in the Rebbe's presence.

Even while sitting in 770, our thoughts were always, "What's happening in the Rebbe's house?" The upstairs *zal* of 770 turned into a kind of extension of the house with a live hookup to all of the *tefillos* and *sichos*.

To hear the Rebbe daven at the *amud* three times a day was something indescribable. Obviously we couldn't all go in the house for every *tefillah* and there were raffles and rotations for who can enter, but even those not in the house were able to hear via the hookup.

That year, the Rebbe's *tefillos* became the center point in the life of a *bochur*. We would strain to hear every word, push near the windows, and endlessly debate nuances in the Rebbe's tone.

We learned how to daven like the Rebbe. Wherever you went that year, in the *zal*, the dining room, or walking down the street, you heard *bochurim* repeating the Rebbe's unique tune, trying to learn every inflection and daven exactly like the Rebbe.

For us *kevutza bochurim*, there was a special *seder* allowing us in to one *tefillah* a day, with a raffle determining who would be *zoche* to join which *tefillah*. This presented me with a unique opportunity, because the *vaad hamesader* was not familiar with the names of the Israeli *bochurim*. I was therefore *zoche* to be at almost every *tefillah* that year, under many assumed identities...

Another unintended consequence of Chof-Beis Shevat, was the *achdus* between different groups of *bochurim* that did not usually interact with each other.

In 770, the American and Israeli *bochurim* usually kept to their respective groups. Yet the shared experience of fighting to get into the Rebbe's house, the excitement of sneaking past the *vaad hamesader*, the time spent in such close proximity in the house, all this brought a new sense of cooperation between the groups. Until today I have friends that I made during the countless hours spent on the steps of the Rebbe's house.

Rabbi Farkash: Looking back at that time, starting from a short while before the *histalkus*



SHACHARIS IN THE REBBE'S HOUSE IN THE YEAR FOLLOWING THE REBBETZIN'S HISTALKUS.

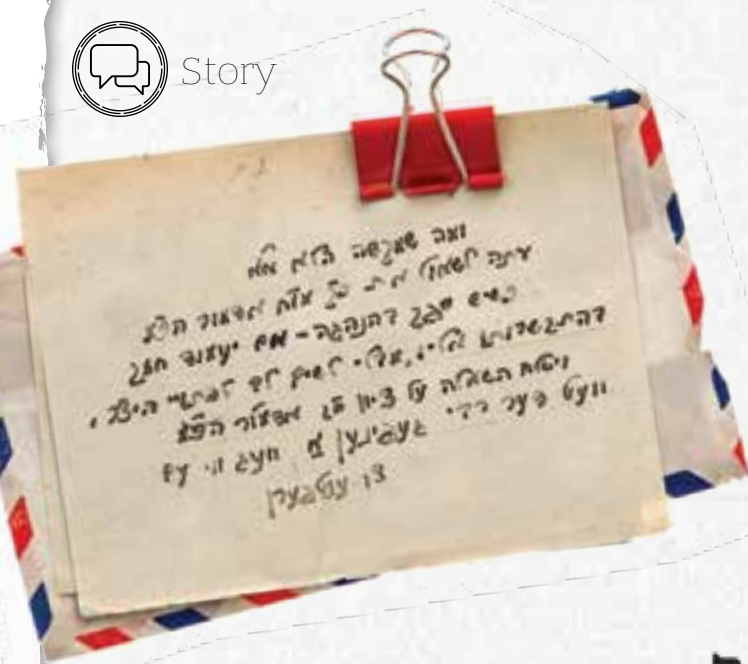
and continuing on afterwards, we can see how the Rebbe was preparing us for a new period.

For example, at the 15 Shevat farbrengen and at the *yechidus klotis* two days earlier the Rebbe spoke about *asei lecha rav*, asking a *rofeh yedid* medical questions, and the like. It seemed clear that the Rebbe wanted to minimize the reliance on the Rebbe's direct responses that Chassidim were accustomed to having. The Rebbe also reiterated that all letters with requests for *brachos* were brought directly to the Ohel of the Frierdiker Rebbe, and so there was no need to wait for a written response from the Rebbe.

A week after the *histalkus*, on 2 Adar, the Rebbe said a lengthy *sicha* in his home again detailing all these steps about what to do when in doubt and in need of counsel.

Let us hope that we will be *zoche* to the fulfillment of עפר שוכני ורננו with the coming of Moshiach now! ד

1. The account from Rabbi Zaklikovsky was originally printed in the Shevat edition of *Techeyeinu* magazine by Vaad Talmidei Hatmimim. The account from Rabbi Gottlieb was originally printed (among other accounts of Chof Beis Shevat) in Kfar Chabad magazine in connection with 30 years from the *histalkus*, 5748-5778. We thank these publications for sharing their material with us.



דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

What Comes First: The Money or the Pledge?

(AS TOLD BY RABBI YISROEL UZAN, ABUJA, NIGERIA)

We started our shlichus in Nigeria in the city of Lagos during Elul 5771*, upon the invitation of Rabbi Shlomo Bentolila, the head shliach to Central Africa. Although Lagos has a smaller Jewish population than the capital city Abuja, Mr. Nissim Gaon, an elderly philanthropist from Geneva, Switzerland had offered us use of his large villa in Lagos. The villa was spacious, fully furnished and secured, and was suitable for our living needs and for Chabad programming.

Unfortunately, four months later, our benefactor became very ill and remaining in the villa was no longer an option, so we returned to France to reconsider how to continue our shlichus in Nigeria.

We concluded that Abuja, with its larger and considerably younger Jewish population, was the logical place to reopen Chabad *peulos* in Nigeria. By Tishrei 5773*, an Israeli company in Abuja received us warmly and offered us to live in an apartment on their compound. We immediately started *shiurim*, *minyanim* and children's programs with the dozens of Jewish families living on that compound and many more Jews in town started to participate as well.

Very soon, our space became too small and we were forced to find a suitable location for a Beis Chabad in order to properly service the community. Finding a place to live in an African country that is on par with Western

standards, with dependable electricity, indoor plumbing and security is difficult, and finding a location large enough for a Beis Chabad is even harder.

However, the greatest challenge is that in order to rent such a location one needs to sign a two year contract and pay the entire rent up front. This is a huge sum of money, and we had no way of raising such an amount in our situation.

Life went on and we continued the daily and weekly *peulos*, but we had no way of moving forward in developing the shlichus. A Beis Chabad was quickly becoming a vanishing dream.

We started having nagging doubts about the entire shlichus. Perhaps our decision to come to Nigeria was a mistake and we were in way over our heads. All the developments in the shlichus certainly indicated so. Perhaps another couple would be more suited for this shlichus...

We were at a critical and painful juncture. After several weeks we decided it was time to travel to the Rebbe to ask for a *bracha* and a clear sign that the shlichus to Nigeria was for us.

We flew to New York for Chof-Beis Shevat 5773* and at the Ohel, we wrote all the details of how our shlichus had evolved. From starting off at the perfect premises for a Beis Chabad in Lagos we were now stuck in a tiny apartment in an Israeli compound in Abuja with no path forward. We begged the Rebbe for a clear sign as to whether we are to remain in Nigeria or search for a new shlichus elsewhere.

That week I heard about a wealthy businessman, Mr. David Khazanski from Toronto, who has several investments in Nigeria. I reached out to him, introduced myself and requested a meeting with him since I was in the area. He invited me for a meeting at his office at 6:00 p.m.

I searched online for flights, found a 3:00 p.m. departure from JFK arriving in Toronto at 4:00 p.m., leaving enough time to make it to his office, meet with him and catch the return flight to New York later that evening.

At 6:00 p.m. I arrived at the office to be told by the secretary that Mr. Khazanski is extremely busy and would like to reschedule for the next morning.

"There is no tomorrow morning for me in Toronto," I explained. "I just flew in from New York to meet Mr. Khazanski and I need to return tonight."

The secretary was a bit flustered and relayed the message. Mr. Khazanski came out of his office and apologized.

"I thought you said you were in the area?"

"Coming from Nigeria, New York City is in close proximity to Toronto."

He graciously invited me into his office and we had an animated conversation about Chabad activities in Nigeria in



MR. DAVID KHAZANSKI

general and in Abuja in particular. I explained to him that we were now at a critical moment and perhaps he would consider making the worthy investment in establishing our shlichus in Nigeria in the proper way.

Mr. Khazanski was very receptive and enthusiastic about everything I said but then explained that, at the moment, his assets were tied to many projects and investments and he was not in a position to give such a significant amount up front.

"When my pending deals in Nigeria pull through you will certainly hear from me."

He then requested that when I return to New York I should write to the Rebbe to request a *bracha* on his behalf for *hatzlacha* in his business dealing in Nigeria.

That evening, my wife and I went to the Ohel and wrote a long *tzetel* about the shlichus in Nigeria. This time we made somewhat of a detailed plan. We would return to Nigeria and remain until Lag Bomer. If by then we won't see any change in the situation, we would take it as a sign that the shlichus is not for us and return to France to look elsewhere.

Of course, we reported to the Rebbe the details of my meeting with Mr. Khazanski of Toronto and asked for a special *bracha* on his behalf for success in his business.

After davening at the Ohel, my wife walked into the Chabad House and saw on the video screen the following scene:

It was the farbrengen of Yud Shevat 5735* and in between one of the *sichos*, Rabbi Avraham Parshan presented Mr. Tanenbaum, a philanthropist from Toronto, to the Rebbe.

Rabbi Parshan: He pledged half a million dollars to build in Kfar Chabad...

Mr. Tanenbaum: I meant a quarter million...

The Rebbe: Why are you scared to commit to half a million if Hashem can make you wealthier? A Jew says you can give half a million...

Mr. Tanenbaum: I say "a quarter," he says "a half..."

The Rebbe: If you'll be able to give half a million, that's even better. Now you have a certain amount of capital which you calculate allows you to give a quarter million. Comes along Parshan here, and says you're giving twice as much. So you can indeed have twice as much capital!

Mr. Tanenbaum: May it only be...

The Rebbe: May Hashem help you - "גיעת ומצאת". Say *l'chaim*...

After Mr. Tanenbaum and his family say *l'chaim* to the Rebbe:

The Rebbe: If Parshan comes along in a few weeks, saying you can give a million, don't get scared... and then see to it that he also gives a million!

Needless to say, my wife was astounded to watch this clip, concerning a philanthropist from Toronto(!) at that exact moment and she repeated the exchange to me when I joined her a few moments later. I asked someone in the office where the video was from and they pointed out to me that this specific clip was produced by JEM as an Eye to Eye in the Living Torah series entitled "What Comes First: The Money or the Pledge?" and is available online. (www.chabad.org/779170)

Right away, I sent the link to Mr. Khazanski and informed him that this was the Rebbe's response to his request for *bracha*.

"My wife saw this message from the Rebbe on the video screen at the Chabad House right after davening on your behalf at the Ohel. Surely, committing to opening the Beis Chabad in Nigeria before the deals pull through will be the conduit for Hashem's blessing for your success."

He responded that we can go ahead with planning the new location for the Beis Chabad.

Before Lag B'omer, Mr. Khazanski came to Nigeria to settle the deal he had been working on for many months. Not only did he close his original deal with much success, he unexpectedly landed an amazing deal in an entirely different industry!

Needless to say, during this wondrous business trip, we signed the contract for the new location and opened a beautiful Beis Chabad.

Most importantly, on a personal level, we received the clearest and most tangible sign from the Rebbe that Nigeria is our *makom hashlichus*. We feel that we received a direct instruction from the Rebbe to remain in Nigeria as his shlichim to prepare the world for the *geula*. ①

YOUR STORY

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



V SCHILDKRAUT VIA JEM 08281

"WHY ARE YOU SCARED TO COMMIT TO HALF A MILLION IF HASHEM CAN MAKE YOU WEALTHIER?"

THE REBBE SPEAKS TO MR. TANENBAUM AND RABBI AVRAHAM PARSHAN FROM TORONTO, DURING THE FARBRENGEN OF YUD SHEVAT 5735.



THE CHABAD HOUSE PURCHASED WITH MR. KHAZANSKI CONTRIBUTION.



THE CHANUKAS HABAYIS OF THE NEW CHABAD HOUSE.





YUD SHEVAT

5720s

TEFILLOS

The Rebbe davens at the *amud* for the three *tefillos* of Yud Shevat. In the 5720s* these were from the rare times that the Rebbe would join the *minyán* for Shacharis.

As can be seen in the pictures, on Yud Shevat 770 was filled with many more Chassidim than usual, as many would travel to be with the Rebbe on this day.



YUD SHEVAT 5722. G SCHUSTERMAN VIA JEM 303168



YUD SHEVAT 5722. G SCHUSTERMAN VIA JEM 303176



YUD SHEVAT 5722. G SCHUSTERMAN VIA JEM 303174



YUD SHEVAT 5721, GOLDSTEIN FAMILY

CHASSIDIM BOARD A BUS AT 770 TO BRING THEM TO THE OHEL.

OHEL

The Rebbe visits the Ohel of the Friediker Rebbe, staying for many hours in the frigid weather.

Many Chassidim would join the Rebbe at the Ohel on this day. (Ahead of the first *yahrtzeit* in 5711*, the Rebbe instructed Chassidim to visit the Ohel of the Friediker Rebbe and to send in *panim* for those unable to visit.)

A heater was placed near the Rebbe.

Some years, the Rebbe did not visit the Ohel on Yud Shevat itself but only on the next day—Yud-Aleph.



YUD SHEVAT 5721, GOLDSTEIN FAMILY



YUD SHEVAT 5721, GOLDSTEIN FAMILY



YUD SHEVAT 5721, GOLDSTEIN FAMILY



YUD SHEVAT 5721, GOLDSTEIN FAMILY



RABBI PINNY LEW

FARBRENGEN

The Rebbe would farbreng each year on Yud Shevat.

During these farbrengens the Rebbe would say a *maamar* “*Basi Legani*” based on the last *maamar* published by the Friediker Rebbe. The Rebbe would base the *maamar* on one chapter of the original *maamar*, covering a chapter each year.

In 5724* (the date of the pictures presented here), the Rebbe said three *maamarim* in connection with Yud Shevat—Friday night, Shabbos day, and Motzei Shabbos.

The Yud Shevat farbrengen would include a *siyum* with a *hadran* on a *masechta*.



YUD SHEVAT 5723; RABBI PINNY LEW



YUD SHEVAT 5723; RABBI PINNY LEW

YUD SHEVAT 5723, RABBI PINNY LEW



YUD SHEVAT 5724



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.



Chanukah Gelt

Dear Editors,

Here are a few corrections to the Chanukah Gelt article ["Holy Coins", Issue 75 (152)]:

On page 31, it says that the Rebbe continued giving *Chanukah gelt* to the *bochurim* "for almost a decade, the final year being 5721." Actually, the final year was 5720.

You then write that "the Rebbe would also send *Chanukah gelt* to *yeshivos*..."—this isn't entirely accurate, for the Rebbe wouldn't actually send money,

rather he instructed the *hanhalos* or one of *ziknei haChassidim*, to distribute it in the Rebbe's *shlichus*.

The same was with other groups of people throughout the years, such as the soldiers of Tzahal (if I remember correctly, beginning 5734, the year of the Yom Kippur War), the Chernobyl kids (5751), and others.

A few of the *Chanukah gelt chalukos* throughout the years are missing in the article:



Zos Chanukah 5735, at the end of the farbrengen: The Rebbe had come to the farbrengen holding (in addition to the *siddur*) a bag with dollars. Towards the end of the farbrengen he handed them to those who participated in *mitvza Chanukah*, for them to distribute the dollars to the whole crowd as *Chanukah gelt*. This was the second distribution of dollars through the *tankistin* (the first was on 18 Elul 5734) so it was quite a *chiddush*.

[-Ed note: See "Ufaratzta!" (Leben Mit'n Rebbe'n) Derher Kislev 5778, for more about Chanukah 5735 and this farbrengn.]

Chalukos of two coins as *Chanukah gelt*, at the back of the Shul: On the fourth night of Chanukah 5737, at the end of the rally - to all kids; and the seventh night - to adults. [This was in the same "style" as the one in 5738 which is discussed in the article. *[-Ed note: See "Two Surprises," (Behind the Picture) Derher Teves 5775, for more about the chalukos of Chanukah 5737.]*

5750: The third night of Chanukah (which happened to be *nittel nacht*). The Rebbe said a short *sicha* in which he notified that he'd distribute two dollars as *Chanukah gelt*. Each night of Chanukah that year the Rebbe distributed dollars, most nights two dollars. [This was at the very beginning of the era when *chalukos* of dollars after *tefillos* became a usual occurrence, so this was also quite unique.] At the "Chanukah Live" event that year the Rebbe distributed packs of four dimes for each person as *Chanukah gelt*.

I am actually a bit surprised that there were only a few lines about the *chalukos* of 5751 and 5752.

Hatzlacha rabba in your *avodas hakodesh*, and we should all be *zoche* to the *hisgalus* of the Rebbe *teikef umiyad mamash!!*

M.L. Amitai
Montreal, Canada



Reb Schneur Zalman Blesofsky and the "Malachim"

Dear Editors:

In your Elul issue you printed a letter from Yitzchak Cohen. He commented on the Derher article about Reb Uriel Zimmer, "Devoted Chassid, Man of the World," which appeared in your Sivan 5778 issue.

Yitzchak referred to the Malachim as "a group of Chassidim from Williamsburg whose parents had been Chassidim of the Rebbe Rashab and veered off the Lubavitch path due to differences of opinions." He named my father as one example.

This is INCORRECT. My father, Reb Schneur Zalman Blesofsky, was the maternal grandson of Reb Moshe Eliyahu Landy, who was a Chossid of the Rebbe Maharash.

Reb Moshe Eliyahu (my great-grandfather) came to America years before the other Chassidim, and his daughter, my *bubbe* Zelda, was thrilled to find an available young Chossid with an uncut beard. She married my *zeide* Avraham Blesofsky, who was a Karliner (Stoliner) Chossid. They were married on the Lower East Side on December 9, 1916.

My father attended Torah Vadaas yeshiva in Williamsburg. He desired to remain seriously frum and found his way to the Malachim, who were *kanaim*. It had nothing to do with moving away from Chabad. He was born and raised here in the U.S. and had no affiliation with any Chabad institute as he was growing up.

My father liked to tell the story of the time Rav Yisroel Jacobson introduced him to the famous Chossid, Reb Dovid Shiffrin. When Reb Dovid heard that he was the *einikel* of his late friend Moshe Eliyahu, he started crying – he cried from happiness. He said he was overcome with emotion to see that his (late) friend's *einikel* remained seriously frum in America.

My father later found his way (back) to Chabad. He had a Chabad brother-in-law, Reb Wolf Greenglass, and was also befriended by Reb Moshe Dubinsky and Reb Elchonon Reices. Reb Moshe Gurkov told me his part in my father's finding his way to 770. The Rebbe told some *bochurim* that there is a Yeshiva Nesivas Olam in Williamsburg and it would be worthwhile to farbreng with some of their *yungeleit*. Reb Moshe Gurkov was one of the *bochurim* that went and farbrenged with the Williamsburg *chevra*. The next morning when he walked into 770 Reb Moshe Gurkov found my father sitting and learning.

My *zeide*, Avraham Blesofsky, was from the original Karliners and was not at all opposed to Chabad. He did after all marry a girl from Chabad. Many still remember Avraham davening at the *amud* in 770. The Rebbe had great pleasure when my *zeide* davened.

As an aside, Reb Dovid Shiffrin and my *elter zeide*, Moshe Eliyahu Landy are both buried in the same *beis hachayim*, Baron Hirsch Cemetery in Staten Island. There

are several known Chabad names there. Reb Dovid's *tzion* is two rows in front of my great-grandfather's.

This was the official *beis hachayim* for Chabad until the passing of Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah. The only means of transport to Staten Island at the time was by ferry boat which would have made it very difficult for the Frieddiker Rebbe to visit his mother's *tzion*. That is when Chabad moved its *beis hachayim* to Queens.

Reb Uriel Zimmer lived in Williamsburg and I clearly remember my father visiting him on Shabbos after davening. I still remember their backyard. Reb Uriel, my father, and Reb Moshe Weber were friends. When Reb Moshe would come to America, the three would get together for *melave malka* at our house in Williamsburg. Both Reb Uriel and Reb Moshe were giants of personalities.

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Correction:

It was brought to our attention that in the Kislev magazine this year, in the article about the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's chasuna, the picture on p. 49 was erroneously captioned as "The Kesubah of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin." The picture actually shows the tenaim document.

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