

A Chassidisher **Derher**

א חסידישער דערהער

**איצטער געפינט
ער זיך דא פונקט
ווי אמאל ..
במילא פירט ער דורך
אלע זיינע ענינים.
—משיחת ש"פ תבוא ה'תשל"ג**



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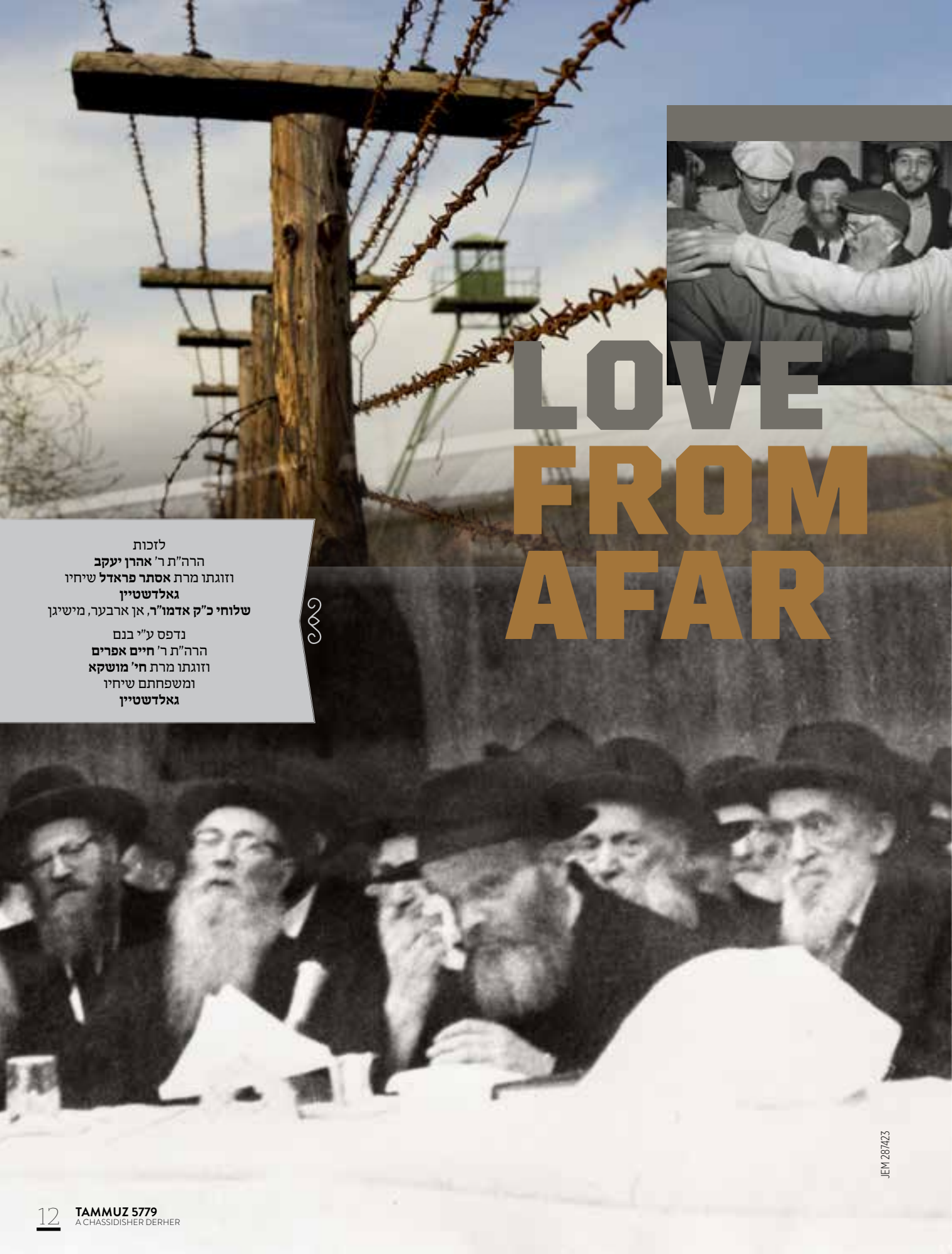
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LOVE FROM AFAR

לזכות
 הרה"ת ר' אהרן יעקב
 וזוגתו מרת אסתר פראדל שיחיו
 גאלדשטיין
 שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר, אן ארבער, מישיגן

נדפס ע"י בנם
 הרה"ת ר' חיים אפרים
 וזוגתו מרת חי' מושקא
 ומשפחתם שיחיו
 גאלדשטיין



JEM 287423



MOSCOW 5740S / NATHAN BRUSOVANI



MOSCOW 5740S / NATHAN BRUSOVANI



MOSCOW 5740S / NATHAN BRUSOVANI

“The Chassidim behind the Iron Curtain were separated from their leaders for over 30 years, and the younger generation has never even seen their leaders, and certainly could not have relied on the latter’s leadership and decisions to shape their lives. Yet these Chassidim turned out to be the strongest element of Jewish life behind the Iron Curtain.”

When we read these words today, written by the Rebbe in 5720*, almost 60 years ago, we can’t help but see the parallels to our situation today (for full quote see sidebar).

It has been so many years since we saw the Rebbe. Yet Lubavitch is bigger than ever and is thriving. The Rebbe has more shluchim today than ever before, and more people, from all backgrounds, are connected to the Rebbe than ever before.

The secret behind the success of Chabad behind the Iron Curtain was the connection between the Chassidim there and the Rebbe. For many long decades, the Rebbe worked tirelessly to encourage and help the Chassidim there. Whenever the Rebbe mentioned them by farbrengens his usual stoic voice would choke with tears.

When Chassidim were finally allowed to leave Russia, they merited unprecedented *kiruvim* from the Rebbe, even the children.

The love that the Rebbe showed for his Russian Chassidim, most of whom he had never seen, is surely something that we are experiencing today as well, a time when the younger generation of Chassidim has never seen the Rebbe.

As we approach Gimmel Tammuz, when this is at the forefront of our minds, we can draw some inspiration from stories that demonstrate the

Rebbe’s deep connection with his Chassidim stuck behind the Iron Curtain.

A REBBE’S THOUGHT

“*Machshava moeles*”—thought helps—these are the first words of Likkutei Dibburim, the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *sichos* edited by the Rebbe.

NEVER SEEN THEIR LEADERS

Incidentally, you mention in a previous paragraph that one of the aspects of Chassidic life is that the Chassidim are relieved from the responsibility of making decisions. You infer that the reason is that they are incapable of making their own decisions, and are entirely dependant on others. However, the truth is not so, as experience had demonstrated. A case in point are the Chassidim behind the Iron Curtain, who were separated from their leaders for over 30 years, and the younger generation has never even seen their leaders, and certainly could not have relied on the latter’s leadership and decisions to shape their lives. Yet these Chassidim turned out to be the strongest element of Jewish life behind the Iron Curtain, an element which retained its independence and way of life, in the face of the most terrible persecution, under circumstances constantly demanding decisions of an extraordinarily vital character, frequently decisions in matters of life and death, while others were indeed unable to make their own decisions and drifted with the stream, taking the line of least resistance. This extraordinary inner strength of the Chassidim came to light, for all to see, when the Iron Curtain was temporarily pierced soon after the last war, and numerous Chassidic families with their children and grandchildren escaped from behind the Iron Curtain.

The Letter and the Spirit volume two page 220

*📅 5720-1960

The discussion by that farbrengen in the sukkah, on the night of Shemini Atzeres 5693*, was about the Jews in Russia. “Thought has no boundaries,” the Friediker Rebbe continued, “and there is nothing that can hold it back, and at every moment it reaches its destination.”

“But what does the other person [the one being thought about] gain?” asked one of the Chassidim.

“A lot.”

Later at the farbrengen, the Friediker Rebbe said to him, “Where were you last Sukkos?” In other words, last Sukkos you were trapped in Russia, and this Sukkos you are free. So you see how my thinking about you had an affect.

The same idea was expressed by the Rebbe, in a letter to Reb Nissan Nemenov in 5712*:

“I had the special pleasure of receiving the names of *anash* in Russia, which demonstrates two important points.

“1) The *ahavas Yisroel* and the unbreakable bond between you and

our brethren in Russia. 2) It is most certain that by keeping a connection with them, at least in our thoughts, it strengthens the idea that כל ישראל כולו. Consequently, just as that country has no power on those outside its borders, a connection with those still stuck there will give them added energy to stand up and strengthen their situation and will weaken the power over them from the enemy... But for this we must be as one body, and this is the idea of the power of thought, and especially the power of imagination (כח הציור).

“Surely you will maintain this connection going forward, and doubtlessly it will greatly help those who are there and also those who are here.”

DIEDUSHKA

Reb Bentzion Vishedsky merited to see firsthand the Rebbe’s care for Russian Jews. He related:

“In 5718*, my father’s uncle, Reb Yaakov Yosef Raskin, left

Russia. My father sent with him a letter to the Rebbe, asking if he should submit a request for exit visas. He did not receive a reply.

“A few years later, in 5725*, our friend Reb Zalman Viniarsky was preparing to leave Russia. Seeing his friend about to leave, my father once again decided to ask the Rebbe if he should submit a request. Zalman was hesitant to take the letter, because if it was seen by the border guards it might put his whole trip in jeopardy. But my father insisted that he wanted to send the Rebbe an actual letter in his handwriting, not just a message.

“In the end Reb Zalman agreed, and my father wrote a letter on cigarette paper, which is very thin and easy to hide. Zalman sewed the cigarette paper into the lining of his coat, and that’s how my father’s letter got to the Rebbe.

“A while later we received a letter from my uncle Reb Yaakov Yosef Raskin. Between the pages of the letter was a slip of paper with the Rebbe’s handwriting on it. It’s an absolute miracle that this message was not taken by the censors who looked at every piece of mail.

“The message said to submit requests for the family, and at the end the Rebbe wrote in his handwriting, “Do svidanya, Diedushka”—We will see each other, Zeide.

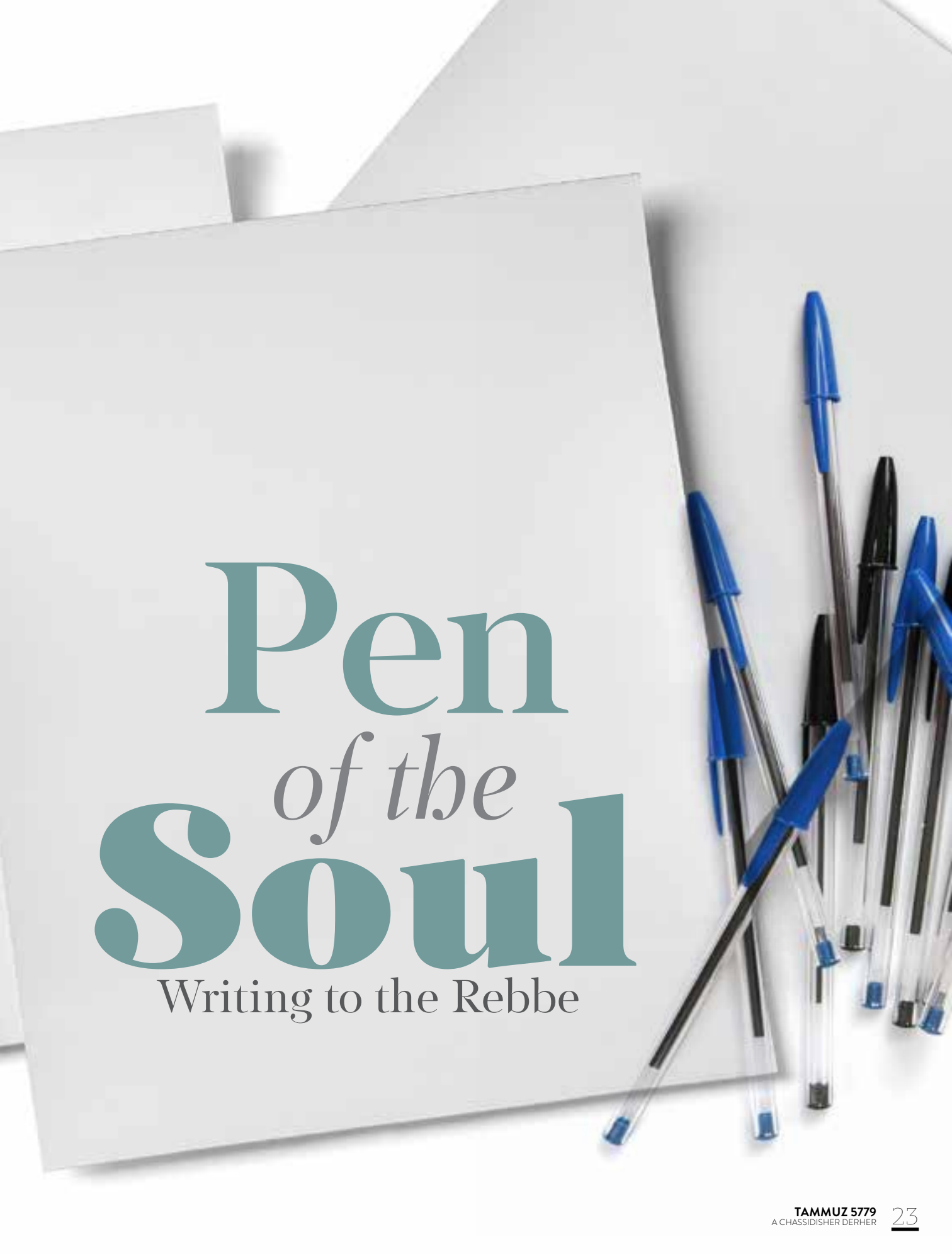
“We knew then that we would be seeing the Rebbe shortly, and indeed our visas were approved and soon we were out of Russia.²

“Our joy was incomplete however, because my older sister Dvonia, who was married to Mottel, the son of Reb Simcha Gorodetzky, had been in Tashkent and was still stuck there.

“Reb Simcha had left Russia even before us, in 5724*, and he thought that he would finally be able to relax a little after so many hard decades. Yet he immediately fell very ill, and was in the hospital. His children were all



11.SHEVAT 5724, JEM 104272

A stack of white papers is shown, with several pens (blue and black) scattered on the right side. The title 'Pen of the Soul' is written in a large, teal, serif font, with 'of the' in a smaller, italicized, grey font. Below the title is the subtitle 'Writing to the Rebbe' in a smaller, grey, serif font.

Pen *of the* Soul

Writing to the Rebbe

Throughout

Throughout the Rebbe's *nesius*, the primary avenue with which a person could personally communicate with the Rebbe was written correspondence. Even when *yechidus* was available, people were encouraged to keep their notes short and their conversations brief; additionally, opportunity for *yechidus* was reserved for rare occasions. And whereas *yechidus* was held in person and limited to people who could visit New York, people held long written correspondences with the Rebbe before ever meeting him even once.

So an individual's primary personal communication with the Rebbe would typically be through writing. When there was a concern, you would write a *tzetel* describing the issue and ask for a *bracha*; when you completed a project and wanted to report it to the Rebbe, you would write it up and send it in.

Anyone and everyone was welcome—and encouraged—to write to the Rebbe. The Rebbe read and answered letters from all over the world, and from people of all ages and lifestyles. As the years went on, the sacks of mail coming into 770 on a daily basis kept on growing and growing. It continues even more so today, as letters, emails, and faxes come in to the Ohel from around the world at all hours of the day and night.

One of the most important aspects of *hafatzas hamaayanos*, spreading the wellsprings of Chassidus, is to connect people to the source itself—to the Rebbe.

In 5709*, prior to the *histalkus* of the Frieddiker Rebbe, the Rebbe penned a fascinating letter to the legendary *mashpia* Rabbi Shlomo Chaim Kesselman, where he writes to him on the topic of encouraging others to write to the Frieddiker Rebbe.

“...It is clear to you based on everything that you have seen, that the Rebbe's words and *brachos* are true... Your experience, and the experience of others, has shown that when one listened to the Rebbe it was good, and when one didn't listen, he had it bad... Someone who believes with complete faith—a faith that directs his entire being—that the outlook and *brachos* of a certain individual [i.e. the Rebbe] govern everything, and knows that his friend must make an important decision in any area in life, even a life threatening issue—if there is even the slightest chance that his friend will listen to him, then out of basic decency, *ahavas Yisroel*, *pikuach nefesh*, etc. he would chase after him and tell him: ‘Have mercy on yourself, your family, and all that is yours! Do not rely on your own judgement! Learn Chassidus, connect with the Rebbe, do as he says, and then you will succeed!’”

A Chossid knows that the Rebbe is the first and final address for everything he needs physically and spiritually; the one who shares our pain and who cares the most for our joy. Writing isn't only a means of requesting the Rebbe's *bracha* or giving him a report. Through the pen, a person connects his soul with the Rebbe. A Chossid understand that when the Rebbe receives his letter, the Rebbe will not only read what is written within the lines, but also what is written between the lines, what is really taking place in the heart and mind of the sender.



I Haven't Received Your Report!

In addition to asking for *brachos* when something is needed—which comes naturally for anyone who is aware of the tremendous power of turning to the Rebbe—a fundamental part of writing to the Rebbe is to report to him, in a detailed manner, on what one is doing.

In countless letters, the Rebbe asks for people to write about how they fared in *limmud haTorah*, *nigleh* and Chassidus, davening, and activities to influence their surroundings with the light of Chassidus. Just as well, the Rebbe asked for reports of good news in health, *parnasa*, and all material areas of life.

As the Rebbe explained it, there are several elements to this. The first is for the benefit of the writer himself: accountability. If people make it a practice of giving detailed reports to the Rebbe of what they learned and accomplished, this would motivate them to work to have things to report, and avoid having embarrassingly empty reports. The Rebbe told this to shlichim and public activists, and also to young *bochurim* in their teens. (If you think about it, this is astounding: The Rebbe's time was infinitely precious; yet he wanted to read about the nitty gritty of individuals' lives, simply as a method of motivation for Chassidim!)

In order for this to be effective, however, the reports need to be detailed. As the Rebbe wrote to an activist,

“When you write in a general manner, it doesn't add in your motivation, for when you suffice with a general description, the description need not change if the activities grow much greater, nor need it change if they become much smaller. On the other hand, when you know that you will need to write a detailed report... your entire approach is different.”¹

In addition to the benefit that the *writer* receives, the Rebbe also expressed many times that by reporting to him about their lives, Chassidim were fulfilling the precept of *ahavas Yisroel* to... the Rebbe himself. “Of all the letters I receive, very few of them contain information that brings me pleasure,” the Rebbe writes in a letter. “Hence, any letter in this vein is very precious to me...”² This is especially true about good news; but even if there isn't anything good to report, the very connection established through the letter is important.

Don't Make My Mistake...

Rabbi Yehoshua Hadad, who was a shliach in Milan, Italy until his recent passing, studied as a *bochur* in Brunoy, France. He related:

“One year, as part of the celebration of Lag Ba'omer, we rented buses and brought about 200 Sephardic children to spend a whole day in the yeshiva in Brunoy. The children



Far, Near and Expensive

A distraught Reb Mordechai Lepler was traveling to Petersburg. Next to him in his carriage sat his son, withering in pain. Perhaps the doctors in the big city would be able to help him and find a cure to his ailment.

After a thorough checkup, they came to the grim conclusion that the disease had penetrated into the boy's bones and there was absolutely nothing they could do.

Hearing the diagnosis, Reb Mordechai sent a letter to his Rebbe, the Mittler Rebbe. In it he detailed the situation and what the doctors had said.

He estimated that the letter would take about five days to reach Lubavitch and then another five days to receive the response.

Ten days passed and an anxious Reb Mordechai waited outside to see when the mailman would come

by. On the first day, his hopes were dashed when he was informed that there was no mail for him. The same thing happened on the second day. Finally, to his great relief, on the third day the postman told him that a letter had arrived but he had no time to search for it and give it to him.

Reb Mordechai was not ready to accept that answer and so he ran after the mailman, took hold of his mail bag and began searching for the letter himself. As he was rummaging through all the letters he asked the man why he was in such a rush that day.

He replied, "A member of the royal family, who is related to the Czar, is very sick and they called the royal doctor of the Austrian king to the house to treat the boy. Today he is returning to the capital city of Vienna and I was charged

with the job of finding a horse and carriage for the trip."

As he was listening to the story, Reb Mordechai found the letter and began reading it.

"I received your letter..." it stated, "and I saw that the salvation is soon to come from near and far." It concluded, "Do not spare any money."

Trying to digest the message, Reb Mordechai realized that he had to do whatever he could to see this doctor from Vienna, so he asked the mailman for the address.

When he arrived, there was chaos outside as tens of people were trying to push their way in for the slim possibility that this famous doctor would help them.

Reb Mordechai was a respected and well known figure, so when he arrived he was able to inch his way closer and closer, until



לזכות
 החתן התמים
משה יעקב קאפל הכהן שיחי'
 והכלה המהוללה מרת חי' מושקא תחי'
כצמאן
 יום חתונתם
 ט"ו סיון - יום התחלת גאולת
 כ"ק אדמו"ר מהורי"צ זצוקלה"ה
 נבג"מ ז"ע - ה'תשע"ט
 נדפס ע"י הורי החתן
 הרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק הכהן
 וזוגתו מרת תמרה ומשפחתם שיחיו
כצמאן



finally he was inside the house, close enough to talk to the doctor.

“Please come check on my son,” he begged.

But the doctor refused to leave, stating that he was the king’s personal physician and he had to get back.

Determined to find a way to convince the doctor to visit his son he offered him one thousand rubles, a staggering sum of money!

In the face of this offer the doctor could not refuse.

“There is no remedy in all of Russia for this illness,” declared the doctor after his initial checkup. “However, if I do find a certain remedy in my bag then I will be able to give it to your son and he will certainly be healed.”

He quickly sent someone to bring his medical bag and sure enough it did contain some of the necessary medicine.

Being that administering this medication required

unique medical capabilities, the Viennese doctor decided that he would find a physician in Petersburg and teach him how to administer it.

After the initial application, the doctor let them know that the healing had already begun and that the cause had been a tooth ailment.

The Mittlerer Rebbe’s words were fulfilled in their entirety. The salvation came from afar in the form of the doctor from Vienna and it was also nearby as the medicine was with him in his medical bag. Additionally, if he had not agreed to spend any amount of money, the doctor would not have agreed to see his son. **T**

(Reshimos Devorim vol. 1, p. 96)



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 27000

RABBI ABRAHAMS RECEIVES KOS
SHEL BROCHA FROM THE REBBE,
MOTZEI SIMCHAS TORAH 5746*.

לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע
נדפס ע"י
החבר הצעיר בשליחות המל"ח
קיצ ה'תשי"ט



“Wherever You Will Be...
***The Rebbe Will
Be With You***”

*Exclusive interview with Rabbi Yosef Abrahams
Mashpia, Yeshivah Gedola Lubavitch of Greater Miami*

Rabbi Yosef Yeshaya Abrahams is the senior *mashpia* of Yeshivas Lubavitch of Miami. He merited to spend his years as a *bochur* in the Rebbe's presence, during the years of *kabbalas hanesius* and after. We thank him for sharing his story. We also thank Rabbi Bentche Korf, *mashgiach* in the yeshiva, for conducting the interview on our behalf.

My First Connections

I was born in Philadelphia in 5697* (תרצ"ז).

My family wasn't associated with Lubavitch. The first time I encountered Chabad was as a seven-year-old student in Yeshivas Achei Temimim. The school was run by a Chossid from Nevel named Rabbi Schneiderman, who also served as the rabbi of a Nusach Ari shul across the street.

My first teacher was Reb Yitzchak Dovid Groner,¹ who taught there for a short period of time. Rabbi Mendel Tenenbaum was also a teacher there. Although it was officially a Chabad-run school, many teachers weren't Lubavitch, and I didn't learn much about Lubavitch during my four years there. I was, however, an avid reader of Talks and Tales.

When I was eleven-years-old, my family moved to Chicago, and we were members of the Chabad Bnei Reuven Shul, which still exists today. Only one month after our arrival, my father tragically passed away, and towards the end of the year, my mother returned to Philadelphia.

I was already twelve-years-old, and my classmates from the *olam'she* school I attended were enrolled in the Telz Yeshiva in Cleveland for the upcoming school year. However, the rabbi of Bnei Reuven, Rabbi Dovid Moshe Lieberman (today the rabbi of Shomrei Hadas in Antwerp) suggested to my mother that I enroll in Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim in New York on Bedford and Dean, which was much closer to Philadelphia. We thought it was a good idea, and so, Reb Dovid Moshe brought me along on his trip

to the Frierdiker Rebbe for Rosh Hashanah 5710*.

Seeing The Frierdiker Rebbe

I began learning in Tomchei Temimim, and naturally I participated in many of the events in 770.

In those days, the Frierdiker Rebbe made minimal public appearances. When he did hold farbrengens on Yomim Tovim and *yomi d'pagra*, children my age and *bochurim* were not allowed to attend due to space constraints.

I recall waiting on the steps to the Frierdiker Rebbe's apartment on Simchas Torah along with other youngsters hoping to be allowed upstairs, but it was not to be.

The same occurred once again several months later, on Yud-Tes Kislev. We waited on the stairs hoping to catch a glimpse of the Frierdiker Rebbe, again to no avail. Suddenly, towards the end of the farbrengen, the door opened. The Frierdiker Rebbe had specifically requested that everyone outside be allowed in.

I was a short child and the room was packed with people, but one *bochur* kindly held me up and I was able to catch a glimpse the Frierdiker Rebbe for a moment. He was sitting at the head of the table wearing his *spodik*, and his holy face was a fiery red.

As it turned out, that was the Frierdiker Rebbe's last farbrengen.

Early Memories Of The Rebbe

My first recollection of the Rebbe is from the Simchas Beis Hashoeva farbrengen the Rebbe held each year for yeshiva students. Many *bochurim* from non-Lubavitch *yeshivos* would come for the evening and I recall participating in that farbrengen in 5710*, before the Frierdiker Rebbe's *histalkus*.²

Suddenly, towards the end of the farbrengen, the door opened.



RABBI ABRAHAMS, AGE 15, OUTSIDE LUBAVITCHER YESHIVA AT BEDFORD AND DEAN.

I recall another event which took place a few days later, on Simchas Torah.

The Frierdiker Rebbe's *hakafos* were held in his *yechidus* room which could only contain so many people. All those who couldn't participate joined a separate *minyán* in the *zal*. Understandably, they wished they could be participating in the Frierdiker Rebbe's *hakafos*, and the spirit in the *zal* wasn't fully *Simchas Torah'dik*.

But then the Rebbe came down from the Frierdiker Rebbe's *hakafos* to dance with us. That brought new life to the dancing. The Rebbe danced with us for quite some time, and because of the strong *hadras kavod* we felt towards the Ramash, "*Der Rebbe's Eidim*," nobody left the circle as long as he was present.

The Year Of Kabbalas Hanesius

Although I was still quite young, I clearly remember the atmosphere in Lubavitch at the time. There was a constant push for the Rebbe to accept the *nesius*, but no one knew how long it would take or how it would play out.

Throughout the year of *aveilus*, davening took place in the Frierdiker Rebbe's *yechidus* room. I wasn't usually present, being in yeshiva in Bedford and Dean, but I do recall, from the times I did participate on Shabbos, that the Rebbe always approached the Frierdiker Rebbe's desk after davening. I don't know if he recited anything or the like.

The first farbrengen I attended after the Frierdiker Rebbe's *histalkus* was, if I recall correctly, Acharon Shel Pesach 5710*. A few days later, on Shabbos Mevorchim Iyar, the Rebbe farbrenged once again, and then again for the *bochurim* on Beis Iyar.

The older *bochurim* in 770 would make sure to involve us and keep us informed of what was going on, so



THE REBBE FARBRENGS IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THE NESIUS.

PINNY LEW

although the Beis Iyar farbrengen wasn't officially publicized anywhere, we were aware that it was to take place and made sure to be there.

Although the Rebbe's *sichos* are usually difficult for a 12-year-old, the Rebbe spoke many *sichos* about *hiskashrus* that year, and those *sichos* were easier to understand. I clearly remember, for example, the *sicha* on Acharon Shel Pesach where the Rebbe cited the story about Rabbi Yehudah Hanasi visiting his family on Friday nights even following his passing.³ The Rebbe also continued on this topic on Shabbos Mevorchim.

Before the official *kabbalas hanesius* on Yud Shevat, the Rebbe's place during farbrengens was at the back wall of the *zal*, near where the door to the yard is today. He would sit at the center of the table, older Chassidim would sit and the *bochurim* would stand around. There was a small area

open between the Rebbe and the wall behind him, and sometimes I stood directly behind the Rebbe.

On Yud-Tes Kislev 5711*, there was a very large crowd at the farbrengen and I stood right behind the Rebbe. In middle of a *sicha*, I noticed the Rebbe's *gartel*, and in my childish mind, I was gripped by a desire to touch it. I surreptitiously reached out and touched it very gently. A few minutes later, the Rebbe finished the *sicha*, and turned around to those standing behind him with a big smile, "People are hiding behind me and not saying *l'chaim!*"

"Who Told You To Come?"

In Tammuz 5710*, I celebrated my bar mitzvah. Some days beforehand, a *bochur* told me that I should go to *yechidus* before my bar mitzvah, so I went to 770 and after Mincha, he directed me to simply knock on the



Rabbi Mentlick said loudly to Rabbi Katz, “The Ramash asked to be notified when the operation begins.”

One suggested that the Rebbe will take on the *nesius* at that point, but another claimed that I had probably misunderstood... However, I recently discovered a letter from the same month, where the Rebbe writes an identical directive to someone else.⁵

My Appendix

On Erev Sukkos 5711*, I suddenly developed appendicitis and was taken to the hospital for emergency surgery. My mother wasn't present, so I was accompanied by the *rosh yeshiva*, Rabbi Mordechai Mentlick, who signed consent for the surgery, and his brother-in-law, Rabbi Moshe Pinchas Katz, who worked in the office in the yeshiva. Needless to say, I was quite nervous. As I was being wheeled into surgery, Rabbi Mentlick said loudly to Rabbi Katz, “The Ramash asked to be notified when the operation begins.” The thought that the Rebbe was thinking about me calmed me considerably.

In those days, the surgery was no simple matter and I was released from the hospital only on Hoshana Rabbah. That night, a few friends arranged *hakafos* in the *zal* in Bedford and Dean, but the next day I managed to make it to 770. In the evening, the Rebbe *farbrenge*d in the sukkah in the *shalash* (the *farbrenge*n began before *shkia*), and then *hakafos* were held in the Friediker Rebbe's room upstairs (where only the older Chassidim were granted entry). I wasn't up to being at the *farbrenge*n, so I stood with another *bochur* in the foyer of 770.

As we were talking, Rebbetzin Chana arrived in 770 and opened the door to *Gan Eden Hatachton* with her personal key.

Looking at us with a smile, she said, “*Mistame vet ir velen aroifgein*—you'll probably want to go up.” She opened the door wide and we went in after her.

The *farbrenge*n was soon over, and people started to come upstairs. Immediately, the entrances were tightly supervised, and when Rabbi Mentlick saw me, he couldn't believe I had made it in. Rabbi Jacobson told us to hide in the sukkah which was right next to the Friediker Rebbe's *yechidus* room, and that's how I was able to participate in those *hakafos*.

After davening, Rabbi Mentlick brought me over to the Rebbe, saying that I was the child who had been in the hospital, and the Rebbe said, “*Nu, er vet zein a gezunter Yid*—he will be a healthy Jew.” The Rebbe repeated this three times.

The next day, there was a *farbrenge*n in the *zal*. At some point, the Rebbe began giving out *l'chaim* to everyone. One *bochur* asked the Rebbe for *l'chaim* for me but the Rebbe refused to give him and said, “*Zol er alein tzugein*—he should come himself.”

That's what I did.

There was a short postscript to the story of my appendix:

At my next birthday *yechidus*, in Tammuz 5711*, the Rebbe asked as I walked in, “*Nu, bist shoim gezunt*—are you healthy already?”

Witness From The Window

As Yud Shevat drew closer, more and more pressure was placed on the Rebbe to accept the *nesius*. I recall the *farbrenge*n of Chof-Daled Teves; Reb Meir Ashkenazi publicly requested of the Rebbe, “*Az der Rebbe zol kumen*

Rebbe's door and ask for the Rebbe's *bracha*. This was before the official *yechidus* schedule was established in Elul 5710*.

I followed his instruction, and Rabbi Nissan Mindel answered my knock. He understood that I wanted to speak to the Rebbe so he left the room. I approached the Rebbe's desk, and said that I would soon be celebrating my bar mitzvah and that I ask for the Rebbe's *bracha*.

The Rebbe asked, “Who told you to come here?”

I answered, “A *bochur*.”

“Which *bochur*?”

I said the name (which I no longer remember).

The Rebbe put on his hat, took out a paper, and asked me for my name and mother's name. He asked about my family, and he also told me to continue reciting *kapitel* 71 every day for the Friediker Rebbe (this was after Yud-Beis Tammuz, when the Rebbe had addressed the question of saying the *kapitel* even after the *histalkus*).⁴ The Rebbe said I should continue at least until Rosh Hashanah, “*Un vu du vest zein, vet der Rebbe zein mit dir*—wherever you will be, the Rebbe will be with you.”

After I reported the Rebbe's instructions, the *bochurim* debated the significance of the Rebbe's instruction to say the *kapitel* until Rosh Hashanah.

What We're All About

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

Part 6: Rashi, Rambam, Pirkei Avos
& Likkutei Levi Yitzchok

The farbrengen was the Rebbe's primary platform for teaching Torah and leading *klal Yisroel*. During the thousands of hours of farbrengens, the Rebbe illuminated all areas of Torah in so many revolutionary ways, thereby transforming the Jewish world forever. Foundational themes now universally accepted and applied—such as the eternal and absolute relevance of Torah, the preciousness of a Yid, the importance of even one mitzvah and the imminence of *geula*—came to the world through the Torah the Rebbe taught at farbrengens and later disseminated through various mediums.

A thorough analysis of the Rebbe's Torah is impossible, and certainly comparing and contrasting it to the Torah of previous Rabbeim is beyond us; nevertheless we have chosen to focus on four permanent fixtures of the Rebbe's *sichos* at the Shabbos farbrengens: Rashi, Rambam, Pirkei Avos & Likkutei Levi Yitzchok.

Although all *Raboseinu Nesieinu* taught Torah and Chassidus publicly, never before had a Rebbe taught a revolutionary approach to entire elements of Torah in a routine fashion. Over the years a pattern emerged and (for many years) Chassidim would come to the Shabbos farbrengen knowing what to expect on a general level. After the *maamar*, there were always *sichos* with explanations on a Rashi, a *biur* from Likkutei Levi Yitzchok, and (in the summer) a Mishna in Pirkei Avos. After the Rebbe instituted the *takana* of *limmud haRambam*, there was an explanation on a *halacha* from the daily *shiur* as well.

Far from just being novel *chiddushei Torah*, these *sichos* introduced an entirely new dimension to the way we learn Rashi, Rambam and Pirkei Avos and made the groundbreaking Torah of Harav Levi Yitzchok accessible to all.

In this article we endeavor to discover how these four areas of *limmud haTorah* are connected to Moshiach and *geula*.

לזכות
החיילים בצבאות ה'

ישראל ארי' לייב
בן הרה"ת ר' מענדל יעקב
וזוגתו מרת רחל שיחיו טראקסלער
לרגל הולדתו ט"ו אייר ה'תשע"ח

לוי
בן הרה"ת ר' יהודה ארי'
וזוגתו מרת רבקה מרים שיחיו מאן
לרגל הולדתו ו' אלול ה'תשע"ח

אליהו
בן הרה"ת זלמן שמעון אברהם
וזוגתו מרת חנה שיחיו טראקסלער
לרגל הולדתו כ"ה כסלו יום א' דחנוכה ה'תשע"ט

נדפס ע"י זקניהם
הרה"ת ר' משה גדול
וזוגתו מרת שושנה שיחיו
טראקסלער



CIRCA EARLY 5720S*

Rashi

The Simple Meaning - פשוטו של מקרא

On Shabbos Parshas Noach 5725*, several weeks after the passing of the Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Chana, the Rebbe explained the first and last Rashi on the *parsha*. Thus began a new era of the Shabbos farbrengens and a new world opened in the study of Rashi. At every Shabbos farbrengen for the next 23 years, the Rebbe routinely explained a Rashi and charted out a new path in understanding this essential *pirush* that has been an inseparable part of Chumash learning for over 800 years.

Hundreds of commentaries have been written on Rashi over the years and yet the Rebbe's unique approach is unprecedented. Rashi describes the genre of his *pirush* in Parshas Bereishis "ואני לא באתי אלא - לפשוטו של מקרא - I have only come to explain the simple meaning of the *possuk* [as understood by the five year old starting to learn Chumash]."

The Rebbe takes this statement literally (more than any previous commentator on Rashi) and reveals how every word and nuance, every source or name quoted and even the *dibbur hamaschil* is integral to explaining the simple meaning of the *possuk* to a five year old child.

So groundbreaking is this approach to Rashi, that an entire *sefer* of *Klalei Rashi* - Principles of Rashi was compiled from these *sichos*.

In addition, based on the statement of the Alter Rebbe that *pirush Rashi* contains within it "ינה של תורה" - the secrets of Torah," the Rebbe revealed how through clarifying the "simple meaning of the *possuk*" one can uncover deep mystical ideas of Kabbalah and Chassidus in these *pirushim*. Discovering wondrous concepts

of *halacha* is also part and parcel of the Rebbe's phenomenal approach to Rashi.

The Rashi *sichos* are a breathtaking tapestry of basic Chumash understanding, fascinating halachic insights, deep explanations in Kabbalah and profound lessons in *avodas Hashem* - intertwined and inseparable - all stemming from the "simple meaning of the *possuk*."¹

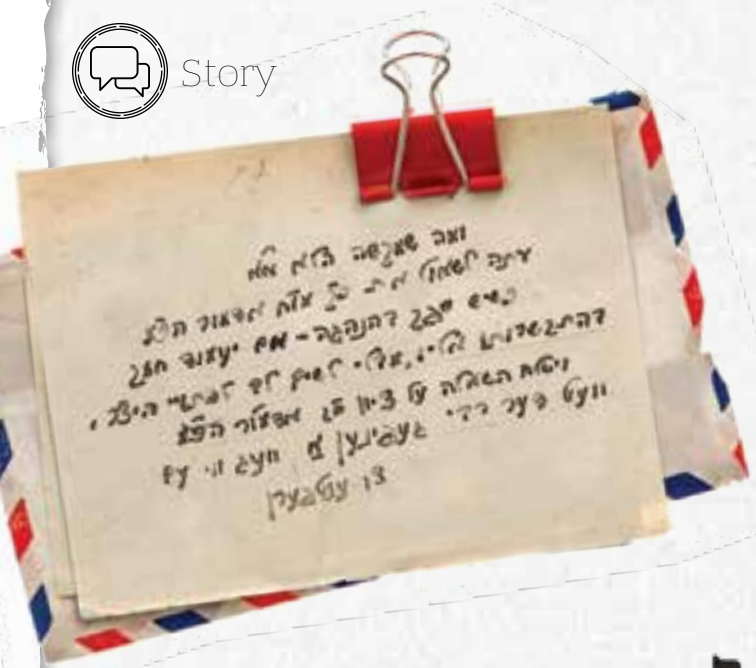
Many wondered why the Rebbe started to *koch* so strongly in Rashi. After all, the purpose of Rashi is to explain the simple meaning of Chumash to beginners, and does not seem to be a topic worthy of such deep analysis.

On Shabbos Parshas Shemos 5725*, there was a *Pegisha*² in Crown Heights and all of the visiting students were present at the farbrengen. Since there was a "new crowd," (certainly unaccustomed to the idea of analyzing a Rashi - ed.) the Rebbe prefaced by explaining the purpose of learning Rashi with such focus and care.

In the current era of עקבתא דמשיחא there is a greater emphasis on discovering the common denominator in all reality. The fact that modern scientific research strives to uncover the unifying factor in numerous disparate particles is a reflection of the fact that we are on the threshold of *geula* when the oneness of Hashem and creation will be revealed.

The same is true with Torah. The vast sea of Torah scholarship in all of its diverse formats all originates in one essential point; hence, every layer of Torah can be derived from the most simple meaning of the original text, the Chumash.

Revealing the true simple meaning of a *possuk* and illustrating how every layer of Torah, even the deepest mystical secrets, can be derived from it, is a taste of *geula*, when *achdus Hashem* will be revealed in everything.³



דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

Without Fear!

AS TOLD BY RABBI BEREL LEVERTOV (SANTA FE, NM)

After several years of shlichus in Santa Fe, the time had come to replace the current building of our Chabad House with a larger and more modern structure. We were happy with the location and a friendly couple pledged a substantial amount of money to sponsor half of the project.

We invested a lot of time, energy and money in creating the new blueprints but we encountered many complications. The price kept climbing and I was having my doubts if demolishing the old building and constructing a brand new building in its place was the proper route to take. The entire process was becoming very uncomfortable and I was plagued with a lot of indecision. We felt we were stuck.

On Shabbos Yud Shevat 5774* I was at the Ohel. Before traveling back home on Sunday I wrote a letter to the Rebbe begging for clarity in the building project. Standing in the Ohel I fervently davened that I make the proper decisions and that everything should work out for the best.

The next Shabbos was my daughter's bas mitzvah and on Friday I wanted to give her something from the Rebbe as a gift.

Baruch Hashem I was *zoche* to grow up near the Rebbe and I had a substantial collection of coins, dollars and *kuntreisim* I had received from the Rebbe, as well as other objects I had managed to collect over the years. In addition,

לע"נ
הרה"ח הרה"ת יעקב שלמה
בן הרה"ח ר' דוד ע"ה
גולדברג
גלב"ע ט"ז טבת ה'תשע"ט
ת"נ צ"ב ה'
נדפס ע"י בתו וחתנו
הרה"ת ר' דובער זוזגתו מרת דבורה לאה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
לברטוב
שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר,
סאנטא פיי, ניו מעקסיקא



after my father, Rabbi Moshe Levertov's passing eight years earlier I inherited a portion of his own collection.

As I opened the safe, a small piece of paper 2.5 X 3 inches that I had never noticed fell out. Apparently it was a part of my father's collection and I have no idea what it was from. An original *ksav yad kodesh* from the Rebbe with four words:

במרץ והתפשטות לבלי חת

With energy and expansion without fear.

We were dumbfounded.

The Rebbe was clearly responding to my question. I should throw away my insecurities and move forward with the plans with a *shturem!*



Before moving forward I discussed the situation with three shluchim and they all advised me to go ahead with it despite the major financial responsibility it entailed.

We got to work immediately and with great enthusiasm we moved out of the building, rented a temporary space a 15 minute walk away and hosted a grand groundbreaking ceremony before Pesach. Many dignitaries participated, there was much positive media attention and the community was very excited about the new developments.

When we approached the bank to secure a construction loan, which I claimed was going to be paid off when the building was completed, they said that in order to consider it, I needed to provide a legally binding letter of commitment from the donors for their substantial pledge.

When we contacted the couple to request the letter they responded that since we were moving ahead with the project with such speed and enthusiasm they will just give the money up front. No need for a letter.

Sure enough, a week later I walked into the abandoned Chabad House and found a FedEx envelope on the floor with a check of the full amount of their pledge!

Time went on and just before Tishrei we met with the contractor to pick up the final plans and permits from the city. To our chagrin he told us that the final price was going to be an additional \$500,000 and for the original price we would only be able to build 6,000 square feet.

We were very upset. I told him that I was not moving ahead with either of the plans.

"So what are you going to do?" he asked.

"I will buy a building," I said.

My wife immediately started searching online and found a 16,000 square foot building for sale in downtown Santa Fe, a 25-minute walk from our house. Although we had originally never considered purchasing in that area because we were accustomed to having the Chabad House near our home, the past six months of walking 15 minutes to our temporary place had changed our attitude.

Since we miraculously had the cash in the bank we were able to make a good offer on the building and the owner—who was a Holocaust survivor—decided to sell it to us with a good deal.

This development was enormous! The entire community was amazed that we managed to secure such a large building at such a prime location in our small town. Two blocks away from the world famous Santa Fe Plaza and a stone's throw away from the New Mexico State Capitol.



It was a tremendous *kiddush Hashem* and cause for great Jewish pride for the local Yidden to have a Chabad House at a landmark location in our beautiful historic town.

Besides, the original location was in a residential area and the zoning laws were very tight. Aside for having a shul, we could not have a kosher deli, a museum, or anything of the sort on premises. But now we had a building in the perfect location for everything we wished to do.

The building needed major renovations and the miracles did not stop there.

One Friday, I was on *mitvoim* and struck up a conversation with a tourist visiting a store and gave him a challa. His name is Mr. Scott Seligman, who was originally from Santa Fe, currently living in San Francisco but visited quite often.

Turns out he was a successful businessman who the store owner had solicited for a donation to Chabad several years before. We had never met or spoken. He was impressed with Chabad and we developed a long distance relationship.

One day I was speaking with Scott and he told me, "Rabbi, I will help you whenever you need."

"I have a building down the block and I need you to name it," I said.

Scott laughed good heartedly and left it at that.

Some time later I decided to visit him in California to make the official pitch. After schmoozing for a while he

asked how much I was asking for and when I said \$900,000 he laughed in my face.

"Rabbi, I don't give such amounts!"

I persisted and continued sharing with him all the wonderful things Chabad was accomplishing in Santa Fe, and after a lengthy conversation Scott decided he was going to name the new Chabad House for the amount I requested!

I have spoken to Mr. Seligman many times and he still can't figure out what motivated him to make such a sizable gift to one organization. But he's very happy he did!

We are now in the midst of renovations and very soon will open the doors of the Santa Fe Jewish Center Chabad (Seligman Building).

Although our plans changed drastically from what we envisioned during Shevat 5774*, the enthusiasm and excitement with which we moved forward caused the major donation to come in ahead of schedule, giving us the confidence and flexibility we needed, and changed our attitude to purchasing in a more central location. All because of the four worded message the Rebbe sent us on that Friday afternoon. **1**

YOUR STORY

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הרה"ת ר' מאיר יהושע וזוגתו מרת דבורה לאה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
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ליצמאן
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נלב"ע ליל שבת פרשת קרח ה' תמוז ה'תשס"ג
ת"נצ"ב'ה'
נדפס ע"י בנו
הרה"ת ר' ישעי' זושא וזוגתו מרת אסתר ומשפחתם שיחיו
ווילהעלם

לעילוי נשמת
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בהרה"ח הרה"ת ר' עקיבא יוסף הכהן ע"ה
פרידמן
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ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.
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ומשפחתם שיחיו
כהן
סאקרא מענטא, קאליפארניא

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לנשיאינו כ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע

ולזכות שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר לסען עי מארן, צרפת
הרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק וזוגתו מרת צלחה חנה
וילדיהם חי' מושקא, שיינא, זעלדא, דבורה לאה, שטערנא,
מנחם מענדל, דובער וישראל ארי' לייב, שיחיו
עמאר

לזכר נשמת
החיילת בצבאות ה'
חי' מושקא ע"ה
זלצמן

נולדה ד' אדר ה'תשס"ט
נלב"ע ש"פ חוקת, יו"ד תמוז ה'תשע"ה
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה'

ולזכות - יבלחט"א אחי' ואחיותי'
הת' מנחם מענדל שי', וחיילי צבאות ה' דניאל אליהו,
פעסי' אסתר, חנה, ואברהם שלמה שיחיו

לע"נ הק' לאה בת אברהם הי"ד

ולזכות שליח כ"ק אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו הרב ישראל בן חנה פריווא לרפו"ש וקרובה

בשבח והודי' להשי"ת על אשר הפליא והגדיל לעשות בארץ והגדיל שמו הגדול
והקדוש אשר נתגדל ונתקדש בעיני כל השרים והעמים אשר בכל מדינות המלך
ע"י פרסום שמו הק' של נשיא דורנו והוראתו הק' לחקיקת "רגע של שתיקה"
בבתי ספר העממים לתקן עולם במלכות ש-ד-י תיכף ומיד ממש!

ונזכה זעהן זיך מיטן רבי'ן והוא יגאלנו!

נדפס ע"י
אחד מאנ"ש

לע"נ

הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' צבי הירש ע"ה
בן הרה"ח ר' שניאור זלמן ע"ה
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נדפס ע"י בנם

הרה"ת ר' אברהם אשר וזוגתו מרת פייגא רבקה
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נדפס ע"י הורי

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ומשפחתם שיחיו

טענענבוים

להצלחה רבה ומופלגה בשליחותם הק'
בנאפה וואלי, קאליפורניא

**מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לנשיא דורנו
כ"ק אדמו"ר זצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע**
בקשר עם יום ההילולא העשרים וחמש

לע"נ הרה"ח הוו"ח אי"א נו"מ רב פעלים
התמים הר"ר יהודה צבי ב"ר משה יעקב ע"ה

פאגעלמאן

מהתלמידים הראשונים של ישיבת תו"ת בארה"ב ומהשלוחים הראשונים בארה"ב של כ"ק אדמו"ר מהוריי"צ נ"ע
שליח מסור ונתון בכל מאודו אל כ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע
שקד יותר משבעים שנה בעבודת השליחות מנהל ישיבת אחי תמימים ומוסדות חב"ד בוואוסטער יסד והעמיד בתי חב"ד

נלב"ע ב' דר"ח תמוז ה'תשע"ג
ת'נצ'ב'ה'

נדפס ע"י נכדיו למשפחת ליבעראוו
וואוסטער מאסאטשוסעטס

לזכות

הרה"ת ר' אשר שיחי' לרגל יום הולדתו כ"א תמוז
ולזכות בנו הת' שמואל שיחי' לרגל יום הולדתו י"ח תמוז
ולזכות כל משפחת קרנבסקי שיחי'

נדפס ע"י ולזכות

דוד בן רחל וזוגתו מרת חנה בלומא בת גיסא בריינא
בנותיהם ובניהם ליבא בת חנה בלומא, ריזל בת חנה בלומא ובעלה משה גבריאל בן חנה הינדא,
שמואל בן חנה בלומא, רבקה בת חנה בלומא, שטערנא שרה בת חנה בלומא שיחי'
פרקש

לזכות החיילת בצבאות ה'
סימא תחי'
לרגל הולדתה ב' ניסן ה'תשע"ט
נדפס ע"י הוריה
הרה"ת ר' ישראל מנחם
וזוגתו מרת חי' אסתר טובא
ומשפחתם שיחי'
ריטשלער

לזכות
ר' יהודה לייב וזוגתו מרת חנה
ומשפחתם שיחי'
מרזוב

לע"נ
הרה"ת ר' צבי הירש בן הרה"ת ר' פרץ ע"ה
חן
נלב"ע ד' תמוז ה'תשנ"ד
ת'נצ'ב'ה'
נדפס ע"י
בניו ובנותיו ומשפחתם שיחי'

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו
נדפס ע"י ולזכות
הרה"ת ר' לייביש משה וזוגתו מרת רינה
ילדיהם קיילא באשא, בנציון דוד, אליהו איסר, רבקה שיינדל אלטא שיחי'
גולדהירש

A Chassidisher Derher
Vaad Talmidei Hatmimim



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