

A Chassidisher **Derher**

א חסידישער דערהער

A Year With the Rebbe

THE STORY OF KVUTZA



Our Very Life

MIVTZA TORAH

Building a Country

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH
RABBI SHABSI ALPERN



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On the Cover:

The group of Kvutza bochurim erupt in joyous dancing on the tarmac upon their return to Eretz Yisroel after a year with the Rebbe, Iyar 5729.

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The Life of a Chossid

Reb Shmuel Gurary

Born: Unknown

Passed away: Adar I, 5681*

Chossid of: The Rebbe Maharash, the Rebbe Rashab and the Frierdiker Rebbe

Reb Shmuel Gurary was born to his father Reb Shneur Zalman.

He was a Chossid of the Rebbe Maharash, by whom he was a *yoshev* (one of the newly married *yungeleit* who would sit and learn) for some time, after which he was instructed by the Rebbe Maharash to turn to business. He was later a Chossid of the Rebbe Rashab and of the Frierdiker Rebbe.

Once, during a trade fair, a number of rich merchants gathered in an inn. They were all Chassidim of various courts, and of course, each of them told stories of the wonders and miracles done by their particular Rebbe. Reb Shmuel Gurary was present, and when it was his turn to tell a story, he said:

“Once, a business proposition came up for me in the field of timber harvesting and sale. It would require an enormous investment, but could generate a tremendous return if all went well. The risk was great, but so was the potential reward. Of course, I sought the advice of the Rebbe [Maharash]. The Rebbe told me to invest, and that’s what I did. Not long afterwards, the investment fell through and I lost everything I had put into the venture.”

Waiting for a miraculous punchline, the others were surprised that with these words, Reb Shmuel concluded his tale and fell silent.

“What was the miracle?” they asked.”

The miracle is that even after this story I remained a Chossid of the Rebbe, trusting the Rebbe exactly as I did before,” Reb Shmuel explained. “The Rebbe certainly knew I would lose on that investment, and yet the Rebbe told me to invest. Certainly, it was for my benefit. Perhaps a terrible decree faced me or my family, and the Rebbe lightened it by way of me losing money. Perhaps it was for another reason. Either way, it is clear to me that this was a miracle.”¹

In Lubavitch, it didn’t matter who you were in your hometown; here, everyone was equal. Reb Shmuel Gurary was a tremendously learned man, in both *nigleh* and Chassidus. He was wealthy and well-connected with the government. It happened many times that in the midst of meeting with a government official, he would ask their pardon to daven Mincha, the officials acquiescing with respect. Reb Shmuel had a guard at his door who would only allow people in with an appointment, as was customary among the local elite. This very same Reb Shmuel would leave his honor and prestige behind when he came to Lubavitch. In the *zal* in Lubavitch, he would be among the people pushing to catch a glimpse of the Rebbe. There was no trace of Reb Shmuel the well connected magnate, the sage. He was replaced by Reb Shmuel the Chossid, an equal amongst equals. He would stand before the Rebbe with complete *bittul*, like a servant before his master.²

The Rebbe Rashab once needed a large sum of money, in the neighborhood of tens of thousands of rubles. It is likely that this was needed to purchase a house in Eretz Yisroel. The Rebbe called in a number of wealthy Chassidim,

לזכות
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טרקסלר



including Reb Shmuel, and told them the amount needed, asking them to work out among themselves how much each would be able to contribute, and to return the next day with a reply.

The *gvirim* began to negotiate among themselves, but could not reach a satisfactory decision. Reb Shmuel, who was troubled by this situation, met the Rebbe during the night and gave him a check for the entire sum. The following morning, when the *gvirim* finally came to an agreement and came to the Rebbe, the Rebbe told them that he no longer required their assistance.³

When World War I broke out, millions of people were displaced from their homes and took to the roads. Reb Shmuel welcomed countless refugees into his home in Kremenchug.

As Sukkos 5679* approached, esrogim were practically impossible to procure throughout Russia. The war was raging and borders were sealed, making the import of esrogim from warmer climes unachievable. There was an exception, however. The Rebbe Rashab, in Rostov, had a single esrog, obtained by Reb Shmuel Gurary, who had been to the port of Odessa, and asked an officer that was travelling to Italy to bring back an esrog. All the Jews of Rostov—whether or not they were members of *anash—bentched* on that esrog.



BICHOL BEISI NEEEMON HU SEFER

When Tomchei Temimim moved to Rostov in the summer of 5679*, Reb Shmuel, who by that time was quite well-to-do, followed the yeshiva there. He was a key financial supporter during this difficult time, making enormous contributions without thought to repayment, even selling personal possessions to raise capital, which he then donated to the yeshiva.⁴

After Tishrei 5680, as the Bolsheviks approached Rostov, Reb Shmuel recommended that the Rebbe leave the country. After initially turning down the offer, the Rebbe eventually agreed, and Reb Shmuel purchased tickets for the Rebbe and for himself to Istanbul, Turkey, across the Black Sea from the port of Rostov. The next day, however, the Rebbe told Reb Shmuel, “At this point, I am not going to travel, and if I’m not going, you’re not going either, because wherever I will be, you will be.”

When the Rebbe Rashab fell ill and Chassidim formed a *beis din* to give years of their lives to the Rebbe, Reb Shmuel joined them. After the Rebbe Rashab’s *histalkus*, Reb Shmuel encouraged Chassidim to be *mekushar* to the new Rebbe, the Frierdiker Rebbe.

Reb Shmuel passed away in Adar I, 5681*, and merited to be buried in the *ohel* of the Rebbe Rashab in Rostov, four *amos* away from the Rebbe’s holy resting place.

“Wherever I will be, you will be.” ①

1. Reb Mendel, p. 104
2. From *Shabbos in Lubavitch*, Derher Cheshvan 5779.
3. Eileh Toldos Peretz, p. 675.
4. Igros Kodesh vol. 14 p. 175.

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ישראל מאיר הכהן שיחי'
לרגל הולדתו ט"ז סיון ה'תשע"ט
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הרה"ת ר' **מנחם מענדל הכהן**
וזוגתו מרת **מליא רחל שיחי'**
טייטלבוים



Our Very Life

**MIVTZA
TORAH**

MAKE TORAH YOUR TRADE

In the times of the *tannaim* and *amoraim*, there were people who were completely dedicated to Torah: תורתם אומנותם, “Torah was their trade,” a designation that came with significant halachic ramifications. Although we can no longer attain this halachic status, the Rebbe explains, we all have the ability to accomplish this by seeing to it that during our limited study-time—תורתנו אומנותנו the Torah is our sole occupation and focus.

This means that during the time set aside to study, the only thing in your world is Torah. No other thoughts can disturb you—and it’s not that you are constantly *fighting* those thoughts; rather, you put yourself in the mindset and mood that the only thing in your world at that moment is Torah. “We see clearly, that if a person makes a determined decision that for a certain period of time he will be completely dedicated to one single thing—whether it’s for a few minutes, a quarter of an hour, or an hour—he is able to do so. It is a very achievable thing to do, and you don’t have to be on a high level; even regular people, and even non-Jews, are able to achieve this.”⁴

Your study-time is like Shabbos, a time when you are uplifted above weekday matters, as the Rebbe explains in a *sicha*:

“If the phone rings, you don’t pick up—it’s Shabbos! If someone comes and tells you about a business deal where you can make a million dollars—you respond that it’s Shabbos; if someone comes to you about a health matter—you answer that ‘Shabbos hi milizok urefua krova lavo,’ [it is not appropriate to discuss health matters on Shabbos, but the healing will surely come].”⁵

“When your family approaches you to discuss something—even good and positive things—you must respond in a



ZAUMAN KLEINMAN

The 15th of Shevat 5731 is the date of the famous surprise *farbrengen* when the Rebbe announced that the time had come to “conquer the world with the study of Torah”—a *farbrengen* that, the Rebbe later revealed, was held at the instruction of the Frieddiker Rebbe.¹ This *sicha* essentially laid the groundwork for Mivtza Torah, which the Rebbe *shTUREmed* about throughout the following years.

KVIUS B’NEFESH

Some of the ten *mivtzoim* are self explanatory. Mivtza Tefillin is to get others to put on tefillin, Mivtza Mezuzah is to put up mezuzos. But then there are *mivtzoim* that are more general, and, thus, may seem a bit vague: Mivtza Torah, for example, can mean a lot of things, and the same goes for Mivtza Chinuch. However, the truth is that each *mivtza* does have a unique bend to it.

The thrust of Mivtza Torah, as the Rebbe explained it in *sichos* throughout the years, has a very specific emphasis: that every single person—man, woman, and child; business people, activists, and shliach—should have a set time to learn Torah. And, the Rebbe emphasized again and again, this time should be set in your soul—nothing should disturb you while you’re learning.²

Rabbi Yehoshua Tzeitlin was one of the three geonim of Shklov who were appointed by the misnagdim to debate the Alter Rebbe about the ways of Chassidus. He asked the Alter Rebbe, “What’s happening with you [—the Chassidim—] in Torah?”

“The baalei-batim have set times to learn,” the Alter Rebbe replied.

*“The same is true by us,” he said. “What is the innovation of Chassidus?” The Alter Rebbe replied: For you, it’s a *kvius b’zman*, it is set in time. Chassidus teaches us that it must not only be a set-aside time, but a *kvius b’nefesh*, it must be set [and ingrained] in the soul.”³*

* 5731-1971

positive, peaceful manner... but now I am learning Torah! My entire being is Torah! Torah is studying Torah!

“When you say this with sincerity... they will accept it, and not only will they not disturb your study, but they will prevent other things from disturbing you as well.”⁶

One can choose to study Torah while still allowing himself to be disturbed by mundane matters; as the Rebbe once put it, “You can study Torah in a *baalebatish* fashion... which means that you are studying while the worldly matters bother you.”⁷ We are told, however, that לא ניתנה תורה אלא לאוכלי המן, Torah was only given to the [Yidden in the *midbar*] who ate the *man*, because they were completely removed from the day-to-day worries of life. Every individual has the power to uplift himself and study Torah like the Yidden in the *midbar*, to uplift himself from the daily drudgery and study Torah as if he has nothing else on his mind.⁸

When you study Torah in this fashion, the Rebbe says, the entire world is completely nullified, the Torah protects and saves you, and you become the *baal habos* over the entire world.⁹

HOW TO ACHIEVE THE MINDSET

A way to achieve this, the Rebbe explains, is by contemplating the value of Torah. The Midrash tells us that יקרה היא מפנינים, אפילו מזה שנכנס לפני¹⁰; studying Torah is even more special than a Kohen Gadol who enters the *Kodesh Hakadashim*. Now, even the most simple individual can appreciate what a Kohen Gadol is, what the *Kodesh Hakadashim* is, and what Yom Kippur is. It follows that he can understand what it means when all three come together: when the **Kohen Gadol** enters the *Kodesh Hakadashim* on **Yom Kippur**—a tremendous level of holiness. And yet we go on to say that the Torah study of this simple Jew is even greater than that!

By contemplating the value and the *geshmak* of Torah, “Every Yid can sit down and study Torah to the extent that he stands above all worldly matters, and nothing can bother him.”¹¹

TORAH AS YOUR FOCUS

Torah study is above time, so even if you don’t spend the majority of your time studying Torah, your entire day can still be a *Torah’dike* day. By studying Torah with the proper approach, every individual has the power to permeate his entire day with Torah.¹²

“These 15 minutes, or half hour, or hour, that is spent on Torah, must be spread out and seeded throughout the entire 24 hours—to the extent that when you sleep, it should be clear that this is a Yid who studied Torah... If you are truly invested in Torah, then you gain knowledge even during your sleep.”¹³

WHO DOES MIVTZA TORAH APPLY TO?

Every person is included in Mivtza Torah, the Rebbe says.

- **Fulfill your halachic obligation:** Every single person has a halachic obligation to study Torah twice a day, in the morning and at night—so if you don’t have set study-times, then make them. Many people do not fulfill their halachic duty with the bare minimum studies in the morning and night (as explained in Hilchos Talmud Torah¹⁴), so even if you do have the minimal study sessions, be sure to fulfill your personal halachic obligation.
- **Increase:** Even if you already fulfill your halachic obligation, you should add more and more. Even if you have the full right to be spending your

A SHLIACH MUST HAVE KVIUS ITIM

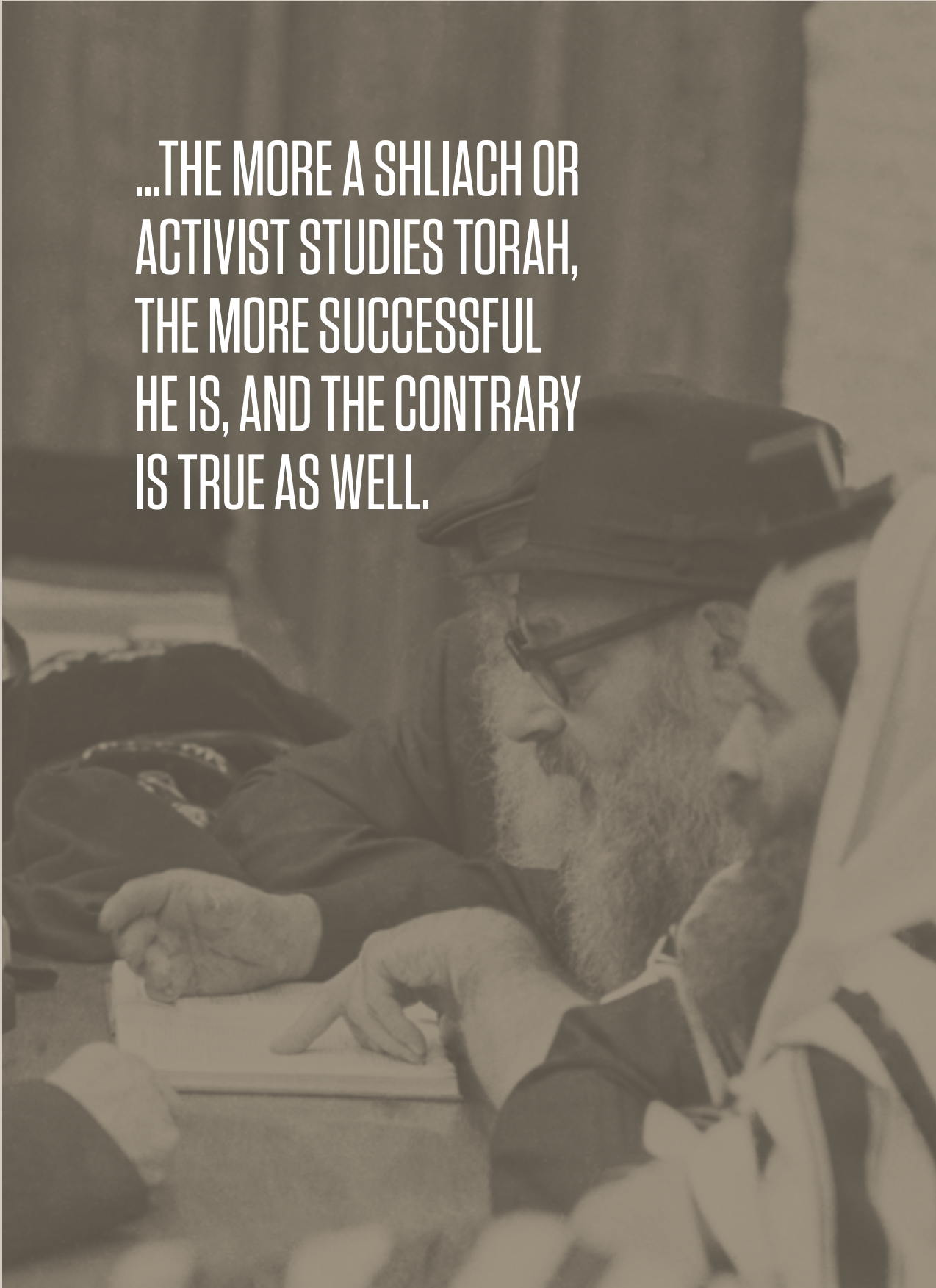
In a *yechidus* with a shliach in 5737*, the Rebbe spoke strongly about his studies. The following are some excerpts:

“...The fact that you don’t have set times to study calls all your activism into question... The test of whether you are a true עסקן ציבורי (community activist) is if it doesn’t disturb your own study of Torah and *avodas Hashem*. If you don’t have any study schedule at all—that’s a *vilde hanhaga*, a ‘wild’ behavior.

“This is all regarding yourself. But also, the truth is that if you don’t study, it harms your עסקנות (activism). We see clearly that the more a shliach or activist studies Torah, the more successful he is, and the contrary is true as well.

“The worst part is that you are *schlepping* me into this. Your justification for not learning is because you are involved in my matters, and I’m at fault for everything!

“From now on, at least, this must be corrected. You must make a firm decision, *azoi un nit andersh*, that not a day will pass without a set time to study. The more you add in Torah, the more Hashem will add for you: with tremendous success in your community activism, and with בני חיי ומזונא רויח in your personal life.”



...THE MORE A SHLIACH OR
ACTIVIST STUDIES TORAH,
THE MORE SUCCESSFUL
HE IS, AND THE CONTRARY
IS TRUE AS WELL.

9 TISHREI 5736, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 141960

time doing other activities, you should “steal” extra time to study! If you have already filled every single moment of your day with study, the Rebbe said, you too can still increase—by raising the *quality* of your study.

- **Women:** Women are obligated to study Torah pertaining to the mitzvos that apply to them—which includes many parts of *nigleh* and the entirety of Chassidus, since they are obligated to fulfill the constant mitzvos—including loving Hashem, fearing Hashem and so on—and they too should have set times for study.¹⁵ In addition, they should encourage their husbands and children to add in their studies.¹⁶
- **Children:** Children need to study as a part of their education, and they must also have set study sessions.¹⁷

THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE!

This applies to every single person, no matter how important the work you are doing is. “Nobody should say that they cannot do it because they are too busy,” the Rebbe says in a farbrengen. “...You can claim that you’re going on *mesiras nefesh*, you’re going on *mivtzoim*, and you’re involved in communal activities... These are all great things, and you will receive the greatest reward for it, but that doesn’t rise to the level of actually sitting down and learning Torah!

“For this, there are no *kavanos* that can help you... You must actually set aside time to learn... Even if you help others study Torah and receive the reward for it—that’s all *reward*, and it cannot be compared to learning Torah yourself. There’s nothing greater than that.” Through toiling in Torah,

the Rebbe says, that is how a person will achieve success in his worldly matters.¹⁸

LIFE’S DREAM

Every Yid must yearn for a time that he will be able to just sit and learn Torah.

We learn this lesson from Mordechai:

Mordechai was by all accounts a tremendously successful activist. By virtue of the fact that he was close to the king and “sat at the king’s gate,” he saved the entire Jewish nation from physical annihilation, in addition to saving them spiritually by bringing

their *mesiras nefesh* to the fore and uniting them together.

He then went on to become viceroy—second in command in a government that ruled the entire world! One would imagine that he would choose to continue his activism and continue helping his brethren.

Yet, when a small contingent of Yidden went up to Eretz Yisroel, he left everything and joined them. He became a member of the Sanhedrin, and the Gemara tells us that after the second *Beis Hamikdash* was built he was in charge of a certain collection box in the *Beis Hamikdash*.

IS IT ENOUGH TO DONATE?

Reb Berel Weiss, a successful businessman and philanthropist, was once in *yechidus* where the Rebbe offered him some advice in significant business matters. Towards the end of the *yechidus*, the Rebbe asked him, “And what will you bring me in return?”

“I said, ‘I’m willing to give whatever I have.’”

“The Rebbe replied, ‘I mean, how many *blatt* Gemara are you prepared to give me?’

“I said: ‘Rebbe, when I give money to *roshei yeshivos* and rabbonim for their institutions, I always tell them that they should have me in mind when they give their classes. I thought that I fulfilled my obligation by giving to them.’

“The Rebbe told me that in the *brachos* for Yissachar and Zevulun in *parshas Vezos Habracha*, the *possuk* says that they would be ‘nourished by the abundance of the seas,’ and Rashi says that ‘thereby, they will have spare time to study the Torah.’

“‘When the ‘Zevuluns’ would travel on the ships, they brought with them a Tanya, a Tehillim’l, a Chumash’l [a small travel size Tehillim and Chumash]—and they learned! You cannot depend on someone else having you in mind. So—how many *blatt* Gemara will you bring me?!’

“How much should I bring?’ I asked.

“You should bring me ten thousand *blatt* by next year,’ the Rebbe replied.

“We settled on a thousand *blatt*...”



REB BEREL WEISS RECEIVING LEKACH FROM THE REBBE, HOSHANA RABBAH 5743*.

ברכות לראש משביר

בחדווה ובעונג הננו לשגר מלוא חפניים ברכות להאי גברא רבא
ראש וראשון לכל דבר שבקדושה

מסור ונתון להחזקת ותמיכת המוסדות המרכזיים של
חב"ד ליובאוויטש

בעל חשק וגישמאק מיוחד לסייע ביד השלוחים והשלוחות
”שלוחו של אדם כמותו” בכל מקום שהם

תומך נכבד וחשוב במגזין הנקרא בכל בית חסידי ברחבי תבל
”א חסידישער דערהער”

הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' שלום
וזוגתו מנב"ת מרת שרה שיחי
אייזיקוביץ

לרגל השמחה במעונם בהולדת בתם
ביום רביעי ל' סיון אדר"ח תמוז

החיילת בצבאות השם לאה שתחי'

יהא רעווא מן שמיא שיזכו לגדלה
לתורה לחופה ולמעשים טובים
מתוך בריות גופא ונהורא מעליא

וירוו ממנה ומכל שאר יו"ח אידישע חסידישע נחת
לאורך ימים ושנים טובות

וזכות התמיכה העצומה בענינים העיקריים והיסודיים
לחיזוק ההתקשרות של כל אנשי הדור לנשיא הדור ומנהיגו
כ"ק אדמו"ר יעמוד להם לזכות לקבל שפע ברכה והצלחה
בטוב הנראה והנגלה בכל מעשה ידיהם

בברכה ובהוקרה עמוקה

הנהלת וחברי המערכת
א חסידישער דערהער

A YEAR WITH THE REBBE

kvutza



IVAR 5729, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 281839

לזכות
החיילת בצבאות ה'
חי' מושקא תחי'
לרגל הולדתה כ"ה ניסן ה'תשע"ט
נדפס ע"י הוריה
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל
וזוגתו מרת שטערנא שרה שיחיו
שמוטקין

You ask about coming here again. First you need to “unpack” what you already acquired while you were here; what you received consciously, and the even greater things that you received subconsciously. Especially given the fact that with Hashem’s help, you were here twice for the month of Tishrei. You need to utilize all these “goods,” at least partially. Let it affect you to be a lamdan, a diligent student, and an oved, the way a tomim really should be.

The Rebbe to a bochur in yechidus after spending a year in 770 with the kvutza program

With the Rebbe

Every Chossid lives for the time he can spend in the Rebbe's presence.

For a *talmid* in yeshiva especially, being in the Rebbe's presence is paramount. These years are what set the foundation for his entire life and give him the fortitude needed to brave *olam hazeh* and fulfill his shlichus in this world. Studying in the Rebbe's presence and learning Torah directly from the Rebbe makes for a life that is altogether of a different nature.

After World War II, when the Rebbe visited Paris to greet his mother, Rebbetzin Chana, he spent much time farbrenging with members of *anash* who had recently escaped the Iron Curtain. The Rebbe encouraged them to strengthen their *hiskashrus* and pushed many of them to take the opportunity to travel to New York and see the Friediker Rebbe.

Reb Refoel Wilchansky was a *bochur* at the time, and the Rebbe seemed to put an extra emphasis on the importance for him to go. "A *bochur* needs to be near the Rebbe!" the Rebbe told him. "Yes, the main thing is to be connected to the Rebbe with a *ruchnius* connection. Nevertheless, being far away from the Rebbe in the physical sense can have a negative effect..."¹



Trickling In

In the early years of the Rebbe's *nesius*, travel was not what it is today. Air travel was a novelty and traveling by boat took a long time and came with a hefty price. But this only made the will of the *bochurim* in Eretz Yisroel to travel to the Rebbe even stronger.

Indeed, over the years a number of them succeeded in crossing the Atlantic Ocean and joined the yeshiva in the Rebbe's *daled amos*.

The first group of *bochurim* to come to New York during the Rebbe's

"A bochur needs to be near the Rebbe! ...Being far away from the Rebbe in the physical sense can have a negative effect."

nesius included Yoel Kahn, a graduate of Achei Temimim in Tel Aviv where he learned under Reb Chaim Shaul Brook. A few months earlier, in Teves 5710*, the group of six *talmidim* received their visas and were allowed to leave Eretz Yisroel for New York. The Friediker Rebbe sent them a letter, giving them his consent and blessing for the trip.



As it turned out, they arrived in New York after the Friediker Rebbe's *histalkus*. Reb Yoel would later relate that he asked the Rebbe if he should stay in New York, even though the original reason to come, learning near the Rebbe, didn't seem to apply anymore. The Rebbe said, "My father-in-law told you to come, and he certainly knew what was going to happen. He didn't mean you should only be here for two weeks and then go back..."²

Obviously, they stayed. The *bochurim* immediately became *mekusharim* of the Rebbe and Reb Yoel went on to become the "*chozer*," being the first one to transcribe the Rebbe's *sichos* for posterity and setting up the *Vaad L'Hafatzas Sichos*.³

With time, the Rebbe would call in each *bochur* individually and ask them what they were learning, guiding and advising them as to how to go about their *limmud haTorah* and *avodas Hashem*.

The Rebbe once mentioned at a farbrengen that the *kvutza bochurim* have a special *hetter* to leave Eretz Yisroel and come to New York (even though a person is usually halachically prohibited from doing so), because they are here to learn Torah. Although

they could have learned Torah in Eretz Yisroel as well, they had to come here because the Gemara teaches us: "לא מן הכל אדם זוכה ללמוד—a person is not always able to learn from every teacher..." And "לעולם ילמוד אדם תורה—במקום שלבו חפץ—a person should always learn Torah in the place where his heart desires..." They had to come here to learn specifically from *ploni*, etc.⁴

In other words, the true reason why they have to travel across the world to learn Torah, is to be able to learn from the Rebbe himself and be guided by his holy words.

As the years progressed, more *bochurim* trickled in to New York and joined the central Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim. This went on until finally, with a large amount of *bochurim* wishing to go the Rebbe, a proper program was arranged in which the Israeli *bochurim* could travel to New York. Thus was founded the "*kvutza*" program, with the Rebbe's involvement at every step of the way.

A Novelty

The *kvutza* program was not without its hurdles. There were plenty of bumps along the way when trying to launch such a novel idea.

The first was getting the *hanhala* of the yeshivos in Eretz Yisroel to agree to letting go of a relatively large group of *bochurim* all at once. It is important to remember that in those days, the entire yeshiva in Lod only consisted of a small amount of students. Letting go of 10 older *bochurim* could potentially have a negative impact on the ones left behind.



JEM 102404

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



ELUL 5736, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 203196



ELUL 5736, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 203205

Then they needed the *hanhala* at 770 to sign an affidavit for each *bochur*, assuring the US government that the students would be taken care of while staying here in this country.

But the greatest obstacle of all was from the Israeli government. Due to the mandatory military draft of every able-bodied 18-year-old boy, it wasn't so simple to arrange for a large group of yeshiva *bochurim* to leave the country for a year.

But one by one, the issues were worked through.

Rabbi Aharon Halperin, one of the *bochurim* hoping to join the first group, relates in this regard:



"My birthday is around Pesach time and in my letter to the Rebbe, I asked for a *bracha* that we should succeed in our efforts to come to the Rebbe for the following year (5722*). In

response, I received a standard letter from the Rebbe, with an added postscript about my request, I should speak to the *hanhala* and follow their guidance..."⁵

In *yechidus* with the Rebbe, the *mashpia* in Lod, Reb Shlomo Chaim Kesselman, asked the Rebbe if he would agree to send *bochurim* from the yeshiva at 770 to take the place of the *talmidim* who were leaving. At the *yechidus* itself, the Rebbe did not respond to this request; but later on in a letter, the Rebbe said that "I spoke to Rabbi Hodakov about it..." Eventually, this idea indeed came to fruition and at the Rebbe's behest, a group of "*talmidim-shluchim*" were sent from 770 to learn in Eretz Yisroel, "replacing" the *bochurim* who would be leaving for the *kvutza* program."⁶

A week before their scheduled trip, the exit permits finally arrived from

the Israeli Ministry of Defense; but they were only valid for one month. This came along with a warning not to even try for an extension! Needless to say, the *bochurim* were devastated. Some of them even thought perhaps to wait with their trip until they'd be able to obtain permission for a longer stay. But they decided to go with *bitachon* and hoped that they would succeed in extending their stay.

Shehechiyanu!

Finally, the awaited day arrived. Along with dozens of Chassidim on the second chartered flight from Eretz Yisroel to the Rebbe for Tishrei, the group of 11 *bochurim* made their way to the Rebbe for the first time.

We can only imagine the excitement, and at the same time—the awe and reverence of the moment felt by these *bochurim* at the time. In those



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days, there were no hookups of the Rebbe's farbrengens, no videos of the Rebbe, and there were barely a few audio recordings going around. The physical distance from the Rebbe was tangible and real. Finally having the chance to see the Rebbe and bask in his holy presence was something they could only have dreamed of. And now it had finally become a reality!

Originally, the flight was scheduled to arrive in time for the Chassidim to daven Maariv with the Rebbe's *minyan*. The Rebbe even delayed the starting time for them. But due to a technical glitch in the landing, the passengers were held up too long and the Rebbe davened before they were able to make it.

The group finally arrived at 770 late at night. It was then, when the Rebbe left his room for home, that they were able to catch but a glimpse of the Rebbe's face as he walked out of 770. The *bochurim* all recited *Shehechiyanu*

and thanked Hashem for being given this special opportunity.

The month of Tishrei was upon them; a special month full of *giluyim*. The Rebbe's Simchas Torah farbrengen was especially uplifting: the Rebbe went on for 10 hours straight and said *lchaim* many times. In middle, the Rebbe stood up and said a *sicha* about the Yidden in Russia, crying that they should be able to come out of exile. Early that morning, the Rebbe taught the *niggun* of An'im Zemiros, along with many other *giluyim*.

In middle of the month of Tishrei, the *bochurim* were able to get an extension of their permits for a total of three months. Needless to say, the *talmidim* were overjoyed and they took this as a first step towards the hopeful possibility of being able to stay for a full year.

Immediately after the *yomim tovim* ended, the two groups of *bochurim* (the ones from Eretz Yisroel who had

recently arrived and the ones from 770 who would be leaving to Eretz Yisroel shortly) went into the Rebbe's room for a joint *yechidus*. The Rebbe addressed both groups in explaining the meaning of moving from one location to another, and how our *avodas Hashem* must progress in each place.

The next day, Rabbi Hodakov held a meeting with the *bochurim* and helped them chart out how to bring the Rebbe's words into actuality. He also appointed two *bochurim* from each group that would be in charge of writing reports to the Rebbe about their work.

The *bochurim* acclimated into the *sedarim* of the yeshiva and learned Torah diligently. Over the years, the Rebbe often reminded the members of the *kvutza* that the only reason they were allowed to leave Eretz Yisroel was to increase in their Torah learning.

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

נדפס ע"י
בית חב"ד מעקוואן, ויסקנסין



RUA
CHABAD

20

**BULL
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CO**

DING UNTRY



Rabbi
Shabsi
Alpern

RABBI ALPERN
WORKING IN HIS
OFFICE.

SEEING THE FRIEDIKER REBBE

I was born on 1 Elul 5796* in Dokshitz, a well known Chassidic town (I am an only child). As soon as World War II broke out, we miraculously immigrated to the United States, where we were initially hosted by Reb Yochanan Gordon,¹ also of Dokshitz. Then my father was hired by a shul in Cincinnati to be a rav and *shochet*, and seven years later he held a similar job for the Bnei Yaakov Nusach Ari shul of Worcester, MA. A short time before my bar mitzvah, my parents sent me to learn in Tomchei Temimim on Bedford and Dean, in Brooklyn, New York. A year later, my parents joined me in Crown Heights (the phone companies had been thriving on our phone bills), and that's where I lived until we went on shlichus to Brazil.

Together with my father, I merited to have a *yechidus* with the Frierdiker Rebbe before my bar mitzvah, several months before his *histalkus* (that was the only time I saw him; we youngsters weren't allowed to participate in the farbrengens). It was difficult to understand the Frierdiker Rebbe's speech, so Reb Elye Simpson, the Frierdiker Rebbe's secretary, repeated the Rebbe's *bracha* to us. The Frierdiker Rebbe also sent me a mazal tov letter before my bar mitzvah, and he signed with the print letter "Yud" at the beginning of his name, as he did throughout the last year before the *histalkus*.²



RABBI ALPERN RECEIVES A TANYA FROM THE REBBE.

YUD SHEVAT 5750, LEVI FREDIN VIA JEM 236496

The Rebbe instructed me to recite the kapitel of the Frierdiker Rebbe for my mother's recovery...

A SPECIAL PHONE CONVERSATION

Some time after the Frierdiker Rebbe's *histalkus*, the Rebbe returned to wearing his regular jacket and hat, but nevertheless, we all knew where things were headed. I was still a young boy, but I clearly remember the talk of how to convince the Rebbe to assume the *nesius*. At some point during the year, we insisted that people cease using the term "Ramash," and call him only, "Rebbe."

The crowds in 770 were very small, and we all received the Rebbe's personal attention. The Rebbe would farbreng each Shabbos Mevorchim, and we all fit into the small *zal* comfortably.

During that year, I once came home to Worcester and discovered that my mother needed a serious operation. Before the procedure, the Rebbe personally called our home and spoke to my parents and to me as well. He instructed me to recite the *kapitel Tehillim* of the Frierdiker Rebbe for my mother's recovery (he had spoken

about reciting the *kapitel* in *sichos* as well).³

OUR RELATIONSHIP

I learned in Bedford and Dean until 5715*, and then I moved to 770.

We felt a very close connection to the Rebbe in those days. Nonetheless, we didn't write to the Rebbe often. There was a powerful *yiras haromemus*, and we felt uncomfortable to take the Rebbe's time.

I recall one instance where I did write to the Rebbe. At that time, my father served as the rabbi of Chevra Shas in Crown Heights, and one of his congregants was a modern individual who came from a family of rabbonim. I resolved to speak to him and to encourage him to strengthen his Yiddishkeit, but I wasn't sure how to go about it. I wrote to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe responded immediately. The Rebbe said to explain to him the teaching from Hayom Yom, ווען מען אקערט און מען פארזייט - וואקסט.⁴ In other words, if he wanted to receive

A SPECIAL HAGGADAH

My father had a large *sheimos* box inside his shul and I would often rummage through the old *sefarim* people would drop off. One day, a few days before Pesach 5718*, I found a *haggadah* called “Tzuf Amarim.” I opened it, and discovered a *haskama* from Harav Levi Yitzchok, the Rebbe’s father. I felt that it was a remarkable discovery, so I immediately went to 770 and asked Reb Moshe Groner to bring it to the Rebbe (he would often enter the Rebbe’s room to speak about different matters, and he had a knack for old *sefarim* as well).

He brought it to the Rebbe, and later he told me that the Rebbe was very pleased to see it. The Rebbe had remarked that it was his first time seeing a *haskama* his father had written. I obviously was very pleased to have made the discovery.

During the *farbrengen* on the second night of Pesach after the *seder*, the Rebbe started one explanation on the *haggadah* with the following:

“Before Pesach, I was brought a *haggadah* with a *haskamah* from my father.”

The Rebbe looked at me while saying those words, and he then proceeded to expound on one of the *haggadah’s* *pirushim*.⁶



THE HAGGADAH “TZUF AMARIM” WITH A *HASKAMA* BY THE REBBE’S FATHER, WHICH RABBI ALPERN GAVE TO THE REBBE.

Hashem’s blessings, he needed to create a vessel for the blessing.

Each year, we had a *yechidus* with the Rebbe before our birthday. The *yechidus* would last two or three minutes. Being an only child, sometimes my father would join me in *yechidus*, and those would last a bit longer.

One year, when we were learning *Maseches Gittin*, the Rebbe spoke to us about the deeper meaning of *Gittin*; that the Jewish people are considered the wife of the *Aibershter*. The Rebbe explained the matter in *avodas Hashem*.⁵

I have an interesting memory from another *yechidus*. As I was waiting in line, the individual before me said that he came to receive the Rebbe’s approval for a book he had written. He left the Rebbe’s room in amazement. In 20 minutes, he told me,

the Rebbe recapped the exact thesis of his book, which had taken him five years to develop.

When I was 17 years old, I had my tonsils removed. Although it was a relatively simple and safe procedure, the Rebbe asked my mother to notify him as soon as it concluded. I remember my mother racing down Eastern Parkway from the doctor’s office to 770 to notify the Rebbe.

Some time later, I suffered from strong headaches. For two months, I didn’t want to bother the Rebbe about it, but as the problem persisted, I decided to write to the Rebbe asking for a *bracha*. It was shortly before Pesach. During *kos shel bracha* on Acharon Shel Pesach, the Rebbe gave me a powerful *bracha*, and miraculously, the headaches disappeared. In fact, the miracle grew even larger: I was accustomed

to wearing eyeglasses in the street, but afterwards, I felt that I no longer needed them. Baruch Hashem, until today the Rebbe’s *bracha* continues.

THERE WILL BE A CHANGE...

My years in 770 were before the Rebbe announced the *miivtzoim* which are so famous today, but the Rebbe nevertheless spoke incessantly about spreading Yiddishkeit. Those were the days when the Rebbe first began speaking about *Ufaratzta*.

As *bochurim*, we all participated in Wednesday hour (the Released Time program for public school children), *Mesibos Shabbos*, *Merkos Shlichus* and so on. We also knew that after our marriage, we hoped to become the Rebbe’s *shluchim* and continue the Rebbe’s work for the rest of our lives.

On 17 Kislev 5721*, I married my first wife, Esther (nee Kazen) a”h.

She merited to attend to the Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Chana, in various ways, so through my wife, I also had the opportunity to visit her. After we left to Brazil, we merited to receive two letters from her in her own handwriting.

We hoped that the Rebbe would be *mesader kiddushin* at our wedding. By then the Rebbe no longer officiated at all weddings, but if a couple committed to go on shlichus, the Rebbe usually did agree. Before our wedding we went into *yechidus*, and there the Rebbe informed us that, "*S'vet zein a shinui in di siddur kiddushin*, there will be a change regarding officiating weddings."

I immediately understood—to my dismay—that the Rebbe had decided to cease *siddur kiddushin* entirely, and I plucked up the courage to say, "But we are going on shlichus..."

In response, the Rebbe said something very powerful.

"*Tzu den darf ich shteyen unter di shtangen kidei tzu benchen?* Do I need to stand under the poles [of the *chupah*] in order to bless you?"

POINTY SHOES

On Shvi'i Shel Pesach 5721*, shortly after our wedding, the *tahalucha* went to Williamsburg. We were a crowd of some 200 *yungerleit*. After we crossed Eastern Parkway, my attention was caught by a man leaning against the wall. He was clearly Jewish, but his clothing were peculiar; he had pointy shoes, which weren't the style then.

I approached him, wished him a *Gut Yom Tov*, and asked him where he was from.

"Brazil," he answered.

"What are you doing here?"

"I'm on business."

Although he wasn't fully observant, he wasn't working that day, so I offered him to join us on our walk to Williamsburg. He joined us, watched

the dancing and the speaking in the shuls, and afterwards I brought him to my home for the *seudah*.

He was a warm Jew, and very touched by everything he had seen that day. We had a conversation late into the night.

"Would you be willing to move to Brazil?" he asked us at the conclusion.

I explained that we don't make these decisions, but that I would write to the Rebbe about it after Yom Tov. After Yom Tov I wrote to the Rebbe, and very quickly, the Rebbe responded in the affirmative.

At the same time, he asked me if he was allowed to ask the Rebbe a question as well. I responded that he was more than welcome to, so he

wrote to the Rebbe about his dilemma. He and his wife weren't blessed with children, and they were thinking about adoption. It was very rare to find a Jewish child available for adoption, but he managed to find a little girl, and he asked the Rebbe if he should go along with the plan. The Rebbe said that he should.

Several weeks after adopting the girl, an elderly rich man passed away, and his sole heir was this little girl. As her legal father, he suddenly found himself with newfound riches, and he moved to New York. Meanwhile, we moved to Brazil.

Thirty years later, I walked into 770 for the Kinus Hashluchim, and lo and behold, I see this individual.

The Rebbe had decided to cease siddur kiddushin entirely, and I plucked up the courage to say, "But we are going on shlichus..."



RABBI ALPERN SPEAKS AT A FUNCTION IN BRAZIL SHORTLY AFTER HIS ARRIVAL ON SHLICHUS.

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לזכות

החתן הרה"ת ר' חיים ישראל
והכלה המהוללה מרת מושקא שיחיו שניאור
לרגל חתונתם ח"י מנחם אב ה'תשע"ט

נדפס ע"י הוריהם

הרה"ת ר' מאיר יצחק וזוגתו מרת רייזעל ומשפחתם שיחיו
שניאור
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל וזוגתו מרת שרה ומשפחתם שיחיו
שארפשיין

לזכות

התמים פסח בצלאל משה שיחיו
לרגל הגיעו לעול מצוות י"ב תמוז ה'תשע"ט

נדפס ע"י הוריו

הרה"ת ר' ברוך וזוגתו מרת חנה ומשפחתם שיחיו
מייערס

לזכות

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

לזכות

הרה"ת ר' אליהו
וזוגתו מרת שולמית
ומשפחתם שיחיו
בלאך

לזכות

החייל בצבאות ה'
אליעזר שמואל שיחיו
לרגל יום הולדתו י"א מנחם אב

נדפס ע"י הוריו

הרה"ת ר' ישראל פסח וזוגתו מרת שולמית ליבא שיחיו
בעניש

נדפס ע"י ולזכות
משפחת ניו שיחיו
בוקה רטון, פלורידה

לזכות
החייל בצבאות ה'
יהודא שיחי'
לרגל הולדתו כ' סיון

ולזכות הוריו הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל וזוגתו מרת גיטל שיחיו גראסבוים
נדפס ע"י ולזכות זקנינו
הרה"ת ר' אברהם אבא וזוגתו מרת טויבא יונה שיחיו פרידמאן
הרה"ת ר' דוד וזוגתו מרת צביה שיחיו פרידמאן

לזכות
החתן הרה"ת ר' יוסף ארי' שיחי' פעלער
והכלה המהוללה מרת דבורה לאה תחי' דערען
לרגל חתונתם בשעתומ"צ כ"ה מנחם אב ה'תשע"ט

נדפס ע"י הוריהם
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הרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק הכהן וזוגתו מרת בת שבע קריינדל שיחיו דערען

לזכות החתן הרה"ת ר' ישראל ארי' ליב שיחי' קיעוומאן
והכלה המהוללה מרת ליבא תחי' קארן
לרגל חתונתם בשעתומ"צ כ"ה מנחם אב ה'תשע"ט
ולזכות הת' שניאור זלמן נתנאל שיחי'
לרגל הגיעו לעול מצוות ב' אלול ה'תשע"ט

נדפס ע"י הוריהם
הרה"ת ר' אברהם יואל וזוגתו מרת גאלדא ומשפחתם שיחיו קיעוומאן
ליורפול, אנגליה

IN HONOR OF
RABBI BILLY LEWKOWICZ
FOR THE DEVOTION, LOVE AND
SELF SACRIFICE TO THE EDUCATION
OF OUR CHILDREN IN
TUSCON ARIZONA

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' יצחק וזוגתו מרת לאה שיחיו
גניביש
לרגל יום נישואיהם ביום י"א אלול
לאריכות ימים ושנים טובות



מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לנשיא דורנו כ"ק אדמו"ר צוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע



DEDICATED TO OUR SON
LEVI YITZCHAK COHEN
IN HONOR OF HIS BIRTHDAY.

MAY HE AND HIS FAMILY BE BLESSED WITH
ONLY REVEALED GOODNESS AND SUCCESS.

KAREN AND YAAKOV COHEN
POTOMAC, MARYLAND



לזכות
התמים שלום הלוי שיחי'
גורביץ'
לרגל הגיעו לעול מצוות
י"ב אלול ה'תשע"ט
נדפס ע"י זקניו
הרה"ת ר' יעקב ליב
וזוגתו מרת חוה שיחיו
אלטיין

נדפס ע"י ולזכות
דוד בן רחל
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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,
זלמן לייב בן חנה בלומא,
פייגא בת חנה בלומא שיחיו
פרקש

לעילוי נשמת האשה החשובה
מרת רחל בת ר' חיים אשר ע"ה
נלב"ע ו' אלול ה'תשע"ו
ת'נצ'ב'ה'
נדפס ע"י בנה
הרה"ת ר' יוסף בנימין
וזוגתו מרת חנה שרון
ומשפחתם שיחיו ציפל
שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר
במדינת יוטא

DEDICATED IN HONOR OF
MRS. YEHUDIS WOLVOVSKY

MAY SHE CONTINUE TO
HAVE MUCH NACHAS FROM
HER FAMILY. TOGETHER,
MAY THEY SUCCEED IN THEIR
SHLICHUS - GEZUNTERHEIT
AND FREILACHERHEIT!

BY HER FRIENDS AND FAMILY

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
שיחיו
גולדהירש

לעילוי נשמת
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' מרדכי
בן הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' שמחה יצחק ע"ה
זאיאנץ
נלב"ע י"א אלול ה'תשע"ז
ת'נצ'ב'ה'
נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו

לעילוי נשמת
הרה"ח הו"ח אי"א נ"מ רב פעלים
התמים הר"ר יהודה צבי ב"ר משה יעקב ע"ה
פאנעלמאן
בקשר עם יום ההולדת י"א אלול
נדפס ע"י נכדיו למשפחת ליבעראוו
וואוסטער מאסאטשוסעס

לעילוי נשמת
מרת דאברושע בת הרה"ח מנחם מענדל ע"ה
זכתה להקים משפחה חסידית לתפארת, חסידים ומקושרים
ההולכים בדרך רבותינו נשיאנו ומהם שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע
נפטרה בדמי ימיה ח' אלול תשל"א
נדבת על ידי נכדיה למשפחת ליבעראוו
וואוסטאר מאסאטשוסעס

A Chassidisher Derher
Vaad Talmidei Hatmimim



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