

A Chassidisher **Derher**

א חסידישער דערהער

זֶה הַיּוֹם עָשָׂה ה'
בְּגִילָה וְנִשְׁמָחָה בּוֹ.

-תהלים קיח:כד



NISSAN 5779
ISSUE 80 (157)
MAY 2019



12 **The Rebbe's Haggadah**
CONCISION.
PRECISION.
DEPTH.



48 **Hisvaadus Chassidim**
SHLUCHIM
FARBRENG
ABOUT 11 NISSAN

JEM103644

28 **Peace In The Galilee**
THE FIRST LEBANON WAR

In every issue

4 **Lessons For Nissan**
DVAR MALCHUS

6 **"A Serious Matter"**
LEBEN MITTEN REBBE'N -
NISSAN 5711

11 **When Facing Challenge**
KSAV YAD KODESH

28 **Mitzvas Hador**
RABBI MORDECHAI AVTZON

30 **A Fishy Business Deal**
A CHASSIDISHER MAASEH

42 **Perfect Clarity**
DER REBBE VET GEFINEN A VEG

56 **Havdalah**
MOMENTS

67 **Derher Letters**

- > The Life of a Chossid
- > Yechidus
- > Dor Hashvi'i -
What we're all about
- > The Rebbe's View

On the Cover:

19 Tishrei 5751, Levi Freidin via JEM 165378

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Special Thanks to

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The Print House

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A Chassidisher Derher (ISSN 26411059) (USPS 21880) is published monthly by A Chassidisher Derher Inc, 784 Eastern Pkwy. Brooklyn, NY 11213. Subscription price \$71 a year. Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn, NY. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to A Chassidisher Derher, 784 Eastern Pkwy. Brooklyn, NY 11213.

This magazine has been made possible

לזכות
הרה"ת ר' שלום וזוגתו מרת שרה
וילדיהם ישראל, ריסא, חי' מושקא, אמונה מלכה, ויעקב יהודה שיחיו
אייזיקוביץ
בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן קי"ז שנה להולדת כ"ק אדמו"ר

DerherEditorial

ברוך הבא בשם ה'; ברכנוכם מבית ה'. (תהלים קיח, כו)

With these words, the Rebbe greeted the thousands of Chassidim who had come to celebrate Yud-Aleph Nissan 5745*, in what would be the last weekday farbrengen (as of now) held on the Rebbe's *yom huledes*.

The *possuk* that we use to greet people with a blessing has two parts: ברוך הבא בשם השם—Blessed is the one who has come for the name of Hashem; מברכנוכם מבית השם—we bless you all from the house of Hashem.

Interestingly, the *possuk* begins in the singular form and concludes in the plural.

This is because when Yidden come together, they start out as separate individuals. But since they join together for a single purpose—in order to serve Hashem and ultimately create a *dura b'tachtonim*, transforming the whole world into a home for Hashem—they become all together a large community.

And the *possuk* concludes ברכנוכם מבית השם—you are all blessed from the house of Hashem, by doing our *avoda* and making the world into a house of Hashem.

In a sense, the Rebbe is telling us what it means to celebrate Yud-Aleph Nissan:

Each of us may be small, individual people, but the Rebbe has invited us to celebrate along with him on this special day and to be a part of his great mission to transform the whole world.

The Rebbe once explained about Chai Elul—the birthday of the Baal Shem Tov and the Alter Rebbe:

One might think: How can I find myself participating in celebrating a day when the *mazal* of these two great *nesi'im* reigns? Am I not light years away from the greatness of the Baal Shem Tov and the Alter Rebbe, that they're *mazal* should have an affect on the way small people like us learn Torah and do *mitzvos*?

But that's what a *nossi* is all about, explains the Rebbe. We saw it by our faithful shepherd Moshe Rabbeinu, and we saw it by the Baal Shem Tov and the Alter Rebbe as well.

The Baal Shem Tov used to travel around to small townlets and show his great love and concern, even for the most simple Jews. The Alter Rebbe wrote a *Shulchan Aruch* to guide the everyday life of every single Yid.

And even after their *histalkus*, the Gemara tells us that Moshe Rabbeinu is still עומד ומשמש—he continues to serve his flock from on high. The same is true about the Baal Shem Tov and the Alter Rebbe: On their *yom huledes*, they radiate *brachos* and *kochos*, giving added strength to the *avoda* of all their *talmidim* here on earth throughout the year. (*Sichas Chai Elul* 5738.)

As you will read in the “Hisvaadus Chassidim” article in this magazine, in our generation, the Rebbe shared his *yom huledes* with all of us as well. It is a time to recommit ourselves to the Rebbe's mission of bringing the *Shechina* down here and ultimately transforming the whole world, and a time when the Rebbe showers us with *brachos*, giving us the ability to do so.

As the Rebbe notes, with all of our collective efforts we become one big community, a “קהל גדול”—and in the words of the *novi*, “קהל גדול ישוּבו הנה”—the large multitude will return here, with the coming of Moshiach, in this month of *geula*—להגאל. בניסן עתידין להגאל.

May it be *teikef umiyad mammosh!*

With blessings for a כשר ושמח חג,

The Editors

פורים, ה'תשע"ט

שנת השבעים לנשיאות כ"ק אדמו"ר



BETTER THAN A BUG?

Shabbos Parshas Tazria 5725*

When the Torah first speaks about *tumah* and *taharah*, is about the *tumah* conveyed by *sheratzim*—crawling creatures. Only afterwards does the Torah discuss the *tumah* conveyed by humans.

Surprisingly, *sheratzim* come first because on a deeper level they are considered superior to humans.

How so?

Animals cannot sin; they have no free choice. People, endowed with free choice by their Creator, can make the wrong choice. The fact that they have the **capability** of sinning places them lower than animals, which cannot sin.

In the beginning of Parshas Tazria, Rashi quotes Rebbi Simlai, who says that just as humans were created last—after the animals—so, too, their laws are taught after those relating to animals. Both are for the same reason: When a person does an *aveira*, he is reminded that “יתוש קדמך”, even the mosquito was created before you.¹”

An obvious question arises: Are people

really lower than mosquitos? After all, people’s shortcomings are restricted to their capabilities—their potential; they **can** sin while animals can’t. However, when it comes to what they are born with—their *yichus*—people have a clear advantage over animals; people have a *nefesh Elokis*! Clearly, people are superior! To this, Rebbi Simlai answers: “Yes, people have a *nefesh Elokis*, but this is not something people must work for or choose to attain; they are born with it. A person merely has better *yichus* than an animal.”

This is why it is specifically Rebbi Simlai who teaches us that animals come first. Rebbi Simlai famously had no *yichus* to speak of. He was a self-made man, and his teachings reflect that. He emphasizes not what a person is born with, but what he can accomplish.

Yes, says Rebbi Simlai, a person has more room for growth but until he realizes that potential, “even the mosquito was created before you.”²”

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר
בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' אלעזר
וזוגתו מרת אסתר זלאטא
ומשפחתם שיחיו
באגאמילסקי
להצלחה רבה ומופלגה
במילוי שליחותם הק'

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WHEN CARROTS AND STICKS DON'T WORK

Shabbos Parshas Acharei, 5725*

The section in the Torah that discusses *arayos*—forbidden relationships—begins with a statement, “I am Hashem your G-d.” The types of *aveiros* that the Torah is about to discuss are particularly challenging, and for many people, additional incentive is necessary to help them resist temptation. And so, although the Torah doesn’t usually threaten punishment or promise reward when giving a mitzvah, here the Torah prefaces with a reminder: “I am Hashem, your G-d”—the One who decrees, and the One who enforces; the Judge who punishes, and the One trustworthy to reward. This serves as an extra boost of incentive to help people observe the *mitzvos* that the Torah is about to teach.

But at the very end of the section, after detailing the *arayos*, again the Torah says, “And you shall not become defiled by them, I am Hashem your G-d.” Why the repetition? The first time it was mentioned was **already** a *chiddush*, giving an extra dose of warning and

encouragement. Why does the Torah say it again?

Rashi, in explaining what that *possuk* means, gives us the answer: “You shall not become defiled by them, I am Hashem your G-d’—if you do become defiled, I am not your G-d.”

For some people, the temptation of *arayos* may be too difficult to overcome, even with the extra emphasis on Hashem’s reward to those who do good and punishment to those who do evil. The carrot and stick won’t work. It is for these people that the Torah **repeats**, “I am Hashem your G-d.”

However low a Yid may stoop, he cannot allow himself to be separated from Hashem. He may not care for reward; he may not even fear punishment, but separation from Hashem — that he cannot tolerate.

“A Yid does not want, and cannot be torn from G-dliness.”

1. Sanhedrin 38a.
2. Sichas Parshas Tazria 5725.



לזכות
החתן הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל
והכלה המהוללה מרת אביגיל שיחיו
חזון
לרגל נישואיהם
כ"א אדר שני ה'תשע"ט
נדבת הוריהם
הרה"ת ר' יצחק מאיר
וזוגתו מרת לאה ומשפחתם שיחיו
שפאלטר



"A Serious Matter"

NISSAN 5711*



This account of the first Nissan in the Rebbe's court after the *kabbalas hanesius* on Yud Shevat 5711 is culled from the diaries of a number of *bochurim* in 770 then: Rabbis Elya Gross, Berel Junik, Berel Pevzner, Moshe Levertov a"h, and שיחיו Leibel Groner and Yoel Kahn יב"ח ט.

THE NOSSI'S HAFTARAH

Since Purim, *anash* have been wondering what will be the *seder* when the Rebbe recites the *haftarah* on Shabbos Hachodesh. In siddur Torah Ohr it says that our *minhag* is to read the *haftarah* that the Sephardim read (כה אמר), but the Frieddiker Rebbe

(who would always receive *maftir* on the Shabbos before Beis Nissan, *yahrtzeit* of the Rebbe Rashab) would follow the Ashkenazic custom (כל העם). The Frieddiker Rebbe once explained that the reason he would read the other *haftarah* is because it talks about the "*nesiim*" and is therefore connected to the *nesiim*, I.e. the Rebbeim. Everyone was waiting to see if the Rebbe would follow this custom, or maybe he wouldn't as it would be openly demonstrating the "*nesius*"!

Indeed, when the Rebbe was called up for *maftir*, after saying the *brachos*, his face turned white, his hands started to shake, and in a shaky voice he began the *haftarah* of Kol Ha'am to the joy of *anash*.

A PERSONAL MATTER

On the night of Beis Nissan, one of the Chassidim asked the Rebbe if he will be going to the Ohel tomorrow. The Rebbe said that he would have gone to the Ohel tomorrow if he had not already gone just two days earlier, on Erev Rosh Chodesh. The Rebbe added that he will again need to go to the Ohel in 10 days from now. When the Chassid asked if the Rebbe will be going then for the Tzemach Tzedek's *yom hilula* on Yud-Gimmel Nissan, the Rebbe replied that he is going for a personal matter [the Rebbe was referring to Yud-Aleph Nissan].

In the end, however, the Rebbe did go to the Ohel on Beis Nissan.

On 6 Nissan the Rebbe wrote a check of three dollars to the *gemach* and before giving it to the *bochur* who is the *gabbai* of the *gemach*, the Rebbe said that the Tzemach Tzedek would often speak about the importance of Yidden lending money to one another. Chassidim were so taken by the Tzemach Tzedek's words that they would give loans to one another even though there was no need, if only for the merit to do this special mitzvah. The Rebbe then tore up the check and wrote another one for nine dollars.

FIRST EDITED MAAMAR

Yud-Aleph Nissan is the Rebbe's *yom huledes*, *leorech yamim veshanim tovos*. Before going to the Ohel on Yud-Aleph Nissan, the Rebbe gave a message to Hatomim Leibel Groner to be related to the *bochurim*: "Those *bochurim* that are taking upon themselves to listen to me should write in their names and their mothers' names [to be brought to the Ohel]." The Rebbe continued, "This will not be *la'alos hashamaima* [lit.: to climb up to the heaven; i.e. they will not be asked to do anything unattainable]."

When the names were brought to the Rebbe and he looked at the list, he exclaimed, "This is a serious matter." But added again, "This is not *la'alos hashamaima*."

The Rebbe went to the Ohel along with Rabbi Hodakov and Hatomim Sholom Mendel Simpson. While at the Ohel, the Rebbe read the list of names. The Rebbe also read a *hanacha* of the *maamar Basi*

"Those bochurim that are taking upon themselves to listen to me should write in their names and their mothers' names..."



THE REBBE AT THE OHEL, YUD SHEVAT 5711.



THE TRANSCRIBED AND "MUGAH" PRINTING OF THE MAAMAR BASI LEGANI, PUBLISHED FOR YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5711*.

Legani which he said two months earlier on Yud Shevat.

When the Rebbe returned to 770, he instructed that the *maamar* be published, but in the unofficial way, in the same style as the *sichos*, meaning in stencil and not printed. The Rebbe asked a number of times that it should be published as soon as possible. The Rebbe had added many additions and footnotes to the *hanacha*, and he also agreed to the title “כ”ק אדמו”ר שליט”א מליובאוויטש” on the *shaar blatt*. This is the first time that the Rebbe is agreeing to this title in print.

On the eve of Yud-Gimmel Nissan, the Rebbe told Reb Shmuel Levitin that he should farbreng in honor of the *yom hilula* of the Tzemach Tzedek as he did last year. When someone mentioned that the Rebbe Rashab would lead the davening on Yud-Gimmel Nissan in Lubavitch, the Rebbe commented, “This is a *chiddush* for me, to daven (at the *amud*) after a grandfather!” The Rebbe told Reb Shmuel that he should lead the davening as well.

The *maamar Basi Legani* was published on Yud-Gimmel Nissan. The Rebbe instructed a number of times (over the phone) that it should be ready no later than *shkia*, i.e. on the *yom hilula*.

FREE OF CHAMETZ

On Erev Pesach at the completion of *biur chametz* the Rebbe said, “A *kosheren un freilichen Pesach*. We are already *patur* [free of] the *chametz*.”

Shortly before *chatzos*, the matzos the Rebbe would use were baked. Afterwards, the Rebbe distributed a full matzah plus an additional small piece to everyone, while some people received two whole matzos. The Rebbe spoke and gave *brachos* to various people who came to receive matzah.

While distributing the matzah, the Rebbe informed Hatomim Berel Junik that he will be the *meshamesh bakodesh* at the *sedarim*. The Rebbe told him that he should take the *becher* and the saucer upstairs to the Frierdiker Rebbe’s apartment (where the *seudos* and *sedarim* take place). The Rebbe said that he should do it quietly without *blitus* and that it shouldn’t be noticeable to people.

The Rebbe instructed the Chassidim to daven Mincha earlier on in the day, as the *Korban Pesach* was offered right after *chatzos*.

THE REBBE’S SEDER

The Rebbe didn’t say anything during the two *sedarim*, and on both nights the *sedarim* ended before *chatzos*. The Rebbe did a full *heseiba* at the *sedarim* but those in attendance didn’t lean in the Rebbe’s presence.

Last year the Rebbe spoke about everyone eating the *afikoman* in the Frierdiker Rebbe’s apartment, even if the rest of the *seder* was held elsewhere, but being that the first night of Pesach fell out this year on Shabbos, the *bochurim* were only able to bring their *afikoman* with them the second night.

POST-SEDER FARBRENGEN

When the Rebbe entered his room after the second night’s *seder*, he said to Berel Junik: “People should go dance and sing *Keili Ata*. The [Frierdiker] Rebbe said that dancing on Pesach is a *segula* for *gilui Eliyahu*. It should be *lebedik*.”

The Rebbe then escorted his mother home, while the crowd danced outside of 770. The Rebbe turned his head back and repeatedly encouraged the dancing.

When the Rebbe returned to 770 the Chassidim were still dancing. The Rebbe joined into the circle. The *olam* stood around and the Rebbe danced with some of the elderly Chassidim, such as Reb Yochanan Gordon, as well as with the *bochurim*. The Rebbe danced with great excitement and encouraged the singing with his hands. This lasted for about 15 minutes.

After the dancing the Rebbe started to say a *sicha*. The Rebbe spoke about the *Korban Pesach* and *Korban Chagigah*, explaining that we must forget about the *guf* and the *nefesh habahamis* and instead rejoice with the *neschama*. A chair was brought for the Rebbe to sit but he remained standing, speaking for 20 minutes.

The Rebbe then went into his room while the crowd continued to dance with great joy. Twenty minutes later, the Rebbe suddenly came back out of his room with a *haggadah* in his hand. He walked into the *zal* and sat at the table. The Rebbe then instructed people to sit down before he begins speaking, saying “I have time to wait...”

The Rebbe related how the Rebbe Rashab and the Frierdiker Rebbe used to begin the *seder* (of the second night) at nine p.m., only to complete it a few hours after midnight!

The farbrengen continued for nearly two hours (12:15-2:00 a.m.) and the Rebbe explained

a number of sections of the *haggadah*. During the farbrengen, the Rebbe started *niggunim* and again requested that the *olam* dance with joy and enthusiasm.

When the Rebbe spoke about the paragraph of “*Marror zeh*” in the *haggadah*, he said that the Frierdiker Rebbe would tell over that when the Rebbe Rashab ate the *marror*, the sharpness was completely unnoticeable on his face, just two streams of tears streamed down from his eyes. The Rebbe said that when the Frierdiker Rebbe would say this he would point to his cheeks, and the Rebbe also pointed to his cheeks.

On the second day of Pesach the Rebbe gave Berel Junik matzah to give out to the *olam*, adding that people shouldn’t be allowed to grab.

CHOL HAMOED INSTRUCTIONS

After Mincha on the second day of Chol Hamoed, the Rebbe told one of the *bochurim* that there should be a farbrengen. The Rebbe said that he will give a *reshima* of the *sicha* that the Frierdiker Rebbe said on Acharon Shel Pesach 5699* to be studied.

When the *bochur* started collecting money from the other *bochurim* for wine for the farbrengen, the Rebbe said, “You shouldn’t collect from them because if they will give *b’gashmius* it will cause them to lack *b’ruchnius*.”

After Shacharis on the third day of Chol Hamoed, the *bochur* brought the *reshima* back to the Rebbe. The Rebbe said that a farbrengen should be arranged again for today and that he will again give a *reshima*. The Rebbe gave a *reshima* of the *sicha* that the Frierdiker Rebbe said on Yud-Tes Kislev 5698*.

When the Rebbe came in to the *zal* for Mincha and saw the farbrengen in progress, he said that Mincha could be postponed so the farbrengen won’t be disturbed.

SPECIAL GILUIM

During the *haftarah* on Acharon Shel Pesach, the Rebbe cried profusely, especially during the *pesukim* “*וַיֵּצֵא חוּטֹר מִגִּזְעוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל*” and “*אִוֹדֶה ה’ כִּי אֶנְפֹּת בִּי*”. There was not one word that the Rebbe said without sobbing. Also during *yizkor*, the Rebbe leaned on the *bima* and cried a lot.

The farbrengen of Acharon Shel Pesach began at approximately 4:45 p.m. and went on until 11:45, finishing before *chatzos* because of *sefira*.



During the farbrengen the Rebbe stood up and spoke about “*Moshiach’s Sefer Torah*,” noting that the Frierdiker Rebbe wanted everyone to be able to take part in it. The Rebbe said that it is for this reason that the Frierdiker Rebbe wanted to finish it a number of times but never did so because he wanted to be *mezakeh* more Yidden.

The Rebbe quoted the Frierdiker Rebbe, saying that one should drink four cups on Acharon Shel Pesach, although the Rebbe added that they don’t need to be full.

The Rebbe started giving out *l’chaim* and spoke about “*simcha poretz geder*.” The Rebbe then said that since no one else is going out of themselves yet, he will have to be the one to begin, and he said *l’chaim*.

First the Rebbe poured wine to the elderly members of *anash*, saying that the Frierdiker Rebbe said that they need to show a good example to the *yungeleit*. Then the Rebbe poured to those who are involved in *ruchniusdiker* work. The Rebbe said that he doesn’t want to mix *gashmius* and *ruchnius*. The Rebbe spoke to many people and had a number of them agree to start new *shiurim*. Then the Rebbe gave *l’chaim* to the businesspeople. The Rebbe told one person to switch his jacket to be right over left.

When Reb Bentzion Shemtov (who just arrived on Chol Hamoed) asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* that



14 ADAR 5713, JEM 103376

anash in Russia should merit to come to the Rebbe, the Rebbe exclaimed, “It would be a good thing.”

The Rebbe announced that all the older people and the *yungeleit* should move aside so he can now pour *l'chaim* to the *bochurim*. The Rebbe spoke a *sicha* to the *bochurim*, emphasizing how the Frierdiker Rebbe planted tremendous *kochos* in them and that their growth could be exponential.

Addressing the whole crowd, the Rebbe said that he hopes no one will be offended if he takes *l'chaim* along with the *bochurim*, because “I am a *bochur* [i.e. *talmid*] of the (Frierdiker) Rebbe as well. Even if someone is offended by this, it doesn't bother me.”

The Rebbe gave many *brachos* to *anash* and gave a number of consecutive *l'chaims* to many people. In general there were many *giluim*.

The Rebbe spoke at length about spreading Torah and *hafatzas hamaayanos* because Moshiach is “עומד אחר כתליו”, only a little is left to be done to complete the job.

As the crowd sang “*Nye Zyhuritz!*” the Rebbe sang along with great enthusiasm. In middle of the *niggun* the Rebbe called out, “*Chapt arain Yidden* before *havdalah*, because tomorrow is *isru chag* and it is not as great as Acharon Shel Pesach.”

“I am a bochur [i.e. talmid] of the (Frierdiker) Rebbe as well. Even if someone is offended by this, it doesn't bother me.”

The Rebbe said to sing the Alter Rebbe's *niggun*, repeating the last stanza seven times!

After Maariv the Rebbe announced that on Motzei Pesach the Frierdiker Rebbe would wish people, “*A gezunten zummer*—a healthy summer.”

MOSHIACH DANCE

At the farbrengen of Shabbos Mevorchim Iyar, the Rebbe said that since it is the Shabbos after Pesach, and the Frierdiker Rebbe would instruct that there should be a “Moshiach Dance” each Acharon Shel Pesach, he is asking that the dance should happen now with great joy. (The Rebbe said that for a various reasons he didn't say to dance on Acharon Shel Pesach.)

The Rebbe himself danced with the elderly members of *anash* for approximately 15 minutes with great vigor, signalling that the crowd too should dance with enthusiasm. **T**

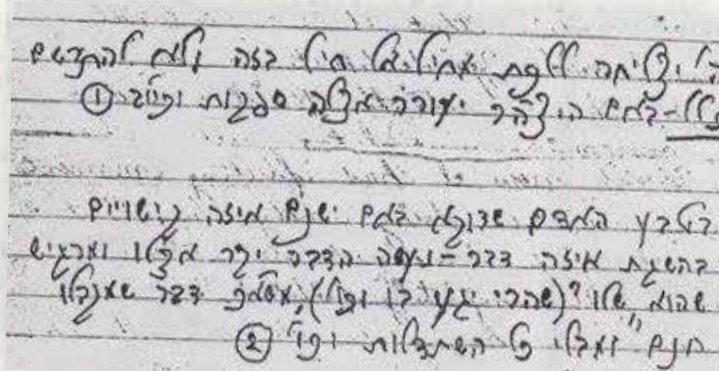


כתב יד קודש

לזכות
החיילת בצבאות ה' ליבא תחי'
לרגל הולדתה כ"ב כסלו ה'תשע"ט
מוקדש ע"י הוריה
הרה"ת ר' דובער
וזוגתו מרת אסתר לאה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
גרינבלאטט

When Facing Challenge

A written response from the Rebbe offering perspective
to a woman who was facing certain challenges in life:



1) May Hashem grant you success in going from strength to strength in this area, without being affected **at all** when the *yetzer hara* sows doubts and the like.

2) Human nature is such that when one has challenges accomplishing something, it becomes more precious to him; he feels as though it became "his" (since he worked hard for it, etc.), while the same cannot be said of something that is obtained for free, without any effort.

וה' יצליחה ללכת מחיל אל חיל בזה ולא להתרשם כלל - באם היצה"ר יעורר אצלה ספקות וכיו"ב (1)

בטבע האדם שדוקא באם ישנם איזה קישויים בהשגת איזה דבר - נעשה הדבר יקר אצלו ומרגיש שהוא "שלו" (שהרי יגע בו וכו'), משא"כ דבר שמקבלו חנם ומבלי כל השתדלות וכו' (2)

לזכות
הרה"ת ר' שלום דוב בער
וזוגתו מרת ח' מושקא
ובנותיהם ברכה ליפשא,
עליזה ושיינדל שיחיו
שוחאט

The Rebbe's Hagga



Concision. Precision. Depth.

Over the centuries, there has hardly been another *sefer* in all of Jewish teaching that has as extensive and lengthy commentary written about it like the *Haggadah Shel Pesach*.

Among all these writings, one small commentary stands out above the rest: The Rebbe's Haggadah, which he humbly called "*Haggadah shel Pesach im Likkutei Minhagim V'taamim*"—Haggadah with a compilation of customs and reasons. But a mere reading of this magnificent work reveals a depth of explanation and clarity unparalleled anywhere else.

In honor of the Yom Tov of Pesach, we take a deeper look at the Rebbe's first original published *sefer*.

Reb Avraham Hirsh Cohen was a Lubavitcher *rav* who, as *yungerman*, studied in Kolel Mea Shearim, a kolel in Yerushalayim that included all kinds of *yungeleit*: Lubavitchers, Polishers, and non-Chassidim.

Rabbi Yosef Tzvi Segal related: Reb Avraham had a tremendous *koch* in the Rebbe's *haggadah* ever since it was published in 5706*. Every year starting around Purim time—30 days before Pesach—he would begin studying it in depth for two hours every day.

Reb Hirsh Kopshitz—a well respected *lamdan*—also studied in the kolel, and when he saw Reb Avraham Hirsh expending so much effort on the *haggadah*, he said to him, "Why should a *talmid chacham* like you study this *haggadah* so much?!"

"Let's sit down for a few minutes and learn one piece, even just one question together," Reb Avraham Hirsh replied. They began learning a part of the *haggadah* where the Rebbe discusses the "four questions" of the *sefer* night, and why the question of *mesubin*—why we lean on this night—comes last.

The Vilner Gaon answers this question a certain way, but the Rebbe questions his answer, and leaves

things with "*tzarich iyun gadol*," meaning that it's a very serious question.

Rabbi Kopshitz tried to come up with an answer for the Gr"a but wasn't successful, so he asked if he could borrow the *haggadah* for a day. After realizing that the question was indeed a strong one, he decided to take it to Rabbi Yitzchak Zev Soloveitchik (also known as the Brisker Rav, or by the name of his *sefer*, the Chiddushei Hagriz).

The next day, Rabbi Kopshitz reported that he had sat for a long time with Rabbi Soloveitchik trying to come up with an answer, but the effort had proven unsuccessful. Rabbi Soloveitchik asked if he could keep the *haggadah* for a few days.

After a few days had passed, Rabbi Soloveitchik told him the following: "I have several answers, but the question remains a question," meaning that the answers weren't sufficient to truly resolve the issue. Rabbi Soloveitchik added that he had spent some time looking into other things that the Rebbe wrote in the *haggadah* and said, "I knew that he is a *lamdan*—but I had not imagined that it was to such an extent."¹

Becoming a haggadah reader

“There are two ways of writing a *sefer*,” says one Rosh Yeshiva we interviewed. “Some people want to write a *sefer*, so they find a subject to write their *sefer* on. Then there are people who write *sefarim* with the purpose of guiding people, of bringing clarity to the subject.

“The purpose of writing the *sefer* is expressed in the end result: When the subject matter is a means to an end—writing a *sefer*—then you dramatize everything, you make everything sound big and bold, you bring out the most sophisticated twist. But when you’re trying to help people understand things and bring clarity, then you try making everything as simple as possible for people to understand. Even when the subject becomes more complicated, you try to explain it in the most simple way.

“Rashi is the classic example for this: Rashi’s goal wasn’t to write a *sefer*—he was helping people read *pshat*.

“This is the Rebbe’s *haggadah*. If the Rebbe were to sit down to write a *sefer* on the *haggadah*, he would write and write and never finish. But the Rebbe is helping people read *pshat*; instead of reading many things *about* the *haggadah*, they should become better *haggadah* readers. The *haggadah* is written with such simplicity and clarity—not making things more complicated, rather, to the contrary, making everything more simple.

“I remember a certain *Litvishe* individual who would read many *sefarim* about the *haggadah* as Pesach was approaching—but by the *seder* he used the Rebbe’s *haggadah*. This is *the* guide to the *seder*.”

Rabbi Isser Zalman Weisberg says, “The vast majority of *haggados* fit into one of two categories: Most *haggados* are the writers’ own *chiddushim* and explanations on the *haggadah*. Then there are *haggados* that collect everything, all of the *pirushim* on the *haggadah* from the *rishonim* and *acharonim*, without choosing one

over the other. There aren’t that many *haggados* like the Rebbe’s—where the Rebbe carefully chooses each *pirush* and *vort* that he includes.”

Rabbi Tuvia Blau writes,² “The same humility that caused the Alter Rebbe to call his *sefer*, which is the foundation stone of *Toras haChassidus* and the ways of *avodas Hashem*, with the name of Likkutei Amarim, as if it’s simply a collection—that same humility caused his successor in *dor hashvi’i*, the Rebbe, to call one of his *sefarim* “Likkutei Minhagim Vetaamim,” a collection of customs and reasons.

“From the thousands of *sefarim* that have been produced on the Haggadah Shel Pesach, this *sefer* is, without question, the most rich in content. You will find *everything* you need to know in order to fulfill the many *mitzvos* on the night of the *seder*, and to fulfill them properly, with complete *hiddur* and enjoyment. And that’s it. In other words: there is nothing missing, and also nothing extra.”

“There is something for everyone in the Rebbe’s *haggadah*,” Rabbi Sholom Spalter says. “Whether you’re a *pashtan*, a *lamdan*, a *darshan*—no matter what type of study you are interested in, *pshat*, *remez*, *drush*, or *sod*—you will enjoy learning the *haggadah*. In more than 40 years, there hasn’t yet been a single year that I haven’t found an amazing *chiddush* in the Rebbe’s *haggadah*. Not a single year!”

In his early review of the *haggadah*, Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin gives a beautiful and succinct description: “This is an amazing *haggadah* and there are few like it; it is appropriate for every Jewish person, Chossid and non-Chossid alike. For every section and line of the *haggadah*, one is provided with the sources in *rishonim* and *poskim* in a concise form, together with the essential laws and *minhagim* that are relevant to that place in the *seder*, in addition to the relevant explanations collected from the *rishonim* and *acharonim*.”

The Rebbe's first sefer

The *haggadah* has the distinction of being the first *sefer* of the Rebbe that was published. It was first printed in 5706*, as an appendix to the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch. It has been noted that this is similar to the fact that Pesach was the first subject the Alter Rebbe published a *sefer* on, when he was still studying by the Mezritcher Maggid. It was also one of the first *halachos* published by his sons in Shklov, as the Rebbe notes in the beginning of the *haggadah*.³ In fact, the *haggadah* is really the only original *sefer* the Rebbe wrote and published himself (the only other *sefer* being Hayom Yom, which is a collection from the Frierdiker Rebbe's Torah).

Now, every *sefer* of the Rebbeim is published under a "*heichal*": the Baal Shem Tov is *heichal alef*, the Maggid is *heichel beis*, and so on. Each *heichal* has a unique *shaar* (border) on the front page of the *sefarim*, which were chosen by the Frierdiker Rebbe.

When the Rebbe was publishing his first *sefer*, he asked the Frierdiker Rebbe which *shaar* to use. The Frierdiker Rebbe responded: "My father [the Rebbe Rashab] was a *pnimi*, and you are a *pnimi*. It would be fitting that the *haggadah* should have a *shaar* like my father's."⁴ (All the Rebbe's *sefarim* from then on were published with the Rebbe Rashab's *shaar*.)

The Rebbe's own use

The Rebbe himself would make much use of the *haggadah*: Both the instructions that the Alter Rebbe wrote when he compiled the *siddur* (and *haggadah*), and the explanations as well.

Rabbi Yisroel Shmotkin related:⁵ "[At the *seder*] the Rebbe would set up the *ka'ara* while standing, and he would recite all of the instructions from the *haggadah* before doing each part. When the Rebbe would recite the first words of the Alter Rebbe's instructions—סדר על שולחנו—he would hold on to the *matzos*. While saying הישראל, he would hold the bottom *matzah* and let it go, then continue with ועליו הלוי, then let the middle one go, and then conclude with the top *matzah*."

"When it came time for Urchatz," Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Offen said, "the Rebbe would also read the instructions for Karpas, because one is not supposed to make a *hefsek* after washing. The same would be by the *simanim* of Matzah, Maror and Korech. Before washing his hands, the Rebbe would recite all of the instructions through Korech.

"The Rebbe's *haggadah* was printed in a different format in those days. In those *haggados*,

the text was printed along an entire page, and then on the next page or two were the *minhagim* and explanations. During the *seder*, we would see the Rebbe recite an entire page quickly, and then while waiting for the *makri* to reach the end of the page, he would peruse the explanations—that he had written—on the next page, as well as look into the Siddur Ha'Arizal. When the Rebbe would look back into the *haggadah*, Reb Yankel Katz would already be halfway through the next page. Then, again, the Rebbe would read through the entire page and then go back to the *minhagim*."



The editions of the haggadah

Rabbi Leibel Shapiro gives us a history of the *haggadah*:

“In 5706*, when the Rebbe’s *haggadah* was first published, the original text of the *haggadah* wasn’t redone: it was copied from the siddur Torah Or, and printed on one side of the page, and the Rebbe’s *pirush* was printed on the other side. (If the Rebbe wrote a lot on a certain topic, then there were two pages of *pirushim* in a row.)



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“In 5717*, the Rebbe wrote *hosafos* on the *haggadah*, and a small, three-page booklet was published.

“In 5723*, which marked 150 years from the *histalkus* of the Alter Rebbe, the Rebbe wrote more *hosafos*, and these were basically pieces that were connected to the Alter Rebbe. Eventually, these were published in a single sefer: the original *haggadah*, with two sets of *hosafos* in the back.

“Over the years, many *sichos* of the Rebbe on the *haggadah* were published, e.g. the *sichos* on the second night of Pesach, Parshas Va’eira, Bo, and so on. (At one point they were collected by the *bochurim* and published in a booklet.)

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Accessible – with unlimited depth

There are two distinct lenses through which the Rebbe's *haggadah* can be viewed. Just as Rashi is fundamentally a simple explanation created for the five-year-old child, the Rebbe's *haggadah* illuminates each part of the *haggadah* in the simplest and most succinct way possible, guiding you along as it gives you sources for everything that you read, practical pointers for what to do, *vertelach* in Chassidus and Kabbalah, and tidbits of explanation that resolve any major questions on the way. Like Rashi, the language in the *haggadah* is concise, clear, and to the point. You don't have to be a scholar to study and enjoy the Rebbe's *haggadah*, and it is accessible to all.

Then there's a deeper layer. If you learn the *haggadah* more diligently, looking up the sources and comparing it to explanations in other *haggados*, two things will happen: first you will discover that not everything is as simple as it appears. You will realize that for every explanation the Rebbe cites, there are plenty more that he didn't, that certain passages are difficult to understand at face value, and that there even seem to be contradictions from one part of the *haggadah* to another. But, eventually, by digging beneath the surface, one discovers the true depth.

Fascinating facts from the Rebbe's haggadah

Fit it into the poem

In the *simanim* of the *seder*, ורחץ is the only one that has a *vov*, “and wash.”

Why?

This is so that each *siman* should have two syllables: *ka-desh*, *u-rchatz*, *kar-pas*, etc. (The Rebbe goes on to quote other reasons as well, including a Kabbalistic explanation from his father.)

In limbo

Shefoch chamascha, when we open the door for Eliyahu Hanovi, is the only part of the *seder* that is not included in any of the 15 sections of the *seder*. *Beirach*—bentching—finishes before “*Shefoch chamascha*” and *Hallel-Nirtza* begins after it.

Hei Lachma Anya in Yiddish?

Today we only translate the *ma nishtana* into Yiddish, but the ancient custom was to translate both *Hei Lachma Anya* and the *ma nishtana* into the local language, and there were those who

translated *avadim hayinu* as well. The Rebbe explains why our custom is different.⁶

The floating possuk

The *possuk* “*Va'reich misboseses bidamayich*” is unique: It's located in a section of the *haggadah* that is quoted directly from the *Sifri*, and if you didn't know better you'd think that the *possuk* comes from the *Sifri* as well, but it was in fact added later on by the authors of the *haggadah*. The various *nuschaos* of the *haggadah* inserted it in different places, and the Rebbe explains why the Alter Rebbe included it into the spot that he did.⁷

Utter precision

In the *haggadah*, the Alter Rebbe wrote short instructions. The Rebbe pays tremendous attention to every detail—to the extent that, in one place, he asks why the Alter Rebbe sometimes writes “and then” (ואח”כ) you should do something, while at other times he writes, “and” do something.

The meaning of כמה שנאמר

In the vast majority of Jewish literature, the term כמו שנאמר means that we are citing a *possuk* as a proof to what we are saying. But when the author of the *haggadah* writes כמה שנאמר, he might be bringing a *possuk* as a proof or he may be bringing it for more elaboration.⁸

Would it really be enough?

The message of the *Dayenu* is to emphasize how great Hashem's kindnesses are to us, and that even if He only did this for us—*dayenu*, it would be enough. But there are several strange stanzas:

If He had given us their wealth, and had not split the sea for us—dayenu. Would it really be enough if we had perished at the sea?

If He had drowned our oppressors in it, and had not supplied our needs in the desert for 40 years—dayenu. Would it truly be enough had we died in the desert?

If He had brought us before Har Sinai, and had not given us the Torah—dayenu. What's the value of coming to Har Sinai without receiving the Torah?

These are questions asked by *mefarshim*, and the Rebbe gives beautiful original explanations for each one of them.⁹

Why the Kabbalah?

When the Alter Rebbe wrote the *haggadah* (as part of the *siddur*), his goal was to create something that was accessible to everyone, and although much of it is based on Kabbalah, there are only two times that he actually includes the Kabbalistic *kavanos* that one should have in mind:

By the pouring of the wine into the broken vessel, the Alter Rebbe writes that one must have in mind that the cup is *malchus* and it is pouring into a the broken vessel of *kelipa*. The Rebbe explains that he was forced to break from his practice because there is a *halachic* reasoning for why one must have this specific *kavana* at this point (see there).¹⁰

In the *Hodu... ki le'olam chasdo*, the Alter Rebbe included the *yud-kei-vov-kei* that one

should have in mind throughout the recitation. This shows us that this is a *kavana* that is relevant to everyone.¹¹

Where are the brachos?

Generally, every mitzvah that we perform is accompanied with a *bracha*. On the night of the *seder*, however, we do not recite a *bracha* for many of the *mitzvos* that we perform: When we drink the four cups, for example, we do not recite a *bracha* “*al shesiyas daled kosos*”—although, of course, we do recite the *borei peri hagafen*. The same is true regarding the mitzvah of recounting *yetzias Mitzrayim*, eating the *charoses*, and more.

The Rebbe brings explanations for each one as they come up:

No bracha on the four cups - The four cups constitute one single mitzvah that is divided into the drinking of four cups. Being that we drink them throughout the *seder*, and we will make interruptions before we finish all four of them, we cannot make a *bracha* in the beginning for the entire mitzvah.¹²

No bracha on the retelling of yetzias Mitzrayim - This question was the subject of a fascinating generational story of the Rabbeim, with each Rebbe asking his child for an answer to this question, all the way back to the Alter Rebbe.¹³ The Rebbe brings down several other answers as well from *rishonim* and *acharonim*.¹⁴

No bracha on Hallel - Because its recital is split in half; or because it's like reading the Torah.¹⁵

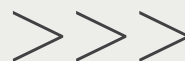
No bracha on charoses - Because the *charoses* was instituted as an addition to *marror* and therefore does not get a *bracha* for itself: the *marror* represents the bitterness of difficult work, while the *charoses* symbolizes just how difficult the work was—with mortar, for “there is no work as difficult as the work with mortar.”¹⁶ This explanation, which was developed by the Rebbe himself, is the subject of much discussion among scholars.¹⁷

Careful Examination

Obviously, in order to truly appreciate the depth of the Rebbe's commentary on the *haggadah*, you need to study and carefully examine the Rebbe's words in their entirety. We hope that this overview will encourage our readers to actually peruse the Rebbe's words and

appreciate the Rebbe's novel approach to the text of the *Haggadah Shel Pesach*. In this spirit, we have included another section below, based on our conversations with individuals who toiled over the Rebbe's haggadah and shared with us their findings.

A Taste of The Rebbe's Haggadah



Indefinable

People have tried to characterize or define the Rebbe's *haggadah*. But, in truth, that is an impossible endeavor. As one of the *roshei yeshivos* we interviewed commented: "Try to define Talmud Bavli. You can't! The only way to have a taste of Gemara is by going ahead and learning it, in depth. You cannot define the Rebbe's Torah—you can only know it by experiencing it."

However, in order to provide a taste of the depth that can be discovered, we have collected a few short explanations from scholars who are experts on the Rebbe's *haggadah*. It should be noted that these have been boiled down to their most fundamental points, and in some

cases we were only able to include references of the explanations themselves. To gain a real comprehension, they should be read in their original form. This is not a representative sample of the *sugyos* that are written on each passage of the *haggadah*; it is a mostly random selection of a few pieces that we felt may interest our readers.

We hope that this will provide some inspiration to learn the Rebbe's *haggadah*—every individual on his own level—whether that means opening it up and studying it on its own, which in itself is a fascinating learning experience; or on a deeper realm, by studying the sources and uncovering more and more insight.

Who created the haggadah of today?

סדר הגדה. ראה במשנה פסחים פ"י, מכילתא פ' בא, תלמוד בבלי וירושלמי שם וכו'. סדר הגדה בצורה קבועה נמצא כבר בסידור ר' עמרם גאון, סי' רס"ג, ברמב"ם, מחזור ויטרי ועוד, הביאור ע"ד הסוד בפע"ה וסי' האריז"ל.

Rabbi Isser Zalman Weisberg says: "Let's focus on just one line in this passage: The Rebbe brings four sources for the *haggadah* as a set *nusach*: Rav Amram Gaon, the Siddur Rasag, the Rambam, the Machzor Vitri, 'and more.'



RABBI ISSER
ZALMAN WEISBERG

"This isn't just a random list: these are the four original prototypes of the *haggadah*; all the many versions of the *haggadah* that have been published since are based on them. The period of the *geonim* extended over about 450 years after the end of the *amoraim* and *sevaraim*, and there were approximately 90 *geonim* during that period. Rav Amram Gaon was the 26th *gaon* of Sura. In response to a request from the elders of a community in Spain, he wrote up the text of the *siddur* and *haggadah*. This is the first *siddur* and *haggadah* that we have. (The reason that the

siddur wasn't written until then is beyond the scope of this article, but it is connected to the fact that *Torah shebaal peh* in general wasn't always written down, and, even at that time, there was much hesitation to write things.) Every *siddur* that we have today—Sefard, Ashkenaz, etc.—is based on this *siddur*.

"Rav Saadia Gaon became the *rosh yeshiva* in Sura 56 years after Rav Amram Gaon. Rav Saadia Gaon authored an enormous amount of *sefarim*; on *Torah shebiksav*, *Torah shebaal peh*, *halacha*, *dikduk*, *hashkafa*, and even *chachmos chitzoniyos* (this was because there were many challenges to Yiddishkeit in his generation from opposing philosophies). Among his many *sefarim*, he wrote a *siddur* and *haggadah*.

"The third source is the Machzor Vitri, which was authored by a student and *mechutan* of Rashi, and it includes many of Rashi's rulings and

minhagim. The fourth source the Rebbe brings is the Rambam.

“It’s interesting to note that the Rebbe lists the Rambam before the Machzor Vitri, even though the Machzor Vitri was written 100 years before the Rambam.

“This is because the Rambam is a more authoritative source than the Machzor Vitri. In general, although Rashi and the Rambam are considered two of the greatest *rishonim*, Rashi is considered more of a *parshan*, a commentator, while the Rambam is a *posek* par excellence. So when it comes to deciding the text of the *haggadah*, the Rambam comes before the Machzor Vitri. We see this throughout the *haggadah*: sometimes the Rebbe will bring sources chronologically, in the order in which they were written, and sometimes he will list them according to importance.

“Now, every word in the Rebbe’s *haggadah* is exact. What does the Rebbe mean by “*ve’od*—and more”? The Rebbe must be saying that there is another source (or sources), yet it does not warrant explicit mention. There is no way of knowing for sure, but I think that the Rebbe may be referring to a *haggadah* that was discovered in the Cairo Geniza, which is a massive collection of ancient manuscripts and documents that was left untouched for centuries in the Ezra shul in Fostat, Egypt, and is considered to be one of the greatest discoveries of manuscripts ever. This *haggadah* dates back to the times of the *geonim*. Although it is quite different than the version that we have today, it is a very early text of the *haggadah*, and this might be what the Rebbe is referring to.”

A Rashi that was long misunderstood

קוראין את ההלל-הלויים (תוספתא פסחים, ספ"ד)

After Mincha on Erev Pesach, we read a description of the *Korban Pesach* in the *Beis Hamikdash*. In the description, it tells us that as the Yidden were slaughtering the animals and bringing them to the *mizbe'ach*, “Hallel was read.” The Rebbe adds a very short note—quoting the *tosefta*—that the Levi'im were the ones who were reading the Hallel.

This four-word comment is one of the most famous *sugyos* in the Rebbe’s *haggadah*. It began with a letter from Rabbi Zevin, who asked the Rebbe (among other things) why he had omitted the opinion of Rashi on the subject, that Hallel was recited by the Yisrael, not the Levi'im. In two fascinating letters,¹⁸ the Rebbe explains at length that the opinion of Rashi had been misunderstood, and that although a superficial

reading may leave a different impression, Rashi had never meant to deviate from the *tosefta* and say that the Hallel was read by the Yisrael.

It is interesting to note that in this issue the Rebbe stands against the commonly accepted version of many *acharonim*, including the Meleches Shlomo, the Mahari Kurkus, the Minchas Chinuch, the Rogatchover, and others.



RABBI SHLOMO
YOSEF ZEVIN

JEM 284219



THE REBBE'S HANDWRITTEN RESPONSE TO RABBI SHLOMO YOSEF ZEVIN'S QUESTION ON THE REBBE'S HAGGADAH, DATED TZOM GEDALYA 5706.

What does Haggadah mean?

השם "הגדה" - בפסחים (קטו, ב). הגדה ע"ש והגדת לבנך, וי"מ הגדה שהוא ל' הודאה ושבה להקב"ה על שהוציאנו מארמ"צ כמו שמתרגם בירושלמי הגדתי היום לד' אלקיך שבחית יומא דין. וכן תרגמו ר' סעדי' בערבי (אבודרהם). ויש גורסין אגדה באל"ף (ראה ד"ס לפסחים קטו-קטז. תוד"ה אמר ע"ז מה, א. ובכמה ראשונים).

The origin of the name "*Haggadah*":

As mentioned above, the Rebbe selected the *pirushim* on the *haggadah* from among many *rishonim* and *acharonim*, and he left many explanations out. Sometimes, he brings only one explanation when many others exist. From the Rebbe's correspondences, we see that this was done with tremendous precision, and that if something was omitted, there was a very good reason for it.

For example: Around the time that the Rebbe's *haggadah* was published, Dr. Aharon Hilman was writing articles in Sinai Magazine about the *haggadah*, and he included his notes on the Rebbe's *haggadah*.

One of them was regarding the name "*Haggadah Shel Pesach*." The Rebbe cites three explanations for the name "*haggadah*," but Dr. Hilman felt that there was a better explanation: As the Rebbe himself notes multiple times, most

of the *haggadah* is built as a *midrash* on *pesukim*; hence the name "*haggadah*"—the *midrash*—of Pesach.

In a letter,¹⁹ the Rebbe responded to him that this was difficult to accept: According to this explanation, the term only applies to one section of the *haggadah*—from *Avadim Hayinu* until *Venomar lefanav halleluka*—and, the Rebbe says, that is not what it seems from *rishonim* and *acharonim*. The implication is that the **entire** *haggadah* is called "*the haggadah*," not only the section that explains *pesukim*.

(Dr. Hilman also felt that the Rebbe had missed a better explanation for why the four cups of wine isn't included in the *ma nishtana*, and there, too, the Rebbe responded that his explanation wasn't sufficient.)

From these letters and others, we see how much precision the Rebbe invested in every word of the *haggadah* and also in what he had left out.

Three matzos – halacha or midrash?

בג' מצות—שאלו אנשי קירואן למר רב שרירא גאון למה לוקחין ג' מצות בלילי פסחים לא פחות ולא יותר, והשיב להם רמז מן התורה הוא לג' סאין שאמר אברהם לשרה לעשות מהם עוגות כו', וגמירי אותו זמן פסח הי'. וי"א זכר לג' הררי עולם אברהם יצחק ויעקב (מעשה רוקח טז, נה).

About the need for three matzos, the Rebbe quotes reasons that seem more symbolic in nature—to remind us of the three measurements of flour used by Avraham Avinu or the three *avos*.

To the layman this may seem like a very simple piece, but someone who has familiarity with *hilchos Pesach* will immediately be struck by a powerful question: There's a simple, halachic

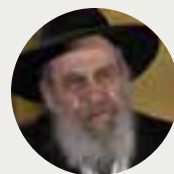
reason why three *matzos* are needed at the night of the *seder*: Two are needed because a person is obligated to make the *bracha* of *hamotzi* on two whole matzos—just as on any other Yom Tov night—and the third is required in order to have a broken matzah as *lechem oni*—bread of affliction. Why does the Rebbe look for symbolic reasons when there is such a simple reasoning?

This question was originally posed in the *Bit'aon Chabad* magazine. Rabbi Ezra Schochet from Los Angeles suggested an answer, and, to put it very briefly, he explains²⁰ that we are dealing with two distinct issues here: 1) The objects that a person needs on his *kaara* during the *seder* when he reads the *haggadah*, and 2) the obligations that he has to *perform* later on throughout the *seder* (like eating the matzah, eating the *maror*, and so on).

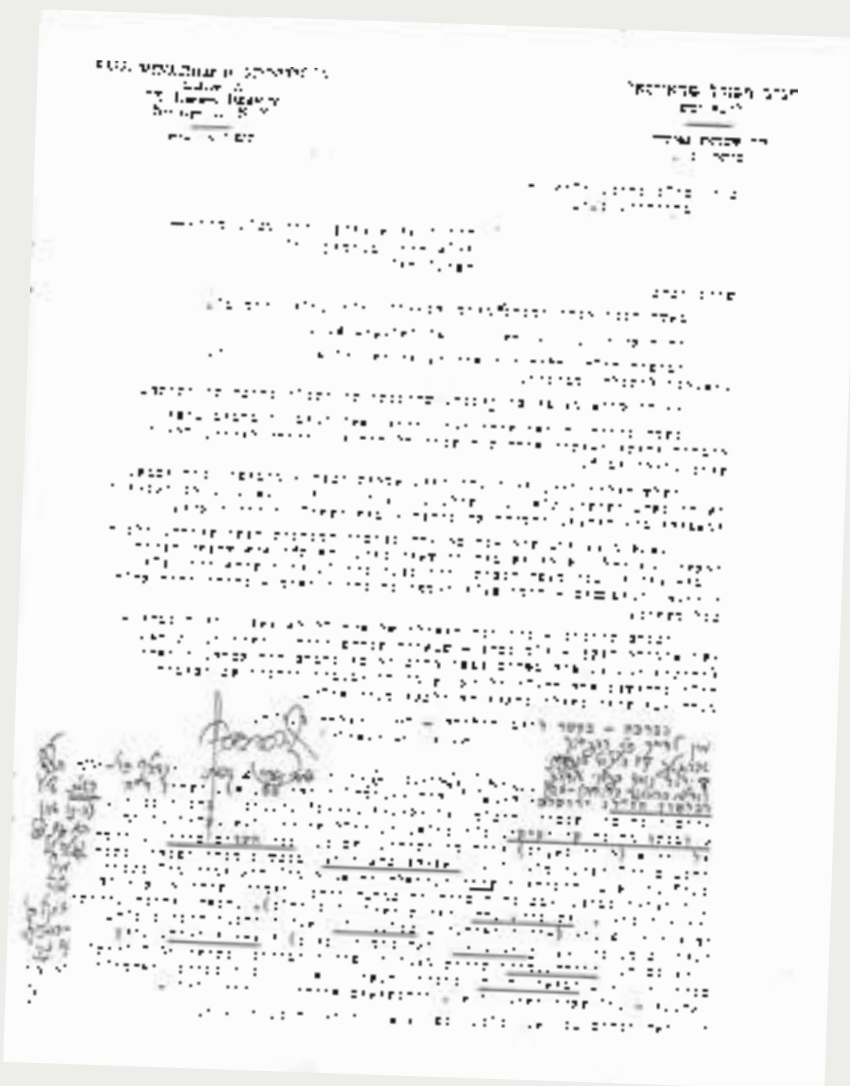
These are not the same thing. Just because something must be used at one point during the night, it doesn't mean that it must be on the *kaara*.

So the Rebbe couldn't bring the halachic reason for three matzos—two for *lechem mishneh* and one for a broken matzah—because that only explains why three matzos will eventually be needed during

the *seder*, not why it must be on the *kaara* throughout the recital of the *haggadah*. (Indeed, the Rambam only says to bring *one* matza to the *seder* table—because, in his opinion, it's not needed on the *kaara*.) In order to explain why it needs to be on the *kaara*, the Rebbe brings the reason of Rav Sherira Gaon. Using this logic, Rabbi Schochet goes on to explain many passages of *rishonim* and *acharonim*, see there.



RABBI EZRA
SCHOCHET



A HANDWRITTEN POSTSCRIPT IN THE REBBE'S KSAV YAD KODESH TO RABBI EZRA SCHOCHET ABOUT HIS STUDIES IN THE REBBE'S HAGGADDAH.

Is the Kiddush on Pesach special?

קדש - בכל יו"ט חייב בקידוש מדברי סופרים, וכשהל בשבת יש לו גם עיקר מן התורה - מוסיף עליהם בלילה זה, שהוא אחד מארבעה כוסות שהן מצוה מד"ם בליל פסח. ולכן: א) אינו מקדש על הפת. ב) אין אחר מוציא אותו ידי חובתו (שו"ע רבינו סתע"ב סכ"ב). ג) דוחק עצמו לשתות ד' כוסות אף שמזיקו או שצריך למכור כסותו (נדרים מט, ב. פסחים צט, ב). ד) אינו מקדש אלא בלילה ממש ולא בתוספת יו"ט (תה"ד סקל"ז), כי תקנו חכמים ד' כוסות בזמן הראוי לאכילת מצה (שו"ע רבינו שם ס"ב). ה) יש לחוש לדעת אלו האומרים שמצוה לשתות כל הכוס ועכ"פ רובו (שם סי"ט).

On the night of the *seder*, *kiddush* is recited over the first of the four cups of wine. For this reason, *kiddush* on this night has different laws than a regular Shabbos or Yom Tov, and the Rebbe lists five differences.

But the problem is that there there seem to be at least three additional significant differences that the Rebbe *doesn't* include: 1) On the night of the *seder*, the wine of *kiddush* must be drunk while reclining; 2) It must be done with wine that is diluted with water; and 3) It must be done specifically with red wine.

Based on this and other *diyukim* in this passage, Rabbi Schochet²¹ suggests that the Rebbe isn't simply pointing out the practical differences between *kiddush* of Pesach night and the rest of the year, because *kiddush happens to coincide* with the four cups of wine—rather, he's choosing differences that are related to the fundamental *nature of kiddush* on the night of the *seder*. (The explanation itself is quite complex, see there for the explanation.)

The possuk that was missing for over a thousand years

ויעבדו מצרים את בני ישראל בפרך: וימררו את חייהם בעבדה קשה בחמר ובלבנים ובכל עבדה בשדה את כל עבדתם אשר עבדו בהם בפרך: (שמות א, יג-יד).

In the Alter Rebbe's *haggadah*, both of these *pesukim* are cited in full. In almost all the other *nuschaos* that the Rebbe checked, he did not find anyone who brings the second *possuk* as well.

A major point of focus of the Rebbe's *haggadah* is to explain the Alter Rebbe version of the *haggadah* (and there are some scholars who

argue that this was in fact the Rebbe's only focus in writing it).

The above is one significant example of this. The Rebbe is explaining how it's possible that, for over a thousand years (!), a *possuk* had been lost in all of the *haggados* used throughout the Jewish world.



THE REBBE'S EDITS ON HIS HAGGADAH.

The Rebbe's explanation is two-pronged: First, he explains that this *possuk* is so crucial to the description of *galus Mitzrayim* that it's impossible that (the Sifri and the) author of the *haggadah* didn't include it. If you're trying to describe the backbreaking work that the Yidden were forced to endure in Mitzrayim, how can you omit the very *possuk* that describes it in detail?!

But that still leaves a powerful question: If we cannot find a single *haggadah* in history that included this *possuk*, isn't that the biggest proof that it was never included?

To answer this question, the Rebbe helps us imagine how the *haggadah* was transmitted through the generations. In the beginning, the *haggadah* was written and copied by hand. When you copy things by hand, you often try to keep things as brief as possible. In order to keep this piece short, the copier of the text copied the first and last words of these two *pesukim*.

So this paragraph -

"ויעבדו מצריים את-בני ישראל, בפרך. וימרו את-חיהם בעבודה,

קשה, בחומר ובלבנים, ובכל-עבודה, בשדה--את, כל-עבודתם, אשר-עבדו בהם, בפרך.

Became this line -

ויעבדו מצרים גו' בפרך.

But there was only one problem. Look again: that same shorthand could also be used if you were copying the first *possuk* on its own. **ויעבדו** **בפרך**, מצריים את-בני ישראל.

Some very early scribes indeed made this very mistake, and believed that the abbreviation was referring only to the first *possuk*. This mistake was then copied throughout all the later editions of the *haggadah*, and it was more than a thousand years before the Alter Rebbe returned the *possuk* back to its rightful place. **1**

1. Taken from "Reb Avraham Hirsh" p. 49-50.
2. Bitaan Chabad vol. 21 p. 21.
3. Rabbi Avraham Alashvili.
4. Yemei Temimim vol. 2 p. 797.
5. See Derher Nissan 5776, "The Rebbe's Seder," p. 50-51.
6. הא לחמא 12 P.
7. ואעבור עליך 22 P.
8. במתי מעט כמה שנאמר 22 P.
9. 28-29 P.
10. ויכוון 25 P.
11. 'הודו לה' גו 47 P.
12. ד' כוסות. 8 P.
13. מצוה עלינו לספר ביצי"מ 15 P. in the second
14. מצוה עלינו לספר ביצי"מ 15 P. in the first
15. הללו' הללו-למענו מים 32 P.
16. ברכה זו. 35 P.
17. See e.g. Kovetz Hayovel vol. 1 p. 92
18. Igros Kodesh vol. 2 p. 241-243, 260-264.
19. Igros Kodesh vol. 2 p. 364
20. Later published in Migdal Or vol. 9 p. 464ff.
21. Kovetz Migdal Or p. 476.



הצליחו עד עתה ולמעלה מן המשוור



Rabbi Mordechai Avtzon

📍 Hong Kong

”נשיא דורנו האט
אויפגעטאן און
אנגעזאגט צו כל
אנשי ונשי הדור
אז מצוות הדור
איז אין דעם ענין
השליחות...”

“The Rebbe nesi doreinu established and mandated each and every man and woman in this generation that the ‘mitzvah of our generation’ is *shlichus*...”
(ש"פ וישלח תשמ"ז)

With a history of over 100 years, the Hong Kong Jewish community was desperately searching for a rabbi. They sent letters to Jewish organizations worldwide, asking for help. The Rebbe's response was immediate. Within days, Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky traveled here to assess the situation. This was the winter of 5745*.

As the community was reluctant to hire a full-time rabbi, it was agreed that two *bochurim* would come for a short while. Armed with the Rebbe's *bracha*, Rabbi Michel Gurkov (today, shliach in Wayne, NJ) and I came to service the community for one month through Purim. At that point, Michel needed to return to New York, and the community asked me to stay. As it is uncommon for a

bochur to be on *Merkos Shlichus* alone, it was not clear to me how to react.

I contacted Rabbi Hodakov who advised me that the Rebbe's instruction was for me to remain for the time being. I stayed through Pesach and then returned twice for short visits. When the summer came around, the community invited me to serve as their rabbi for the following year.

To sign such a contract as a *bochur*, especially at *shidduchim* age, was a big deal! I asked the Rebbe for his guidance but the summer passed and there was still no answer. Toward the end of the summer, Rabbi Kotlarsky wrote to the Rebbe and mentioned that since the community is without a rav for Tishrei, he is asking again if I should take the job.

The Rebbe responded:

כעצת ועד רבני אנ"ש כאן אזכיר עה"צ ויבש"ט

“Follow the advice of the Vaad Rabbanim here. I will mention this at the *Tziyun*, and may you share good news.”

At the advice of the *rabbonim* which consisted of Rabbi Sholom Morosow, Rabbi Marlow and יבלח"ט Rabbi Osdoba, I traveled back to Hong Kong just before Rosh Hashanah and signed a contract for a year, with the agreement that when a *shidduch* comes up, it would be okay to travel.

A few months passed and a *shidduch* was proposed. I wrote to the Rebbe, asking for a *bracha* to come to New York. On the very morning that my ticket was booked, *mazkirus* called and informed me that the Rebbe just instructed:

לא כדאי להפסיק השליחות כעת.

“It is not worthwhile to interrupt the *shlichus* at this point.”

This was a turning point as it had not been clear to me whether my employment was deemed as a full-fledged *shlichus*. Here, the Rebbe clearly referred to this position as a *shlichus*!

About a month later, the *shidduch* came up again and the Rebbe responded in the affirmative. Several weeks later, on Yud Shevat, I became engaged to Goldie Shemtov –

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר
בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל
וזוגתו מרת חנה שיינא
ומשפחתם ח' מושקא, לוי יצחק,
רבקה מאריאשא, ברכה,
יקותיאל זוסמאן וגיטה שיחיו
גנזבורג
שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר לטאראנטא, קאנאדא



daughter of Rabbi Avrohom and Bat Sheva Shemtov from Philadelphia. On Rosh Chodesh Nissan, just three weeks after our wedding, we traveled back to Hong Kong as a couple.

The community included many factions. While there was a traditional group that supported my employment, there were also those who were opposed to having a Chabad rabbi. In spite of a new contract offered for the coming year, the community reneged during that summer. We were in New York at the time due to my mother's passing and to us it seemed that it was all over.

The Rebbe, however, wanted the shlichus to continue. Rabbi Kotlarsky was instructed to travel to Hong Kong and work things out with the community but they did not budge. On a phone call with Rabbi Hodakov the Rebbe came on the line and said:

מ'וועט נישט דערלאזן אוועקשיקן די
וועלכע מ'שיקט פון דאנעט

"We will not allow those who are sent from here to be sent away."

The Rebbe's position was clear; Chabad would open independently. At that point, I asked Rabbi Hodakov if this meant that we should be the shluchim or perhaps in light of the embroiled community environment, a fresh couple should be selected for this position. Again, the Rebbe made it clear by saying that it is "נוגע בנפש" (absolutely essential) that we be the shluchim!

On Rosh Chodesh Elul that year (5746*), we started "Chabad of Hong

Kong" in a 100 square foot room at the Hilton Hotel. Some members of the community pledged their support but most of the community was opposed to our presence.

Soon thereafter, we established "L.I.F.E. – Lubavitch In the Far East," and with the Rebbe's *brachos* our community grew and Chabad's presence throughout the South East Asia took root.¹

During those first few years, we worked on many fronts as the Rebbe's only shluchim in Asia. I made many trips to Thailand, Japan, Singapore, Korea, Vietnam, and of course China, to work with individuals and communities in these places. *Baruch Hashem*, all these places now have permanent shluchim.

Chinuch became an issue that weighed heavily on our minds. The possibility of a Jewish school seemed daunting. This predated the Shluchim Online School by many years. The notion of bringing up our children in such an isolated location seemed impossible. The closest Jewish community was an eight-hour flight!

Concerned and worried, my wife wrote to the Rebbe, asking permission to relocate. The Rebbe's reply was incredibly encouraging:

הצליחו ע"ע ולמעלה מן המסוער. ואזכיר
על הציון שלעיתיד לבא יצליחו עוד יותר ומתוך
שמחה וטוב לבב ויבשרו טוב.

"You have succeeded until now, and beyond expectations. I will mention at the *Tziyun* that going forward you should succeed even more than you

did until now, and with joy and good hearts; may you share good news."


It is important to mention that we received this answer during the "Nine Days." Rabbi Binyomin Klein told us that it was extremely unusual for the Rebbe to give out answers during that period.

Shortly after receiving this answer, we managed to open a nursery school with eight children. After a year or so, people asked that we turn it into a community school and after much consideration we decided to go ahead with this. To accomplish this and get a maximum number of community members on board there were some policy issues that needed to be negotiated – some of which made it no longer feasible to be an official Chabad school. These issues were discussed under pressure of time and at one point I felt that we may have shown weakness. I shared my concerns with the Rebbe, adding my hope that the overall result brought him *ruach*.

The Rebbe drew a line under the words *נחת רוח*, extended the line above my letter, and wrote in big letters:

ורב הוא!!

"[The *nachas ruach*] is great"

Today the school has grown and is home to close to 400 Jewish children! 

1. A number of clips where the Rebbe speaks to people about the work of Chabad in Hong Kong can be found on Living Torah. Chabad.org/1558542. Chabad.org/443384. Chabad.org/1804988. Chabad.org/1441939.



A Fishy Business Deal

Selling fish was Moshe Dovid's¹ trade, but it was his financial situation that stunk; in regards to real sea creatures, he didn't even have a penny for a piece of old herring. He was out of business.

Luckily for him, he resided in a town where Chassidim of the Tzemach Tzedek also lived and they suggested that he travel to their Rebbe for a bracha. The depth of his dire situation was such that even this simple journey was more than he could afford. Determined to help him, the Chassidim collected some money and paid for Moshe Dovid's trip, all the while convincing and encouraging this not-yet Chossid that he would be helped.

Upon entering the Tzemach Tzedek's room, Moshe Dovid poured out his heart and explained how his fish business had

collapsed leaving him destitute.

"Travel to Berlin," answered the Rebbe, "Hashem will help you!"

Somewhat surprised at this seemingly random piece of advice, Moshe Dovid travelled back home without any intention of actually carrying out the Rebbe's words. "What purpose at all is there in traveling to Berlin?" he thought to himself.

When he arrived, the Chassidim eagerly gathered around him, sure they would be hearing a miraculous story.

"To Berlin?!" they echoed after hearing what had transpired. "So why are you here? If the Rebbe told you to go to Berlin then that is where your salvation will come from."

Knowing full well that he couldn't afford the trip, they again quickly raised



BERLIN, GERMANY IN THE LATE 1800S.

some funds and sent him on his way.

"Now what?" Moshe Dovid asked himself upon arriving in Berlin. For the next seven days he roamed the streets aimlessly with no inkling at all as to what he was to do next.

One morning, as he strolled around Berlin with absolutely no plan, he found himself in the marketplace, standing right next to a large fish store.

After milling around that area for a long while, the owner of the store asked Moshe Dovid what he was looking for. "I want to buy 100 barrels of that fish," he replied, pointing to a certain species of fish and offered a ridiculously low price for the purchase. The German fishmonger was taken aback by the audacity of such a low offer but after a few minutes of negotiations, Moshe Dovid convinced the

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לכ"ק אדמו"ר
בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל
וזוגתו מרת אסתר מרים
ומשפחתם שיחיו
ליפשיץ



man to make the sale. The fishmonger jotted down the address of where Moshe Dovid was staying and ordered his employees to prepare the order.

Chuckling to himself at the absurdity of what he had just done, Moshe Dovid returned to his hotel with no plans at all to make good on the order he had placed.

The next day the price of this particular fish had gone up tremendously.

Word had it that this German fishmonger had many barrels of this fish and hungry merchants clambered to his store to buy them. They offered him tremendous amounts of money, many times more than the going market price, but to no avail. "I can't sell them to you," he explained. "They were already purchased by someone else and I am just waiting for him to pick them up."

"Who do they belong to?" they pressed.

The fishmonger gave them the address to where Moshe Dovid was staying.

They knocked on his door and immediately got down to business by offering to buy the fish for a steep price, much more than the going rate, and many times more than the amount he had committed to pay. Without much hesitation, Moshe Dovid

agreed to the deal. He then went to the fishmonger and paid up his bill, and returning home with the profit, a considerable sum of money. From that day on, he once again succeeded greatly in his business. ¹

*(Adapted from
Otzar Sippurei Chabad
vol. 17, p. 28)*

1. The name does not appear in the original but was added here for the sake of clarity.

UPON ENTERING 770, THE REBBE ENCOURAGES
THE SINGING, YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5732*.



לע"נ
הרה"ח ר' אליהו ציון ע"ה
בן הרב חנני' ע"ה
נלב"ע כ"ז ניסן ה'תשע"ג
ת"נ צ"ב'ה'

נדפס ע"י בנו
הרה"ת ר' יגאל ישראל
וזוגתו מרת ח' צירליא
ומשפחתם שיחיו
ניאזוף

זה היום עשה ה'

Hisvaadus Chassidim

Yud Aleph Nissan



As we approach the auspicious day of Yud-Aleph Nissan, A Chassidisher Derher sat down for a farbrengen with two shluchim, Rabbi Yossi Paris of Montreal, QC and Rabbi Binyomin Scheiman of Des Plaines, IL. They shared with us some recollections from their time by the Rebbe, and guidance on how to approach Yud-Aleph Nissan today.

A Yom Tov for Everyone

Rabbi Paris: I was a *bochur* in 770 in the late 5720s* and early 5730s*. Those were the years that Yud-Aleph Nissan really became the public Yom Tov that it is today. We were *zoche* that the Rebbe shared the day with us Chassidim and all of *klal Yisroel*, giving us the opportunity to take part in his *simcha*. Today it is a given that we add in our *hachlatos* in preparation for

Yud-Aleph Nissan, we give *matanos* to the Rebbe, make *farbrengens* and do all we can to be by the Rebbe on this day. But like many things in *dor hashvi'i*, this was something built up over time.

In general, if we look back at previous generations, the Rebbeim celebrated their birthdays privately. The Rebbe Rashab said a *maamar* every year on his birthday. If Chof Cheshvan fell out on Shabbos he said

it publicly but if it was a weekday he said it only in the presence of the Frierdiker Rebbe.

Chassidim also didn't celebrate their birthdays and many in previous generations did not even know the exact date of their birth.

Chai Elul was a *chassidishe yom tov* for centuries before it was revealed by the Rebbe Rashab that it was the birthday of the Baal Shem Tov and the Alter Rebbe. Even when the Rebbe



Rashab “revealed” it, he only told this to the Frierdiker Rebbe, who chose to make it public many years later.

When we look at Yud-Aleph Nissan, we find the same. Nobody really knew when the Rebbe’s birthday was. Interestingly, when the Rebbe published Hayom Yom in 5702*, he placed the Frierdiker Rebbe’s instructions regarding a *yom huledes* in the Hayom Yom for Yud-Aleph Nissan, but no one really knew this

was the Rebbe’s birthday. The first time Chassidim learned about the date was in 5707*, when the Rebbe was visiting his mother, Rebbetzin Chana, in France. Rebbetzin Chana suggested to a small group of Chassidim there that they should ask the Rebbe to farbreng because it’s his birthday—and the Rebbe agreed.

However, it remained a Yom Tov among Chassidim for many years before the Rebbe began farbrenging and officially celebrating the day with us.

The first time the Rebbe made a farbrengen for Yud-Aleph Nissan was in honor of his sixtieth *yom huledes*, in 5722*. That year, Tzach (Lubavitch Youth Organization) made a huge *shturem* all over the world for people to make *hachlatos* in the number 60 in honor of *shnas hashishim*. On the day of Yud-Aleph Nissan, Rabbi Hodakov went into the Rebbe’s room before Mincha with the stacks of *duchos* containing all the *hachlatos*. When he came out, he announced that the Rebbe would hold a special farbrengen that night.

But besides for that one year, Yud-Aleph Nissan was still celebrated quietly. When I was growing up in Kfar Chabad there was a big public farbrengen on Yud-Tes Kislev and Yud Shevat, but not on Yud-Aleph Nissan. In yeshiva, we farbrenged in the dormitory rooms ourselves. I remember one year Reb Yoel farbrenged in a *bochur*’s house, not in yeshiva. I heard from Reb Leibel Raskin a”h that when he was a *bochur* in the 5710s*, they were uncomfortable to even farbreng

openly, and they made secret farbrengens for Yud-Aleph Nissan.

This all changed in 5731*. That year when the Rebbe returned from the Ohel, it was announced that he would hold a farbrengen between Mincha and Maariv. This caught everyone by total surprise. In that farbrengen the Rebbe said the famous *maamar* “*Beyom ashtei asar.*” It was a short farbrengen with one *sicha* and a *maamar*.

Perhaps the purpose of that surprise farbrengen was to kick off the festivities for the Rebbe’s seventieth year, *shivim shanah*, Yud-Aleph Nissan 5732*.

That year thousands of people came from all over the world. It was the largest crowd 770 had seen until that point.

For months before Yud-Aleph Nissan, *bochurim* and *anash* made *hachlatos* in the number 70. 70 *maamarim* by heart, 70 *blatt* Gemara, 70 dollars to *tzedaka*, etc. The *hisorerus* was incredible. There were four *niggunim* made that year on the Rebbe’s new *kapitel*!

There was also great excitement in the Jewish world and beyond. Many world leaders and elected officials sent letters of recognition, scrolls of honor, and keys to cities to present to the Rebbe at the big farbrengen, in recognition of Yud-Aleph Nissan.

The *hachanos* reached their peak at the Purim farbrengen, about a month before Yud-Aleph Nissan, when the Rebbe spoke openly about it, responding publicly to those that had asked what they could give the Rebbe as a *matana* for his birthday. The Rebbe requested that all *matanos*



Chai Elul was a chassidishe yom tov for centuries before it was revealed that it was the birthday of the Baal Shem Tov and the Alter Rebbe.



for his birthday should also include an element of Torah. Never before had the Rebbe so clearly and publicly addressed the celebration.

On the day of Yud-Aleph Nissan, Rabbi Hodakov, in the Rebbe's name, distributed \$71 to the head of every Chabad *mosad*. The Rebbe was celebrating together with his Chassidim.

There is no need to describe the famous farbrengen that year. Everyone is surely familiar with the Rebbe's announcement of the formation of

71 new institutions, and pledging 10 percent of the costs for each new *mosad*.¹ There is a video of that incredible farbrengen and I highly suggest that people take the time to watch it.

From that year on, the Rebbe farbrenged every year on Yud-Aleph Nissan (until 5745*).

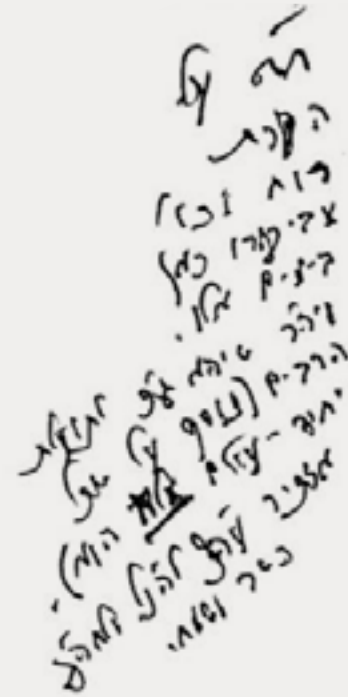
We are truly fortunate that the Rebbe chose to celebrate his own birthday with his Chassidim, something that did not exist in all the previous generations.

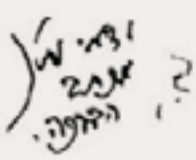
The Day it all Started

Rabbi Scheiman: Obviously, for us as Chassidim, Yud-Aleph Nissan is the most important day on the calendar. If not for Yud-Aleph Nissan, “אִי לֹא הָאֵי” “יּוֹמָא” (“...If it weren't for that day...”²)

In the farbrengen of 7 Adar 5745, the Rebbe speaks about the birth of Moshe Rabbeinu. Rashi says that when Moshe Rabbeinu was born נִתְמַלֵּא “הבית כולו אורה,” the house became filled with light. The Rebbe elaborates on the *chiddush* in Rashi's words: Even before Moshe Rabbeinu had a *bris*, before







KSAV YAD TO A CHOSSID WHO VISITED THE REBBE FOR YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5732*:

ת"ח על הקורת רוח וכו' מביקורו כאן בימים אלו.
ויה"ר שיהא ג"כ לתועלת הרבים (נוסף על שכל יחיד - עולם מלא הוא).
אזכיר עה"צ להנ"ל ולחה"פ כשר וששמח.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR THE PLEASURE OF HAVING YOU VISIT HERE IN THESE DAYS.
MAY IT BE HASHEM'S WILL THAT IT ALSO BE FOR THE BENEFIT OF MANY (IN ADDITION TO THE FACT
THAT EACH INDIVIDUAL IS AN ENTIRE WORLD.
I WILL MENTION ALL OF THE ABOVE AT THE OHEL, AND FOR A KOSHER AND HAPPY PESACH.

he even had a name, as soon as he entered the world, he didn't even have to do anything, the house was filled with light.³

In a farbrengen on Yud-Beis Tammuz, the birthday of the Friediker Rebbe, the Rebbe explains that the "house" refers to Hashem's house, this world. The Rebbe's birthday is not just a *simcha* for those who live in his "house," his Chassidim, but for the whole world, because on that day a new light began illuminating the entire world.⁴

On a personal note, Yud-Aleph Nissan always stood out to me more than any other *yoma depagra*. I started noticing that the Rebbe comments on the number 11 at every opportunity.

In Chassidus the number 11 symbolizes higher than *hishtalshelus*. The world is made up of ten *sefiros*, that's the natural order, and 11 is above that, reaching the *atzmus* of Hashem.⁵ Eleven represents the deepest connection with Hashem.

In the farbrengen of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5745*, the Rebbe connected

this with the famous words of the Alter Rebbe that he doesn't want Gan Eden or *olam haba*, "מער ניט אז"—only Hashem Himself." In another *sicha*, the Rebbe says that the coming of Moshiach is connected specifically with 11.⁶

On another occasion, the Rebbe offered a lengthy explanation on when the early seeds of *yetzias Mitzrayim* and the birth of *am Yisroel* actually began—on the Sunday before they left *Mitzrayim*, which occurred on, you guessed it, Yud-Aleph Nissan.⁷



MEM 103644

THE FARBRENGEN OF YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5732*.

On Chof-Beis Shevat 5752*, the Rebbe even said that the uniqueness of the number 22 is that it's double 11!

Rabbi Paris: On this note, I remember something interesting the Rebbe said in connection with Yud-Aleph Nissan on Shabbos Hagadol 5729*: The *possuk* in Yehoshua tells us that the Yidden who were born in the desert did not have a *bris mila* until the end of the 40 years, right after they crossed the Yarden. What date did this occur? The Rebbe quoted several sources that indicate it was actually on Yud-Aleph Nissan.

The mitzvah of *mila* is unique in the fact that it is one of two *mitzvos aseh* that warrant *karres* if they're neglected (the other one being *Korban Pesach*). When one fulfils the mitzvah of *mila*, the potential *karres* is transformed into a positive act. This is similar to the concept of נעשו לו זדונות

—כזכירות—that when one does a proper *teshuva*, his *aveiros* are transformed into merits.

I remember how a few days later at a farbrengen with Chassidim, someone pointed out that the Rebbe is actually hinting to the nature of Yud-Aleph Nissan and what it really means: The Rebbe's whole life is about bringing myriads of Yidden back to Yiddishkeit. No wonder this lesson about *mila* happened on Yud-Aleph Nissan!

Traveling to the Rebbe

Rabbi Scheiman: During the court case over the *sefarim*, the Rebbe spoke a lot about “מה זרעו בחיים אף הוא בחיים”, just as his [the Rebbe's] children are alive, so too he is alive.” On numerous occasions, the Rebbe says that when we see “*zar'ò bachaim*,” then we know that “*hu bachaim*.”

We are the *zar'ò bachaim* of the Rebbe. When we act as *zar'ò*, the

Rebbe's children, then most certainly “*af hu bachaim*,” the Rebbe is alive and relates to us in this way too.

As the *zar'ò bachaim* of the Rebbe, it is important that we make the effort to go to the Rebbe as often as possible, on the various *yomei depagra* and especially for Yud-Aleph Nissan.

Before Yud-Aleph Nissan 5742*, the Rebbe's 80th birthday, the Rebbe said in a *sicha* that people should not travel to come in. Many shluchim couldn't resist and went anyways; it's the Rebbe's birthday, how could one not be there?! By nature I'm a *kabbalas ol'nik*, so I stayed in Chicago that year. I also convinced some of my fellow shluchim to stay.

Imagine how we felt when we watched the hookup and heard the Rebbe thanking everyone for coming, adding that he would give each participant a Tanya as a token



Not knowing what to do, he asked the Rebbetzin, and the Rebbetzin answered him “we didn’t mean friends.”

of appreciation. We saw the shluchim from Chicago who had gone in, go by to get a Tanya. The others who I had convinced to stay with me were very upset with me, to say the least.

Interestingly, it was later published in the “Encounters” by Reb Zalmon Jaffe, how he was planning to be by the Rebbe that Yud-Aleph Nissan, but after the Rebbe said not to come in he was thinking of cancelling his trip. Not knowing what to do, he asked the Rebbetzin, and she replied that, “We didn’t mean friends.”

We are friends, or even more so as I said earlier, children. This is our father’s birthday. If one asks his father whether or not to fly in for

his birthday party, of course he’ll say not to. Every father would tell his children not to waste their money, not to bother themselves, etc. But certain things you don’t ask! You go, and once you’re there it is very much appreciated.

Especially now after Gimmel Tammuz, we have to show even more that *zar’o bachaim*, and the way to do that is by going to the Rebbe just like before.

After Gimmel Tammuz, my wife and I decided that our family’s schedule of going to the Rebbe would continue unchanged. A few years later, we were driving for Yud Shevat, and one of my younger daughters asked if

this time she would get a dollar from the Rebbe. I guess she realized that the last few times she didn’t get one.

My wife told her that when we go to the Rebbe we always get *brachos*. If the Rebbe has time, maybe he’ll come out and *daven* with the Chassidim, *farbreng*, have *yechidus* or give out dollars, but we always get the *brachos*.

The Rebbe is certainly pouring out *brachos* on this day. There is no more opportune time to be in close proximity to the Rebbe than on Yud-Aleph Nissan.

Bringing Nachas to the Rebbe

Rabbi Paris: The focal point of Yud-Aleph Nissan is to bring the Rebbe *nachas*.

In Montreal for a number of years, Rabbi Berel Mockin would arrange a meeting in the weeks approaching Yud-Aleph Nissan to determine what

Not knowing what to do, he asked the Rebbetzin, and the Rebbetzin answered him “we didn’t mean friends.”

matana we would bring the Rebbe that year. One year we decided that our *matana* was a new mikvah in Montreal. Every member of *anash* gave \$1000 and we built a beautiful mikvah.

It was clear to every person that Yud-Aleph Nissan was about bringing something to the Rebbe, you couldn’t come empty handed.

Every year, as it gets closer to Yud-Aleph Nissan, our shlichus centers around what we are bringing to the Rebbe for his *yom huledes*. Every extra mitzvah that we do with someone, every tefillin that we put on, every *shiur* that we make, at the forefront of our mind is that this is something I can take to the Rebbe for Yud-Aleph Nissan.

A Matana for the Rebbe

Rabbi Scheiman: You can’t come empty handed to the Rebbe. You have to bring a *matana* and it has to be something substantial.

This year marked 90 years since the Rebbe’s *chasunah* on Yud-Daled Kislev. Chassidim all around the world took on extra *hachlatos* in honor of this milestone.

The shluchim in Chicago had a farbrengen on Chof Cheshvan. At that farbrengen someone recounted how he was once discussing a *maamar* he was learning with Reb Mendel Futerfas. Reb Mendel was animatedly talking about the finer points of the *maamar*, as if he had just learned it. So the *bochur* asked him why he *punkt* now learned this *maamar*.

Reb Mendel told him that he learned this *maamar* as a *bochur* over 70 years earlier but he was taught that you have to live with a *maamar* for a year. So he reviewed it every single day

for a year. When you learn something 350 times it stays with you even after 70 years.

So we made a *hachlata* that each of us would take something and learn it every day from Chof Cheshvan until Chof-Beis Shvat, 90 days in honor of the 90 year milestone.

For my *hachlata*, I chose to learn the *sichos* the Rebbe said on the day I came on shlichus to Chicago, on Rosh Chodesh Adar 5740*.

That day the shluchim were going to leave to Australia. Before Mincha, totally out of the blue, Rabbi Groner came out of the Rebbe’s room and announced that there would be a farbrengen after Mincha.

As that was the day we moved on shlichus, and the whole farbrengen was in essence a *tzeischem l’shalom* for shluchim, I feel a special connection. Over the years I have come to see more and more how so many things in that farbrengen applied directly to me and my own shlichus.

The *matana* that we bring to the Rebbe accomplishes two things. First of all it’s a present for the Rebbe. But in addition to that, it’s also beneficial for us, as it helps us live with the Rebbe more.

Rabbi Paris: In 5735*, the Hebrew schools that my wife and I started in Montreal for public school children were already quite successful. We had around 400 students by then.

I decided that for Yud-Aleph Nissan that year I was going to bring the Rebbe a booklet with the Hebrew names and mothers’ names of all the students in the school.

This was a very difficult task. Many of the children didn’t know their Jewish name so I had to go to each

parent, and getting the parents’ names was another difficult task.

Of course this made us work hard to enroll even more students, to make the list longer. We wanted to bring the Rebbe as much *nachas* as possible.

When I came to New York on 9 Nissan I submitted the booklet to *mazkirus* as our *matana* to the Rebbe. Shortly afterwards, I received a beautiful answer from the Rebbe.

”נת”ח ודבר בעתו כו’ ואשרי חלקם ודכל המסייעים וכו’ - שליט”א. אזכיר עה”צ ולחה”פ כו”ש וכל המברך מתברך בבר’ של הקב”ה כו’.”

“It was received; thank you. The timing is appropriate, etc. Fortunate is their lot and that of everyone who assisted etc.—*shlita*. I will mention this at the Ohel, and for a kosher and happy Pesach. [In response to the blessings for Yud-Aleph Nissan:] Anyone who blesses another is blessed with Hashem’s blessing, etc.”

It’s interesting to note that in the letter accompanying the booklet I wrote that we made all the preparations for Pesach in school, with a model *seder* and *ma nishtana* along with everything the kids need to know, and the Hebrew school program was now closed for Pesach.

At the farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke about this. He said it’s “א וילדע זאך”; it doesn’t make sense that the *yeshivos* and Talmud Torahs are closed at the time of year when children need the most education, about how to celebrate the *seder* and to observe the *halachos* of Pesach. All that is accomplished is that the kids are home for a week disturbing their parents’ preparation for Pesach. Better they should be busy practicing the *ma nishtana*.

Since then the school is in session until erev Pesach.

There was a period of time that I didn’t get any answers to the *duchos* I had sent to the Rebbe. One year I came back from the Rebbe to Montreal



THE REBBE LEAVES 770 FOLLOWING THE FARBRENGEN OF YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5737*.

on Yud-Aleph Nissan and went to visit some *baalei batim*.

One of the people I visited never wanted to put on tefillin. This time I told him, “Today is the Rebbe’s birthday, how about you give him a present?” and he agreed. So I suggested that his present to the Rebbe could be to put on tefillin today. He was happy to do the mitzvah in honor of the Rebbe.

When I wrote this story to the Rebbe, I received the first answer in a long time.

Mivtzoim

Rabbi Paris: I once heard a *vort* from the veteran shliach in Montreal, Rabbi Simcha Zirkind a”h, that Yud-Aleph Nissan is an opportune time for doing *mivtzoim*. I always found this to be the case, seeing tremendous *hatzlacha* on the *mivtzoim* I did on that day.

One needs to do all they can to be by the Rebbe on Yud-Aleph Nissan, but after being at the Ohel and doing what we have to do, we are certainly on the right track if we spend the rest of the day doing the Rebbe’s *mivtzoim*.

Indeed, when the Rebbe spoke about not coming in for Yud-Aleph Nissan in 5742* (as mentioned by Rabbi Scheiman earlier), the Rebbe said that instead “people should be active in spreading Yiddishkeit in their place, especially through doing the *mivtzoim*!”⁸

Rabbi Scheiman: In addition to all the *hachalatos* and *matanos*, we should remember that sometimes, the best *matana* we can bring to the Rebbe is ourselves. Showing up can be the greatest gift of all.

Chazal say that when Moshiach comes, all the Yomim Tovim will be cancelled with the exception of Chanukah and Purim. In Chassidus it

is explained that other Yomim Tovim are a reflection of a specific quality of *Elokus*, but Chanukah and Purim are not a specific quality rather Hashem Himself.⁹

So too, Yud-Aleph Nissan is the day when it all began. It is about the Rebbe himself! I don’t know what will be with the other *chassidische Yomim Tovim* but we will certainly be celebrating Yud-Aleph Nissan when Moshiach comes. **7**

1. For a complete description of this farbrengen and the whole period of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5732, see ‘A Time To Expand,’ Derher Nissan 5776.
2. Based on Gemara Pesachim 68b.
3. Hisvaaduyos 5745 vol. 2 page 1289.
4. Sichä 12 Tammuz 5722.
5. Yahel Ohr page 48.
6. Hisvaaduyos 5745 vol. 3 p. 1724.
7. Hisvaaduyos 5749 vol. 3 p. 7.
8. Hisvaaduyos 5742 vol. 2 p. 1084.
9. Torah Ohr Megilas Esther page 90:4.



דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות

לכ"ק אדמו"ר

בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן

נדפס ע"י

הרה"ת ר' ישראל בן בתי'

וזוגתו מרת שטערנא שרה בת חנה בתי'

ובנם מנחם מענדל בן שטערנא שרה

Perfect Clarity

AS TOLD BY CHANA SHERMAN (TORONTO, ONTARIO)

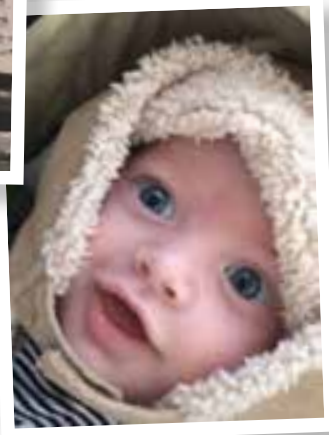
My youngest child was 10 years old when I became pregnant with my son Yonatan, in the winter of 5774*.

At the 18-week ultrasound, the doctor discovered many large fluid spots in the baby's brain. He told us that in his 30 year career he had never seen such large and numerous spots and was unsure of what to make of it. Thankfully, the organs were all healthy, which ruled out Down Syndrome, but further investigation was needed to come up with a plan. In the meantime, another ultrasound was scheduled for six weeks later.

We were plunged into great emotional turmoil from the news, especially the fact that the prognosis was unknown, but we refused to consider "other alternatives."

I immediately understood that I must call my Rebbetzin, Mrs. Toby Bernstein of Chabad of Richmond Hill, so we can daven to Hashem together for help that everything would turn out alright, and to write to the Rebbe.

I had been to the Ohel before with Mrs. Bernstein when I joined her at the Kinus Hashluchos, and I felt certain that I must turn to the Rebbe for a bracha. From home I wrote a



detailed letter of the situation requesting a bracha and sent it to the Ohel.

As I waited out the six weeks for the next ultrasound, I said much Tehillim and found considerable comfort in Chapter 118.

The day of the ultrasound arrived and after an hour of scanning, the head radiologist came over to us and asked in a frustrated tone, "What are you doing here? Your baby is perfectly fine. There is no evidence of any spots whatsoever!"

We were overjoyed by the wonderful turn of events and looked forward to welcoming a healthy baby to the world.

I was scheduled to have a C-section for the 21st of Cheshvan, but Hashem had other plans. I went into labor 24 hours before the scheduled C-section, and gave birth on the 20th of Cheshvan to a healthy baby boy whom we named Yonatan. I later learned that this is the birthday of the Rebbe Rashab, a special day.

Three years later, Mrs. Bernstein invited me to join a women's trip to the Ohel and I decided that it was time to bring Yonatan along to say thank you to the Rebbe for the miraculous blessing of his birth.

When we arrived at the Ohel by bus, I asked Mrs. Bernstein what the Rebbe's chapter in Tehillim was and, although she probably said 116, I heard 118. I had brought

with me a Tehillim from home and as I entered the Ohel holding Yonatan in my arms, I opened to chapter 118 to say (what I thought) was the Rebbe's chapter.

To my utter surprise, the picture of the ultrasound with the large numerous fluid spots in the baby's brain fell out of the page! I had completely forgotten that during those tension filled weeks I had said this specific chapter over and over again and had placed the picture of my unborn baby at that spot as a page marker.

Standing at the Ohel, holding the picture of the ultrasound with its dire prognosis in one hand and my healthy Yonatan in the other, I was overcome with deep emotion and a feeling of perfect clarity. I felt as if the Rebbe was smiling at me in acknowledgement that he was with my little Yonatan throughout the entire ordeal until its happy conclusion.

I later learned that I had opened the Tehillim to the wrong chapter, as the Rebbe's chapter was really 116, but in truth the Rebbe wanted me to open to chapter 118... ①

YOUR STORY

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

Peace in the Galilee

לזכות
החתן הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל
והכלה המהוללה מרת ח' מושקא שיחיו
סג"ל לנדא
לרגל נישואיהם כ"ג אדר א' ה'תשע"ט
ולזכות הוריהם
הרה"ת ר' יוסף זוגתו מרת שפרה
ומשפחתם שיחיו סג"ל לנדא
הרה"ת ר' פרץ זוגתו מרת גיטל מלכה
ומשפחתם שיחיו בראנשטיין



"Imagine a weak hearted individual who walks into an operating room and watches the doctors begin a surgery. As he sees the first few drops of blood, he will beg the doctors to pause the operation and wait until the patient recovers from the beginning of the surgery, and only then should they continue operating. 'How can you continue operating when you see his blood being spilled?'"

"You can imagine the surgeon's response..."

"After they began the first surgery [the 1956 Sinai Campaign], a weak hearted person decided to pause the operation, saying that he needed to convene a meeting, and ask the opinion of certain individuals—otherwise it wouldn't be a democracy—so they need to ask the opinions of those in the Diaspora. The same occurred by the second surgery [the 1967 Six Day War] and the third surgery [the 1974 Yom Kippur War]."

"Now they are holding at the fourth surgery..."¹

THE FIRST LEBANON WAR

AN ISRAELI JET FLYING OVER BEIRUT, LEBANON.

ISRAELI GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE



SENIOR COMMANDERS OF THE IDF ANXIOUSLY SIT WITH A MAP DURING A PULL-OUT FROM TZUR, LEBANON.

Sitting Ducks

“We are sitting ducks!’ my commander yelled into his radio. Soldiers were being killed, tanks were being destroyed, and nevertheless, we were instructed to maintain our positions.”

As a young man, Rabbi Yigal Tzipori, today the Rebbe’s shliach in Kiryat Shemonah, served in the reserves and was called up in the First Lebanon War, officially named *Mivtza Shlom Hagalil*, which took place in 5742* (1982). The war was a response to years of katyusha shelling of villages in the Galilee from southern Lebanon, which had become known as Fatachland.

“We were positioned low in a valley,” Rabbi Tzipori related, “and the Syrian commando unit was stationed on the hill looking down at us. They entrenched themselves and brought in reinforcements. From time to time, snipers would fire at us. They also set up ambushes. We were a massive military force concentrated in a small area, and yet we didn’t have permission to advance.”²

After the PLO terrorists were ousted from their original home in Jordan in 1970, they entrenched themselves in Lebanon, which was

in the midst of a crippling civil war between Muslims, Christians, and other factions, along with the heavy presence of the Syrian army. With no central government in control, they had free reign which they utilized to build up a significant military force and to launch attacks against Eretz Yisroel and Jews all over the world.

The IDF carried out an incursion into Lebanon in 1978, known as *Mivtza Litani*, but it failed to fully destroy the PLO’s bases. As the attacks continued, the Israeli Government decided to act, and a plan was drawn up for an invasion.

On 12 Sivan 5742*, Shlomo Argov, Israel’s ambassador to Britain, was ambushed in London by three Palestinian terrorists. The terrorists were caught, but as a result of the shooting, the ambassador was paralyzed for life. As far as Prime Minister Menachem Begin was concerned, this was the last straw. On 15 Sivan 5742*, the Israeli tanks rolled into Lebanon.

5:00 A.M. Phone Call

“The night the war broke out,” relates Rabbi Yitzchak Yehuda Yeruslavsky, “Rabbi Hodakov left the Rebbe’s room and looked for my

“We are sitting ducks!’ my commander yelled into his radio.”

colleague Rabbi Mordechai Ashkenazi, who was in New York for Shavuot. The Rebbe wanted to know what was happening with the Sefer Torah for Chayalei Tzahal.

“Earlier that year, at the end of Tishrei, we had been called into *Gan Eden Hatachton* along with all the members of the Chabad Beis Din in Eretz Yisroel. No one told us what it was about. The Rebbe opened the door and explained that he wanted to speak about something sensitive. He told us to come inside and closed the door.”

During that *yechidus*, the Rebbe asked the rabbonim to take on a new project: To encourage the IDF to write a Torah for its soldiers.

“Throughout the winter,” Rabbi Yeruslavsky continues, “we worked on the project, trying to break through the endless bureaucratic red tape. Meanwhile, the Rebbe constantly requested updates.

“Then the war broke out. When Rabbi Ashkenazi told Rabbi Hodakov that I was the main person involved, he was instructed to phone me—even though it was five o’clock in the morning in Eretz Yisroel—and to inform me that we must energetically work to finish the project, being that the war broke out.

“When I received the phone call, everything suddenly fell into place. I realized that the Rebbe had already foreseen the outbreak of the war during the previous Tishrei and therefore had initiated this project, in the merit of the soldiers fighting the battles.”³

The Invasion

In Eretz Yisroel, the invasion proceeded according to plan. The

soldiers advanced quickly; each battalion quickly achieved its objectives, bulldozing through the PLO strongholds and rooting out terrorists. The intelligence agencies provided the soldiers with precise information about the terrorists' whereabouts and they found and neutralized them with relative ease.

For three days, the army moved deeper and deeper into the country. When the Syrians realized that the Israelis were planning on advancing until the capital city, Beirut, where the PLO command centers were based, they also began attacking the Israeli forces.

Now that the Syrians had joined the fray, the Israeli Air Force began an air

battle to demolish the Syrian's ground-to-air missile launchers. A full-on air battle was launched, and the outcome was astounding. The launchers were demolished and 97 Syrian aircraft were downed, without a single loss of Jewish life.

By the morning of the sixth day, the IDF was closing in on the main highway leading to Beirut and it was a matter of hours before they would cut off the Syrian supply route and essentially control the Lebanese capital. Realizing that they were being totally vanquished, the Syrians and PLO terrorists ran to the UN to beg for a ceasefire.

Already at the outset of the war, the United Nations Security Council

had been pressuring the sides to agree to a ceasefire. Now, the pressure really began to build from the United Nations as well as the United States. Following an intense debate in the Israeli Cabinet, Prime Minister Menachem Begin decided to accept it.

Tactical Disaster

The decision to accept the ceasefire was welcomed by some, but criticized by many others.

"Right before the ceasefire, Israeli intelligence received information that the terrorist organization was on the verge of collapse," declared the General of the Northern Command, Amos Braam, during a press conference in New York. "From a military perspective, it was a big mistake to agree to the cessation of hostilities."⁴

Immediately, the general set off a political firestorm and was harshly criticized for his statement. "The general mixed into affairs that aren't his," the Deputy Defense Minister, Mordechai Tzipor, responded. "He mustn't get involved in political decisions. G-d save us from a situation where the generals decide the army's next move."⁵

Two days after the ceasefire, on 22 Sivan, the Rebbe said a *sicha* to the graduating students of Beis Rivkah High School, and spoke about the situation. The halachic way to go about any war, the Rebbe explained, was to follow the opinion of the security experts.

Politicians invariably have various interests in mind; they think about the next elections and worry how the war will affect their international relations. The army officials, on the other hand, have only one objective: Accomplishing the objective with a minimum loss of life. Therefore, in a situation of *pikuach nefesh*, we must rely solely on their opinion.⁶





MIVTZA OIS BSEFER TORAH

By the time of the Rebbe's *sicha*, this had already been demonstrated on the battleground. Once the ceasefire had been declared, the Syrians had the opportunity to bring in reinforcements. They strengthened their positions, brought in additional soldiers and equipment from Syria, and in many places set up snipers bearing down on Israeli positions. As soon as they felt ready to proceed with the fighting, they would start shooting again.

Over the next two months, the army fell into a routine. They would advance a bit, then a ceasefire would be announced and the enemy would reinforce its position, and then the fighting would resume. The IDF would move at a snail pace, incurring more and more casualties. What had been planned to be a short ten-day operation now became a drag with no end in sight.

3 Tammuz 9:25 P.M.

Seder was just finishing in the small *zal* and *bochurim* were reaching for their hats and jackets anticipating the Rebbe's entrance for Maariv. Suddenly, an announcement was made: the Rebbe would hold a farbrengen immediately after Maariv.

"As soon as we heard the exciting news, everyone went running," writes Reb Aharon Korant in his diary. "Some to the mikvah, some to the telephone, and others to grab a place for the farbrengen. The Rebbe seemed very serious during Maariv, and we were able to hear him audibly recite the words of *Al tira...*"

During the farbrengen, the Rebbe returned to the issues that had taken place on the other side of Eretz Yisroel, regarding the Sinai Desert.

Following the Six Day War and the Yom Kippur War, the Israelis had

conquered the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt. From the very beginning, the Rebbe warned against returning any of the land. Firstly, Hashem gave us that land and we have no right to give it away, but more importantly, it was an issue of *pikuach nefesh*.

Shulchan Aruch rules in Hilchos Shabbos *siman shin-chof-tes* that if non-Jews besiege a Jewish settlement, even if they claim to have come for peaceful purposes, the Jews are to go out with weapons of war, even on Shabbos, to banish them.

Promises of peace are meaningless, the Rebbe always explained. They can be rescinded the moment after they are signed. Yet the irreversible sacrifice for that "*shalom hamedumeh*," that imaginary peace, literally endangered the lives of all the Jews in Eretz Yisroel, and projected an image of a weak country, which would invite more warfare and more pressure.

They now had enough money to sponsor the very terrorists who were warring with the Israelis in Lebanon.

Unfortunately, the Rebbe's words went unheeded, and in 5738*, they signed "the *Chozeh Ha'umlal*, the Wretched Accords" of Camp David, as the Rebbe called it. Within a short time, it became clear that the Egyptians did not plan to respect the treaty.

During this farbrengen, the Rebbe pointed out how these same accords had actually emboldened the terrorists.

Through the return of the Sinai Desert, the Egyptians had access to huge oil fields. Beforehand, their economy had been in turmoil, but the peace treaty had given them a major economic boom, and they now had enough money to sponsor the very terrorists who were warring with the Israelis in Lebanon.

"Soldiers spilled their blood to conquer those territories with the simple faith that they were protecting Eretz Yisroel and the Jewish people, and if those territories are returned, those deaths were for naught.

"After the Yom Kippur War, the prime minister admitted that had they listened to the military expert they would have saved hundreds of lives. Yet nevertheless, the politicians are making the same mistake!"⁷

The lesson to be learned was that the operation had to be concluded as soon as possible.

"A campaign to save human life is the obligation and merit of any normal person!" Each delay costs more human life, and "*they too* [the Arabs], were



PRIME MINISTER MENACHEM BEGIN AND DEFENSE MINISTER ARIEL SHARON VISIT THE WAR ZONE IN LEBANON DURING THE WAR.

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created b'tzelem Elokim," the Rebbe cried out.⁸

Foreign Relations Blunder

Dealing with immense pressure, Prime Minister Begin had embarked on a ten-day mission to the United States to meet with President Reagan.

Pundits predicted that he would receive a very cold reception. Reagan's administration had been pressuring Israel to scale back its campaign and was harshly critical in the press.

Previously, on the day of Argov's assassination attempt, the President had embarked on his first overseas trip. For 10 days, he traversed Europe, visiting England, France, West Germany and other countries, and his reactions to the Lebanon War were vague and noncommittal. The president officially criticized the war, but no real pressure was applied.

On the day he landed, one reporter wrote in an Israeli newspaper, "Tonight ends President Ronald Reagan's first overseas trip as president. And, apparently, tonight also ends the window of opportunity for Israel to finish the campaign without American pressure."

The Israelis had previously briefed the Americans regarding the Lebanon plans. Although the Americans were loath to enter into a conflict with the Arab world, they also wanted to see the Syrians and the PLO chased out of Lebanon.

For them, the initial scheduling had worked out perfectly. The campaign was to be concluded before the President returned and was forced to deliver a proper response. However, once the Israelis agreed to the UN ceasefire, the war began to drag on and the Americans were forced into a conflict they didn't want.

Nonetheless, when Begin arrived in the United States, he received a very warm welcome.

"What's been done, is done," the President announced during the press conference, after reading off an official statement criticizing the operation. "Now we need to look towards the future." During the meeting that followed, Reagan agreed to Begin's demand that all terrorists be forced to leave Beirut before the cessation of hostilities.

The surprise Gimmel Tammuz farbrengen coincided with the end of Begin's trip.

"They announced that the President will be away for 10 days," the Rebbe pointed out, sending a clear message that they could proceed without American pressure.

"The Americans should be the only foreign consideration," the Rebbe added, "because they provide funds and weapons. Yet still, the 'faint of heart' held up the completion of the campaign."⁹

The Rebbe also held that there had been a second opportunity to finish it—during Begin's trip, when someone else had been appointed to be the acting prime minister. It was, in the Rebbe's opinion, a situation of *halacha v'ein morin kein*, where the Israelis could have utilized the Prime

Minister's absence to quickly finish the operation.

Unfortunately, the Rebbe's words continuously went unheeded. The army continued its cycle of ceasefires, and only slowly did it finally reach closer to Beirut.

Spiritual Warfare

"At one o'clock in the morning, we decided that the situation just couldn't continue," wrote Rabbi Aharon Leizer Tzeitlin of Tzefas in a report to the Rebbe. "A *manhig Yisroel* issues a directive and it isn't being carried out immediately?"¹⁰

The issue at hand was printing Tanyas in Lebanon. The Rebbe had instructed that a special printing be held behind the enemy lines, in the halachic boundaries of Beirut, and to be studied with local Jews (there were some) or with the soldiers stationed there. However, the army's bureaucracy proved to be a very difficult obstacle. A week after the directive, they still hadn't gained permission to cross into Lebanon.

"I decided to go to the general of the Northern Command right then," Reb Aharon Leizer related. "I got into my car and drove the five minute ride



PERMIT FROM THE IDF ALLOWING THE GROUP OF CHASSIDIM ENTRY INTO LEBANON TO PRINT THE TANYAS.

up to the Northern Command. I sped up to the entrance, jumped out of my car, and yelled, 'Where is the general!?'

"The soldiers got scared and immediately let me through and pointed, 'That way...'

"I came to his secretary and demanded entry. At first, she laughed in my face, but I insisted that it was urgent for the success of the war, and she finally allowed me in.

"I sat with the general for 15 minutes, and explained to him how the Rebbe viewed this Tanya printing with great importance. He agreed to give me a permit.

"As soon as I received the permit, I woke up the group [of shlichim], we jumped into the printing truck and drove to Tzor, and we printed the Tanya there at four o'clock in the morning. The soldiers stationed there were shocked.

"What is that?' they asked.

"We explained to them that the Rebbe wanted to print a Tanya there. To them, the fact that the Rebbe in New York was thinking about them gave them an amazing feeling of support.

"In the end, we printed the Tanya in 15 places in Lebanon, all with the IDF's official permit."¹¹

From the war's outset, and even before, the Rebbe placed a great emphasis on the spiritual side of warfare. Chassidim noted that in the week before the war, the Rebbe went to the Ohel several times, instead of the usual twice a month.

The Rebbe constantly spoke about the merit of the soldiers guarding Eretz Yisroel, and about the significance of soldiers putting on tefillin and being registered in the Sefer Torah for Chayalei Tzahal. Throughout the war, mitzvah tanks moved from one battalion to the next, bringing joy and Yiddishkeit to the soldiers.



AMIDST THE FIGHTING, A GROUP OF CHASSIDIM PRINT TANYAS ON A TRUCK IN THE HEART OF BEIRUT, LEBANON.

The army chief-of-staff himself later related, "No other organization in the country accomplished what they did. Countless soldiers were encouraged by their presence, and I definitely encouraged their work."¹²

The Rebbe also encouraged Jews around the world to engage in Torah, *tefila* and *tzedaka* in merit of the soldiers.

After the abovementioned *sicha* to the *talmidos hamesaymos*, the Rebbe



THE "SHAAR BLATT" OF THE TANYA PRINTED IN BEIRUT, LEBANON.



THE REBBE HOLDS UP 3 TANYAS PRINTED IN LEBANON DURING THE FARBRENGEN OF YUD-GIMMEL TAMMUZ 5742*.

gave out dollars for tzedaka in merit of the soldiers. During the surprise farbrengen of Gimmel Tammuz, the Rebbe added that more tzedaka should be given in merit of the politicians—“So that they finally leave their inner exile of the *yetzer hara*, the ‘*kel zar asher b’kirbicha*—the foreign god within you,’ and remember that they too, belong to the nation of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov.”¹³

The Rebbe also orchestrated the declaration of a *taanis shaos*, a partial fast day, through the Agudas Harabbonim, for 7 Tammuz. That day, the Rebbe came downstairs for Mincha and spoke a special *sicha* of *divrei kibushin*.

Surrounding the Capital

As each ceasefire was terminated, the IDF slowly advanced towards Beirut. After a bit less than a month of fighting, the Israelis tightened their grip on the Lebanese capital. The government began working on a way to force the PLO out of the country.

“One option,” related Arik Sharon, “was to physically enter West Beirut. However, such urban warfare was sure to cost many lives. Another option was to heavily bomb the area. I supported the second option, but the cabinet chose a third: To bomb an open area near the terrorists, which would not destroy them outright, but still give an impression that we mean business.”¹⁴

That year, Yud-Beis Tammuz fell out on Shabbos, and the main farbrengen celebrating the Frierdiker Rebbe’s release from prison, was held at 1:30 p.m. on Shabbos afternoon. On Sunday, Yud-Gimmel Tammuz, the Rebbe visited the Ohel. “The Rebbe entered the *zal* for Mincha at 9:05,” Rabbi Korant writes. “After davening, we heard great news. The Rebbe would farbreng again after Maariv. Again, everyone rushed to prepare.”

The Rebbe dedicated a long *sicha* to the topic of the war, where he placed intense focus on the military aspects:

- The Rebbe criticized the fact that Begin wanted full

government approval before every move. The politicians making those flawed decisions, the Rebbe said, were the same who made the disastrous choices during the Yom Kippur War...

- There had been numerous occasions to finish the war. Just recently, President Reagan had traveled to California to watch the landing of the Columbia space shuttle; yet they never utilized the opportunity. (The Rebbe added that the war would now have to continue after Shiva Asar B’Tammuz, which was not a good development.)
- The administration had announced that Reagan would deliver a speech on foreign policy, and all the news networks reported that it would be a negative outcome for Israel. However, it turned out that the President spoke

only in support of Israel. The Rebbe said that the news networks weren't mistaken. "The intention was to test the reaction of Jewish leaders, and yet there was no response. One went on a stroll, the other played golf, another continued in his business dealing... nobody protested that the President was about to criticize Eretz Yisroel." The fact that the statement was actually positive "was an open miracle," the Rebbe said.

- "Everyone knows who the PLO is!" the Rebbe declared. "Nobody needs proof." The PLO's barbarism was common knowledge yet the Israeli government was busy investing time and money in demonstrating how bad the PLO was, instead of finishing the war!

The Rebbe also directly addressed the issue of clearing the terrorists out, and the government's claim that they didn't really control Beirut:

"The area is very small; they can easily turn the entire area into a heap, without even entering inside. They can suffice with a five minute warning so whoever wants to escape can leave, and they can thereby finish the entire operation without a single casualty or injury. Moreover: There won't be a need to hurt the gentiles there, or even the PLO members—if they will be convinced that it is no empty threat, and you indeed plan on destroying the area!"

The Rebbe continued: "The crowd likes something that is a *shturem*; here, there is a simple proof that we are already within Beirut!

As the Rebbe spoke, he picked up three small Tanya's from the table. Taking off the elastic, the Rebbe handled each one. "Here on the table lies a Tanya that was printed in

Beirut (as is inscribed in the *shaar*) a few days ago, with enough time for it to arrive here so that it can be on the table during the Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen. The reason they were able to print it was because the IDF themselves made the necessary arrangements for it to be possible.

"Together with the printing, they said *lchaim*; *lchaim* to the soldiers and *lchaim* to *klal Yisroel*. They studied there from the Tanya, and they davened and gave *tzedaka* in a shul in Beirut, which was there before the founding of PLO, and will be there after their downfall."¹⁵

The Rebbe concluded the farbrengen with a call to Jews everywhere to fulfill the three pillars of Torah, *tefila* and *tzedaka* in honor of the soldiers, and that farbrengens should be held as well. The Rebbe also gave *mashke* to create a continuation from the main farbrengen to the coming ones.

The Sefer Torah of Tzahal

"As soon as I received the call from Rabbi Ashkenazi at the beginning of the war," Rabbi Yeruslavski continued

his account, "we began energetically pushing the writing of the Torah.

"That very day, we organized cars of *anash* to go to Lebanon to get soldiers to sign up for the Torah, and simultaneously we organized with several *sofrim* to write different parts of the Torah, to be finished within four weeks."

During the Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke at length about the importance of the Sefer Torah of the IDF. The Rebbe was very unhappy that it still had not been finished, and spoke very sharply about the merit it could bring to the soldiers if completed.

"All the soldiers of the IDF needed to be registered in the Sefer Torah long ago. If only this would have been done earlier, many undesirable things could have been averted!"

Two days later, the Rebbe held another surprise farbrengen, and this time the Rebbe shared good news:

"Now we could reveal that on the eve of 15 Tammuz, the Sefer Torah of Tzahal was completed, and celebrated *b'rov am hadras melech*..."

"The area is very small; they can easily turn the entire area into a heap."



CHASSIDIM SIGN SOLDIERS UP FOR LETTERS IN THE SEFER TORAH FOR THE IDF.

MIVTZA OIS BSEFER TORAH



CHIEF RABBI OF THE IDF RABBI MORDECHAI PIRON LEADS THE SIYUM CELEBRATION FOR THE SEFER TORAH FOR THE IDF SOLDIERS.

Although the Torah had been concluded, much work was left to be done for the soldiers to register.

"I traveled with Reb Shlomo Madanchik to the Defense Ministry," Rabbi Yeruslavski related, "and received permission for Chabad cars to enter Lebanon for 'spiritual work.' Over the next few weeks, cars of

Chassidim traveled throughout the battlefields, until every single soldier had a letter.

"In Eretz Yisroel, too, Chassidim went to all the army bases, recruiting as many soldiers as possible."

The Rebbe's words on Yud-Beis Tammuz, that bad things could have been averted through the Sefer Torah,

were actually also said much earlier, on the Chanukah preceding the war.

The Rebbe spoke then about the importance of the Sefer Torah for the soldiers, and explained that it would sow fear among the gentiles, "when they realize that every soldier is united with 304,805 other soldiers..."

"Not only will the enemy flee the battlefield," the Rebbe said, "*they will ensure that a war will not erupt in the first place...*"

They Mean Business

The PLO leader, Yasser Arafat, began negotiating with the Israelis on the terms of their exit. They argued on how many PLO men were to leave, and if they would be allowed to leave with their weapons, and so on and so forth. The talks began to drag on, and it became clear that Arafat was simply manipulating the negotiators. He had no intention to leave.

It took another month for the government to finally realize that they had no choice but to bombard the terrorists out of the city. A heavy bombardment was initiated, and the army tightened their siege on the area. Heavy artillery was directed at the city.

Suddenly, the Arabs began singing a different tune. Seeing their city being destroyed, the local Arab leadership forced Arafat to evacuate, and by the beginning of Elul, the city was finally cleared of the PLO (to the extent that could be confirmed).

A Weak Retreat

"Tell Shamir not to pull out of Lebanon! If he pulls out, I will be very upset!"

During *hakafos* on Simchas Torah 5744*, the Rebbe spoke at length with the newly appointed ambassador to the United Nations, Mr. Binyamin Netanyahu. Part of that conversation is well-known, but the lesser known fact is that most of the discussion centered around the situation in Lebanon. The

Sabra and Shatila

Being in control over a large part of the country, the Israeli government attempted to install a government headed by the Phalangist Christians. Although they represented only 30 percent of the population, they made a pact with Israel that if they would be given control, they would sign a peace treaty with Israel. Elections were set up and the Phalangist leader Bashir Gemayel was elected president, but on 26 Elul a bomb explosion killed him.

The Phalangist forces entered the camps called Sabra and Shatila, officially to ferret out the last PLO terrorists, and soon disturbing news began to trickle out. The militia had embarked on a full scale massacre of Palestinians to revenge the assassination of their leader. When the dust settled, hundreds of civilian Palestinians had been killed.

The massacre created an international uproar.

For days on end, the western media vilified Israel, accusing them and blaming them for being complicit in the murder. Under intense pressure, Prime Minister Begin decided to create a commission to investigate the events in the camps. The Rebbe spoke against the commission twice, on Yud-Tes Kislev and on Asara B'Teves 5743*, and explained that the entire investigation was flawed:

“The order came directly from the [new] Lebanese President, and those who committed the act were his soldiers. Nonetheless, no one thought of punishing them; to the contrary... they are held in high regard, because they ‘avenged the blood,’ as is customary there for generations, both in the Christian community and the Muslim community.

“On the other hand, who is blamed? The Jews who may have known about the occurrence and didn’t risk their lives to prevent it!”

Rebbe told Netanyahu to tell Prime Minister Shamir not to leave Lebanon until it was truly free of terrorists, and that the Jews of Eretz Yisroel must conduct themselves *b'yad chazaka u'vizroa netuya*.

The Rebbe explained throughout the war, and regarding the concept of *shleimus ha'aretz* in general, that at the core of the issue was something much deeper than mere bad decision making.

The actions of the Israeli administration went against all measures of logic. Their decisions were based on a deep-seated fear of the gentile—who wasn't pressuring them at all!

The core problem was in the hearts of the Jews:

“A fear and embarrassment before the *goyishkeit* within him, from his *nefesh habehamis*, ‘*Kel zar asher bikirbicha*, the foreign god within you,’” the Rebbe said. “There is no greater exile than when a person fears the *goyishkeit* within him, and the greater his position and rank, his exile is even greater.”¹⁶

The end result in Lebanon was a never ending war. The IDF remained in Lebanon for quite a while, while the politicians moved back and forth on the issue. The soldiers were often subject to terror attacks, but due to the political situation weren't given permission to respond with proper

force. As the situation became more and more of a mess, the Israeli public pressured the government to leave Lebanon, with a peace deal or without.

Indeed, as the Rebbe had warned during the war, if they didn't properly go about the operation, there would be long lasting repercussions. “If they don't conclude the operation,” the Rebbe said, “as the *possuk* says, ‘those whom you leave over will be as spikes in your eyes and thorns in your sides...’”

The Rebbe made it very clear throughout the years that the only way to secure a true and lasting peace in Eretz Yisrael is through standing strong, unabashedly declaring to the world that the *Aibershter, Elokei Olam* (the Eternal G-d), gave His land, *Nachalas Olam* (an eternal inheritance), to His nation, the *Am Olam* (the eternal people).

And then, through *Shleimus Ha'aretz* (the integrity of the Land of Israel), along with *Shleimus Ha'am* (the integrity of the Jewish Nation) and *Shleimus Hatorah* (the integrity of the Torah), we will bring about the *geula ha'amitis vehashleima*, may it be speedily in our days. **T**

1. *Karasi Ve'in Oneh*, pg. 603-4.
2. *Birega Haemet*, pg. 310
3. For the full interview, see *Os B'sefer Torah*, pg. 210-219
4. *Shalom Shalom Ve'in Shalom* pg. 266
5. *Ibid* pg. 267
6. *Toras Menachem* 5742 vol. 3 pg. 1666
7. *Ibid* pg. 1725
8. *Ibid* pg. 1722
9. *Ibid* pg. 1720
10. *Kiryat Chabad Tzfat* pg. 23
11. *Kfar Chabad* issue 1539 pg. 22
12. *B'rega Haemet* pg. 328
13. *Toras Menachem* 5742 vol. 3 pg. 1726
14. *B'rega Haemet* pg. 317
15. *Toras Menachem* 5742 vol. 4 pg. 1850
16. *Karasi Ve'in Oneh* pg. 585.



לעילוי נשמת
הבחור היקר והנחמד
ברוך שניאור זלמן ע"ה
בן יבלחט"א
הרה"ת ר' אברהם אליהו שיחי'
נלב"ע ל' ניסן ה'תשע"ח
תנ"צ'ב'ה
נתרם ע"י הוריו
הרה"ת ר' אברהם אליהו
וזוגתו מרת אסתר גאלדע
ומשפחתם שיחיו
פלאטקין

HAVDALAH

The Rebbe would usually make *havdalah* privately. But on a handful of occasions each year we were fortunate to witness the Rebbe making *havdalah* publicly, being *motzi* all those present. Below we present a pictorial overview of this unique occurrence, along with various *hanhagos* that Chassidim observed.

We encourage our readership to watch the videos of *havdalah* and *kos shel bracha*, with the fervent hope that this Pesach we will be *zoche* to *kos shel bracha* with the Rebbe, with the coming of *Moshiach tzidkeinu*!

As Yom Tov would come to a close, the Rebbe would conclude the *farbrengen* with *bentching*, and would daven *Maariv*.¹ As that was happening, the setup of the room would suddenly change; benches were passed over people's heads and tables were rearranged. The *farbrengen* was now over, and the festive and exhilarating atmosphere of *kos shel bracha* was about to begin.

After *Maariv*, the Rebbe returned to his *farbrengen* place (from where he would distribute *kos shel bracha*) and make *havdalah* for all.



The *meshamesh bakodesh* would fill up the Rebbe's *becher*, to the point that the wine would overflow. The Rebbe would then lift the *becher* in the same manner that it is raised for *kiddush*, and looking in the *siddur*, he would begin "*Hinei Keil yeshuasi*" with a unique tune.


If it was *Motzei Shabbos*, he would make sure that the candle was fully lit before starting. Reb Meir Harlig, who would stand to the Rebbe's side throughout *kos shel bracha*, would usually hold the candle.

There is a very interesting change in the Rebbe's *hanhaga* over the years of the *nesius*. From approximately 5725* and on, the Rebbe would put the *becher* down on the table (if it was Motzei Shabbos) for the *brachos* on the *besamim* and the candle, and then lift it again for the last paragraph.

However in the earlier years the Rebbe wouldn't put the *becher* down at all, as can be seen in this unique picture from the early 5720s*. Instead, he would transfer the *becher* to the left hand, and use only his right hand to hold the *besamim* and then raise the hand towards the fire for בורא מאורי האש.

In the following sections we will be following the Rebbe's *hanhagos* from the later years.





Before making the *bracha* on the *besamim*, the Rebbe would put down the *becher* and sometimes wipe his hands with a napkin.

After the *bracha*, the Rebbe would smell the *besamim*, while holding them with both hands.

The Rebbe made sure that he was holding the *besamim* in his hands during the *bracha*, sometimes picking up the *besamim* at the beginning of the *bracha*, and sometimes towards the end of the *bracha*.





For the *bracha* of בורא מאורי האש, the Rebbe would raise both hands towards the candle (in the early years just the right hand).

First, the Rebbe would hold his hands with his fingers bent inwards. Afterwards, the Rebbe turned his hands over so that the fingers were straight, facing the flame.

The Rebbe's thumbs were covered by the other fingers for this *bracha*.



The Rebbe was careful that for the entire *havdalah* the cup would be full and overflowing. Accordingly, as the Rebbe would pick up the *becher* to begin the last part of *havdalah*, the *becher* would be refilled to its top.

If wine would spill from the cup at an earlier point, the Rebbe would signal for more wine to be added.





Following the *bracha*, the Rebbe would sit down and drink the wine.

The *havdalah* candle would then be put out with the wine in the silver plate. If necessary, the Rebbe would pour more wine from his *becher* on to the plate, but he would not pour wine directly over the candle.



Once the candle was put out, the Rebbe would bend down and bring his head very close to the plate, and then dip the two pinky fingers into the wine (sometimes touching the two fingers to each other) and rub them on top of both eyes. The Rebbe would then wipe his hands and eyes with a napkin. With *havdalah* over, *kos shel bracha* would begin.



Hours later, after everyone had received *kos shel bracha*, the Rebbe would sit down and open the siddur for the *bracha achrona*, before leaving the shul for home.

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1. In the earlier years, the Rebbe would walk to his davening place at the front of shul for Maariv. In the later years however, a *shtender* was set up for the Rebbe near the farbrengen place.

Derher**Letters**

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



Dollars at the Farbrengen

Dear Editors,

Thank you for the beautiful pictures of the Rebbe giving dollars to the *tankistin* in the Adar I magazine [Moments—Dollars to the Tankistin].

As is known, during these *chalukos* at the end of most weekday farbrengens (especially in the mid 5740s*), the Rebbe would give a stack of dollars to Reb Yosef Wineberg for the women attending the farbrengen. If Rabbi Wineberg wasn't present, either Reb Zalman Gurary or my grandfather, Reb Dovid Raskin would fulfill this shlichus in his stead.

On two occasions, women actually came downstairs to the main shul and passed by the Rebbe to receive dollars or coins at these *chalukos*. This was something very unusual.

The first was at the farbrengen of Purim Katan 5738*, which was held in honor of the shluchim and shluchos that were leaving to Eretz Yisroel that day. This was the third and final group of non-Israeli *yungeleit* and *bochurim* that the Rebbe sent on shlichus to Eretz Yisroel during the years 5736*-5738*. (See *Total Transformation*, Derher Adar 5778*, for a full article on this story). At the end of the farbrengen the Rebbe asked that the shluchim approach and the Rebbe gave them each the Kuntres Ahavas Yisroel, a couple of *maamarim* and a number of dollars and lirot for tzedakah. After the shluchim, the shluchos approached as well and the Rebbe gave them each the Kuntres Ahavas Yisroel, a Tanya, *siddur*, letter to *n'shei Chabad*, tzedaka, and an additional two dollars for tzedaka for them to pass on to their parents in recognition of them allowing their children to go on shlichus.



The second occasion was on Rosh Chodesh Adar 5740* when the Rebbe held a special surprise farbrengen in honor of the shluchim that were leaving to Australia that day. At this farbrengen, the Rebbe gave three dollars to all the participants. The Rebbe explained the number three as being 30 times 10 cents, in connection with *ויהי בשלושים שנה*, thirty years since Yud Shevat! When the Rebbe was finished giving the dollars to the men and the women were about to come in, Rabbi Leibel Groner started sending the men out, but the the Rebbe said they could remain inside.

Here are two pictures of women receiving dollars at the farbrengen of Rosh Chodesh Adar 5740. My mother, Mrs. Chaya Mushka Pearson *a"h*, can be seen receiving her dollars from the Rebbe.

Bentzion Pearson
Brooklyn, NY

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Listening In to the Tzemach Tzedek

Dear Editors,

Thank you for another very interesting and educational magazine.

In the article about Reb Avrohom Chaim Rosenbaum [“The Life of a Chossid”, issue 77 (154) Shevat 5779*], you include the story of how he climbed up the chimney sweep’s ladder in order to hear the davening of the Tzemach Tzedek.

The article says that Rebbetzin Rivkah shouted at him, “Have you no shame? Where are you climbing? You’ve never witnessed a Yid davening?” This is a mistake as it was Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, the Rebbetzin of the Tzemach Tzedek who told him that.

Bentche Korf
Miami, Florida

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Pushka on the Wedding Table

Dear Editors,

Thank you for the very informative article about *mitvza tzedaka* including many *horaos* from the Rebbe about giving *tzedaka* [“The Power of Money,” issue 78 (155) Adar I 5779*].

There’s an interesting *horaa* about *tzedaka* that wasn’t included in the 11 practical points on page 43.

At the *yeichidus klolis* for *chasanim* and *kallos* which took place after Tishrei 5749*, a *chosson* and *kallah* who were set to get married that day passed by the Rebbe to give their *tzetlach* and receive the customary dollar. The Rebbe gave them an extra dollar and said: “Surely, there is a *tzedaka pushka* on the table at the wedding. If there isn’t, you should place a *tzedaka pushka* on the table, and put in the dollar bill for *tzedaka*.”

Mendel Goldstein
Kfar Chabad, Eretz Yisroel

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Rabbi Moshe Rosen

Dear Editors,

In a recent article, you wrote about Rabbi Moshe Rosen, the chief rabbi of Romania and how the Rebbe encouraged him to stay in Romania [“Retirement? Out of the Question”, issue 78 (155) Adar I 5779*].

You write about the *yeichidus* which he had when he was 70 years old in 5742*, “Rabbi Rosen asked the Rebbe, “When can I finally relax?” The Rebbe responded, “When you’ll be my age we can discuss it.”

You continue to write about the *yeichidus* that he had 10 years later in 5752* and end off by saying that also after that *yeichidus*, he returned to be the *rav* in Romania until his passing.

To the best of my knowledge these last details are incorrect. I had a special connection with Rabbi Rosen as my father, Rabbi Yisroel Tzvi Heber *a”h*, had been sent by Rebbe to Romania for a number of years (574*1-5748*) and he was close with Rabbi Rosen.

Let me share the details of the *yeichidus* as I heard it directly from Rabbi Rosen during his visit in 5752*.

Rabbi Rosen told me that the Rebbe told him in his *yeichidus* in 5742* (when Rabbi Rosen was 70), “I am 80 and have taken upon myself more. When you turn 80 in another 10 years, come back and we will speak again”.

It seems that at Rabbi Rosen’s final *yeichidus* in 5752, the Rebbe did grant him permission to leave his post and emigrate to Eretz Yisroel.

Rabbi Rosen was not a Chossid from birth, but as he said many times, the only person that cares so much about *klal Yisroel* is the Rebbe. He would consult with the Rebbe about his work and he took the Rebbe’s words very seriously.

Rabbi Shmuel Heber
Brooklyn, NY

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