



PINNY LEW

<p>ע"י בנם ר' יקותיאל יהודה וזוגתו מרת פעסל לאה ומשפחתם שיחיו רוהר</p>	<p>טור 'לעבן מיטן רבין' הוקדש לזכרון ולעילוי נשמת ר' שמואל ב"ר יהושע אליהו ז"ל ואשתו מרת שרה ע"ה בת ר' יקותיאל ומרת לאה הי"ד ת'נ'צ'ב'ה'</p>
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# Hashem helped us that we have a Rebbe!

YUD - YUD-ALEPH SHEVAT 5711\*



Much has been written about the historic events that took place during the years 5710\* and 5711\*. The *histalkus* of the Frieddiker Rebbe, the Rebbe's constant words of *chizuk* and encouragement to Chassidim, and the tireless efforts of Chassidim and Jews around the world for the Rebbe to accept the *nesius*.

For an entire year, the Rebbe led the Chassidim, guiding, teaching and inspiring them. Yet, despite the ongoing requests and pleading of the Chassidim, the Rebbe did not agree to be *mekabel* the *nesius*.<sup>1</sup>

As we enter שנת השבעים, seventy years since the events of Yud Shevat 5711\* and the famous *farbrengen* and first *maamar*, which the Rebbe said that night, we attempt to present the readership with the story of this most historic day—the day that the Rebbe finally agreed to accept the *nesius* of Lubavitch, marking the beginning of the דור השביעי, and the final preparations for the *geula*.

This article is based on the diaries and recollections of many Chassidim present during those historic events.<sup>2</sup> We encourage the readership to listen to the *sichos* and the *maamar* from the recording, and to relive these events הזו בזמן הזה בימים ההם.

## EVE OF YUD SHEVAT, 6:55 P.M.

“A large crowd of *anash* and *bochurim* awaited the Rebbe’s arrival,” Reb Moshe Dubinsky writes. “Large delegations of people had arrived from across the United States and Canada for this special day. The *shtender* where the Rebbe was set to lead the *tefillos* was in the Frieddiker Rebbe’s *yechidus* room but due to the enormous crowd, many people were forced to stand in the hallway as well.

“The Rebbe came upstairs. The crowd pushed back and cleared an aisle for the Rebbe to come through. The Rebbe approached the *shtender* and began ‘*Vehu Rachum*.’

“Throughout the davening the Rebbe was holding himself back from crying. During the *kaddish* before Shemoneh Esreh the crying intensified, although he tried to hide this from the crowd. The Rebbe’s voice was choking when he finished reciting the *kaddish*.”

As per the Rebbe’s request, a *minyán* of *bochurim* and some married *yungeleit* studied the *maamar* ‘Basi Legani’ in the Frieddiker Rebbe’s room throughout the 24 hours of the *yahrtzeit*.

“In the morning,” writes Reb Elya Gross, a *bochur* in 770 at the time, “the Rebbe once again led the davening in the Frieddiker Rebbe’s room. Before he began, the Rebbe glanced at the Frieddiker Rebbe’s chair. The Rebbe davened in a soft voice and during the davening he cried profusely.”

Reb Leibel Groner, also a *bochur* at the time, writes: “Throughout the evening and daytime that followed, the Rebbe was wearing his silk *kapote* like Shabbos and Yom Tov. After Shacharis, everyone wrote *panim* and gave them to the Rebbe.”

Before leaving to the Ohel, a group of elderly Chassidim entered the Rebbe’s room. Harav Meir

Ashkenazi gave the Rebbe a “*Ksav Hiskashrus*” on behalf of *anash* from across the globe. “Accepting the *nesius* will bring the *geula* closer,” he said to the Rebbe while handing it over. “Since the *geula* is dependant on *יפוצו מעיינותיך חוצה*, the Rebbe accepting the *nesius* and saying Chassidus will hasten it’s coming.” The Rebbe responded: “Yes, but [people] need to help me out as well.”

The *pan* which was written on behalf of everyone (soon to be brought to the Ohel), was read out loud in the *zal*. The *pan* stated that *anash* everywhere are asking the Frieddiker Rebbe to cause the Rebbe to agree to be *mekabel* the *nesius*, and that everything should be with *hatzlacha*, etc.

“At 12:00 p.m.,” writes Reb Moshe Dubinsky, “about 10 buses arrived at 770, and by 1:00 p.m. everyone left to the Ohel. I was surprised to see walls built around it and a *matzeiva* set up there, as these had not been put up yet when I drove the Rebbe to the Ohel on Erev Rosh Chodesh Shevat.”

At the Ohel, Chassidim once again read the *pan*, this time in the Rebbe’s presence.

“The *pan* was handed to the Rebbe and he put it in his pocket,” writes Reb Yitzchak Pevzner. “As the Rebbe took it back out of his pocket, he started to shake. Trying to hold back his emotions, the Rebbe bit his lips, but then he burst out in tears and cried for quite a while. The hour was late, so the Rebbe didn’t read the full *nusach*, just the names of those who signed.”

Reb Yoel Kahn, also a *bochur* at the time, adds that when the Rebbe took the *pan*, he said “*Ach*” (an expression of discomfort) but then went on to read it while crying profusely.

The Rebbe spent a long time at the Ohel and returned a short while before *shkiah*. For Mincha,



GOLDSTEIN FAMILY



THE REBBE AT THE OHEL ON YUD SHEVAT 5711, THE FIRST YAHRZEIT OF THE FRIEDDIKER REBBE. HOURS LATER WOULD THE REBBE DELIVER THE HISTORIC MAAMAR “BASI LEGANI”.

the Rebbe once again led the davening in the Frierdiker Rebbe's room. After Maariv, the Yud Shevat farbrengen was announced. It was set to begin at 8:00 p.m.

Reb Moshe Herson was a 13-year-old *bochur* at the time. He talks about<sup>3</sup> the preparations for the famous farbrengen that took place that night: "I was standing with a group of other *bochurim* next to the *bima* which had been moved from the center of the *zal* to the space in between the *aron kodesh* and the second entrance leading into the hallway. We were very close to where the Rebbe sat.

"The pushing was extremely intense. Many more people than expected came to the farbrengen and there was an enormous crowd. In addition, it was a freezing cold day and some people fainted outside. A lot of people couldn't make their way into the small *zal* and just listened to the farbrengen from the speakers. The *cheder sheini* was also packed with Chassidim." All in all, about 800 people filled the various rooms and the courtyard outside, awaiting the Rebbe's arrival.

The tables were set up like a *shin* and the Rebbe's seat was placed at the head table along the southern wall of the *zal* (where the door to the *cheder sheni* is). For the first time, the Rebbe's table had been raised on a small platform.

After visiting his mother, Rebbetzin Chana, as he did each day, the Rebbe entered the *zal* at 9:45 p.m. Reb Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky and Rabbi Yolles from Philadelphia walked behind the Rebbe.

The Rebbe sat down at his place and Reb Yosef Robinson poured the Rebbe *l'chaim*.

Although no one knew at the time, the Rebbe's *mazkir*, Reb Moshe Leib Rodshtein had the great *zechus* to record this farbrengen for posterity. It is in his merit that the *sichos* and *maamar* '*Basi Legani*' that the Rebbe said that night are available for us to listen to today.

In the first *sicha*, the Rebbe spoke about strengthening the *hiskashrus* and continuing to fulfill the shlichus that the Frierdiker Rebbe gave each person.

"This is also an answer to those who inquired if they should continue reciting *kapitel* 71 (the Frierdiker Rebbe's *kapitel*) and until when should they do so," the Rebbe said. "The answer is that they should continue saying it until Yud-Beis Tammuz 5711\* because then the [Frierdiker] Rebbe will become a year older." The Rebbe cried a number of times during the *sicha*.

In a letter which Reb Yoel Kahan sent to his family in Eretz Yisroel, he writes as follows: "In between the *sichos*, people say *l'chaim* and sing *niggunim*, but the Rebbe continues to say words here and there like the *seder* at a farbrengen. I don't even know if these were later included in the transcript.

"I noticed that someone started offering his opinion, unsolicited, to the Rebbe. The Rebbe responded with a story:

"When the Frierdiker Rebbe was 15 years of age, the Rebbe Rashab involved him in public affairs. At that time, the Rebbe Rashab sent him to an important convention with a number of leading *rabbonim*. Since he was young, the Rebbe Rashab sent along Rashbatz, the Frierdiker Rebbe's teacher. Rashbatz was 'a *kluger Yid*, a smart Jew.' The Rebbe Rashab instructed him as follows: 'Indeed you are travelling along with him, but you should know that the less you will mix in, the better things will go.'





The Rebbe's answer was clear. One needs to listen to the Rebbe and not to say their own *dei'os*."

"It says that when someone goes to a new place they should follow its customs," the Rebbe started off saying in the next *sicha*, "When one comes to a town or country, he needs to show that he is taking on the customs of the new location. In America, proceedings always need to begin with a 'statement' and the statement needs to be some revolutionary idea that shocks the listener. I don't know if this will shock the listener..."

Here the Rebbe said the famous "statement" about the three loves: *ahavas Hashem*, *ahavas haTorah* and *ahavas Yisroel*. All three of these are interconnected and one cannot have one without the other. It is one essence and an essence cannot be divided into sections.

Reb Elya Goss describes the lead up to the *maamar*: "Reb Avraham Sender Nemtzov, an elderly Chossid, stood up and announced: 'The talks are

good, but the *olam* is asking to hear Chassidus.'" The room became completely silent and everyone waited anxiously to see how the Rebbe would respond.

10:40 p.m. The Rebbe opened up the *kuntres* 'Basi Legani 5710\*' of the Frierdiker Rebbe. Looking into it, the Rebbe started to speak: "The *maamar* that the [Frierdiker] Rebbe gave out for the day of his *histalkus*..." Choking with emotion, the Rebbe continued: "The [Frierdiker] Rebbe begins..." Here the Rebbe changed to the tune of a *maamar*, "*Basi legani achosi kalah*."

At first, the room was filled with tumult. Overtaken by joy and emotion, everyone stood up and the room once again became silent.

Reb Moshe Herson relates: "The emotions that passed through the hearts of each and every Chossid at that moment are beyond description. Here it is! Finally, the Rebbe is accepting the *nesius!*"

The Rebbe said the first part of the *maamar*. When he spoke about "*kol hashvi'in chavivin*" he cried a lot. "Now we will take a break and say *lchaim*," the Rebbe concluded.

Rabbi Nemtzov jumped up and called out: "Chassidim, say after me! We must *bentch* 'Shehechyanu v'kiyemanu vehigianu lizman hazeh!' Hashem has helped us that we have a Rebbe!

With great joy, Rabbi Nemtzov recited the *bracha* of 'Shehechyanu' and everyone answered after him word for word.

Next, the Rebbe instructed that the *Beinoni* be sung, adding: "The [Frierdiker] Rebbe favored this *niggun*." Then the Rebbe asked that the *Rostover Niggun* be sung.

Following the second part of the *maamar*, the Rebbe once again instructed that *lchaim* be said. Then, the Rebbe asked that they sing a *niggun* from the Rebbe Maharash and from the Tzemach Tzedek. When those *niggunim* were finished, the Rebbe asked for a second *niggun* of the Tzemach Tzedek and then a third!

In the third part of the *maamar*, the Rebbe told the stories of *ahavas Yisroel* from each one of the Rabbeim. He cried profusely throughout.

The last few minutes of the *maamar* were filled with bitter tears as the Rebbe spoke about the pain that the Frierdiker Rebbe suffered on behalf of *klal Yisroel*. The Rebbe spoke with great emotion about the *dor hashvi'i*, and the *avoda* that is expected of us in this generation.

"Now it is all dependant on us!" the Rebbe concluded. "This applies to every one of us, being





that we are in the seventh generation... May we merit that very soon, we will be reunited with the Rebbe, and he will take us out of the spiritual and physical exile, and bring us to the *geula sheleimah b'meheira b'yameinu amen!*"

During the entire *maamar*, the Rebbe's hands were under the table, his eyes were open, and he gazed directly in front of him.

Having delivered the *maamar*, the Rebbe said:<sup>4</sup> "Fellow Jews, listen now!

"Traditionally, Chabad has demanded that every individual do *avoda* on his own, and not just rely on the Rabbeim. This is the difference between Poilishe Chassidus and Chassidus Chabad. We have to do our work on our own, with all the 248 organs and 365 sinews of the body and with all the 248 organs and 365 sinews of the soul.

"Chazal teach: הכל בידי שמים חוץ מיראת שמים—'Everything is in the hands of Heaven except for the fear of Heaven.' I will not (*chas v'sholom*) completely withhold any assistance, to the best of my ability. However, since 'Everything is in the hands of Heaven except for the fear of Heaven,' then if you don't do your own independent individual *avoda*, what will you gain from giving out manuscripts [of Chassidus], singing *niggunim*, and saying *l'chaim*?"

"The [Friediker] Rebbe used to caution Chassidim against self-delusion. Every individual Chossid himself has to transform the folly of the *sitra achara*—and the seething disposition of his animal soul—to *kedusha*."

The Rebbe then asked that a *niggun* of the Mittlerer Rebbe be sung. Following the *niggun*, the Rebbe made a *siyum* on *Shisha Sidrei Mishnah* which was divided up among *anash* on Yud-Tes Kislev. Following the *sicha* and the Alter Rebbe's *niggun*, the

Rebbe recounted what he heard from the Frierdiker Rebbe, that when the Rebbe Rashab spoke about his accepting the *nesius*, the Frierdiker Rebbe asked that it should be *בחסד וברחמים*.

In the last *sicha*, the Rebbe spoke about the Frierdiker Rebbe's words that *בימיו יהי הדבר הזה*, Moshiach will come during his lifetime. How is it possible that this did not take place? The Rebbe explained that this is not a question since the Yerushalmi tells us about Shimshon that even 20 years after his passing, he was still leading the Yidden. Of course, in our instance it shouldn't take that long as only a small bit of *avoda* is left to bring Moshiach.

The farbrengen concluded at 12:25 a.m. and the Rebbe returned to his room to the niggun of "*Ki Besimcha*." Chassidim danced with great joy for a long while afterwards.

Reb Berel Junik related that as the Rebbe walked out, Reb Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky stood next to the door and wished the Rebbe 'Mazal Tov.' The Rebbe smiled.

Following the farbrengen, *chazara* took place with the participation of all of *anash* and the *bochurim*. Leading the *chazara* were Rabbi Mentlik, Reb Shmuel Dovid Raichik, Reb Mendel Tenenbaum, Reb Yossel Wineberg and Reb Yoel Kahn.

Reb Yoel relates: "The official *chazara* ended at 3:00 a.m. Although we hadn't slept the night before and hadn't eaten during the day (because everyone went to the Ohel. ed.), the *bochurim* remained and continued *chazering* the *maamar* until 6:30 a.m.

"We woke up a couple of hours later and continued *chazering* the *maamar* throughout the day. The same was on Thursday and Friday until we merited to hear the second *maamar* from the Rebbe on Shabbos. We lived with the *maamar* and continued *chazering* it again and again. In between we took a bite to eat and slept a little, but the entire *koch* and *chayus* was in the *maamar* that we heard from the Rebbe." **T**

1. See "A Nossi Emerges," *Derher* 15 (92).

2. A number of details are based on the extensive research and collection of anecdotes put together in the *sefer* "Yemei Bereishis" published by Rabbis Yosef Greenberg and Eliezer Zaklikowsky. See "Behind the Scenes of בראשית", *Derher* Issue 2 (39) for more about this *sefer*.

3. *Techayeinu* magazine, Shevat 5776.

4. Translation is from "Proceeding Together" by Sichos in English.