

A Chassidisher **Derher**

א חסידישער דערהער

A Year With the Rebbe

THE STORY OF KVUTZA



Our Very Life

MIVTZA TORAH

Building a Country

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH
RABBI SHABSI ALPERN



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On the Cover:

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

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Publisher

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Editor in Chief

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Administration/Development

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Editors

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Advisory Committee

Rabbi Mendel Alperowitz

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Design

Rabbi Mendy Weg

Contributors

Rabbi Shmuly Avtzon • Rabbi Yanky Bell • Rabbi Yossi Bendet • Rabbi Koppel Chaiton • Rabbi Levi Dubov • Rabbi Tzemach Feller • Rabbi Yossi Feller • Rabbi Levi Greenberg • Rabbi Menachem Mendel Greenberg • Rabbi Mendy Greenberg • Rabbi Zevi Kaplan • Rabbi Levi Katz • Rabbi Levi Levertov • Rabbi Shmuly Levertov • Rabbi Mendel Misholovin • Rabbi Levi Raichik • Rabbi Mendy Shemtov

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(718) 305 6859, Feedback@Derher.org

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

Derher **Editorial**

The accepted practice in these parts of the world is to begin a new *shnas halimudim*, either at the end of Av or in the beginning of the month of Elul. Either way, the new year in schools and yeshivos always begins before Rosh Hashanah.

The obvious reason for this is, that before Rosh Hashanah we try to increase in Torah and mitzvos in order to merit a *ksiva v'chasima tova*, a good sweet new year. The first and most important step in this direction is by starting a new year of *chinuch* for our children; a new year that brings with it new enthusiasm and excitement in their studies.

(Motzei Shabbos Parshas Ekev 5738)

Approaching the new *shnas halimudim* in yeshivos and schools around the world, the current issue of the Derher magazine brings you the story of the legendary “*kvutza*” program, where *bochurim* from Eretz Yisroel spend a full year learning in yeshiva near the Rebbe.

And, of course, most importantly, an overview on “Mivtza Torah”—the Rebbe’s call to conquer the world with the study of Torah. As the Rebbe noted, the increase in Torah study is applicable to everyone, including working people, but most importantly to “*ישבי אהל*”—those whose primary occupation is already in Torah study. Especially *talmidim* of Tomchei Temimim, who are charged with being “*נרות להאיר*”—illuminating lights; they must serve as a shining example for *talmidim* of other yeshivos, showing what an increase in Torah study should look like.

With blessings for a לשנה טובה ומתוקה כ"ף

The Editors

יום ההילולא השבעים וחמש, כ"ף מנחם-אב, ה'תשע"ט
שנת השבעים לנשיאות כ"ק אדמו"ר



WHY DESTROY AMALEK'S SHEEP?

The Torah tells us to “obliterate the remembrance of Amalek.” Rashi tells us that this includes even their livestock. Their other possessions, though, can be kept. A famous example of this happened during the Purim story, when Achashverosh transferred the house of Haman (who was from Amalek) to Esther.

From among all of Amalek's possessions, why are the sheep the only ones that need to be killed?

This is because animals can never truly be changed; their original state—and ownership—will always be a part of them. The sheep will always be “that sheep that used to belong to Amalek.” Other objects, however, can—and must—be changed in such a way that they're unrecognizable;

in this way, Amalek's remembrance is erased, but the object can be used for other purposes. And since other objects can be changed, people don't tend to refer to them as “the house that was once Amalek's.” In other words, their existence doesn't serve as a reminder of Amalek. Haman's house was only Haman's house until Achashverosh transferred it; then it became Esther's.

On a spiritual level, objects belonging to the realm of *domem*—inanimate objects such as stones and metal—correspond to the *avodah* of *kabolas ol*—*avoda* done with complete submission to Hashem, with no life force and no input from the individual on how the *avoda* should be done. The evil forces of Amalek can have no ownership over this lofty level of *avoda*.

לזכות
הרה"ת ר' גד דוד ומרת שירה
וילדיהם
נתנאל חיים, נחמה אסתר, חוה מזל,
מנחם מענדל, נעמי חנה, משה אליהו
שיחיו
סבג

PHOTO: JEW/THE LIVING ARCHIVE / 104489

REMEMBERING TO FORGET

We are commanded to obliterate all remembrance of Amalek. That seems impossible! The Torah itself mentions Amalek, discussing it in multiple *parshiyos*. In fact, one of the Six Remembrances we say each day is to “Remember ... that which Amalek did to you.”

So if it's in the Torah, how can it be erased?

The answer lies in *why* you're remembering Amalek. Remembering Amalek *to keep their memory alive* is prohibited. But remembering Amalek *for the sake of erasing Amalek* is not only allowed, it is a mitzvah. So much so, in fact,

that some make a point to write Amalek's name on wood or stone in order to then erase it.

How, then, does one fulfill the mitzvah of obliterating Amalek? By ensuring that one's surroundings bear no reminders of Amalek—nothing that hearkens back to them. No sheep that people will call “Amalek's sheep.”

Reading about what Amalek did and remembering Amalek—in order to wipe out all traces—is itself another way of erasing Amalek.¹

1. Adapted from *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 14 *Parshas Teitzei*, pages 86-92.



לעבן מיט'ן רבין

לזכות החיילת בצבאות ה'
חי' מושקא תחי'
לרגל הולדתה כ"ז אייר ה'תשע"ט
נדפס ע"י הוריה
הרה"ת ר' שלום דובער
וזוגתו מרת ריקל שיחיו
פעוונגער

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A FARBRENGEN IN THE "SHALASH".

First Encounters

ELUL 5717*



We present the following account of Elul 5717* with the Rebbe as described in letters written by Reb Yitzchok ("Itchke") Gansburg to his family back home in Eretz Yisroel. A young and energetic Russian immigrant, Reb Itchke worked for Reshet Oholei Yosef Yitzchok, Chabad's educational network in Eretz Yisroel. This was his first visit to the Rebbe.

His account of the subsequent Aseres Yemei Teshuva was featured in the Tishrei 5778 Derher, and a transcript of his *yechidus* was included in the Elul 5778 Derher.



FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH THE REBBE

FRIDAY, 24 ELUL

It's 4:30 p.m. here, 10:30 for you in Eretz Yisroel.

I thank Hashem for all the good He has done for me, that He has brought me here.

Albeit lengthy, the trip went smoothly, with no hitches. We had an hour layover in Athens, after which we flew to Vienna. At 6:00 p.m. we left for Brussels, and stayed there until 2:00 a.m. We then switched to a much larger plane, in which we flew to Manchester. We arrived in New York at 4:30

p.m. In the airport we were met by my brother Tzvi [Heishke] as well as my brother-in-law Yoel Kahn, along with their wives.

I *chazzered* Chassidus four times throughout the trip to an audience of Shloime Rosenfeld and Moshe Cadaner. We also sang *niggunim*. As my father-in-law [Reb Refoel Nachman Kahn] likes to remark: "גע'חזר'ט חסידות איבער שטעט און שטעטליך" [Repeated Chassidus over many towns and villages]. Indeed, with the airplane flying at 267 miles per hour, and taking the four flights into account, many miles heard Chassidus...

I've already encountered the Rebbe face to face.

Have a good Shabbos and a *ksiva vachasima tova*.

MOTZEI SHABBOS

PARSHAS NITZAVIM-VAYELECH

I will continue from where I left off on Friday. As mentioned, we arrived in the United States at 4:30 p.m. With six other planes set to land, we circled for a while. After clearing customs (by the way, my suitcase wasn't opened) we walked out to a sunny afternoon. Following an emotional *shalom aleichem* with Tzvi and Yoel, we hopped into two taxis which took us to my dear brother's home.

Later, as I glanced toward 770 on my way to Yoel's house, I noticed the Rebbe walking towards the entrance. I was at a loss at what to do. Suddenly everyone was standing at attention, as soldiers before a king. Startled and confused, I debated whether I should nod my head or simply run away. In the end, I froze in my place. The Rebbe glanced at me, with a hint of a smile on his face.

The *mazkirus* office is located at the front right corner of the building. It was there that we met Leibel Groner and I handed him a letter to pass on to the Rebbe. (By the way, immediately upon arriving at my brother's house we notified Rabbi Hodakov, as is customary.) The office has tables piled high with letters and other things. On the left side of the building, a few steps into the hallway, is the *Kodesh Hakadashim* [the Rebbe's room]. Further down on the right side of the building is the shul, which is neat and well-kept. Next door to the shul is a smaller room filled with *sefarim*, a "*cheder sheini*" of sorts. I'm not yet sure what the other doors lead to.

On the left side of the hallway there's a stairway leading down to the "*shalash*" [Russian for "hut"], the modern day "Sukkas Dovid." It seems to have

originally been a driveway, but has since been converted with a makeshift roof of wooden boards and a tarpaulin. Electricity has also been installed for this "hall." At the far side stands a *bima* about three feet above the ground, upon which the Rebbe *farbrengs*. The place is lined with 10 large and sturdy tables and benches, where Chassidim sit, or, more accurately, stand and hang, as they watch the Rebbe's holy countenance.

For someone living overseas, it is a great thrill. We are not talking about *sefiros d'Atzilus* or *le'asid lavo*; rather, in this day and age, *Elokus melubash b'teva*. In a single moment one finds himself in the *Beis Hamikdash*, where he can observe Moshe Rabbeinu holding the *luchos* and peacefully serving his Creator.

*In a single moment one
finds himself in the Beis
Hamikdash, where he can
observe Moshe Rabbeinu
holding the luchos...*

SHABBOS WITH THE REBBE

Upon returning to my brother's house we changed into Shabbos clothes and then headed to Mincha. I met many friends and acquaintances in shul, and we also got to see all the "*sefiros haelyonos*," such as Reb Itche Goldin, Reb Yochanan Gordon, Rabbi Hodakov, and so on. I was glad to see *yungeleit* from Eretz Yisroel such as our cousin Boruch Sholom Kahn, Gershon Mendel Garelik, Itche Springer, and Sholom Feldman. I was especially elated to meet those whom we hadn't seen since leaving Russia, such as Berel Kabilaker's [Levertov] sons Sholom and Moshe. We grew up together in Moscow, yet I never knew them there. *Bli ayin hara* a nice crowd. I also met Reb Pinye Althaus. Despite having had two *yechidusen*, Reb Pinye hadn't yet managed to discuss Beit Sefer L'melacha in Kfar Chabad with the Rebbe. Also, regards to my *shver* from Shmuel "*der shneider*" [Lyubashitzki] and Hendel Futerfas.

The Rebbe arrived to Mincha and walked to his place at the southeastern corner of the room. While he sits on an upholstered chair at a table near the



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southern wall, the Rebbe occasionally stands at the *shtender* by the eastern wall. The Rebbe has two Siddur Torah Ohrs; he davens with one, and recites Mishnayos and *kaddish* with the other. On Shabbos the Rebbe recited *kaddish*, I don't yet know for whom.¹

Outwardly, nothing about the Rebbe's davening sticks out, aside for the fact that every word is recited from the *siddur*. The Rebbe bows only slightly at the set places in *shemone esrei*, as well as "*Oseh shalom*." The Rebbe's holy face, his shining countenance, and most significantly, his gaze, cast

awe upon all present. Once in a while the Rebbe will raise his eyebrows, only intensifying the feeling.

When the Rebbe recites *kaddish*, all the other *chiyuvim* remain silent. As in *shemone esrei*, the Rebbe moves his head only slightly at “*Oseh shalom*.” The words “חיים טובים עלינו” are emphasized with the age-old *Chassidishe nusach*. His backward steps are relatively large. Then, only after waiting for all the *chiyuvim* to finish *kaddish*, does the Rebbe conclude the Mishnayos in a tune of study, and recites Kaddish D’Rabbanan. The *chiyuvim* then follow.

At davening’s conclusion a wide path is cleared, and the Rebbe, *sefarim* in hand, heads to his room.

A *bochur* then *chazzered* the *maamar* that was said the previous Shabbos, Chai Elul.

A short while later, a hush descended upon the shul as the Rebbe returned for Kabbalas Shabbos. On cue, Reb Itche Churgin passionately began “*Lechu Neranena*.” The Rebbe noticeably makes sure that people shouldn’t see anything extraordinary. After davening, the Rebbe turns to every direction with a “*Gut Shabbos*” and then proceeds to his room.

We then head to my brother’s home for *seudas Shabbos*.

Tehillim began at 8:30 on Shabbos morning. From my vantage point I was able to see that the Rebbe was reciting Tehillim from a Yahel Ohr, while an Ohel Yosef Yitzchok was open to the “*Yehi Ratzon*.” Each *sefer* was followed by *kaddish*, first by the Rebbe and then the other *chiyuvim*. After Tehillim the Rebbe made a brief visit to his room, and returned in a tallis, carrying four *sefarim*, including a Tanya.

Again I noticed that the Rebbe recites everything from the *siddur*, and relatively fast. In addition to davening with the *minyan*, the Rebbe also managed to learn from the Tanya several times.

During *krias haTorah* (the *baal koreh* is Reb Mottel Schusterman), the Rebbe followed along in a Chumash while standing in his place. I was not near the Rebbe for most of *krias haTorah*, opting instead to remain near the *bima* so I could be close for Maftir, when the Rebbe is called to the Torah...

The Rebbe recited *birchas haTorah* without any special movements or gestures. He lifted the Torah slightly while grasping the *atzei chaim* with his bare hands.

After *hagba* the Rebbe waited until the Torah was covered before proceeding to chant *birchas haHaftarah* in a gentle singsong. *Possuk by possuk*,

the Rebbe enunciated the *haftarah*. His voice shifted to cries, and at times he disguised it by holding his breath.

FARBRENGEN!

Immediately after the *haftarah*, I rushed to the *shalash* to grab a spot for the farbrengen. My place, which I inherited from my brother Tzvi, is to the Rebbe’s left on the stage.

The hall quickly fills up. Many have fixed places and *chazakos*. Yoel has a secured spot on the floor. Some *anash* elders sit on the platform, while others stand. Rabbi Mentlik, who pours the wine from a covered bottle, is on the Rebbe’s right, while Rabbi Hodakov is on his left. Reb Yossel Wineberg and many others are behind him. A special chair is set up for Rashag at the end of the table to the Rebbe’s right. The room is full to capacity.

A lot of wine and *mezonos* is brought and paper cups are distributed. All of a sudden, a hush descends upon the crowd. At exactly 1:00 the Rebbe appears, carrying his *siddur*. The table, covered with two large tablecloths and another smaller one, is set with a silver becher (facing down), a covered plate of cake, and a pile of napkins. A watch is also placed on the table. After Rabbi Mentlik fills the *becher*, the Rebbe silently recites *kiddush*.

After *kiddush*, the Rebbe turned to the assembled with a smile on his face, and exclaimed: “Nu, you’ve already made *kiddush*. Say *lchaim*.” As the entire room begins to say “*lchaim*,” the Rebbe nods “*lchaim v’livracha*,” in every direction.

Sitting slightly hunched, the Rebbe proceeded to address the gathering. The crowd then sang some *niggunim* and said more *lchaims*. The Rebbe also drank a bit from his *becher*, after which he continued speaking.

The Rebbe then signalled for the *hachana niggun* to be sung, upon which the entire crowd rose to their feet. The *maamar*, beginning with the words לך נאמר לבך בקשו פני² lasted for a while. It was a *hemshech* of the *maamar* of the previous Shabbos. Throughout the *maamar*, the Rebbe had a tense look on his face, coughed several times to clear his throat, and even burst into tears.

Toward the *maamar*’s end the Rebbe wept profusely, taking out his handkerchief to wipe away tears. The crying is really wondrous, and takes place in the least expected parts of the *maamar*. For example, upon concluding the *maamar* with שמח

His ordinary behavior is a mere perception. Only his body is with us; his neshama transcends time and space.

the Rebbe's voice and ישראל בעושי³ choked with tears.

Here you are, observing a man like all others, sitting and speaking; smiling and crying; eating and drinking; standing and walking. Yet at the same time, he isn't really here. The Rebbe is in *olaomos elyonim*, in *Atzilus* and even higher, united with *Elokus*. His ordinary behavior is a mere perception. Only his body is with us; his *neshama* transcends time and space. The Rebbe hears the word of Hashem and knows *daas Elyon*.

After reciting the *maamar* with his eyes closed, the Rebbe opens them up and turns to every direction with a smile on his face, as if to convey, "Say *l'chaim*." The Chassidim rush to fulfill his

desire, as though they want to restore the joyous aura after such a serious *maamar*. Upon starting a *freiliche niggun*, however, the attendees realize that it is the Rebbe who is energizing the crowd, suddenly motioning to intensify the singing and glee. The Rebbe taps on the table, but not in the usual fashion; it is absolutely sublime! The Chassidim maintain the rapid, boisterous song, it's as if the walls of the room and the entire hall are dancing along. All the while, the Rebbe encourages the singing ever more!

Then comes another *sicha*, more singing, and *l'chaim*. At times, after surveying the entire crowd, the Rebbe will proceed to single someone out to come up and say *l'chaim*. At this particular *farbrengen* the Rebbe summoned two *mechutanim* who were soon marrying off their respective children. When they brought a bottle to the Rebbe, he poured some into his own cup, and then instructed for the remainder to be distributed to the entire crowd. After pouring some *l'chaim* on the



A FARBRENGEN IN THE "SHALASH", 21 TAMMUZ 5721*.

stage, one of them gave the bottle to someone else to dispense. The Rebbe was not pleased with this, and stated in a tune of objection: “I said *you* should give it out, why are you passing it to someone else?!”

The Rebbe then told Reb Pinye Althaus: “Sing *mizimras ha’aretz*.” To which he replied, “I don’t know *niggunim* from the ‘*aretz*,’ I only know from Lubavitch.” When the Rebbe replied: “Nu!” Reb Pinye began singing “*Tik’eu Bachodesh Shofar*.” Afterwards, the Rebbe filled a small cup with wine and handed it to Pinye’s son, who was standing on his left, instructing him to “give it to your father so that he says *l’chaim*.” Upon seeing this, Reb Pinye proclaimed: “I want to receive without *memutza’im* [intermediaries],” to which the Rebbe smiled and responded something that I didn’t manage to catch. After Reb Pinye said *l’chaim*, the Rebbe handed him some *mezonos*.

The Rebbe then announced that all those who were not here last Shabbos will receive *l’chaim* from his cup. Upon seeing me approach with a small cup

the Rebbe exclaimed (these were the Rebbe’s first words to me): “Why a small cup? Take a large one!” I switched to a large cup and said “*l’chaim*,” to which the Rebbe responded “*l’chaim v’livracha*.”

Reb ... who was also standing on the stage, said a lot of *l’chaim* and was extremely inebriated. He pushed me off the platform. Although this happened near the Rebbe, it wasn’t in his view. I later noticed that the Rebbe did not respond to his *l’chaim*.

In the following *sicha*, the Rebbe discussed those who traveled from afar, entailing *mesiras nefesh* in body and soul, as well as monetarily. “For this they deserve medals of glass, marble, wood, iron, copper, silver, precious stones, and more and more.” (The Rebbe smiled as he said this.) “Nevertheless,” the Rebbe continued, “they should know that despite all the hassle, they must still keep their *shiurim*.” The Rebbe added that special *shiurim* should be given for women, and that they should hold a *farbrengen*



before Rosh Hashanah, in order to link the past and coming years.

“*Asader Lseudasa*” and “*Bnei Heichala*” were sung, after which the Rebbe recited the *bracha acharona*, rose from his place, and left. Mincha immediately took place in the upstairs shul. I was called up to the Torah and *bentched* “*Hagomel*.”

Following Mincha, everyone returns to the *shalash*, where, along with many *bochurim*, Yoel begins to *chazzer* the *maamar* and piece everything together.



RABBI YOSEF GOLDSTEIN



RABBI YOSEF GOLDSTEIN

THE REBBE DAVENS IN THE UPSTAIRS SHUL OF 770, CIRCA 5721*.

SLICHOS

Slichos took place at 1:00 a.m. Before Slichos a meeting of Tzach’s administration took place in Beis Rivka. About 20 people, including me, participated. However, there isn’t anything noteworthy to repeat. Reb Dovid Raskin is in charge, and he really *kochs* in this.

Slichos were recited in the Sukkah [Shalash], and were led by Reb Shmuel Zalmanov. The Rebbe stood in the southeastern corner surrounded by tables protecting his place.

A massive crowd was in attendance.

At Shacharis the following morning I met several people, and now had the opportunity to converse with more of our acquaintances.

The Rebbe does not attend Shacharis on a regular weekday. When I saw Rabbi Hodakov in the *mazkirus* office I asked him about *yechidus*, to which he replied that he’s still awaiting specific instructions. The *mazkirus* office is open, and anyone can walk inside. While there, I also saw Mr. Quint. A bespectacled man of about 50 years old, he’s short and beardless. He seemed very preoccupied with his work.

The following morning, I recited Slichos at 7:00 a.m. in the Rebbe’s minyan. Reb Zalman Duchman was *chazzan*, and it seemed that the Rebbe had to wait for him...

At the end of davening, I returned home to finish the letter, and then visited Yoel. I used this opportunity to get copies of many *sichos* and *maamarim* from him, which I will *im yirtze Hashem* bring to Eretz Yisroel.

They say that the Rebbe visited the Ohel today, from twelve until six. At 10:00 p.m. I travelled together with Tzvi and his wife, in Reb Mottel Dubinsky’s car, to the women’s convention that the Rebbe had called for on Shabbos. They called it a “meeting” and I was the guest speaker. About a hundred women attended. In my address I discussed the Rebbe’s influence in Eretz Yisroel, and they say I did “alright...” ❶

1. The Rebbe would recite *kaddish* on 25 Elul. It is unknown for whom.
2. Tehillim 27:8. (From “לדוד ה' אורי,” recited daily from Rosh Chodesh Elul through Hoshana Rabba.)
3. Tehillim 149:2. Quoted in Tanya perek 33.
4. Tehillim 104:31.



כתב יד קודש

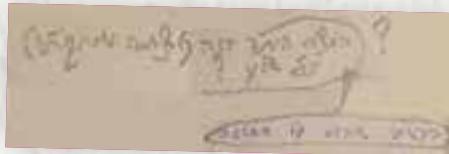
לזכות
משפחת קארנפעלד
בורביינק, קאליפורניא

Your True Family

In honor of Tes-Vov Elul, the day of the founding of Tomchei Temimim, we present the following *ksav yad kodesh*, written in response to a letter from Rabbi Binyomin Klein (who would later join the Rebbe's *mazkirus*).

Rabbi Klein had written that he wanted his father to come to the United States for his (Binyomin's) wedding, but his poor health would not allow him to travel. This, in turn, only worsened his condition.

On this part of the letter, the Rebbe placed a question mark and replied:



Did you find a halachic warrant according to the Shulchan Aruch allowing [your father] (to leave Eretz Yisroel)?

המצא היתר בזה (ליציאה מאהקת"ו [=מארץ הקודש
תבנה ותכונן]) ע"פ שו"ע [על-פי שולחן ערוך]?

Rabbi Klein continued in his letter that he feels dejected because neither his parents nor any other members of his family will be in attendance at his wedding. The Rebbe replied:



According to the words of our Rebbeim, **our nesi'im**, the founders and directors of Tomchei Temimim: all the talmidim, teachers, and roshei yeshiva of Tomchei Temimim are your family.

ע"פ דברי רבותינו נשיאינו מייסדי ומנהלי תו"ת כל
הת' ור"מ ור"י דתו"ת [= התלמידים, וראשי מתיבתא
וראשי ישיבה דתומכי תמימים] הם משפחתו.

(Teshura Naparstek-Grossbaum 5778)

The Life of a Chossid

Reb Shmuel Gurary

Born: Unknown

Passed away: Adar I, 5681*

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

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

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

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

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

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

“What was the miracle?” they asked.”

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

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

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

לזכות
החייל בצבאות ה'
יעקב יהודה בן הרה"ת ר' לוי יצחק
וזוגתו מרת **דבורה לאה** שיחיו
אלוליאן
לרגל הולדתו יום
ב' דר"ח אייר ה'תשע"ט
נדפס ע"י זקיניו
הרה"ת ר' **משה גדול**
וזוגתו מרת **שושנה** שיחיו
טרקסלר



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

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

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

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



BICHOL BEISI NEEEMON HU SEFER

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

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

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

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

“Wherever I will be, you will be.” ①

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

לזכות
החייל בצבאות ה'
ישראל מאיר הכהן שיחי'
לרגל הולדתו ט"ז סיון ה'תשע"ט
ולזכות אחותו **חנה תחי'**
ולזכות הוריו הרה"ת ר' **שמואל הכהן**
וזוגתו מרת **חי' מושקא שיחי'**
נדפס ע"י זקיניו
הרה"ת ר' **מנחם מענדל הכהן**
וזוגתו מרת **מליא רחל שיחי'**
טייטלבוים



Our Very Life

**MIVTZA
TORAH**

MAKE TORAH YOUR TRADE

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

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

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

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

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



ZAUMAN KLEINMAN

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

KVIUS B'NEFESH

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

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

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

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

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

* 5731-1971

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

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

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

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

HOW TO ACHIEVE THE MINDSET

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

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

TORAH AS YOUR FOCUS

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

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

WHO DOES MIVTZA TORAH APPLY TO?

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

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

A SHLIACH MUST HAVE KVIUS ITIM

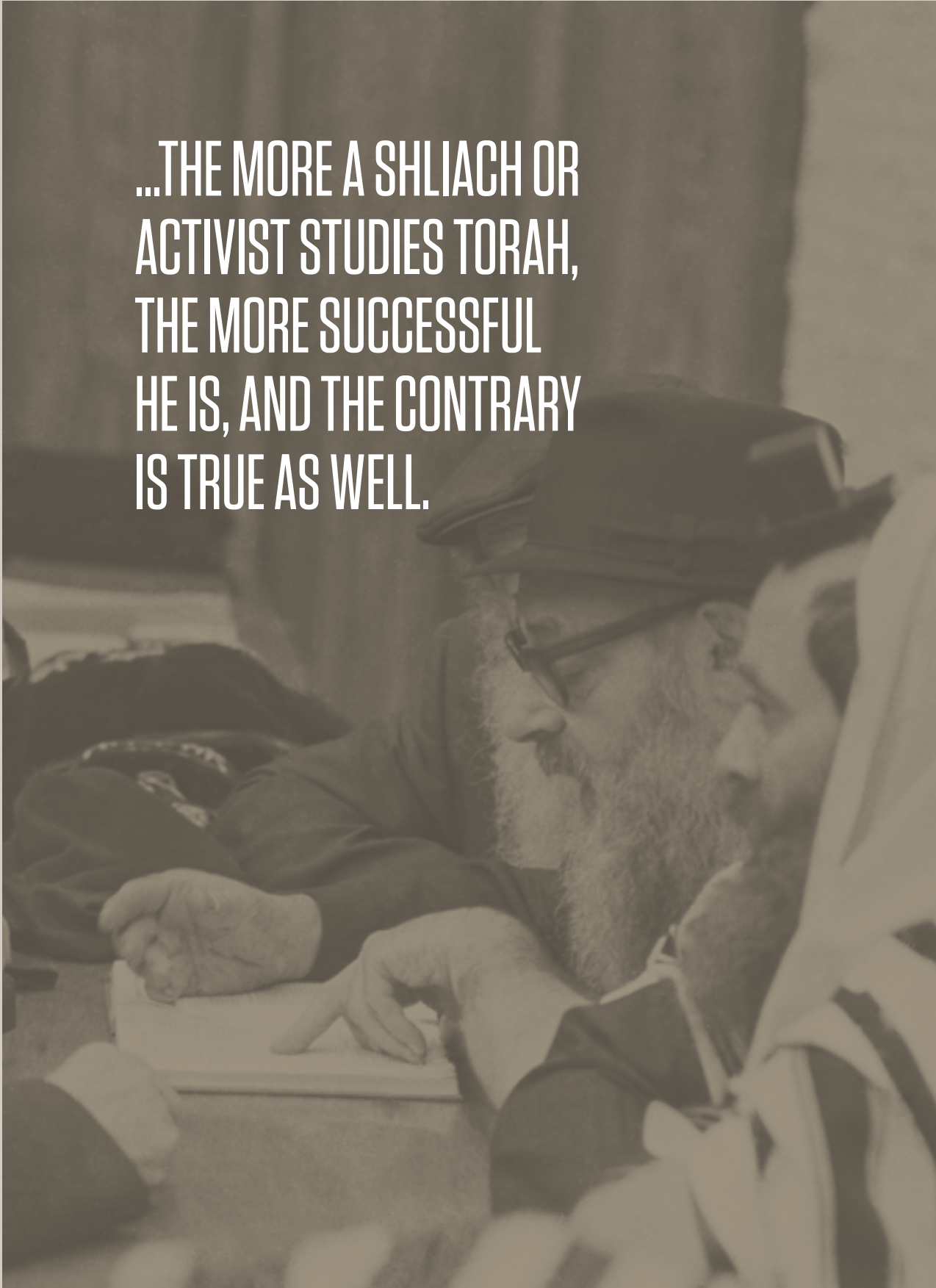
In a *yechidus* with a shliach in 5737*, the Rebbe spoke strongly about his studies. The following are some excerpts:

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

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

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

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



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

9 TISHREI 5736, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 141960

**“YOU SHOULD BRING ME TEN
THOUSAND BLAT BY NEXT
YEAR,” THE REBBE REPLIED.**

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

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

THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE!

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

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

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

LIFE’S DREAM

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

We learn this lesson from Mordechai:

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

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

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

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

IS IT ENOUGH TO DONATE?

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

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

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

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

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

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

“How much should I bring?’ I asked.

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

“We settled on a thousand *blatt*...”



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

This provides an amazing lesson for anyone that is involved in the business world or activism, the Rebbe says. On one hand, you must never leave your place at the front of the battle, *chas veshalom*. Until the *nossi hador* tells you differently, you must continue soldiering on with absolute *kabbalas ol*.

But that doesn't mean that you should *enjoy* the fact that you are involved in activism instead of studying Torah. To the contrary: "At the same time that you are involved in community activism, you must have a powerful longing for the time that you will be able to study Torah with diligence. As soon as you receive a clear instruction that you have completed your work—you must immediately drop everything and sit down to learn, just like Mordechai who left his post as viceroy and returned to Eretz Yisroel..."

"...When you have this attitude, then any free moment that you have from your business or activism—*chaper zich*, you seize the opportunity to study Torah, with energy and diligence that surpasses that of the full time Torah scholars!"¹⁹

MILESTONES IN MIVTZA TORAH

The Rebbe spoke about Mivtza Torah throughout the years, but there were occasions that there was a focus on a specific area.

- **Chamisha Asar Bishvat 5731:** The Rebbe announced that the time has come to conquer the world with the study of Torah.
- **Summer 5734:** The campaign is renewed on a broader scale, this time as one of the 10 *mivtzoim* [as a method of protection for world Jewry].
- **Simchas Torah 5745** and in the following farbrengens: The Rebbe makes a strong push

that every person should have a set time to study.

- **Noach 5750** and in following farbrengens: The Rebbe calls for a renewal of the public classes in shuls on Shabbos afternoon.

TEACHING OTHERS

In addition to learning on one's own, the other fundamental part of Mivtza Torah was that people should encourage *others* to study and toil in Torah. The Rebbe said that you should encourage every person at their individual level. And if they already study Torah, then you should convince them to study more, and even to become teachers themselves.

If *chas veshalom* they don't have any *shiurim* at all, then work your hardest, with all your heart and all your soul, that they should begin having *shiurim* in Torah. If you can convince them to study twice a day, in the morning and at night, thereby fulfilling their halachic obligation—that would be ideal. But if starting with that is difficult, then they should at least study once a day, or even once every few days; the main thing is that it be a *set* study, and eventually it will grow and grow.

It doesn't matter *what* they learn, the Rebbe emphasized. They should study whatever they find interesting, whether it is Tanach, Mishna, Gemara and so on. העצם כשאתה תופס במקצתו—אתה תופס בקולו—when you take hold of part of the essence, you have the whole thing; this little bit of Torah will draw them into studying the Torah in its entirety.

NO STRINGS ATTACHED!

In a fascinating passage, the Rebbe added that there is a point that needs to be emphasized: "When you approach a Yid to speak to him about setting a time to study, you shouldn't mix it with anything else; you

shouldn't ask him about his behavior in Torah and mitzvot, whether he fulfills mitzvot with *hiddur*, *lechatchila* or *bedieved*—the only thing you should tell him is that as a son of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, and as a daughter of Sara, Rivka, Rachel, and Leah... he should go study Hashem's Torah.

"Don't ask him about his background, don't ask him for his passport... and certainly don't ask him for money (unless he offers it on his own). You are asking one thing of him: 'תן לי הנפש! Give me your soul! Sit and learn Torah! Hashem says that if only the Yidden would forsake me'²⁰ and keep my Torah!" No matter where a person is holding, Hashem wants him to study Torah!

"This is also the answer to all those who argue that Torah must be studied in purity and so on: Hashem himself says, 'If only... they would keep my Torah.' The study of Torah will bring him closer to all areas of Yiddishkeit!"²¹

HOW TO AFFECT OTHERS SUCCESSFULLY

The keys to convincing others are:

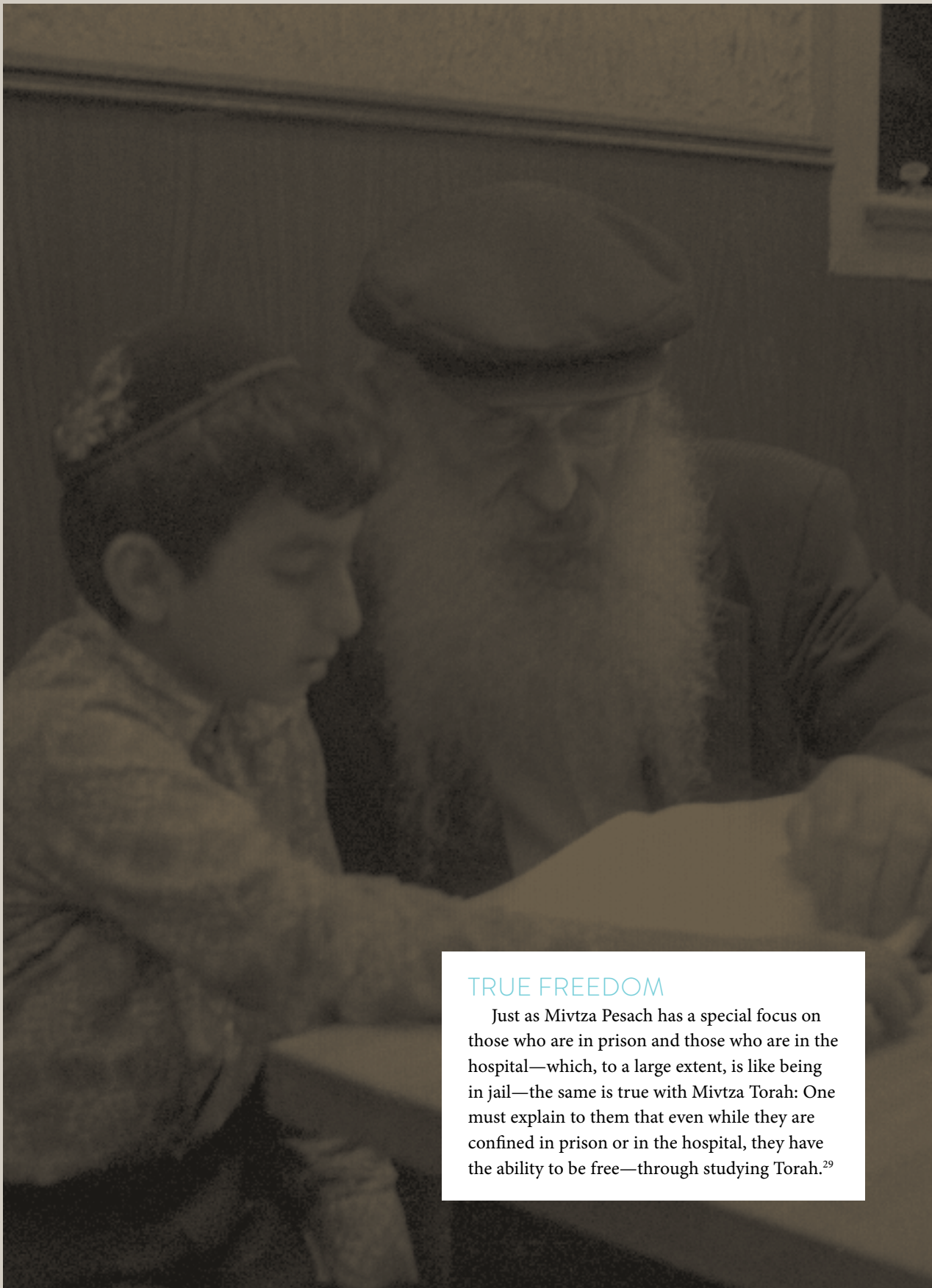
- To appreciate the value of Torah yourself, and speak sincerely, for words that come from the heart enter the heart.²²
- To set a *דוגמא חי*, a living example by studying Torah on your own. And it should be a *living* example, meaning that it should be evident that this is your entire life, ער לעבט מיט דעם!²³

The Rebbe adds that if you want the other person to study a certain amount, obviously you must do double as much. Because the other person will make the justified calculation that it is enough for him to do half as much as you do. Therefore, you must double your Torah study, and thus you will

IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT THEY LEARN.
THEY SHOULD STUDY WHATEVER THEY FIND
INTERESTING, WHETHER IT IS TANACH,
MISHNA, GEMARA AND SO ON...



ELUL 5735, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 140814



TRUE FREEDOM

Just as Mivtza Pesach has a special focus on those who are in prison and those who are in the hospital—which, to a large extent, is like being in jail—the same is true with Mivtza Torah: One must explain to them that even while they are confined in prison or in the hospital, they have the ability to be free—through studying Torah.²⁹

7 TISHREI 5741, LEVI FREDIN VIA JEM 191059

TIPS

In private letters, the Rebbe advised people on how to overcome challenges and increase their Torah studies.

Addressing a person who felt that he lacked the patience or diligence to maintain *shiurim* in Torah on a consistent basis, the Rebbe advised him to begin immediately—but slowly: start off with a short session (e.g. 15 minutes or half an hour daily), and to build it up over time.³⁰

Study with a *chavrusa*, this will help your Torah session be long-lasting.³¹

Don't give up! Even if your first or second attempt does not succeed, do not give up. The way the world works is that not everything succeeds on the first attempt, but with strong willpower you will overcome.³¹

Give *tzedakah* every morning in the merit of more success.

succeed in convincing him to study Torah on his own level.²⁴

WHAT IF I DON'T KNOW HOW TO LEARN?

But what if you yourself don't know how to learn? How can you accomplish Mivtza Torah with others?

First of all, the Rebbe said, the fundamental point of Mivtza Torah is not that you *yourself* must teach others; all you have to do is convince them to attend *shiurim*.²⁵

Furthermore, the Rebbe said, being that we are holding in the final days before Moshiach, every person must share whatever knowledge they have.

“There are those who argue: How can you tell me to get involved in Mivtza Torah, when I myself only know a single chapter, or a single letter? It's not my fault—I am a *tinok shenishba bein ha'akum*; the bottom line is that I don't have any knowledge, so how can you expect me to get involved in Mivtza Torah?!”

“[We say to him:] Listen up! There is no time! Moshiach is coming soon! Run out to the street and study Torah with someone! If you only know ‘one chapter,’ then learn with him ‘one chapter!’”

“Even if you only know ‘one saying, or even one letter’—you were taught how to read the Alef-Beis, and all you know is the shape of an Alef—then go out and shout ‘Alef!’ You will surely meet someone that doesn't know what an Alef is, and you will be able to explain it to him!”

“But”—this person argues—“What will they gain from knowing what an Alef is?!”

“No! You will begin with Alef, and it's possible that this will be all; but because you gave him ‘one letter’ of Torah, it will blossom into ‘one chapter,’ and before long into a tremendous amount of Torah.”²⁶

SUCCESS IS CERTAIN

“When you exert sufficient effort,” the Rebbe said, “you will certainly succeed... with results that completely outshine your efforts.”

“It's like finding a precious stone and picking it up—the effort that must be expended to dust off the stone is insignificant! The Yidden are a ‘precious land,’ with precious stones and diamonds, and the effort involved in dusting it off and finding the stones is nothing compared to the gain!”

LIBERATED

There is not a moment to waste. אין לך בן חורין אלא מי שעוסק בתלמוד תורה, you are only free if you toil in Torah.

Every moment that you study, you become a free man, and if you waste even a single moment, at that moment you are subjugated (enslaved); by giving someone the opportunity to learn, you are giving them the gift of freedom.²⁷ While still in *galus*, Torah gives us the opportunity to rise above and become free—free of any limitations whatsoever.²⁸ **1**

1. For more on this farbrengen, see Derher Shevat 5773, “ראש השנה לאילנות”.
2. The Mishnah in Pirkei Avos tells us, “עשה “תורתך קבע” make your Torah-study permanent. Although, on a simple level, this is telling a person to spend most of his time learning, if you cannot actually spend most of your time studying, you must still make Torah study a permanent part of your life; the study should be ingrained in your soul.
3. Likkutei Diburim vol. 1 p. 13. See also Or Hatorah Nach p. 37; Hemshech 5672 vol. 1 p. 9.
4. Sichos Kodesh 5738 vol. 2, p. 307.
5. Sichos Kodesh 5735 vol. 2, p. 150.
6. Sichos Kodesh 5738 vol. 2, p. 310.
7. Sichos Kodesh 5740 vol. 2, p. 295.
8. Sichos Kodesh 5735 vol. 2, p. 150.
9. Sichos Kodesh 5740 vol. 2, p. 298.
10. Bamidbar Raba 6:1.
11. Sichos Kodesh 5740 vol. 2 p. 297.
12. Sichos Kodesh 5734 vol. 2 p. 95; *ibid* p. 166.
13. Sichos Kodesh 5732 vol. 1 p. 523
14. See third *perek*, *se'ifim* 4-6.
15. See Toras Menachem 5745 vol. 1 p. 461
16. Igros Kodesh vol. 20 p. 331
17. See Toras Menachem 5745 vol. 1 p. 461
18. Sichos Kodesh 5740 vol. 2 p. 238
19. Sichos Kodesh 5738 p. 79
20. In the *sicha*, the Rebbe left out this word.
21. Toras Menachem 5745 vol. 1 p. 461.
22. Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5742 vol. 1 p. 823
23. Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5745 vol. 1 p. 526
24. Toras Menachem 5745 vol. 1 p. 587.
25. Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5745 vol. 1 p. 664
26. Sichos Kodesh 5739 vol. 2 p. 720
27. Sichos Kodesh 5737 p. 709-710
28. Sichos Kodesh 5735 vol. 2 p. 15
29. Sichos Kodesh 5737 p. 711
30. Igros Kodesh vol. 9 p. 298; vol. 14 p. 243
31. Igros Kodesh vol. 14 p. 243



THE REBBE SPEAKS TO HILLEL STUDENTS¹

8 ADAR 5720*

The Rebbe asked whether the students preferred to first ask all their questions and then he would answer, or did they want each question answered as it was asked. The latter was decided upon and the students began:

Question: The Rebbe said that one should spread Torah. How and in what manner is this to be done?

Rebbe: Everyone must do as much as possible in his immediate surroundings by speaking with other people in a way that shows his certainty and confidence in the matter. For confidence is a characteristic of the youth specifically. An older person is often beset with doubts and hesitations, while the young are sure of themselves. It is this characteristic that we must utilize in spreading Torah and mitzvos, and everyone must work at 100% capacity.

Every means must be employed, including newspaper and radio. But, above all, the most vital is the personal example we set in our everyday living.

Question: What was the role that the Baal Shem Tov played in the Chassidic movement?

Rebbe: We can understand what the Baal Shem Tov did by the simile of the relationship of an electric powerhouse with a lamp that is connected to it by a wire. In order to light his lamp, one must find the right switch, or push the correct button. The soul of every Jew is a part of and is connected with G-d Almighty, but in order that one can enjoy the great benefits of it, the correct switch must be found or the proper button pushed. It was the Baal Shem Tov's mission to explain and proclaim that every Jew without exception is connected with "the powerhouse," and

every one of them has a switch in his innermost being, that will be found if searched for.

Also, every one of us in our own work in strengthening Judaism, must try to find the switch in the soul of every Jew. One can never know what will make the connection, perhaps it is just one word. But by this, you open up the well or inner fountain of his soul.

Rabbi Levy, director of the Hillel Foundation at Princeton University, brought greetings to the Rebbe from Kfar Chabad. He had visited there during the summer and related his admiration for the love that is shown the Moroccan children. Never had he seen such love between Jews of such different backgrounds, upbringing, etc.

Question: What is the difference between Lubavitch and other Chassidic groups?

Rebbe: Lubavitcher Chassidim are often called Chabad Chassidim, an abbreviation of the Hebrew words *chochmah*, *binah*, and *daas*, which indicate different aspects of understanding.

To serve G-d with the emotions alone or with faith alone or even with intellect alone is not enough, for it would be an incomplete service. Rather, there must be a fusion of all of these elements, the service must permeate the entire being of a Jew and every single day. However, the intellect is the "ruler" of these elements, and it is this that the Alter Rebbe stressed when he said that a Chassid must use his intellect and not be content with a service of G-d centered only in the emotions or in faith alone.

לעילוי נשמת
 ר' מנחם זאב בן ר' פנחס ע"ה
 נלב"ע כ"ה אלול ה'תשנ"ט
 תנ"צ'ב'ה
 נדפס ע"י בנו
 הרה"ת ר' פנחס מרדכי
 וזוגתו מרת הלנה אילנה נורית
 ומשפחתם שיחיו
 הרמן

Question: Can Chassidism bring non-religious Jews back to their Judaism?

Rebbe: Certainly! Today it is expected that one understands his doing and therefore many Jews can be reached only through their intellect. But in order to reach the intellect of someone else you must use your own intellect, for only through your mind can you reach the mind of another.

Question: Why is Chabad so successful in its activities?

Rebbe: Today everyone tries to understand before he does something. I am not discussing whether this is good or bad, but only stating a fact. Everyone requires proofs and understanding. Chabad Chassidus provides it. It explains aspects of Judaism so that they can be understood by the intellect. As a Chabad Chossid I have a more categorical answer: I have no doubt that Chabad Chassidus is the truth and truth must be successful.

Question: What is the function of a Rebbe?

Rebbe: As was said earlier, to find the switch in every Jew and help him become connected with the power house.

Question: I understand that Chassidism elevates the woman to a state higher than she had before in Judaism. Could you explain this?

Rebbe: Traditionally, women were not taught Torah except those laws that were directly relevant to herself and her duties. Chassidus however, teaches and demands of every one, man or woman, that the mitzvos, all of them, must be done with joy and inspiration, not automatically. But we cannot expect someone to be inspired unless he understands or feels. The woman has a right, and more—she must know of the individual providence, of the omnipresence of G-d Almighty that He created not only the heavens but also the home and the kitchen, and then she can be inspired by the mitzvah to make the home and kitchen a Jewish home and kitchen. We must explain to her in detail the teachings of the Jewish religion and the reasons why of Judaism. Especially as the woman has a great effect on her children and her husband. It is necessary, then, that she be taught the basic ideas of Chassidus

Question: How far does the power of the Rebbe extend in natural law? Does the Rebbe have preferred status as regards prayer?

[Someone added that what is meant is whether the Rebbe can perform miracles.]

Rebbe: This world is not separate from the higher worlds but is another step, the last one, in a long chain of worlds.

Everything in this world comes from and is influenced by the higher ones. A miracle is something that happens which you could not have calculated. When a Jew connects himself through his Divine spark with G-d through fervent prayer, Torah, and mitzvos, he can affect things in this physical world “from above”—that means in a way that is beyond calculation. This power is not the prerogative of one Jew but of every Jew.

Rabbi Gurewitz, of the Brooklyn Hillel Foundation, thanked the Rebbe for the interview and started to leave, but then the Rebbe said:

Now I want to ask you a question, and at the same time try to perform a miracle.

Everything has a purpose. What was the purpose of our coming together here tonight? Certainly it was not merely to ask questions and receive answers, good or bad. Rather it was to achieve something.

All of us here are young, myself included, and have tens of years yet before us. Since six million of our people in Russia, Poland and Hungary have been lost to us through Hitler, we have a special task to accomplish—the work that they could have done, at least a major part of it.

Everyone counts. No Jew is expendable. We all must work to the fullest capacity, every one of us. In our day-to-day life we must use our full strength to add to the side of good, and by this we will gain a life of happiness and harmony—and all this can be done only through a life of Torah and mitzvos tested by our 3,500 year history. This obligation lies upon every Jew and G-d has given him the power to carry this through successfully. And if each of us, beginning tomorrow, should add in his own personal life more Torah and mitzvos and influence the environment in the same direction, if we all will do this, myself included, this indeed will be our miracle. **1**

1. The transcription of this yechidus was prepared by Rabbi Moshe Feller and edited by the Rebbe. Rabbi Feller also prepared a newspaper article about this yechidus, also edited by the Rebbe. See *Teshura Feller-Winner* 5778.



A Prescription for Success

In the city of Minsk there was an unlikely trio of a doctor, shopkeeper and wealthy man. They were united by challenges they each faced and together they decided to travel to the Tzemach Tzedek for a *bracha* and advice.

The doctor had no patients, the shopkeeper had discovered that despite great sales he was coming away with a large loss, and the wealthy man had not been blessed with offspring.

They each had the opportunity to share their concerns and worries with the Rebbe and receive his *bracha* and guidance. The first to enter was the shopkeeper. The Tzemach Tzedek advised him to go to sleep at a later hour and rise much earlier than he was accustomed to at that time.

To the luckless doctor, the Rebbe instructed him to change his lifestyle. "You dress simply and don't command respect. Get yourself honorable clothing, a horse and wagon and then when you are called to visit

a patient you will get paid respectfully."

The rich man was told to spend a night with his wife at a hospitality home where the poor members of society would sleep.

The trio returned to Minsk prepared to do what was necessary to turn their lives around.

The poor doctor asked the shopkeeper for a loan with which he could buy a horse and wagon and a new wardrobe. "If I succeed," he explained to his friend, "then I will return you the money. If I don't do well then I will give you the horse and wagon." The shopkeeper agreed to the deal and lent him the money.

Sure enough, when the doctor was summoned to see a patient, he would let them know that he will arrive in half an hour. At the appointed time he would arrive with his wagon and be received with honor and dignity. The payments he received in return were substantial and within a

month he was able to pay back his loan.

Meanwhile, the shopkeeper changed his schedule and began staying in the store later at night and arriving earlier in the morning. It was just a matter of time until he caught on to the scheme that had been robbing him of his merchandise and sanity. His workers had dug an underground tunnel into his store and had been sneaking into his store each night, stealing his goods! Now that he was there for longer hours he had caught them in the act.

When the wealthy man heard how the Tzemach Tzedek's *brachos* and advice had bore fruits he decided to go ahead with the advice he was given.

One night, he and his wife entered the hospitality home and tried to make themselves comfortable for the night. All around them, paupers and homeless individuals settled down on the floor and fell asleep. The rich man, however, had a

very difficult time and spent most of the night tossing and turning.

In the morning, when most of the poor people had awoken they began talking badly about the rich and elite class of the town. Included in the barrage of insults was this very couple who, unbeknownst to them, was listening in to every word. The well to-do couple heard them saying how cheap and miserly they were. They went on to talk badly about the wife and how she never let a poor person cross the threshold of her home.

This was a bitter pill for the couple to swallow, however, it became apparent to them why they had not yet been blessed with children. With a little bit of self reflection and honest reckoning they could change their behaviour and bring blessing upon themselves. ①

(Adapted from
Otzar Sippurei Chabad
vol. 17, p. 183.)

ברכות לראש משביר

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

מסור ונתון להחזקת ותמיכת המוסדות המרכזיים של
חב"ד ליובאוויטש

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

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

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

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

החיילת בצבאות השם לאה שתחי'

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

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

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

בברכה ובהוקרה עמוקה

הנהלת וחברי המערכת
א חסידישער דערהער

A YEAR WITH THE REBBE

kvutza



IVAR 5729, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 281839

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

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

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

With the Rebbe

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

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

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

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



Trickling In

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A Novelty

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

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



JEM 102404

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



ELUL 5736, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 203196



ELUL 5736, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 203205

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

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

But one by one, the issues were worked through.

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



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

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

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

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

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

Shehechiyanu!

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

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



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD

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

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

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

and thanked Hashem for being given this special opportunity.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Rebbe bemoaned the fact that the Israeli government wouldn't allow them to remain here through Pesach and see "ah Yiddishen seder."

Obviously, the most important Torah learning that could be done only here in the United States was the Torah they learned from the Rebbe himself.

"At first, we had a hard time focusing and understanding the Rebbe's words at the farbrengens," says Rabbi Micha Steinmetz. "Firstly, we had to get used to the intense pushing and shoving that naturally came along with standing in the overcrowded shul. Additionally, we needed to learn and grow accustomed to the Rebbe's style to fully understand and appreciate the *sichos* and *maamarim*. Of course, this was a major priority at this stage in our lives, and we put in much effort until we were able to participate in the Rebbe's farbrengens successfully."⁷

Another Extension

Three months passed by fairly quickly and the *bochurim* were not ready to give up so fast and return to Eretz Yisroel. When they asked the Rebbe what to do in order to prolong their stay, the Rebbe told them to work with the *hanhala*. When Reb Efraim Wolf was in *yechidus* during that time, the Rebbe instructed him to be in touch with Mr. Niv Dekel, a representative of the Israeli Security Consul in New York.

Of course, the Rebbe was updated about each additional step taken. At one point, the Rebbe wrote that they should try to be able to stay till after Pesach.

With much intervention and a lot of bureaucratic maneuvering, they were able to extend the permits for an additional four months, but they would have to leave before Pesach.

On the day before their departure, Rabbi Hodakov notified the *bochurim* that they would have a group *yechidus* with the Rebbe the next day!

When they all entered the Rebbe's room, the Rebbe was sitting with a silk *kapota* (a rare occurrence on a weekday) and immediately began reciting a *maamar*—"אל יפטר אדם מחברו."

There was an incredible mixed-feeling in the hearts of the *bochurim*: On the one hand, they were obviously pained by the fact that they would now take leave from 770. With travel and communication much more limited in those days, the departure was all the more difficult. On the other hand, they felt overjoyed by having the *zechus* to have been with the Rebbe for so long, with the Rebbe showing them so many *kiruvim* and caring for them like a loving father all along.

After the *maamar* and a short *sicha*, the Rebbe handed each of them a Tanya, saying that this will be the token for "מתוך כך זוכרהו." (This was based on the words of Chazal quoted at the beginning of the *maamar*: "אל יפטר אדם מחברו אלא מתוך דבר הלכה שמתוך כך זוכרהו—a person should only take leave of his friend by stating a word of halacha, for through this he will be remembered.") Along with the Tanya, they each received a silver dollar.

The Rebbe told them to give over "joyous regards" ("א פריילעכן גרוס") at each stop of their journey home, especially in Eretz Yisroel, and to strengthen the yeshivos with their visits. "One or two of you should be

selected to write reports every few weeks about the things you are doing," the Rebbe concluded.⁸

After the *yechidus*, they were summoned by Rabbi Hodakov who gave them each 50 dollars as the Rebbe's contribution to their trip fair, along with some instructions about their trip.

Rabbi Yitzchak Yehuda Yeruslavsky, who was one of the *bochurim* in the first *kvutza*, explained to us in an interview:

"The attention the Rebbe showed us, especially when we were leaving, was absolutely unprecedented. In addition to reciting a *maamar* **only** for us, the Rebbe also escorted us out the door of 770. To the best of my knowledge, the Rebbe did not do this for any other *kvutza* after us..."

The *bochurim* were scheduled to leave that evening and the Rebbe davened Maariv earlier than usual so that they could join his *minyán*. As they were about to leave to the airport, the *bochurim* were given various letters from the Rebbe to be delivered to members of *anash* in the places they were scheduled to stop over.

Reaching Eretz Yisroel, they immediately began fulfilling their shlichus: speaking and farbrenging in the various communities and educational institutions throughout the land, bringing fresh reports from life with the Rebbe and reviewing the *sichos* and *maamarim* they heard while there.

Joining the yeshiva at Kfar Chabad recharged and almost born anew, the *temimim* of the first *kvutza* breathed new life into their old home, bringing the real *chayus* from the Rebbe as it manifested in their everyday learning of Torah and *avodas Hashem*.

Continuation

The ground had been broken, but there was still a long way to go. The Israeli bureaucracy was complicated

“Everything that we have today; it’s all based on that special year with the Rebbe.”

and difficult to breach. But the work went on and a year later, another *kvutza* was preparing to come to the Rebbe—for 5724*. Again, these *kvutzos* were only able to stay for a few months at a time.

For the year of 5725*, the *kvutza* arrived on Chai Elul 5724* and remained in New York until Rosh Chodesh Nissan. Unfortunately, they were unable to stay for Pesach, although the Rebbe strongly wanted it. In a *yechidus* with Reb Itchke Gansberg (a veteran Chabad askan and mechanech in Eretz Yisroel), the Rebbe bemoaned the fact that the Israeli government wouldn’t allow them to remain here through Pesach and see “*ah Yiddishen seder*.” In fact, Reb Shlomo Zarchi, the *mashpia* at 770 relates that the Rebbe once remarked: “צוויי ניסכים איז בעסער ווי” “צווי תשרי” (i.e. a *bochur* being here for the Yom Tov of Pesach is more important and would have an even greater impact than being here for the whole month of Tishrei!)

In our interview with Rabbi Chananya Yosef Eizenbach, a member of the 5725* *kvutza*, he related:

“We actually traveled to and from New York by ship. [It should be noted that when the *hanhala* wanted to send the first group back by ship to Europe and from there they would fly to Eretz Yisroel, the Rebbe rejected the idea saying that it is unfair to make the *bochurim* schlep for so long just to save some money... -ed.]

“The first time we saw the Rebbe was during Maariv on the day of our arrival. I remember feeling so uplifted at that moment; I wrote in a letter to friends and family in Eretz Yisroel that even having seen the Rebbe only once

had already paid off all my expenses and made my trip worth it.

“Right at the beginning of the year, on Vov Tishrei, the Rebbe’s mother passed away. Then the Rebbe started *farbrenging* every Shabbos and introduced the new ‘Rashi Sichos’ in her memory. It was an amazing year to be with the Rebbe. The *farbrengens* came so often, and were long and rich!

“Unfortunately, we were unable to stay through Pesach as the Rebbe had wanted. On the Shabbos before we left, the Rebbe said a whole *sicha* about us; quite an emotional *sicha* about “די וואס פארן—those that are leaving now.” The Rebbe repeated the words of the Frierdiker Rebbe that even though we are leaving physically, we will still be very much connected.

“Since the Rebbe was in the year of *aveilus*, he did not see us off in a group *yechidus*. Instead, we were given instructions by Rabbi Hodakov. We were to stop in various locations of *anash* and bring regards from the Rebbe’s presence, placing special emphasis on the importance of learning the entire section in Likkutei Torah each week—something the Rebbe was *shturem*ing about at the time...

“When we returned to Eretz Yisroel, we went around and spoke in many places. Coming back from the Rebbe was a major novelty; most people in Eretz Yisroel never saw the Rebbe and hookups or videos weren’t around yet. We reviewed the *sichos* and *maamarim* and spoke about the Rebbe as much as we could.”

Shana Temima

Finally, the proper arrangements with the Israeli government were

made, and the *kvutza* of 5726* was able to stay for a full year.

Rabbi Avraham Alter Heber, a member of the 5726* *kvutza*, relates:



“Traveling to the Rebbe was a big deal. Our *mashpia*, Reb Shlomo Chaim Kesselman, drilled into us how important it was to prepare ourselves in a *pnimiudike* way. For this reason, even though we came to New York before Tishrei, we weren’t allowed into *yechidus* with the Rebbe until the month of Teves. The *hanhala* told us we needed time to properly prepare ourselves—most importantly by hearing the Rebbe’s *maamarim* and *sichos* at the *farbrengens*.”

Rabbi Zalman Gopin, another member of that group, relates how they first saw the Rebbe:



“We arrived in New York in the evening on a direct El-Al flight. A large group of *bochurim* came to greet us at the airport and together we were bused to 770. We saw the Rebbe shortly thereafter leaving the car and walking into 770. It was a special moment; we all recited *Shehechiyanu*...”

Later that year, the Rebbe spoke at a *farbrengen* about the fact that *chazzara* of *sichos* and *maamarim* was not being done right and that it needed fixing. Some of the *bochurim* got involved in helping Reb Yoel Kahn with remembering and transcribing the *farbrengens*, including Rabbi Gopin.

“That year with the Rebbe is what shaped our entire lives,” Rabbi Gopin says. “Everything that we have today, any connection that we have with the Rebbe, with Chassidus, and *avodas Hashem*; it’s all based on that special year with the Rebbe.”

As far as the group for the following year, 5727*, the Israeli government became weary about letting the *bochurim* go for so long



REUNION OF THE FIRST GROUP OF KVUTZAH IN ERETZ YISROEL, AN ANNUAL TRADITION FOR THE GROUP.



12 ADAR 5722, GERSHON SCHUSTERMAN VIA JEM 303105



REB YOEL KAHAN LEARNS WITH A GROUP OF BOCHURIM IN THE UPSTAIRS ZAL AT 770.

and stated that they wouldn't give permission for the next group to leave until the previous group returned, which was after Tishrei 5727*. But as it turned out, the new group was only able to come in the month of Nissan. Thus began a new system of each *kvutza* coming for one year, from before Pesach until after the following Pesach.

Rabbi Sholom Ber Cohen, a member of that *kvutza*, related in an interview with us:

"We arrived on 10 Nissan 5727*. The first time we saw the Rebbe was at Mincha. We noticed how the Rebbe gazed at us very intensely, as if taking extra note to our presence. It is interesting that throughout the year, the Rebbe spoke about the *kvutza bochurim* relatively often.

"We were *zoche* to have been with the Rebbe for two Pesachs, being

The Only Heter

Rabbi Sholom Ber Cohen relates:

"The Rebbe emphasized again and again that the only reason we came to New York was to study Torah. Even in the summer, when most of the yeshiva emptied out and went on Merkos Shlichus or to camps, we were sitting and learning. One *bochur* wrote to the Rebbe that he felt he wasn't learning well anyways and asked permission to be allowed to go on Merkos Shlichus during the summer, the Rebbe responded:

א"כ באיזה היתר יצא מאה"ק ועליו לחזור מיד.

If this is the case, how can you justify [halachically] your leaving Eretz Yisroel; you must return immediately.

"(Parenthetically, I remember that another *bochur* once wrote to the Rebbe that sometimes he misses *sof zam krias shema* in the morning. The Rebbe responded, applying the words of the Alter Rebbe in Tanya, that with a small *aveira*, a person can fool himself and think עוֹדֵנוּ בִּיהוּדוֹ, that he is still a fine Jew and connected to Hashem. But as the Alter Rebbe proves, that is actually not true...)

"Another time that the Rebbe reprimanded us was during a weekday *krias haTorah*. In those years, the Rebbe wouldn't daven Shacharis with the *minyan*. Instead, he would join our *minyan* on Monday and Thursday, only for *krias haTorah*. After receiving an *aliya*, the Rebbe would wait until the *sefer Torah* was brought back into the *aron*, and in the meantime he would say Tehillim. Once, while we were gazing at the Rebbe as he said Tehillim, the Rebbe turned to us and said, 'איר גייט דאך מיט', וואס חלומ'ט איר? איר גייט דאך מיט—Why are you daydreaming? You are wearing tefillin!"

At the farbrengen on Shabbos Hagadol, the first week that we were with the Rebbe, the Rebbe spoke a lengthy *sicha* about us. The Rebbe gave a whole halachic analysis about why it was permissible for us to come to New York, obviously only to learn Torah. At the end of the *sicha* the Rebbe gave us a bottle of *mashke* to say *l'chaim*.¹⁰

THE KVUTZA BOCHURIM DANCE UPON RETURNING TO ERETZ YISROEL AFTER SPENDING A YEAR WITH THE REBBE.

1948, LEV FREIDIN VIA JEM 28812

THE BOCHURIM IN 770 LED BY REB MORDECHAI MENTLIK AND REB DOVID RASKIN WAIT IN THE AIRPORT TO GREET THE NEW GROUP OF KVUTZA.

JEM 306727

5723, GERSHON SCHUSTERMAN VIA JEM 303120

present at four of the Rebbe's *sedarim*. It was a most amazing experience.

"Before the Rebbe's *seder*, the Rebbe came to visit our *seder* in the dining room at 749 Eastern Parkway. The Rebbe toured through the whole floor and then went back to 770, then we hurriedly conducted the whole *seder* in order to make it on time to join the Rebbe's *seder* in the Friediker Rebbe's apartment on the second floor of 770.

"Being with the Rebbe for that year literally changed our lives. We knew so little about the Rebbe beforehand, and suddenly we saw the Rebbe on a daily basis. It was incredible! We were

finally able to see and understand that we have a Rebbe, a *Ro'eh Yisroel* and feel connected. The year in *kvutza* is what set the tone for our whole lives afterwards..."

From then on, the *seder* was that the *kvutza bochurim* came from before Pesach until after the next Pesach, until the year 5738*. Beginning from summer 5738*, the *kvutza* would come from before Tishrei until after the following Tishrei.

Rabbi Menashe Chadad of the 5730*-5731* *kvutza* related to us in an interview:

"Moshe Dayan agreed to allow them to come here to New York for 12 months and study pnimius haTorah. Where does the issue arise? Here in New York!"

"While we were at the airport, Rabbi Efroim Wolf spoke to us about the Rebbe's instruction that we must take upon ourselves to learn diligently. If not, we were not to go to New York."

In the *sefer Yemei Temimim*, there is a telegram from the Rebbe to Rabbi Wolf dated 7 Nissan 5730*:

"תמוהה ומוזרה השמועה שכאילו לא הזהירו כל אחד מהתלמידים הרוצים לנסוע לכאן שזהו ממש תלוי בהחלטתם התקיפה ללמוד כאן בהתמדה ובריאת שמים ובהנהגה חסידותית, ובוודאי יזהירו עתה ויודיעוני בטח."

"The rumor is extremely puzzling, maintaining that you did not sufficiently warn the talmidim who wish to come here that it is only up to them; if they decide resolutely to learn diligently with *yiras shamayim* and *chassidishe* conduct. You will certainly warn them now and notify me for sure..."

Even Moshe Dayan Knows It!

A few weeks after the *kvutza* arrived in 5730*, the Rebbe spoke about the hard time the *bochurim* had in making all the arrangements to come and reprimanded the *hanhala* in New York for not showing enough interest in their cause.

The Rebbe spoke with great pain, bemoaning the fact that the Chassidim here in New York cared less about the *bochurim* coming here than the members of the Israeli Security Consul.

“The Ministry of Defense is generally not interested in sending young men to yeshiva; they are more concerned about drafting them to the military. Nevertheless, an amazing thing happened and Moshe Dayan agreed to allow them to come here to New York for 12 months and study *pnimius haTorah*. Where does the issue arise? Here in New York! They couldn’t find enough money in the whole New York to buy a few more beds and some meager pieces of bread for the *bochurim* who just want to come here and learn!”

The Rebbe spoke at length about this whole issue and expressed his hope that in the future, the attitude will change and things will get better.

“These *bochurim* went on *mesirus nefesh* to try and come here. They have no money. Instead they borrow and get themselves into debt, only to pay it back with the money of their dowry upon getting married!

“Their parents tell them to stay in Eretz Yisroel. ‘There are enough yeshivos here, even yeshivos that learn *pnimius haTorah*,’ they say. Despite all this, and despite not being given very good accommodations here in New York, the *bochurim* don’t take this into account and come here anyways!

“...No one has time to try and help them. Instead, they are busy learning Chitas. Think to yourself: What would the [Frierdiker] Rebbe rather, that you should say Chitas on time, or that you should maybe push it off till the evening and spend five minutes helping the *bochurim* who want to come here and learn?”

(*Toras Menachem* vol. 60, p. 29)

On 10 Nissan, Rabbi Wolf writes in a letter that he indeed spoke to each of the *talmidim* about this matter.¹¹

A few weeks later, the Rebbe spoke about this at a farbrengen.¹²

The *kvutza* program continued throughout the ensuing years and continues through this day, serving as a golden opportunity for thousands of Chassidim in Eretz Yisroel to spend a full year in the Rebbe’s presence and shape their lives around the Rebbe’s Torah and shlichus.

The Rebbe himself says as much in a fascinating letter to Mr. Menachem

Begin (at the time Israel’s Interior Minister and later Prime Minister):

“Firstly, I would like to thank you for taking interest in this matter [arranging special permission for *talmidim* in Eretz Yisroel to join the *kvutza*].

“...We are talking about *bochurim* who only want to come here and learn Torah for a while, and they feel that they will be successful in their studies here and in gaining the proper outlook on life, etc. The rule is that people are more successful if they study in the place where their heart desires.

“...Additionally, the education they will receive here will instill in them the appreciation and responsibility they have to use their strengths and talents for the benefit of the public... Those students from the Holy Land who have already been through this system and went back to the Holy Land at the end of their course here [have indeed acted on this premise]. Their stay here has turned out to be a great blessing not only for them, but for the entire land of Israel. The benefit is ultimately not just their own, but it is for the good of the entire nation, and for the whole of the Holy Land...”¹³ T

1. Yemei Melech vol. 3, p. 67.
2. Yemei Bereishis p. 107.
3. See *Retaining Chassidus—Part II*, Derher Adar II 5776.
4. Sichas Shabbos Hagadol 5727.
5. Interview with Kfar Chabad magazine issue 1572.
6. See *The Rebbe will Always be with you; An Exclusive Interview with Rabbi Yosef Abrahams*, Derher Tammuz 5779.
7. Interview with Kfar Chabad magazine ibid.
8. *Toras Menachem* vol. 33, p. 142.
9. Interview with Kfar Chabad magazine issue 1625.
10. *Toras Menachem* vol. 49, p. 272.
11. Vol. 4, p. 273.
12. Shabbos Parshas Metzora; *Toras Menachem* vol. 60, p. 49.
13. Igros Kodesh vol. 26, p. 299.



What We're All About

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

Part 7: Shofar Gadol:
The Six-Day-War
and Russian Jewry

Eretz Yisroel, Spring 5727*: Tensions in the Middle East erupted into a full scale war between Eretz Yisroel and the neighboring Arab countries. Aside for the fact that the Yidden were outnumbered in every conceivable way, the leaders of the Arab world proclaimed a war of genocide, רחמנא ליצלן, and the global Jewish community was in a terrified panic.

During this time of confusion, fear and terror, the Rebbe's voice of assurance rang forth with clarity and confidence. In addition to calling upon all Yidden to strengthen the security of Eretz Yisroel through wearing tefillin, the Rebbe remained in close contact with the military and political leadership, providing support and comfort in immeasurable ways.

The world was shocked and amazed when a ceasefire was declared only six days after hostilities began, with a resounding victory for the Yidden in Eretz Yisroel. They had decimated their enemies and conquered enormous swaths of territory. The astounding miracles were obvious and undeniable.

As a result of all this, a wave of *teshuvah* swept through the Jewish world which has unabated ever since.

Soviet Union, 5726*-5727*: For over four decades, the Soviet Union had imprisoned the millions of Yidden within its borders. It was excruciatingly difficult to live a Jewish life and impossible to leave. Since the legendary escape known as the *Eshalonon* in 5706*, the Iron Curtain was virtually impregnable and barely a handful of Yidden succeeded in leaving the accursed country.

For years, the Rebbe remained in close contact with the Yidden there and constantly spoke of their plight publicly and *bentched* them that they merit to leave imminently.

In 5726* the situation began to change. Through various secret channels of communication, the Rebbe instructed Russian Chassidim that the time was ripe to apply for exit visas from the USSR, and to everyone's amazement, hundreds of families immigrated to Eretz Yisroel in less than two years.

The new immigrants were invited to celebrate the festive month of Tishrei 5728* in 770 with the Rebbe. Their travel expenses were covered by the Rebbe and throughout the month, the Rebbe showed a great deal of *kiruvim* to these legendary *mesiras nefesh* Yidden.

The Maamar Explains it All

During the farbrengens of Tishrei 5728* the Rebbe revealed how these two trajectories in history were interconnected and, in fact, the realization of the *nevua* of Yeshayahu Hanavi about the sounding of the great shofar that would precede the final *geula*.

In unprecedented fashion, three Tishrei *maamarim*—Rosh Hashanah, Shabbos Shuva and Shabbos Bereishis—all started with the *possuk* והיה ביום גדול והוא יתקע בשופר, and other *maamarim* focused on the same theme as well. In a landmark *sicha*¹ during the second Shabbos Bereishis farbrengen the Rebbe explained that this specific *nevua* was particularly relevant to current world events in general and to the prevailing mood throughout global Jewry in particular.²

The Rebbe opened the *sicha* explaining that the *maamar* he had just delivered at the farbrengen was based on the *maamar* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, published in the famed Hakria Vehakedusha magazine in 5703.³ Although the *maamar* had been said and published over 20 years earlier, its message contains the key to understanding a peculiar phenomenon unfolding in the Jewish world.

Never before had the entire Jewish world been shaken to its core in response to a tragedy happening to *klal Yisroel*. Even while the murderous Nazis were unleashing the most gruesome and horrifying Holocaust upon millions of Yidden in Europe, the Jewish response in the free world was somewhat subdued in comparison to what would have been expected.

However, in 5727*, when the Arabs threatened to destroy Eretz Yisroel and mobilized at its borders, Jews



ISRAEL GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE/MOSHE MILNER

RUSSIAN IMMIGRANTS ARRIVE IN ERETZ YISROEL, 5731.

from all walks of life, from all over the world, were *tzutreiselt* and utterly petrified for their brothers and sisters. And when the miraculous victory occurred, this communal fear gave way to collective relief, elation and spiritual awakening, the likes of which had never been seen before in Jewish history.

Two Prophecies – Two Eras

There are two prophecies proclaiming that before the final *geula* two major events will happen in connection with a “shofar.”

In general, a shofar blast represents the idea of being terribly frightened and shaken to the core for reasons one does not necessarily understand. As the *navi* Amos declares “היתקע שופר בעיר ועם לא יחרדו”—Is it possible for one to blow a shofar in the city and the citizens will not be frightened?”

Since the *geula* will usher in an era of global transformation, not only for the Yidden but for all of humanity, it is therefore necessary to pave the way for the new world order by destroying the status quo in incomprehensible ways. These seismic changes are represented by two “Soundings of the Shofar”—two

What We're All About

major events in two separate eras that will alter the course of world history in a terrifying fashion, in preparation for the *geula*.

וְה' עֲלֵיהֶם יֵרָאֶה וְיֵצֵא כְּבֹרֶק חֶצֵּוֹ וְאֵד' ה' (אֱלֹקִים) בְּשׁוֹפָר יִתְקַע
וְהַלֵּךְ בְּסַעֲרוֹת תִּימָן: זְכָרִיָּה ט, יד

And Hashem shall appear over them, and his arrows shall go forth like lightning. And Hashem shall sound the shofar, and He shall go with the whirlwinds of the south.

The *navi* Zecharia declares that before Moshiach will come, Hashem will “sound the shofar” and cause stormy wars to shake civilization and cause terribly painful suffering upon the Yidden as part of *חבלי משיח*, the birth pangs of Moshiach.

וְהָיָה | בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִתְקַע בְּשׁוֹפָר גָּדוֹל וְכָאֻו הָאֲבָדִים בְּאֶרֶץ אַשּׁוּר
וְהַנִּדְחִים בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וְהַשְׁתַּחֲוִי לָהּ בְּהַר הַקֹּדֶשׁ בִּירוּשָׁלַם: יִשְׁעִי
כ”ז, י”ג

And it shall come to pass on that day, that a great shofar shall be sounded, and those lost in the land of Assyria and those exiled in the land of Egypt shall come and they shall prostrate themselves before Hashem on the holy mountain in Yerushalayim.

The *navi* Yeshayahu declares that after the era of world war, the “great shofar shall be sounded,” and this will cause a great spiritual awakening specifically for *klal Yisroel*. Even those who have drifted far away from Yiddishkeit will be awakened by this call.

World Wars – Preparing the World

The *nevua* of Zecharia came to pass during the era of the world wars.



THE FARBRENGEN OF SIMCHAS TORAH 5728*. MANY OF THE RECENT IMMIGRANTS FROM RUSSIA JOINED THE REBBE FOR TISHREI THAT YEAR.

World War I broke out as a result of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir presumptive to the Austro-Hungarian Empire by a Serbian national. Europe was certainly a tinderbox before the assassination, but it was one gunshot that escalated into a catastrophic war consuming most of civilization, displacing millions from their homes and creating the geopolitical atmosphere ripe for another world war that would destroy civilization again.

World War II was caused by a man who was lacking in every possible way—an absolute “nothing.” Inexplicably, eight million Germans feared him and accepted his leadership unquestioningly. Even when the world nations understood his intentions of conquering



JEM 103273

the world, they were paralyzed by fear and did nothing to stop him from preparing Germany for another major war.

These two ghastly wars changed civilization forever and their causes defy all rationale. They all occurred because the “hearts of kings and princes are in the hands of Hashem,” the result of the “sounding of the shofar” as articulated by Zecharia Hanavi. Wars of unprecedented destruction which prepared the world for the great changes of *geula*.

It was during the era of the “sounding of the shofar” of Zecharia’s prophecy that the Frieddiker Rebbe said the *maamar* והיה ביום ההוא, and indicated that there was another era to come as a prelude to the *geula*.

Astounding Miracles – Preparing Klal Yisroel

While these wars certainly changed the world, they did not awaken all of *bnei Yisroel*. To do so necessitates the “Sounding of the *Great Shofar*” as described by Yeshayahu Hanavi.

This *nevua* came to pass in the spring of 5727*. The danger facing the Yidden of Eretz Yisroel was so great that it captured the attention of Yidden everywhere in the world, from every stripe of the religious spectrum.

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But when it all ended with a miraculously astonishing victory, a wave of relief, joy and *hisorerus teshuvah* swept over all of *klal Yisroel*—representing the fatherly, loving call of Hashem to each and every Yid to come home.

A new era of preparing *klal Yisroel* for Moshiach had begun. The *shofar gadol* sounded loud and clear, manifest in the great spiritual awakening of Yidden all across the religious spectrum, returning to their roots. Even those who had run away from Torah life or had never had the opportunity to receive a Jewish education were now inexplicably drawn to learning Torah and doing more mitzvos. The promise that every Yid will do *teshuva* before the arrival of Moshiach was becoming a reality.

Lost in Prosperity – האובדים בארץ אשור –

While the “sounding of the shofar” is capable of shaking and restructuring the world through war, it is not powerful enough to awaken a Yid lost to the temptations of pleasure, liberty and wealth.

The call of the “*shofar gadol*” reaches the core of the Yid and is able to awaken him or her from his or her prosperity-induced spiritual slumber. This is the meaning of the words “ובאו האובדים בארץ אשור”. The word “Ashur” represents wealth and prosperity.

Before the coming of Moshiach there will be millions of Yidden who will be so entrenched in the comforts of *galus* that they will be uninterested in any change. The fatherly loving call of Hashem to the Yidden through the miracles of the Six-Day-War managed to awaken even the most assimilated Jews in the free world.

Shackled in Poverty – הנדחים בארץ מצרים –

Before the *geula* there are יחידי סגולה—an elite cadre of Yidden—chosen to undergo an especially difficult and treacherous type of *nisayon*. These are the “נדחים בארץ מצרים”—living under a cruel government which forbids them from learning Torah and doing mitzvos, and subject to poverty and deprivation. And just like the borders of Mitzrayim were sealed shut and *bnei Yisroel* were unable to leave on their own, the Yidden in the USSR are imprisoned behind the Iron Curtain with no option to flee.

Such a *nisayon* can lead one to a situation where even Moshe Rabbeinu’s assurances of the imminent *geula* could be ignored; not out of lack of faith, but due to the excruciating pressures of *galus*.

Yet despite the impossible conditions, these Yidden go above and beyond their capabilities to live a Jewish life and they educate their children to do the same.

The fact that the Iron Curtain is starting to crack open, and Yidden are managing to leave that terrible *galus* and emigrate to Eretz Yisroel, is clear proof that the “*shofar gadol*” which will reach and awaken the נדחים בארץ מצרים has started to be manifest in a practical and physical sense.⁴

(Although the Rebbe did not mention this publicly at the time—for obvious reasons—it is noteworthy that the victory of the Six-Day-War caused a tremendous *hisorerus* by the millions of Jews still trapped behind the Iron Curtain and many started to seek out ways to connect to Yiddishkeit - ed.)



YIDDEN POSE AT THE KOSEL HAMAARAVI SHORTLY AFTER THE CONQUEST OF THE CITY DURING THE SIX DAY WAR.

Channeling the Power

Six months after the miraculous victory, in a long and fascinating *sicha* during the Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen,⁵ the Rebbe addressed a question posed by many: How do we know that the tremendous *hisorerus* that gripped the Jewish world during the Six-Day-War was connected to *teshuvah*? After all, many millions of Yidden had not yet adopted the lifestyle of Torah and mitzvos.

The Rebbe explained that although the “sounding of the *shofar gadol*” will awaken every Yid, channeling this awakening in the right direction will not be dictated by Hashem and everyone continues to have free choice. It is up to those fortunate to be connected to Torah and mitzvos to approach these recently awakened Yidden and to guide them in applying this newfound warmth and excitement through learning Torah and doing mitzvos.

The fact that the *hisorerus teshuvah* did not lead to immediate שמירת התורה ומצוות does not disqualify the *hisorerus*, and when someone will approach this Yid and connect with him or her הלב מן הלב (words that come from the heart and enter the heart), it will certainly succeed.

“It has been proven, that those Yidden approached in Tel Aviv, in Chadera or even in Times Square, and were offered to wrap tefillin, to think about Hashem,

to recite a *bracha*, *bentch* the lulav and esrog—the overwhelming majority agreed to do so!”

It is up to us to channel this global *hisorerus teshuvah* caused by the sounding of the *shofar gadol* in the right direction, by influencing every Yid to connect with Torah and mitzvos, thereby paving the way for the true and ultimate *geula*, when we will merit very soon to the realization of the conclusion of the *nevua* “והשתחונו לה' בהר הקודש בירושלים”.

התקיעה בשופר גדול פועלת לעורר את כולם (עס וועט אלעמען דערנעמען). והיינו שגם אלו ששום דבר לא פעל עליהם (קיינ ענין האט זיי ניט דערנומען) ועד כדי כך, שאפילו בזמן גילוי המשיח הם עדיין במעמד ומצב דעור ופסח, הנה גם הם יתעוררו על ידי התקיעה בשופר גדול, להיות קהל גדול ישובו הנה.
מאמר ד"ה הנגי מביא אותם, ש"פ נח תשכ"ח

The next installment of this series will focus on the connection between the *mitvzoim* and *geula*.

1. Toras Menachem vol. 51 page 210.
2. It is noteworthy that this *sicha* was edited by the Rebbe to be transmitted live on radio and published in the *Di Yiddische Heim* magazine.
3. Sefer Hamaamarim Yiddish page 78.
4. Toras Menachem vol. 51 pages 23 and 187.
5. Ibid pages 383-399.

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

נדפס ע"י
בית חב"ד מעקוואן, ויסקונסין



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DING UNTRY



Rabbi
Shabsi
Alpern

RABBI ALPERN
WORKING IN HIS
OFFICE.

SEEING THE FRIEDIKER REBBE

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

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



RABBI ALPERN RECEIVES A TANYA FROM THE REBBE.

YUD SHEVAT 5750, LEVI FREDIN VIA JEM 236496

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

A SPECIAL PHONE CONVERSATION

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

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

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

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

OUR RELATIONSHIP

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

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

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

A SPECIAL HAGGADAH

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THERE WILL BE A CHANGE...

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

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

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

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

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

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

In response, the Rebbe said something very powerful.

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

POINTY SHOES

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

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

"Brazil," he answered.

"What are you doing here?"

"I'm on business."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDET CHABAD

We hugged and kissed, and he related that a short time after he adopted his daughter, his wife became pregnant with a son. Through a series of events, they had grown much closer to the Rebbe, and the son was now a shlich himself. He had brought along his father for the Kinus Hashluchim.

THE CLOSED BLINDS

Our flight was set for 5 Av 5721*.

We had two *yechidusen* before our departure, and on Shabbos, 2 Av, the Rebbe held a *farbrengen*. During the *farbrengen* the Rebbe said a short *maamar* on the topic of Bnei Gad and Bnei Reuven, but at the end, he suddenly spoke about the importance of shlichus in faraway places.

“Unlike those who mistakenly want to remain in their own *daled amos*, and don’t want to travel to distant places. One must know that although it is easier to remain in your own *daled amos*, it is nevertheless not the *tachlis hakavana*, the ultimate purpose. Hashem’s will is that you go to a distant shlichus and spread the wellsprings of Chassidus there.”⁷

That last paragraph wasn’t directly connected to the *maamar*, and we understood that it was a farewell to us. In the *sicha* following the *maamar*, the Rebbe spoke about it once again.

In those years, there was a special ritual to see off a couple going on shlichus. On the way to the airport, the shluchim would stop off in front of 770, and the *bochurim* would come out of the *zal* to dance and see you off. During the dancing, the Rebbe would pick up the blinds of the window in his room about a third of the way up.

When we came to 770 before our departure, the Rebbe did not pick up the blinds. Everyone thought it to be very strange. The Rebbe had given us two *yechidusen* before our trip, and there was no doubt that the Rebbe wanted us to go. Slightly disappointed, we left for the airport.



RABBI ALPERN WITH ONE OF HIS SUPPORTERS DURING THE INAUGURATION OF THE BEIS CHABAD IN S. PALO, 5739*.

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RABBI ALPERN BEING AWARDED AN HONOR AT CITY HALL IN S. PALO, BRAZIL, 2 NISSAN 5737*.

LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD

The first leg of our journey, to Caracas, Venezuela, was on a Belgian airline. We sat down ready for take-off, but the plane didn’t move. After some time, the pilot apologized and said that one of the engines had burned out, and it would take another 48 hours to receive a replacement from Brussels. We were told to go home and return two days later.

On Tuesday, before returning to the airport, we again stopped off to say farewell at 770. This time, the Rebbe opened the blinds.

NO CONFLICT

We arrived in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on Thursday, 7 Av. We immediately got to work.

It would be another five years before a phone was installed in our home, and until then, everything was done through written correspondence.

During our *yechidus* before we left, the Rebbe gave me an interesting directive. He said there are already two *anash* families living in Brazil. Whenever they do an initiative together, I should participate as well. However, if one family does something without the other, I should have no part in it.

In those days, there was no concept of a Beis Chabad. We knew that we were sent to a location to strengthen Yiddishkeit, and that was all. I became the principal of a small Jewish school in Rio, as well as the rabbi of the small shul located on its premises. My wife taught all day at the school in addition to helping at the shul. They paid us a very small salary.

Brazil was very primitive in those days. It would be another five years

before a phone was installed in our home, and until then, everything was done through written correspondence. I wrote a report to the Rebbe every Sunday morning, and I would receive letters back every two or three weeks. Some of those letters were only two lines, sometimes just acknowledging my report, but I always received something. Whenever I came to New York, I would converse lengthily. Later, I would converse with Rabbi Hodakov about various matters.

Two and a half years after we arrived, the Rebbe instructed us to move to S. Paulo. The letter caught us by surprise, but obviously, we packed up and moved. In S. Paulo, I began to work in the largest religious day school, and within a few years, I became the principal.

FOUR CITIES

In the beginning, we made very few trips to New York, because the cost was prohibitive. Our salary was \$250 a month; there were times I didn't have enough money for Shabbos meals.

After we moved to S. Paulo, my wife made a special trip to the Rebbe. We had been married for almost three years, but hadn't yet been blessed with children, and a very prominent doctor in Rio told us that we were both infertile and suggested we look into adoption.

We decided that my wife would travel to New York to ask for the Rebbe's *bracha*.

Before she left, I asked the doctor, who spoke a fluent English, to write a letter to the Rebbe describing our situation. My wife gave the Rebbe the letter during *yechidus*, but the Rebbe didn't respond to it. He read it, folded it and put it away. He then turned to my wife and said that she should go to the Merkos office, and they would give her plane tickets to four cities to speak to groups of Jewish women about Yiddishkeit.

As per the Rebbe's instructions, my wife spoke in four cities in New England, and then she returned to Brazil. To our joy, our first child was born nine months later, and over the ensuing years we were blessed with four children, *ka"h*. We hoped to have more, but weren't successful. Our *bracha*, evidently, was vested in those four cities.

In this day school, there was a group of children in "Cheder." They learned *limudei kodesh* on a higher level than the rest of the school. Now, there were several parents who insisted that we teach Gemara in Yiddish only. This was obviously a challenge: the Gemara itself was difficult enough, and Yiddish was entirely foreign to them. I felt it would be counterproductive.

When I visited New York, I told the Rebbe about the situation, and the Rebbe said that we should use the language that brings the best results. When I returned to Brazil, I switched the language to Portuguese, and Baruch Hashem, we saw immediate results. There is a *lamdan* in Eretz Yisroel that still thanks me today, because the switch allowed him to finally enjoy the classes, and they were the impetus for his real growth in Yiddishkeit.

OUR BEIS CHABAD

Ten years after we moved to S. Paulo, we left the school and decided to open our Beis Chabad. When we opened our doors, I reported to Rabbi Hodakov over the phone, and the *bracha* we received was, "*Azkir al hatziyon*, I will mention it at the resting place [of the Frieddiker Rebbe]." Truthfully, I was a bit disappointed, so I decided to travel to New York for Shabbos for some additional inspiration.

During the *farbrengen* that Shabbos, the Rebbe called me over, and handed me a bottle of *mashke*, "*Far dem mosad, far di shtot, un far di medinah*—for the institution, the city and the country." (There were several instances where the Rebbe gave me a bottle of *mashke* on his own initiative. Usually, if you wanted to receive a bottle of *mashke* for some special occasion, you would bring a bottle to Mazkirus before Shabbos, and then you would get it back. I never did so,



RABBI ALPERN LEADS A BAR MITZVAH FOR 17 JEWS IN SURINAME, A COUNTRY IN SOUTH AMERICA, CIRCA 5744*. THE EVENT WAS BROADCAST ON NATIONAL TV.

yet I still received several bottles from the Rebbe.)

Mission completed, that very night, I returned to Brazil.

Baruch Hashem, our Beis Chabad quickly became very popular. Many young people would come to learn and to participate in our events. There were times that we would have a few hundred people at our Tuesday night class, and it reached a point that we had to break it down into groups, to be able to create more personal connections with the participants.

PRINTING TANYAS

On Chanukah 5744*, the Rebbe asked that Tanyas be printed in every single Jewish community throughout the world.⁸

Since it was summer vacation in Brazil, it was a perfect opportunity, so I organized two groups of *bochurim*, each accompanied by a rabbi and technician, to travel around Brazil in vans and print Tanyas.

In the beginning of Shevat, once the plan was in place, I traveled to New York to report to the Rebbe



RABBI ALPERN MAKES A L'CHAIM WITH A GROUP AT THE CHABAD HOUSE OF CURITIBA, BRAZIL.

about the good news. The same week I arrived, Rabbi Meni Wolff from Kehos in Eretz Yisroel also arrived with the first batch of Tanyas that had been printed in Eretz Yisroel.

That Shabbos (Shabbos Parshas Bo, 3 Shevat 5744*) the Rebbe held a surprise farbrengen, and explained that there were two reasons.

One: It was a week before Yud Shevat.

Two: The Tanyas.⁹

Towards the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe called me over to give me a bottle of *mashke*.

The Rebbe asked me how many Tanyas I planned to print.

I answered, "Eighty-three" (the Rebbe's *kapitel* that year).

The Rebbe responded, “*Oib du vest machen mer, vet keiner nisht faribel hoben*, if you do more, no one will be upset...”

Right away, I upped the number to 100, and the Rebbe gave me a broad smile.

On Sunday morning, Rabbi Groner approached me with a *maaneh* from the Rebbe:

”מצו”ב השתתפות מקרני כ”ק מו”ח אדמו”ר - בהוצאות ההו”ל - דכאו”א מהנ”ל. כשיוסיפו בעוד ישובי בני” יודיע, ויוסיפו בהנ”ל.”

“Attached is a participation from the funds of my father-in-law, the Rebbe—towards the cost of the printing—for each one [of the printings] mentioned before. Inform [us] when more Jewish communities are added, and more will be added to the above sum.”

Together with the *maaneh* came \$2,040. Twenty dollars per city, and another \$40 to participate in the cost of the printing presses.

We picked 100 small cities throughout Brazil. In each city, the *bochurim* would print the Tanya, study a portion with the local Jews, and then

send us the copies (100 per city) via the delivery company that we hired to bring them kosher food. When we received them in S. Paulo, we would have them bound.

These journeys were a golden opportunity to connect with Jews in those forsaken places. Many amazing stories happened through the trips. One group met an eligible young bachelor looking for a Jewish wife, and in another town they met a young Jewish woman looking for a husband. The *bochurim* connected the two of them, and together they established a Jewish home. In another city, they helped a woman write to the Rebbe for a *bracha* for children, and later she had twins. To my surprise, she named one baby Menachem Mendel in honor of the Rebbe, and the second one Shabsi, for me.

We finished the printings in 33 days. We then prepared a leather-bound copy of each Tanya, and placed them in a beautiful acrylic case with the map of Brazil on its cover prepared especially for the Rebbe.

NEW LOCATIONS

We arrived in New York early Thursday morning, 13 Adar I. As the Rebbe left *krias haTorah* that morning, I stood in *Gan Eden Hatachton* along with several other individuals who were involved in the printing, and we presented the Tanyas to the Rebbe.

The Rebbe was very pleased. He gave 100 crisp dollar bills towards the printing, and gave additional sums to the others as well. Before entering his room, the Rebbe asked if we would remain for Shabbos, and when we answered in the affirmative, he said that there would be a *farbrengen*.

We were obviously very excited. There indeed was a *farbrengen*, and the Rebbe dedicated a significant portion of a *sicha* during the *farbrengen* to our Tanyas, and conveyed the special *nachas ruach* that he had from it.¹⁰

Later that day, during the late *seudas Shabbos* at my brother-in-law’s home, someone mentioned that a long lost cousin of mine had been discovered living in Communist East Germany. Because I was hyped up about the Tanyas, I thought to myself that I should go visit him, and print a Tanya there as well.

I wrote to the Rebbe the next morning, and the Rebbe sent out a pocket-size Tanya that had been printed in Prague, which was also under Communist control. I was surprised not to receive a clear answer (which I understood later) but I saw this as a signal that my idea was approved, so I began working on the project.

I reached out to my cousin, and a short time later I traveled to visit him. After spending time together, he and his non-Jewish Communist wife took a liking to me, and when I broached the topic of the Tanyas, they were open to the idea. They agreed to arrange a printing—on the presses of the local



RABBI ALPERN POSES WITH THE 100 TANYAS PRINTED THROUGHOUT BRAZIL, WHICH WOULD BE PRESENTED TO THE REBBE.
INSET: THE PRINTING OF THE TANYAS.

GAMARA

S. Paulo had a Jewish city councilman named David Roysen. He was originally associated with Communists, but he met us and over a short period of time became very dedicated to Yiddishkeit. In addition to his own extensive Torah learning, he also became the “shliach” to city hall. He would put on tefillin with Jews who visited and so on, and he also encouraged all the councilmen to correspond with the Rebbe, and the Rebbe answered all of them.

My wife brought a large group of people to visit the Rebbe for Yud Shevat 5738*. At that time (following the events of Shemini Atzeres 5738*) instead of regular *yechidus*, the Rebbe would sit in *Gan Eden Hatachton*, and all the guests would pass by for a short *bracha*.

The Rebbe instructed that when the Brazilian group enters, both doors should be shut, and they would receive their own *yechidus*. During the *yechidus*, David Roysen handed the Rebbe a scroll which declared the Rebbe as the “Citizen of the Year” of S. Paulo. The Rebbe asked, “Does this mean that when I come there, I will be able to speak?”

One time, someone was appointed the president of the city council, and David Roysen helped him write to the Rebbe. The Rebbe’s response was always in English, but here the Rebbe used the Portuguese word for city council—*Câmara Municipal*. However, there seemed to be a typo. It said *Gâmara Municipal*.

David Roysen asked me what the change could mean, and I responded that it was a hint from the Rebbe that the city council should have a *shiur* in Gemara. The city council wasn’t located in a Jewish area, so the *shiur* was small, just 10-20 participants. The classes were taped by the city council and each week all the participants got a gift, a tape of the previous class. There was one teenager who did live in the area, and he loved to come and ask questions (to the consternation of the other participants).

I offered to arrange a private *shiur* with him in the Beis Chabad. Initially he wasn’t interested because he lived far away, but ultimately he agreed, and began studying with one of the shluchim. We saw that he was very serious about his learning, so we sent him to Morristown where he became a full-fledged *baal teshuvah*, and slowly brought his entire family along as well. After getting married, this youngster, now known as Rabbi Shlomo Levy, first settled in Brazil, then spent a short while in Uruguay, and today he is a very successful shliach in Argentina.

Several years ago, I invited a visitor from Uruguay for *seudas Shabbos* in my home. I told over the story at the table, and suddenly this young man grabbed me and began to dance! He said to me, “I want to call you Zaide.” All those at our table were brought to tears.

I didn’t understand what he wanted, but then he explained himself.

“During the few months that Rabbi Levy was in Uruguay, he brought me to Yiddishkeit, and I since call him ‘Father.’ If you brought him to Yiddishkeit, I will call you ‘Zaide.’”

All these beautiful results were a result from one word in the Rebbe’s letter, Gamara instead of Camara. *Der Rebbe’s a vort geit nisht farfalen.*



RABBI ALPERN IN A MEETING WITH BAALEI BATIM.

LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD

Communist Party, no less! However, it wouldn’t be possible for me to be present there, so I left them with instructions and material, and flew back to Brazil.

Ultimately, the plan didn’t work out. A short time after my visit, I

received a very mean letter from my cousin. I had left a collection of our Chabad magazines from Brazil with my cousin’s wife (who understood Portuguese) and she had read an article describing the suffering of the Jews behind the Iron Curtain.

As an ardent Communist, she was very offended, and they wrote back attacking me. Obviously, the printing was off the table.

Now I understood why the Rebbe didn’t write at all when he sent me the Tanya from Prague.

However, that Tanya that I received from the Rebbe had an impact in a different, unexpected way.

On the way back from East Germany, the plane had to land in a city two hours from S. Paulo. In all my 58 years in Brazil I never landed in this city. After landing, I looked around and saw a member of our shul who gave me a ride to S. Paulo.

As soon as I got into his car, he told me that he just met an Israeli expat living in S. Paulo, who was the architect of the Brazilian outpost in Antarctica. When I heard the word

Antarctica, one thing immediately flashed through my mind: we need to print a Tanya there. After all, I had just given the Rebbe 100 Tanyas from Brazil and I was just coming back from Germany where (I thought) the Tanya would be printed soon and now Antarctica simply falls onto my lap. It was unbelievable! The next day, Roy (the Israeli) came to see me and although he thought it was crazy, he agreed to do it.

Shipping a printing press to Antarctica was the most difficult hurdle. Space on the ship that went

there was always very tight, and only essential items were allowed on board. To overcome the issue, I had an idea. I gave the press as a present for the scientists of Antarctica, as a way to entertain themselves while sitting bored at the edge of the world. They would now be able to print a small newspaper with news from Brazil.

We shipped off the press and all the accessories on the next ship, and waited to hear from our engineer. Soon enough, at three o'clock one morning, I received a call.

"Rabbi, I have a kippah on, and the printing of the Tanya is ready. Let's study." We studied perek 5 together.

A few weeks later, the ship brought the Tanyas back to S. Paulo, where we had them bound, and then I sent one copy to the Rebbe with someone traveling for Purim.

After the Megillah reading here in Brazil, I received a phone call from Rabbi Groner. The Rebbe was very pleased with the Tanya, he said, but he also noted a mistake. On the *shaar blatt*, we had written Antarctica, but the Rebbe felt that it was imprecise, because 14 different countries had bases there. Instead, we were to write the name of the, "Brazilian Base of Antarctica."

Immediately, I replaced all the *shaar blatts* and sent an updated version to the Rebbe.

It still bothered me that I didn't print the Tanya in Berlin but, Baruch Hashem, I was later informed by the shliach there that he arranged a printing after the two Germanys were united. Still, something else disturbed me, that I hadn't managed to print it on a Communist press. But this was also solved when my son Yossi printed the Tanya on the Communist press in Havana, Cuba.

ANGELA

Once, a non-Jewish couple joined a class of mine, and afterwards asked

On the shaar blat, we had written Antarctica, but the Rebbe felt that it was imprecise...



THE BUILDING OF BEIT CHABAD CENTRAL, MODELED AFTER 770.



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDET CHABAD

to speak with me in private. They were a prominent family; the husband was a district attorney and his wife was a lawyer, and they had an only daughter named Angela who was 11 years old. They had recently discovered that their daughter had four tumors in her head. They traveled the world seeking out a cure, but there was nothing that worked. Then, they heard about the Rebbe, and they came to ask how to go about writing to him.

I wrote a letter to the Rebbe for them in English. In those days, I kept a supply of US stamps, and whenever I wanted to send an urgent letter, I would go to the airport and ask a Jewish traveler to drop the letter in a mailbox in New York, and the Rebbe would receive it a day later. That's what I did this time as well.

This took place in Adar. They came every week to our Tuesday night class, and, being that Brazilians naturally share their problems with everyone, it was only a short time before all the participants knew their story.

A month later, as I arrived before the class I noticed everyone standing around them with joyful faces. They related that they had just visited the doctor, and were told that the tumors had disappeared.

Some months later, I spent 10 days by the Rebbe for Yud-Beis Tammuz. After Mincha on my final day in New York, Rabbi Groner approached me with a note in the Rebbe's handwriting. The Rebbe wanted to know what had happened to Angela.

I realized that I had made a mistake. I had wanted to spare the Rebbe the time of opening and reading my letter, since he knew anyways without me telling him. But I was wrong, you have to always write good news to the Rebbe (today as well).

As I returned the Rebbe's note I turned it over and saw that it was a corner piece of my original letter sent five months earlier.

I immediately sat down in the Merkos office, and wrote the Rebbe the end of the story.

When I returned to Brazil, I phoned Angela's mother, and told her about the Rebbe's interest in her daughter. I noted that the Rebbe had asked me about it only on the last day of my 10-day trip, a fact which I found rather interesting.

The mother had an immediate explanation: "Yesterday was Angela's birthday. She turned twelve..."

This is a story I often tell youngsters when they ask me,

"Where is Lubavitch going? How will we survive without the Rebbe here physically?"

My answer is very simple. If the Rebbe could spend months thinking about a non-Jewish girl at the other end of the world, is it possible to think he didn't think of this eventuality?

It must all be part of the Master Plan.

May we soon merit to see the entire plan fulfilled *lemata me'asora tefochim* and all pieces will fall into place and all be clear and understood. **T**

1. For our biography of this Chossid, see "With Heart and Soul," *Derher* Adar I 5776.
2. See *Toras Menachem* vol. 2, p. 190.
3. See *Toras Menachem* vol. 1 p. 149.
4. *Hayom Yom*, 25 Cheshvan.
5. The Rebbe spoke about this at length on 20 Av 5719. See *Toras Menachem* vol. 26 pg. 156. *Lekutei Sichos* vol. 4 pg. 1121, vol. 9 pg. 143.
6. *Toras Menachem* vol. 22 pg. 229.
7. *Toras Menachem* vol. 31 pg. 160.
8. For a full overview of the Rebbe's Tanya campaign, see "Tanya to the World," *Derher* Adar II 5776.
9. *Hisvaaduyos* 5744 vol. 2 pg. 811.
10. *Toras Menachem* 5744 vol. 2 page 1096.



דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

לזכות
החיל בצבאות ה'
יעקב פישל שיח'
לרגל הולדתו ב' אייר ה'תשע"ט

Dedicated by his parents
Bruce and Rochele Backman

I'm Supposed To Be Here

AS TOLD BY RABBI YEHUDA TEICHTAL (BERLIN, GERMANY)

It was a few weeks before Pesach 5760* and I had set up a Chabad table at the WIZO (Women's International Zionist Organization) annual fair in Berlin. Since there were no *bochurim* available at the time to man the table, I stood there for close to 10 hours engaging Yidden and trying to encourage them to put on tefillin and to take greater interest in Pesach.

The first day was very demoralizing. No one accepted my offers for tefillin and in general the fair-goers were not receptive to our work. In fact, towards the end of the day an elderly gentleman approached me and said, "Young man, this is Berlin, not Brooklyn... We don't do tefillin tables

here, we don't need this nor do we want this. Please leave and don't come back!"

After an internal struggle, I summoned up the courage to return the next day and for 10 hours it seemed that the whole experience would be a repeat of the previous day.

At 7:50 p.m., 10 minutes before the fair closed, a man named Pedro walked up to me and agreed to put on tefillin. As we were chatting he said, "Rabbiner, I heard you do good things. What do you need? I want to help you."

I invited him to come over to the Chabad House the next day to discuss our activities.



The next morning Pedro was very clear. “Rabbiner, I want to sponsor your entire Pesach budget. I will cover every single one of your Pesach *sedarim*.”

Thus began a long and fruitful relationship with Pedro who became a tremendous partner of the Rebbe’s work in Berlin.

In 5764*, we started constructing a 10 million dollar Chabad Community Center. Two years into the project we ran out of funding and construction came to a halt.

At the same time Pedro was diagnosed with several large tumors and his prognosis was grim. The doctors advised him there was nothing to be done and that he should go home and enjoy his last few weeks of life.

Pedro was heartbroken and he approached me for guidance in how to best prepare himself for the end.

I understood the reason for his overwhelming sadness and in the face of his dejection I initially hesitated to be optimistic, but I immediately reminded myself that I am a shliach of the Rebbe and my mission is to bring Yidden to the Rebbe. I looked him straight in the eyes and said, “Pedro, we need to stop with all this negativity. Let’s take a flight to New York together and ask the Rebbe for a *bracha*.”

Although hesitant at first, he finally agreed and a few days later we arrived at JFK Airport and went directly to the Ohel. Pedro held his medical files with the doctors’ bleak prognosis and I held the final plans for the new building that was stalled due to lack of funding.

As we prepared to enter the Ohel I said to Pedro, “We can’t come to the Rebbe empty handed. You need to give the Rebbe something in return.”

“Rabbiner, I will tell the Rebbe that if I ever become healthy again—which I highly doubt—I will sponsor the building of the *mikveh*.”

We wrote our *panim*, davened at the Ohel and arrived back in Berlin the next morning. Pedro went straight to his doctors and I immediately called all the contractors to begin working on the construction site.

Three days later Pedro was shocked to hear that all the tumors had miraculously disappeared! He went to several hospitals to do more tests and every one of them confirmed that he was perfectly healthy!

Needless to say, Pedro kept his part of the deal and a year later we dedicated the beautiful *mikveh* in the Chabad Community Center of Berlin.

At the joyous inauguration of the Chabad Community Center on Chai Elul 5767*, an emotional Pedro shared the story with all the celebrants and concluded: “Yehuda always said, Hashem and the Rebbe will help! Well, I was not supposed to be here anymore and neither was this building supposed to be here right now. But dear friends, Hashem and the Rebbe helped.”

This episode had a major impact on our community and since then many Yidden from Berlin come to the Ohel on a regular basis knowing that we have a loving father who takes care of us. **1**

YOUR STORY

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



לזכות
הבחור הנעלה התמים
מנחם מענדל שיחי'
לרגל יום הולדתו העשרים ואחת
כ"ט סיון ה'תשע"ט
לחיזוק התקשרותו לכ"ק אדמו"ר,
ושיצליח בלימודו,
לימוד הנגלה ולימוד החסידות
נדפס ע"י הוריו
הרה"ת ר' שניאור זלמן
וזוגתו מרת דבורה שיחי
קפלן



KRIAS HATORAH

Elul



CHAI ELUL 5739, LEVI FREDIN VIA JEM 203245



ELUL 5739, LEVI FREDIN VIA JEM 191629

The Rebbe arrives to 770 at
approximately 10:00 am.

ELUL 5741, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 199976



The Rebbe enters the small *zal* upstairs in 770 to join the Shacharis minyan for *krias haTorah*. Upon entering, the Rebbe hands out coins for tzedakah to the children standing nearby.





25 ELUL 5742, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 205984

21 ELUL 5736, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 203296



28 ELUL 5739, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 191988



The Rebbe is called up for the third *aliyah*.
Reb Dovid Raskin is the *baal koreh*.





CHAI ELUL 5741, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 199907



The newly arrived guests from abroad, who have come to spend Tishrei with the Rebbe, recite *Hagomel* by the Torah, as the Rebbe looks on.



25 ELUL 5737, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 20939



25 ELUL 5741, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 200140

Following the *kriah*, the Rebbe remains in the shul until after the Torah is returned to the *aron kodesh*. During this time the Rebbe recites Tehillim.



27 ELUL 5740, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 187983



On 23 Elul the Rebbe would recite *kaddish* in observance of the *yahrtzeit* of his maternal grandfather, Harav Meir Shlomo Yanovsky.

On 25 Elul the Rebbe would say *kaddish* as well, although it is unknown for whom.

The Rebbe turns to watch as Reb Dovid Raskin blows the shofar.



25 ELUL 5737, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEW 20958

Derher**Letters**

A forum for readers to send their feedback, add to, or ask any questions about articles. Submit your letter to feedback@derher.org.

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



Rebbe's Last Ma'amar / Including Names

Dear Editors,

First of all, a big *yasher koach* for all the work that goes into producing this beautiful magazine. I look forward to receiving it each month, and when I read it, it puts me in another time and place. I often share tidbits from the Derher with my guests on Shabbos.

Your feature "Shavuos with Rabbosenu Nesienu" in the Sivan magazine [Issue 82 (159)], particularly the part about the surprise *maamar* on Erev Shavuos 5749*, took me back, as I remember standing there and having the momentary confusion of realizing that the Rebbe is saying a *maamar*! It inspired me to go back and watch the video of this event, and I noticed a few things. First, I was reminded that about halfway through the *maamar* the Rebbe switched to the tune of a *sicha*. Usually the Rebbe would deliver the *bracha* at the end of the *maamar* in the tune of a *sicha*, but in this case it was for a longer time. Also, the Rebbe did not appear to be holding a handkerchief, which was the *hanhagah* during a regular *maamar* but not during a *maamar k'ei sicha*. This may be the only such instance of a regular *maamar* without a handkerchief.

On another note, I wanted to suggest that when you publish pictures of the Rebbe, especially in the pictorial "Moments" section, that you also include the names of Chassidim that can be seen in the picture. This would give a feeling for

the *arum* of Chassidus, and would be especially beneficial for the younger generation who aren't familiar with many of the people in the photos.

Once again, keep up the great work.

Shmary Brownstein
Davis, CA

”

Rabbi Chaim Nachman Kowalsky

Dear Editors,

In issue 82 (Sivan 5779) you printed newly discovered photos of Motzei Shavuos 5723*, including of "Rabbi Moshe Kowalsky" bringing the Rebbe a tray of *bikkurim*.

I showed these images to my friend Dr. Yosef Kowalsky of Efrat, Israel and he made the following correction: The picture is NOT of Rabbi Moshe Kowalsky, but rather of his son Rabbi Chaim Nachman Kowalsky (as was noted in a previous letter to the editor). Yosef, son of Rabbi Sholom Ber, was a child in 5723* and attended that farbrengen with his grandfather and remembers it vividly.

Thanks for another masterpiece!

Chaim Shaul Bruk
Bozeman, Montana

”

Birchos Hashachar with Kavana

Dear Editors,

Regarding the article about “*Avodas Hatfilah in Dor Hashvi*” [Issue 81 (158), Iyar 5779], I came across an interesting *hora'ah* in the farbrengen of Shabbos Mevorchim Sivan, 27 Iyar 5751* (*bilti mugah*).

Often when we think about davening the way we're supposed to, we think about *Pesukei D'zimra*, *Krias Shema*, or *Shmoneh Esreh*, but here the Rebbe points out that it is also important to say *Birchos Hashachar* properly.

In the *sicha* the Rebbe says: “One should have added caution to say *Birchos Hashachar* slowly, etc. unlike those who as a result of saying *Krias Shema She'el Hamitah* with so much *arichus* the night before, wake up late in the morning and therefore have to rush in their recital of *Birchos Hashachar* in order to say *Krias Shema* on time, even though they are not strict about other things.”

In a farbrengen a few weeks later, on Shabbos Mevorchim Tammuz, 27 Sivan 5751*, the Rebbe again speaks about saying *Birchos Hashachar* properly: “Now is the time to encourage about having proper *kavana* when saying *Birchos Hashachar*, unlike those who are lenient because it is before davening.” The Rebbe goes on to explain why people mistakenly feel that they only need to be *makpid* on *kavana* when saying *Shema* but not when saying *Birchos Hashachar*.

These *sichos* add another small piece to the puzzle of the Rebbe's many *horaos* and guidance to davening the way a Yid is supposed to.

Mendy Greenberg
Wassila, Alaska

”

The “Vilder Minhag”

Dear Editors,

Thank you for your excellent article on how to handle the summer [“A Chassidisher Summer”, Issue 82 (159), Sivan 5779]. You mention that the Rebbe referred to the two-month vacation period in America as a ‘*vilder minhag*,’ (a wild/strange custom) but your readers might be interested to know more on how this came about:

In earlier times the summer heat was not just a matter of discomfort, but there was also deadly disease. In the fetid swamps of America's coastal cities, yellow fever and malaria raged. At first people were simply caught in it, but when the railroads came in the early 1800s they eagerly took the opportunity to escape the danger to the mountains for the hottest months.

The air there was cooler anyway, and soon an extended holiday culture developed, which continued even after the river-mouth swamps were cleared up. It continued to be a habit also after artificial cooling came in, simply because “everybody else” was doing it and the cities were not conducting business, and at length the origin of the habit was forgotten. Hence the “*vildkeit*” came to flourish on its own, until the Rebbe addressed the problem.

Yirmeyahu Bindman
Yerushalayim, Eretz Yisroel

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לרגל חתונתם ח"י מנחם אב ה'תשע"ט

נדפס ע"י הוריהם

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

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ליורפול, אנגליה

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

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



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



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

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

KAREN AND YAAKOV COHEN
POTOMAC, MARYLAND



לזכות
התמים שלום הלוי שיחי'
גורביץ'
לרגל הגיעו לעול מצוות
י"ב אלול ה'תשע"ט
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רבקה בת חנה בלומא,
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פרקש

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ת'נצ'ב'ה'
נדפס ע"י בנה
הרה"ת ר' יוסף בנימין
וזוגתו מרת חנה שרון
ומשפחתם שיחיו ציפל
שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר
במדינת יוטא

DEDICATED IN HONOR OF
MRS. YEHUDIS WOLVOVSKY

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

BY HER FRIENDS AND FAMILY

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

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

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

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

A Chassidisher Derher
Vaad Talmidei Hatmimim



770 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, New York 11213