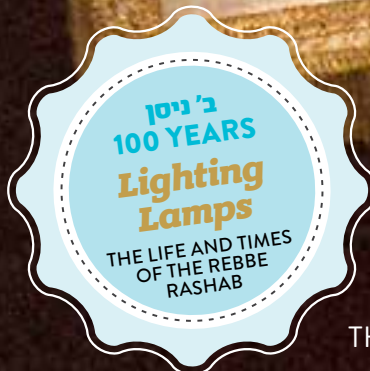


A Chassidisher **Derher**

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ואביטה
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כל דצריך ייתי ויפסח

THE REBBE'S PESACH CAMPAIGNS

Heart of the People

AN HISTORICAL JOURNEY ON
THE ROLE AND MEANING OF A REBBE



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On the Cover:

In honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan, our cover features a picture of the Rebbe distributing dollars on 13 Nissan 5749. Those uniquely joyous days are explored in the Leben Mitten Rebbe'n column in this magazine.

Cover Photo: CB Halberstam via JEM 308371

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הרה"ת ר' שלום וזוגתו מרת שרה
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אמונה מלכה, יעקב יהודה, ולאה שיחיו
אייזיקוביץ

בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן קי"ח שנה להולדת כ"ק אדמו"ר

Derher **Editorial**

On Yud-Aleph Nissan, the Rebbe's great light began illuminating our world.

The great light that brought the dawn of *dor hashvi'i*—the generation to usher in the *ohr hageula*, when the whole world will be illuminated forever.

In order to better understand the significance of the birthday of *our* Moshe Rabbeinu, let us take a look at what the Rebbe explains about the birth of the first Moshe Rabbeinu, on Zayin Adar:

Chazal say that Moshe Rabbeinu was born, “נתמלא הבית כולו”—The entire house was filled with light.”

Now, whose house are we talking about? Which house was Moshe Rabbeinu born into?

None other than the *nossi* of his time, Amram.

Imagine: Amram's house must have been a bastion of spiritual light. Amram had many *zechusim* of his own, in addition to being the father of Moshe Rabbeinu, whom we sometimes refer to as “Ben Amram!”

Nevertheless, when compared to the great light of Moshe Rabbeinu, Amram's home is considered to have been “absent” of light!

The Rebbe expounds how this great light emanated from the “*atzmiyus*,” the essence of Moshe Rabbeinu; even before any of the great deeds he accomplished throughout his lifetime.¹



As the Rebbe explained in his first *maamar*, Moshe Rabbeinu's innate quality was the fact that he was born the “*shvi'i*”—seven generations from Avraham Avinu. That's why

he was *zocheh* to bring the *Shechina* back to this world and begin the final step towards a *dira b'tachtonim*.

We, too, says the Rebbe, are the *dor hashvi'i*, seven generations from the Alter Rebbe. We are the ones who will complete the task and bring the *ikker Shechina* to this world with the coming of Moshiach.²

Hence, the light that the Rebbe brought to the world is unlike anything in previous times. Just like Moshe Rabbeinu's illumination deemed everything before him as "absence" of light, we find a similar sentiment about the Rebbe:

...[The Frierdiker Rebbe told me:] "For the dream I had today, you would need to give *mashke*. Give me a kiss, give *mashke*, and begin learning Chassidus..."

"...[In my dream,] my father [the Rebbe Rashab] told me: 'Why are you so broken-hearted? In your home, the light shines at night!'

"...Then I went into the library and I saw [you] learning from a *sefer*..."³

It was the Rebbe's great light that brought a true and wholesome happiness to the home of the Frierdiker Rebbe, the *nossi* of his time!



This Yud-Aleph Nissan, marking the Rebbe's birthday while celebrating 70 years of the Rebbe's *nesius* of *dor hashvi'i*, is a most opportune time to once again recognize how fortunate we are to have been born into this special era.

Like Moshe Rabbeinu, the "*goel rishon*," who was seventh in his line, we too play a critical role in the story of the world, ushering in the revelation of the "*goel acharon*" with the coming of Moshiach.

True, the Rebbe could have done it all on his own. But he gave us the *zechus* to have a part of this magnificent story as well. And for that we are eternally indebted.

May Hashem help us that with the auspicious *brachos* of this Yud-Aleph Nissan, we will indeed merit to finally complete our task once and for all, and bring the *geula ha'amitis v'hashleima*, now!

A Chassidisher Derher

ימי הפורים ה'תש"פ

שבעים שנה לנשיאות כ"ק אדמו"ר

1. Sichä 7 Adar 5745.

2. Maamar Bossi L'Gani 5711.

3. Reshimos, 12 Kislev 5693.

WHERE TO DRAW THE LINE?

When is passionate zealotry a positive trait, and when is kindness and compassion the better approach?

The Gemara in Zevachim tells a story of Rav Huna Bar Nosson who came before a king of Persia named Izgadar.

King Izgadar took Rav Huna's belt, which was encircling his body near his armpits, and repositioned it at his elbows. As he lowered the belt he said, "About you it is written, 'A kingdom of priests and a holy nation,' you must dress like the Kohanim in a beautiful manner. They don't gird themselves where they sweat; as stated, 'Do not gird yourselves in a place that sweats.'"

Rav Huna Bar Nosson later recounted his experience to two different people, Rav Ashi and Ameimar.

Rav Ashi repeated this story on occasion, but did not contribute any reflective significance.

Ameimar, on the other hand, saw biblical prophetic intensity in the story. "You are the fulfillment of [the Messianic prophecy], 'והיו מלכים אומנים' 'Kings will be your nursing fathers,' he told Rav Huna."

In his notes on Zohar, the Rebbe's father, Harav Levi Yitzchok, spends

close to four pages elucidating this story. He shows how each character had a distinct role, because of a unique mindset, indicated Kabbalistically in their name.

However he doesn't conclude with a take-away message, a lesson that could be applied to a person's life.

The Rebbe explained that his father had limited supplies of ink and paper. He hoped the reader would infer on his own a relevant application from the explanation he provided.

He starts with clarifying the principles that separated Rav Ashi and Ameimar, and how that evolved into opposing perceptions and responses.

PASSIONATE FEELINGS

The name Ashi comes from the word "*aish*." Fire, holy passion, strict and unbending. This impedes the opportunity for elevation and transformation. Rav Ashi reflected the divine *midah* of **Gevurah**.

Ameimar by contrast, contains the letters that spell "*mayim*," Water. Ameimar also means "*amirah*," To speak.

Amirah and *dibbur* both mean to speak, but *amirah* is soft and gentle speech as opposed to *dibbur* which is harsh speech. Water by nature always descends, like the characteristic of kindness which is to give to those that are lower and lacking. Ameimar reflected the divine *midah* of **Chesed**.

When Rav Ashi heard the story of Rav Huna Bar Nosson approaching a non-Jewish king, and the non-Jewish king lowering his belt and telling him how to behave, this made him uncomfortable. Better the king be consumed by the fire of *kedusha* than to involve himself in the affairs of someone of the caliber of Rav Huna Bar Nosson.

Ameimar, by contrast, discerned a submission of sorts in King Izgadar. The king sought to beautify Rav Huna Bar Nosson; that he should dress like the Kohanim, *lekavod u'letiferes*.

A LOOK OF BENEVOLENCE

The Rebbe derives a powerful lesson from his father's discussion:

There are two approaches one can have to himself, others, and the world at large.

One is the approach of embracing kindness, trying to see in oneself and others a connection with *kedusha*. The other approach is one of exclusiveness; to be passionate, but alone and secluded.



A LOOK AT THE TORAH OF
HARAV LEVI YITZCHOK
THROUGH THE REBBE'S SICHOS

Additionally, being kind, compassionate and generous, means that one is not particular to perform only according to the harsh letter of the law, but is instead willing to extend himself and to harness more of his own life into the service of Hashem. Conversely, the *gevurah* approach is to do Torah and mitzvos only at the level of absolute necessity.

Additionally, someone who lives with *gevurah* may indeed be very passionate about Torah and mitzvos, but that passion can cause him to be harsh on others. He can look at something that appears to be contradictory to Torah and mitzvos and that may result in him sweating from rage.

Someone who lives with *chesed* is always ready to see a depth of character that can be harnessed into a submission to *kedusha*.

Ameimar, embodying the attribute of kindness, saw in the depths of the three impure *klipos*, אַ הַמַּיִינִי, a word which in Aramaic means “belt,” but in Hebrew it means *emunah*.

To Ameimar, Izgadar moving the belt away from the place of physical heat and sweat was the very principle that he represented. The Persian king moved the “yardstick of faith” away from the fiery passion of *gevurah*. When this happens, there can be room for healing and

transformation, instead of banishment and destruction.

To Ameimar, Izgadar’s belt placement and comment was the symbolic act of *klipa* kneeling before *kedusha*, an act of service and submission embodying a micro-*Geulah* moment, that only a lens of kindness can appreciate. Rav Ashi, on the other hand, could not appreciate and discern *klipa’s* transformation, and so he said nothing.

UPPER AND LOWER BODY

The belt also has another function, that it is girded prior to prayer, because it severs the bond between the upper and lower body. The upper body is the location of the respiratory system, the heart, and the head. The lower body is the location of the digestive system.

Arabs, who wear a turban on their head, make no distinction between the higher and lower parts of their body. To them it is all the same. That is why they were not able to accept the Torah, which demands a person live with ‘mind over matter.’

[In *kedusha* there is also such a concept of a wrap around the head. The Kohen Gadol wore the *mitznefes*, which encircled his head. However the Kohen Gadol also had an *avnet*, which divided the upper and lower body. In fact, the way the Arabs do it today is

a result of the concept as it exists in *kedusha*.]

Unlike Arabs, a Jew divides his upper and lower body with a *gartel*. However, the purpose of the divide is not to banish the lower, but rather to refine it, to make sure it’s submissive to the higher.

This benevolent divide only functions this way when properly placed. If it is placed beneath the armpits it then turns into a firewall, which blocks out and wants nothing to do with the lower body.

There is a story of the Mittler Rebbe that illustrates all of the above:

He once heard someone other than his own father read the curses of the *tochacha*, and it caused him to become physically ill. When asked, “Don’t you hear this *parsha* every year?” He explained, “When father reads it is an entirely different thing.”

The same curses can come through like a zero tolerance policy, an uncompromising firewall, or they can come through as a dividing line between what is already good and what still needs to be elevated—like a “father” who sees the inherent good in everything and seeks only to demonstrate the division between what is clear goodness, and what still needs to be elevated and transformed. 1

(Adapted from Sichas Motzoei
Shabbos Parshas Tzav 5739)

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר
בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן

נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק
וזוגתו מרת ח' שצערא
ומשפחתם שיחין
שפאלטר



לעבן מיטן רבי'ן



NISSAN 5749, YOSSEI MELAMED VIA JEM 129062

טור 'לעבן מיטן רבי'ן' הוקדש לזכרון ולעילוי נשמת
ר' שמואל ב"ר יהושע אליהו ז"ל
ואשתו מרת שרה ע"ה בת ר' יקותיאל ומרת לאה הי"ד
ת"נ צ"ב ה'

ע"י בנם
ר' יקותיאל יהודה
וזוגתו מרת פעסל לאה ומשפחתם שיחיו
רוהר

A Freiliche Voch!

NISSAN 5749*



Of the many unique memories that Chassidim have of Yud-Aleph Nissan with the Rebbe, one that particularly stands out is from the year 5749. Starting with an incredible Shabbos Hagadol farbrengen to the distribution of a special *kuntres*, and then a surprise *maamar* two days later, it was a week of extraordinary *giluyim* from the Rebbe.

We bring you a brief description of these events, many of which are available to watch on video.

Special thanks to Rabbi Hirshel Raskin for sharing his *yoman* with us for the benefit of the readership.

זכות הרבים תלוי בו.

THE DAYS LEADING UP

On Monday, 5 Nissan, the Rebbe came out to the front steps of 770 for the annual drawing of *mayim shelanu*. Crowds of *bochurim* and *yungeleit* stood around the blocked off area and watched with great concentration as the Rebbe filled up a cup with water from a faucet (set up especially for this), and poured from it a number of times into a large barrel. While this was taking place, the Chassidim sang the niggun *Keli Ata* and on the way back inside the Rebbe encouraged the singing.

Two days later, on Wednesday, 7 Nissan, the Rebbe distributed matzah to representatives

from around the world to bring back with them to their respective communities. A large amount was sent with Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Aharonov to bring with him to Eretz Yisroel. Following the distribution, the Rebbe came out to see off the car with the matzos for Eretz Yisroel as it departed to JFK.

During the next few days, guests from across the globe could be seen arriving in 770 to spend Yud-Aleph Nissan with the Rebbe.

As has been the custom for many years now, the days leading up to Yud-Aleph Nissan saw a number of *niggunim* composed to the words of the Rebbe's new *kapitel*—פ"ח. Notices were hung up before Shabbos announcing that the *vaad* appointed to choose the *niggun* had made their selection. The *niggun* chosen included the *possuk* תבוא לפניך תפיליח. As has also been the custom for a number of years now, this is usually the first *niggun* sung each Shabbos at the Rebbe's farbrengen for the whole next year, until the coming Yud-Alef Nissan.

This year, Shabbos Hagadol fell out on Yud Nissan. Everyone waited eagerly for the Shabbos farbrengen where the Rebbe would possibly make mention of the new *kapitel*.

The Rebbe entered the shul at 1:30 p.m. and as he walked towards his farbrengen place, Chassidim sang the new *niggun*. The Rebbe made *kiddush* and then began to speak.

In the first part of the farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke about the first Shabbos Hagadol—Yud Nissan—the day on which the Yidden brought the sheep for the *korban Pesach* into their homes, and when the original miracle took place.

"There are a number of Yidden", the Rebbe began the next *sicha*, "who are concluding to say *kapitel* ז"ר and will begin saying *kapitel* פ"ח. These Yidden are connected to all *b'nei Yisrael* since we are commanded כל ישראל ואהבת לרעך כמוך and ערבים זה לזה."

The Rebbe then went on to speak about the new *kapitel*, learning a lesson from its opening words שיר מזמור לבני קורח.

Now, the only *niggun* from those newly composed that contained these words, was Reb Sholom Bruchshat's *niggun*, not the *niggun* that was chosen. Obviously, as soon as the *sicha* ended, the *bochurim* began energetically singing Reb Sholom's *niggun* and the Rebbe encouraged the singing with

great enthusiasm. This is a *niggun* still sung to this day.

Later on in the farbrengen, the Rebbe expounded on the deeper meaning of Yud-Aleph; how the number 11 alludes to the levels of *Elokus* that are beyond the natural, whereas 10 corresponds to the ten *sefiros* which make up the limited worlds.

The farbrengen was very unique and joyous and when the Rebbe left the shul after Mincha, Chassidim were on a high; Yud-Aleph Nissan had begun!



THE REBBE EXITS 770 TO DRAW MAYIM SHELANU, 5 NISSAN 5749.

Already a half hour before Maariv had even started, the assembled burst out into song, exhibiting tremendous *simcha* and an uncontainable excitement.

MOTZEI SHABBOS, YUD-ALEPH NISSAN

In changing from the usual practice of davening Maariv on Motzei Shabbos in the upstairs *zal*, Maariv was held in the shul downstairs in honor of the occasion.

As is the yearly custom on Yud-Aleph Nissan, one of the elder Chassidim *bentches* the Rebbe on behalf of everyone.

After Maariv and *havdalah* came the *bracha*.

The Rebbe descended from his platform¹ to the *shvil* where Reb Zalman Gurary stood, surrounded by a number of shluchim and elderly Chassidim. There was tremendous pushing, as everybody present wished to witness this awesome moment.

After *havdalah*, Reb Zalman blessed the Rebbe with *arichus yamim v'shanim tovos* and various other blessings.

The Rebbe's face was very serious as he gazed at Reb Zalman, but after the *bracha* the Rebbe smiled.

The Rebbe motioned that they should move away the microphone², and then he began to speak.

He spoke for a few minutes, focusing again on the words *שיר מזמור* from the new *kapitel*.

Following the short *sicha*, Harav Yitzchok Hendel of Montreal, a Kohen, *bentched* the Rebbe with *birchas Kohanim*. The Rebbe responded, "Amen! A *freileche voch* (It should be a joyful week)."

The assembled broke out into song, joyously singing the new *niggun* with the words that the Rebbe spoke so much about. Looking around towards the *bochurim*, the Rebbe waved his hand in great encouragement. The Rebbe continued to wave his hand with strong motions as he walked through the shul, and the crowd broke out into spontaneous dancing and singing. This unusual rejoicing continued for about half an hour, and one could sense the real heartfelt joy that was shared by all; a truly heart-warming scene.

The Rebbe went upstairs using the staircase and continued to encourage the singing all the way in to *Gan Eden Hatachton*.

Dr. Weiss spent 45 minutes in the Rebbe's room.

Tonight in 770, a *siyum haRambam* took place marking the conclusion of Sefer Haflaah and the

beginning of Sefer Zeraim in Rambam³, eventually turning into a large Chassidische farbrengen in celebration of the Rebbe's birthday. The farbrengen lasted until the morning.

All in all, it was an extremely uplifting evening with a shared sense of jubilation by all; a very *yomtov'dike* atmosphere indeed.

SUNDAY, YOM HABAHIR - YUD-ALEPH NISSAN

The Rebbe greatly encouraged the new *niggun* on his way to and from Shacharis today as well as when he ascended the *bima*.

Something unusual occurred at the end of Shacharis.

The Rebbe finished *Aleinu* ahead of the *minyan* and started to say Tehillim even before the *chazzan* reached *kaddish d'rabbanan* (before *Aleinu*). Also, usually the Rebbe recites just that day's *shiur* of Tehillim with the *minyan*, but today, the Rebbe said the *kapitlach* of פ"ח and פ"ט⁴! (It seemed that the Rebbe said each one twice.)

As the *seder* is every Sunday, the Rebbe stood near *Gan Eden Hatachton* and distributed dollars for tzedakah. This took place soon after Shacharis. This time however, it went on for an unusually lengthy amount of time. This may be due to the many guests that came to be with the Rebbe on this special day, or maybe it is because of the *chassidische hergesh* that a lot of Chassidim and *bochurim* shared: That being the auspicious time that it is—the Rebbe's birthday, and also a few days before Pesach [even though they would generally refrain from going on the line, to avoid taking the Rebbe's time as much as possible. –Ed.]—it would be unthinkable to pass up the opportunity to walk by the Rebbe and merit a "*bracha v'hatzlacha*" or "*chag haPesach kosher v'sameach*"...

In any event, the distribution that began at around 11:30 a.m. did not finish before 3:10 p.m.

After the distribution finished, the Rebbe went to the *mikveh* and then visited the Ohel. When the Rebbe came back and entered the shul downstairs for Mincha-Maariv, the whole room which was packed from wall to wall with people, burst out in unrestrained joy, singing the new *niggun* composed for the Rebbe's birthday. When the Rebbe reached his place, the singing stopped and Mincha commenced, followed by Maariv.



IMAGES FROM SUNDAY DOLLARS, YUD ALEPH NISSAN 5749.

The crowd suspected that the Rebbe might say a *sicha*, the microphone even being set up just in case. But in fact, something quite different occurred; a special surprise was in store for the Chassidim.

At the conclusion of Mincha, the Rebbe turned to Rabbi Groner and told him something.

Pandemonium erupted as Rabbi Groner was seen rushing upstairs.

He returned with a large box containing *kuntreisim*—the Rebbe was going to distribute Kuntres Ahavas Yisroel.

As the Rebbe closed his *siddur* at the end of Maariv, he turned to Rabbi Groner and informed him that he will be giving out dollars in addition to the *kuntres*. Additionally, the distribution would be only for those who are bar mitzvah and older.

This *kuntres* was originally printed at the Rebbe's behest in 5737* in connection with the Rebbe's initiative of עשה לך רב. The Rebbe was very involved in the making of this *kuntres*—a collection of *pesukim*, *maamarei chazal* and quotes from the teachings of the Baal Shem Tov, the Mezritcher Maggid and all the Rebbeim relating to the mitzvah of *ahavas Yisroel*. The *kuntres* also contains the entry for "Ahavas Yisroel" from Sefer Ha'erchim.

The *kuntreisim* that were brought down had been sitting in the Rebbe's room for the last 12 years⁵. At the time, the Rebbe had distributed Kuntres Ahavas Yisroel exclusively for *mashpi'im*, adding his own initials on the first page for each person he gave it to.

As there was only one box, the *kuntreisim* ran out pretty quickly. Immediately, another case of *kuntreisim*, though not yet bound, was rushed over from Kehos.

The Rebbe handed out a *kuntres* together with a dollar to all those passing by.

Although they usually receive at the end, tonight, the Rebbe gave *kuntreisim* to Rabbis Groner and Klein and the other helpers at the start of the *chalukah*.

When the second box ran out, the Rebbe began handing out three dollars to each person.

Although many of the guests were leaving back home for Pesach, the special events of this week were far from over...

TUESDAY, YUD-GIMMEL NISSAN, LEIL EREV PESACH

The Rebbe again visited the Ohel; this time in connection with the *yahrtzeit* of the Tzemach Tzedek. Upon returning, the Rebbe davened Mincha, and then went upstairs to his room to arrange the selling of the *chametz*. Rabbi Piekarski, *rosh yeshiva* in 770, entered the Rebbe's room;



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DOLLARS IN THE MAIN SHUL AT 770, 13 NISSAN 5749.

he was the rav that the Rebbe would use for the transaction.

A little while after, the Rebbe came downstairs for Maariv after which an unforgettable event occurred; an event that was cause for a great *hisorerus* and *simcha* amongst Chassidim the world over.

It has been three-and-a-half years now since the Rebbe said a regular *maamar*. The last time a *maamar* was said by the Rebbe in the traditional tune of a *maamar* and with the *niggun hachana* beforehand, was on Shabbos Bereishis 5746*! Since then, the Rebbe has only been saying *maamarim ke'ein sichos* (a *maamar*, but in the tune of a *sicha*) and at this point, it has already been about a year since the Rebbe has said any *maamarim* at all!

As Mishnayos at the end of Maariv were being recited by the *chazzan*, the Rebbe walked over to the second *shtender* which had been set up for a *sicha*. The Rebbe's hand was wrapped with a handkerchief which he covered with his siddur. The Rebbe instructed Rabbi Groner, "*zogen dem niggun*"—to start the preparatory *niggun* customarily sung before saying the *maamar*.

When the Chassidim began realizing what was happening, the alarm was sounded throughout the whole neighborhood.

The way it worked in Crown Heights was that an alarm system loud enough to be heard in the whole neighborhood was set up. Besides for letting people know when Shabbos and Yom Tov started, it was also used to notify people about certain events in 770. When the alarm was sounded, it was a sign that the Rebbe was saying a *sicha* or something else special was happening. Immediately, people would run to 770.

As the *niggun* for the *maamar* began, the alarm was sounded three times—a highly unusual occurrence—and obviously, whoever was not in 770 came running as fast as they could.

As the *niggun* was being sung, the Rebbe's eyes were closed and his face exhibited great *dveikus*. He then began "*מצה זו שאנו אוכלים*", a *maamar* which lasted for just under ten minutes. All through the *maamar*—in which the Rebbe spoke about the difference between the matzah of *yetzias Mitzrayim* and the matzah that we eat now after *matan Torah*—the Rebbe's eyes remained closed. The whole scene was very *himel'dik*.



THE REBBE EXITS THE ELEVATOR TO THE LOBBY OF 770, RETURNING FROM A TEFILA TO HIS ROOM.

The *olam* was shocked, and understandably, this was an extremely delightful and refreshing surprise for Chassidim everywhere.

In general, after such an instance—where the Rebbe would say a *sicha* after a *tefilla*—he would then distribute dollars to everyone present. The *bochurim* would usually stand in their places and watch the Rebbe, but this time, unable to contain their tremendous joy, as soon as the *maamar* ended, the *bochurim* spontaneously gathered in the center of the shul and started to dance while the Rebbe gave out dollars to the men, women and children who passed by.

Baruch Hashem, we merited that the Rebbe edited the *maamar* for publication already before Yom Tov, and given the outpouring of incredible joy and excitement displayed by all, study sessions, both public and personal, were immediately set up to learn and relearn the *maamar*; many even studying it well enough to be able to *chazzer* the *maamar ba'al peh*. ①

1. At first they stood on the Rebbe's *bima* but the Rebbe signaled that the *bracha* should take place below.
2. Although a public *havdalah* was recited in shul after Maariv, the Rebbe would make his own *havdalah* in his room.
3. The Rebbe spoke about the siyum at the farbrengen earlier in the day.
4. The past year's kapitel.
5. It is interesting to note that recently, the Rebbe has been sending many boxes out of his room.



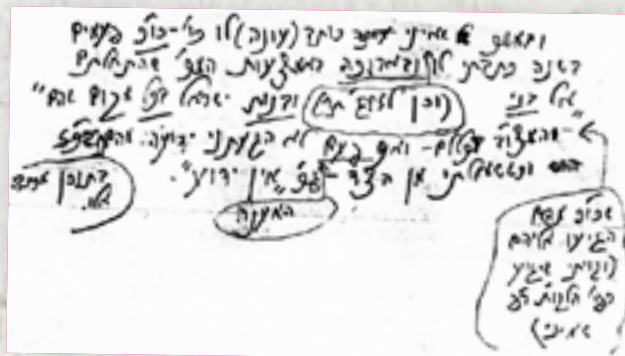
כתב יד
קודש

An Affective Response

The following is a handwritten response from the Rebbe to an individual who complained that the Rebbe wasn't responding to his letters in writing. The Rebbe replied with a strongly worded explanation as to how he actually did respond.

Presented in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan, the date on which the Rebbe sent out many of the *michtavim klali'im* to all the Yidden:

לעילוי נשמת
יהודית ב"ר שלום ע"ה
פוזנר
נלב"ע י"ג אלול ה'תשע"ט
ת"נצ"ב'ה'
ולעילוי נשמת
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל
בן ר' זאב ע"ה בוימגארטען
נלב"ע ג' אדר ראשון ה'תשע"ט
ת"נצ"ב'ה'
נדפס ע"י משפחתם
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל
וזוגתו מרת חנה ומשפחתם שיחיו
פוזנר



Regarding what you write, that I don't write ([i.e.] respond in writing) to you, etc.:

[In fact] I did write to you (and to your wife *tichyeh*) **many** times during the year, at **length**, through my letters beginning with the words "To the **sons** and **daughters** of Israel **wherever** they may be." Many of these letters reached you (and I hope they will also "reach" you in the sense that they "touch" and affect you, as explained in Likkutei Torah, beginning of Parshas Shemini). The [letter] attached herein is one of them.

Not **once** did I receive word from you about the content of these letters [i.e. that you are carrying out the instructions given in the *michtavim klali'im* and applying its lessons in your lives –Ed]. When I asked others about this—the response I got was also "we don't know." [I.e. that others are also not aware of you taking initiative in these matters. –Ed.]²

ובמש"כ [=ובמה שכתב]
שיאיני כותב (עונה) לו כו' -
כו"כ פעמים בשנה כתבתי
לו (וכן לזוג' תחי') ובארוכה
באמצעות המכ' שהתחלתם
אל בני ובנות ישראל בכל
מקום שהם שכו"כ מהם
הגיעו אליהם (וקויתי שיגיע
כפי' הלקו"ת ר"פ שמיני)
והמצו"ב בכללם - ואף
פעם לא הגעתני ידיעה
מהם בתוכן מכתבי אלו.
וכששאלתי מן הצד -
המענה גם כן "אין ידוע".

1. For an extensive overview on the subject, see Derher, Elul 5778.

2. Since we do not have the original letter of the writer, this translation is only speculation. There may be other ways of understanding what the Rebbe means with these lines.

כל דצריך ייתי ויפסח

The Rebbe's campaign to ensure every Jew celebrates Pesach properly

Feeding Emunah

Long before the Rebbe launched the *mitvzoim*, distributing *shmurah* matzah to all Yidden before Pesach was an integral element of the mission of Lubavitcher Chassidim in *dor hashvi'i*. On Shabbos Parshas Hachodesh 5714* the Rebbe publicly announced the importance of every Yid receiving *shmurah* matzah for the *sedarim*¹:

*Years ago it was common practice for the rav to send a set of shmurah matzos to their congregants for Pesach. Either six matzos for both sedarim or at least two matzos (for the middle matzah) used for the kazayis matzah at each seder.*²

Although the purpose of this practice was to provide the rav an opportunity for an income, there was a strong advantage to this. Since there are so many halachos and hiddurim involved with preparing shmurah matzah—

beyond the capacity of most laypeople to keep track of—the rabbonim handled these preparations and thus ensured that all the Yidden in town were observing this mitzvah properly.

For some reason this practice has ceased in most communities... I request—and if I were able to I would instruct—to restore this practice that rabbonim should send shmurah matzah to their congregants.

This practice is not limited to the rav. Anyone who is in a position of influence—a rav, shochet, a reverend or a shamash—if there is even one Yid that would use shmurah matzah if you send it to him, then be sure to send it to him.

Specifically round, specifically handbaked and specifically “shmurah” matzah.

Hundreds and thousands of Yidden will be influenced to observe the mitzvah of eating matzah properly and with great

hiddur. In places where there are public sedarim (such as in hotels and the like) the organizers should ensure there is shmurah matzah there.

The Rebbe went on to talk about the tremendous *brachos* that this campaign will bring:

The Zohar teaches us that matzah is מיכלא דמחימנותא and מיכלא דאסוותא—the bread of healing and the bread of faith. Emunah is the foundation of all the mitzvos and of Jewish life in general. Ensuring that all Yidden observe this mitzvah properly will infuse more chayus into their Torah study and mitzvah observance throughout the year. It will be a healthy year in spiritual matters, which will automatically cause it to be a healthy year in all physical matters as well.

This instruction became an official Chabad *minhag* as was later included in the *Sefer Haminhagim*.

לזכות
החיילת בצבאות ה'
חי' מושקא תחי'
לרגל יום הולדתה כ"ט טבת
נדפס ע"י הוריה
הרה"ת ר' אבא וזוגתו מרת רחל שיחיו
נפרסטק



UNITED STATES ARMY CHAPLAIN
YAAKOV GOLDSTEIN RECEIVES A
SHIPMENT OF MATZOS FOR THE
AMERICAN SOLDIERS IN IRAQ DURING
THE GULF WAR, 27 ADAR 5751.

LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 277183

That year the Rebbe sent Mr. Zalman Shazar a letter in honor of Pesach and enclosed three matzos. *"It is our custom to send shmurah matzah to friends and relatives. I am therefore enclosing three shmurah matzos, since you live in Eretz Yisroel and do not have the obligation of the second day of Yom Tov [and only need matzos for one seder -Ed]."*³

When Reb Dovid Helman, the *gabbai* of the Lubavitcher shul in Tel Aviv, notified the Rebbe that he had distributed the matzah he received from the Rebbe to many others, the Rebbe responded *"If only I would have known beforehand, I would have sent you much more matzah."*⁴

The above mentioned *sicha* was edited by the Rebbe and in following years the Rebbe included it in letters⁵ to Chassidim throughout the world, encouraging them to do everything in



PACKING MATZOS FOR MIVTZOIM DISTRIBUTION, KFAR CHABAD 2 NISSAN 5744.

LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 303453

Gift at Yud-Alef Nissan Farbrengen

In 5712* Reb Zalman Abelsky of Kfar Chabad arranged a farbrengen in honor of Yud-Alef Nissan. In addition to giving permission to host such a farbrengen, the Rebbe requested he distribute shmurah matzah to all the participants.

their power to bring shmurah matzah to as many Yidden as possible.

In Eretz Yisroel, Tzeirei Agudas Chabad (“Tzach”) took the lead in bringing this campaign to the furthest reaches of the country, including to soldiers and political leaders, while teachers of the Reshet Oholei Yosef Yitzchok schools distributed matzah to their students’ families every year.⁶

In 5721*, Reb Yitzchok Gansburg initiated a campaign called “Matzah For Every Student.” Thousands of school children would visit the matzah bakery in Kfar Chabad every year to experience the process of matzah baking and they would receive a matzah to take home to their families.

Often, especially in the early years, the Rebbe paid high percentages of the budget for these mass distributions of shmurah matzah. In fact, when the Israeli government once offered financial assistance for the matzah distribution the Rebbe rejected it.⁷

“This is a project unique to Chabad,” the Rebbe wrote to Reb Aharon Friedman of Kfar Chabad.⁸ “It affords the opportunity to reach people in a pleasant manner, and to share some words of inspiration as well.”

In many *igros* following Pesach there are references to the matzah campaigns; expressions of pleasure when it was done properly and subtle rebuke when more could have been done. Even those who were involved in selling shmurah matzah were instructed to distribute matzah to those who would not come to buy it on their own.⁹

In addition to ensuring that Yidden receive the matzos, the Rebbe wanted Chassidim to explain the importance of the shmurah matzah and its unique message of *emunah* and *refuah* to the recipients.¹⁰

Presentation is also important and in 5727*, when the Rebbe saw the boxes that were used in Montreal to pack the matzos for distribution, the Rebbe commented that everyone should learn from Montreal how Mivtza Matzah ought to be done.¹¹

Every Single Jew

Maximizing one’s potential in distributing matzah to their community and acquaintances is not enough.

“As long as there is one single Jew, man or woman, child or adult, in your surroundings—and the meaning of “your surroundings” is the entire world (!)—

who does not have shmurah matzah, or has shmurah matzah but is unaware of its importance and message, there is no doubt that you must do something about it.”¹³

If there is a Jew in the world that is unaware that he or she is in need of shmurah matzah for Pesach, then it is our job to make them aware of this need and provide them with their Pesach needs.¹⁴ It is not enough to give them matzah, we must also inspire them to the point that they will go and search out another Jew and ensure that they have shmurah matzah as well.¹⁵

Distributing shmurah matzah has a transformative effect¹⁶ on the distributors and causes that the unique power of matzah to strengthen *emunah* and health should be realized in both the givers and receivers, that they should all have a kosher and *freilichen* Pesach, which will impact the entire year.¹⁷

Mivtza Pesach

Over the years, the Rebbe’s *shturem* about distributing matzah evolved into an all encompassing campaign to provide Yidden with all of their Pesach needs: To ensure every Yid sells their *chametz*, participates in a *seder*, has access to kosher for Pesach food for all



Misplaced Humility

“I was pleased to read that you participated in the shmurah matzah distribution. I was surprised, however, that almost no one was aware that the distribution happened as a result of your influence. This is misplaced humility. Certainly if everyone would know that this was your idea they would be more receptive to your efforts in influencing them to learn Chassidus and living according to its guidance and customs.”¹²

eight days, and has the opportunity to learn the *halachos* of Pesach through printed material and classes. This was all included under the umbrella category of Mivtza Pesach.

In the *michtav klali* of Yud-Alef Nissan 5717*, the Rebbe explains that although the Haggadah gears the experience of *zman cheiruseinu* to all four types of Yidden participating in the *seder*—including the rebellious *rasha*—the fact is that all of them are aware of the *seder* and care to participate. Unfortunately today there is a fifth category: the Jew who is unaware that there is a Yom Tov of Pesach or does not care to participate at all. It is our duty to reach out to “*der finfter zun*—the fifth son” to ensure that this category of Yidden observes Pesach as well. This became a central theme of Mivtza Pesach throughout the years. (See full letter published herein.)

Starting from Purim the Rebbe would dedicate time at the farbrengens to remind and inspire Chassidim to get involved with Mivtza Pesach in every way possible.

On Thursday evening, 28 Adar 5737*, after returning from the Ohel, the Rebbe held a surprise farbrengen

(which started with a *maamar*) with the main purpose of inspiring everyone to increase their efforts in Mivtza Pesach. “*This farbrengen is being held on a weeknight so that the message can be transmitted live around the world instantaneously and have the desired effect.*”¹⁹

It is interesting to note that in the month of Nissan 5740* the Rebbe launched a massive campaign to

involve children in the preparations for Pesach. This evolved into the Matzah Ball contest which served as the forerunner to the establishment of Tzivos Hashem six months later.²⁰ It all stemmed from Mivtza Pesach.

Several years later in 5747*, the Rebbe started a campaign that every child should have their own illustrated Haggadah to use at the *seder* to encourage them to participate and

Maos Chittim

It is an age-old custom to give money to the poor to help provide for their Pesach needs. Every year, the Rebbe would send various amounts of money to needy families in Crown Heights and other communities.

This was not limited to Pesach. Before Tishrei and Nissan each year, the Rebbe would look through the list of names prepared by the *mazkir*, Rabbi Shalom Mendel Simpson, and add various families. The Rebbe would indicate the amount and checks would be sent out.

One year, when no changes had been made to the list in a while, the Rebbe wrote:

“האומנם במשך כל הזמן לא ניתוסף אף אחד?!”

Is it possible that not one name was added this whole time?¹⁸

At the farbrengens from Purim through Pesach, the Rebbe would constantly speak of the importance of giving *maos chittim*:

“*This is the most appropriate preparation for the seder... All Yidden are responsible for each other, physically and spiritually. One cannot be truly free and behave in a manner of freedom during Pesach, especially at the seder, unless he or she does everything in their power that every other Jew should also be free from all worry.*”

On Shabbos Parshas Ki Sisa 5740* the Rebbe spoke with disappointment at the fact that nothing had been done about *maos chittim* in the days since Purim.

“*Why are you waiting for instructions? On Har Sinai Hashem told Moshe Rabbeinu that thirty days before the Yom Tov one needs to be involved in hilchos hachag, and Moshe Rabbeinu passed it onto us. So why are you asking questions?*”

“*How do I know that nothing was done yet in the realm of maos chittim? Behashgacha pratis, every year on Shushan Purim I receive a list of the first to donate to maos chittim, and this year I did not receive a list...*”



STUDENTS FROM THROUGHOUT ERETZ YISROEL VISIT THE KFAR CHABAD MATZAH BAKERY AND RECEIVE THEIR OWN GIFT OF SHMURA MATZAH, 5722.

Mechiras Chametz

In a letter to Rabbi Azriel Chaikin, then a shliach in Denmark, the Rebbe wrote:

“The idea of distributing a letter about Pesach is appropriate, and although you do not mention it, surely you will enclose a brief *mechiras chametz* contract...”²³

“Since they are unable to arrange their Pesach needs for themselves, one must be sure that when he sits down to the *seder* and says the *חזן* *לחמא עניא* inviting all the poor to partake of his *seder*, he can rest assured that he took care of the prisoners and bedridden as well. To do so requires early work to secure all the necessary permits...

“And if they wonder how they can relate to the celebration of *חירותנו* when they find themselves in such a unique imprisonment, we should remind them that Yidden have been celebrating freedom so many years while they are still imprisoned in *galus*.

“Furthermore, through celebrating the freedom of Pesach properly, this will draw down much blessing that the healing procedures and medicines should work swiftly—for those who are bedridden in hospitals—and that advocacy on behalf of the prisoners should bear fruit much quicker, and they will be released earlier.”²⁴

Public Sedarim

On 27 Adar II 5746* both chief rabbis of Eretz Yisroel, Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi Avrohom Hakohen Schapiro and Sefardic Chief Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu, had a *yechidus* with the Rebbe for close to three hours.

Among the many topics that were discussed the Rebbe suggested that the Israeli rabbinate undertake a project to arrange public *sedarim* in every city and town in Eretz Yisroel.

“I would like to make a practical suggestion in connection with Pesach. It would be appropriate to make an effort that all four types of sons participate in the seder, even those who throughout the year are far from Yiddishkeit, Torah and mitzvos.

“The solution for this is that the rabbonim in every city, village and neighborhood should arrange public



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD

CHILDREN JOIN THE EFFORT IN THE MERKOS CONFERENCE ROOM TO PREPARE MATZAH PACKETS FOR THE AMERICAN SOLDIERS IN IRAQ DURING THE GULF WAR, 5751.

get more involved in the *seder*. At the time, Tzach in Eretz Yisroel printed a special Haggadah for children. The Rebbe encouraged this greatly, guiding them in various technical details involved in the publication.²¹

During the years 5732* and 5733* hundreds of Yidden emigrated to Eretz Yisroel from the Soviet Union. Before Pesach 5733* Rabbi Hodakov instructed the Chassidim in Eretz Yisroel to ensure that these Yidden had access to new utensils for Pesach and that the Rebbe would cover the costs.²²

Rabbi Mordechai Silberberg, shliach to London, Ontario, relates: It was a few days before Pesach, in the late 5720s* or early 5730s*, and Dr. Yitzchak Block, who was a professor at the local university, was preparing to travel to New York for Yom Tov with his family. Suddenly Rabbi Hodakov

called him and asked, “Are you coming to New York?”

“Yes, *im yirtze Hashem*.”

“What will the students eat on Pesach?”

Dr. Block took the cue and said that he will arrange meals for the students in London.

He went to one of the old Jewish fraternities and made a deal with them: “I will give you guys a brand new oven; all I need you to do is put in these pre-cooked trays of kosher for Pesach food each night for students to eat.” They agreed to this arrangement.

Redemption in Prison

For those unable to prepare a kosher and *freilichen* Pesach on their own, we have a duty to help them experience a proper Pesach as well.

Yidden incarcerated in prison or bedridden in hospitals and old age homes must not be forgotten.

sedarim in every place and invite all the residents, especially the children, to join.

“As far as I know the situation here in New York, for example, there are tens of thousands of Jewish children who will not attend a seder. What’s more, they do not even know that there is such a thing as a seder! From the information I receive about Eretz Yisroel, last year there were many children that for some reason did not attend a seder.

“[Just arranging public sedarim for those who need it] does not completely solve the problem,” the Rebbe continued. “Many will be embarrassed to admit they do not have where to go for the seder or to come to a public seder thus making it known that they didn’t have a seder at home.

“The solution perhaps is that the local rav should make his seder together with his children and students in a public space and invite all the locals to participate in his seder—all who need a seder and even those who are simply coming out of curiosity. My hope is that the publicity and festiveness of these public sedarim will inspire even very secular villages and kibbutzim that do not have rabbis to arrange such sedarim next year as well.

“Emphasize that there is no expectations of the participants; no payment and no obligation to stay through the end. Everyone can come and leave as they wish.

“I am willing to foot the bill of these sedarim...” The Rebbe smiled and said, “There is a saying that a Yid is a businessman. I am also looking to turn a profit from this whole seder business after Pesach. If these public sedarim will bring new faces through the door who will get to know the rav and as a result they will grow in their Torah and mitzvos after Pesach—this will be the greatest gain.”²⁵

For many years Chassidim had been arranging public sedarim for different demographics of Yidden, especially recent émigrés from the



20 ADAR II 5749, SAM SHLAGBAUM VIA JEM 144819

Advertise

Reb Shaul Spigler, a lawyer and influential member of the Chabad community in Melbourne, Australia spearheaded an initiative to make public sedarim in the Far East.

On 20 Adar 5749*, the Spigler family was present at the Machane Yisrael Development Fund *yechidus*, and when it was their turn to speak with the Rebbe, Reb Shaul shared that he was arranging for two *bochurim* to run a public seder in Tokyo, Japan.

“The main thing is to advertise early on that there will be a public seder [in Tokyo],” the Rebbe said. “There are visitors who will come on Erev Pesach or a day before that and it is important they should know that there is a place where they can have a kosher *seudah* and a kosher Pesach.”

Model Seders

In a letter to Rabbi Dovid Chanzin, the director of the network of Chabad schools in Eretz Yisroel, *Reshet Oholei Yosef Yitzchok*, the Rebbe writes:

“In this country (America) it is customary these past few years [to do model seders] and through this they have succeeded in showing the students how to run a seder, set up a *ka'ara*, etc. Thus these *halachos* were ingrained in their memories. Although with regard to the students in the *Reshet* there are certainly different *minhagim*, which one should obviously be careful not to impede upon... nevertheless it is worthwhile to figure out [a way to do this] without compromising the various *minhagaim*.

Soviet Union and Israeli expats all over the world.

Rabbi Hersh Rabiski was a shliach in Ladispoli, Italy together with Rabbi Sholom Ber Friedman, servicing the thousands Jewish Soviet immigrants transitioning to Eretz Yisroel and America through there. One year, as they prepared sedarim for close to 5,000 Yidden, Rabbi Rabiski suggested charging 1 lira per participant to help cover the enormous costs of the sederim. The Rebbe rejected the idea

and wanted the sedarim to be open to all, free of charge.²⁶

The Rebbe also instructed that the public sedarim should be available on both nights of Yom Tov as well.²⁷

Mivtza Pesach Never Ends

Mivtza Pesach does not end on Erev Pesach or after Pesach. As the well known saying goes, we do not recite the traditional פסח סידור at the conclusion of the seder, because Pesach never ends.

Even after Pesach, as we enter the month of Iyar, it is important to continue with Mivtza Pesach, to reach out to Yidden who are in a spiritually low place, in *galus Mitzrayim*, and to elevate and inspire them to leave their “*Mitzrayim*” by bringing them closer to Torah and Yiddishkeit.²⁸ **T**

- 1 Likkutei Sichos vol. 1, p. 243.
- 2 See also Sichos Kodesh 5732 vol. 2, p. 27 where the Rebbe gives similar suggestions for the amount distributed, including also the possibility of giving enough matzah for the entire Yom Tov.
- 3 Igros Kodesh vol. 8, p. 337.
- 4 Ibid. vol. 9, p. 35.
- 5 Igros Kodesh vol. 11, page 6.
- 6 Ibid. page 86. vol. 12, p. 343.
- 7 Yemei Temimim vol. 6 page 133.
- 8 Ibid. vol. 18 page 346.
- 9 Ibid. page 375.
- 10 Ibid. vol 20 page 185.
- 11 Rabbi Avrohom Gerlitzky (Diary 5727).
- 12 Igros Kodesh vol. 13 page 219.
- 13 Sichos Kodesh 5734 vol. 2, p. 4.
- 14 Ibid. 5737 vol. 1, p. 535.
- 15 Ibid. 5734 vol. 2, p. 11.
- 16 Igros Kodesh vol. 19, p. 319.
- 17 Sichos Kodesh 5727 vol. 2, p. 9.
- 18 Teshura Simpson-Avtzon 5765.
- 19 Ibid. 5737 vol. 1 page 533.
- 20 See *Children at the Forefront*, Derher Sivan 5774.
- 21 Tzeirei Agudas Chabad, p. 286-288.
- 22 Yemei Temimim vol. 6, p. 124.
- 23 Igros Kodesh vol. 20 page 186.
- 24 Sichos Kodesh 5737 vol. 1 page 606.
- 25 Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5746 vol. 2 page 851.
- 26 Shlichus Kehilchasa page 395.
- 27 Sefer Hasichos 5751 vol. 2, p. 411.
- 28 Hisvaaduyos 5745 vol. 3, p. 1880.



MATZAH DISTRIBUTION IN PHILADELPHIA

Michtav Klali

“Unfortunately, there is, in our time of confusion and obscurity, another kind of a Jewish child: the child who is conspicuous by his absence from the Seder service; the one who has no interest whatsoever in Torah and Mitzvoh, laws and customs...”

The following is an English translation of the landmark letter from the Rebbe introducing the concept of the fifth son, in addition to the four mentioned in the Haggadah. The original Yiddish letter is published in Igros Kodesh vol. 15, p. 33.

By the Grace of G-d
11th of Nissan, 5717

[April 12, 1957]

Brooklyn, N.Y.

Greeting and Blessing:

The Festival of Pesach is inaugurated by the central theme: “When thy son will ask thee,” and the Haggadah is based on the commandment of the Torah: “Then shalt thou tell thy son.”

There are various ways of asking questions and formulating the answers, depending upon whether the son belongs to the category of the “Wise,” the “Wicked,” the “Simple,” or “The One Who Knows Not How to Ask.”

While the “Four Sons” differ from one another in their reaction to the Seder service, they have one thing in common: they are all present at the Seder service. Even the so-called “Wicked” son is there, taking an active, though rebellious, interest in what is going on in Jewish life around him. This, at least, justifies the hope that someday also the “Wicked” one will become wise, and all Jewish children attending the Seder will become conscientious, Torah-and-Mitzvoh-observing Jews.

Unfortunately, there is, in our time of confusion and obscurity, another kind of a Jewish child: the child who is conspicuous by his absence from the Seder service; the one who has no interest whatsoever in Torah and Mitzvoh, laws and customs; who is not even aware of the Seder-Shel-Pesach, of the Exodus from Egypt and the subsequent Revelation at Sinai.

This presents a grave challenge, which should command our attention long before Passover and the Seder night. For no Jewish child should be forgotten and given up. We must make every effort to save also that “lost” child, and bring the absentee to the Seder table. Determined to do so, and driven by a deep sense of compassion and responsibility, we need have no fear of failure.



In order to remedy an undesirable situation of any kind, it is necessary to attack the roots of the evil. The same is true in this case.

The regrettable truth is that the blame for the above-mentioned “lost generation” lies squarely on the shoulders of the parents.

It is the result of an erroneous psychology and misguided policy on the part of some immigrants arriving in a new and strange environment. Finding themselves a small minority and encountering certain difficulties, which are largely unavoidable in all cases of resettlement, some parents had the mistaken notion, which they injected also into their children, that

the way to overcome these difficulties is to become quickly assimilated with the new environment, by discarding the heritage of their forefathers and abandoning the Jewish way of life. Finding the ensuing process somewhat distasteful, as such a course is bound to be full of spiritual conflict, some parents were resolved that their children would be spared the conflict altogether. In order to justify their desertion and appease their injured conscience, it was necessary for them to devise some rationale, and they deluded themselves, and deluded their children, by the claim that in their new surroundings the Jewish way of life, with the observance of the Torah and Mitzvot, did not fit. They looked for, and therefore also “found,” faults with the true Jewish way of life, while in their non-Jewish environment everything seemed to them only good and attractive.

By this attitude the said parents hoped to assure their children’s existence and survival in the new environment. But what kind of existence is it, if everything spiritual and holy is traded for the material? What kind of survival is it, if it means the sacrifice of the Soul for the amenities of the body?

Moreover, in their retreat from Yiddishkeit, they turned what they thought was an “escape to freedom” into an escape to servitude, pathetically trying to imitate the non-Jewish environment, failing to see that such imitation, by its caricature and inferiority complex, can only call forth mockery and derision, and can only offend the sensibilities of those whose respect and acceptance they are so desperately trying to win.

The same false approach to the minority problem, whereby the misguided minority seeks to ensure its existence by self-dissolution, which essentially means suicide, or, at any rate, self-crippling, has dominated not only individuals, but unfortunately has been made the creed of certain groups thrown together by a set of circumstances. This gave rise to certain dissident movements on the Jewish scene, which either openly or by subterfuge seek to undermine the Torah which Moses commanded us, as he received it from the One G-d, and transmitted it to our people; the Divine Torah which gives our people its unique and distinctive character among the nations of the world. Verily, these movements, while differing from each other, have one underlying ideology in common, that of “We will be as the nations, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone.” (Ezekiel 20:32)

The dire consequences of this utterly false approach were that thousands upon thousands of Jews have been removed from their fountain of life, from their fellow Jews and from their true faith. Deprived of spiritual life and content, there

grew up children who no longer belong to the “Four Sons” of the Haggadah, not even in the category of the “Wicked” one. They are almost a total loss to themselves and to their fellow Jews and true Yiddishkeit, which are inseparable.

The event of the Exodus from Egypt and the Festival of Passover are timely reminders, among other things, that not in an attempt to imitate the environment lies the hope for survival, deliverance and freedom, but rather in the unswerving loyalty to our traditions and true Jewish way of life.

Our ancestors in Egypt were a small minority, and lived in the most difficult circumstances. Yet, as our Sages relate, they preserved their identity and, with pride and dignity, tenaciously clung to their way of life, traditions and distinct uniqueness; precisely in this way was their existence assured, as also their true deliverance from slavery, physical and spiritual.

It is one of the vital tasks of our time to exert all possible effort to awaken in the young generation, as also in those who are advanced in years but still immature in deeper understanding, a fuller appreciation of the true Jewish values, of Torah-true Yiddishkeit, a full and genuine Yiddishkeit; not of that which goes under a false label of misrepresented, compromised, or watered-down “Judaism,” whatever the trademark. Together with this appreciation will come the realization that only true Yiddishkeit can guarantee the existence of the individual, of each and every Jew, at any time, in any place, and under any circumstances.

There is no room for hopelessness in Jewish life, and no Jew should ever be given up as a lost cause. Through the proper compassionate approach of Ahavas Yisroel, even those of the “lost” generation can be brought back to the love of G-d (Ahavas HaShem) and love of the Torah (Ahavas HaTorah), and not only be included in the community of the “Four Sons,” but in due course be elevated to the rank of the “Wise” son.

May G-d grant that all sons and daughters of Israel be gathered together at the same table of the Seder service, to celebrate the Festival of Passover in its true spirit and manner, in accordance with “the testimonies, statutes, and laws which G-d our G-d commanded us.”

May the gathering also of those “lost tribes of Israel,” and their assembly at the Seder table, hasten the beginning of the true and complete Redemption of our people, through our righteous Moshiach, speedily in our time.

With the blessing of a Kosher and Happy Pesach,
/signed/ Menachem Schneerson

The Life of a Chossid



Reb Zalman Moshe Hayitzchaki

Born: 5632* in Nevel, Russia.

Passed Away: 3 Shevat 5712*
in Eretz Yisroel.

Reb Zalman Moshe Hayitzchaki was born in 5632* in Nevel, Russia, to his father Reb Dovber Hayitzchaki, known as “*Berel Der Shochet*,” and his mother Rochel. Tradition has it that his family name was due to their being descendants of Rashi—Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki.¹

Reb Zalman Moshe married around the year 5658* in Zembin, Belarus. His wife, Neshe Reines, was from a leading *misnagdishe* family.² After several years, he moved to Schedrin, Belarus.³

Following his father’s passing in 5679*, he moved back to Nevel and assumed his father’s position as the town *shochet*.⁴

In 5695*, Reb Zalman Moshe moved to Eretz Yisroel, where he lived in Tel Aviv before moving to Kfar Chabad in 5710*. On 3 Shevat 5712*, Reb Zalman Moshe passed away. He is buried in the old cemetery in Tzfas.



After his marriage, Reb Zalman Moshe and his wife lived in Zembin for a number of years, where he worked as a *shochet*. After Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim was founded in 5657*, a number of *temimim* came to Zembin along with the noted *mashpia* Reb Shmuel Gronem Esterman. Reb Zalman Moshe was attracted to the yeshiva and would occasionally attend Reb Gronem’s *shiur Chassidus*. This was Reb Zalman Moshe’s first exposure to Chassidus and it opened his eyes. His longing to learn Chassidus increased

to the point where he came to the *shiur* every day, despite not officially being a student in the yeshiva. In 5659*, Reb Zalman Moshe accompanied the *temimim* on their trip to Lubavitch for Tishrei.

During this first visit to Lubavitch, he listened intently to the many *maamarim* the Rebbe Rashab said over Tishrei. He realized that the style of the Rebbe Rashab’s *maamarim* differed somewhat from the style of Reb Gronem’s *shiurim*. Upon investigating further, he heard from a number of elder *Chassidim* that Reb Gronem taught only the Chassidus of the Rebbe Maharash, to whom he was *mekushar*.

When he returned to Zembin, Reb Zalman Moshe stopped going to Reb Gronem’s *shiurim*. “We have a Rebbe and we must learn his Chassidus,” he said.

The following year, Reb Zalman Moshe again traveled to Lubavitch for Rosh Hashanah, and he had his first *yechidus*. The Rebbe Rashab asked him, “Are you still attending the *shiurim* of Reb Gronem?” “No,” replied Reb Zalman Moshe. “Why?” asked the Rebbe. “Because he doesn’t teach your Chassidus,” Reb Zalman Moshe replied. The Rebbe Rashab made a motion of dismissal with his hand and said, “If that’s the case, it doesn’t matter.”

From that point on, the Rebbe Rashab referred to Reb Zalman Moshe as “my Zalman Moshe.”⁵

Several years after his marriage, Reb Zalman Moshe agreed to the request of the villagers in Schedrin, Belarus, to become that town’s *shochet*. Schedrin was a relatively small town, whose population was half the size of Zembin’s. It was founded by the Tzemach Tzedek, and its inhabitants were all Chassidim, who mostly worked in agriculture. People asked Reb Zalman Moshe, “Zembin is a big city, and you have enough *parnassa* from your job as a *shochet*. Why are you moving to Schedrin, where the job will not

לזכות הורינו
הרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק
וזוגתו מרת הדסה רייכל שיחיו ניו
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל
וזוגתו מרת נחמה דינה שיחיו מאנגעל
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' ישראל זוגתו מרת חנה שיחיו
ניו

be as lucrative?" Reb Zalman Moshe answered, "That is the very reason I'm moving to Schedrin! There, I won't be as busy *shechting*, and I'll be able to spend more time learning Chassidus.⁶"

Reb Zalman Moshe was generally a gentle person, who spoke kindly to anyone he met. During farbrengens, however, he was known to speak out strongly about things he felt needed improvement. In truth, he intended the rebuke for himself, but as talking to himself wouldn't seem proper, he directed them at the others present. When asked why he used such biting terms, Reb Zalman Moshe replied, "What can I do? That's the only language the *beheima* [the *nefesh habahamis*] understands."

Reb Mendel Futerfas related: "When we were learning in Tomchei Temimim in Nevel, Reb Nissan Nemanov was appointed as *mashpia*. Despite his young age, Reb Nissan instilled awe in the *temimim*; he was extremely particular about *shemiras hasedarim*.

"Reb Itche Der Masmid once came to Nevel, and we were told that he would farbreng with Reb Zalman Moshe. We asked Reb Nissan for permission to go to the farbrengen, but he refused and told us to continue learning. After a few minutes, we noticed that Reb Nissan himself had left the *zal*, and we realized that after prohibiting us from going, he could not resist and had himself gone to the farbrengen. Of course, we immediately closed our *sefarim* and came to the farbrengen, and sure enough, there was Reb Nissan, enjoying the *farbrengen*."⁷

When the Rebbe was in Paris in 5707*, he said at a farbrengen, "Reb Zalman Moshe's sayings are repeated in *Beis Harav*.⁸"

"זלמן משה"ס א ווארט חזר'ט מען אין בית הרב."

In 5693*, Reb Zalman Moshe resolved to move to Eretz Yisroel. At the time, exit visas could only be obtained in Moscow, so he moved there, residing in the home of his son-in-law, Reb Avraham Drizin. He lived there for two years until he finally received his exit visa in 5695*.

When Reb Zalman Moshe got to Moscow and saw the big buildings, he said, "The *malachim* in Moscow created much waste."⁹

Once, during a farbrengen in the home of Reb Moshe Gurarie in Tel Aviv, Reb Zalman Moshe—after saying much *l'chaim*—turned to Reb Moshe and said, "You're a big *maskil* in Chassidus, so please tell me what is *Atzmus u'Mehus*?" Reb Moshe tried to avoid the question, but Reb Zalman Moshe would not let up. "You're a *maskil*, so you have to explain to me what is *Atzmus u'Mehus*." Finally, after much cajoling, Reb Moshe began to explain. But no sooner had he opened his mouth, and Reb Zalman Moshe admonished him, saying "*Atzmus u'Mehus! Atzmus u'Mehus* is higher than any explanation, higher than any speech! *Atzmus u'Mehus* is even higher than being able to say that it's higher than any explanation!"¹⁰

Reb Yoel Kahan relates:

"In 5709*, a few *temimim* from Tel Aviv came to Reb Zalman Moshe and asked him to teach them how to write a *pan* to the Rebbe. Reb Zalman Moshe took a pencil and paper, but immediately burst into tears. After a long while, he finally calmed down, and asked the *bochurim* to come back the next day, for right now he was not prepared to write a *pan*.

"The next day, the *bochurim* returned and again asked Reb Zalman Moshe to write a *pan*. He picked up the pencil and wrote the words, "אנא לעורר," and immediately burst into tears, unable to stop crying. Try as he might, he could not continue writing."¹¹ **T**

1. *Anashim Chassidim Hayu*, p. 9.

2. *Ibid.* p. 11.

3. *Ibid.* p. 14.

4. *Ibid.* p. 15.

5. *Ibid.* p. 11.

6. *Ibid.* p. 14.

7. *Ibid.* p. 18.

8. *Ibid.* p. 19.

9. *Ibid.* p. 35. Chassidus teaches that *gashmiyus* comes from *shmarei haofanim*—the waste of the *ofanim*. See Torah Or Beshalach 68:1.

10. *Anashim Chassidim Hayu*, p. 45.

11. *Ibid.* p. 50.

What makes someone the Rebbe? Is it tremendous Torah knowledge? The ability to perform miracles and tell the future? Is it complete self-sacrifice?

How do we know who is the true Rebbe of each generation?

Why does each generation have only one Rebbe?

Must there be a Rebbe in every single generation? Why can't we suffice with the neshama within each individual person to inspire their performance of Torah and mitzvos?

Was this concept first introduced with the founding of Chassidus or was there a Rebbe in each of the preceding generations throughout history as well?

In honor of yom habahir, Yud-Aleph Nissan, a look at the essence of a Rebbe through the lense of the Rebbe's sichos and letters.

לזכות הורינו
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' משה
וזוגתו מרת פערל שיחיו הערסאן
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' אברהם
וזוגתו מרת ח' בלומא שיחיו אזדאבא
להצלחה רבה ומופלגה בשליחותם הק'
לאורך ימים ושנים טובות
מתוך נחת חסידותי אמיתי,
בריאות הנכונה, ומתוך שמחה והרחבה!

נדפס ע"י בנם ובתם
הרה"ת ר' אשר זעליג
וזוגתו מרת שרה ומשפחתם שיחיו
הערסאן

Original artwork by **Baila Goldstein** for A Chassidisher Derher.



THE HEART OF THE PEOPLE

A journey through history
and what we can learn about
the role and meaning of a Rebbe

What makes someone the Rebbe? Is it tremendous Torah knowledge? The ability to perform miracles and tell the future? Is it complete self-sacrifice?

The Rebbe has all of the above—and more—but these qualities do not capture what a Rebbe truly is. Every generation has many *tzadikim*, geniuses in Torah and activists, and they all vary in their *tzidkus*, knowledge, and self-sacrifice.

But what makes someone a Rebbe isn't one quality or another. It is not even defined by the things he does and accomplishes. It's the fact that he is the *nossi hador*, the leader of the generation. He isn't a person who reached great heights in his individual *avoda*—rather his entire being, his *essence*, is that he is a leader of Yidden, a shepherd of his flock.¹

Just as a body receives life and vitality from its head, all of the Yidden receive their life-force from their *nossi*. He is our head and heart; through him, we receive all of our *hashpaa* from on-High; by connecting with him, we reveal and refresh our essential connection to Hashem. When we need someone to daven for us—he has the power to do so; when we are in trouble, he feels our pain more than we do ourselves. He is our generation's Moshiach—the essence of our soul, our *yechida*—and he helps us reveal our personal *yechida*, the spark of Moshiach in our heart.

Every human body has a head, and every generation has a *nossi hador*. “There is a continuation of Moshe in every generation,” the Zohar tells us. “There is no generation that doesn't have someone like... Avraham... Yaakov... Moshe,” as the Midrash puts it.²

But while every generation has a *nossi hador*, in some generations this role is more revealed and in some

generations less so. There were *nesi'im* who primarily served their flock in physical matters; others gave spiritual guidance; there were some who imparted *nigleh*, while others taught Kabbalah.

But our Rabbeim, from the Baal Shem Tov and on, lead their generation in all areas: in Torah, *avodah* and *gemilus chassadim*; in *nigleh* and in Chassidus; in spirit and in body. We are openly connected with them in every area of our lives.

It is impossible to capture the character of a *nossi* on paper. However, over the years, the Rebbe explained various aspects of a *nossi* through the lens of famous *nesi'im* throughout the generations. In honor of Yud-Alef Nissan, the birthday of our *nossi*, when the *mazal* of his *neshamah* and of all of our *neshamos* shines brightly, we feature a selection of these below.

It is true, as mentioned, that the accomplishments of a *nossi* are not what **makes** him the *nossi*. Nevertheless, by studying what the *nesi'im* in each generation provided for the Jewish people of their time, and how they impacted the collective Jewish consciousness, we can better understand what it means to be a *nossi* of the Jewish people, and how there are certain things that **only** a *nossi* can accomplish.

Based on the Rebbe's words in these *sichos*, we can discern what the meaning of a true “Rebbe” and “*nossi*” really is, and hopefully apply them and have a better understanding of *our* Rebbe.

In many *sichos*,³ the Rebbe explains that whenever a *nossi* gives a description of one of his predecessors, or sheds light on the meaning of a *nossi* in general, the same sentiment applies also to the Rebbe who is talking. We will therefore present the following anthology of the Rebbe's teachings about preceding *nesi'im* while remaining true to the Rebbe's words in their source, leaving it up to the reader to see how they apply in our generation.

Note: We included only a few *nesi'im* from Jewish history. We intentionally did not include any of the *nesi'im* of Chassidus, for that would go much beyond the scope of a single article.

MOSHE RABBEINU

THE ULTIMATE LEADER

When it came time for the Yidden to enter Eretz Yisroel, Moshe begged Hashem to let him enter with them. The Midrash tells us that Hashem responded that this could not be done, for it would be akin to a shepherd whose sheep had been captured: If the shepherd returns to the palace without the sheep, people would say that he had stolen them. So too, Hashem told Moshe, you brought 600,000 out of Mitzrayim, “You must stay at their side and come [to Eretz Yisroel] *with* them,” when Moshiach comes.

This doesn’t seem right, the Rebbe says. Why should Moshe have to stay at the side of the generation of the *midbar*? He was nothing like them! The generation of the *midbar* remained in the *midbar* as a punishment for the fact that they *didn’t want* to go into Eretz Yisroel, with the story of the *meraglim*, whereas Moshe Rabbeinu’s greatest wish was to enter Eretz Yisroel. Why should Moshe stay in the *midbar* to remain with them, when he could not be more different than them?!

The answer to this lies in the parable of a shepherd: At his very essence, Moshe Rabbeinu was a shepherd of the Yidden, a *ro’eh Yisrael*. And as a true shepherd—he cannot abandon his flock, no matter what!

This can be seen in another episode as well: When the Yidden served the *eigel*, Hashem told Moshe Rabbeinu, “Go down, for *your* nation has sinned.”

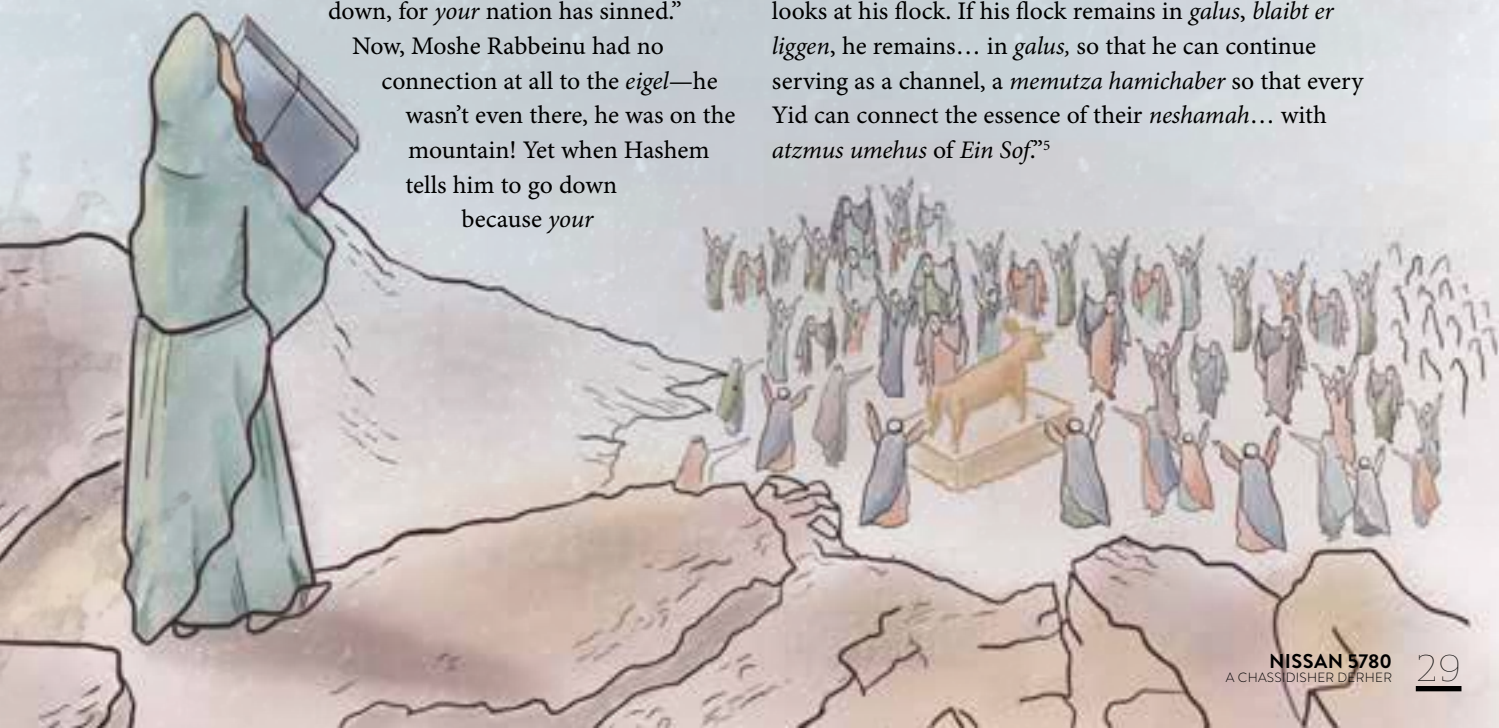
Now, Moshe Rabbeinu had no connection at all to the *eigel*—he wasn’t even there, he was on the mountain! Yet when Hashem tells him to go down because *your*

nation has sinned, Moshe Rabbeinu doesn’t disassociate himself from them, *chas veshalom*, because they have fallen to such lows—rather, he accepts Hashem’s words, that this is *his nation*, Moshe Rabbeinu’s nation!

And he gives up everything for them; he told Hashem, “ואם אין, מחני נא מספרך”, if you don’t save them, erase me from your Torah! Why? Because he is their shepherd! And a shepherd does not abandon his flock, no matter how low they have fallen! This is also why he remained in the *midbar*: he would not leave his flock, no matter what.

The Rebbe spoke about this theme many times, but in one *sicha*⁴ he added a poignant point: “This is also expressed in the fact that Moshe Rabbeinu lived for exactly 120 years, unlike his brother Aharon who lived for 123: His connection to his generation was so essential and powerful that when the generation of the *midbar* passed away, he couldn’t leave his flock—and he couldn’t continue living without them! As soon as the last people of his generation passed away, he could no longer live!”

On another occasion, in a *sicha* punctuated with tears, the Rebbe explained that this was followed by the *nesi’im* throughout the generations: “This is true regarding every leader and *nossi* in their own generations: Notwithstanding his own level, the *nossi* puts everything on the side, and looks at his flock. If his flock remains in *galus*, *blaiht er liggen*, he remains... in *galus*, so that he can continue serving as a channel, a *memutza hamichaber* so that every Yid can connect the essence of their *neshamah*... with *atzmus umehus* of Ein Sof.”⁵





YEHOSHUA

A NEW GENERATION

One Rebbe for Each Time

Yehoshua was the *nossi* following Moshe Rabbeinu, and the Midrash says, “the face of Moshe was like a sun, the face of Yehoshua was like a moon.” Since Yehoshua was on a lower level, Moshe Rabbeinu believed that his leadership would be diminished. He therefore informed Yehoshua that he would share the leadership of the Yidden with the 70 *zekeinim*: Yehoshua would lead in military and external matters, while the *zekeinim* would lead in internal matters. This was similar to the way that Moshe Rabbeinu had shared the burden of leadership with the *zekeinim*.

But Hashem had different plans: דבר אחד לדור ואין שני—there is only one leader for each generation—only one style of leadership for each generation—and notwithstanding the fact that Moshe is greater than Yehoshua, Yehoshua has his own path. In Yehoshua’s time, the *zekeinim* had no say whatsoever: *Take a stick and hit them on their skull*, Hashem told him. “Hashem was telling Yehoshua: Although in the times of Moshe Rabbeinu the

zekeinim helped lead the Yidden—you must have your own style of leadership.” As a leader in his own generation, Yehoshua must follow his own mind.⁶

This highlights a truth about the leaders throughout Jewish history. We must follow the leader of *our* own generation. “We demand that in this era every person must dedicate their time to spread Torah and Yiddishkeit (in general, and specifically the ten *mitvzoim*), and it all must be permeated with Chassidus, but there are those who come with the argument: We didn’t see this practice in previous generations. In previous generations there wasn’t such a *koch* in *ahavas Yisroel*. Even by the Frierdiker Rebbe, we didn’t see this until his last years when he came to America. How can we accept these ‘new’ *avodos*?

“To this we answer: there is only one leader per generation, not two. It’s possible that other generations did not require this *avoda*, but in our generation... the Rebbe says that in our times it is necessary to work in spreading Chassidus... and we must follow the leader of *this* generation.”⁷

DOVID HAMELECH

THE HEART OF A NOSSI

Dovid Hamelech was the ultimate king. He was given the everlasting lineage of kingship, and Moshiach, the final king, will descend from him. As the king, the entire nation was under his rule and was obligated to obey him.

But although he was such a powerful king, he was also famously humble, as he declares in Tehillim, “I am but a worm and not a man” and “My heart is empty [conquered] within me.” The Midrash points to this contrast: “We cannot figure out who Dovid is. Sometimes he calls himself a king, and sometimes he refers to himself as a pauper.”⁸

We find this paradox by kings in general: On the one hand, the nation must be entirely subjected to the king—to the extent that if one would disobey the king, he would be sentenced to death. At the same time, however, the king himself is specifically commanded to be subjected to Hashem.

For a Jewish king, humility and power are not conflicting qualities. On the contrary, his humility *causes* his power. The reason that Yidden subject themselves to a king (and a *nossi*) is because he is not an independent being—he stands for Hashem, and channels Hashem’s kingship to the nation. When a person nullifies himself to the king, he is nullifying himself to Hashem. And by doing so, the person receives his *chayus* (vitality) from Hashem.

Thus, the single most important quality of a king is that he should be a proper channel for Hashem’s kingship—and that is achieved through his own *bittul* and self-nullification.⁹

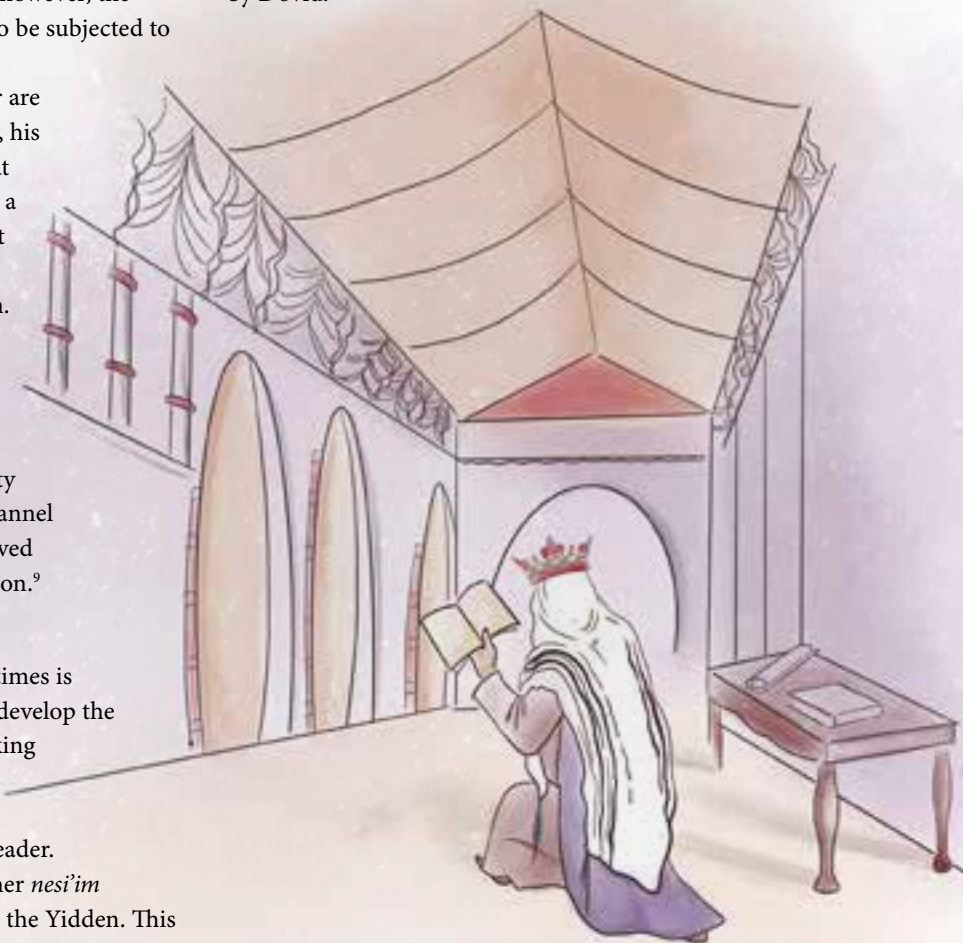
Fighting for the Yidden

Leading the people through peaceful times is vital. It’s an important time to teach and develop the character of the nation and so on. But a king who leads his people through war, taking himself on the arduous journey along with them is the symbol of a true leader.

What makes Dovid unique among other *nesi'im* is that throughout his reign, he *fought* for the Yidden. This started from the very beginning, when he went up against

Golias: Golias was a seasoned warrior, whereas Dovid was a simple shepherd who had come to bring food for his brothers. As Shaul Hamelech told him, “You cannot go to that Plishti and fight him; you are only a boy, and he has been a warrior from his youth!” Yet Dovid risked his life to stand up to him. He was victorious over Golias, and raised the morale of all the Yidden by showing that the Plisitim are nothing to be afraid of.¹⁰

This continued later when he became king, as Dovid constantly fought wars for the Jewish people (unlike his son Shlomo who merited to have a peaceful reign). Sometimes a *nossi* doesn’t need to fight wars to provide for his nation; but when it is necessary, he does that as well, as exemplified by Dovid.¹¹



MORDECHAI

EMUNA

Mordechai was a great leader in many areas: He was a great Torah scholar, one of the leading members of Sanhedrin, and an adviser to the monarch who ruled the entire civilized world. We see his involvement everywhere in the Purim story: Uncovering the plot to murder the king; kindling Haman's wrath by refusing to bow to him; gathering all the Jewish children and studying with them; and communicating with Queen Esther to inform her of the decree and guiding her throughout.

However, when he is introduced to us in the Megillah, he's given a simple title: "*Ish Yehudi*." This doesn't mean that he was from *shevet Yehuda* (for he wasn't), but that he was "a man of *hoda'ah* (concession)," a person who concedes to and believes in Hashem, is *kofer* in *avoda zara*, and is the one responsible for the *emuna* of every Yid.

Every Yid has a connection to Hashem that utterly transcends understanding and intellect. Just like the relationship between a father and a son, the Rebbe says: "It's not something that *can* be explained intellectually, it's not something that *needs* to be explained intellectually, and it's not something that anyone *wants* to explain intellectually." One can find intellectual explanations for their relationship—for example, the Chovas Halevavos

explains that a son is obligated in *kibud av va'em* because he should appreciate everything his parents did for him—yet it cannot capture the depth of the essential love between a father and son.

This applies even more so to the relationship between Yidden

and Hashem, since we are Hashem's 'firstborn' child (and only child). Even after our *neshamah* becomes a creation for itself and comes down to the world, it remains a part of *Elokus*. "[A Yid] is a part of Hashem's essence," the Rebbe says, "and when you grasp a part of the essence, you grasp its entirety. Thus, every Yid is Hashem *kevaycholl*!"

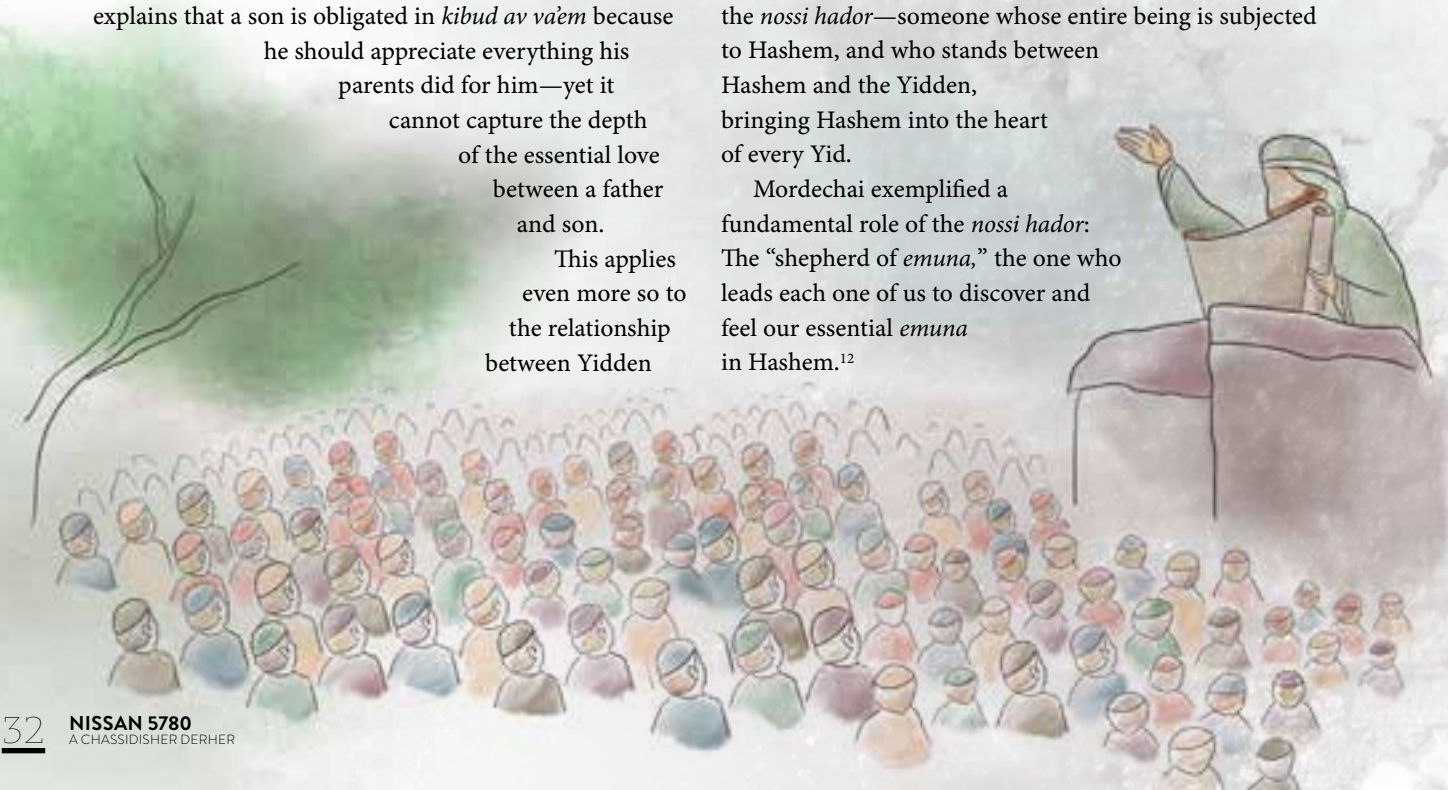
However, when Yidden are in *galus*—when Yidden are under the foreign reign of King Achashveirosh—they need assistance to feel and internalize their *emuna*. Mordechai was the *memuzta hamichaber*, the conduit who helped them reveal their essential *emuna* in Hashem.

Mordechai led by example; he "did not kneel and did not bow" to Haman, and his leadership had a tremendous influence on the Yidden.

As the Alter Rebbe explains, the Yidden could have saved themselves if they would just renounce their religion. Haman's decree applied only to those who considered themselves Jewish, and every Jew had the choice to convert to another religion and spare his life. And yet, over an entire year of waiting and agonizing for the terrible decree to take effect, *not a single person even considered* doing so. This was all due to Mordechai's influence.

Mordechai was able to accomplish this because he was the *nossi hador*—someone whose entire being is subjected to Hashem, and who stands between Hashem and the Yidden, bringing Hashem into the heart of every Yid.

Mordechai exemplified a fundamental role of the *nossi hador*: The "shepherd of *emuna*," the one who leads each one of us to discover and feel our essential *emuna* in Hashem.¹²



REBBI SHIMON BAR YOCHAI

THE WORLD ON HIS SHOULDERS

Rebbi Meir and Rebbi Shimon were part of the same generation of *tanaim*. They were both disciples of Rebbi Akiva—the only students who received *semicha* from him—and are among the *tanaim* quoted most often in the Mishnah.

Rebbi Meir is known for his tremendous depth of intellect, and the *halacha* often doesn't follow his opinion simply because his colleagues were unable to comprehend the depth of his opinion and couldn't *pasken* like him.¹³ His wisdom was so deep that he would use *three hundred parables* for every concept, with every parable explaining the one before it.

Rebbi Akiva, their teacher, asked Rebbi Meir to sit before Rebbi Shimon, thus ranking him higher. He explained to Rebbi Shimon, "It's enough that I and your creator recognize your capabilities." Chassidus explains that although Rebbi Meir's wisdom was greater than his colleagues'—to the extent that they couldn't *pasken* the *halacha* like him—they at least *knew* how great he was. Rebbi Shimon Bar Yochai's greatness was so far beyond the other *tanaim* that *they didn't even realize* his greatness. He is the one who began the revelation of *pnimiyus haTorah*, as the author of the Zohar. His *avodas Hashem* was on an entirely different plane.

After 13 years of hiding from the Romans, during which time they climbed higher and higher in *avodas Hashem*, Rebbi Shimon and his son Rebbi Elazar emerged from their cave, and encountered people going about their daily lives. Upon seeing this, Rebbi Elazar burned the world with his eyes. From his lofty reality—a world of constant Torah study and ultimate connection to Hashem—he could not comprehend how people can simply go along with their daily lives!

And yet, everywhere that Rebbi Elazar burned, Rebbi Shimon healed. He was on an even higher level than his son, but he was able to lower himself and relate to the world on *its* level—for he wasn't just a *tzadik*, he was the *nossi*.¹⁴

For this reason, when the Jewish nation was in trouble with decrees from the Roman government, Rebbi Shimon

was the one who went to intercede;¹⁵ and even when a decree came from Hashem himself, he did not hesitate:

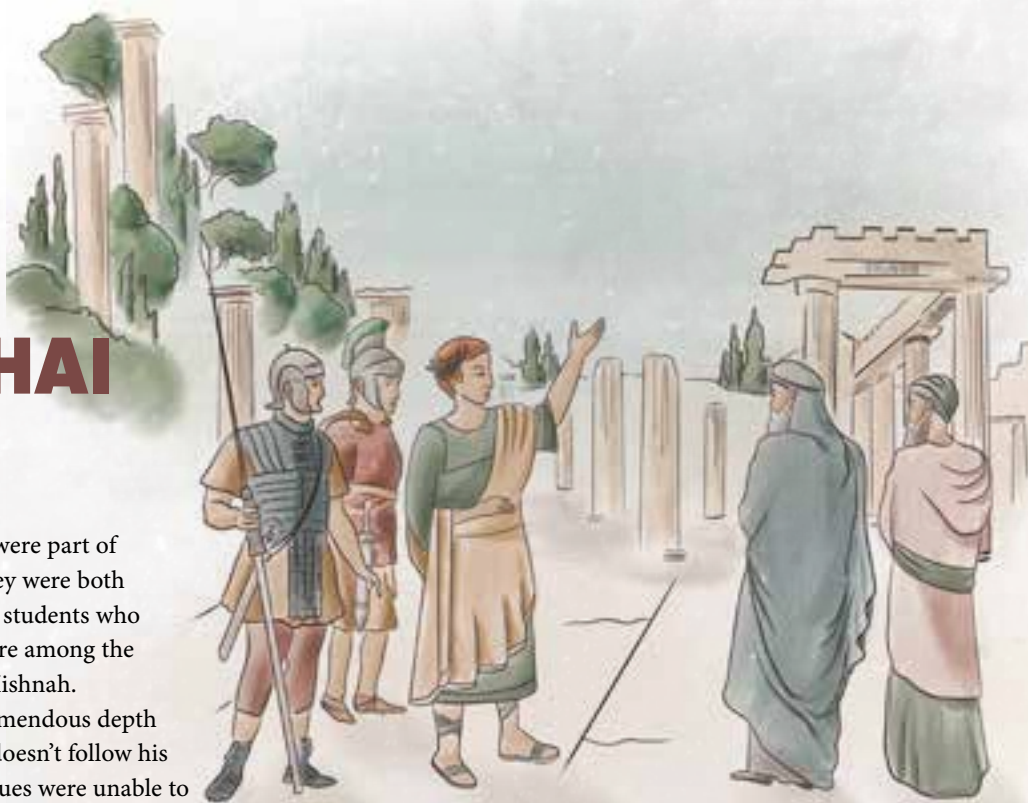
Rashbi told his son Rebbi Elazar: Come, let us see what Hashem wishes to do in the world. They went and found an angel... and Rebbi Shimon asked him, "What do you want to do?"

The angel replied, "[I want to] destroy the world, for there are not 30 tzadikim in the generation"... Rebbi Shimon told him, "I beg of you, go before Hashem and tell him that Bar Yochai is on the earth."

The angel went before Hashem and said, "Ribono shel olam, before you is revealed what Bar Yochai said." Hashem told him, "Go destroy the world and don't pay attention to Bar Yochai."

When the angel returned, Rebbi Shimon told him, "If you don't go again before Hashem, I will decree that you will not return to Heaven, and you will be in the place of Uza and Azazel. When you go before Hashem, tell him, "If there are not 30 tzadikim, 20 should be enough... and if not that ... at least two should be enough, me and my son... and if two isn't enough, there is one. That is me, the tzadik, the foundation of the world."

The Gemara explains that there are many levels in *tzadikim*: The 18,000 *tzaddikim* who "see Hashem from behind an unclear glass," the 36 hidden *tzadikim* "who see Hashem from behind a clear glass," and so on. But then there is Rebbi Shimon—the *tzadik yesod olam*, the foundation of the world. Every generation has at least one *tzadik* on this level, someone who is on a tremendously high level yet lowers himself to the world to purify it.¹⁶



MOSHIACH



The ultimate *nossi* of all the Jewish people, *Moshiach tzidkeinu*, will also exert his influence over the Jewish people in an unprecedented way.

A *melech Yisroel*, a *nossi* in general, imparts a strong *bittul* within every Jew to *Elokus*.

However, there are levels of *bittul* and *yirah*, the greatest level will be the one *Moshiach* brings to the world and particularly to all *Yidden*.

Even *Moshe Rabbeinu* will depend on *Moshiach* for his *bittul* and *yirah*.

The way to awaken the *bittul* within a *Yid* is by activating the *yechida*, the innermost part of the *neshama*.

In the world of the *yechida* there is only one thing: Hashem.

For the *yechida* it is no challenge to give up everything for Hashem because it knows nothing else. There is nothing else worth living for.

Mordechai activated the *yechida* of every Jew to the point that they were *moser nefesh* for an entire year.

Moshiach will not just activate the *yechida* of every Jew, he will *reveal* it. It will take over our entire reality. We will think like the *yechida* thinks and see the way the *yechida* sees.

As mentioned above, the *nossi hador* is the *yechida* of the generation, the essence of its soul. This is also why the *nossi* is the *Moshiach* of the generation:

Kabbalah teaches¹⁷ us that just as every person has a *yechida*, and just as every generation has its *yechida*, so too, the entire history of the world has a *yechida* as well. That *yechida* is *Moshiach*.

[In a broader sense, the world has all five levels of the soul: 1) *Dovid* merited the level of *Nefesh*; 2) *Eliyahu Hanavi*—*Ruach*; 3) *Moshe*—*Neshama*; 4) *Adam Harishon*—*Chaya*; 5) *Moshiach*—*Yechida*.]

As soon as we reveal our own personal *Moshiach*, the *Moshiach* of the world will reveal himself, may it be *bikarov mamesh*.



LITMUS TEST OF A TRUE LEADER

Once, while mentioning a story related by the Friediker Rebbe, the Rebbe added tangentially:

The fact that the Friediker Rebbe was the leader of his entire generation is clear to all, beyond the shadow of a doubt. Notwithstanding that there were other truly saintly people who accomplished many great things but it is universally conceded that their accomplishments were only in their particular fields, whereas the Friediker Rebbe was concerned with each and every Jew in his generation. This is not meant to belittle anyone else, but it is a fact that “there is only one leader for a generation, and not two leaders for a generation.”

So vast was his dedication to Jewry, that even when the K.G.B. placed him under constant surveillance he did not desist from his efforts. His concern was so all encompassing that he even busied himself with children of whom he had no personal knowledge (even those in Brooklyn, N.Y.). In an effort to draw them closer to Torah, he sent letters and emissaries, time and time again if necessary. It so disturbed him that, contrary to his nature, he became extremely vexed and agitated over it.

In his 30 years of leadership he was the only one who worried about all Jews, men, women and children. His *talmidim* carried on with his concern and work over the next 30 years, and will continue to do so for all time...

*(Shabbos Parshas Lech L'cha 5741.
Sichos Kodesh 5741 vol. 1, p. 393.
Translation based on SIE.)*

1. See Igros Kodesh vol. 3 p. 331.
2. See sichas 9 Sivan 5720.
3. Most notably, Yud Shevat 5720, et. al.
4. Toras Menachem 5745 vol. 5 p. 2845.
5. 10 Shevat 5714.
6. Sichos Kodesh 5731 vol. 1 p. 25
7. Likkutei Sichos vol. 19 p. 307-314.
8. See Sichos Kodesh 5740 vol. 3 p. 221.
9. See Reshimos, kuntres 7; Derech Mitzvosecha Mitzvas Minuy Melech.
10. Sichos Kodesh 5738 vol. 2 p. 453.
11. Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5743 vol. 4 p.1564.
12. Purim 5731 p. 546
13. Eiruvim 13b.
14. See Likkutei Sichos vol. 20 p. 152.
15. Meila 17,a
16. Likkutei Sichos vol. 4, p. 1235.
17. See *Kuntres Inyana Shel Toras HaChassidus* ch. 5, et. al.



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



Lives are at Stake!

Kolel or Hafatza?

In this excerpt from a letter dated 19 Tishrei 5717, the Rebbe encourages yungerleit to involve themselves in saving Yidden from assimilation, and not to selfishly focus on their own continued studies.*



Regarding what you wrote about setting up a *kolel* for *yungerleit* in which they would learn after their wedding, and about the former *minhag* of yeshivos, in which the students would marry at a very advanced age—30 and older.

This *minhag* of delaying weddings in an orphaned generation¹ has already been decried. The Rishonim and Acharonim expound on [the impropriety of doing this]. See also the Alter Rebbe's Hilchos Talmud Torah *perek* 3 page 4, regarding studying Torah specifically in purity.²

Chabad yeshivos were never accustomed to delay marriages to the abovementioned age.

Regarding what you wrote about setting up a *kolel*, the Torah rules that a mitzvah that cannot be done by another person takes precedence over everything else. In recent generations, involvement in the field of *rabbanus* and the field of *chinuch al taharas hakodesh* and the like is a matter of saving and rescuing lives—literally.

To take tens of *yungerleit* who are capable of this [*rabbanus* and *chinuch*] and sit them down to learn Torah while hundreds and thousands cry out for help—albeit a silent, inward call—to be saved from the wicked waters that flow in the streets and, to our distress, have begun to flow into homes—it is very difficult to understand how one would permit this.

While for a talented few, [going to *kolel*] is ideal because for them sitting in *kolel* will enable them to work properly in saving Yidden, for the majority this is not the path.

If only the previous generation had focused more on saving Yidden from assimilation and from distancing themselves from the path of Torah and mitzvos, placing the burden of saving these souls on the shoulders of the yeshiva *bochurim* as soon as they left yeshiva, there would have been tens of thousands more students today in the yeshivos, shuls, and *batei midrash*.

There is no need to expound at length on something so disturbingly painful: There are still some *roshei yeshiva* that

hold of this approach, claiming that, “I have saved my own soul.”

Our *chachamim* have expounded at length about this in many places, including Zohar *chelek alef*, pages 67b and 106b, regarding Noah's behavior while the world was flooded.³ And Noah is different [than people today who would take his approach] because he lived before the Torah— and the mitzvah of *ahavas Yisroel*—was given.

Consider the following: If it were the son of the biggest *rosh yeshiva* or his only daughter who needed to be brought closer to Hashem and His Torah, would [the *rosh yeshiva*] still hide himself in an inner chamber and rely on a miracle [to save his child from assimilation], just so that he is able to learn Torah for a few more hours a day?

Regarding the few talented individuals belonging to the type mentioned above [who would benefit from *kolel*], this custom has existed among *anash* as well, for many years: to learn Torah after marriage, with Torah as one's occupation. However, this should not become the approach for the majority of people, based upon the above-mentioned aim of saving one's own soul...

...May you be blessed to have good news in all of the above and good health for your whole family speedily.

Because of the sanctity of Chol Hamoed, the Rebbe did not sign, and I sign in his name,

The secretary.⁴

1. This seems to refer to the post-Holocaust generation - Editor.

2. Meaning after marriage.

3. Noah was criticized for saving himself without attempting to bring others to the path of righteousness. Similarly, some individuals preferred to save themselves but ignore the Yidden threatened with assimilation.

4. Igros Kodesh vol. 14 pp. 30-31. Printed in part in Likkutei Sichos vol. 11 p. 243, and printed in part in Likkutei Sichos vol. 23 p. 443.



Hush

Loud noise, singing, dancing, and a general feeling of merriment and celebration are the usual scenes at a *hachnasas sefer Torah*. For centuries, Jewish communities have joyfully dedicated and welcomed new Torah scrolls with great reverence and honor.

Yet one dark night in Lubavitch a completely different spectacle was beheld.

Reb Shmuel Gronem related:

The Rebbe Maharash's son-in-law, Reb Moshe Leib Ginzburg of Vitebsk, had arranged a *siyum sefer Torah* at which the Rebbe Maharash was present. But the crowd was surprisingly small.

The Rebbe took up the quill to write the final three

words of the Torah, *leini kol Yisroel*. As he prepared the feather for its sacred task, he spoke in a joyful manner and a bright smile was visible across his face.

As he began writing, after adjusting the parchment, a visible change took place and the Rebbe's face looked like a burning fire. When the last letter had been written, he raised the parchment and examined his work under the light shining in the room. He then exclaimed, "It has been 25 years since I last held a quill... It appears that it came out well."

The few Chassidim who were present requested of the Rebbe that he say a *maamar Chassidus*. To their disappointment he replied, "My father [the

Tzemach Tzedek] never said a *maamar* at a *siyum sefer Torah*!"

One of the participants pointed out that indeed there was one *maamar* of the Tzemach Tzedek that was said at a *siyum sefer Torah*. The Rebbe Maharash dismissed this and stated, "That was only once and a unique occurrence."

They then asked the Rebbe if the portion of "*Meonah*"¹ is recited to which he indicated that it should not be said. Nevertheless a few individuals did recite it. The Rebbe Maharash sat there for an hour and a half with *mezonos* and *lchaim*, relating in his usual manner many stories.

The Rebbe Maharash related that it was common

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר
לרגל יום הבהיר י"א ניסן
ולזכות שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר
בכל אתר אתר שיצליחו,
ושימלאו שליחותם הק'
מתוך הצלחה מרובה בגו"ר
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל
וזוגתו מרת אסתר מרים
ומשפחתם שיחיו
ליפשיץ

practice by his father, the Tzemach Tzedek, that there would be a *siyum sefer Torah* when only his sons were present and the Chassidim were not notified about the *siyum*.

He continued to tell over the following stories:

On one occasion, the Rebbe Maharash was aware that a *siyum sefer Torah* was imminent so about two weeks before it actually took place, he asked his father when the *siyum* would be held. The Tzemach Tzedek answered him that he would let him know at the proper time. Each day the Rebbe Maharash waited anxiously for the special ceremony. Finally, two weeks later, his father told him that it would take place that night.

That night, at 2:00 a.m., just father and son, the Tzemach Tzedek—holding a lit candle in his hand—and his young son held a *siyum*. The only other people who were present were two individuals tasked with holding the *chupa*.

Right before they began the procession, the Rebbe Maharash asked his father if he should call his brothers. The Tzemach Tzedek replied, "There is no need to call anyone."

"Can I at least call my mother?" the Rebbe Maharash asked.

He replied, "Go and check if my aunt is sleeping with her. If she is, then there is no need to wake her; otherwise you can."

He then said, "The first set of *luchos* were given with

great tumult and they were broken, the second set of *luchos*, however, were given quietly and they survived. The same needs to apply here."

The Rebbe Maharash concluded the story with the following:

The bath house attendant in Lubavitch was notorious for having one too many drinks at night and he stumbled around the town in a drunken stupor. That very night, this drunken man noticed the awesome sight of two individuals carrying a *chupa* under which the Tzemach Tzedek was holding a lit candle. The scene was so shocking to him that he collapsed in a dead faint. When they were finally successful in rousing him, he fled from the

courtyard in utter fear of what he had just witnessed.

The next day in shul he repeated the terrifying scene he had watched earlier but his words were dismissed as a big joke. He was adamant that everything he was saying was true yet they had a hard time believing him. Upon further investigation, however, they discovered that indeed there had been a *siyum sefer Torah* the previous night. ¹

(Adapted from
Otzar Sippurei Chabad
vol. 18, p. 36)

1. Some have the custom to read from the Torah (without a *bracha*), from the *possuk* of מעונה אלקי קדם, till the end of the parsha.

ב' ניסן
5680 100 YEARS 5780

Lighting Lamps

The life and times of the Rebbe Rashab

In honor of the one-
hundredth *yom hilula* of
the Rebbe Rashab, we present
the following overview of the life
and times of the Rebbe Rashab.

The information was culled from many
sources. For more depth on the topic, see:
*Sefer Hatoldos Admur Harashab, Igros Kodesh
Admur Harashab, Sefer Hasichos Toras Shalom,
Toldos Chabad B'russia HaTsaris, Lubavitch
Vichayaleha, Zikaron Livnei Yisrael, Reshimos
Devarim, Sefer Hamaftechos Lesichos Kodesh -
erech Admur Harashab, Ashkavta D'rebbi.*

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

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





“REBBE, WHAT IS A CHOSSID?”

The Rebbe Rashab answered the Chossid's question: “A Chossid is a lamplighter. The lamplighter walks the streets carrying a flame at the end of a stick. He knows that the flame is not his. And he goes from lamp to lamp to set them alight.”

Asked the Chossid: “What if the lamp is in a desert?”

“Then one must go and light it,” said the Rebbe. “And when one lights a lamp in the desert, the desolation of the desert becomes visible. The barren wilderness will then be ashamed before the burning lamp.”

Continued the Chossid: “What if the lamp is at sea?”

“Then one must undress, dive into the sea, and go light the lamp.”

“And this is a Chossid?” the Chossid asked.

For a long while the Rebbe Rashab thought. Then he said: “Yes, this is a Chossid.”

“But Rebbe, I do not see the lamps!”

Answered the Rebbe Rashab: “Because you are not a lamplighter.”

“How does one become a lamplighter?”

“First, you must reject the evil within yourself. Start with yourself, cleanse yourself, refine yourself, and you will see the lamp within your fellow. When a person is himself coarse, *chas veshalom*, he sees coarseness; when a person is himself refined, he sees the refinement in others.”

The Chossid then asked: “Is one to grab the other by the throat?”

Replied the Rebbe: “By the throat, no; by the lapels, yes.”

(13 Tammuz 5721)

No Longer Enough

“For 10 years,” the Frierdiker Rebbe quoted the Rebbe Rashab, “I deliberated about opening the yeshiva, and I visited the Ohel of the Tzemach Tzedek and the Rebbe Maharash often.”¹

The Rebbe Rashab announced the opening of Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim during the *sheva brachos* of his only son, the Frierdiker Rebbe, on 15 Elul 5657*.

It was a tumultuous time for Russian Jewry. Some 15 years earlier, the Jews had been scapegoated for the assassination of the Czar and had experienced a wave of devastating pogroms, followed by a series of debilitating decrees hampering Jewish movement.

The Haskalah movement had been making inroads for decades, and Socialism and Zionism were becoming popular, making their way into yeshivos, shuls, and all the greatest strongholds of Jewish life. A common opinion throughout Eastern Europe was that Chassidus (and Yiddishkeit in general) no longer provided the answers to the challenges of the times (*r"l*).

The state of Chabad Chassidim was also in disarray. For close to 10 years, no Rebbe had actively served in the town of Lubavitch, and additionally, many of the Tzemach Tzedek's grandsons served as Rebbes in different towns, splintering the once unified Chabad movement.

In those days, Chassidim normally began to study Chassidus as *yoshvim*, independant older *bochurim* and young married men already proficient in *nigleh*, who chose to spend several months or years in the Rebbe's presence. However, many others fell through the cracks. Instead of making

the journey to Lubavitch as their ancestors had done in the hundreds and thousands, they were being pulled into the new movements.

The Rebbe Rashab felt it was time for change.

A New Type of Yeshiva

“When I shopped around for a *yeshiva gedolah*,” recounted Reb Shmerel Sasonkin,² “I met *bochurim* from Telz, Volozhin, etc., with shaved beards and large *chups*, who complained about their status as *yeshiva bochurim* and hoped to study medicine or law.

“In my yeshiva too, we paid attention to cultural norms in our dress, hair, etc. We were oblivious to the concept of *hidur mitzvah*. Our *tallis katans* weren’t the proper *shiur* and we hid them in our pants. All mitzvos including *tefillah* were done quickly and coldly, trying to save time for our Gemara learning.

“When I arrived in Lubavitch, I didn’t recognize my former friends. They wore wool *tzitzis*, and *tefillin* made by *yirei Shamayim*. They didn’t care about the world around them. And their goal wasn’t to become a *lamdan*; it was to connect with Hashem by delving into His wisdom.”

The goal of Tomchei Temimim, as evident from the talks and writings of the Rebbe Rashab and Frierdiker Rebbe, could perhaps be boiled down into several points: Torah learning in an atmosphere of *yiras Shamayim*, study of Chassidus that resembles the study of *nigleh*, *avodah pnimis*, and a fourth goal, equal if not more important: to become *neiros leha’ir*.

“The main goal and objective of Tomchei Temimim,” the Rebbe Rashab writes to the Frierdiker Rebbe in one letter, “is to strengthen the youth and



THE EARLIEST EXTANT PICTURE OF THE FRIERDIKER REBBE.

JEM 102266

protect them from heinous influences, to implant within them *yiras Hashem* and *ahavas Hashem*, and, wherever they are able, to strengthen Torah and *avodah*; to establish Torah classes in towns with the youth . . . to draw them to Torah, to instill in them *yiras Shamayim*, a desire to separate from forbidden things and to do mitzvos in actuality. This is the goal of Tomchei Temimim!”³

There were other yeshivos that sought to strengthen the *yiras Shamayim* of their students, but they normally used an approach of *mussar*, even the (non-Chabad) Chassidishe yeshivos. Lubavitch was unique in the Rebbe Rashab’s insistence that Toras Hachassidus was as relevant as it was in previous generations, even taking

it a step further, making Chassidus a subject to be studied just like *nigleh*, studied by *all bochurim*, of *all* ages, for up to a third of the day (four out of twelve hours), something that had been previously unheard of, even in Chabad.

In another unprecedented move, the Rebbe Rashab wrote various *kuntreisim*, which can be called “manuals for Chassidic life,” defining in utmost detail the appropriate conduct and approach of a Chossid, which had been much more fluid and less defined by the Rabbeim in previous generations.

Exponential Growth

The yeshiva began with a small group of *bochurim* who were sent



A LETTER ON THE STATIONARY OF TOMCHEI TEMIMIM LUBAVITCH, SIVAN 5665.

to Zhembin, under the guidance of the mashpia Reb Shmuel Gronem Esterman. Another group remained in Lubavitch, continuing the format of *yoshvim*, under the guidance of Reb Chanoch Hendel Kugel. As the yeshiva grew, Lubavitch became the central branch.

During the first year alone, 10 new students joined, and over the next few years, the yeshiva grew by leaps and bounds. When the Rebbe Rashab said the famous *sicha* of *Kol hayotze limilchemes beis Dovid*, three years after the yeshiva's founding, over 60 *bochurim* were counted among its ranks.

Soon, classes were opened for younger *bochurim* and even children, and in its second decade, the yeshiva numbered close to 400 students. The alumni, widely acclaimed for their Torah, *avodah*, and fearless dedication to Yiddishkeit, began to take up posts as rabbonim and community pillars throughout Russia and beyond. The yeshiva was a very sought after destination for G-d-fearing fathers (Chassidim or not) who wanted their sons to grow in their Yiddishkeit.

"The week of enrollment made a deep impression on me," related Rabbi

Yisrael Jacobson.⁴ "Many *bochurim* arrived in Lubavitch, some together with their fathers. All the fathers spoke to each other nervously, hoping that their son would be accepted. The yeshiva was famous for only accepting students who demonstrated their willingness for *avodah* and learning. If a student was rejected, he didn't give up so quickly; he would begin knocking on doors, approaching the yeshiva administration, the Frierdiker Rebbe, the elder Rebbetzin Rivkah (the Rebbe Rashab's mother), shedding copious tears to be accepted; sometimes, they were successful."

The Rebbe Rashab's Chatzer

From the outset, the *menahel* of the yeshiva was the Frierdiker Rebbe. However, no big decision was made without the Rebbe Rashab's input, and he constantly received detailed reports about the yeshiva in general and *bochurim* in particular. *Bochurim* would consult with the Rebbe Rashab during *yechidus*, and he would give them detailed instructions in their *avodah pnimis*. Davening at length, for example, was something a *bochur* would engage in only at the direct behest of the Rebbe Rashab.

However, a *bochur* in yeshiva didn't get to see the Rebbe every day. As per the custom of most of the Rabbeim, the Rebbe Rashab remained in his home, and would enter the yeshiva only on Friday night, for the central event in the 'Lubavitch Court': to deliver a *maamar*.

"After Kabbalas Shabbos," Rabbi Yisrael Jacobson said, describing his first Shabbos in Lubavitch, "a square enclosure was set up, and all the *bochurim* crowded around singing many beautiful *niggunim*. Suddenly, the crowd fell silent. A pathway was cleared, and the Rebbe Rashab entered and began reciting the *maamar*."

"I don't remember the *dibur hamaschil* or the content of the *maamar*, but the sight left a deep impression on me."

The *maamar* would normally last an hour-and-a-half. The Rebbe Rashab would begin in a low voice, but as time went on, he would speak louder and more passionately. After the *maamar*, he would make his way back home, and the *bochurim* and guests would begin *chazarah*. On Shabbos morning, the *chozrim* would enter the Rebbe Rashab's room to deliver a *chazarah* before him and hear his comments and corrections. Later, the Rebbe Rashab would deliver a written transcript of the *maamar*, which many *bochurim* would learn all week long.

On Yomim Tovim, many guests from all over Russia would arrive in Lubavitch. While davening normally took place in the small *zal*, for Yomim Tovim it would move to the big *zal*, which housed the yeshiva and was about four and a half thousand square feet.

The Rebbe Rashab would farbreng several times a year: On Simchas Torah, Yud-Tes Kislev, Acharon Shel



Pesach, and other unique occasions. Other farbrengens were held in his home, but most *bochurim* weren't granted entry.

There were other special events during the year.

On Rosh Hashanah, Chassidim would crowd around to hear *tekios*, and to listen to the Rebbe Rashab daven Maariv, which would go on for hours. The walk to *tashlich* at the river was one of the only occasions that the Rebbe Rashab would be seen resplendent in his *spodik* outside of the *chotzer*. Photographers from Vitebsk would attempt to capture pictures of him from boats, so tall *bochurim* were appointed to surround him and block the photographers.

Before Yom Kippur, groups would enter the Rebbe Rashab's home to receive his blessing, and he would read Maftir Yona during Mincha. On Simchas Torah, the shul was filled to capacity when the Rebbe Rashab and the Friediker Rebbe would dance together for the first and last *hakafos*.

Before Pesach, the Rebbe Rashab would lead a large procession to the river to draw water for *mayim shelanu* amidst joyous singing. He would also supervise the matzah baking, and visit the *bochurim's seder* after Maariv on the first night of Pesach.

On Shabbos mornings, the Rebbe Rashab would attend davening, but would himself daven very slowly, and would be holding before Baruch She'amar when the minyan concluded. On Yom Tov, however, he would daven with the minyan, and the *balebatim* were able to approach him and wish him Gut Yom Tov afterwards.

Yechidus took place three times a week, on Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday, and the train to Rudnia, the closest station to Lubavitch, was

always full of Chassidim on those days. (Women didn't generally enter *yechidus*, and they would sometimes send messages through the Rebbetzins. Non-Jews were occasional guests at *yechidus*, but the Rebbe Rashab wouldn't speak to them in Russian, for various reasons.)⁵

Galvanizing the Community

"The Rebbe [Rashab] was the first Rebbe [of his time] to truly involve himself in activism, and he was also the first not to hide his opinion. Many Rebbes of the day were opposed to Zionism yet were afraid to express themselves, but the Rebbe of Lubavitch famously put out a letter against them, greatly provoking and upsetting the Zionist circles. Even those whom he upset begrudgingly respected his fearlessness and his leadership."

These words were written—somewhat surprisingly—by Yitzchak Shneerson, a relative of the Rabbeim but an outspoken advocate for Haskalah who opposed the Rebbe Rashab on all fronts.

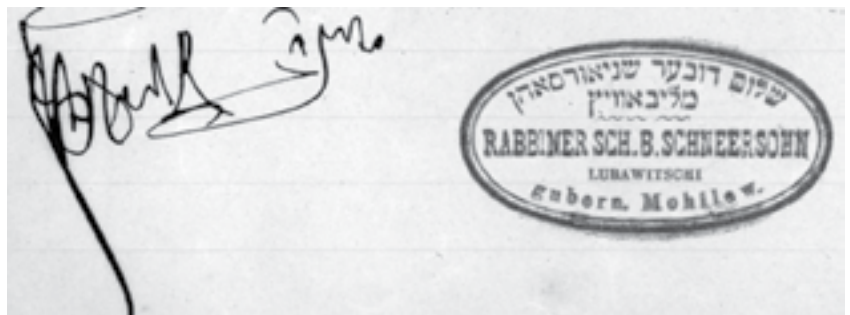
"When the need arose to organize the religious community, the Rebbe [Rashab]'s decisions made a very strong impact. He was a famous and beloved Rebbe, known for his fierce fear of Heaven and equal good *midos*,

for his famous Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim and for his fearlessness in combating Zionism. He was a Rebbe who never traveled around asking for money, being a true *soneh batza*. And unlike most other Chassidic leaders, he was a talented communal activist and first class organizer, making him the acclaimed leader of all religious circles in Russia."

From the earliest years of his leadership, the Rebbe Rashab spent many months on the road, traveling throughout Russia for matters of public importance (as well as for matters pertaining to his own health). Those were trying times for Russian Jews, and there was a constant need for public activism to better the physical and spiritual well-being of the Jewish community.

On a material level, the anti-Semitic government issued new decrees regularly, tightening the Pale of Settlement—where Jews were permitted to live—and imposing other restrictions. On a spiritual level, the Haskalah and anti-religious Zionist groups were becoming increasingly organized, and, along with the government, sought to force secular education into the *chadarim* and rabbinate.

Opposing these matters came at a significant danger. The government



SIGNATURE AND STAMP OF THE REBBE RASHAB.



SOME OF THE PARTICIPANTS AT THE ASIFAS HARABONIM OF 5670 IN S. PETERSBURG.

would often threaten to sanction pogroms if their will wasn't carried out, and great care was necessary so as not to endanger Jewish communities. On occasion, the Rebbe Rashab's personal safety was in jeopardy as well, and he was even once placed under house arrest for his efforts.

Through travel and correspondence, he was in constant contact with other prominent rabbonim such as Reb Chaim Brisker, Reb Chaim Ozer Grodzinsky and Reb Yitzchak Elchonon Spektor, and many *Poilisher* Rebbes. He also made connections with major philanthropists from Western Europe, who were close business partners with the government and also major donors of the Haskalah, most prominently, the Barons Naftali Tzvi and Alexander Ginzburg.

Some of the projects were: Sending matzos to Russian soldiers on the border of China, fighting the Zionist activists, working against the rulings that tightened the Pale of Settlement, and efforts to create more places of Jewish employment.

A lot of the Rebbe Rashab's work focused around his opposition to the Maskilim. In response to the founding

of Chevras Mefitzei Haskalah, many Jewish leaders recognized the need to galvanize the entire religious community, and turned to the Rebbe Rashab, who orchestrated the founding of Chevras Machzikei Hadas to unite the entire religious community under a single banner. When his proclamation was sent out, 137 chapters were founded throughout Czarist Russia, and the organizations made an immediate impact.

The Maskilim also opened schools throughout Russia, where the teachers presented a "cultured" view of Judaism and gave the children a significant secular education. Due to the significance of the town of Lubavitch, they even founded a school there, to the Rebbe Rashab's great *agmas nefesh* (this school was the foundation of the Poalei Tzion of Lubavitch, a group of youth who were in perpetual conflict with the yeshiva). The Maskilim also sought to install, by government compulsion, non-religious teachers in the *frum chadarim* as well.

The Rebbe Rashab fought this campaign on all fronts. In the first case, he fought to stop the Maskilim's sources of funding. He wrote extensively to the Maskilim's chief

sponsor, Baron Ginzburg, pushing him to direct his funding elsewhere, and scuttled a major grant from the JCA (encouraging them instead to establish factories for the underemployed Jewish community). In the second case, he organized a wide group of Jewish representatives to promote the opposition, an effort which came to a height with the *asifas harabbonim* in S. Petersburg.

The Asifas Harabbonim

The Russian government held occasional conferences with Jewish leaders to deal with various issues of the Jewish community. However, the gatherings were usually attended by members of the Haskalah and dominated by Baron Ginzburg and others, who preferred to retain control over the proceedings. These wealthy and non-observant individuals were significantly detached from the Jewish community, and the outcomes, therefore, often didn't reflect the view of the mostly observant population, and didn't accurately represent their material needs.

For many years, the Rebbe Rashab advocated a gathering of the real rabbonim of Russia in a

conference that would be recognized by the government, where they would effectively deal with the issues and accurately represent the community's needs. Given the state of communication in those days, as well as the lack of interest on the part of the Maskilim and the government (Russian law forbade the gathering of rabbonim at all without government permission), this idea was pushed off for many years. Finally, in 5668*, the plans began to take off.

To ensure that the community was properly represented, the government arranged for elections to be held in each Jewish community where the representatives for the grand *asifa* would be chosen. The Rebbe Rashab immediately began an election campaign, to ensure that G-d-fearing rabbonim would be chosen over the Maskilim, who were running an election campaign of their own.

In most cities, the Rebbe Rashab was confident of his success, but when several locations seemed to hang in the balance, the Rebbe Rashab traveled there personally to ensure the success of his candidates.

In Chernigov, Yitzchak Schneerson was running the Maskilim's campaign, and the Rebbe Rashab arrived to counter the efforts of his own cousin. In Yitzchak's memoirs, he describes the scene of the Rebbe Rashab's arrival:

"The train station was besieged by thousands of people who came to see the Rebbe. The home where he stayed was surrounded by so many that it was impossible to cross the street...

"At the gathering for the elections, a line-up of the most prominent rabbonim and Jewish leaders from the area gathered together. But the height of the event was the arrival of the

Lubavitcher Rebbe, a man with a bold step, a keen eye and a *hadras panim*. His mere presence made an impact; we felt that we are in the presence of someone with a fierce determination and full of vigor. A real leader.

"I too, felt unusually inspired. It is well-known that even the greatest liar appreciates truth. Even I, far from being the greatest *yarei Shamayim*, felt uplifted by the presence of such a great Rebbe."

The conference took place in 5670* in S. Petersburg, and a "pre-conference" took place in Vilna a year earlier. Many of the most prominent rabbonim of the time participated, among them, Reb Chaim Ozer Grodzinsky, Reb Meir Simcha of Dvinsk, Rada"tz Chein, the Rebbes of Babroisk, Radzin and Sokolov, among many others. The Rebbe Rashab brought along his own contingency of Chassidim and rabbonim, among them the Frierdiker Rebbe, Harav Levi Yitzchak Schneerson, and Reb Mendel Chein. Reb Chaim Brisker was one of the leading rabbonim at the conference, and he supported the view of the Rebbe Rashab on all fronts.

One individual present, Heinrich Slusberg, noted the Rebbe Rashab's towering presence: "The Lubavitcher Rebbe had an immense impact on all the rabbonim. Though he was not so old, his every word captivated the crowd... He was tough as a rock on all matters pertaining to Yiddishkeit; he would not bend an iota on any Jewish practice..."

Many issues were brought up. The problem of Jewish employment, the issue of the many *agunos* in Russia, and the proper place and power of the *kahal*. The central discussion, however, was the government proposal that all rabbonim and *melamdin* be obligated



A BRIEF ACCOUNT BOOKLET OF THE ASIFAS HARABONIM 5670 IN S. PETERSBURG.

to acquire a secular education. At one point, a message was conveyed on behalf of Minister of the Interior Stolypin:

"If the attendees continue their opposition to the government's requirement of educating rabbonim in Russian, terrible pogroms will break out in 101 cities across the Russian Empire."

There were other rabbonim who subtly spoke out against it, but the Rebbe Rashab was the only one who openly took a bold stand.

The Rebbe Rashab asked for permission to speak, and he spoke words which would later be repeated by the Rabbeim countless times:

"...It was merely our bodies that were sent into exile and placed under the jurisdiction of foreign governments. Our *neshamos*, however, were never sent into exile!"

Passionately, he called on all the attendees to ignore the threats and stay true to Yiddishkeit. "Yidden!" he called out, "Be *mekadesh Hashem's* name in public!" and he fell into a faint.⁶



THE BUILDING OF TOMCHEI-TEMIMIM IN ROSTOV.

Upheaval

Over the five years following the *asifa*, the Rebbe Rashab continued to work to promote the decisions, and indeed, no new laws for the rabbonim and *melamdim* were enacted. Then World War I broke out, and everything changed.

“With the approach of winter 5676*, we were excited,” wrote Reb Yudel Chitrik.⁷ “Being that the borders were closed, it seemed that the Rebbe Rashab would remain in Lubavitch for the entire winter.”

However, it was not to be. As the battle-front approached the region, the Rebbe Rashab decided to leave the town Lubavitch. The house was quickly packed up, the large library the Rebbe Rashab had collected was shipped to Moscow (where it remains in *galus* to this very day) and wagons were loaded with the necessary household items and the precious *kesavim*.

On 17 Cheshvan 5676*, to the dismay of the Chassidim and Temimim, the Rebbe Rashab left Lubavitch, the cradle of Chassidus Chabad for over 100 years.

After some time on the road, the Rebbe and his household arrived in

Rostov, where they rented a home and settled in. Despite the dangerous conditions, the Rebbe Rashab immediately set out to work on new issues that arose due to the war. The government had banished all the Jews from the regions at the front, creating millions of refugees who needed material and spiritual assistance, and the army also wanted to draft all able-bodied young men, including rabbonim and *shochtim*. The Rebbe Rashab made several trips to Moscow and S. Petersburg (sometimes ending up in extreme danger in the middle of roadside battles), to annul those decrees and better the Jews’ situation.

New opportunities arose when the Czar was assassinated and a democratic government was announced. The Rebbe Rashab wanted to establish chapters of Tomchei Temimim throughout the country, and was also involved in the arrangement of a Jewish congress. However, a bitter civil war broke out, and soon, the Communist Bolsheviks overtook the country.

The situation on the streets constantly deteriorated. Unauthorized gatherings were outlawed, money and property were confiscated, and even

a portion of the Rebbe Rashab’s home was taken.

Reishis Goyim Amalek

“When the Bolsheviks took Rostov in Shevat [5680*],” writes Reb Berel Rivkin,⁸ “the Rebbe [Rashab] asked that Chassidim stop visiting his home [because such gatherings were forbidden]. Nevertheless, on Purim everyone showed up, each person thinking he would be the only one.”

Despite the danger, the Rebbe Rashab led an uplifting farbrengen and calmed everyone’s fears. Suddenly, there was a knock on the door; the Bolshevik police were coming to conduct a search.

The police entered the building, and approached the door of the farbrengen, staring incredulously at the illegal gathering. Everyone at the table froze in fright, but the Rebbe Rashab wasn’t moved. He didn’t allow anyone to remove the *mashke* or money (both contraband) from the table, instead declaring, “We will speak Chassidus, and they will be *nisbatel!*”

“He began saying the *maamar ‘Reishis Goyim Amalek,’*” writes Reb Berel, “explaining how the *klipah* doesn’t exist in reality. Several times, he reminded everyone, ‘Listen to what is being said, don’t be afraid, and don’t look at them.’”

Shockingly, the police left without causing any problems.

On Motzei Shabbos, Reb Berel wanted to go into *yechidus*, but was told that “the Rebbe is unusually preoccupied.” Over the next few days, the Rebbe Rashab asked for many different *sefarim*. As Chassidim later discovered, he was preparing a *tzava’a*.

A week after the Purim farbrengen, the Rebbe Rashab began to feel ill. When the condition didn’t pass



quickly, doctors were called, and they determined that it wasn't the typhus that was raging through the city. However, to their consternation, his strength deteriorated from day to day. "The doctors didn't understand the concept of a Rebbe, yet they became very attached to him, just like the biggest *mekusharim*," Reb Berel writes.

By the eve of Beis Nissan, the situation was clearly dire. The doctors said they had nothing to offer anymore. The Rebbe Rashab spoke faintly, and Chassidim were able to make out various words and phrases from Chassidus. Suddenly, he opened his eyes, looked at the Frierdiker Rebbe, and said clearly, "*Ich gei in himel, di ksavim loz ich eich*—I am going to heaven, and the *kesavim* I leave for you." He asked to be taken

into the *zal*, where all the Chassidim had gathered.

For several hours, the situation hung in the balance. Chassidim gathered around his bed, sobbing and reciting Tehillim, and people donated their own years in front of the *aron kodesh*. For a short moment, the crowd was ushered out, and the Rebbe Rashab blessed the members of his family. Soon, the Chassidim returned, and the Tehillim recital continued.

Then, at around four in the morning, on ג' ניסן תר"פ, the Rebbe Rashab was *nistalek*.

A Just Cause

Three years after the founding of Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim, the Rebbe Rashab spoke a foundational *sicha* about the task of his *bochurim*,

known as "*Kol Hayozte Lmilchemes Beis Dovid*."

The Rebbe Rashab said that their task in life was to be a torch of holiness for themselves and their surroundings, waging Hashem's war against those who fight Him: equally against those who *אשר חרפו אויבין ה*, and those who *אשר חרפו עקבות משיחך*, spreading the *mayanos* of Chassidus until they reach the farthest *chutza*, like the teaching of the Baal Shem Tov.

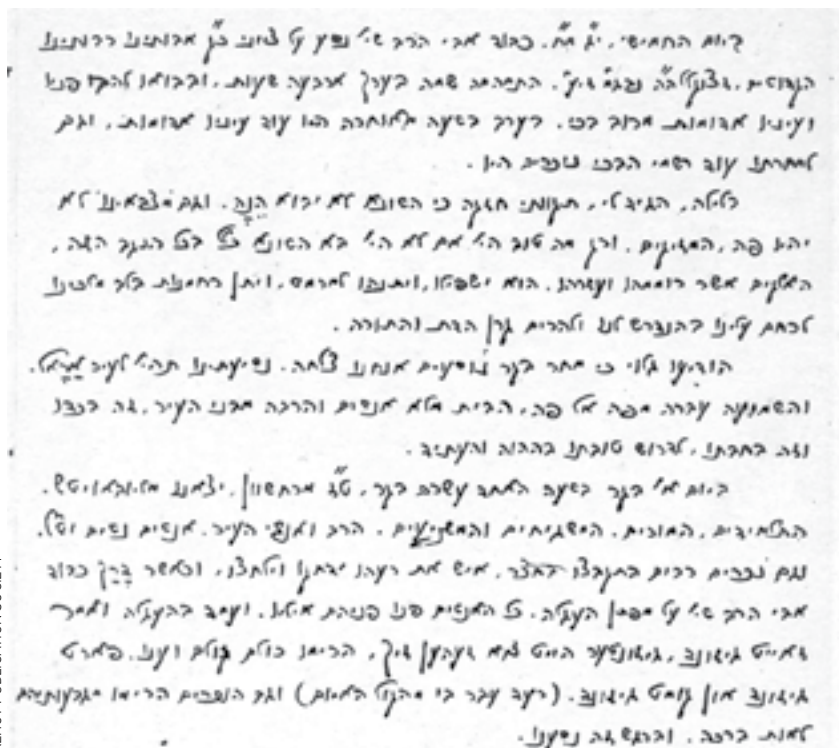
It seems that the "real" work, and the true test of character, actually only began after the Rebbe Rashab's passing, with the advent of Communism in Russia.

It was the Temimim and their families and students who responded to the Frierdiker Rebbe's call for *mesiras nefesh*. They created a vast network of chadarim, keeping the spark of Yiddishkeit alive, and they raised a generation of Chassidim, who became the nucleus for the Rebbe's work in *hafatzas hamaayanos*.

During a Chof Cheshvan farbrengen, the Rebbe once asked: Why is it necessary to recall that famous *sicha*, which was said to the "elite" *bochurim* of Lubavitch? How is it relevant to us?

The answer, the Rebbe said, is that it is indeed now the task of each one of us. The generation of *yetzias Mitzrayim* was loftier than us, but now their *avodah* has become ours. Likewise with the Rebbe Rashab; although the *sicha* was said to loftier people than us, it has now, in light of the circumstances, been passed on to become the task of every single Jew.

Every Jew is a *ner leha'ir*.



RESHIMA OF THE FRIERDIKER REBBE DESCRIBING THE REBBE RASHAB'S MOVE OUT OF LUBAVITCH TO ROSTOV.



A REBBE'S CHINUCH

In Secrecy

The birth of the Rebbe Rashab, as recounted to us by the Frierdiker Rebbe, was shrouded in secrecy.

It began with a series of dreams that his mother, Rebbetzin Rivka, dreamt where she saw her mother, Rebbetzin Sarah, and *her* father, the Mitteler Rebbe, and then a third individual later identified as the Alter Rebbe. She was instructed to write a *sefer Torah*, and was promised a 'good' son. "Don't forget about my name," said the Mitteler Rebbe. Under the guidance of the Tzemach Tzedek, the beginning of the Torah's writing and its *siyum* (shortly before the Rebbe Rashab's birth) were held quietly, in the Tzemach Tzedek's room.

On Chof Cheshvan 5621*, the Rebbe Rashab was born. On the evening before the *bris*, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka overheard her husband sending his attendant to tell the Rebbe Maharash that the *bris* won't be held the next morning. Shocked, she protested strongly, and after a few conversations, the Tzemach Tzedek

agreed not to send his attendant. "The *bris* will take place in its proper time," he said. But the next morning, the baby was declared unfit for the *bris*.

On the second night of Chanukah, the Tzemach Tzedek instructed that the *bris* be held the next morning in his room, with minimal participation. "The second *luchos* were given quietly, and in their regard it is said, 'לא ימושו' מפיק ומפי זרעך ומפי זרע אמר ה' מעתה ועד עולם."

At the *bris*, the baby was named Shalom Dovber, after his two great-grandfathers, the Tzemach Tzedek's father Reb Shalom Shachne, and the Mitteler Rebbe.

The child's upshernish too, was held in a quiet fashion. Upon the direction of the Tzemach Tzedek, the Rebbe Rashab slept over in his grandfather's room, and in the morning, he recited the morning *brachos* with him. He called in the child's parents, the Rebbe Maharash and Rebbetzin Rivka, and said as follows:

"The spiritual *pach hashemen* which the Baal Shem Tov gave the Maggid of

Mezeritch to anoint the Alter Rebbe for generations of *nesius*—with that power, my father-in-law the Mitteler Rebbe was appointed, and I, with this power, anointed you (=the Rebbe Maharash) and I anoint him (=the Rebbe Rashab)."

A Close Connection

For his first five years, the Rebbe Rashab's childhood was graced by the presence of his grandfather, the Tzemach Tzedek, who would often test him on his learning in *cheder* and tell him Torah stories. A number of fascinating encounters are known to Chassidim from those meetings, most famously, the Rebbe Rashab's question about Hashem's appearance to Avraham Avinu.⁹ (Some stories may have been passed down in *beis harav*, but the Frierdiker Rebbe noted that the Rebbe Rashab had clear and organized memories of his life from five years of age.)

On his fifth birthday, the Tzemach Tzedek called him in together with his parents, and blessed him. "The blessing from Grandfather," the



MAAMORIM FROM THE
REBBE RASHAB FROM
1899-1902, PUBLISHED BY
THE VAAD HADFASAS DACH
OF YESHIVAS TOMCHEI
TEMIMIM OF LUBAVITCH,
SHANGHAI 5703.

Frierdiker Rebbe recounted hearing from his father, “put me in a different place entirely. He made me a *baal kishronos* (a talented person).”

When he was nine-years-old, his father the Rebbe Maharash began educating him with a *chinuch pnimi*.

“My son was never a child,” the Rebbe Maharash said. “Even during his youth, he was a *yarei Shamayim* and a *mesudar*, and he toiled to conduct himself in the ways of Chassidus. With the approach of his bar mitzvah, he was already a Chossid with a *mesudardiker avodah*.”

Even from a young age, the Rebbe Rashab was famous for his *yiras Shamayim* and meticulous observance of Shulchan Aruch. In a famous story, he once explained that before his bar mitzvah, he trained his body to automatically act according to *halacha*. When his bar mitzvah approached, he was already fluent in Gemara, *poskim* and even Chassidus (he began listening to his father’s *maamarim* from eight years of age).

When he was 15-year-old, the Rebbe Rashab married his first cousin, Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah, the daughter of Reb Yosef Yitzchak of Avrutch. The wedding was held in the *kallah’s* hometown; the Rebbe Maharash did not participate due to his ill health, but instead recited 32 *maamarim* over the week of the wedding.

When the Rebbe Maharash passed away on Yud-Gimmel Tishrei 5643*, the Rebbe Rashab was only 22-years-old. Although he began to say Chassidus (as did his older brother, the Raza, for a short time) and accept *panim* to be read at the Ohel, he still refused to accept the *nesius*. During the year of *aveilus*, he closeted himself in the *yechidus* room of the Rebbe Maharash, where he davened, ate, slept, and studied, and he refused to answer Chassidim or guide them.

As the years passed, not much changed. The Rebbe Rashab would sometimes answer questions, but spent much of those years traveling out of the country for health reasons and for *askanus haklal*. The numbers of

Chassidim visiting Lubavitch dropped drastically; that period of time has been remembered as “*churban Lubavitch*.”

Seven years later, in 5650*, a slight change became evident. The Rebbe Rashab stopped his long journeys and remained in Lubavitch, where he began to accept Chassidim for *yechidus*. Over the next few years, the flow of Chassidim to Lubavitch began to grow once again, where they would come hear Chassidus from the Rebbe Rashab and enter *yechidus*. Thousands of Chassidim streamed to Lubavitch for the wedding of the Rebbe Rashab’s sister Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka and for Tishrei 5653*, the tenth *yom hillula* of the Rebbe Maharash.

On Erev Rosh Hashanah 5654*, the Rebbe Rashab spent a long time at the Ohel of the Rebbe Maharash and the Tzemach Tzedek. Later that night, upon entering the shul for Maariv, the Rebbe Rashab walked right past his usual place, and took the place of his father, the Rebbe Maharash. The long wait of 11 years was finally over.



A NEW UNDERSTANDING

One of the primary endeavors of the Rabbeim—if not *the* primary one—was the teaching of Toras Hachassidus, through the delivery of *maamarim*.

Beginning from the tender age of 15, the Rebbe Rashab wrote hundreds of *hanachos* of his father's *maamarim*, and he would also perform *chazarah*, the verbal review of the *maamarim* for other Chassidim.

When the Rebbe Maharash passed away, he began immediately delivering his own *maamarim*, even though he didn't officially assume the *nesius*, the first *maamar* being 'Keser Yitnu Lecha.' However, he didn't regularly submit them for dissemination. One *maamar* that did make waves in the Chabad world was 'Tanu Rabanan Ner

Chanukah' 5643*, just a few months after the Rebbe Maharash's passing. "Requests for transcripts of the *maamar* came in from all over," the Frierdiker Rebbe recounted.

After he officially assumed the *nesius* 11 years later, the *maamarim* began to be given out more regularly, but a truly new era began with the founding of Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim. It was in those years that he began to regularly deliver the *maamarim* in his famous style. The Frierdiker Rebbe pointed to *Hemshech Rana*"t as the first such *hemshech*, delivered just one year after the founding of the yeshiva.

To get a better understanding of the Rebbe Rashab's *maamarim*, we turned to Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Gurary,

the *mashpia* of Yeshivas Lubavitch, Detroit:

"On several occasions, the Rebbe compared the Rebbe Rashab's Chassidus to that of the Mittlerer Rebbe. The *maamarim* of the Tzemach Tzedek and the Rebbe Maharash, in many instances, are replete with references to Midrash and Zohar, showing the depth of Chassidus and how it relates to all segments of the Torah, and 'uniting,' in the Rebbe's words, *nigleh* and Chassidus together. The Mittlerer Rebbe's *maamarim*, on the other hand, often focus on explaining the concepts of Chassidus themselves, speaking about them at great length and explaining them with utmost clarity.

"The Rebbe Rashab's *maamarim* have a very similar style. In his *hemsheichim*, he approaches all the deepest concepts in Chassidus, attempting to define the *gedarim* of even the most profound ideas, culled from sources throughout *primius haTorah*, going to the depth of each concept to reach the truest and clearest understanding of the issue, in a style that somewhat resembles the Rogatchover's approach to defining concepts in *nigleh*."

Interestingly, one of the only extant letters of the Rebbe Rashab before his



nesius—when he was 17-years-old—is a request for a *ksav* of a *maamar* of the Mitteler Rebbe, from the Chossid Reb Yaakov Mordechai Bezpalov. On a similar note, the Rebbe Rashab once expressed himself that his hair fell out from intense study of Imrei Binah during his travels in Yalta in 5646*.

In fact, the Rebbe related on one occasion, the Rebbe Rashab once found it necessary to point out his *hiskashrus* to his father, the Rebbe Maharash, because of the extreme likeness of his teachings to those of the Mitteler Rebbe.¹⁰

“However,” Rabbi Gurary points out, “in contrast to the Chassidus of the Mitteler Rebbe, the Rebbe Rashab is also known as the Rambam of Chassidus. The Rambam isn’t only known for his utmost clarity, but also for writing *halachos pesukos*, for his decisive approach to the concepts. The Mitteler Rebbe might offer an explanation for pages and pages, and then overturn the entire concept with a few short lines, ודלא כדלעיל, as he often writes. The Rebbe Rashab’s *maamarim*, on the other hand, are written with a clear build up and goal and always bring you closer to the *maskana*.¹¹

“There is a fascinating *sicha* of the Rebbe Rashab on Yud-Tes Kislev 5668*, where he explains the difference between the Alter Rebbe’s Chassidus before his arrest and afterwards, known as ‘*far*’ and ‘*noch Peterburg*.’ The difference is less about the length of the *maamarim*, and more about their approach to logic.

“To understand the former *maamarim*,’ the Rebbe Rashab explained, ‘you need to be a *hechere Yid*, a loftier Jew,’ but the Chassidus following Peterburg is *mislabesh* in human logic; it is accessible to all.

Shiurei Torah

On two occasions brought in Reshimas Hayoman, the Frierdiker Rebbe recounts the *sefer halimud* of the Rebbe Rashab (later mentioned concisely in Hayom Yom):

He had two *shiurim* in Gemara: Two *daf* a week in *iyun*, and three *daf* each day in *girsra* ([a *daf*] after Shacharis, Mincha and Maariv). He would learn this *shiur* even on Yom Kippur during the break. He would also learn *poskim*, although not daily. “Choshen Mishpat with pleasure,” the Rebbe Rashab once remarked, “and the other sections *b’kabbalas ol*.”

Every year, he would learn the entire Midrash Rabba, Chumash with Rashi and also another *pirush* on the *parsha* (one year Panim Yafos, another year Bartenura, and so on).

Each day, he would recite a *perek* of Torah, Nevi’im and Kesuvim by heart, with an open *sefer* in front of him. He would also learn a *perek* of Mishnayos and a *shiur* in Yerushalmi while wearing the tefillin of Shimusha Rabba and Raavad and take a daily *shpatzir* among his *sefarim* shelves for an hour and a quarter.

He would recite Zohar, and also say Shir Hashirim before Kabbalas Shabbos during the weeks between Vayikra and Nitzavim. Pirkei Avos were learned slowly, sometimes a Mishna or two a week, lasting throughout the summer months, and on Tisha B’av, he would learn Midrash Eicha and the *sugya* in Gittin.

(See Reshimas Hayoman 24 & 26 Nissan 5691)

The Rebbe Rashab pointed out that this change was integral to the goal of *yafutzu maayanosecha chutza*, to bring Moshiach; ‘Chassidus was given so that everyone, even those who aren’t spiritually refined—meaning, the *chutza*—should be able to comprehend *Elokus* . . . and that began after Peterburg.’¹²

“It is striking that this *sicha* was said as the Rebbe Rashab was wrapping up the delivery of *Hemshech Samech Vov*, a very widely studied *hemshech* of Chassidus. As the Rebbe once noted, the Chassidus of the Rebbe Rashab in general, and *Hemshech Samech Vov* in particular, is unique in its utmost clarity and logic. In the Rebbe Rashab’s own words to his son, the Frierdiker Rebbe, ‘*In dem Yom Tov, iz altz faran*—everything is contained in this [*hemshech* of] Yom Tov [Shel Rosh Hashanah 5666*].’

“In comparison to the *maamarim* of previous generations, his Chassidus is far more approachable and understandable, and can be studied as an intellectual pursuit, and, to quote the Rebbe Rashab’s words above, ‘even by those who aren’t spiritually refined—meaning, the *chutza*.’” ❶

1 *Sefer Hatoldos* pg. 138.

2 *Zichronosay*, (new edition) pages 29-30, 38-39.

3 *Igros Kodesh Admur Harashab* vol. 1 pg. 318-9.

4 *Zikaron Lvnei Yisrael*.

5 *Lubavitch V’chayaleha*

6 For an extensive overview of this *asifa*, see *No Backing Down*, Derher Teves 5778.

7 *Reshimos Devarim* pg. 366

8 *Ashkavta D’Rebbi* pg. 5

9 Hayom Yom 9 Cheshvan.

10 Shabbos Vayetze 5740, *se’if* 10.

11 *Toras Menachem* 5742 vol. 1 pg. 209

12 *Toras Shalom* pg. 114.



דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר

בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן

נדפס ע"י

הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל

וזוגתו מרת חנה שיינא

ומשפחתם ח' מושקא, לוי יצחק,

רבקה מאריאשא, ברכה,

יקותיאל זוסמאן וגיטה שיחיו

גנזבורג

שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר

לטאראנטא, קאנאדא

Try Again and Again

AS TOLD BY RABBI DOVID STOLER (BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA)

As part of our shlichus we run the Hillel School in the Villa del Parque neighborhood of Buenos Aires. The students all come from not-frum homes and since it is a middle/lower class neighborhood, most families do not pay full tuition. Some come on full scholarships and I need to fundraise close to 60% of the annual budget.

The Argentinian economy has been very bad for several years and in Adar 5779* the financial situation of the school was terrible. Balei Batim stopped answering my phone calls, refusing to meet with me and it seemed that we would need to close the school inevitably.

Before Yud Shevat I had traveled to the Rebbe on 8 Shevat for several hours specifically to come to the Ohel and daven for the success of the school, which already then was in bad financial straits.

I returned from the Ohel uplifted, confident that everything will work out with the Rebbe's brachos and we will succeed in keeping the school running, but a month later things were only getting worse, and I started to despair.

One day in Adar, as I was thinking about the situation I received a WhatsApp notification about the daily JEM



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"YOU CERTAINLY KNOW THAT THE PEOPLE OF YOUR COUNTRY ARE FAMOUS FOR THEIR INSISTENCE IN EVERYTHING THAT THEY WANT".

NEW YORK SENATOR PATRICK MOYNIHAN AT SUNDAY DOLLARS, 21 ADAR 5750.

video. Admittedly I don't watch the videos every day since they come to my phone in the middle of the day and I am usually too preoccupied to concentrate even on the short video. But that day I tapped on the notification and watched the video.

It was an excerpt from Dollars on 21 Adar 5750*. New York Senator Patrick Moynahan came to greet the Rebbe and presented the Rebbe a two hundred year old Sefer Tikun Chatzos he received at an ancient shul in Marrakesh, Morocco.

The Rebbe thanked him for the sefer and said: *"You certainly know that the people of your country are famous for their insistence in everything that they want. May G-d Almighty bless you to be successful in being insistent for the benefit of the entire population of New York and the population of the United States."*

After discussing the senator's 63rd birthday the Rebbe continued, *"Insist on your activities, with the famous insistence of your country."*

Although I am a shliach in Buenos Aires I was born in Tucuman, Argentina and Tucuman locals are famous in Argentina for their stubbornness to make things work. If something doesn't work out the first time they keep at it until they succeed.

When I heard the Rebbe's words I took it as a message directly to me that I should not despair if donors are not answering the phones. I decided that come what may, I will continue calling and calling until things start to work out.

I threw myself into the work with renewed energy and resolve and Baruch Hashem over the next few weeks large donations were coming in and the financial disaster was behind us.

A few days before Yud-Alef Nissan I wanted to travel to the Ohel to thank the Rebbe for the many brachos I

had just experienced and I contacted a travel agent to book a flight for a short trip to New York. Right before confirming the purchase I thought to myself that there is so much work before Pesach in preparing for the sederim, the model sederim for the school and ensuring the mitvza matzah happens with the proper shturem, and it would be inappropriate for me to leave for even a day.

After canceling the trip I thought to myself that מחשבה טובה הקב"ה מצרפה למעשה and hopefully just the fact that I had the serious consideration and desire to be by the Rebbe for Yud-Alef Nissan will be counted as if I was actually there.

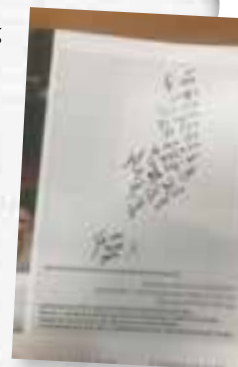
Yud-Alef Nissan in the morning I was folding my tallis in shul when I noticed the Spanish Derher that had just been published for the month of Nissan. When I opened it to the ksav yad column, I was shocked with what I saw.

It was a response to someone who had been by the Rebbe for Yud-Alef Nissan 5732:

ת"ח על הקורת רוח וכו' מביקורו כאן בימים אלו.
ויה"ר שיהא ג"כ לתועלת הרבים (נוסף על שכל יחיד -
עולם מלא הוא).

אזכיר עה"צ להג"ל ולחה"פ כשר ושמח.

Many thanks for the pleasure etc. of your visit here during these days. May it be [Hashem's] will that this will benefit the community (in addition to the fact that every individual - is an entire world). I will mention you at the tziyun for the above and for a kosher and joyous Pesach. ①



YOUR STORY

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



לע"נ
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' אהרן
בן הרה"ח הרה"ת יהושע שניאור זלמן
ע"ה
נלב"ע ט' ניסן ה'תשע"ט
נדפס ע"י בנו
הרה"ת ר' יוסף וזוגתו מרת חנה רחל
שיחין
סערעברעאנסקי



”אלע ענינים שאקעלן זיך!”

EREV PESACH 5740

Upon returning from the Ohel on 13 Nissan 5740*, the Rebbe davened Mincha in the upstairs *zal*. Not long after, word spread that there would be a *sicha* following Maariv. All those who were present at the time of this special *sicha* recall the serious manner in which the Rebbe spoke, addressing the situation in Eretz Yisroel and the effect it was having on the world in general. This was an unusual scene in 770, and we are pleased to present this set of recently discovered and restored photos of this rare occasion from JEM's Living Archive.

This story is part of the Rebbe's campaign of "Vehayshiv Lev Avos Al Bonim" started on Rosh Chodesh Nissan 5740. For a deeper understanding of the story see, "Children at the Forefront," Derher Sivan 5774.



Following Maariv at 7:45, a microphone was quickly set up at the Rebbe's table. The Rebbe sat down, placed his hand on his forehead, and while looking downward began speaking about "*Vehayshiv lev avos al bonim*," the theme of the ongoing campaign for children.

Suddenly the Rebbe began speaking in a very serious tone, with closed eyes, about the security of Eretz Yisroel. "אלע ענינים שאקעלן" זיך—Things are shaking, especially in Eretz Yisroel!"—the Rebbe said, and if Eretz Yisroel is wavering in matters pertaining to security and livelihood, it is a direct consequence of a wavering and uncertain stance in matters of Torah and mitzvos. The Rebbe compared the situation to the *gezeira* of Purim and declared that the defeat of our enemies would come by assuming a firm and determined position in all matters of Torah and mitzvos, specifically through children.



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The room quickly filled up, an overflow crowd extended out into the corridor, and *bochurim* stood on tables and benches to be able to hear and see.



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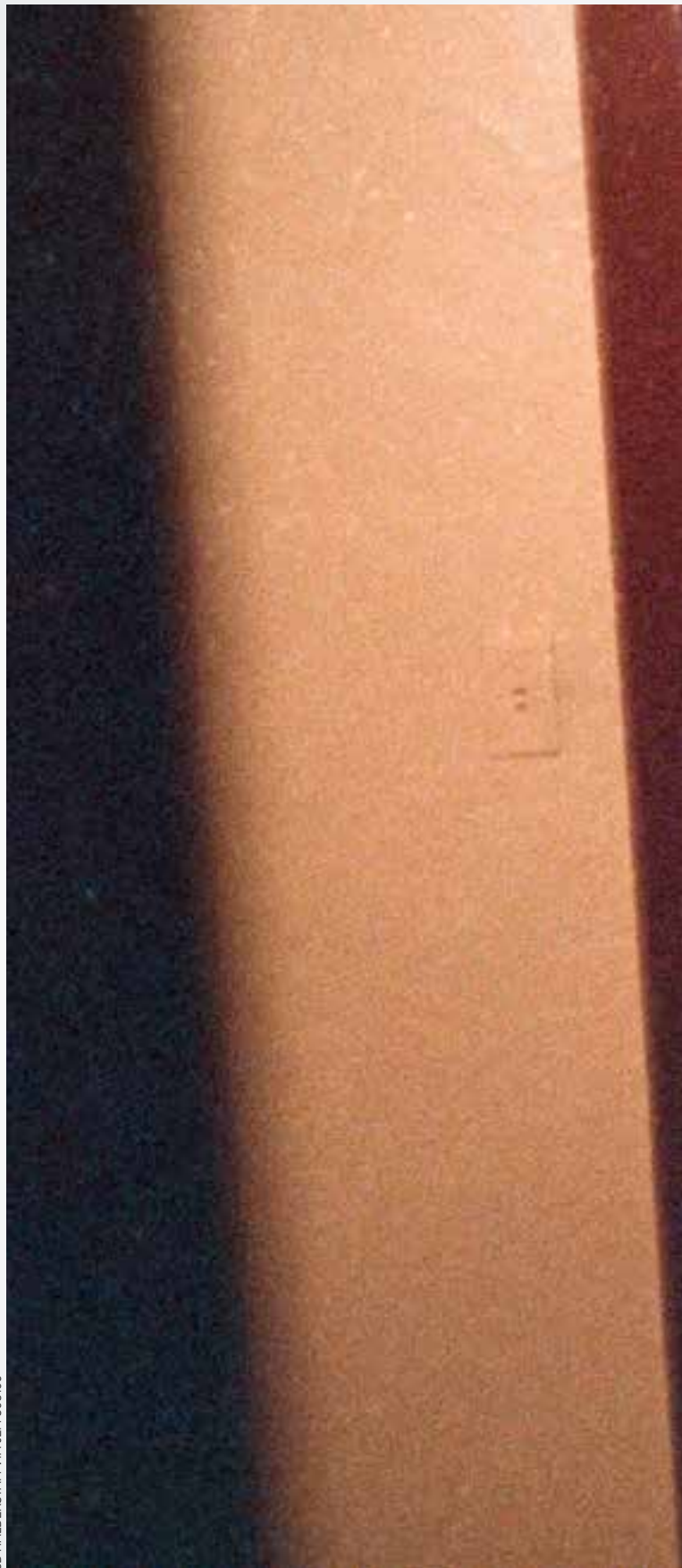
After the *sicha*, the Rebbe waited for the crowd to form a path for him to get through. After a few minutes in his room the Rebbe headed home while starting the niggun “*Al Achas*.”

The Rebbe edited the *sicha* for publication¹ and instructed *mazkirus* to forward the key points to the Prime Minister of Israel, Mr. Menachem Begin. They were to inform him that the *sicha* was delivered at a time when there was an obligation upon the Rebbe, *al pi Shluchan Aruch*, to perform *bedikas chametz*, but the Rebbe nevertheless used the time to speak the *sicha*.

14 NISSAN - EREV PESACH

Krias haTorah took place at 10:15 in the upstairs *zal*. At 10:45, the Rebbe headed down to the boiler room in the basement of 770 for *biur chametz*.

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Derher**Letters**

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



גודל הנחת רוח - 70 years

Dear Editors,

In continuation to the *shturem* of *shivim shana*, seventy years of the Rebbe's *nesius* celebrated on Yud Shevat this year, I will share a story that took place in 5732 when we marked the Rebbe's seventieth birthday.

There was a tremendous *ruach* then in Lubavitch. Chassidim prepared for months for the special milestone. Shluchim and *askanim* brought various gifts and the *bochurim* took on resolutions in learning as *matanos* for the Rebbe.

I was 10-years-old at the time and I too wanted to bring a *matana* to the Rebbe. I took on a *hachlata* to learn an extra seventy hours outside the time in yeshiva. I bought a little notepad and everyday I would write down all the time I spent learning in between school hours, until I accumulated seventy hours by Yud-Aleph Nissan. I was of course very excited.

I planned to share my *matana* with the Rebbe but I didn't want anyone else (even my parents) to know about it. On Erev Yud-Aleph Nissan I went to my father's drawer where he kept paper without lines on it for writing to the Rebbe and I took a paper on which I wrote down about the extra seventy hours.

I came in to 770 where I intended on giving my letter to *mazkirus*.

Lots of people were hanging around the *mazkirus* office and I was embarrassed to go in. I knew that Reb Binyomin Klein would ask me right away whose letter it is and I was uncomfortable, so I left 770 and started heading back down Kington Avenue.

As I was walking, I thought to myself that I don't want all my hard work to go to waste so I went back to 770, stuck my letter under the door of *mazkirus* and ran away.

Then I realized there's a good chance my letter would not make it into the Rebbe's room as it will get trampled on and end up in the trash. I went back into *mazkirus* and pointed out to Rabbi Klein that someone's letter had ended up on the floor. He told me to pick it up and he added it to the shelf with all the letters for the Rebbe.

It was a very busy day in 770. Yud-Aleph Nissan is always busy but 5732 was chaotic. There were dignitaries, shluchim and many other visitors going in and out of the Rebbe's room throughout the day and the Rebbe was scheduled to farbreng that night.

To my great surprise, when I got home later that day, my father (who speculated I had written something to the Rebbe) told me that the Rebbe had given out a special answer for me:

גודל הנחת רוח. כמופת הייתי לרבים ואתה מחסי עוז.

The *nachas-ruach* [is] great. [Citing from the new *kapitel*,] "I was an example for the many, and You were my strong shield..."

On the Rebbe's birthday with so much going on, the Rebbe took the time to answer a ten-year-old child about the *nachas* he caused!

Pesach Sperlin
Montreal, Canada



Greater than Packages

Dear Editors,

Thank you so much for the Derher; I very much enjoy reading it.

I recently read the Teves issue with the fascinating article on Ezras Achim, about everything the Chassidim did to help the Yidden in Russia [“Secrecy, Stealth and Inspiration”, Issue 88 (165)].

I would like to bring to your attention a letter from the Rebbe to Reb Peretz Mochkin that I read lately.

At the time of the letter (5717), Reb Peretz had two children in Russia and was sending them packages. In the letter the Rebbe writes that *hafatzas hamaayanos* is a more effective way to help his children, being that Yidden are all one, especially parents and children, so our Torah and mitzvos, and most importantly our work in spreading the *maayanos* can help them in an even greater way than the packages. (The letter is printed in Igros Kodesh vol 17, p. 523.)

Thank you again for all the work that you do.

Zelig Shemtov

Yeshivas Ohr Elchonon Chabad LA



Hanhagos at Kiddush Levana

Dear Editors,

In the Teves magazine, you published a selection of pictures of the Rebbe reciting Kiddush levana [Issue 89 (166)].

1) In the article you write: “Only beginning in 5743 were a *shtender* and lamp set up in advance.” The first mention I have seen about the *shtender* was actually in Tishrei 5744. In Cheshvan and Kislev it is written that this was a “new *seder*.” It is possible that it started late 5743, but I am not sure about that.

2) In the article you write: “The Rebbe would first turn to his right, then to his left then again to his right.” It is possible that this was the *minhag* at some point, but from the videos I have seen and from what I heard, the way the Rebbe turned was: right, left, then farther to the left (meaning more behind).

Mendel Kaplan

Tomchei Tmimim Morristown

Archeological Evidence?

In the Adar magazine we published an article about Rabbeinu Tam’s Tefillin [The Great Debate, Issue 91 (168)].

In the article, we cited the *machlokes* between Rashi and Rabbeinu Tam, and how it actually began much earlier and was in fact a discussion among many Rishonim.

But what about archeological evidence?

In Orach Chaim Siman 34.11, the Beis Yosef cites the Semag and the Mordechai, who write about tefillin that were found in the *kever* of Yechezkel that followed the opinion of Rashi.

However the Derisha says that there is no proof from their findings. On the contrary, perhaps the reason they were buried is because they were no good!

This discussion about the validity of archeological proof continued throughout the generations (in other matters as well, such as the Dead Sea Scrolls). The Rebbe in many *sichos* strongly adopts the opinion of the Derisha.

It is interesting to note that in recent archeological findings, tefillin were found that followed other opinions as well.

The Editors