

A Chassidisher **Derher**

א חסידישער דערהער

A Mountain of Pride

THE FOUNDING OF
NACHLAS HAR CHABAD

The Making of a Chossid

THE FIRST OF A
TWO-PART SERIES
EXPLORING THE
FASCINATING
STORY OF RABBI
IMMANUEL
SCHOCHET



ושמחת בחגך!

Sukkos with the Rebbe

CHASSIDIM SHARE
THEIR MEMORIES OF
THE DAYS OF JOY
WITH THE REBBE



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The Rebbe distributes Lekach from the door of his Sukkah, Hoshana Rabba 5749.

Cover Photo: Pinny Lew

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

ולזכרון הצדקנית הרבנית
מרת חנה ע"ה שניאורסאהן בת הרה"ג הרה"ח ר' מאיר שלמה ע"ה
אמו של כ"ק אדמו"ר
לרגל היארצייט-הילולא ו' תשרי

Derher **Editorial**

The Machzor describes in great detail how the Kohen Gadol went about the day of Yom Kippur in the *Beis Hamikdash*, carefully and painstakingly performing every step of the *avoda*, drawing down all the necessary *hamshachos* for all of *klal Yisroel*.

At the end of an exhausting day, the Kohen Gadol was festively escorted home, celebrating his successful entry to the *Kodesh Hakadashim* and bringing about atonement for all the people.

Once, while sitting at a Yom Tov meal in the Friediker Rebbe's apartment, the Rebbe explained that the Kohen Gadol served as a "*shliach tzibbur*" for each and every Yid, from those on the lowest levels to those on the highest. The Kohen Gadol was able to do all the *avoda* on behalf of every single one of them.

Someone seated at the table commented, "But today we don't have a Kohen Gadol."

The Rebbe's face grew serious, as he replied: "We do have a Kohen Gadol today! Every generation has a '*manhig hador*'—the leader of the generation. The leader of the generation fills the place of Moshe Rabbeinu, as Chazal say—there is no generation that does not have someone like Moshe. Just like Moshe Rabbeinu spoke the words of Hashem—שכינה מדברת מתוך גרונו—so too the leader of each generation speaks the words of Hashem, and his words therefore must be obeyed. The leader of the generation is like a king to the people, and he is also like a Kohen Gadol..."¹

Spending the month of Tishrei with the Rebbe, Chassidim are able to tap into the immense *hamshachos* and heavenly *giluyim* with the Kohen Gadol of our generation; enough to have a lasting impact on the entire year.

An old Chassidishe *vort* maintains that being with the Rebbe in these awesome moments is like a baby being carried in its mother's arms. The baby doesn't necessarily know or understand how or where he needs to go, but he can rest assured that he will reach the proper destination in the right time and in the right manner. Similarly, Chassidim follow the Rebbe on the spiritual journey of the month of Tishrei. It is up to us to "hold on"—by learning the *maamarim* and *sichos*, coming to be in the Rebbe's presence, and following the Rebbe's *horaos* for the *Yomim Tovim*. In this manner, we can rest assured that the Rebbe will "take us along," ensuring that all the necessary "*hamshachos*" are tended to, bringing down the *ksiva v'chasima tova*—that everyone should be blessed with a good new year, including the ultimate *bracha*, that we will merit a "*shnas geula*" with the coming of Moshiach now!

בברכת כתיבה וחתימה טובה לשנה טובה ומתוקה,

The Editors

ח"י אלול ה'תשע"ט

שנת השבעים לנשיאות כ"ק אדמו"ר

1. Sukkos 5728; Toras Menachem vol. 51, p. 98.

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The Rebbe's father, Harav Levi Yitzchok, wrote many *chiddushei Torah*. Some of these he wrote in exile, on the margins of his Zohar, with the famous ink prepared by Rebbetzin Chana.

Many years later, the Zohar made its way to the Rebbe, and in Tammuz 5730*, the first volumes of ליקוטי לוי יצחק were printed from the notes in the margins.

The first two volumes to be printed included *biurim* on Tanya and on Zohar Bereishis.

A few weeks later, on Chof Av, the *yahrtzeit* of Harav Levi Yitzchok, the Rebbe walked into the farbrengen holding the new *sefer* on Tanya. For the next few months, the Rebbe explained a piece from his father's *biurim* on Iggeres Hateshuva by most Shabbos farbrengens. After that the Rebbe switched to the *biurim* on Zohar.

By almost every Shabbos farbrengen until 5748*, the Rebbe would have a ליקוטי לוי יצחק in front of him, and would say a *sicha* on a *biur* from his father on the Zohar of that week's *parsha*.

Being that Harav Levi Yitzchok wrote these *biurim* on the margins of the Zohar due to lack of paper, they are by necessity quite concise. As the Rebbe explained, since space was so limited, he only wrote the *chiddush*, leaving us to connect the dots.

In addition, he also only wrote the Kabbalah aspect of the *biur*, leaving it to us to figure out the *hora'a* in *avodas Hashem*, how it connects with Chassidus, etc.

This year, in honor of 75 years since the passing of Harav Levi Yitzchok, this column will feature some of these beautiful and fascinating sichos.



In the year 5744*, marking the 40th *yahrtzeit* of Harav Levi Yitzchok, the administration of Kotel Tiferes Zekeinim Levi Yitzchok in Crown Heights planned a special kinus. In the schedule they submitted to the Rebbe, they had started off with “opening words” (as you can see below). The Rebbe added that the opening words should be from the Torah of his father. However, since his Torah is very Kabbalistic and deep, the Rebbe pointed out that they should make sure to teach a section that can be understood by the audience—one consisting of a wide variety of people.

A FOCUSED STORM

Rebbi Yosi began his commentary on parshas Chayei Sara as follows:

"They lifted Yonah and threw him into the sea and the raging sea became calm." (Yonah 1:15.) Here we must understand, why it was specifically the ocean that raged against Yonah and not the dry land [i.e. with an earthquake or the like]. Since he was running away from the Shechina, why did his troubles begin only when he entered the sea?

"Surely it was all proper. For 'The sea reflects the heavens, and the heavens [reflect] the Throne of Glory.' Since he was running from the 'sea' (Hashem), the [physical] sea struck him in its place."

(Zohar Bereishis, page 121:1)

In the commentary of Harav Levi Yitzchok on the Zohar, he explains the mystical meaning of this Zohar, yet doesn't address a basic question!

How can the Zohar not understand why it was specifically the sea that raged against Yonah? It is common knowledge that השטן מקטרג בשעת הסכנה, the *satan* accuses in a time of danger.

Traversing the sea is dangerous, which is why we make *birchas hagomel* upon our safe return. So it would seem quite obvious why Yonah was only in danger once he boarded the ship—when there is natural danger, you must also be protected from spiritually induced danger. So what is the Zohar's question?!

RIGHT AND LEFT

Much of the commentary on *sefer Yonah* comes from Pirkei D'rabbi Eliezer, where the story is explained at length:

Yonah began his flight on Thursday. Why did he run? Because previously Hashem had sent him to prophesize regarding the destruction of Yerushalayim. Once the Yidden did *teshuva* and Hashem decided not to destroy the city, Yonah was accused of being a false prophet!

Knowing that the people of Nineveh were spiritually sensitive and prone to repentance, Yonah said to



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

himself, "If I inform them that they will be destroyed, they will repent. It's bad enough that the Jews accuse me of being a false prophet, now the gentiles will too. I would be better off running away!"

So Yonah went to the port of Yaffo and there were no ships. The nearest ship had already set sail two days prior. In order to test Yonah, Hashem sent a strong wind that blew the ship back to port.

Yonah saw this and was certain that Hashem approves of his plan, as he was doing it only for the sake of the Jewish people and for the glory of Hashem (i.e. to avoid the *chilul Hashem* of being called a false prophet).

Once Yonah boarded the ship, next came a storm. Why did the ship's captain and sailors react so strongly to the storm? They were after all seasoned sea-goers, and storms and raging seas were part of their everyday routine! Why did they suddenly feel the need to "draw lots and discover who is causing us this harm?"

The reason for their panic was because they looked to the right and to the left, and saw all the other ships sailing on calm seas. Only their ship was in trouble, to the extent that it was on the brink of sinking!

In other words, only once the crew saw that theirs was the only ship caught in the storm, did they know it must be from Hashem. They understood that it was not natural, and therefore they decided to cast lots.

We now understand why the Zohar could not use 'השטן מקטרג בשעת הסכנה' to explain why only the sea tried to stop Yonah. Because it was not a dangerous situation! On the contrary, all the other ships were coming and going peacefully.

Furthermore, "**right and left**" does not mean only in direction, or it would just say "they looked to the sides." Rather it means spiritually as well. The **right** means people who were greater than Yonah, and the **left** means people who were not as spiritually elevated.

On Yonah's ship itself the people were much lower spiritually. As he later said about them, "They keep worthless futilities and abandon their kindness" (Yonah 2:9); i.e. they didn't fulfill their promise to bring *karbanos* and thank Hashem after the storm subsided.

Yet, although there were people to the **left**—spiritually lacking people—on Yonah's ship itself, the only one who ended up suffering from the storm was Yonah. This shows us that it was not a natural danger at all, thereby

allowing the Zohar to wonder: Why was it only the sea that got angry?

WE ARE ALL YONAH

As for the lesson in *avodas Hashem* from the story of Yonah:

In another place the Zohar explains the story of Yonah at great length (being the most thorough commentary on Yonah in all of Chazal).

Yonah descending to the boat refers to the souls of people, which descend to this world to be in human bodies.

The soul is called Yonah based on the word אונאה—trickery. A person goes in to this world like a person boards a ship that is about to sink in the ocean.

The soul is tricked by the body into believing that bodily pleasures and needs are important. The body shows the soul how beautiful and pleasurable the worldly desires are, until it forgets what is truly important and forgets why it came down to this world!

The goal is to be Yonah ben **Amitai**—from the word *emes*, truth.

Our soul, our Yonah, must be illuminated with the light of truth, the truth of the eternal G-d. To recognize what is truly important, and to fulfill its purpose in descending to this world. Then it will be not just Yonah, but **Yonah ben Amitai!** 7

Based on sichas
Shabbos Chayei Sara 5742

לזכות
הת' שמואל שיחי'
לרגל הגיעו לעול מצוות ו' תשרי ה'תש"פ
נדפס ע"י הוריו
הרה"ת ר' ישראל וזוגתו מרת דבורה לאה
ומשפחתם שיחי'
פינסאן



לעבן מיטן רבין



19 TISHREI 5741, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 191437

טור 'לעבן מיטן רבין' הוקדש לזכרון ולעילוי נשמת
ר' שמואל ב"ר יהושע אליהו ז"ל
ואשתו מרת שרה ע"ה בת ר' יקותיאל ומרת לאה הי"ד
תנ"צ'ה' ע"י בנם
ר' יקותיאל יהודה
וזוגתו מרת פעסל לאה ומשפחתם שיחיו
רוהר

The Children's Hakafa

SHEMINI ATZERES - SIMCHAS TORAH 5741* – SHNAS HAKHEL



We present this account of Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah 5741*—Shnas Hakhel—with the Rebbe.

This was only days after the establishment of Tzivos Hashem, and unprecedentedly, the Rebbe had the children join him for a *hakafa* on both nights of Yom Tov!

It was also the first time the Rebbe danced his usual *hakafa* by himself.

WEDNESDAY, 21 TISHREI, HOSHANA RABBA

After davening, the Rebbe distributed *lekach* at the door of his sukkah to those who hadn't received on Erev Yom Kippur; first men, then women. When a police officer from the local precinct wished the Rebbe that there be peace in Eretz Yisroel, the Rebbe replied: "May there be peace in Brooklyn..."

The Rebbe davened Mincha in the small *zal*, after which he began singing "*V'samachta*." Then, after

visiting his home, the Rebbe returned to 770 and resumed the *lekach* distribution.

In preparation for *hakafos*, most of the tables and benches were removed from the shul. A small stage (known as the “ches”) was erected where the Rebbe dances *hakafos*, so the crowd would be able to see him.

HAKAFOS, LEIL SHEMINI ATZERES

Upon entering the shul for Maariv, the Rebbe energetically clapped his hands, animating the song. Following davening, the Rebbe began singing his father’s *hakafos niggun*.

Hakafos was called for 9:00, at which time the Rebbe entered the shul while vigorously waving his hand. After ascending the *bima*, the Rebbe stood at its edge, facing the crowd, and clapped his hands toward the crowd. There was still a lot of noise and commotion in shul when the Rebbe was honored with the *possuk* “*Ata Hareisa*,” and he motioned that only once order was restored would he recite it. The Rebbe led all the *pesukim* in the first round, while in the second and third, he only chanted the first and last *pesukim*. Following the first *Ata Hareisa*, the Rebbe began “*Hosheia Es Amecha*,” and after the second, “*Ufaratzta*.” Upon completing the *pesukim* for the third time, the Rebbe proceeded with “הגני”³⁴ as in every *Shnas Hakhel*, after which he began his father’s *hakafos niggun*.

First Hakafa

The Rebbe held his small Torah⁴ for the first *hakafa*, and walked behind the *chazan* to the center of the shul, with Rabbi Hodakov and several others in tow. The Rebbe stood in the center of the “ches.” For the first time since the beginning of the Rebbe’s *nesius* the Rebbe danced solo in a circle (Rashag was not present at *hakafos*.)⁵ Another shift from the norm was the *niggun* sung at this *hakafa*: instead of starting the usual *hakafos niggun*, the Rebbe began his father’s *niggun*. While holding the Torah with one hand, the Rebbe encouraged the song with the other, raising it above his head.

During the *hakafa*, Reb Zalman Gurary, who was carrying one of the *sifrei Torah*, suddenly did not feel well, and he fell on the table with the Torah in his hand. A commotion ensued, and the Rebbe asked: “Why are people pushing?” They tried taking the Torah from Reb Zalman, but he wouldn’t let go. When they attempted with force, the Rebbe reprimanded them, saying that the person is more

important than the Torah and they should tend to him. They stood Reb Zalman up and left the Torah in his hands. The Rebbe continued with the *hakafa*, but upon noticing several minutes later that Reb Zalman was still not feeling well, he cut it short. The *hakafa* lasted about five minutes.

On the way back to his place, the Rebbe blessed several people who requested *brachos*. The Rebbe blessed all those who kissed the *sefer Torah* with a good year ahead.

Upon ascending the *bima*, the Rebbe asked Dr. Weiss to examine Reb Zalman, and Rabbi Krinsky to bring him a chair. After Reb Zalman was seated and examined, Dr. Weiss came over to update the Rebbe. The Rebbe then summoned Dr. Feldman, requesting that he tend to Reb Zalman, and sent Dr. Weiss to join the dancing.

Second Hakafa

During the second *hakafa*, the Rebbe stood at his *shtender*, leaning on it with one hand. Although he clapped now and then, the Rebbe’s face remained serious. In the meantime, Reb Zalman Gurary got up and began clapping his hands. Upon seeing this, the Rebbe motioned for him to be seated.

At the *hakafa*’s conclusion, the Rebbe sat in his chair. When Dr. Weiss noticed the Rebbe sitting, he asked if everything was okay. The Rebbe replied that he’s preserving his energy for the seventh *hakafa*.

Spotlight on Children

Fifth Hakafa

Ahead of the fifth *hakafa*, the Rebbe conveyed something to Rabbi Groner. Upon receiving the message, Rabbi Groner rushed to the *gabbai* who then announced the Rebbe’s instruction: The children of Tzivos Hashem, those who learn *osiyos haTorah*, “*ben chamesh l’mikra*” and “*ben eser l’mishna*,” will be honored with this *hakafa*! Their teachers should circle together with them, and they should hold the Torahs.

Pandemonium immediately ensued. Children of all ages were being passed over heads from all corners of the shul. All made it in one piece, although some children who didn’t understand what was going on were in tears.

The *melamdim* received Torahs, while the Rebbe took his small one. On the way to the center of the shul, the Rebbe asked several individuals if they were teachers of children under bar mitzvah. Those who answered in the negative were told to clear the



MOTZEI SIMCHAS TORAH 5741, YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM116492

space for the children. Upon reaching the “ches,” the Rebbe noticed several people and he instructed them to leave the *hakafos* area. Some fathers asked if they could remain with their young children and the Rebbe agreed.

“Are you one of the children?!” the Rebbe asked one *bochur* who was still standing there. “Are you part of the Vaad Hamesader?!” The Rebbe told him to leave the space.

The Rebbe requested for “*Utzu Eitza*” to be sung, and proceeded to dance in a circle surrounded by the throng of children. The crush was great. With one hand, the Rebbe clutched the Torah, while he encouraged the singing with the other, energetically swinging it above his head. The *hakafa* lasted ten minutes.

When heading back to his place at the *hakafa*’s conclusion, the Rebbe instructed that Moshiach’s Sefer Torah⁶ be taken up to the women’s section, for the girls to kiss it. The *gabbai* asked whom he should send, to which the Rebbe replied: “A strong person...” Moshiach’s Sefer Torah was brought to the *ezras nashim*, while the rest were returned to the *aron kodesh*.

The Rebbe sat down in his place and asked to halt the *hakafos* until Moshiach’s Sefer Torah returned. At that point, tens of children were standing on the Rebbe’s *bima*, and the Rebbe began singing “*Utzu Eitza*,” clapping along with them. Shortly thereafter, the Rebbe began “*V’samachta*,” and further propelled the children.

During the singing, the Rebbe called for Rabbi Groner and instructed that the Moshiach’s Sefer Torah be brought to the other women’s section as well. After being brought there, the Torah returned to the shul. Upon seeing it, the Rebbe stood up and clapped energetically.

Sixth Hakafa

“*Chayolei Adoneinu*” was sung during the sixth *hakafa*, with the Rebbe singing along in the first round. The Rebbe’s hand motions were slightly different than usual, circling above the head with a raised finger. A toddler standing opposite him imitated these motions, and the Rebbe turned toward him several times with a smile, and waved his hand in the same fashion.

Seventh Hakafa

The seventh *hakafa* was just like the first, including the *niggun* of the Rebbe’s father. The



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 189184

TZIVOS HASHEM WAS FOUNDED JUST DAYS BEFORE THIS SIMCHAS TORAH. A CHILDREN’S RALLY, 5 TISHREI 5741*.

Rebbe danced quite passionately, sporadically hoisting the Torah toward the crowd. At one point the Rebbe gestured toward the elders situated in the back of the “ches” to move aside, whereupon he went and danced there as well. The *hakafa* lasted about 10 minutes.

Following *hakafos*, the Rebbe returned to his place. At davening’s end, the Rebbe blessed all present in a loud voice: “Gut Yom Tov, Gut Yom Tov, Gut Yom Tov,” along with a wave of his hand, and then began singing “*V’samachta*.” On his way out, the Rebbe made strong hand motions encouraging the song. *Hakafos* concluded at 11:30.

Several minutes later, the Rebbe exited his room and walked toward the library building, where he would be eating *seudas Yom Tov* with the Rebbetzin.⁷ A group of children stood near the library and were singing. The Rebbe clapped along.

THURSDAY, SHEMINI ATZERES

Upon arriving at 770 this morning, the Rebbe conversed with Dr. Weiss. In a matter of seconds a crowd had gathered around. The Rebbe was not pleased with this, and exclaimed: “Not everyone has to hear the conversation!” (The Rebbe was inquiring about Reb Zalman Gurary’s health.)

Before Mincha, the Rebbe inquired as to Rashag’s health, as he was visited in the hospital in the morning.

Maariv was nearly empty, as most people were on *tahalucha*. After Maariv the Rebbe began the niggun “*U’faratzta*.”

Pre-Hakafos Farbrengen

The Rebbe entered the farbrengen at 9:00 p.m. and began with a *sicha* on the advantage of

making *kiddush* in public. Due to the late hour, the Rebbe explained, he isn't making *kiddush* at the farbrengen. The Rebbe noted, however, that if someone present had not yet made *kiddush*, he should do it here (and thereby be *motzi* others who also hadn't yet heard *kiddush*).

After a member of *anash* made *kiddush*, the Rebbe began his father's *hakafos niggun*.

During the singing at the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe turned toward one of the *rabbonim* who was sitting groggily, with one hand on his cheek and told him to wake up and rejoice.

The Rebbe then distributed bottles of *mashke* to a number of *anash* elders, for them to distribute amongst the attendees. (Reb Mendel Futterfas was instructed to distribute his amongst Russian emigres.) After handing out the bottles, the Rebbe requested for a *niggun* linked with *yetzias Mitzrayim* to be sung, whereupon Chassidim sang "*Al Hasela Hoch*."

When the elders had finished distributing the *mashke*, the Rebbe intimated that this was only a beginning and that it would resume tomorrow. Thus, those who didn't receive would get the next day and there's no reason to push. Now we must stop to prepare for *hakafos*.

The Rebbe requested for the seder of *hakafos* to be announced. Before leaving, the Rebbe began his father's *hakafos niggun*. The farbrengen ended close to midnight.

HAKAFOS, LEIL SIMCHAS TORAH

The Rebbe arrived to *hakafos* at 12:40 a.m., and was honored with leading the first and last *pesukim* of all three "*Ata Hareisa*" rounds. The *gabbaim* initially wanted to honor the Rebbe with Rashag's *possuk* as well, but the Rebbe instructed that all the teachers and *mashpi'im*⁸ lead the recital instead.

Children's Hakafa - Again

Before the fourth *hakafa*, the Rebbe once again discussed a children's *hakafa* with Rabbi Groner. The Rebbe originally wanted it to be during the fourth *hakafa*, but ultimately decided that it would be better during the fifth, as in the previous night.

When the children's *hakafa* was announced, chaos broke out once again. Tonight, everyone knew to bring their children, exponentially increasing the crowd. The "*ches*" was jam packed, with additional children sitting on the enclosing tables, as well as behind them, with the rest of the crowd.

The crowd waited for about 20 minutes, hoping that some *seder* would be enacted, but to no avail. Eventually, the Rebbe took his Sefer Torah and headed to the *hakafos* area. Before entering the "*ches*" the Rebbe had to stop because the path was totally congested. Rabbi Groner futilely attempted to clear a passage.

Upon seeing this, the Rebbe began making a *seder*. First he instructed all the *melamdim* to leave the area (those holding Torahs were told to stand on the *kriah bima*). The children standing on the tables were instructed to get down and join the *hakafa*. Despite all this, the squeeze was terrible.

The Rebbe instructed everyone standing in front of the southern table to clear the place. Many people generally gather in this space, but it was not long before it was absolutely cleared. The children without a spot were moved there. The Rebbe single-handedly made a *seder*, instructing people to move



outside the “ches.” To one person the Rebbe said: “With all due respect, you don’t belong here...”

The Rebbe also cleared the area behind the western table, and those standing near the northern table took their cue and cleared the area as well. Children were then put around all the tables. And still, there was a great crush in the “ches.” Nevertheless, the Rebbe finally proceeded with the *hakafa*.

The Rebbe began singing “*Utzu Eitza*,” and everyone joined the spirited song. While holding the Torah in one hand, the Rebbe encouraged the singing with the other. Every so often the Rebbe brought the *sefer Torah* down closer to the children’s height, for them to kiss it.

The Rebbe danced in a circle near the tables, sporadically signalling children to let him pass. The *hakafa* lasted ten minutes, after which the Rebbe again asked that Moshiach’s *Sefer Torah* be brought upstairs for the girls.

When the Rebbe returned to his place, he sat down and began singing “*V’samachta*.” Several children were *zoche* to have the Rebbe tell them a few words, others received the Rebbe’s hand together with a “*Gut Yom Tov*,” while a few got wine for *l’chaim*.

*Gematria*os

Between *hakafos*, the Rebbe sat and conversed with various individuals. One of these was Reb Gershon Ber Jacobson, publisher of the *Algemeiner*, whom the Rebbe wished that he merit to bear headlines of Moshiach’s arrival this very year.

The Rebbe also told several people to say “*l’chaim*.” When Reb Gershon Ber did, the Rebbe asked him if it was *mashke*. He replied in the affirmative. The Rebbe pressed on: “What is the alcohol percentage?” Reb Gershon Ber replied: “86.” Soon after that, the Rebbe asked him if he knows its *gematria*, and he said no. The Rebbe informed him



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that it's the *gematria* of שמאלקים. A short while later as the Rebbe was about to go towards the center for one of the *hakafos*, a bottle of 96% was brought. One of individuals present turned to the Rebbe and declared that surely this also has a *gematria*. Holding the *sefer Torah*, the Rebbe advanced to his *hakafa*, without answering. After the *hakafa* the Rebbe asked Reb Gershon Ber to convey to his friend that 96 is *b'gematria* א-ל-א-ד-ג-ו-י, adding that the main thing is the pleasure of him knowing that this too has a *gematria*.

As the Rebbe returned from one of the *hakafos*, Reb Chaim Baruch Halberstam looked toward the Rebbe and announced that all the people who are involved in the Rebbe's *inyanim* should be blessed *b'gashmiyus ub'eruchniyus*. Someone standing next to him mentioned that the one giving the blessing is a grandson of the Sanzer Rebbe. The Rebbe answered "amen" and added that "a blessing from the grandson of the Sanzer Rebbe who was a grandson of the Alter Rebbe, will surely be fulfilled."

Camp Style Davening

Ahead of *Aleinu*, the Rebbe instructed Rabbi Avraham Shemtov to lead the children "Gan Yisroel" style. After doing so, the children sang "Utzu Eitza," then they proclaimed "We Want Moshiach Now" in unison, and sang "Chayolei Adoneinu." The Rebbe encouraged them with hand motions. Before leaving, the Rebbe waved his two arms toward the assembled, exclaiming: "Gut Yom Tov" in a loud voice three times. *Hakafos* concluded at 3:00 a.m.

FRIDAY, SIMCHAS TORAH

Prior to circling the *bima* for *hakafos*, the Rebbe waited for all those who would be accompanying to enter the circle. Upon seeing Dr. Weiss lingering in the aisle, the Rebbe signalled for him to join.

After circling one time and reaching the entrance to the "ches," the Rebbe instructed the *chazzan* to start the next *hakafa*. One person claimed that the *hakafa* began further, and therefore the pause should also be a few steps away, but the Rebbe didn't accept his words. Reb Zalman Gurary chimed in and told this individual to heed the Rebbe, to which the Rebbe smiled...

Following the three and a half circuits, the Rebbe began his father's *hakafos niggun*, and danced for 10 minutes.

Upon ascending his *bima* for *Choson Bereishis*, the Rebbe picked up a yarmulke that had slipped off a child's head and gave it back to him.

After davening, the children sang "Utzu Eitza," to the Rebbe's encouragement. The Rebbe wished the crowd "Gut Yom Tov," and headed to his room. Several minutes later, the Rebbe reappeared and went to the library. On his way, he vigorously clapped his hands to the singing of those gathered outside.

Simchas Torah Farbrengen

The Rebbe entered the shul for the farbrengen at 6:15 p.m. After washing and reciting "Hamotzi," the Rebbe stated:

"Since this farbrengen is in continuation to yesterday's (Simchas Torah eve), and not everyone received *mashke* (due to a shortage), it will be distributed now. And being that *shkia* is very soon, everyone should hurry and say 'lchaim.'

"Those who studied at, or are current students of the *kolel*, should come up and take *mashke* to distribute to the entire crowd."

Using both his hands, the Rebbe proceeded to hand two bottles of *mashke* to each member of the *kolel*. In middle of the *chaluka* the Rebbe noted that only members of the local *kolel* should come, and those who already received their bottles should distribute the *mashke* immediately. (When the bottles ran out, the Rebbe sent Rabbi Groner to get another case, which was also given out.)

The Rebbe then requested for the *maamar niggun* to be sung, after which he recited the *maamar dibur hamaschil* ביום השמיני שלח את העם וגו'

Wonders In Our Time

In the *sicha* following the *maamar*, the Rebbe elaborated on the *possuk* "לעשה נפלאות גדולות לבדו" ¹. The Rebbe laid out in plain terms that even a child could understand, that for a Yid, even simple water is "נפלאות גדולות."

The Rebbe explained that when a Jewish boy who is thirsty runs to a mobile drink vendor and buys a drink to quench his thirst, this is not a chance occurrence, but rather *hashgacha pratit*. For this exact reason the vendor was aroused at the exact moment, and drove to the boy's precise location, so that his thirst could be quenched. The Rebbe said that a child understands this, for he heard a story of the Baal Shem Tov on this topic.¹² Furthermore, the Rebbe added that specifically



such stories should be told to children, not “*Bubbe-mayases*.” The Rebbe then went on to discuss proper children’s education.

Uplifting Aura

After singing the usual *niggunim*, the Rebbe said that we must pause for *seudas Shabbos*, and the farbrengen will therefore resume tomorrow. The Rebbe encouraged everyone to properly utilize the final moments of Simchas Torah.

The Rebbe led the bentching, and then handed the challos to Reb Moshe Yeruslavski, for the *hachnasas orchim*. The farbrengen lasted about two hours.

While walking to his place for Kabbalas Shabbos, the Rebbe clapped energetically; the aura was quite uplifting. The *chazzan* Reb Berel Zaltzman sang “*Lecha Dodi*”¹³ and many other portions of davening, and the Rebbe motioned with his hand for the crowd to join in the song.

The Rebbe recited *kaddish yasom*.¹⁴ After davening, the Rebbe wished those present a triple “Gut Yom Tov” with hand motions, as usual, and left while encouraging the singing along the way.

Fortunate is the eye that witnessed all this! **T**

1. For a full history, see: *On the Front Lines: The Founding of Tzivos Hashem*, Derher Adar 5777.
2. The square enclosure in the middle of 770 where the *hakafo*s would take place, surrounded by metal tables to ensure that the crush of people wouldn’t overrun it. For more on this, see: *Uniting. Uplifting. Transcending: Simchas Torah with the Rebbe*, Derher Tishrei 5778.
3. Yirmiyahu 31:7.
4. For a history of the Rebbe’s Torah, see *The Rebbe’s Sefer Torah*, Derher Tishrei 5773.
5. He spent Yom Tov in the hospital, due to a health issue.
6. For this Torah’s history, see: *Sefer Torah shel Moshiach*, Derher Shevat 5776.
7. For more on this, see: *Shabbos at the Library*, Derher Sivan 5776.
8. The yeshiva (and its staff) was under Rashag’s auspices.
9. Under the auspices of the Rebbe’s *mazkirus*.
10. Melachim I 8,66.
11. Tehillim 136,4. One of the *pesukei Ata Hareisa*.
12. Likutei Diburim vol. 4, א, תקפד.
13. Lecha Dodi was generally chanted - not sung - in those years.
14. For the Rebbe’s grandmother, Rebbetzin Rachel.



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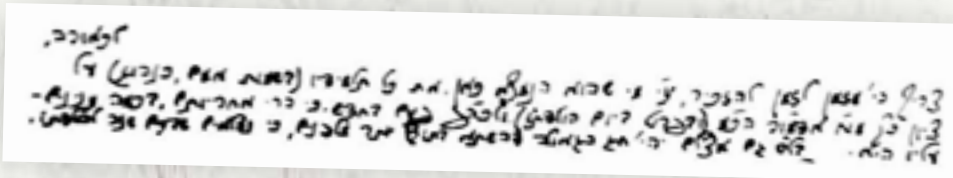


כתב יד קודש

לע"נ
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' אברהם דוב
בן הרב יהושע ע"ה
נלב"ע כ"ד טבת ה'תשע"ג
ולע"נ
זוגתו מרת ליבא בת ר' ברוך ע"ה
נלב"ע כ"א טבת ה'תשס"ד
ת"נ צ"ב'ה'
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' אליהו וזוגתו מרת דליה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
העכט
לאורך ימים ושנים טובות
ובריאות ולהצלחה רבה ומופלגה
בעבודת השליחות בגשמיות וברוחניות

Responsibility Towards Students

Shortly after the Friediker Rebbe's *histalkus*,
the Rebbe wrote to the *mashpia*, Reb Nissan Nemenov:



It would seem appropriate that from time to time you should have all the names of your students (along with their mothers' names, as is customary) mentioned at the Ohel of my father-in-law, the Rebbe—by someone who is here (especially on his birthday [Yud-Beis Tammuz]). [This should be done] at least once a month. Because you bear responsibility for their wellbeing in many respects.

Undoubtedly, you too will celebrate the [Friediker Rebbe's] *chag hageulah* this year with more vigor than in years prior; because this year marks 70 years since [the Friediker Rebbe's] birth.

לכאורה, צריך ה' מזמן לזמן להזכיר, ע"י מי שהוא הנמצא כאן, את כל תלמידיו (בשמות אמם, כנהוג) על ציון כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הכ"מ (ובפרט ביום הולדתו). ולכה"פ פעם בחדש. כי הרי אחריותם, בכמה ענינים - עליו היא. בל"ס [=בלי ספק] גם אצלם יהי' חג הגאולה דהשתא בתוקף יותר מלפנים, כי נמלאים שבעים שנה להולדתו.

A MOUNTAIN OF PRIDE

The founding of Nachalas Har Chabad

Nachalas Har Chabad—called so because of Avraham Avinu, who is associated with “Har” [the mountain of Moriah]. Avraham was an “one-and-only”—he stood on one side, while all the inhabitants of the world stood against him. Nevertheless, he was not intimidated because he was connected to the one and only Hashem, eventually revealing this within the entire world as well.

So, too, are the Yidden who have recently emigrated from behind the Iron Curtain: They held on to [the values and teachings of] Avraham Avinu—the “הר”—and thus they merited that Hashem took them out and brought them to a restful place of inheritance (“אל”ה המנוחה ואל הנחלה”), until they finally reached Nachalas Har Chabad.

May they acclimate well, with joy and gladness of the heart. And may this serve as a good beginning for their brothers and sisters whom they left behind, that they too should experience an exodus from the narrow straits to the ultimate expansion...

(Purim 5729)

Towards the end of the 5720s*, a crack opened up in the Iron Curtain and many Jewish families who had been stranded in the G-dless regime for decades were finally able to emigrate to Eretz Yisroel. This was especially true for the Jewish communities of Georgia and Bukhara (Uzbekistan), both part of the Soviet Union at the time.

Many of these Yidden knew only the basics of Yiddishkeit, yet they were committed heart and soul to Torah and mitzvos with *mesiras nefesh*—under the most dire circumstances. The Rebbe was concerned that when they arrived in Eretz Yisroel, this spirit should not be dampened, *chas v'shalom*. For this reason, the Rebbe wanted as many new emigres as possible to settle in Chabad communities, where they would see authentic Jewish life celebrated out in the open every day.

Many of the new arrivals settled in Kfar Chabad. The Rebbe also commissioned the building of the Shikun Chabad neighborhood in Lod for this purpose.¹ But when it became clear that the limited space in these neighborhoods was running out, the

Rebbe wanted a new neighborhood to be established.

The veteran Chabad activist, Rabbi Binyomin Gorodetzky, was dispatched to Eretz Yisroel to scout out and find a suitable place to establish a new Chabad settlement.

Time was of the essence. Members of the Israeli government made it clear that since there was no more room in the Chabad neighborhoods, the new immigrants from Georgia would be dispersed all over Israel—something that the Rebbe wanted to avoid at all costs.

Finally, a suitable location was found in the city of Kiryat Malachi. A cluster of buildings stood empty with 600 apartments waiting to be inhabited, and Rabbi Gorodetzky saw this as the perfect opportunity.

On 23 Shevat 5729*, the Rebbe agreed that “this suggestion of Kiryat Malachi is appropriate,” and that 10 young families from Kfar Chabad should move there immediately and establish a *kollel*. At Rabbi Gorodetzky’s behest, the government agreed to pay the salaries of these young families from the Department of Education budget—in



THE AREA OF NACHLAS HAR CHABAD AT THE TIME OF ITS ESTABLISHMENT.

* 5720S-1960S, 5729-1969

compensation for their assistance with the new immigrants.

As part of his shlichus to see this matter through, Rabbi Gorodetzky arrived at Kfar Chabad looking for *yungerleit* to move to Kiryat Malachi and help the new immigrants.

“Rabbi Gorodetzky told us that whoever holds the Rebbe’s wish dear should jump at this opportunity,” recalls Rabbi Avraham Alter Heber. “In those days, shlichus was still a novelty and not necessarily the norm. But his words had a strong impact on us. A group of *yungerleit* met together in Reb Efroim Wolff’s office where we decided to ask the Rebbe what to do. Our representative, Rabbi Yitzchok Yeruslavsky [today the *rav* of Nachalas Har Chabad] telephoned the Rebbe’s *mazkirus* and said that he is standing with a group of *yungerleit* that are considering the move to Kiryat Malachi.

“Rabbi Hodakov responded that, ‘From here [i.e. from the Rebbe] there will be no explicit directive asking specific people to move there. Whoever decides to take on this mission has the Rebbe’s *bracha*.’

“Immediately, we all decided to move.”

“Today it seems so simple,” Mrs. Rochel Heber relates. “The Rebbe wants you to go, you take the shlichus. But this concept was still foreign back then. We were just married. My husband came home from *kollel* in Kfar Chabad one day and told me that the Rebbe wants 10 families to move to Kiryat Malachi. Where is that on the map? I had no idea. It was far from everyone and a move like that would certainly bring along many challenges. But the Rebbe wanted it, so we did it. We moved to Nachalas Har Chabad just before Purim 5729*...”

On Erev Shabbos Parshas Zachor, the Rebbe sent a message that a farbrengen should take place in the new neighborhood over Shabbos.



THE TELEGRAM FROM THE REBBE APPROVING THE LOCATION FOR NACHLAS HAR CHABAD.



A GROUP OF THE YUNGERLEIT WHO MOVED TO NACHLAS HAR CHABAD.

The Rebbe especially instructed that the legendary *mashpia*, Reb Shlomo Chaim Kessleman, should lead the farbrengen, along with other elder Chassidim, *rabbonim*, and *askanim*.

With that, Nachalas Har Chabad was founded.

The Name

As mentioned, the Rebbe explained the meaning of the name of the new neighborhood during the farbrengen of Purim 5729*. In many letters to the residents of Nachalas Har Chabad and other *sichos* and *yechidusen*, the Rebbe explained each word of the three-part name, giving it special significance.²

Chassidim also took note of the fact that the *roshei teivos* of the three words “נחלת הר חב”ד are the same letters as the name חנה, a possible reference to the name of the Rebbe’s mother.

How To Establish A Village

A short while later, the Rebbe requested that two *sifrei Torah* from the shul of 770 be chosen and brought upstairs into his room. Meanwhile new *mantelach* were sown for them, with the words in *lashon hakodesh* saying, “ביה”נ חב”ד בנחלת הר חב”ד באה”ק”, “תובא”א, נשלח על ידי כ”ק אדמו”ר שליט”א ((ליובאוויטש)). One of the two *sefarim*

was small, and a white *mantele* was prepared for it, whilst the other was regular-sized, and a dark black *mantele* was made for it.

After the new accessories were ready, the two *sefarim* were returned to their original place.

The date to see off the special cargo was set for Yud-Aleph Nissan.

Before leaving for the Ohel, the Rebbe went downstairs to the main shul with Rabbi Binyomin Gorodetsky and members of *mazkirus*, Rabbis Hodakov, Klein and Groner. The Rebbe approached the *aron kodesh* where a waiting Rabbi Y. Gordon was greeted with a smile, and handed him \$200 for the *sefarim*.

The Rebbe gave one *sefer Torah* to Rabbi Hodakov and the other to Rabbi Gorodetzky, and together they went upstairs into the small *zal*.

Once there, they handed the *sefarim* to the Rebbe, who in turn gave them back to Rabbi Hodakov to place in the *aron kodesh*. Then the Rebbe left for the Ohel. Upon his return, the *sifrei Torah* were brought outside, and

the Rebbe accompanied them wearing his silk *kapote* (which is traditionally reserved for Shabbos and Yom Tov), and his *gartel*. A car was waiting and Rabbi Klein placed the two *sefarim* inside.

In keeping with previously made agreements, Rabbi Hodakov was to accompany the convoy until the airport, and Rabbi Gorodetzky would

continue the journey until Eretz Yisroel.

The *sefarim* were welcomed with joy and dancing immediately upon their arrival at Ben Gurion Airport, and the formal *hachnasas sefer Torah* in Nachlas Har Chabad took place a week later, on 19 Nissan. Hundreds of guests and well-wishers from across



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD

THE REBBE ESCORTS THE SIFREI TORAH AS THEY ARE PLACED IN A CAR FOR THE AIRPORT EN-ROUTE TO NACHLAS HAR CHABAD.



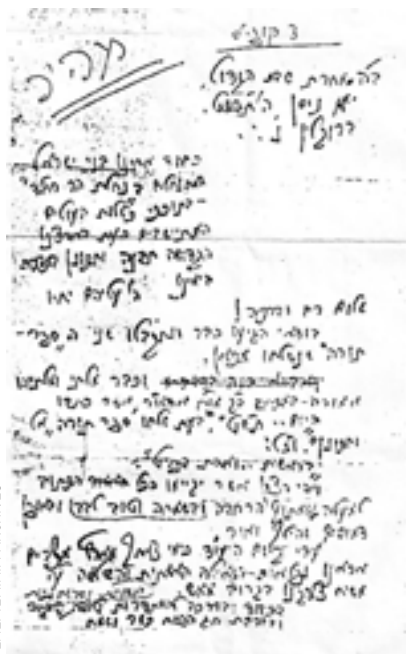
LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD

HACHNOSAS SEFER TORAH IN NACHLAS HAR CHABAD FOR THE SIFREI TORAH SENT BY THE REBBE.



JEM 109192

THE SIFREI TORAH FOR NACHLAS HAR CHABAD.



A HANDWRITTEN LETTER TO THE MEMBERS OF NACHLAS HAR CHABAD EXPLAINING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SENDING THE SIFREI TORAH.

Eretz Yisroel came to participate in the special occasion.

As for the reason for the special gift of the *sifrei Torah*, the Rebbe sent a letter, echoing what the Frieddiker Rebbe had written when he sent a Sefer Torah some 20 years earlier to the residents of Kfar Chabad.

In his letter, the Frieddiker Rebbe explained that the *sefer* was being sent to serve as a reminder to those, whom *hashgacha pratis* had brought to live in the “land upon which Hashem’s eyes [gaze] from the beginning of the year until the end of the year,” that they must set up their lives to be in complete accord with Torah. They are to provide an uncompromising education for their children, and eventually spread their influence to their neighbors, both near and far.³

Growth

Throughout the ensuing years, the Rebbe continued encouraging the settling and growth of Nachlas Har Chabad in every way possible.

In 5731*, a group of *anash* emigrated from the Soviet Union and



CELEBRATING THE OPENING OF THE NEW COMMUNITY.

settled there. The Rebbe sent them a letter saying he was pleased with the good news that they were able to move to Eretz Yisroel, and with doubled good news (“בשורה טובה על בשורה טובה”) that they settled in Nachlas Har Chabad.

During the month of Tishrei 5732*, a large group of newly arrived immigrants who had settled in Nachlas Har Chabad were invited by the Rebbe to come to 770 for the festive month and celebrate with the Rebbe, at the Rebbe’s cost. (This was a standard practice that the Rebbe availed to all recent immigrants from the Soviet Union in those years.)

At the end of the month, the Rebbe held a special *yechidus* for this group, again stressing how important it is to settle in Nachlas Har Chabad and to encourage others to do the same.

Challenges

Like every endeavor of *kedusha*, the founding of Nachlas Har Chabad met its line of challenges. At some point in 5730*, rumors were circulating that the Rebbe did not intend for Nachlas Har Chabad to be a community for ordinary *anash*.

The Rebbe responded to these claims very sternly in *yechidus*, saying

that “whoever is dampening the spirits of the immigrants who already live in Nachlas Har Chabad or even ordinary citizens who wish to move there—they should know that they are waging war against the [Frieddiker] Rebbe. The [Frieddiker] Rebbe stood up to the wars waged against him in Russia and he emerged victorious; he will certainly be victorious in Eretz Yisroel as well!”⁴

Step By Step

The Rebbe guided the community of Nachlas Har Chabad through its infancy and into major growth.

Once, when the chairman of Tzach in Eretz Yisroel, Reb Yisroel Leibov was in *yechidus*, the Rebbe asked him why there is no “*vaad*” (administrative committee) for the neighborhood of Nachlas Har Chabad like there is in Kfar Chabad.

A committee was formed and Reb Mordechai Gorodetzky was chosen to serve as its chairman. A short while later when he was in *yechidus*, Reb Mordechai asked the Rebbe to be relieved from his position, citing his lack of time and experience. The Rebbe responded, “You have the *zechus* to be the chairman. Who could forgo such a thing?”



A RECEPTION EVENT FOR NEW IMMIGRANTS FROM GEORGIA AND BUKHARA WHO SETTLED IN NACHLAS HAR CHABAD.

A Holy Community And A Good Leader

The Rebbe extended many *brachos* to Nachlas Har Chabad and its residents, sometimes in unprecedented terms.

Once, before embarking on a trip to Eretz Yisroel, Reb Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky was in *yeichidus* and the Rebbe spoke to him for some time about Nachlas Har Chabad. The Rebbe explained the significance of each word of the three-part name, and

said: “The neighborhood of Nachlas Har Chabad is שם צוה ה' את הברכה—Hashem commands His blessing there. We need only to open the spigot and the blessings will flow freely...”

The legendary rav of Nachlas Har Chabad, Rabbi Yitzchok Yehuda Yeruslavsky, was privileged to hear many important statements from the Rebbe about the neighborhood. Once, while in *yeichidus*, the Rebbe told him, “May you have success in everything that you wrote about, both the private and communal matters. May

Nachlas Har Chabad be a true ‘holy community’ (קהילה קדושה) as it should be, and you should be a good spiritual leader as you should be...”

Nachlas Har Chabad thrived through the years as a beacon of light in the south of Eretz Yisroel. Not only was it a physical and spiritual haven for the Georgian and Bukharian immigrants, it served, and continues to serve, as the “mountain” of Chabad—the headquarters where Yiddishkeit and the wellsprings of Chassidus are spread to the entire surrounding area.

In *yeichidus* with the longtime *mashpia* of Nachlas Har Chabad, Reb Michoel Misholovin, the Rebbe expressed his wish that the neighborhood would eventually turn into an “empire.” With the ensuing years, this wish has indeed become a reality. Nachlas Har Chabad is the Rebbe’s empire of the south.

1. See introduction to Yemei Temimim vol. 3.
2. See Likkutei Sichos vol. 14, p. 219; et. al.
3. The letter appears in Likkutei Sichos vol. 24 p. 390.
4. The *yeichidus* was published at the time by the rav of Kfar Chabad, Reb Shneur Zalman Garelik.

Highest Standards

Rabbi Nosson Wolff relates:

In the early stages of the founding of the “Nachalah,” a small day school was established, consisting mostly of the children of *anash* who were newly arrived immigrants from the Soviet Union. Naturally, people were afraid that given the conditions of these children’s upbringing, the academic level of study would not reach the usual standard for a Lubavitcher school. But it turned out that nothing could have been further from the truth.

I remember how the *rosh yeshiva* of Tomchei Temimim 770, Rabbi Yisroel Yitzchok Piekarsky, came to visit Eretz Yisroel and the Rebbe told him to make a stop in Nachlas Har Chabad and test the students of the day school. Rabbi Piekarsky was in awe of his findings. He told me, “We need to bring the *melamdim* from New York to train here and learn how to educate so well!”



THE TALMUD TORAH IN THE EARLY YEARS OF NACHLAS HAR CHABAD.

The Life of a Chossid

Reb Nechemya of Dubrovna

Born: 15 Shevat 5548*

Passed away: 15 Shevat, 5612*¹

Married to: The daughter of Reb Chaim Avraham (the Alter Rebbe's son)

Chossid of: The Alter Rebbe, the Mittler Rebbe and the Tzemach Tzedek

Reb Nechemya Halevi lived in the city of Dubrovna (Dubroŭna) on the banks of the Dnieper River in Belarus. He was a star pupil of the Alter Rebbe and indeed, his second wife was the Alter Rebbe's granddaughter.

His erudition and scholarship were legendary, and his *sefer*, *Divrei Nechemya*, was published at the behest of the Tzemach Tzedek.² At the very beginning of the Mittler Rebbe's *nesius*, the Mittler Rebbe appointed the Tzemach Tzedek, Reb Avraham of Kalisk, and Reb Nechemya to respond to halachic queries, a position they held for a time.

The Right Melamed

Even in his youth, Reb Nechemya's brilliance was obvious. Not wishing to waste a single drop of his son's potential for Torah-study, Reb Nechemya's father, Reb Avraham Beirach, who was a Chossid, decided that for his son's advancement in Torah, it would be ideal for him to have a *misnaged* as a tutor. A Chossid—Reb Avraham Beirach reasoned—would spend much of the day preparing for davening and then davening at length, and spend yet more time farbrenging, leaving precious little time for studies with his pupil. A *misnaged* was hired and began to teach young Nechemya. Reb Avraham Beirach left town on business for several months, and when he returned home, he heard his son speaking very negatively about the Alter Rebbe. "Where did you learn this?" his father asked.

"From the *melamed*," came the son's reply. Immediately, Reb Avraham Beirach traveled to the Alter Rebbe in Liozna and told the Alter Rebbe what had transpired. The Alter Rebbe told him, "Even though a *melamed* who is a Chossid will spend much time in *chassidisher* things, nevertheless, it would be better if you hired a *chassidisher melamed* for your son."³

How to Make a Living

The Tzemach Tzedek was determined to be financially self-sufficient, and chose to go into business with Reb Nechemya, making furnaces out of clay. After molding the ovens and baking them in a kiln, they would light a small fire inside the oven. This would expose any cracks and imperfections, which they would then seal. Since they were both Torah-scholars, they passed the time talking in learning, becoming quite engrossed in their conversation. It once happened that one of them was sealing cracks inside the furnace and the other was sealing cracks from the outside, and without realizing it, the furnace door was sealed shut. The fire, meanwhile, grew bigger, unbeknownst to the one outside, who was only brought to the realization that something was wrong when he heard the cries coming from inside. Quickly breaking open the oven door, he saved the other, but the furnace was a total loss.

After seeing that business was not going to be successful, the Tzemach Tzedek reluctantly agreed to earn a living through Torah by becoming a tutor.

Ein Od Milvado

Later on, Reb Nechemya sold *taleisim* (*taleisim* needed to be imported from other regions, so the Tzemach Tzedek had located a new *tallis*-weaving factory in Dubrovna and



convinced local wool merchants to begin supplying raw material, creating a local source for *taleisim*⁴). Once, he was calculating his finances and after entering all of the figures that needed to be calculated, upon reaching the bottom line, he wrote “*Ein od milvado*”—nothing exists besides Hashem. While obviously, the purpose of his calculations was to come up with the amounts he owed—or was owed—he nonetheless wrote this, because the concept that nothing exists besides Hashem permeated him to the extent that his honest business calculations resulted in a sum total of “*Ein od milvado*.”⁵

Stay Warm

Reb Nechemya once witnessed a soldier in the Czar’s army being whipped. While corporal punishment was commonplace in the Russian army, the reason for this soldier’s lashes was unusual: He had remained at his guard post on a bitterly cold night, persevering even when his feet froze. The Czar was told of this soldier’s dedication, but instead of rewarding him, he ordered the soldier to be whipped, because “the oath a soldier makes to the Czar should have kept him warm.” Reb Nechemya said, “This experience invigorated my *avodas Hashem* for 25 years. We took an oath at Har Sinai, and it must warm us forever.”⁶

Traveling to Lubavitch

After the Mitteler Rebbe’s *histalkus* on 9 Kislev 5588*, the Tzemach Tzedek did not accept the *nesius* openly until Shavuot of 5589*. Before that Shavuot, a group of Chassidim traveled to Lubavitch to request of the Tzemach Tzedek to accept the *nesius*, which the Tzemach Tzedek did on Erev Shavuot. Two years later, a large group of Chassidim visited Lubavitch for Shavuot, and returned via Dubrovna, where they met Reb Nechemya. He related how he had seen the Alter Rebbe in a dream, and the Alter Rebbe had hinted about the *nesius* of the Tzemach Tzedek. As a result of this dream, Reb Nechemya resolved to journey to Lubavitch for the following Shabbos. Upon hearing this, the Chassidim, too, decided to accompany him back to Lubavitch. That Shabbos, the Tzemach Tzedek

said Chassidus three times. That Shabbos was a turning point for many of the elder Chassidim, who now became *mekusharim* of the Tzemach Tzedek.

Aha!

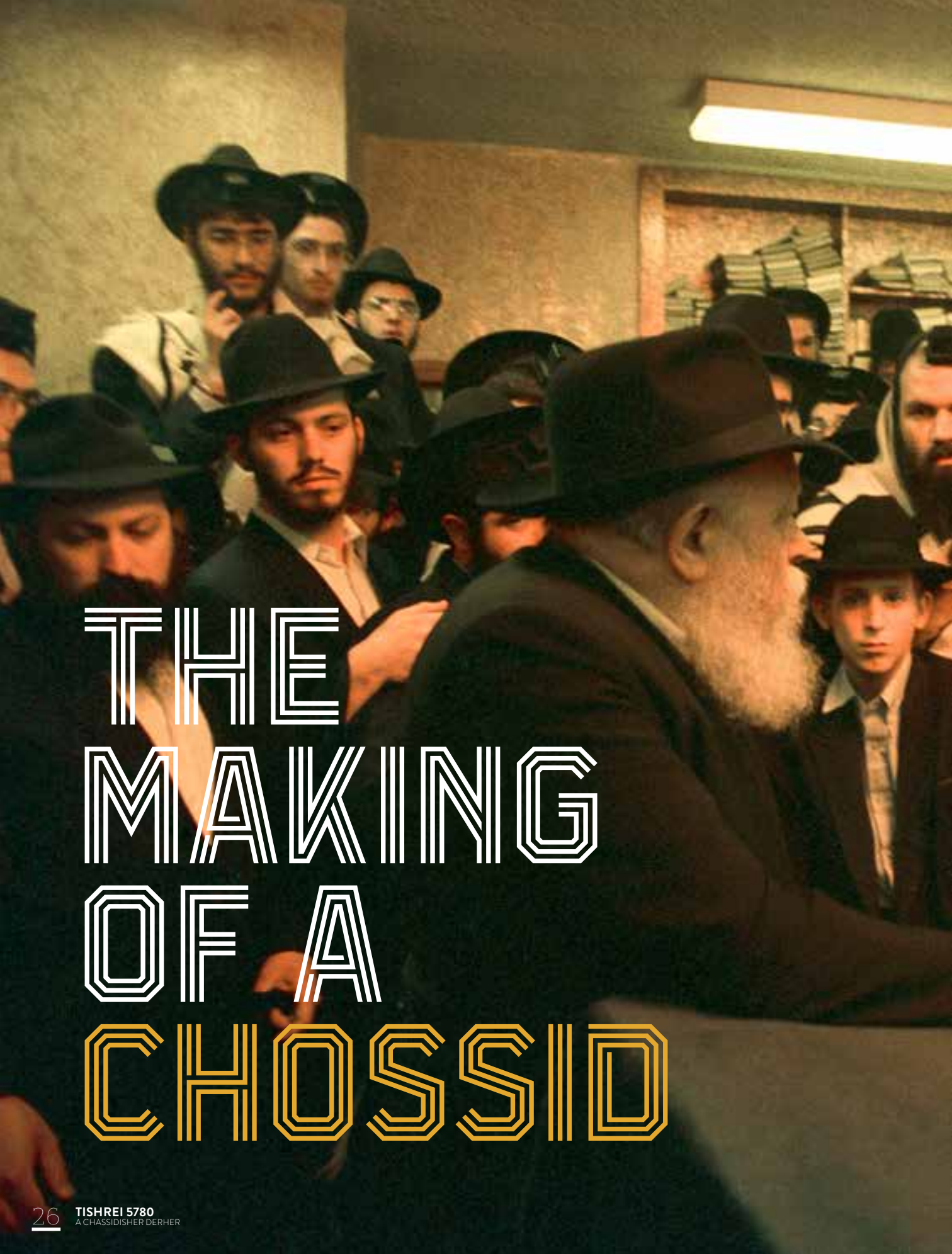
Reb Nechemya once asked the Tzemach Tzedek, “Why must we toil to learn Chassidus, which we don’t fully grasp? The *navi* says that when Moshiach comes, everyone will know Hashem—even those who didn’t learn Chassidus—so why should we waste time on it now?”

The Tzemach Tzedek replied that the difference is in the “Aha!” that the Chassidim will say.

The Tzemach Tzedek explained this with a *maschal*: A person stands near a wall. On the other side of the wall, two people are having a conversation. The person can’t quite make out everything they’re saying, only snippets of their discussion reach him; he gets a general picture of what they’re talking about, but would not be able to repeat what they were saying. Later, they tell him all about their conversation. As he hears each detail, he recalls what he had been able to pick up from the other side of the wall, and thinks, “Aha! Now I understand what I had heard then!”

The *nimshal*: We learn Chassidus today and only partially understand it. But when Moshiach will teach it to us, we will be able to say “Aha!” The Tzemach Tzedek concluded, “Someone who hears something for the second time understands it far better than someone who hears it for the first time. This is why the *navi* says, “For they shall all know Me from their smallest to their greatest.”⁷ Can one compare the knowledge of the smallest to the knowledge of the greatest? **❶**

1. See Beis Rebbe, Part One Chapter 26. See also the *sicha* of 15 Shevat, Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel-Pekudei and Shabbos Parshas Vayikra 5742.
2. Preface to Divrei Nechemya.
3. Reshimos Devarim p. 84.
4. <https://www.chabad.org/3284891>. Excerpt from Likkutei Dibburim vol. 4, chapter 36.
5. Toras Menachem 5742 vol. 2 p. 1129.
6. Shmuos Vesippurim part 3, story 139; Arba Chassidim p. 107.
7. Yirmiyahu, perek 31 possuk 33



THE MAKING OF A CHOSSID

לזכות
ילדינו היקרים
יצחק צבי, מנחם מענדל, אברהם מאיר,
יהודית, וישראל ארי' לייב
שיגדלו להיות חסידים
יראי שמים ולמדנים
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' אליעזר
וזוגתו מרת חנה שיחיו
וואלף

Rabbi Yaakov Immanuel Schochet was a unique figure in *dor hashvi'i*; handpicked by the Rebbe to work on some of the deepest works of Chassidus and also instructed by the Rebbe to attend college and become a professor at a university. Even without the archetype characteristics of a “typical” Chossid, he was a staunch and ardent Chossid of the Rebbe.

When the Rebbe wanted the Tanya to be translated to English, Rabbi Schochet was the one he chose to translate *Iggeres Hakodesh* (which is arguably the most difficult part); when the Rebbe wanted *mafteichos* to be made of various works—Rabbi Schochet is the one he appointed; when the fate of everything was on the line during the *sefarim* case, Rabbi Schochet was on the witness stand to convey the meaning of a Rebbe. When the Rebbe was fighting for *mihu yehudi*, the purity of the Jewish nation, Rabbi Schochet was at the forefront. As a pioneering lecturer and writer, he traveled the world to speak on Chassidus, Moshiach, and the authenticity of Yiddishkeit.

Rabbi Schochet was a strong Chossid and *mekusher* (and, at one point, he was even a member of the Rebbe's secretariat), but if you met him as a teenager you wouldn't necessarily believe he would end up that way.

In Part I of this article we begin with Rabbi Schochet's early years: when he came to Lubavitch at the age of fourteen with a mind of his own, how the Rebbe was *mekarev* him tremendously, dealing with him patiently and lovingly through his teenage years and all that it entailed. In Part II we will discover how he became involved in the Rebbe's work, as a powerful advocate for Torah and Yiddishkeit.

COMING TO LUBAVITCH

Rabbi Yaakov Immanuel Schochet was born in Switzerland in 5695*. His father, Rabbi Dov Yehuda Shochet, was of German descent, a *yekke*, and studied in the Telz Yeshiva. For many years, Rabbi Schochet (the father) was a *rav* in Switzerland and Holland.

The Schochet family was related to Rabbi Hodakov, who was married to Rabbi Dov Yehuda's sister. Their direct connection to the Rebbe began in 5712*, after they emigrated to Canada, when their youngest daughter suffered severe burns to her body, and it was the Rebbe's miraculous intervention that saved her life.¹

That year, Rabbi Hodakov advised the elder Rabbi Schochet to send his children to a Lubavitcher yeshiva. Rabbi Immanuel Schochet related: "My father was told by my uncle [Rabbi Hodakov] that if you're sending your children to a yeshiva in America, you need someone to keep a good eye on them. Send them to Lubavitch and I'll take care of them." Immanuel was enrolled in Tomchei Temimim at Bedford and Dean, the Lubavitcher yeshiva high school that included secular studies.

Immanuel and his brother Dovid arrived by train from Toronto on 26 Nissan, a Monday. Rabbi Hodakov picked them up from Grand Central Station and drove them directly to 770 for davening. "It wasn't like the later years when people would sit literally right in front of the Rebbe. In those days, when the Rebbe would come into the room, everybody disappeared. Before davening, the *bochurim* would line up to reserve a place around the *bima*, and then they would later come in to hear the Rebbe's *maftir*. The moment *maftir* was over—they were gone again. There's an expression in *Nach* והנערים נחבאים, 'the boys were hiding.' Does the Rebbe have to see my face...?"



RABBI DOV YEHUDA SCHOCHET, IMMANUEL'S FATHER.

"(When I originally came, this concept of hiding from the Rebbe didn't make any sense to me, and I was the only *bochur* who davened with the Rebbe's *minyan* on Shabbos. I sat quite close to the Rebbe during Shabbos davening.)

"When the Rebbe came in on that Monday morning, all the *bochurim* disappeared, and the entire front half of the shul was empty. I didn't understand why, and I remained standing behind Rabbi Hodakov.

"The Rebbe stared at me... and I stared right back. To me, it felt like the eye contact was for a long time, though it was probably just a second. Inside me, things were turning. Don't ask me why: I didn't understand what a Rebbe is, even though this was after the miracle had occurred with my sister. In my mind a Rebbe was like a chief rabbi..."

THE FIRST YECHIDUS

The following day was Tuesday, and Immanuel and his brother Dovid were scheduled to have a *yechidus* with the Rebbe. Reb Dovid Raskin approached Dovid and told him that before *yechidus* one immerses in the mikveh. There was no men's *mikveh* in Crown Heights at the time, and Immanuel did not understand the necessity of immersing in *mikveh*, so he decided to ask Rabbi Hodakov if it was required. Rabbi Hodakov replied that it was



IMMANUEL SCHOCHET AS A YOUNG BOY.

SCHOCHET FAMILY

not—it depends on a person's *hergesh*, and so Immanuel decided not to go to *mivkeh*.

As a result, he entered *yechidus* early in the evening, while his brother, who traveled a half hour to Brownsville to go to *mikveh*, entered much later."

THE FIRST YECHIDUS

"I came into the room," he later related. "To this day I don't understand it, but it looked like the whole room was dark. The only light was coming from two small Shabbos lamps behind the Rebbe. All I could see was the Rebbe's face, nothing else. I began trembling from head to toe. Don't ask me why, it doesn't make sense to me.

"The Rebbe was very friendly, asking 'Shalom Aleichem, how are you? How are things? How are you settling in yeshiva?' Then he began asking about my family: how my parents were doing, how my sister was doing. But I was very nervous and felt like I had to leave.

"Before the *yechidus*, I had been told to write my name and my mother's name on a piece of paper. When I gave it to the Rebbe, he stared at it for a long, long time. I didn't understand, what there was to see. It's three or four words...! The Rebbe went on to ask me a few more questions, and the *yechidus* lasted 5-7 minutes.



A LETTER FROM THE REBBE TO IMMANUEL, DATED 28 MENACHEM-AV 5713.

THE REBBE'S FARBRENGENS ARE WHAT KEPT ME IN LUBAVITCH. MOST OF WHAT I LEARNED IN YESHIVA WAS AT THE FARBRENGENS.

The moment I closed the door behind me, I felt as if a magnet was pulling me back in again. I had to really control myself not to go back in.

“I went to Rabbi Hodakov’s office and he asked me, ‘Nu how was it?’ I described it with a German word (I barely spoke Yiddish at the time)—*unheimlich*, spooky. He was surprised: most people who go into the Rebbe feel so comfortable, the Rebbe makes you feel so at home... But that was the first *yechidus*.”

THE FARBRENGEN

“A few weeks later there was a farbrengen for Shabbos Mevorchim Sivan. I didn’t understand three-quarters of what the Rebbe said. Although I understood most of the Yiddish, the Rebbe speaks with a mix of Yiddish, and Hebrew words,

and technical terms. Yet, there was something about the farbrengens that was a magnet for me, I could not miss a farbrengen. Don’t ask me how. The farbrengens are what kept me in Lubavitch. Most of what I learned in yeshiva was at the farbrengens.

“I stood there and watched what was going on, and towards the end of the farbrengen the Rebbe looked at me and told me to say *l’chaim*. I said, ‘Thank you, א דאנק, איך גלייך דאס נישט,’ but I don’t like it.”

“Everyone’s looking at me... such a *chutzpah*! The Rebbe tells you to say *l’chaim* and you say no?! The Rebbe is smiling; Rabbi Hodakov is exploding in laughter because he knows who we’re dealing with... Rabbi Mentlik’s face turned redder than his beard, like Yom Kippur. If looks could have killed

me, I would have died so many times. The Rebbe got a good laugh out of it...

“The Rebbe said, ‘פארט, זאג ל’חיים—Still, say *l’chaim*.’ Again I said that I don’t like it. So, with a smile, he let me go. I didn’t understand what was happening, I had been polite. I felt bad, so I took a drop Slivovitz, and said *l’chaim*.”

“The Rebbe said *l’chaim*, and said, ‘ער וועט זיך שוין צוגעוואוינען צו דעם’—he will eventually get used to it.”

From then on, at almost every farbrengen, the Rebbe would tell Immanuel to say *l’chaim*.

THE SECOND YECHIDUS

The second *yechidus* took place only two months after Immanuel joined the yeshiva. He had been involved with Agudah from his childhood—“I was a fanatic Agudist,” he would later say—and he was in touch with their central New York office from the day he arrived. As the summer approached, they offered him to be a counselor at Camp Agudah, which, at the time, was the only religious summer camp.

“The *rosh yeshiva* Rabbi Mentlik asked me what I’m doing for the summer, and I told him that I’m going to be a counselor at Camp Agudah. ‘How long are you going for?’ I said that the job was for nine weeks. ‘You only have permission from the yeshiva to leave for three weeks,’ he said. ‘And you can’t leave before Yud-Beis Tammuz.’ He told me that the only one who could give me permission was the Rebbe.

“Well, I considered myself as having a close relationship with the Rebbe! So I went to Rabbi Hodakov and told him that I needed a *yechidus*. ‘Is it necessary?’ he asked me. I told him that it was, and he gave me a *yechidus* for the following week, no questions asked.

“I didn’t understand it at the time, but people would wait three or four months for a *yechidus*, and here I



wanted a *yechidus*—no problem! There were only a few books available in Yiddish from Merkos that I could read from cover to cover—and I was given whatever I wanted. It took me years and years to understand that there must have been special instructions from the Rebbe himself to ‘cut this guy some slack.’

“This time I also didn’t go to *mikveh*. The moment I opened the door, I saw that there was a big smile on the Rebbe’s face, and I had to smile back. It was the exact opposite experience of the first *yechidus*.

“‘Reb Immanuel!’ the Rebbe greeted me. ‘How are you?’ We talked for a little bit, *chapt a shmues*. Then

the Rebbe asked, ‘Nu, what brings you here?’ Thinking back now, it’s unbelievable...

“I said that I had gotten a job at Camp Agudah, which was for nine weeks, but the yeshiva only wanted to give me three weeks off. They said that I would need the Rebbe’s permission for more time off. So, I said to the Rebbe, I came to get your permission.

“Now, what would someone else have done in the Rebbe’s position? Three weeks and that’s it!

“But the Rebbe started reasoning with me... You just came to yeshiva, the Rebbe said, you were barely there, and you’re going to leave now? It doesn’t make sense.

“I started arguing, and it was going back and forth. For example, the Rebbe quoted the Mishnah that says that *Shema* precedes *Vehaya im shamoa* because a person must accept upon himself the yoke of Heaven before accepting the yoke of mitzvos. The Rebbe didn’t simply dismiss what I said—he kept reasoning with me!

“The Midrash says that Shlomo Hamelech, who was the wisest person on earth, was even wiser than the fools. What does that mean? Obviously he was smarter than the fools. The explanation is that a fool believes that he’s the smartest person in the world; Shlomo Hamelech was so



L'CHAIM WITH THE REBBE

“The Rebbe would often ask me to say *l'chaim*. On one occasion, something unusual happened:

“It was Shabbos Mevorchim Nissan 5713 or 5714. In the middle of the farbrengen, an elderly Chossid from Eretz Yisroel showed up, and people called him over to take a seat at the table with the *baalei batim*. For whatever reason, another one of the elder Chassidim felt that this person didn't belong taking a prominent place at the Rebbe's farbrengen, and he made a sharp remark—even trying to physically pull the guest away from his place.

“The Rebbe's face turned white; I've never seen the Rebbe like that. Everything got quiet, but the Rebbe didn't say anything directly about the incident. The subject of the next *sicha* was on the *possuk* לא תתעב מצרי כי גר היית בארצו—you shall not hate an Egyptian for you sojourned in his land. Regardless of what happened you don't embarrass a person like that, especially someone who has esteemed heritage. The Rebbe continued speaking sharply about *yetzias Mitzrayim* and how it is important for every person. It is *noigea* to me, the Rebbe said, pointing to himself; it's *noigea* to my brother-in-law, pointing to Rashag; to Reb Shmuel, to Reb Shmuel Zalmanov, to Rabbi Zalman Gurary. דארט'ן שטייט שוחד'ס זון, וואס מיינט אז ס'איז נישט נוגע צו עם, ס'איז נוגע צו עם אויכעט. There stands Shochet's son who thinks that it doesn't apply to him, but it applies to him as well!

“The Rebbe was putting me together with a group with whom I had no connection. After that, he turned to me and said אפשר וועסטו שוין אפער וועסטו שוין?—Maybe you will finally say *l'chaim*?! with a pretty stern tone (as opposed to the very friendly tone I was accustomed to).

“In the later years, the Rebbe wouldn't tell me to say *l'chaim* as frequently; I would generally say *l'chaim* on my own. But sometimes out of the blue the Rebbe would still remind me.

“Usually, I didn't have anything in mind when I said *l'chaim*—I just said *l'chaim*. But there was one time around 5748-5749 when I did have a *bracha* in mind. I had a good seat, right in front of the Rebbe, but when I raised my cup to say *l'chaim*, the Rebbe answered to my right, he answered to my left, behind me, in front of me, all over—but he seemed to skip my place. I didn't understand what was happening. I felt that the Rebbe was intentionally skipping me.

“They were singing *Zol Shoin Zein Di Geula*, and suddenly the Rebbe stood up and started encouraging the singing with his hands very strongly, with a serious expression on his face. Everyone else stood up as well, and looking at the Rebbe's face I felt rotten inside. Here it's bothering the Rebbe so much that '*zol shoin zein di geula, Moshiach zol shoin kummen*,' and I have in mind some personal thing. I really felt embarrassed.

“At that moment, the Rebbe sat down, looked at me, and said *l'chaim*.”

wise that he was even able to make a fool realize that he was a fool.

“The Rebbe dealt with me similarly. He kept reasoning with me, and the *yeichidus* lasted for about a half hour (!) going back and forth. Eventually, I realized that he wouldn't budge. I knew a few Yiddish words, and I said, 'Nu! *Farfalen*—it's a lost case.' The Rebbe started laughing and said, נישט, פארפאלן, ס'איז געפונען—it's not lost, it's found.”

In the end, Immanuel went to Camp Agudah after Yud-Beis Tammuz, but he stayed for six weeks instead of three. Being that he hadn't come at the beginning of the summer, he was a rotating counselor without a



THE SCHOCHET FAMILY IN TORONTO. IMMANUEL IS SECOND FROM LEFT.

designated bunk. As a result, and also because the mentality of the American kids was alien to him, he didn't have a good time.

As soon as he got back from camp in the month of Av, he went into *yechidus* for his birthday. "This was the third *yechidus* in a few months! By this time I was more into things, and I went to *mikveh*. As soon as I came in, the Rebbe said, 'אה שלום עליכם! נו ס'האט, זיך געלוינט צו האנדלען זיך נאך א וואך און זיך געלוינט צו האנדלען זיך נאך א וואך —Shalom Aleichem! So, was it worth negotiating for another week and another week...?'

"It was as if he was saying, you had a miserable time, so what were you arguing about? It wasn't worth it..."

"If only I would have had the *sechel* to appreciate everything... It was unheard of for *bochurim* to receive letters from the Rebbe, especially signed by hand. If I would have had the *sechel*, I would have been able to take advantage... On the other hand, if I would have had the *sechel* I wouldn't have had the *kiruvim*, so... But the relationship with the Rebbe is what kept me in Lubavitch; if not,

I would have run away from there. Throughout the years, the Rebbe took a direct personal interest in me. In the summer, when I was home, the Rebbe would sometimes send me letters enjoining me to study even when it was voluntary, and other *mussardike* messages like that."

A TIKKUN

In Adar 5714*, Immanuel got into some trouble with the yeshiva, together with a few other *bochurim*. They were kicked out of the secular part of the yeshiva, and one of the *bochurim* was so upset that he transferred to Torah Vodaas. Immanuel wanted to do so as well, and he wrote a letter to the Rebbe detailing how he felt that the yeshiva wasn't right for someone with his outlook and background, and that he was going to leave, as his friend already had.

A week later, there was a letter waiting for him in *mazkirus*. Most of the letter was responding to his general complaints about the yeshiva; the Rebbe wrote that the *yetzer hara*



RABBI CHAIM MORDECHAI AIZIK HODAKOV, IMMANUEL'S UNCLE.

didn't want him to be in Chassidische yeshiva which was why it was fighting against it. It also addressed the incident that had occurred.

Immanuel sent another letter to the Rebbe, reiterating his version of the story, and within a few days he received a response. The Rebbe responded to his letter and again emphasized the importance of being in a Chassidische yeshiva. The Rebbe also gave him a *tikkun* for what he had done, especially now that he had more time in the afternoons having been expelled from secular studies: to learn masechta Taanis; to learn the first 11 *prakim* of Derech Chayim and know the content well; and to observe the fast days of *Bahab* following Pesach, by fasting half days. This was suggested for all four of the *bochurim* who were involved.

Immanuel passed on the message to his friends.

"The previous year I had returned home for Pesach," Rabbi Schochet related. "This year I decided to see how Pesach was like with the Rebbe. My parents were very upset, so I made up a whole excuse that my papers were being held up in the consulate... My brother decided to stay as well, with the same excuse.

"Erev Pesach arrived, and I went by the Rebbe to receive matzos. The Rebbe smiled, wished me a 'kosher

and *freilichen* Pesach,’ and asked me if I had begun studying Derech Chayim yet. I said that I hadn’t, but I would begin after Pesach. The Rebbe shrugged his shoulders and smiled. He let it go.

“I spent the *seder* with Rabbi Hodakov; we finished the *seder* early and went to the Rebbe’s *seder*. The meal had just ended, and the second half of the *seder* was beginning. The Rebbe saw me, and made eye contact. After the *seder* ended, the Rebbe walked down the steps [from the *seder*, which was upstairs in 770], and everyone was singing *Keili Ata* from the pouring back of *kos shel Eliyahu*. The Rebbe was encouraging the singing with his hands, and went into his room. Normally, he would go into his room and that’s it. This time he put down his siddur, came out again, and kept going with his hands, as we were all standing around there.

“The Rebbe looked around, I saw eye contact, and by the way he looked at me I felt that something was coming. The Rebbe started saying a *sicha*: first about Pesach in general, then about the significance of a Chassidishe yeshiva. Looking at me

with a smile, the Rebbe went on to say that there are some people who think that they are a *yekke*, and aren’t *shayach* to Chassidus, but they should know it’s *shayach* to them as well, and so on. The Rebbe also mentioned the incident. The Rebbe said that he had already given a *tikkun teshuva*, part of which was to study Derech Chayim. Now Derech Chayim, the Rebbe said, isn’t *yom-tov’dik*, so I don’t have the heart to tell them to start right away, yet it would be a *glaike zach*, the correct thing to do.

They started singing again. The Rebbe kept looking in my direction, but I’m not one to start singing and dancing and jumping up and down. The Rebbe kept looking at me, very sharply.

Suddenly the Rebbe came over to me, and pulled me by my jacket into the circle, with him.

After the dancing, I sat down together with the father of one of the *bochurim*, and we began studying Derech Chayim.

COLLEGE

In 5715*, Immanuel was getting ready to graduate from Bedford and

Dean, and the topic of college came on the table. It was very important to his parents that he get a degree, so although it wasn’t particularly important to him, he decided to enroll in Yeshiva University, where he could pursue a degree while studying Torah as well.

Towards the end of the year, he was involved in another incident of troublemaking that caused him to be expelled from the secular part of Bedford and Dean, and he didn’t have all the necessary credits for college.

The next farbrengen was a week or two later. Yud-Beis/Yud-Gimmel Tammuz were on Shabbos and Sunday, so there was a farbrengen on Shabbos and then a big farbrengen on Sunday night. During the Shabbos farbrengen the Rebbe dedicated an entire *sicha* to the topic of secular studies. Although the Friediker Rebbe was against going to college, the Rebbe said, he still took care of the people who did go to college, arranging for them to receive matzos for Pesach, kosher food, and their other religious needs. Still, the Rebbe emphasized, the principle was not to go to college.

The Rebbe continued and said that there is mercy from above, and they made going to college ever more difficult: One needs to pass exams and get a diploma; and if that wasn’t enough, they recently added an entrance test to be accepted to college, in addition to the requirement to pass high school.

For some people, the Rebbe said, even that is not enough, and obstacles were placed in their path from above. “Without spelling it out,” Rabbi Schochet said, “the Rebbe was alluding to my story. Those who knew what happened understood what the Rebbe meant. It was quite a strong *sicha*.”

“Now, most of the students in my class in Bedford and Dean were not from Lubavitcher families. It was a good yeshiva—there weren’t even so



IMMANUEL GIVES A SPEECH AT THE KEVER OF REBBI SHIMON BEN YOCHAI ON LAG B'OMER 5718.

"IMMANUEL," THE REBBE SAYS TO ME. "YOU ARE ALSO WALKING AROUND WITH THOUGHTS OF HOW TO SET YOURSELF UP AFTER LABOR DAY. SAY L'CHAIM AND FORGET ABOUT IT."

many yeshivos in New York those days—and more than half of the class was planning to go to college. After that farbrengen, Rabbi Mentlik gathered all the boys except for me, and told them that he wanted to report to the Rebbe before the farbrengen on Sunday night that they had decided not to go to college. He was afraid to tackle me after what had happened...

"Most of the class decided not to go.

"After Yud-Beis Tammuz I wrote to the Rebbe that I had heard the *sicha*, but I had not made up my mind yet about what to do, because the school had acted unfairly with me. Meanwhile I was going to attend public school in the evenings to make up for my missing course in Geometry, and afterwards I would take an entrance exam to have in the bank, since I was still planning on attending YU. I wrote that I hoped that there was no *kepeida* on me.



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“The Rebbe wrote back: ‘אין מצדי ח’ו’ ענין של קפידה, אלא שמחוייב אני וכל אחד מישראל, שכשרואה משהו עושה דבר שאינו מתאים בשבילו לעשות כל מה שביכולתי—There is no *kepeida* on my part, *chas veshalom*. But when I see that someone is doing something that is not good for him, I have the obligation, like every Jew, to do everything in my ability to stop him.”

Immanuel went ahead with the evening classes, passed the exam, and

he was scheduled to take the entrance exam for college at the end of the month of Av. During the farbrengen on Chof Av, out of the blue the Rebbe began speaking about the Rambam in Hilchos Deos that it is better for a person to live in the forests and deserts than to expose himself to an environment that is harmful for him... “From the way the Rebbe spoke, the way I heard it, it was addressed directly to me, ברחל בתך הקטנה (in unmistakable terms).

“I realized that I couldn’t do it. After the farbrengen I wrote to the Rebbe that I had decided to stay. I had already paid the \$50 fee for the entrance exam, a good chunk of money at the time, but I didn’t take it. To my parents I had to make up a whole story that something was delayed, and so on... But that was it. I stayed in yeshiva.”

READING INTO THOUGHTS

“Afterwards I started thinking to myself: Why was the Rebbe so passionate about it? Yud-Beis Tammuz, Chof Av, letters... Probably it’s because of the direct *kiruv* that the Rebbe had shown me, such an open personal relationship—something that didn’t exist in general, and everyone knew about it. If I went to college, it would kind of be a *patch in ponim*—the Rebbe put so many *kochos* into me, and I’m going to college. I was also Rabbi Hodakov’s nephew...

“So I decided that the problem was that it had been too public. I would have to do it quietly: I would go home for the summer the following year, and then I simply would not come back. No one would even notice it. The Yeshiva Ner Yisrael in Baltimore has a deal with the University that you can get credit for studying in the yeshiva, and I would go there, especially since my brother Ezra was in Baltimore at the time.

I didn’t breathe a word about my decision in yeshiva nor at home; not a soul on earth knew about it.

“Comes Shavuot. The Rebbe speaks a whole *sicha* about people going to the country, and how it’s another world: people aren’t careful about *tefilla betzibur*, people aren’t careful about *tznius*; it’s kind of *helker shmelter*—until Labor Day, and he made fun of Labor Day as this magical date when suddenly everything goes back to normal. It was a very strong *mussar sicha* about what goes on in the summer.

“The *sicha* finishes, the *olam* starts singing a *niggun*, and suddenly I notice that he’s looking at me with a big smile on his face. I thought, *oy vey, what now? I haven’t been in trouble for quite some time!*

“People begin noticing that the Rebbe keeps staring at me, and I keep staring back, and the singing stops. “Immanuel,” the Rebbe says to me. דו טראגסט זיך אויך ארום מיט מחשבות ווי אזוי צו מתקן זיין נאך לייבאר דיי, זאג לחיים און פארגעס וועגען דעם.—You are also walking around with thoughts of how to set yourself up after Labor Day. Say *l’chaim* and forget about it.”

“I really didn’t understand what the Rebbe was saying. I wasn’t *thinking* about it: I had made up my decision at the beginning of the year—and that was it, finished! I looked towards the Rebbe with a puzzled look on my face. The Rebbe kept looking at me, and smiling. Then he said, ‘ס’וועט דאך סיי ווי, נישט ווערן, איז וואס דארפסטו זיך ארומטראגן מיט די מחשבות?—It’s not going to happen anyway, so why do you have to walk around with these thoughts?’

I’m looking at the Rebbe, and then it suddenly hits me; kind of like he put the thought in my head. I just had to burst out laughing. The Rebbe told me to say *l’chaim*, and that was that. **T**

To be continued in Part II.

1. See JEM’s Through the Veil, vol. 1.





לזכות
מאיר, מנחם מענדל, לוי, ישראל, נחום,
שמואל, שניאור זלמן ואיטא
נדפס ע"י הוריהם
הרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק הכהן
ומרת נחמה דינה שיחיו
בלעסאפסקי
לחיוזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע
ולהצלחה רבה ומופלגה בכל עניניהם



In Response to Anti-Semitism

The following letter was sent by the Rebbe to a Polish politician who, after an anti-semitic attack of vandalism at Warsaw's Jewish cemetery, expressed sympathy and outrage on behalf of the President of Poland. The Rebbe's letter gives a fresh and beautiful perspective on the correct response to anti-semitism.

By the Grace of G-d
15th of Cheshvan, 5752 [October 23, 1991]
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. Arkadiusz Rybicki
President of the Council for Polish-Jewish Relations
Office of the President of the Republic of Poland
Warsaw

Dear Mr. Rybicki,

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter in which you express deep sorrow about the terrible anti-semitic incident that took place last month in front of the synagogue in Warsaw: that the perpetrators were captured and will be prosecuted, and that the behavior was condemned by President Walesa, etc. You also express the hope that in the future, intolerance and prejudice will disappear from the Polish people, and that you are working towards this end.

We appreciate the sentiment expressed in your letter, and we pray that your hope and efforts will materialize very soon indeed.

Apropos of the above I would like to add that last month, in the beginning of Tishrei, we ushered in the current Jewish New Year, 5752, with the celebration of Rosh Hashanah, the anniversary of the Creation of the first man, Adam. Our Sages of the Talmud explain why the creation of man differed from the creation of other living species and why, among other things, man was created as a single individual, unlike other living creatures created in pairs. One of the reasons – our Sages declare – is that it was G-d's design that the human race, all humans everywhere and at all times, should know that each and all descend from the one and the same single progenitor, a fully developed human being created in the image of G-d, so that no human being could claim superior ancestral origin; hence would also find it easier to cultivate a real feeling of kinship in all inter-human relationships.

Indeed, although Rosh Hashanah is a Jewish festival, our prayers for a Happy New Year include also all the nations and dwellers on earth. And true happiness includes everyone's peace and prosperity both materially and spiritually.

With prayerful wishes,
M. Schneerson





Dreaming A Mission

"I have two sons, 18 and 21 years old," began an excited Reb Dovid¹ to his new-found friend at a motel in Disna. "I want to share with you an amazing story that happened with them and the Tzemach Tzedek."

"Being a young adult in Russia during those years meant facing the inevitable challenge of being forced to join the Czar's army. Being drafted as a soldier was the greatest nightmare and fear for any Jewish family.

"The lottery, which determined who would have to become a soldier, landed on my family and one of my sons was ordered to serve. With no way out from the dreaded conscription, I

went directly to the Rebbe for help and shared with him the terrible situation.

"What do you want from me?" replied the Tzemach Tzedek. 'Am I a minister?!' Completely broken, I burst into bitter tears and asked the Rebbe why he is distancing me. 'Am I not a devout Chossid and *mekushar* like the Chassidim of yore?' I cried in despair.

"You are of those who are *mekushar*?" exclaimed the Rebbe.

"Yes! I was in Lubavitch last year and this year and I am fluent in all the *maamarim* I heard from the Rebbe.' The Tzemach Tzedek then began to

question me on the different parts of Chassidus he had taught and I was able to answer all the questions clearly and fluently. At that moment his compassion for me was revealed and he blessed me that, 'With Hashem's help your sons will be saved. Go to the city of Liepeli and over there you should meet up with an individual who is proficient in these matters. Go immediately to his house and he will help you.'

"Hearing this advice, I replied, 'But he doesn't know me at all!' The Rebbe responded, 'Don't worry he will recognize you.' I set out for Liepeli without delay and arrived very early in

the morning. I made my way over to this individual's house only to find that the gate was locked. I stood outside and listened for some noise coming from within; my ears picked up the sound of the attendant moving around. I knocked on the gate and was welcomed inside. At that moment I heard sounds coming from the owner of the house but it was very strange; he seemed like he was under the influence of alcohol. Every few moments he would let out a scream, 'Master of the world, what is this?!' His behavior was like that of someone who was possessed; running from room to room like

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

EVERY FEW MOMENTS HE WOULD LET OUT A SCREAM, 'MASTER OF THE WORLD, WHAT IS THIS? HIS BEHAVIOR WAS LIKE THAT OF SOMEONE WHO WAS POSSESSED; RUNNING FROM ROOM TO ROOM LIKE A MADMAN

a madman. For the first few moments he paid no attention to me at all, completely ignoring me as if I wasn't there. Finally he saw me and greeted me warmly.

"Where are you from?"

"I am from Tzashnik."

As soon as he heard this he began clapping his hands and dancing. 'He is from Tzashnik, he is from Tzashnik...' At that point, in my head, I was fully convinced that this man was not mentally stable. When he finally calmed down he said, 'I know you think I am crazy but by the time I will have finished explaining to you what happened everything will be clear.'

And with that he started telling me his story:

"It has been five years since I have last seen the Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek, and then one night he appeared to me in a dream. In the dream he told me that I need to help the Yid from Tzashnik out of his plight. Understandably I woke up quite shaken from what had occurred but then I managed to fall back asleep. Once again the Rebbe came to me and implored me to help this Yid. This happened practically the whole night.

"When you saw me this morning pacing around and around it was because of the dreams that I had

seen overnight. And then when I heard you were from Tzashnik I completely lost it as I realized this was indeed a true request from the Rebbe. So, please let me know what your problem is and how I can help you?"

Reb Dovid continued his tale:

"I quickly filled him in about what was decreed against one of my sons and asked him to help me out of the draft. Acknowledging the challenge of such a feat, he encouraged me by saying that with Hashem's help and the Rebbe's *brachos*, all will certainly turn out well. He then drank some tea, davened Shema and

Shmoneh Esrei and left the house.

"About midday he returned with a great smile and in a joyous mood. 'All is well,' he announced. 'I was at the bureau today and I guarantee you that your children are safe and no one will lay a hand on them. Their lottery will only be called in a number of years and by that time the decree will be over.'

"This my friend," concluded Reb Dovid, "is a true story of the greatness of our Rebbe." ¹

*(Sippurim Nora'im
p. 106)*

1. Name does not appear in the original, it was added here for the sake of clarity.

לזכות
הת' משה פינחס שיחי'
לרגל הגיעו לעול מצוות יום
ב' דראש השנה ה'תש"פ

נדפס ע"י הוריו
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל
וזוגתו מרת ברכה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
טעלדאן



Sukkos *by* *the* REBBE

One of the Shalosh Regalim—when the entire Jewish nation would gather in the Beis Hamikdash, *liros uliheiraos* (to see and be seen)—was the Yom Tov of Sukkos. Set right after Yom Kippur, when the *Aibershter* promises Yidden a good and sweet year, the joy was boundless.

Over the many years of the Rebbe's *neisus*, the style of Sukkos by the Rebbe changed dramatically, from the Rebbe's *farbrengen* in the Sukkah to the nightly *sichos* and *simchas beis hashoevah*. Nonetheless, the common theme throughout all the years, and throughout all the days of Sukkos, was the boundless joy that the Rebbe exuded and shared with all the Chassidim.

In previous issues, we sat down for roundtable discussions with various Chassidim who shared their recollections of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Simchas Torah with the Rebbe. This year, we again present a roundtable discussion with three Chassidim—of different ages—this time relating their memories from the special Yom Tov of Sukkos.

Our thanks to Rabbi Gavriel Shapiro of Crown Heights, Rabbi Yoske Sassonko of Miami and Rabbi Levi Jacobson of Toronto for sharing their memories for the benefit of the readership. זכות הרבים תלוי בהם.



Take Off Your Coat!

Rabbi Shapiro: The first Tishrei I spent near the Rebbe was in 5721*, when I was a young child living in Cleveland, Ohio. I have had the merit to be present every single Tishrei since.

My earliest Sukkos memory is of the Rebbe *bentching* on the lulav.

Children wouldn't *bentch* on the Rebbe's *daled minim*, but I remember standing on the steps in front of 770 and watching as the Rebbe sat in his sukkah and people walked in, *bentched* on the lulav and esrog, and backed out. The Rebbe Maharash's *maamar* "*Hemshech Vekacha*" (in its original handwritten print) was open on the table in front of the Rebbe. It was a special sight.

Another interesting memory is the Rebbe on the streets of Crown Heights. In those years, Crown Heights was home to a wide range of Jewish communities,¹ and on Yom Tov afternoon, Eastern Parkway was full of Jews strolling on the parkway. I vividly recall the image of the Rebbe walking past hundreds of people on his way to and from 770, all wishing the Rebbe a "*Gut Yom Tov*."

In those early years, the Rebbe also held a farbrengen in the Sukkah on Chol Hamoed. Those farbrengens would normally last about two and a half hours, and the Rebbe always delivered a *sicha*

on *nigleh*. The last time the Rebbe farbrenged on Chol Hamoed was in 5724*.²

However, the farbrengens in the sukkah on the second day of Yom Tov and Shabbos Chol Hamoed were held through 5730*. I remember one farbrengen in particular, on Shabbos Chol Hamoed 5727*. It was pouring rain, but when the Rebbe entered he instructed everyone to take off their coats, and he took off his own coat as well. When Reb Shea Pinson wore a coat to *kos shel bracha*,³ the Rebbe told him to take it off too.

Rabbi Sossonko: Although I was only nine-years-old in 5727*, I remember that farbrengen distinctly. That Tishrei a small contingency of the new Russian immigrants were present; my father Reb Asher Sasonkin, Reb Mendel Futerfas, Reb Berke Chein and perhaps a few others. In the years 5726*-5734*, thousands of Jewish families were granted permission to leave the Soviet Union. Until then it was almost impossible to leave, yet with a *bracha* from the Rebbe and tremendous *nissim*, my family received permission to leave earlier in 5724*. Getting out of Russia was unheard of at the time! The story is an article in itself.

My father traveled to the Rebbe from Eretz Yisroel right away for Tishrei 5725*, and for Tishrei 5727* he brought me along. I was the only Russian



CHASSIDIM WAIT IN LINE BY THE REBBE'S SUKKAH FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHAKE THE REBBE'S LULAV AND ESROG, CHOL HAMOED SUKKOS 5723.

RABBI YOSEF GOLDSTEIN

child present. The Rebbe showered us with amazing *kiruvim*, and he asked that I stand near him at all the farbrengens that Tishrei. In the sukkah as well, I stood very close to the Rebbe, right behind Rabbi Hodakov.

I didn't understand the *sichos*, but I did notice the rain pouring off the Rebbe's hat, especially during the *maamar*. Often, the Rebbe would begin a *maamar* in a slow and deliberate manner, and as it would progress, he would speak more intensely and increasingly move his hands and head. At this farbrengen, I remember watching how the water poured off his hat every time the Rebbe moved his head in a different direction, and was slowly soaking through the *kapote*.

Reb Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky was watching from behind, and he placed a towel over the Rebbe's shoulders, doing so very gently hoping the Rebbe wouldn't notice.

A Confirmation For Your Work

Rabbi Shapiro: Shortly before my first Tishrei, the *shalash* was transformed into a permanent structure.⁴ Therefore, the Rebbe's sukkah—which until then had been in the corner of the *shalash*—was moved to the front yard of 770, and the public sukkah was moved to the courtyard on the other

side. It was a simpler sukkah in those days, and was built each year by Reb Shlomo Cunin (a *bochur* at the time) and his brother *ybchl"ch* Reb Pinyeh a"h.

The *sechach* on the Rebbe's sukkah and the public sukkah was always evergreen, which is a significant expense. I recall that they once asked the Rebbe if they could buy bamboo poles for the public sukkah, and the Rebbe refused, because it would take away from another Jew's *parnassa*.

Rabbi Jacobson: I had the merit to take part in building the Rebbe's sukkah in the later years. One year, as I stood on the ladder working on the sukkah, I suddenly realized that all the other *bochurim* had disappeared. When I got off the ladder, I noticed them gathered behind the sukkah. "You got a confirmation for your work," they exclaimed. My *chaverim* explained that the Rebbe had opened his blinds and had been watching me for several minutes. They said that this was actually a yearly occurrence that at some point during the building of the sukkah, the Rebbe would look out of the window and observe the building (although this was the only time I saw it).

In later years, a second sukkah was built for the Rebbe on the driveway, which the Rebbe could reach privately from the hallway in *Gan Eden Hatachton*. In 5751*, that Sukkah was moved into



ERECTING THE REBBE'S SUKKAH IN THE FRONT COURTYARD OF 770, 11 TISHREI 5737.

Rabbi Groner's office, where a retractable roof was installed.

The Rebbe's Daled Minim

Rabbi Shapiro: Rabbi Yisroel Jacobson had the *chazaka* to provide the Rebbe with the *daled minim*. After he passed away, his son-in-law, Rabbi Mordechai Altein, took over. In addition, Rabbi Leibel Bistritzky would bring lulavim, Reb Shalom Hecht would bring esrogim, and visitors from Kfar Chabad would present the Rebbe with esrogim from the Kfar Chabad orchards.

On Erev Sukkos, the Rebbe would have various dignitaries and representatives enter his room, and they would each receive a set of *daled minim* from the Rebbe. I recall that the *mazkirim* would receive two hadassim each. Rabbi Nissan Mindel received a lulav and esrog as well, along with others such as Reb Binyomin Gorodetzky and Reb Shmuel Dovid Raichik. Others present would receive a single hadas from the Rebbe.⁵

Rabbi Jacobson: Reb Dovid Raskin was entrusted by the Rebbe each year with the job of preparing the lulav for the Rebbetzin. In later years, he did so for the Rebbe as well. He would always do it “*b’eimah ubiyirah*,” dressed in his *kapote* and gartel, fully invested in every detail and infinitely care. Some *bochurim* and children, myself included, would crowd around in the sukkah to watch.

Sukkos Farbrengens

Rabbi Shapiro: In the years that the Rebbe would farbreng in the sukkah,⁶ there would be a farbrengen before the end of the first days of Yom Tov. The Rebbe would wash for bread, lead the bentching, and after the farbrengen, the Rebbe would distribute *kos shel bracha*.

The Rebbe's seat at these farbrengens was on the far end of the sukkah, with his back towards Union Street. The *bochurim* would stand along the sides, while the older people would sit in the middle. If you had a *makom kavua* in 770, you attempted to sit in a similar location in the sukkah as well.

The sukkah wasn't very large, and as the crowd grew, the pushing became unbearable. During the farbrengen in 5729*, the Rebbe asked that the *olam* stop pushing, and that otherwise he would end the farbrengen early.

Rabbi Sossonko: The pushing was extremely intense, and children like us weren't able to make it inside. During the Rebbe's last farbrengen in the



REB DOVID RASKIN PREPARES THE LULAV FOR THE REBBETZIN AS REB SHMUEL DOVID RAICHIK LOOKS ON, EREV SUKKOS 5737.

Sukkah, on Shabbos Chol Hamoed 5730*, there were tables and benches collapsing all over. Rabbi Marlow's foot got trapped under one of the heavy tables that collapsed, and the bones shattered from the pressure. The next year before Sukkos, the Rebbe informed Rabbi Hodakov that he would no longer hold farbrengens in the sukkah.

Rabbi Shapiro: When word got out that the Rebbe would no longer farbreng on Sukkos, the Vaad Hamesader—and others—asked the Rebbe several times to reconsider, but the Rebbe responded very sharply that it had become an issue of *pikuach nefesh*.

Then, on Yom Tov, the Rebbe surprised us with an announcement that a farbrengen would be held, but that it would be inside 770 with no food or *l'chaim* (“אויף טרוקען”). That Sukkos (5731*) coincided with the United Nations General Assembly, and it



LEVI FREDIN VIA JEM 204760

seemed that the farbrengen was associated with the Rebbe's *ruchniusdike* attempts to impact it.⁷

This farbrengen was an exception to the rule, and the next year, in 5732*, we understood that the Rebbe would not be farbrenging at all. Many new Russian immigrants had arrived during that Tishrei, and the Rebbe showered them with attention. They submitted a request for a Sukkos farbrengen, and the Rebbe said that instead, he would deliver a *maamar* in the morning of Shabbos Chol Hamoed in 770.

I remember that *maamar* clearly. It felt like a "Matan Torah Maamar" on Shavuot. The shul at 770 was packed when the Rebbe entered at 8:00 a.m. The room was set up like a regular farbrengen, and the Rebbe seated himself at his place, delivered the *maamar* (*Ulikachtem Lachem*), and left immediately afterwards.

Rabbi Sossonko: Over the next 10 years, there were no *sichos* or farbrengens on Sukkos aside for

a few exceptional occasions. Instead, it seemed, the Rebbe chose to farbreng on Yud-Gimmel Tishrei, which he had previously done only on Shabbos. The first such farbrengen took place in 5733*.

The Yom Kippur War

Rabbi Sossonko: A most memorable Sukkos was in 5734*, right after the Yom Kippur War broke out. The Rebbe held a farbrengen on Yud-Gimmel Tishrei and spoke amazing words, saying that "*nibah velo yadah ma nibah*," how he had, with his words, "unknowingly" preempted the war with his campaign during the summer for Jewish children, *mipi olelim veyonkim*. The entire farbrengen was connected with the war, even the "Torah" elements of the *sichos*.

From that farbrengen onward, the Rebbe was in a state of constant *simcha*, and demanded a similar joy from Chassidim. If I recall correctly, the Rebbe said



RABBI AARON GOLDSTEIN VIA JEM 204760

THE REBBE FARBRENGS IN THE SUKKAH DURING CHOK HAMOED SUKKOS CIRCA 5716.



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 198464

DANCING IN FRONT OF 770 IN THE SPIRIT OF SIMCHAS BEIS HASHOEVA, 19 TISHREI 5744.

we should farbreng “*yomam valayla*, day and night,” throughout Sukkos.

The Rebbe also held another two farbrengens in the shul without food or l’chaim (“אויף טרוקען”); one on the second night of Sukkos, and other on Shabbos Chol Hamoed.

We were perplexed; the war was going terribly in Eretz Yisroel, and we were in constant trepidation. On Chol Hamoed, a group of Chassidim led by Reb Zushe Wilmowski approached the Rebbe with a *pan* for the Jews of Eretz Yisroel. The Rebbe said that he was in a state of *simcha*, and the *pan* wasn’t appropriate for the mood, so to speak; but since Chassidim were asking for a *bracha*, he would obviously respond.

On Shemini Atzeres, a very special event took place during *hakafos*. After the regular *pesukim* were read for the fourth *hakafa*, the Rebbe suddenly began singing the *pesukim* printed in small—



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 201861

THE REBBE LEAVES 770 FOR THE SUKKAH SUKKOS MORNING TO SHAKE LULAV AND ESROG, 20 TISHREI 5742.

“*Mitzvas Hashem barah...*”—to the tune of “*Hoaderes V’Haemuna*” (the tune commonly sung in shuls).

Initially, we were totally lost, but I remember that a few quick *bochurim*, Reb Leibel Altein and others, immediately understood what the Rebbe wanted, and they began responding to each stanza, “*L’chai olamim...*” After three or four lines, everyone joined in, and the entire room roared in response to the Rebbe’s calls. The Rebbe had given that *hakafa* to anyone that had been or was in the army, and this was sung with great emotion; we felt as if the Rebbe was winning the war with *simcha* at that very moment.

The next day, when the members of the Israeli consulate came to *hakafos*, they were surprised to see the joy and celebration during such a trying time, but we managed to explain to them that the Rebbe was spiritually winning the war with *simcha*.



That night the Rebbe also taught the *niggun* of “*Hoàderes V’Haemuna*” to the French national anthem.

Sukkos Stories

Rabbi Sossonko: Sukkos 5736* was a very rainy holiday, from the beginning to the end. The sukkah was filled with mud, and everything was a big mess. A *bochur*⁸ wrote to the Rebbe that it seemed to be a fulfillment of the Gemara⁹ that compares rain in the sukkah to a king who pushes away his servant, but the Rebbe rejected that explanation. The Rebbe said that we should tell the people on *mivtzoim* and *tahalucha* that Hashem wanted to make our farbrengens more comfortable, so he gave rain so that we are halachically permitted to eat outside of the sukkah.¹⁰ When we received the *hora'ah*, we took buses to other neighborhoods and shared the Rebbe's message with those Jews.

It was very difficult to farbreng that Sukkos. I recall Reb Mendel Futerfas holding a farbrengen in the small *zal* without food or drink, and whenever he wanted to say *l'chaim*, he would lean out of the window into the sukkah.

Simchas Beis Hashoevah

Rabbi Shapiro: Until 5741*, Sukkos was a relatively quiet Yom Tov, especially throughout the 5730s*, when the Rebbe didn't farbreng at all. Chassidim would travel on Chol Hamoed to farbreng in various communities, a custom which started in the 5710s*, and some farbrengens with Chassidim took place in the evenings, but nothing official would happen.

Rabbi Sossonko: In general, on the first night of Yom Tov, Crown Heights was silent. I recall Reb Avrohom Mayorer being one of the only Chassidim who would farbreng that night.

The second night of Yom Tov was when the farbrengens began. Every sukkah was full of Chassidim; one very popular farbrengen was in the Dubrawsky sukkah, where my father Reb Asher Sossonko and Reb Mendel Futerfas would farbreng. On Chol Hamoed, there were many farbrengens as well, although on a smaller scale.

Then, in 5741—*Shmas Hakhel*—everything changed.¹¹

After Maariv on the first night of Sukkos, the Rebbe turned around on his *bima*, wished the crowd “Gut Yom Tov,” and suddenly began saying a *sicha*!

The crowd rushed forward to hear, and a *balagan* ensued. The Rebbe spoke for a few minutes, and then began singing a *niggun* and left 770 while encouraging the singing. It was very hard to hear the *sicha*, especially since nobody was prepared. Afterwards, I was told that the Rebbe had spoken about the joy of *simchas beis hashoevah*, how it could be celebrated in *galus* even on the first night, and that he used very strong terms about the importance of *simcha* during Yom Tov.¹²

Needless to say, when we heard the Rebbe's instructions, we all broke out into a joyous dance, but as the minutes passed, people slowly broke away to begin their Yom Tov meals. I noticed one guest from Eretz Yisroel, Reb Moshe Nisselevitch, dancing with extra vigor. His son explained to me that his father felt that this was more than a regular *hora'ah*, and a great deal of *simcha* was needed. He planned to dance until people returned from their *seudas Yom Tov* to replace him.

* 5736-1975, 5741-1980, 5730S-1970S, 5710S-1950S, 5741-1980



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 201866

The Rebbe had asked for *simcha*, but for how long can a person dance? We didn't expect it to go longer than a half hour or an hour.

After the meal in my parent's home, I went to Reb Avrohom Mayorer's sukkah to farbreng as usual. On the way, I stopped off in 770, and I saw that Reb Moshe was still dancing with another 30 or 40 people. I joined the circle for some time, and continued on to Reb Avraham.

The next morning, I heard that Reb Moshe and the dancers had decided to go outdoors to "conquer" the streets as well, and had circled the *shechuna* at two o'clock in the morning. They even passed the Rebbe's home! There was a rumor that the Rebbe had smiled when he heard about it.

That night, the Rebbe again said a *sicha* about *simchas beis hashoevah*. We began to realize that something special was happening. More and more people began participating in the dancing on the street, and on Motzei Shabbos Chol Hamoed (it was a three day Yom Tov) an orchestra joined as well. During the *sicha* on the third night, the Rebbe himself spoke about the dancing in the streets, explaining that we were turning the *reshus harabim* into a *reshus hayachid l'yechido shel olam...*¹³

Until that year, *simchas beis hashoevah* was celebrated through farbrengens. That year, we began dancing much more, but nonetheless, farbrengens were still held over Yom Tov. However, in *sicha* after *sicha*, that year and in following years, the Rebbe spoke about the importance of dancing and dancing in the streets, as opposed to conducting farbrengens. From then, farbrengens became pretty much obsolete; the *mitzvas hayom* was dancing.

Rabbi Jacobson: From that year onward, Sukkos was a time of no sleep. Just as in the *Beis Hamikdash*, when *lo tu'amu taam shina*. After the Rebbe's *sicha*, we would dance every night at the *simchas beis hashoevah* until the wee hours of the morning, and then we would have only about two hours until the line for the Rebbe's lulav began. Then was *mitvtzaim*, and then the cycle would start over again.

The night would begin with a *sicha*. These were normally very long, sometimes even reaching close to two hours. They were always very *geshmak*; generally, the Rebbe would speak about the importance of *simcha* at *simchas beis hashoevah*, and about the *ushpiz*—including the *Chassidisher ushpiz*—of the day.¹⁴ The Rebbe would also often connect it to the *shiurim* in Chitas and Rambam,

and various other topics. Often, on Friday night, the Rebbe spoke a Rashi *sicha* too.

The Rebbe would usually begin with a *shrutemdiker* call of "Gut Yom Tov," to which the crowd would respond with a resounding "Gut Yom Tov" of its own. Often the Rebbe would announce "Gut Yom Tov" three times. Then the Rebbe would start the *niggun* of "*Vesamachta*," which would go on for several minutes with the Rebbe encouraging the singing, and only then would he proceed with the *sicha*. It was the Rebbe's "Gut Yom Tov" and *niggun* that set the tone for the "*zman simchaseinu*" on a daily basis.

A wonderful memory that I have is from the second night of Sukkos 5750*. It had rained mightily the night before, and the dancing was not the way it could have been. During the *sicha*, the Rebbe said that a *shmuah* had reached him that the dancing hadn't been with full enthusiasm. He hoped it wasn't true, the Rebbe said, but even if it was, we could be *mashlim* it that night, and we should see to it that "*Vu nur s'iz doh a gass, zol men zehn az di gass zol mit-tantzen*—wherever there is a street, the street should dance along."

The *sicha* was a short one; "*Veiniker geredt un mer getuhn*—less talk and more action," the Rebbe said. As usual the Rebbe began with "*Vesamachta*," and in the middle of the *sicha*, the Rebbe began singing his father's *niggun* for several minutes with unbelievable *simcha*. At the *sicha's* conclusion, the Rebbe said that when Moshiach comes, the whole world will see that "*Atah Vechartanu...*" and began singing the *niggun*.

That night, the dancing went on all night with a lot of *lebedikeit*. We sang "*Veshimcha hagadol...*" for hours on end, and hundreds of people participated. It was a very special night.

On Yom Tov when there was no microphone, it was important to come very early to get a place near the Rebbe's *bima*, and the pushing would be very severe. In 5752*, the Rebbe's *shtender* was moved to his farbrengen place in the center of 770. This way the Rebbe would be in the center of the room and it would be much easier for a larger crowd to hear. A special platform was built by the Vaad Hamesader for the Rebbe to walk from his davening *bima* to the place of the *sicha*.

In addition to the dancing and farbrengens that would break out immediately, after the *sicha*, 770 would split into groups of *chazzara*, especially on Yom Tov. In later years, there were special *chazzaras* held in English, Hebrew and Yiddish, so everyone

* 5750-1989, 5752-1991



REB MEIR HARLIG BRINGS THE LULAV AND ESROG TO THE REBBE BEFORE HALLEL, 21 TISHREI 5751.

present would be able to understand, and many hundreds of people would participate.

On the first night of Yom Tov, the Rebbe would also go to 770's large sukkah (along with Reb Moshe Yeruslavsky, the official *machnis orach*) and say a special *sicha* to the *orchim*. A small *bima* would be set up for the Rebbe, and he would speak for a few minutes.

During, before and after all the *sichos* and *tefillos*, the Rebbe pushed the *simcha* further and further. The Rebbe encouraged the singing going in and out of davening, and during each *sicha* explained how that night's *simcha* needed to be greater than all the previous nights', and how each person was obligated to take part.

Each year, the *simchas beis hashoevah* grew to much larger proportions.

The Rebbe expected each and every Chossid to take part in the dancing. One anecdote that illustrates this: One year, in the middle of a Yom Tov night, the Rebbe went out of his room to the sukkah. On his return, he requested that Rabbi Groner be called to take care of a certain issue. There was a *bochur* near the Rebbe's room (after 5748*, each night of Shabbos and Yom Tov, certain *bochurim* would make rotations to remain near the Rebbe's

room) and the Rebbe asked him to go find Rabbi Groner, saying that "*Mistame iz er baim tantzen—he is probably at the dancing.*"

It was in the wee hours of the morning, and yet the Rebbe expected that Rabbi Groner—who was no youngster by then—would be nowhere else, but at the dancing!

When we heard the story, we also understood that we couldn't suffice with attending the *simchas beis hashoevah* for a short few minutes. The Rebbe wanted every Chossid to be fully involved.

Shaking the Rebbe's Lulav

Rabbi Shapiro: From the earliest years of the Rebbe's *nesius*, Chassidim *bentched* each day on the Rebbe's *daled minim*. As I mentioned earlier, when I was a child, the Rebbe would sit each day and watch as each individual would enter the sukkah and make the *bracha*.

In 5725*, the Rebbe gave a *maaneh* in which he expressed his displeasure in spending so much time standing there. From then on, Rabbi Meir Harlig took over.

Each morning, the Rebbe would arrive in 770 at 8:00 or 8:15, come out to his sukkah with the lulav and esrog and spend 10 or 15 minutes there. Then,



HOSHANA RABAH 5750. LEVI FREDIN VIA JEM165872

he would open the door, hand the *daled minim* to Reb Meir Harlig, and everyone would have the opportunity to *bentch* on it in the large sukkah. Before the Rebbe reached Hallel, Reb Meir would bring the *daled minim* down to the shul for the Rebbe, and after the Rebbe returned to his room, Reb Meir would come back out with it for anyone who hadn't had the opportunity to *bentch* earlier.

Rabbi Sossenko: In the early years, everyone would wake up at a regular time, go to *mikveh*, and get on line to *bentch* on the Rebbe's *daled minim*. However, as the crowd grew, the line began to stretch longer and longer, and people began coming very early, from five in the morning, to reserve places in the line. Then, a new *seder* began. Numbered tickets were distributed in the morning, and you would only get into line shortly before your number arrived.

The line would be held in a special corner of the main sukkah that was constructed for this purpose.

Rabbi Shapiro: There were two instances when the *pitum* fell off the esrog making it *possul*. On one occasion, the Rebbe began using the Rebbetzin's esrog instead, but he didn't give it for Chassidim to *bentch* (he explained that it didn't belong to him). Instead, we *bentched* on the sets that the Rebbe had

given the prominent Chassidim, such as Reb Shmuel Dovid Raichik. The other time, the Rebbe replaced it with an esrog from his room.

Rabbi Jacobson: In 5752*, I was up the entire first night of Sukkos, and as the morning began, a *bochur* came in and reported that the Rebbe was standing and watching the *olam bentch* lulav. When the Rebbe had come out of his sukkah with the lulav at 8:15, he turned right and started walking towards the *bentching* place at the back of the large sukkah. People thought the Rebbe would leave the lulav there and go back, but the Rebbe remained until the line was finished at 3:15 pm!

The prospect that the Rebbe would watch you recite the *bracha* was quite frightening, and I know of at least one *bochur* who stood next to the sukkah the entire time but couldn't bear to enter. Others stumbled over their words. It was a very unique feeling, seeing the Rebbe pay such close attention to each and every passing *bochur* and *yungerman*. The Rebbe answered "*Baruch hu uvaruch shemo*" and "*Amen*" to all the *brachos* and watched closely as each of the thousands of people shook. Normally, we would watch the Rebbe, but here the tables were turned and the Rebbe was watching us, from



TEHILLIM, NIGHT OF HOSHANA RABBAH 5740.

an extremely short distance away. It was an awe inspiring experience.

As time passed, a chair was brought for the Rebbe. Rabbi Groner also informed the Rebbe of the time, but the Rebbe stood there until after 3:00 p.m., watching closely as every person recited the *bracha*.

Shacharis and Mincha took place back-to-back that day. It was a special davening, and I remember the Rebbe encouraging the singing very greatly by “*Halelu es Hashem*” during Hallel for a significant amount of time.¹⁵

Hoshaana Rabba

Rabbi Sossonko: Hoshaana Rabba is normally a busy time; there was Chumash and Tehillim to recite, a Yom Tov to prepare, a *sicha* and *simchas beis hashoevah*. I recall on several occasions how the Rebbe noted in the *sicha* of the night that a Jew has the power to accomplish everything. The *simchas beis hashoevah* on Hoshaana Rabba was obviously much shorter than usual. In 5741*, the Rebbe said to dance for 18 minutes and then to return to the shul to recite Devarim.

Rabbi Jacobson: The *sichos* on Hoshaana Rabba were especially unique and longer than the other nights. The Rebbe would often speak at length about the *geula* and that day’s *ushpiz*—Dovid Hamelech. Those *sichos*, in my mind, were the most expressive of the Rebbe’s heartfelt cry for the *geula*. One example was the heart-wrenching *sicha* of Hoshaana Rabba 5744*, when the Rebbe cried profusely when talking about Moshiach.

Rabbi Shapiro: Tehillim on Hoshaana Rabba would be at one o’clock. There were several years that the Rebbe also said a short *sicha* afterwards.


Rabbi Sossonko: Shacharis would begin at 10:00, and would take a very long time, partially due to the *chazzan*, Reb Yankel Katz, stretching it out. When it was time for Hoshaanos, the Rebbe would stand at a *shtender* on the floor, so that he wouldn’t need to get on and off the *bima* seven times. The Rebbe would circle the *bima* with the *chazzan* and a few others and the rest of the crowd did their Hoshaanos afterwards.

Rabbi Jacobson: After Hoshaanos, the Rebbe would turn around and watch the entire crowd do Hoshaanos themselves. It was always a special

sight as the Rebbe stood and gazed at the *olam*. On Hoshaana Rabba, the Rebbe would do so for a very long time.

After davening on Hoshaana Rabba, the Rebbe's lulav would be brought out for women and children to *bentch*. Mrs. Maryashe Garelik would be in charge of that line. No matter how busy they were on Erev Yom Tov, the whole world came to a stop and they waited patiently in line for their turn. As a child, I remember it being a major highlight of Sukkos as this was my only opportunity to shake the Rebbe's lulav.

Rabbi Shapiro: The Rebbe would also give out *lekach* on Hoshaana Rabba for whomever had not received earlier, and in the later years, women would receive *lekach* as well.

Rabbi Jacobson: After Hoshaana Rabba davening, the shul would be emptied, and they would begin setting up for *hakafos*. Then we would prepare for Simchas Torah, the climax of it all!¹⁶ 

1. Read about the story of Crown Heights in *A Chassidisher Derher*, Cheshvan 5777.

2. See *A Chassidisher Derher*, Teves 5779 pg 43.

3. That year was a three day Yom Tov, and the farbrengen on

the second day of Yom Tov went late into Friday night. Due to halachic concerns about *kiddush*, the Rebbe would not eat or drink past *shkiah* on such occasions, so *kos shel bracha* was distributed after the Shabbos farbrengen the following day.

4. Read more about 770's expansions in *A Chassidisher Derher*, Iyar 5775.

5. See "Daled Minim," *A Chassidisher Derher*, Tishrei 5779.

6. For a full description of the Rebbe's farbrengens in the Sukkah, see "The Streets Will Dance," *A Chassidisher Derher*, Tishrei 5777.

7. The full story of this farbrengen and the continuation on Simchas Torah is printed in a *A Chassidisher Derher*, Tishrei 5779. "Transforming the Nations."

8. Rabbi Binyomin Zilberstrom. For the story in detail, see *My Encounter*, Living Torah D158 P632.

9. Sukkah 29a.

10. The full *maaneh* is printed in *Lekutei Sichos* vol. 14 pg. 433.

11. For another description of these events and more, see "The Streets Will Dance," *A Chassidisher Derher*, Tishrei 5777.

12. See *Sichos Kodesh* 5741 vol. 1 pg. 128

13. *Ibid* pg. 195.

14. For a sampling of those *sichos*, see "From Generation to Generation," *A Chassidisher Derher*, Tishrei 5774.

15. For a full description of this day, see *A Chassidisher Derher*, Issue 6.

16. See our round table discussion about Simchas Torah by the Rebbe, "Uniting, Uplifting, Transcending," *A Chassidisher Derher*, Tishrei 5778.



RABBI SY HODAKOV

HOSHANOS, HOSHANA RABAH 5724.



CHOL HAMOEED SUKKOS CIRCA 5723, PINNY LEW



דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

לזכות החייל בצבאות ה'
שמעון שיחי'
לרגל הולדתו כ"ג תמוז ה'תשע"ט
ולזכות הוריו
הרה"ת ר' ארי' לייב
וזוגתו מרת אריאלה ליבא שיחיו
לבנר
נדפס ע"י זקיניו
ר' מנחם שלום וזוגתו מרת שושנה יפה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
סיגלשטיין

A Working System

AS TOLD BY LEV YAAKOV VOSKOBOYNIK (LOS ANGELES, CA)

Growing up, my family was not really involved in Yiddishkeit and we would attend our Conservative synagogue only on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. As I made my way through high school I succeeded academically, socially, and with playing competitive-tennis, but my Jewish identity was not very important to me.

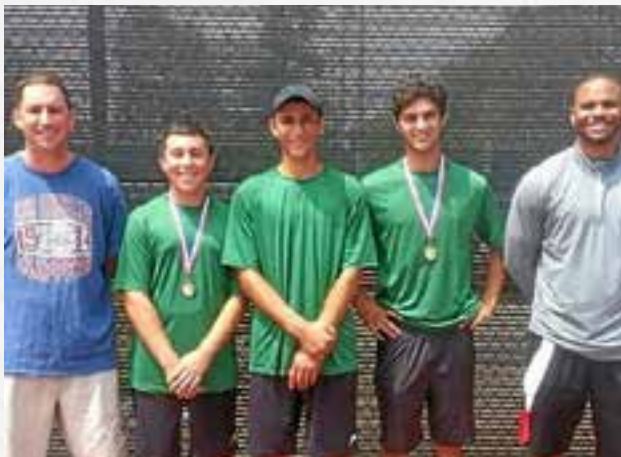
Although my parents had never provided me with a Jewish education, they still were bothered by my lack of care for Jewishness, so during the summer of my sophomore year in high school (5773) they signed me up to the Cteen Xtreme travelling camp.

Those two weeks were life-changing for me and they opened my eyes to the beauty of Yiddishkeit. When I

came home I was so inspired that I started keeping the few mitzvos I had learned about in camp. I started wearing a yarmulke and tzitzis all the time, wrapping tefillin every day and refrained from using my cell phone on Shabbos.

My parents were not so excited about this development. Their intention in sending me to Cteen Xtreme was for me to be more proud of my Judaism but not to this extent of observance. My grandfather's reaction, though, was far worse.

Both my parents and grandparents are immigrants from the former Soviet Union and for my grandfather, anything religious was anathema to him because of the terrible persecution his family had endured.



My grandfather was very unhappy about my new commitment to Yiddishkeit to the point that it was putting a terrible strain on our relationship.

I was terribly hurt by this, but my commitment to Yiddishkeit only grew, and the local shliach, Rabbi Eli Rivkin, continued to inspire me and guide my path towards more mitzvah observance and was very helpful and supportive.

That winter (5774), after much discussion my parents allowed me to attend the Cteen Shabbaton in Crown Heights.

For a non-religious boy, the first time entering 770 is an awe-inspiring experience. Everything you see, every *bochur* and every Chossid is holy. When we went to the Ohel on Sunday we were told that we could ask the Rebbe for whatever it is that we needed.

It was the first time in my life that I really thought about what is important in life, and with great sincerity I wrote a long letter to the Rebbe with requests that I be successful in my studies and with my tennis playing and that I should have good friends. I specifically mentioned the fallout I had with my grandfather and asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* that I should have a normal relationship with him.

I had learned that whenever asking the Rebbe for a *bracha*, one needs to make a *hachlata* as well, and I therefore committed to start keeping *kashrus*. Writing my *pan* and then davening at the Ohel truly made a deep impression upon me.

When I returned home my new *hachlata* was met with displeasure from my parents but I managed to stick with my commitment and life went on.

A few months later I was in Hawaii for vacation and while I was waiting in the airport for my return flight to Los Angeles I started making a mental checklist of all the *brachos* I had requested from the Rebbe at the Ohel to see if they had been fulfilled.



Going through the list I was happy to note that I was succeeding academically; I was in the top 50 students of a 5,000 student body and my sports life was doing exceptionally well as I had recently won the title of Los Angeles Tennis Champion. My social life was also on a high and I was blessed with solid good friends. But one *bracha* had not yet materialized: My grandfather was still ignoring me. Nothing had changed in the last few months since I had written to the Rebbe.

The thoughts continued festering in my mind and I was truly bothered by them.

It was literally two minutes later when my cell phone rang and my grandfather was on the line.

“Lev Yaakov, I must apologize to you,” he began. “I was unfair to you these past 10 months and this is not how a grandfather should behave with a grandson. When you come back to Los Angeles we should start rebuilding our relationship.”

I was ecstatic and overcome with a deep emotion. I was blown away at the fact that at the exact moment I started doubting the veracity of the Rebbe’s *brachos* the Rebbe ensured I should have no more doubts.

Per the Rebbe’s *bracha*, my relationship with my grandfather blossomed and today he joins our family every Friday night for *seudas Shabbos*.

Baruch Hashem, today I am a full-time *yeshiva bochur*, my grandfather has decided to buy for me all of the *sefarim* that I need in yeshiva, and my father, who is now *frum*, has begun learning Chitas daily. My sister goes to Cteen and is coming closer to Yiddishkeit. My mother is also on the road to complete *shmiras hamitzvos*. **T**

YOUR STORY

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לע"נ
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' שמעון ע"ה
בהר"ר שמואל זאנוויל ע"ה הי"ד
נלב"ע כ"ט תשרי ה'תשע"ז
ולע"נ זוגתו
מרת אסתר ע"ה
בת הרה"ח ר' יוחנן ע"ה
נלב"ע טו"ב תשרי ה'תשע"ד
גאלדמאן

ולע"נ
ר' יצחק יעקב ב"ר משה ע"ה
סיימאן

נלב"ע ד' אדר א' ה'תשע"ט
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה'

נדפס ע"י משפחתם
הרה"ת ר' שמואל זאנוויל
וזוגתו מרת צירל שיחיו
גאלדמאן



JEM 254107

EREV YOM KIPPUR

KAPAROS

The Rebbe would arrive to 770 early in the morning of Erev Yom Kippur.

At approximately 7:00 a.m. the Rebbe would privately *shlug Kaparos* in Gan Eden Hatachton. Shortly afterwards, the Rebbe would exit 770 holding the chicken, and hand it to the *shochet*. A look of discomfort was clearly seen on the Rebbe's face as he watched the *shechita*.

Following the *shechita*, the *shochet* would hand the Rebbe a few feathers from the chicken, and the Rebbe would say the *bracha* “*al kisui hadam be'afar*” and cover the blood with dirt using the feathers. The Rebbe would cover over the blood five times.

The Rebbe was careful to pay the *shochet* before *chatzos* that day.

The Rebbe leaves for the *mikveh* before Shacharis. The Rebbe always went to mikveh in the morning of Erev Yom Kippur.¹

1. The only exception being 5725 when the Rebbe was sitting shiva after the passing of his mother, Rebbetzin Chana.



9 TISHREI 5752, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 217586



9 TISHREI 5752, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 217544



9 TISHREI 5748, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 13201

SHACHARIS

Dressed in a silk *kapota*, the Rebbe enters the shul for Shacharis. In the years prior to Chof-Beis Shevat 5748*, this was one of the rare occasions that Chassidim were able to daven Shacharis with the Rebbe. In consideration of the Rebbe's busy day ahead, the davening proceeded at a fairly quick pace.



9 TISHREI 5751, CB HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 56009

LEKACH

After Shacharis, the Rebbe would distribute *lekach* at the door to his room. Men and children would pass by to receive a piece of cake and a *bracha* for a *shana tova u'mesuka*. (Women and girls would receive *lekach* from the Rebbe on Hoshana Rabba.)

The Rebbe stood for hours until Mincha to see the thousands waiting in line. Sometimes, if not everyone was able to come by before Mincha, the Rebbe would continue giving out *lekach* after Mincha as well. In the later years the distribution of *lekach* began a few day before Yom Kippur, leaving time for the ever growing crowd to receive.

In the earlier years, the Rebbe would wait for each person to ask for the *lekach* before giving. But later on, when the crowds of people swelled, the Rebbe would consider the outstretched arm as the “ask.”



TZEDAKAH

As the Rebbe entered the shul for Mincha carrying large envelope filled with coins, he would stop at tables full of pushkas and other makeshift tzedakah boxes, each for a different charitable cause, and drop several coins into each.

9 TISHREI 5751, LEVI FREDIN VIA JEM 172709

BRACHA TO ANASH

Following Mincha, the Rebbe turns to face the crowd and gives a *bracha* to the Chassidim. In the earlier years, when the Rebbe did not have a raised *bima*, he would deliver this *bracha* standing on a table.



9 TISHREI 5728, JEM 103744



9 TISHREI 5736, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 141990



JEM

BIRCHAS HABANIM

In the final moments of the day, garbed in tallis and *kittel* in anticipation of Yom Kippur, the Rebbe would give the *birchas habanim* to the *bochurim*; for as the Rebbe explained, “As you learn in the Rebbe’s yeshiva, you are the Rebbe’s children.”

Originally this was held in the Rebbe’s room, but as the number of *bochurim* grew over the years, it eventually moved to the small *zal*.

The Rebbe would cover his face with the tallis and *bentch* the *bochurim*, “*Vayidaber... Yivorechecha... Yaer... Yisa... Vesamu*,” followed by additional words of *brachos*.



JEM

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The Rebbe's Miracle

Dear Editors,

I was privileged to share the story of the birth of our first child with the Rebbe's tremendous bracha in the Av magazine ["A Year on the Mark", Issue 84 (161), Av 5779].

Please allow me to share an additional miracle from the Rebbe in continuation to that story.

Celebrating Simchas Torah this year in the Chabad shul in Lod where I daven, I went around and asked many of the *yungeleit* when was the last time they went to the Rebbe. The responses I got were troubling to say the least. Some said it had been ten to fifteen years since the last time they were in New York. Others said the last time they were there was before they got married. This was disturbing to me and I decided to do something about it.

There and then, I announced that I plan to arrange a group to travel to the Rebbe sometime during the upcoming year. On Shabbos Bereishis we farbrenged and spoke more about making the trip. Right after Shabbos I got to work.

I had never arranged a group, so I started calling around to find out what I needed to do to put the trip together. I called a friend who is a travel agent to figure out when the tickets are cheap in the middle of the winter. Then I reached out to Rabbi

Michoel Tayeb to find out when he is available and if he could come with us as a *mashpia* to farbreng with the group. But it turned out that the time that he was available wouldn't work with the prices. Everyone had a different time that worked for them. In short, three days passed and we couldn't even decide on a date.

Eventually, I told my wife that it's too difficult to arrange the trip and it seems that I won't be doing it this year. It is too hard to take guys that haven't been there for so long, I told her. My wife took me to task on this, quoting how I had told her that the Rebbe gave special attention to groups and those who brought groups of people to 770. It's the best gift you can give the Rebbe, to bring *yungeleit* who haven't been by the Rebbe in so many years. Don't lose the opportunity, she said.

Hearing my wife's strong words, I changed my mind and decided that I would do everything I could to make the trip happen.

The following week we went for a certain fertility treatment. On the morning of Chof Cheshvan, as I was preparing to travel to New York for work (I am a photographer at the Kinus), the doctor called to notify me that my wife had become pregnant again. The due date for the birth was around Gimmel Tammuz!

In the end, 30 members of *anash* in Lod took part in the trip to the Rebbe. We

spent Shabbos at the Ohel, davened in 770, visited the Rebbe's house, and all in all it was an amazing success.

Just a few weeks ago, two weeks before Gimmel Tammuz, our Menachem Mendel was born.

There is no question to me that this *bracha* was in merit of the group that I brought to the Rebbe.

May we continue to share good news,

Hertzel Kosashvili
Lod, Eretz Yisroel



Escape from Warsaw

Dear Editors,

The article about the Friediker Rebbe's escape from Europe to the US ["The Miraculous Rescue", Issue 79 (156), Adar II 5779] was indeed very interesting.

It seems that much research went in to the article but I think there may have been a mistake regarding the miraculous escape from Warsaw to Riga via Berlin.

Although the Derher was probably relying on the account brought down in "Toldos Chabad B'Poilin," there is a more recent account from one of the German soldiers, Klaus Shank (I don't know if I'm spelling his name right), who took part in the operation of saving the Friediker Rebbe and his family. This account was published in Hebrew in "Admurei Chabad VeYahadus Germania".

One important detail that differs from the Derher is regarding the form of transportation from Warsaw to Berlin.

Derher talks about it being a train in which they traveled. "There was a genuine fear that at any moment German soldiers would board the train and do whatever they want. They were sure to be provoked at the sight of a dignified rabbi with a

long beard travelling freely into Germany. Indeed they were harassed multiple times on the train."

In Klaus's account: "On the day of the rescue, Bloch and his soldiers escorted the group of Jews outside of the house and they walked with them on the street until they got to the car where a group of German soldiers were waiting. A truck was waiting next to the car.

"Inside of the car, sat Bloch, myself, the [Friediker] Rebbe, his wife and mother. The rest of the group of Jews went on to the truck with our group of soldiers."

In long detail he describes the very scary trip and numerous stops by S.S. officers on the way. Ernest Bloch was the general who led the operation of saving the Friediker Rebbe. He was a high ranking German officer with Jewish ancestry. It is an extremely interesting and also shaking account. (See Pages 91-97.)

Keep up the great work!

Yisrael Pinson
Detroit, MI



Thinking Torah All Day

Dear Readers,

In last month's magazine, we included an article about Mivtza Torah ["Our Very Life", Issue 79 (162), Elul 5779]. The article included various *sichos*, *horaos* and stories from the Rebbe on the topic of learning Torah.

One quote that we included was from a *sicha* in 5732* where the Rebbe says: "This 15 minutes, or half hour, or hour, that is spent on Torah, must be spread out and seeded throughout the entire 24 hours—to the extent that when you sleep, it should be clear that this is a Yid who studied Torah... If you are truly invested in Torah, then you gain knowledge even during your sleep."

In this regard, Reb Nochum Markowitz of Crown Heights shared with us a story.

As a *bochur*, Nochum wasn't excited about learning. Instead, he worked for the Shmira-patrol, driving around and ensuring the safety of the *shechuna*. As known, the safety of Crown Heights was very important to the Rebbe and he felt that this would be a good way for him to spend his time.

At one point, he went in for *yechidus* with the Rebbe. In his note he wrote to the Rebbe about his occupation and that he does not want to learn. He wrote clearly that although he knows very well that he is really supposed to be learning, he lacks interest in learning and therefore does not learn. He added that this lack of interest bothers him.

The Rebbe told him as follows (in *Lashon Hakodesh*): "You should continue to work in the patrol in this neighborhood, and you should set times for learning, in Torah Shebichsav and in Torah Shebaal Peh. In

Torah Shebichsav—learn the parsha of the week, and in Torah Shebaal Peh [at this point the Rebbe picked up his head]—learn whatever you want. The main thing is, that these set times shouldn't be more than five minutes! And from time to time, add a fifth [twenty percent, i.e. one extra minute].

Reb Nochum relates how this *horaah* was life changing for him; he would often finish the five minutes in the middle of an interesting question or topic, but as per the Rebbe's instructions, he would not continue. This made him think about the learning all day until he could finally learn the answer or continuation the next day.

As the Rebbe said many times, a *horaah* to someone privately is not necessarily a *horaah* for the public; yet this story sheds insight on the aforementioned quote, so it is being shared for the benefit of the readership with the exact context.

The Editors

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להצלחה מרובה בכל אשר יפנו בגו"ר,
מתוך הרחבה ונחת חסידותי מכל יו"ח

לזכות
הרה"ת ר' לוי יצחק זוגתו מרת חנה
באנון
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חנינא וישראל שיחיו
לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר

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לכ"ק אדמו"ר

נדפס ע"י
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כהן
מנשסתר, אנגלי'

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' לוי יצחק שיחי' וואגעל
בקשר עם יום הולדתו ביום ו' תשרי
ולזכות זוגתו מרת חי' פריידא ומשפחתם שיחיו

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מתוך בריאות נכונה ושפע בגו"ר
לנח"ר כ"ק אדמו"ר והוריו הי"ו

לע"נ
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נלב"ע ביום ל' כסלו ה'תש"נ
ולע"נ זוגתו
מרת שרה רוזא ע"ה בת ר' אהרן ע"ה
נלב"ע כ"ח אדר ה'תשע"ז
גארדאן
ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

DEDICATED BY
MR. & MRS. LARRY GORDON

לזכות
גרשון ליב בן מנחה שיחי'
לרפואה שלימה וקרובה



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גראסס
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ולע"נ זוגתו האשה החשובה והחסודה
מרת שרה פייגא ב"ר נטע זאב ע"ה
גראסס
נלב"ע ביום שבת קודש פ' וילך ו' תשרי ה'תשע"ט

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ולעילוי נשמות
הרה"ח ר' אהרן בן הרה"ח ר' יהודה ע"ה
חיטריק
נלב"ע בכ"ט תשרי ה'תשע"ב
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה'
נדבת משפחתם שיחיו



לזכות
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והכלה מרת חי' מושקא תחי' גרינברג
לרגל נישואיהם בשעתומ"צ
יום ג', כ"ט סיון, ער"ח תמוז ה'תשע"ט
נדפס ע"י הוריהם
הרה"ח ר' יוסף יצחק
וזוגתו מרת אסתר גאלדע שיחיו
גרינברג



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

ולזכרון הצדקנית הרבנית מרת חנה ע"ה שניאורסאהן בת הרה"ג הרה"ח ר' מאיר שלמה ע"ה
אמו של כ"ק אדמו"ר
לרגל היארצייט-הילולא ו' תשרי

לע"נ

הרה"ג הרה"ח הרה"ת מוה"ר שניאור זלמן בן הרה"ח ר' נתן ע"ה
גורארי'

מסור ונתון בכל לבבו בכל נפשו ובכל מאודו לכ"ק אדמו"ר מוהריי"ץ ולכ"ק אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו ומקורב לבית רבי. כל ימיו
פזר מכספו להדפסת הספרים של כל רבוה"ק. הי' חבר בהנהלה הראשית דאגו"ח העולמית וחבר פעיל בהנהלת מל"ח,
קה"ת, תות"ל, ועד המסדר. ציפה בכליון עיניים לביאת המשיח.

נפטר בש"ט ביום השבת א' דר"ה ה'תשס"ד

תנ"צ'ה

נדפס ע"י נכדו נתן וזוגתו גיטל ומשפחתם שיחיו
שטרנברג

לזכות

הרה"ת ר' ישראל עובדי-ה וזוגתו מרת עליזה קריינדל ומשפחתם שיחיו
שחט

לע"נ

מרת בראנא שיינא בת ר' אברהם צבי הלוי ע"ה
דייטש

נלב"ע י"ג תשרי ה'תשע"ה

תנ"צ'ה

נדפס ע"י משפחתה שיחיו

לזכות

הרה"ת ר' מענדי וזוגתו מרת שטערני
ומשפחתם שיחיו
סמיטאנא

מוקדש

לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר

נדפס ע"י

הרה"ת ר' יהושע פישל
וזוגתו מרת שטערנא שרה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
ראזענשטיין

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו

נדפס ע"י ולזכות

הרה"ת ר' לייביש משה

וזוגתו מרת ריינה

ילדיהם קיילא באשא, בנימין דוד,
אליהו איסר, רבקה שיינדל אלטא שיחיו
גולדהירש

DEDICATED BY CHABAD
LUBAVITCH OF WESTPORT

הרה"ת ר' יהודה לייב
וזוגתו מרת נחמה דינה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
קאנטאר

IN HONOR OF MY DEAR FRIENDS
AVRAHAM AND DEVORAH
שיחיו
HAYMAN

DEDICATED BY
YISROEL SCHULMAN

A Chassidisher Derher
Vaad Talmidei Hatmimim



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