



# IN THE KING'S COURT

*Parim With The Rebbe*

לע"נ  
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' אברהם יעקב  
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נלב"ע כ"ה תשרי ה'תשנ"ו  
ולע"נ זוגתו האשה החשובה  
מרת פריידא ראצא  
בת הרב יחיאל אפרים פישל ע"ה  
נלב"ע ט"ז אדר-שני ה'תשע"ו  
תנ"צ'בה'  
נדפס ע"י בנם  
הרה"ת ר' משה מאיר שמואל  
וזוגתו מרת רבקה לאה  
ומשפחתם שיחיו  
גלוכאווסקי



The Purim farbrengen.

Moments in time when Chassidim in 770 rose “*a tefach hecher*,” uplifted by the Rebbe’s presence and words. The noise and chaos of New York City seemed to fade away as the crowd united as one, basking in the Rebbe’s presence; drinking in hours of *sichos*, following the Rebbe’s lead during the *freileche niggunim*, and listening intently to the *maamar Chassidus*.

It was always a transformative experience to be in the Rebbe’s presence, but Purim was undoubtedly special. Even today, watching a video of the Rebbe’s Purim farbrengen brings one into the special atmosphere of the Rebbe’s Purim celebration. The stories of Achashverosh, Mordechai and Esther come alive and timely, real and relevant; the atmosphere electric; the *simcha*, pure, unifying and uplifting.

“There was something very unique about the Purim farbrengens, setting them apart from the rest of the year,” explains Rabbi Simon Jacobson. “Although it was one of the largest farbrengens of the year, the Rebbe didn’t want it to be televised, explaining that Purim is a time of ‘*mishpacha u’mishpacha*,’ as if to say that this farbrengen was more of an intimate and personal experience.

“Chabad demands *pnimius*. It goes without saying that Purim by the Rebbe was not a day of frivolous fun; there was no *leitzanus* or Purim shpiels. Rather, it was a soulful and transcendent celebration of the highest level of the *neshama—ad d’lo yada*. The Rebbe often explained the words of the Tikkunei Zohar that Purim is just as holy as Yom HaKippurim (Yom Ki-purim = like Purim), with the distinction that on Purim we elevate the physical world as well. In truth, this was personified and palpably

expressed in every one of the Rebbe’s Purim farbrengens.

“These farbrengens were truly remarkable, and the Rebbe was always very *besimcha*. It’s difficult to describe the *simcha* of the Rebbe: His face radiated with a special inner glow. His presence gave off an elevated sense of joy and happiness—not an external one, but one coming from a deep place within. The Rebbe’s *nichnas yayin yatza sod* was extraordinary: Deep concepts of Torah flowed from the Rebbe, like an ‘ever-increasing spring.’ The Rebbe was far more ‘open’ and accessible than usual. The entire environment was different, empowering everyone who attended with a new sense of urgency, confidence and focus.

“There were also many historic Purim farbrengens. Specifically, Purim 5716\*, 5718\*, 5726\* and 5747\* come to mind. There were wondrous things that happened at these farbrengens, such as in 5713\*, when the Rebbe said a second *maamar*, and declared three times ‘*hoo-rah*,’ that was connected to the death of Stalin that same night.

“In my memory, one of the most *Purim’dik* farbrengens was actually Shabbos Ki Sisa 5745\*, two days after Purim.<sup>1</sup> It was a most extraordinary farbrengen, with abounding *simcha* and amazing *sichos* and interactions; I don’t think I remember any other similar farbrengen.

“Every year, a central theme of the farbrengen was the relevance of the Megillah to our lives today. The word ‘Torah’ stems from the word *hora’ah*, as the Rebbe explained countless times, and therefore every detail in it serves as a lesson. It may be that the section of Torah with the greatest amount of the Rebbe’s explanations and lessons is actually the Megillah. Every detail—from the length of Achashverosh’s feast to the heroic actions of Mordechai and

Esther—has an eternal lesson relevant to the present-day state of affairs.”

## THE PURIM THEMES

We asked Rabbi Jacobson to point out several examples:

“Certain concepts were recurring themes in the Purim *sichos*. For example, the Rebbe often spoke about *hashgacha pratis* in our lives, which we learn from the Purim story, how seemingly ‘random’ events were actually part of a greater divine plan. This teaches us how to connect the dots in our own lives and recognize the patterns of a deeper narrative.

“This idea is associated with the way Chassidus explains the hidden





name of Hashem in the Megillah, and the apparent natural cycle of events we see in the story. The Rebbe would draw a lesson from this to our own lives: That we also need to recognize that Hashem is present in our own lives, even if it isn't immediately apparent.

"Another central theme was Chassidus's interpretation of *ad delo yada*—that Purim is a Yom Tov more sublime than any other, even Yom Kippur. It is associated with the idea of a *goral* because it stems from the highest levels of *Elokus*, from *Atzmus* itself, which is beyond the rational structure of things. (Actualizing this theme, the Rebbe encouraged

many people to say *l'chaim* at these farbrengens, and would often ask for a volunteer to fulfill *ad delo yada* in an actual way.)

"Current affairs were always a present topic. The Jews' participation in Achashverosh's feast, as well as the term '*Yehudim*' first seen in the Megillah, were often starting points for *sichos* about *Mihu Yehudi* and assimilation. The stories about Mordechai and the children he gathered served as lessons regarding *chinuch*. Mordechai's proud Judaism in the court of the king was a lesson for Jewish America—and contemporary Jewish life in general—to always stand proud and celebrate our Yiddishkeit.

"At several farbrengens, the Rebbe spoke about Mordechai's status as *ratzui lero v'echav*, not being accepted by parts of the Sanhedrin because he became involved in public affairs, and drew practical modern-day lessons from the story regarding *shlichus* and *hafatzas hamaayanos*.

"One very important theme at practically every Purim farbrengen was *Neshei U'bnos Yisrael*. The Rebbe would dedicate at least one *sicha*, and sometimes more, to the pivotal role of Jewish women, often dwelling on the lessons of Esther and on the fact that the Megillah is called exclusively in her name, without mentioning Mordechai."



PINNY LEW

## A MUCH LONGER CELEBRATION

The Purim festivities, it could be said, would often begin much before Purim. From the beginning of Adar, and even from Shabbos Mevorchim, Purim was high on the agenda in the Rebbe's *sichos*, often with reminders about Mivtza Purim, the importance of taking care of the needy, and additional *simcha*.

Following the establishment of Tzivos Hashem,<sup>21</sup> rallies were often held in the days around Purim, where the Rebbe would speak about the lessons of the Megillah in the clear and simple style he used during those rallies. From 5740\*, Purim was also preceded by a *sicha* on Taanis Esther.

On Purim evening and morning, the Rebbe would join the main *minyán* for davening and Megillah reading, even in the years that he would normally daven Shacharis alone. This was one of the few occasions a year (until 5748\*) that Chassidim saw the Rebbe wearing tefillin. Notably, the Rebbe would always recite the *brachos* and Megillah quietly along with the *baal koreh* (Reb Yochanan Gordon in the early years, and Reb Mottel Shusterman later on).

"In the early years," recalls Rabbi Meir Harlig, "the Rebbe used an old, frayed Megillah which he kept in a cardboard container. It had the names of Haman's sons written in a single column, unlike the Megillah of the Rebbe Maharash. Apparently, it had been a gift from the Frierdiker Rebbe. In later years, Reb Getzel Rubashkin bought the Rebbe a new beautiful Megillah in a silver case."<sup>22</sup>

"As far as I remember, the Rebbe would lightly tap his foot at every mention of Haman, but would do so more significantly when Haman is mentioned with a title. I also remember several instances where the

Rebbe smiled broadly at the noise-making of the children."

(Editor's note: At the farbrengen on Shabbos Shushan Purim 5741, the Rebbe addressed it directly: "The *gabbaim* walk around with serious faces, attempting to shorten the noise-making... but the children know that there is still a Haman!"<sup>23</sup>)

"An interesting fact: In the early years, the Rebbe would personally read Megillah for the Rebbetzin at home, but there were also instances where she would open the window and listen to the reading in the shul of the Bostoner Rebbe next door to her home.

"Every year," Rabbi Harlig continues, "the Rebbe would give *mishloach manos*, delivered by Rabbi Groner, to a Kohen, Levi and Yisrael. In the early years, the *mazkir* Reb Eliyahu Kwint was the Kohen, Reb Shmuel Levitin was the Levi, and Rabbi Hodakov was the Yisrael. When Rabbi Kwint passed away, the *sofer* Reb Shaya Matlin replaced him, and when Reb Shmuel passed away he was replaced by Reb Shmuel Dovid Raichik.

"After Shacharis, I would prepare the packages, which contained a bottle of Smirnoff vodka and a fruit. One year, the Rebbe spoke at a farbrengen about adding to the *mishloach manos*, so I added a hamantash. The Rebbe didn't get involved in the contents.

"The Rebbe would also send to the *Poilisher* Rebbes who received *mishloach manos* from the Frierdiker Rebbe: The Kopishnitzer Rebbe, the Boyaner Rebbe and the Amshinover Rebbe. These may have been delivered by Reb Berel Yunik.

"There were several individuals who would bring *mishloach manos* to the Rebbe: Reb Sholom (Sydney) Hecht would bring to the Rebbe's room, and Reb Leibel Bistritzky would bring to the Rebbetzin, at home. Normally, the Rebbe would then send

all *mishloach manos* he received to the *bochurim* and to Beis Rivkah.

"For *matanos levyonim*, a number of people would enter the Rebbe's room on Purim morning. Rabbi Mentlick and Rabbi Chaim Meir Bukiet would both receive money from the Rebbe for Kupas Bachurim, which supported the *bochurim* in the yeshiva, and Reb Moshe Groner would receive money—a different amount each year—for poor families in the Lower East Side of Manhattan. Reb Moshe Pinchas Katz and his son Reb Zev would receive money from the Rebbe as well."

Rabbi Michoel Seligson shares an interesting anecdote that he heard from Reb Moshe Groner:

"When Reb Moshe entered the Rebbe's room to receive *matanos levyonim* in 5751\*, he noticed several differences in the Rebbe's *hanhagah*; for example, the Rebbe gave him a much larger sum than usual and the Rebbe insisted that he take it from his hands, not from the table as he usually did. It turned out to be the last Purim when the Rebbe was in good health."

The Purim farbrengen would usually be held at 9:30 p.m. on Motzei Purim, after families held their *seudah* at home. Whenever Purim fell out on Friday, the Rebbe would hold the farbrengen on Shabbos Shushan Purim instead, dwelling on many of the same themes, albeit in the style of a Shabbos farbrengen.

The Purim farbrengens would often end with a call for *maos chittim* and Mivtza Matzah, even though Purim wasn't over yet. Shushan Purim was always a joyous day in the Rebbe's presence, and the following Shabbos farbrengen often continued with the same Purim themes. Beginning in 5742\*, the Rebbe would also hold a *yechidus klalis* in the days after Purim, to see off the guests who had arrived to spend the day in the Rebbe's presence.





LEVI FREDIN VIA JEM 243618

A MISHLOACH MANOS KIT PREPARED BY TZACH IN ERETZ YISRAEL, PURIM 5733.

## THE REBBE'S KUPAH

One of the staples of the Purim farbrengens was the *magbis* the Rebbe would announce towards the end of the farbrengen. Participants would write their pledges on one card, and their name and mother's name on a separate card for the Rebbe to take to the Ohel.

This tradition began in 5713\*, when the Rebbe said that he was attempting to reinstate *minhagim* that had been stopped for various reasons over the years. The *magbis* was a custom of the Rebbe Rashab, who would collect tzedakah money "for his own *inyanim*." Because it was a donation for the Rebbe's own cause, it was known as Kupas Rabbeinu. (In 5745\*, the Rebbe said the money supports people who learn Torah *lishmah*.)

The early source of this custom also served as a reason for the two separate cards, one for the pledge and one for the name of the donor. The Rebbe explained that this tradition preceded the era of *mitzvah lifarsem oseh mitzvah*, when charitable deeds are promoted and celebrated, and therefore it was done then *betzina*, in a more private way. (On some occasions, however, the Rebbe asked that both details be included on a single card.)

Although the *magbis* was only held during the Purim farbrengen, the *kupah* always existed, and the Rebbe encouraged donations even on years when no Purim farbrengen was held, saying that Chassidim needed to know to donate to the *kupah* even when no official 'appeal' was held.

The Rebbe often encouraged that large sums be donated, "in a way of *ad delo yada*." On one occasion, the Rebbe instructed right after the *magbis* that everyone give double the amount of their pledge!

# PURIM HIGHLIGHTS

To give our readers a feel of Purim with the Rebbe, we have collected snippets of varying lengths from every Purim over the years, culled from *sichos*, *yomanim*, and memories of Chassidim. We were greatly assisted in this endeavor by Rabbi Michael Seligson.



**5710\***

“*Vilde menschen*, wild people say that *histalkus* means to completely go away, but they don’t know what they’re talking about!” the Rebbe said at the Shabbos Shushan Purim farbrengen, barely a month after the *histalkus* of the Frieddiker Rebbe. Really, the Rebbe explained, it means the Rebbe is more present than before, as in, “*Istalek yekara d’Kudsha Brich Hu.*”<sup>2</sup>

**5711\***

This was the first Purim after the Rebbe accepted the *nesius*. It was a very long farbrengen, and the Rebbe was very emotional, saying that he was unworthy of the *nesius* and only a conduit for the Frieddiker Rebbe in this world.<sup>3</sup>

**5712\***

“This was the only Purim farbrengen where the Rebbe washed for *Hamotzi*,” relates Rabbi Seligson. “In a powerful *sicha*, the Rebbe cried profusely when speaking of the lesson from Mordechai, who despite his prominent position personally gathered Jewish children to teach them Torah. Among other things, the Rebbe also said that whoever is close to the Rebbe, and even those who only hold on to the Rebbe’s *kliamke*, will merit to receive the *giluyim* of Moshiach. The Rebbe instructed many people to say *l’chaim*; some individuals began to be *mehader* in the Rebbe’s instructions, until the Rebbe told them to stop...”

**5713\***

Late in the farbrengen, the Rebbe’s face became very serious, and he seemed to be preparing to recite a *maamar*. But instead, the Rebbe related a story of a Russian Chossid who participated in elections, and, following the cue of the other voters, declared loudly, “*hoo-rah.*” Seeing the Rebbe’s grave expression, everyone repeated after the Rebbe, “*hoo-rah, hoo-rah, hoo-rah!*” The Rebbe then proceeded with a (second) *maamar*. News of Stalin’s death arrived a few days later.<sup>4</sup>

**5714\***

The farbrengen was held on Shabbos Shushan Purim until late in the evening (followed by *kos shel bracha*), thereby allowing people from other areas to participate.

**5715\***

The Rebbe spoke a long *sicha* about the *nisayon* of wealth. Right afterwards, the Rebbe announced that whoever desired to be tested by the *nisayon* of wealth, should raise their hand and will be blessed with it. Most people were under the impression of the *sicha*, and didn’t raise their hand; only three individuals did so. However, it seemed that the Rebbe was disappointed that only a few people took advantage of this opportunity.





PURIM 5713

### 5716\*

An extraordinary *lebedike* farbrengen, where the Rebbe instructed people to say *l'chaim* again and again.

During one *sicha* on the topic of when to roll up the Megillah, a commotion broke out among the Chasidim when the Rebbe favored an opinion that is refuted by the Vilna Gaon (explaining that we don't have clarity from the Alter Rebbe on this matter).

In response, the Rebbe related that he received protests about a statement of the Chossid Reb Folle Kahn, that a certain *gadol* in heaven is jealous of a child who learns Tanya. The Rebbe actually defended his words, saying that it was, in fact, based on a Gemara<sup>5</sup>, that the righteous people are “נכוח מחופתו של חברו, burned (by embarrassment) from the *chupah* of their fellow [i.e. the reward from Hashem].”

### 5717\*

The Rebbe related a powerful story involving several Rabbeim, dating back to the Mittlerer Rebbe's bar mitzvah year, about the power of a *tzaddik*.<sup>6</sup>

### 5718\*

One of the Rebbe's longest and most famous farbrengens, complete with *giluyim* from beginning to end. The Rebbe said numerous *l'chaims* and spoke to many people individually.<sup>7</sup> Listen to the audio and see for yourself.



PURIM 5722, RABBI AHARON GOLDSTEIN

5716-1956, 5717-1957, 5718-1958, 5719-1959



PURIM 5713

### 5719\*

The Rebbe's Purim Torah: “The only argument between Haman and Mordechai was whether ‘*lehashmid* . . . *Hayehudim*’ or ‘*Layehudim haysa orah*...’ But *Mihu Yehudi*? There was no argument about that!”<sup>8</sup> Just a month earlier, the Rebbe had responded at length to Prime Minister Ben Gurion's question of “Who is a Jew?” which had been sent to a number of leading Jewish personalities. This farbrengen, which deals with the distinction between the Jew and non-Jew at length, seems to be in direct relation to that discussion.



PURIM 5713, JEW 103376



**5720\***

The Purim farbrengen that year was in a very serious mode. Some people associated this with the recent devastating earthquake in

Morocco where many Jews were killed, among them many students in the local Chabad institutions. The *maamar* was a very serious one, but afterwards, the Rebbe instructed everyone to say *l'chaim*.

"During that farbrengen," relates Rabbi Seligson, "the Rebbe said a powerful *maamar* ('*Balaylah Hahu*'), where he quoted the *possuk* in Shir Hashirim, '*Ani yesheinah v'libi er, kol dodi dofek*,' explaining that there is always a *pintele Yid* awake within the heart of every Jew. The Rebbe was very emotional and cried repeatedly. It seemed to be associated with the state of American youth, who were rebelling against their parents and searching for meaning in their lives."

Zalman Shazar was present throughout the farbrengen, and many of the *sichos* seemed directed to him. The Rebbe alluded—and responded—to a speech Prime Minister Ben Gurion had made in Boston, where he equated the Jewish people with all other nations. The Rebbe expounded on the meaning of '*Atah bechartanu*,' and also spoke at length about Kfar Chabad, which Shazar had been very instrumental in since its founding.

The Rebbe also spoke about the merit Shazar had in printing the *maamarim* of the Alter Rebbe, and spoke about those *maamarim* at length. At this farbrengen, the Rebbe also instructed Shazar not to run for President of Israel. (Later, the Rebbe instructed him otherwise.)



PURIM 5729

**5721\***

"Give up on your fresh milk, radio and television, and reach out to the Jew in a *medinah chareivah*!" A lesson about going on shlichus from President Kennedy's newly announced Peace Corp.<sup>9</sup>

That year also marked the Rebbe's first call for Mivtza Purim (in educational institutions), something that would later grow to much greater proportions.

**5722\***

"In America, as soon as a baby begins to speak, he gives an opinion. So, let him demand of his parents: 'Educate me in the ways of our forefathers!'" Several powerful *sichos* on Chinuch.

**5723\***

Shazar again participated in the Rebbe's farbrengen, along with Dr. Yosef Kelerman, another prominent Israeli official. The Rebbe said a *maamar* beginning with the words "*Reishis Goyim Amalek*," based on a *maamar* of the Alter Rebbe that had been discovered in a newly arrived manuscript. Two years later, Shazar arranged for a grant to sponsor the publishing of the manuscript in its entirety.

**5724\***

That year, the Rebbe suspended the *takana* limiting Mashke just for Purim. "Nobody said *l'chaim* at the farbrengen, but afterwards, it was very *freilach* and the dancing went until very late." – A *yoman*.



PURIM 5723, JEM 287078

5723-1963, 5724-1964



PURIM 5725

**5725\***

Due to it being the year of *aveilus* after Rebbetzin Chana's passing, the Rebbe opened the farbrengen with a *siyum* on Maseches Megillah.

**5726\***

Towards the end of a particularly *lebedike* farbrengen, the Rebbe asked for a volunteer to fulfill *ad delo yada*, and began distributing *l'chaim* to many individuals, usually in full cups: Reb Zalman Duchman; Reb Chaim Asher Kahanov; the grandson of Rabbi Zevin; and many others.

At one point, the Rebbe instructed that all bottles be emptied and the contents be used to say *l'chaim*. The crowd began to say *l'chaim* and the noise level in 770 rose, while the Rebbe continued to distribute *mashke* for half an hour, pouring over the *siddur* he had opened in preparation for *bracha acharona*.

Suddenly, the Rebbe announced "*Kol haposhet yad, nosnim lo!*" A rush for the Rebbe's place ensued, and the Rebbe distributed *l'chaim* to everyone present. Upon leaving 770, more distributing took place, and the pushing to be near the Rebbe was so strong that the roof on the Rebbe's car caved. The Rebbe went home in a different car and more people gathered at the Rebbe's home where he gave *l'chaim* again. One individual even received *mashke* from the Rebbe on the morning of Shushan Purim.<sup>10</sup>

FOLLOWING THE FARBRENGEN OF PURIM 5726, THE REBBE CONTINUES DISTRIBUTING MASHKE OUTSIDE 770.

5725-1965, 5726-1966, 5727-1967

**5727\***

That year, the Rebbe addressed the latest fad: Interfaith dialogues. The Rebbe pointed out that it was clearly against *halacha*, and bemoaned the state of those rabbis whose greatest wish was to be legitimized by members of another faith.

It was a very *lebedike* farbrengen, beginning with the singing of *Vayehi B'yemei Achashveirosh* with the Rebbe's strong encouragement. The Rebbe expressed himself to one of the participants, "If you do everything you can, Hashem will do everything He can, as well." To another individual who didn't want to say *l'chaim*, the Rebbe said, "Today, everything needs to be done in cash. Pledges are not enough."

The Rebbe also spoke at length about the new *talmidim hashluchim* to Australia, and asked their relatives and other shluchim to say *l'chaim*. "It's no *kuntz* to open a yeshiva where another 10 exist. It's a *kuntz* to open one in *'yei hayam...*'"



PURIM 5729



**5728\***

“The Rebbe’s Purim farbrengens were unlike any other Purim celebrations,” explains Rabbi Seligson. “The *simcha* was an uplifting, spiritual one, and it came directly from the Rebbe. For example, at this farbrengen in 5728\*, the Rebbe asked for a *Purim’diker niggun*, and instead of waiting, he began to sing ‘*Vesamachta*.’”

Rabbi Meir Harlig has another example: “During one of the early years, a group of costumed clowns from a non-Lubavitch community came into the farbrengen and began doing *shtick* during one of the *niggunim*. When they were done with their ‘show,’ the Rebbe said, ‘Now lets see what we could do...’ and began a *shturemdiker niggun*.”

This farbrengen was also less than a year after the Six Day War, and the Rebbe said a long *sicha* about the significance of tefillin. “I was asked, since I *koch* in Mivtza Tefillin, how will I connect it to Purim? I answered that no Purim Torah is necessary, since the Gemara says clearly, ‘*V’yikar—eilu tefillin!*’”<sup>11</sup>

**5729\***

This *geshmake* farbrengen is the longest recorded on tape: seven hours and forty-one minutes.<sup>12</sup>

**5730\***

In an hour-and-a-half long *sicha*, the Rebbe said that he was forced to address the issue of the new law in the Israeli Knesset regarding ‘Mihu Yehudi.’ In clear and no-nonsense terms, the Rebbe laid out the story and the profound tragedy that it would bring upon the country. The *sicha* was widely publicized, and ‘Mihu Yehudi’ became a topic at each farbrengen for the next several years.

**5731\***

By this time, Shazar was president of Israel, and he was pressured by some members of Israeli government to cancel his planned visit to 770, since they viewed it as a disrespect to the office of the president. Nonetheless, Shazar insisted on visiting the Rebbe.

This visit took place on the eve of Purim. Shazar arrived half an hour before Maariv, and the Rebbe welcomed him publicly and brought him into his room for a short *yechidus* until davening.

The Rebbe entered the shul for Maariv alongside Shazar, leading him by the arm in a very *malchusdiker* sight. A special Megillah encased in silver was prepared for Shazar as a gift from the Rebbe, along with a special edition of the *siddur* embossed with the words “Purim 5731.”

After the Megillah reading, Shazar returned to the Rebbe’s room where he had a four-hour long *yechidus*. Refreshments were placed on the Rebbe’s table, but the Rebbe didn’t touch them, fasting until late into the night.<sup>13</sup>

This year also marked the expansion of Mivtza Purim to members of the IDF. The Rebbe entered the farbrengen late, noting (somewhat emotionally) that he had just received word that all those who participated in the *mivtza* and traveled to the soldiers in the Sinai Desert had returned home safely.

**5732\***

The first Purim farbrengen recording on videotape.<sup>14</sup> טעמו וראו כי טוב הוי’.



**5735**

Taking a lesson from Mordechai, the Rebbe said that we need to leave our own Torah learning and go be *mekarev* another Jew.

The Rebbe held a special farbrengen in the beginning of Adar to encourage Mivtza Purim, which started taking place on a much larger scale.

**5736\***

Mivtza Purim was expanded to prisons and hospitals. When a group of *bochurim* in Eretz Yisrael traveled to an army base near Shechem, they encountered a dangerous hoard of Arabs blocking the road. Confident with the Rebbe's *koach*, they insisted that the driver force his way through and Mivtza Purim was conducted in the base with great success. At the farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke about the story and the lesson that each person can learn from it.<sup>17</sup>

After a picture of the Rebbe instructing Chassidim to whistle was published in the *Algemeiner Journal*, a controversy arose, with letters to the editor upset about the 'unbecoming' photo, in their opinion. On Purim, the Rebbe addressed the issue, expressing his surprise that no Chossid had cited the story of Dovid Hamelech, where, to the chagrin of Michal bas Shaul, he danced publicly as the *aron* was brought to Yerushalayim.

During this same farbrengen, the Rebbe instituted that bar mitzvah *bochurim* begin donning Rabeinu Tam's tefillin, instead of waiting for the Rebbe's personal approval at age eighteen.<sup>18</sup>

**5733\***

For the first time, the farbrengen was broadcast on radio, and the *sichos* of this very *lebedike* farbrengen were simple and easy to follow (available on video). The farbrengen was also attended by author Chaim Potok, and the Rebbe spoke about the responsibilities of those given special talents and special influence.<sup>15</sup>

**5734**

The Rebbe distributed a silver dollar to whoever participated in Mivtza Purim.

As Purim occurred on a Friday, the farbrengen was held on Shabbos Shushan Purim. In one of the sharpest *sichos* at the time, the Rebbe excoriated the religious Mafdal party for joining the coalition without correcting MiHu Yehudi. "*Hashamayim?* Should I care about Hashem?" the Rebbe portrayed the Mafdal leader's indifferent attitude, "*Kis'i!* I care about my seat! *Ha'aretz?* Should I care about the *shtachim?* *Hadam raglay!* My position is more important!"<sup>16</sup>





**5737\***

Purim was on Friday, and no farbrengen was held. When the Rebbe arrived for Mincha, he saw a large group of *anash* and *bochurim* participating in a farbrengen, and the Rebbe encouraged the singing.

On Shabbos, the farbrengen opened with singing “*Shoshanas Yaakov*,” and the Rebbe instructed many people to say *l’chaim* on full cups, and also asked for one individual to “do *mesiras nefesh*” and fulfill *ad delo yada* in the name of all the participants. Due to the recent passing of the Beis Yisrael of Ger, the Rebbe spoke a rare *sicha* about the Chabad-Ger connection on Shabbos Shushan Purim, and wished the new Gerrer Rebbe much success.

**5738\***

The Rebbe addressed Mivtza Litani, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, praising the soldiers’ fearlessness and expressing his hope that it will continue in the same vein. The Rebbe connected it with the spiritual significance of Tzfas, in northern Israel, and the giants of *pnimius haTorah* who lived there, and who started the revelation of Moshiach.

**5739\***

With extraordinary *lebedikeit*, the Rebbe opened the farbrengen with *niggunim* and three rounds of *l’chaim*. “A large contingency of Iranian children were present at that farbrengen,” relates Rabbi Seligson. “The Rebbe asked them to sing a *niggun* of their own, and they began to sing ‘*Yigdal Elokim Chai*.’ Most of the audience weren’t familiar with the song, so the Rebbe turned to Reb Yoel and commented, “They say that you catch a *niggun* quickly; learn this *niggun* too.”

**5740\***

The Rebbe addressed the issue of *shtachim* at length (available on video).

PURIM 5731, JEM 103400



PURIM 5747



PURIM 5738, YOSSEI MELAMED VIA JEM 129223



**5741\***

Purim on Erev Shabbos was usually uneventful, but 10 minutes after Mincha, the Rebbe suddenly returned to the small *zal* and recited a *maamar*. Before he began, he asked that the doors be locked (so as not to disturb the rest of the city) but by the *maamar*'s conclusion, the *zal* had somehow become full of people.<sup>19</sup>

**5742\***

The Rebbe asked for a candidate to observe *ad delo yada* and also make *kuleh*. An extraordinary *simcha* ensued, and the entire 770 danced to "We Want Moshiach Now" at great length (available on video).

**5743\***

The Rebbe spoke at length about the two "Iron Curtains," one physical and one spiritual, and our responsibility to combat them: The Jews stranded in the Soviet Union, and the Jewish children stranded in the public school system (available on video).

**5744\***

Being the same *kvius* as the year of the Friediker Rebbe's arrival in America, the Rebbe asked that his *maamar* of that Purim, "*Balayla Hahu Tof-Shin*," be republished. The booklets were ready the next morning.

The next Shabbos, the Rebbe spoke the famous *sicha* about "*Kam Rabbah v'shachtai l'Rav Zeira*." The Rebbe explained that he didn't want the *sicha* to be translated immediately during the broadcast on Purim, for fear of misunderstandings, so he chose to deliver the *sicha* on Shabbos. The Rebbe also instructed that the *hanacha*—in all languages—be responsibly and properly edited. Upon receiving the Hebrew *hanacha* by Rabbi Dovid Feldman, the Rebbe responded, "*Tach tach al hasidur hana'eh*—thank you for the pleasant format."

**5745\***

The real surprise came on Shabbos, 16 Adar, when the Rebbe led an extraordinary farbrengen where many memorable events took place. "They say that such a *lebedike* farbrengen hasn't occurred since 5726" - A *yoman* (Purim farbrengen available on video).



PURIM 5740



**5746\***

In an unprecedented *sicha*, the Rebbe cryptically addressed a certain issue of modern times, in response to a vote of the New York Senate (available on video).

**5747\***

A historic farbrengen. In unprecedented terms, the Rebbe demanded that Chassidim do everything they can to hasten Moshiach's arrival, for the first time using the terms that would become famous again on 28 Nissan 5751\*, that the Rabbeim had done everything in this regard and now the task was given over from the *nossi* to every Yid. This turned out to be the last Purim farbrengen to-date (also available on video).



PURIM 5749, CB HALBERSTAM VIA JEW 303177

**5748\***

Following the Rebbetzin's passing, the Rebbe remained at home throughout the *sheloshim*, and—to the Chassidim's deep disappointment—no farbrengen was held. However, the Rebbe surprised everyone with an hour-long *sicha* after Mincha in his home, which included a *maamar K'ein- icha*.

**5749\***

The Rebbe said a *sicha* after Mincha with a compelling question on the custom of Parshas Zachor. After Maariv, the Rebbe delivered another *sicha*, praising those who fulfilled the custom of *ad delo yada*, and encouraged everyone to increase their *simcha*. During the dollars distribution and the entire ensuing evening in 770, the atmosphere became very *lebedik*.<sup>20</sup>

**5750\***

During the *sicha* following Maariv, the Rebbe instructed that everyone wash again and continue the *seudah*. A lively farbrengen ensued in 770.

**5751\***

Dollars were distributed. That Purim marked the end of the Gulf War, and on Shabbos, 16 Adar, the farbrengen was unusually *Purim'dik* and the Rebbe concluded the farbrengen by standing up and dancing.



PURIM 5750



## BRING IT TO THE WORLD

No description of Purim with the Rebbe would be complete without a few words about Mivtza Purim.

Today, every Lubavitcher Chossid spends his Purim bringing the joy and mitzvos of the Yom Tov to other Jews in his vicinity. The origins of this *mivtza* in its broadest scale were actually focused on Eretz Yisrael, when, in 5731\*, the Rebbe called for a wide-spread effort to bring *simchas Purim* to the soldiers of the IDF and the bereaved families of the fallen. The Chassidim, who mostly lived in the center of Eretz Yisrael, equipped themselves with Megillos and supplies for the other mitzvos of Purim, and visited the IDF bases throughout the country and in the Sinai Desert.

In the United States, Mivtza Purim became more widespread in the mid-5730s\*, at the height of the *mivtzoim* era. In 5734\*, the Rebbe informed Reb Dovid Raskin that each participant would receive a silver dollar. In following years—5735\* and 5736\*—the Rebbe held special farbrengens before Purim to promote the *mivtza*, encouraging the participation of women as well and expanding the reach to Jews in prisons and hospitals.

The earliest form of the *mivtza* actually began much earlier, in the early 5720s\*. In 5721\*, the Rebbe sent a letter to educators encouraging them to teach their students about *mishloach manos* and *matanos levyonim*, something that their parents may have overlooked. The next year the Rebbe spoke about it publicly, encouraging everyone to get involved, and the content of the Rebbe's talk was also published in newspapers. In Eretz Yisrael, the Rebbe encouraged Chassidim to work through the education system to bring the mitzvos to their furthest reach, and indeed, in 5723\*, the Ministry of Education under Abba Eban published special instructions for schools to teach their students about *mishloach manos*.

On Purim 5733\*, the Rebbe made a special mention of all those who took part in the *mivtzoim*, specifically noting those in other countries, such as Eretz Yisrael, who had made long trips to bring the joy of Purim to others, and asked them to say *l'chaim*.

“They are physically distant, yet spiritually they are close and united with us. So everyone here should say *l'chaim* for yourselves and for them. With this, גדולה לגימה שמקרבת, the physical distance will be nullified. And we will become a unified nation, even though in the current situation we are scattered among other nations.”

For the full account of Mivtza Purim, see A Chassidisher Derher, Adar 5775.



MIVTZA PURIM ON AN ISRAELI ARMY BASE.

UDJ/ITCH-FOUNDATION OF MICHIGAN

1. See *Leben Mitten Rebbe'n* in this issue.

2. Toras Menachem vol. 1 pg. 18.

3. Toras Menachem vol. 2 pg. 326. For more about this Purim, see *Derher* Tetzaveh 5773 and Adar 5775.

4. See a full description of this farbrengen in *Derher* Adar 5777, “Leben Mit’n Rebbe’n.”

5. Bava Basra 75a.

6. Toras Menachem 5717 vol. 19 pg. 177.

7. For the full account of this Purim, see *Derher* Adar 5776, pg. 6.

8. Ashreinu Audio, Sicha 4 min. 21:38

9. See pictures of this Purim in *Derher* Adar 5779 pg. 61.

10. For the full account of this Purim, see *Derher* Adar 5778 pg. 6.

11. Toras Menachem pg. 135

12. See pictures of this Purim in *Derher* Adar 5777 pg. 60.

13. See pictures of this Purim in *Derher* Adar 5774 pg. 42.

14. For more about this farbrengen, see *Derher* Adar 5774 pg. 22.

15. For the full account of this Purim, see *Derher* Vayikra 5771.

16. Sichos Kodesh 5734 vol. 1 pg. 417-8.

17. See *Derher* Adar 5775 pg. 26.

18. See *The Great Debate* in this magazine for a lengthy overview of this issue.

19. For the full account of this Purim, see *Derher* Adar 5775 pg. 7.

20. See pictures of this Purim in *Derher* Adar 5778 pg. 60.

21. See *Derher*, Adar 5777.

22. See *Derher* Adar 5775 pg. 58.

23. Sichos Kodesh 5741 vol. 2 pg. 735.