

Derher

A Chassidisher

א חסידישער דערהער

The Time Is Now!

THE REVELATION
OF PNIMIUS HATORAH

Physician To Royalty

THE LIFE OF DR. AVRAHAM
ABBA SELIGSON

The Mezritcher Maggid

גל עיני
ואביטה
נפלאות
מתורתך



KISLEV 5781
ISSUE 100 (177)
MARCH 2021

DO YOU DERHER?

A CHASSIDISHER DERHER

available in stores, or delivered to your door!



» www.Derher.org/subscribe



26 **The Time Is Now!**
THE REVELATION OF PNIMIUS HATORAH

34 **Physician To Royalty**
THE LIFE OF DR. AVRAHAM ABBA SELIGSON

14 **The Mezritcher Maggid**

6 **It's Up to You**
DVAR MALCHUS

8 **Kennedy's Assassination and Kuntres Bad Kodesh**
LEBEN MITTEN REBBE'N - KISLEV 5724

13 **From the Ground Up**
KSAV YAD KODESH

46 **"The Rebbe Got Rid of My Termites"**
STORIES OF THE REBBE

47 **Lost On The Way To Lubavitch**
A CHASSIDISHER MAASEH

48 **Minutes Later**
DER REBBE VET GEFINEN A VEG

50 **Shacharis**
MOMENTS - ROSH CHODESH KISLEV 5749

57 **Derher Letters**

About the Cover:

Chassidus is compared to oil, and its Rosh Hashanah is celebrated in the month of Kislev, close to the Yom Tov of Chanukah. Read more about it in *The Revelation of Pnimius HaTorah*.

A Chassidisher Derher is honored to feature unique and historic photos from Jewish Educational Media's Living Archive photo collection. The Living Archive is a project to preserve, and provide access to the video, audio, and photographic recordings of the Rebbe. These photos are copyright by JEM and are available at TheLivingArchive.org



The Living Archive



A Chassidisher Derher Magazine is a publication geared toward bochurim, published and copyrighted by A Chassidisher Derher under the auspices of Vaad Hatmimim Haolami. All articles in this publication are original content.

Vaad Talmidei Hatmimim

Rabbi Tzvi Altein

Publisher

Rabbi Yossi Kamman

Editor in Chief

Rabbi Mendel Jacobs

Administration/Development

Rabbi Levi Kesselman

Rabbi Schneur Druk

Editors

Rabbi Mendel Misholovin

Rabbi Eliezer Zalmanov

Advisory Committee

Rabbi Mendel Alperowitz

Rabbi Dovid Olidort

Design

Rabbi Mendy Weg

Contributors

Rabbi Yanky Bell • Rabbi Yossi Bendet • Rabbi Koppel Chaiton • Rabbi Levi Dubov • Rabbi Tzemach Feller • Rabbi Levi Greenberg • Rabbi Menachem Mendel Greenberg • Rabbi Mendy Greenberg • Rabbi Zevi Kaplan • Rabbi Levi Katz • Rabbi Mendel Levertov • Rabbi Levi Levertov • Rabbi Mendel Misholovin • Rabbi Mendy Shemtov • Schabse Soffer • Rabbi Mendel Vogel

Photo Credits

Jewish Educational Media • Library of Agudas Chasidei Chabad • Rabbi Michael Seligson

Special Thanks to

Rabbi Mendel Gourarie • Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook • Rabbi Yosef B. Friedman • Rabbi Shalom Ber Levin • Rabbi Shmuel Lubecki • Rabbi Michael Seligson • Rabbi Elkanah Shmotkin • Rabbi Avraham D. Vaisfiche

Printed by

The Print House

Reproduction of any portion of this magazine is not permissible without express permission from the copyright holders, unless for the use of brief quotations in reviews and similar venues.

Submit your questions and comments:

(718) 305 6859, Feedback@Derher.org

To subscribe, order a copy, or access back issues visit us at www.Derher.org

נא לשמור על קדושת הגליון.

A Chassidisher Derher (ISSN 26411059) (USPS 21880) is published monthly by A Chassidisher Derher Inc, 784 Eastern Pkwy, Brooklyn, NY 11213. Subscription price \$71 a year. Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn, NY. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to A Chassidisher Derher, 784 Eastern Pkwy, Brooklyn, NY 11213.



It's Up to You

רמב"ם הלכות שמיטה ויובל, יג:יג

ולא שבט לוי בלבד אלא כל איש ואיש מקל באי העולם אשר נדבה רוחו אותו והבינו מדעו להבדל לעמוד לפני ה' לשירתו ולעבדו לדעה את ה' והלך אשר כמו ששעשהו האלהים ופרק מעל צוארו על החשבונות הרבים אשר בקשו בני האדם הרי זה נתקדש קדש קדשים ויהיה ה' חלקו ונחלתו לעולם ולעולמי עולמים ויזכה לו בעולם הזה דבר המספיק לו כמו שזכה לכהנים וללויים. הרי דוד עליו השלום אומר "ה' מנת חלקי וכוסי אתה תומיד גורלי

Not only the tribe of Levi, but any one of the inhabitants of the world whose spirit generously motivates him and he understands with his wisdom to set himself aside and stand before God to serve Him and minister to Him and to know God, proceeding justly as God made him, removing from his neck the yoke of the many reckonings which people seek, he is sanctified as holy of holies. God will be His portion and heritage forever and will provide what is sufficient for him in this world like He provides for the priests and the Levites. And thus David declared: "God is the lot of my portion; You are my cup, You support my lot."

When one lends money to his fellow, and then the *Shemita* year arrives, Torah law automatically cancels the debt and the money is never paid back.

The obvious issue is that as a result, no one would want to help another with a loan knowing full well that there's a strong possibility they won't ever see their money again.

The Torah itself addresses this, and warns against this calculation, guaranteeing the Yid that if he will continue to give loans without worrying about the fast approaching *Shemita* year, Hashem in turn will bless him in all things.

Later in time, in the generation of Hillel Hazaken, these Torah warnings



מחזור הארבעים 40 CYCLES OF LEARNING RAMABM

In memory of our loving uncle
Stuart (Shmuel Yisroel)
 Ben Hersh Leib a”h
 Dedicated by
Shaya and Miriam Rochester

and *brachos* were no longer enough to help Yidden keep giving loans; they were worried for their money. So Hillel came up with the “*pruzbul*,” a process in which the *beis din* takes charge of the loan and makes it immune from being annulled by *Shemita*—in order to save these Yidden from violating a clear prohibition in the Torah.

Although the *pruzbul* does seem like a loophole created out of necessity to save Yidden from an *aveira*, the Rebbe points out that it actually brings a new and stronger level of connection between the Yidden and the mitzvos. Now, even Yidden who would ordinarily be violating Torah because they are scared for their money are keeping the mitzvah of *Shemita*.

Until the time of Hillel, a Yid with this attitude was a contradiction to the mitzvah of *Shemita*, and only time could tell what would happen to the mitzvah of *Shemita* when the Yidden are in a state that the wallet takes precedence to their belief in Torah.

Once *pruzbul* was invented, it became clear (and we were given the tools to ensure) that the mitzvah of *Shemita* will forever be kept by all Yidden.

What we see from here is that something that even the Torah could not accomplish, a Tanna in a later generation, Hillel, was able to accomplish.

This offers insight into the last halacha in Sefer Zeraim of the

Rambam, where he states that not only Levi'im are part of Hashem's “workforce” but every Jew that devotes himself completely to Hashem's service becomes holy like the Levi'im.

From a simple Torah perspective, it seems that this is not possible; there are specific laws that apply particularly to Levi'im because of their holy status, like not owning land (other than designated cities). They are born into a status that can't be changed or otherwise attained.

Comes a later *chacham*, in this case the Rambam, and reveals a new reality in which *every* person can indeed become a spiritual Levi! ¹

1. Adapted from Shabbos Parshas Emor 5749; Sefer Hasichos 5749 vol. 2, p. 440.



לעבן מיטן רבין



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

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

Kennedy's Assassination and Kuntres Bad Kodesh

KISLEV 5724*



In the following pages, we present the reader with a letter written by a *bochur* in 770 in 5724* to his friend in France, updating him on the latest news in the Rebbe's presence. The month of Kislev that year found the world as a whole in unusual times, and here we see the perspective of a *bochur* by the Rebbe in those unique days.

Surely you already heard what happened this past Friday (Vov Kislev)—President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. It happened as he was riding in an open car when a young man shot and killed him. The news got here on Friday afternoon, and when the Rebbe was informed by the *mazkir*, Reb Moshe Leib Rodshtein, he reacted with surprise as to how Kennedy rode in an open vehicle, exposed

as he was, thereby making himself such an easy target...

This week, the *kuntres* “Bad Kodesh” was reprinted in honor of Tes and Yud-Tes Kislev. The date printed in the preface to the *kuntres* is ‘Chof Cheshvan 5724.’

This *kuntres* is a lengthy letter the Mittlerer Rebbe wrote to the ruler of the Vitebsk region of Russia in connection with his imprisonment.

As I have written to you in the past, every Motzei Shabbos Rabbi Yosef Wineberg gives a *shiur* in Tanya on the radio; he also gives *chazara* of the *sichos* the Rebbe says. In many instances, the Rebbe provides him with specific *hora'os* about what to say on the broadcast. On the Motzei Shabbos after Kennedy’s assassination, Rabbi Wineberg asked the Rebbe if while on the radio he should say anything about it. The Rebbe said that if on the other radio stations (not necessarily the *frum* ones) it is being mentioned, then he should do so as well. An interesting detail in all of this is that the Rebbe also instructed Rabbi Wineberg to speak about the new *kuntres*, and to make special mention of the *he'ara* the Rebbe himself added in the new edition, in which the concept of a monarch is discussed according to Chassidus.

Here in 770, *bochurim* and *anash* are speculating that the reprinting of the *kuntres* with this *he'ara* from the Rebbe is connected with the President’s assassination; similar to the *maamarim* said at the time of other major world events. It is known regarding the Rabbeim in general, that certain *maamarim* they said were connected to the changing of the governments at the time. Obviously, our suspicions were only strengthened in light of the Rebbe’s above instruction to Rabbi Wineberg regarding the *kuntres*.

(Rabbi Wineberg later related that the Rebbe also told him to talk about the concept of every country having their own *sar lemaalah*—a “heavenly minister,” as it were—and definitely, the Rebbe added, a superpower like the United States has one.)

You have surely heard of the *pisgam* repeated by the Rabbeim regarding the Tzemach Tzedek, how on Rosh Hashanah he would “arrange” what is going to happen in Petersburg (Russia’s capital and the seat of the government) in the coming year, and who will be in positions of leadership.

In retrospect, the Rebbe alluded to the current events at the farbrengen of Shabbos Shuva which



THE NEWLY PRINTED KUNTRES

KEHOT PUBLICATION SOCIETY

came as a continuation of the Rosh Hashanah farbrengen:

In one of the *sichos* at that farbrengen, the Rebbe dwelled on this exact idea—how everything that will transpire in the coming year is alluded to on Rosh Hashanah.

The Rebbe spoke about how in the *maamarim* of the Friediker Rebbe from the year of his *histalkus*, there are many incredible allusions to different things—starting with the *maamarim* of Rosh Hashanah. In these *maamarim*, the Friediker Rebbe established the *sefer* for every single future Rosh Hashanah until the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu!

In this *maamar* from Rosh Hashanah 5710, the Rebbe continued, the Friediker Rebbe speaks about the *avoda* of “*min hameitzar*”—a more “limited” *avoda* through which one can eventually attain the level of “*anani bamerchav*,” which is a “broader” *avoda*. But even the *avoda* of *kabolas ol* has to be in a manner of *merchav*—with expansiveness and comfort.

The Rebbe went on to explain how this *avoda* in a manner of “*merchav*” is connected to the concept of *binyan hamalchus*, and as a source, the Rebbe referenced the Mittlerer Rebbe’s *kuntres* Bad Kodesh...!

The assassination made waves in the entire world, and delegations from all over are arriving in Washington. On Tuesday, Yud Kislev, the Israeli delegation arrived in Washington headed by Mr. Zalman Shazar.

The Rebbe sent Dr. Nissen Mindel (from the *mazkirus*) and Reb Yitzchok Goldin (principal of Beis Rivkah) as his personal shluchim to greet Mr. Shazar. Along with them, the Rebbe sent the newly reprinted *kuntres* Bad Kodesh to give to him, along with two bottles of *mashke*; one to bring back to Eretz Yisroel and the other one to make a *farbrengen* with in Washington in honor of Yud Kislev.

We heard that Shazar received them warmly, and that Mr. Avraham Herman (Israel's ambassador to the U.S.) distributed the *mashke* the Rebbe sent. Afterwards, the shluchim davened Maariv together with the whole delegation.

The *Morgen Journal* from last Thursday reported that Shazar wanted very much to come and have a *yechidus* with the Rebbe but that he wasn't able to due to concerns that it may appear as if he came to America for reasons other than for Kennedy's funeral. But "being as Shazar is a Chabad Chossid," the newspaper read, "he was not able to contain himself, and he expressed himself to close confidants, saying, that to come to America and not have a *yechidus*—this is out of the question."

In the end, Shazar telephoned *mazkirus* and asked to speak to the Rebbe. The Rebbe spoke with him on the phone for over half an hour! I heard that when the Rebbe found out that the occurrence of their conversation was public knowledge, he was not pleased.

I will write to you the main points from what I heard was spoken about in their conversation:





כתב יד קודש

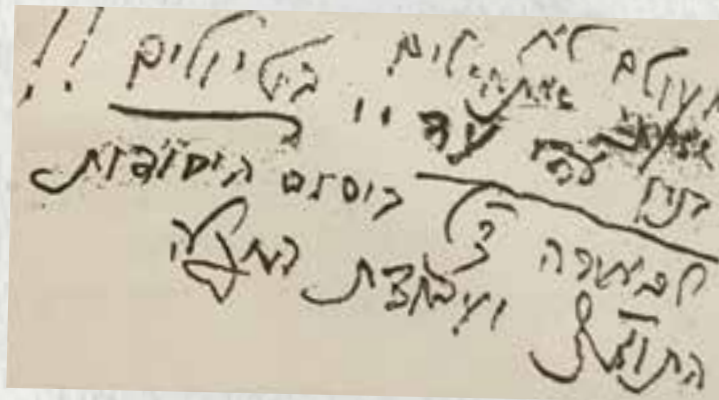
מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר

ולזכות תלמידי התמימים
בכל אתר ואתר
המסורים לענייני כ"ק אדמו"ר
באופן ד"תיר מבחיה"י ממש

נדפס ע"י
הרועה בעילום שמו

From the Ground Up

The following note from the Rebbe was written in response to a *chosson* who wrote that immediately after his wedding he planned on traveling with his wife (5738*):



I have never heard that the way to begin [building] an **everlasting edifice** [a Jewish home]...is by going about **touring**!!

It would seem that the first thing to do is establishing the foundations—with Torah and mitzvos, and working on davening.

מעולם לא שמעתי שמתחילים בנין עדי עד ..
בטיולים!!

לכאורה צ"ל ביסוס היסודות

התומ"צ ועבודת התפלה



The MEZRITCHER MAGGID



A Reinvigorating Vision

“My holy father appeared to me in a vision today...”

It was the second day of Shavuot 5521* (תקכ"א). A day earlier, the Baal Shem Tov’s leading students had marked the conclusion of the first year without their revered Rebbe.

His absence was profoundly felt. The excitement and passion the Baal Shem Tov had imbued in his *talmidim* and Chassidim were slowly ebbing away and the students feared that the newly minted Chassidic movement would dissolve in the face of the pressures of its opponents.

It was in that climate that their new Rebbe, the Baal Shem Tov’s son Reb Tzvi, stood up and made his declaration.

“Today, my father appeared to me and said, ‘The heavenly entourage that always accompanied me has moved today to accompany the holy and awesome Reb Berenyu ben Reb Avraham. Therefore, pass the leadership to him in the presence of the entire *chevraya kaddisha*. He should sit in my place, and you, my son, should sit in his. Know that you will be successful; *u’pi shnayim b’rucho* [double the spirit of his predecessor].”

Saying this, Reb Tzvi turned to the Maggid, wished him *mazal tov*, and gave him his cloak and his place. The Maggid seated himself at the head of the table and the *chevraya kaddisha* immediately stood on their feet, ready to hear Torah from their new Rebbe.¹

Reb Berenyu

Precious little is known about the early years of the Mezritcher Maggid. His birthday is unknown and even his age is in doubt. (The Rebbe attributed this lack of knowledge to the *pnimius* of his *talmidim*, who were too busy receiving his Torah to inquire into trivial matters.) According to a tradition passed down by Reb Shmuel Gronem, the celebrated *meshpia* of the yeshiva in Lubavitch, the Maggid was older than the Baal Shem Tov. According to traditions passed down among Chassidei Chagas, he was several years younger.

The Maggid’s father, Reb Avraham, had no apparent connection to Chassidus. The Rebbe once noted² that the Maggid was the only one of the *nesi’im* that didn’t have a childhood background in Chassidus (the Baal Shem Tov’s and the Alter Rebbe’s fathers, on the other hand, did have a connection to Chassidus—albeit

a hidden one). From a young age, his father noticed his significant talents and assiduousness and began searching for a place of higher Torah learning for his son.

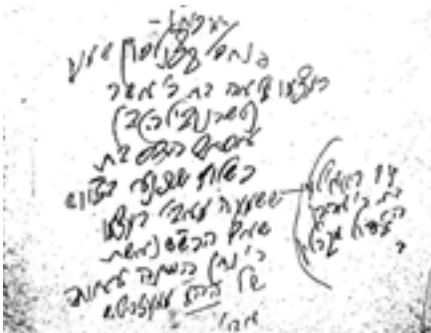
At first, he studied Torah under the tutelage of Reb Dovber [Berish] Halbershtat, the rav of Lukatch. When he grew further in his learning, the rav suggested his own father-in-law, Reb Yehoshua Falk—the Pnei Yehoshua. For several years the Maggid learned Torah in his yeshiva and reached significant heights under his tutelage. He also gained significant knowledge in Kabbalah.

According to the Ruzhiner³ tradition, he married Rebbetzin Keila, the daughter of Reb Sholom Shachne of Turtchin, and continued learning with the support of his father-in-law. However, the wheel of fortune soon turned, and the Maggid chose to eke out a meager living as a *melamed*.

The Rebbe's Relation

There are several notes in which the Rebbe transcribed notable or interesting facts that he heard from individuals during *yechidus*. One such note is regarding a previously unknown family relation of *Beis Harav* to the Maggid, through Reb Shalom Shachne, the father of the Tzemach Tzedek:

"Pinchas Katzenelson from Yerushalayim heard directly from Leah, daughter of Reb Asher (Chernobler) son of Esther Hadas, the daughter of Reb Shalom Shachne's second marriage to Riva'le, the daughter of Reb Aharon Hagadol of Karlin, that she personally heard from her father that the mother of Reb Shalom Shachne (the wife of Reb Noach) was the sister of the Mezritcher Maggid."



The First Meeting

The accounts of how the Maggid first encountered the Baal Shem Tov are many and varied.

According to Shivchei Habesht, the suggestion to visit the Baal Shem Tov came from the Baal Shem Tov's *talmid*, Reb Mendel of Baar, who enticed him with the possibility of a cure for his ailing leg.

According to the version of Sipurim Noraim cited in Sefer Hatoldos, the Maggid was drawn to Mezibuzh after the Baal Shem Tov met with the Pnei Yehoshua in two cryptic encounters where he revealed his powers of *ruach hakodesh* and asked him to instruct the Maggid to come to him.

A third version is brought in Keser Shem Tov,⁴ which cites the story in the name of the Maggid himself:

Hearing about the Baal Shem Tov's reputed powers, the Maggid decided to visit and see the phenomenon for himself. He spent several days on the road, and began to regret the *bitul Torah* it entailed.

Upon arriving in Mezibuzh, the Baal Shem Tov received him and began to tell him strange stories about his travels. "I once ran out of food for my non-Jewish wagon driver... I once ran out of food for my horse..."

The Maggid was very disappointed. He told his attendant to be ready to leave at daybreak. But at midnight, he was called back to the Baal Shem Tov.

"The Baal Shem Tov asked him *pshat* in a teaching of Etz Chaim," the Rebbe repeated the story.⁵ "The Maggid suggested several interpretations but the Baal Shem Tov said that they didn't reach the full depth of the meaning. 'Well, how do you interpret it?' asked the Maggid. The Baal Shem Tov began to recite the Etz Chayim with passion and enthusiasm and the *malachim* and *yichudim* mentioned in the teaching filled the room.

"Afterwards, the Baal Shem Tov told the Maggid that his interpretation was correct but it

was missing the passion and enthusiasm. With that message, he ‘hooked’ the Maggid.”

The Frierdiker Rebbe recounted⁶ that this first meeting took place only eight years before the Baal Shem Tov’s passing, in 5512* (תק”ב). He didn’t settle in Mezibuzh. According to a tradition passed down from the Ruzhiner, the Maggid visited the Baal Shem Tov only two times, both—apparently—for an extended period of time.

A New Style

Within a short period of time after the Maggid assumed the *nesius*, the centers of Chassidus throughout Europe were reenergized.

The Maggid had a different modus-operandi than the Baal Shem Tov. While his predecessor traveled constantly, the Maggid remained stationed in Mezritch. And while the Baal Shem Tov dedicated much of his time dealing with cures, *kameios*, and uplifting simple Jews, the Maggid gathered promising *talmidim* from throughout Europe and taught them the most profound teachings of Chassidus.

“The Baal Shem Tov traveled from town to town,” the Rebbe explained,⁷ “teaching Chassidus to the most simple people. In order for them to understand, he lowered the concepts to their level, through stories, short *vertlach*, and so on—containing the deepest secrets of the Torah.

“The Maggid, on the other hand, spoke Chassidus openly, without stories etc. And he spoke it to his *talmidim*, Torah giants, not for the general populace.”

The Torah of the Maggid was so intense that his *talmidim* were unable to listen through the entire duration. The only ones who would be able

to maintain themselves until the end were Reb Mendel Horodoker and the Alter Rebbe.

“On one occasion,” the Rebbe repeated in the name of the Frierdiker Rebbe,⁸ “the *hispaalus* was so intense that the Maggid came out again and delivered another Torah on the verse, אנוכי עשיתי ארץ ואדם עליה בראתי, explaining that the fundamental purpose of creation is for the 613 mitzvos to be fulfilled here in this physical world.”

New Achievements

Originally, the news had spread that the Baal Shem Tov’s work was falling apart, but now the efforts to spread Chassidus doubled and tripled, with the Maggid’s *talmidim* spreading far and wide. The number of his great *talmidim* was double that of the Baal Shem Tov’s (either 60 or 120), and they reached much further regions than their predecessors in the previous generation.

“The Maggid added the concept of *gute Yidden*,” the Rebbe once noted⁹ when asked about the Maggid’s *chiddush* over the Baal Shem Tov. “The Baal Shem Tov would travel to places with his *talmidim*, but the Maggid *sent* his students to the different locations, and gave them special *kavanos* [for their place].”

After six months of learning in Mezritch, a new *talmid* would be sent back to his hometown or to a new location, where he was tasked with spreading the message of Chassidus with a special emphasis on reaching the *lomdim* of the city. These *talmidim* set up fully independent centers of Chassidus where they attracted Chassidim of their own. The center of Reb Aharon Karliner, for example, was so popular even during the lifetime of the Maggid, that Chassidim in general were dubbed *Karlinim*, a name that stuck for quite some time afterwards.

In the case of the Alter Rebbe, as the Frierdiker Rebbe recounted, when he returned from Mezritch to Vitebsk after his first visit, he shared many teachings from the Maggid with the group of students that were already gathered around him. He also changed certain customs: In their private *minyán*, simpletons hadn’t been

The First Torah

“The Zaide,” the Alter Rebbe said, referring to the Baal Shem Tov, “loved simple Jews dearly. During my first days in Mezritch, the Rebbe the Maggid said, ‘The Rebbe—the Baal Shem Tov—would often say: *Ahavas Yisroel is ahavas Hamakom. Banim atem laHashem Elokeichem*, when you love the father, you love the children.’”

(*Hayom Yom* 24 Av)

לזכות
הרה"ת הרב שלום דוב בער
וזוגתו מרת חיה מושקא שיחיו
שוחאט

לרגל יום נישואיהם - יום הבהיר
ראש חודש כסלו

ולזכות בנותיהם ברכה ליפשא,
עליזה ושיינדל תחיינה



The Time Is Now!

*THE EVOLVING
REVELATION
OF PNIMIUS
HATORAH*





גל עיני ואביטה נפלאות מתורתך

“I am at 30 years of strength but my energy has weakened as my thoughts are troubled. For the fall has passed and the summer has gone by, yet we have not been saved nor has our sickness been healed. Our wound—the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash—has not been healed... Our sages tell us, “If the Beis Hamikdash was not built in your days, it is as if it was destroyed in your days.” I put my attention to understanding the reason for this, why has our galus continued for so long? Why has Ben Yishai not come?”

These solemn words were written by Reb Chaim Vital, the most notable *talmid* of the Arizal, in the introduction to *Shaar Hahakdamos* (itself an introduction of sorts to understanding all the writings of the Arizal). He goes on to say that he found the reason for this: People do not study *pnimiyus haTorah*. Furthermore is the cause of all *galus* throughout the generations. “*This was the sin of Adam Harishon: He ate from the eitz hadaas instead of choosing the eitz hachayim, the study of Kabbalah. This itself was the sin of the eirev rav... and why the first luchos were broken... This caused the destruction of the first and second Batei Mikdash and caused our long and bitter galus, until the Yidden will do teshuva and seek Hashem through the study of the secrets of the Torah.*”

The Rebbe would often point people to read these “shocking words” of Reb Chaim Vital in order to understand the importance of learning Chassidus. This same concept was repeated generations later by Moshiach himself; when the Baal Shem Tov asked him when he will come, he replied—לכשיפוצו מעיינותיך חוצה, when your wellsprings will be spread to all.

But what does this mean? Why does the lack of this study cause *galus*?

Before getting to the *why*, we must first define *what pnimiyus haTorah* is. It is not simply *another*, deeper, aspect of Torah, *another* subject to be studied; it is the *pnimiyus*—the innermost element—of the Torah, animating and shedding light upon its depths.

Reb Chaim Vital explains at length:

We know from Chazal that Hashem studies Torah on-high, as do the *neshamos* and *malachim*. Now, in the spiritual worlds above, there is no concept of time and place, and certainly no physical objects—so how can we possibly say that they are studying the physical stories of the Chumash and the physical *halachos* of the Gemara? As Reb Chaim Vital puts

it, “When Hashem was enjoying the Torah and creating worlds with it—it obviously was not with the simple story of Adam Harishon, or the story of Bnei Chori or of Bilaam’s donkey...”

The truth is that our Torah down below is merely the *physical manifestation* of the essence of Torah, Reb Chaim Vital explains. The Torah itself is in the spiritual world of *Atzilus* (and beyond), utter *Elokus*—and from there it comes down into the worlds:

First it comes into *Briah* (which corresponds to Torah-study through the method of *drash*), *Yetzirah* (which is the world of *remez*) and *Asiya* (the world of *pshat*). The Torah as we know it—including the Chumash, Mishna, and Gemara—is Torah *clothed* in physicality, in physical stories and physical laws. *Pnimiyus haTorah* is Torah in its purest form, as it is

The Whole of the Torah

The very fact that *pnimiyus haTorah* is half of the Torah (in quantity, and much more in quality, as the Rebbe explains) means that one *must* study it, since every person is obligated to study every part of Torah to refine his *neshama* (as the Alter Rebbe writes in Hilchos Talmud Torah). When someone *denies* the importance of studying it or fights against it, it is considered *kfirah* in the entire Torah.

(Yud-Tes Kislev 5722 p. 188)

“...This caused our long and bitter galus, until the Yidden will do teshuva and seek Hashem through the study of the secrets of the Torah...”

in *Atzilus*—it is the *neshama* and innermost element of *nigleh*, the Torah down below.

Thus, Reb Chaim Vital explains, without *pnimiyus haTorah* there’s no *neshama*. Like a dead body without a *neshama* to enliven it, *nigleh* alone lacks the energy and light that comes with *pnimiyus haTorah*.

Furthermore, he says: The only way to comprehend the true meaning of the mitzvos and stories of the Torah is through *pnimiyus haTorah*: The *chachamim* themselves studied *nigleh* based on its *neshama*—*pnimiyus haTorah*, as the Zohar tells us, “The sages of the Mishna and the *amoraim* based their entire study on the secrets of the Torah.” Reb Chaim Vital elaborates, “In the simple meaning of the Torah—its stories, laws, and mitzvos—one cannot recognize Hashem. To the contrary, there are mitzvos and *chukim* that cannot be accepted logically, and all the nations tease the Yidden about them for they seem like riddles

and parables: You blow a horn on Rosh Hashanah and think that you are confusing the Satan? Similarly, a vast percentage of the mitzvos—and especially their details—cannot be accepted logically. Where is the beauty and greatness of the Torah?

“Its words are like a dream without meaning. The secrets of the Torah are the meaning of the dream... Those who study just Talmud Bavli are like blind people stumbling in the dark.”¹

The Zohar uses these terms in describing the difference between *nigleh* of Torah, the revealed part of Torah, and *pnimiyus haTorah*, Kabbalah—that it is like a maidservant to her mistress, like the husk to the grain, like the *eitz hadaas* (which is clothed in the world) of good and evil, compared to the *eitz hachayim* of pure good.

And, the Midrash² tells us—this is a part of Torah that Hashem wants us to focus on. It describes the day of judgement above and how Hashem reacts to people who

study only certain parts of Torah: “Let he who has Chumash come forth... let he who has halachos come forth...” Then it says, “Let he who has Talmud come forth. Hashem says to him, ‘My son, you toiled in Talmud—but have you gazed at my merkava? Have you gazed at my glory? For I have no enjoyment in this world except when talmidei chachamim toil in the Torah, looking and gazing and seeing and contemplating this great study: Where my kisei hakavod is... where the chashmal is... greater than all of them, from my nails to my forehead. Is that not my glory? Is that not my greatness? Is that not my beauty? That my sons should recognize my glory.’”

“Hashem has no enjoyment in this world except when this wisdom is studied,” Reb Chaim Vital declares. The study of *nigleh* [in which we learn about how to keep the mitzvos meticulously] is for *our* sake—for our righteousness does not affect Hashem nor do our sins—but when we study the secrets of the Torah, Hashem *kvaychol* gains strength.

Nigleh is supremely important as well: Hashem brought the Torah into the physical world of good and evil in order to refine it and the person. If one studies *pnimiyus*

haTorah without *nigleh* they are like a *neshama* without a body. But, Reb Chaim Vital says, “A person was created only to study the Kabbalah.”

Moshiach Through Pnimiyus HaTorah

Reb Chaim Vital explains that the cause of all *galus* is because *pnimiyus haTorah* was rejected time and again throughout history—by Adam Harishon who chose *Eitz Hadaas* over the *Eitz Hachayim*; by the *eirev rav* at *Matan Torah* who wished to listen to Moshe Rabbeinu instead of Hashem (which alludes to *nigleh* instead of Kabbalah). This caused the destruction of the first and second *Batei Mikdash* and our long, bitter *galus*.

When Moshiach comes, the Torah will divest itself of its garments and *pnimiyus haTorah* will become fully revealed, and it is only as a result of studying *pnimiyus haTorah* that Moshiach will come.

Reb Chaim Vital writes, “[This *galus* will continue] until the Yidden perform *teshuva* and ‘seek their G-d’ through the study of the secrets of the Torah so that they know Whom they are serving and Who is their King.” The Zohar tells us, “[When Moshiach comes] the Yidden will taste from the ‘tree of life,’ the *Sefer Hazohar*—and it is with it that they will be redeemed mercifully.”

Thus, as the time for Moshiach comes closer and closer, *pnimiyus haTorah* is being revealed more than ever before, becoming ever more accessible to the masses, as the Zohar prophesies, “In the sixth century of the sixth millennium, the gates of wisdom will open,”³ and “When the days of Moshiach come closer, even the children will know the secrets of wisdom.”⁴

The Only Way to Love Hashem

In addition to the fact that *pnimiyus haTorah* is a fundamental element of Torah, there is another crucial issue at play: Two basic mitzvos in which a Yid is constantly obligated are to fear Hashem and to love Him—*yiras Hashem* and *ahavas Hashem*. These serve as the motivation for all the other mitzvos of the Torah; if you don’t fear Hashem and love him, it is impossible to be truly motivated to fulfill all the mitzvos on a consistent basis.

So how does one achieve *yiras Hashem* and *ahavas Hashem*? You can only feel emotions towards something that you know and understand—which can only be achieved through studying *pnimiyus haTorah*, especially Chassidus.

The Rebbe explains that since *pnimiyus haTorah* is the way to fulfil these two fundamental mitzvos, it is relevant to everyone—men, women and even children, whether or not

they officially belong to a certain movement, and whatever their level of Torah observance and study is. Women, for example, do not have an obligation to study Torah in general—but they must study Chassidus in order to achieve *yiras Hashem* and *ahavas Hashem*.⁵ Even non-Jews, who are strongly discouraged from learning Torah, are encouraged to study *pnimiyus haTorah* in order to better fulfill their mitzvah of believing in Hashem.⁶

And without the *ahavah* and *yira* that *pnimiyus haTorah* provides, one cannot learn *nigleh* correctly either. As the Rebbe Rashab explains at length,⁷ Torah must bring a person to *bitul* and nullification to Hashem—the more Torah you learn, the closer you become to Hashem, and the more nullified you become. But if a person suffices with studying *nigleh*—which is *Elokus* as it is enclothed in a physical form—he will become occupied with studying physical subjects and will not feel the *Elokus* in the Torah—and his achievements in Torah study will promote his ego. This (temporarily) causes the Torah to become a *sam hamoves*, a fatal poison, as it enters the *galus* of the person’s ego. Furthermore: a person studying Torah in this manner will inevitably make mistakes, as the *halacha* can be discerned only by someone who is nullified to *Elokus*.

לע"נ
ר' יהודה ע"ה בן ר' משה יעקב ע"ה
ביסטאן
נלב"ע ר"ח כסלו ה'תשנ"ט
תנ"צ'ב'ה'
נדפס ע"י בנו
הרה"ת השליח ר' יוסף יצחק
וזוגתו מרת ביילא רחל
ומשפחתם שיחיו
ביסטאן



Physician To Royalty

He was a brilliant doctor, a well versed Talmid Chacham, a devoted Chossid and merited to serve as the personal physician to the Beis Harav for forty years. Following is a biographical sketch of the life and times of the legendary Dr. Seligson.



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 191042

WITH RABBI KAZARNOVSKY, 29
ELUL 5740

*曲 5740 5741

KISLEV 5781
A CHASSIDISHER DERHER

Early Life

Harav Avraham Abba Seligson was born on 8 Av 5667* in Cracow, Poland. His father Reb Michoel Aharon was a direct descendant of the Alter Rebbe's second son Harav Chaim Avraham. Reb Michoel Aharon was a wealthy man, an erudite Talmid Chochom, and a gifted *baal menagen*. A prominent member of the Cracow Jewish community, for several years he served as the gabbai of the Megaleh Amukos shul.

Reb Michoel Aharon was the only Lubavitcher chossid in Cracow at the time, and the Friediker Rebbe stayed in his home for an extended period during a visit to the city. Later the Friediker Rebbe wrote to him that as the only Lubavitcher chossid in the city, he should arrange a shiur in Chassidus and invite friends, neighbors and acquaintances to participate.

After some time, Rabbi Mordechai Mentlik among the outstanding Tmimim in Poland, was sent to Cracow to give the shiur, to attract the city's yeshiva bochurim to Chassidus. Reb Michoel continued to maintain the Chassidus shiur which lasted for many years.

Avraham's mother, Chaya Rochel, hailed from a prominent Cracow family, descendants of many Gedolei Yisroel. Their home was a blend of wealth and yiras Shamayim with an emphasis on Chassidishe minhogim.

During WWI the family fled Cracow for the outskirts of Vienna. Avraham Abba learned at a Hebrew Gymnasium, and received his formal training in Limmudei Kodesh from his father. A natural masmid, he would learn well into the night.

Avraham Abba wanted to help people and perhaps because many of his uncles on his mother's side were physicians; he developed an interest in medicine. He applied to the medical



AVROHOM SELIGSON IN HIS EARLY 20S

RABBI MICHOEL SELIGSON

university in Vilna and due to their anti-semitic policies, was initially rejected. Therefore, as a nineteen-year-old he started his medical studies in Strasbourg. Two years later in 5688*, through the intervention of one of his physician uncles, he transferred to the medical school in Vilna.

In Vilna he lived in the home of his uncle Harav Schneur Zalman Seligson. A prominent Lubavitcher Chossid, Harav Seligson was an ambitious activist for the Jewish community with many government contacts. He was a rare personality, a dedicated chossid and one of the founders of Yeshiva Tomchei Tmimim in Vilna. For the next four years Avraham learned with his uncle, absorbing much from him. Avraham davened with the yeshiva in the evenings, and was always seen with a sefer. Immaculately dressed, he was modest and humble in all of his interactions and made a favorable impression as a yarei Shamayim of high caliber.

While studying in Vilna, Avraham had the option of studying the diseases endemic to Asia and Africa. While most of the students sought to become proficient in local illnesses, Avraham surprised everyone by choosing to

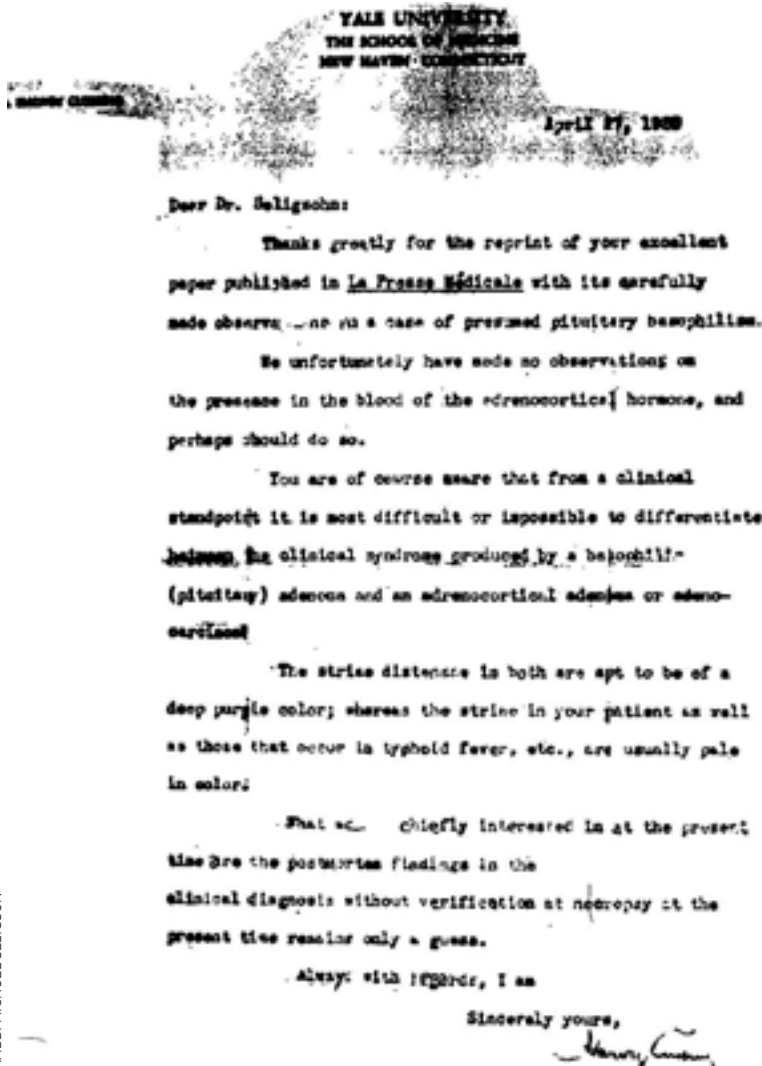
study and research foreign disease, as well. This turned out to be the exact training he would later need during the war to protect the health of Yidden.

After receiving his diploma in Vilna, Avraham returned to Cracow and started working on his doctorate; engaging in research and gaining clinical experience as a practicing physician. He received his doctorate in medicine in 5696*. During the course of his research, he worked at specialized clinics at the Universities of Vienna and Cracow, respectively. His work uncovered the connection between hypertension and Cushing Syndrome, and was published in medical journals in Poland, France, Austria and the US.

In a 1947 letter of recommendation, when Dr. Seligson was applying for a license to practice medicine in the US, Dr. Bussell, a colleague from Cracow, wrote: "I have personally known Dr. Seligson for fifteen years... In his native city of Cracow, Poland he was known as one of the prominent physicians and research workers of that city. His special field of interest was the problem of hypertension. He published several papers... translated into many languages and were accepted with acclaim."

His research gained the attention of Dr. Harvey Cushing, the world renowned neurosurgeon, and the namesake of the syndrome. He offered Dr. Avraham Seligson a position in his laboratory at Yale University. In one of the letters taken from their correspondence, Dr. Cushing writes, "Thanks greatly for the reprint of your excellent paper published in La Presse Medicale with its carefully made observation..."

In addition to research, Dr. Seligson focused on his medical practice. Devoted to his patients, his bedside manner, personal warmth and good cheer put everyone at ease. He



CORRESPONDENCE WITH DR. CUSHING

was never off duty and always had his medical bag with him in the event of an emergency. Known in the region as a frum doctor, many Yidden preferred to be treated by him despite his youth. On occasion, when halachic questions arose in connection with medical issues, prominent rabbonim such as Rabbi Chaim Ozer Grudzansky, the Rav of Vilna, relied on his judgement, as he was proficient in both halacha and medicine.

Shanghai

With the outbreak of WWII, Dr. Seligson fled Cracow for Vilna, where he received a transit visa from the legendary Japanese Consul Chiune

Sugihara, enabling him to escape Europe. After a long and arduous journey, he arrived in Shanghai, China together with thousands of Yidden. These included a group of Tmimim and the talmidim of several other famous yeshivos who escaped Europe in the same way.

The Chinese government settled the Jewish refugees in a ghetto in the poorest part of the city. The unsanitary conditions set the stage for illness and disease. Dr. Seligson was the only doctor that the refugees would trust. He worked in a hospital established by the American Joint for the Jewish refugees, as well as in a neighborhood

Healthy Digestion

In 5695* the Frieddiker Rebbe was in Vienna for extended periods of time, and Dr. Seligson once merited to have a *yechidus*. The Frieddiker Rebbe inquired about his studies and then explained the following Gemara according to Chassidus.

אכל ולא אכילתו דם. וזהו תחילת חולי מעיים. (שבת מא,א)

One who ate and did not drink at all, what he ate becomes blood and that causes the onset of intestinal disease.

Eating represents the study of *nigleh* and drinking represents the study of Chassidus. When a doctor prescribes a diet for the patient, there must be a means for the food to be digested properly. Similarly with Torah, learning Chassidus ensures that the *nigleh* is "digested" properly.

clinic. He was dedicated to his patients and often walked miles in torn shoes to deliver medicine to patients who were unable to come to the hospital.

Almost immediately, many developed dysentery. Dr. Seligson suggested that all drinking water should be boiled, and all fruit and vegetables be thoroughly cleaned before consumption. Subsequently, the outbreak subsided. The Jewish residents of the ghetto were also stricken with Beriberi, a result of vitamin B-1 deficiency, common in Asia but virtually unheard of in Western countries. This was a disease that Dr. Seligson was familiar with from his medical training, and he was able to diagnose it properly. With no available vitamins or any medicine containing B-1, Dr. Seligson



TOMCHEI TMIMIM SHANGHAI. DR. SELIGSON IS STANDING SECOND FROM THE LEFT.

researched the foods that contain Vitamin B1 and prescribed them to the suffering ghetto residents. Thousands of lives were saved as a result.

Despite his many medical responsibilities, Dr. Seligson davened for many hours every day. He received *smicha* from Harav Meir Ashkenazi, the chief rabbi of Shanghai, at this time. He maintained an intense regimen of Torah study; borrowing *sefarim* from the *beis medrash* overnight and returning them in the morning.

America

In 5707* Dr. Seligson received a visa to immigrate to the United States. After the war many *sefarim* were published in Shanghai and Kehos published Chassidus *sefarim*, as well. When Dr. Seligson sailed from Shanghai, the publisher sent a case of newly published *sefarim* for the Frierdiker Rebbe. Dr. Seligson arrived at his sister's home in New York on a Friday morning. The Rebbe sent a *bochur* that day to pick up the *sefarim* so that the Frierdiker Rebbe would have them for Shabbos.

Although a practicing physician for over 10 years, Dr. Seligson needed to



A REPORT FROM 5710 ABOUT DOCTORS VOLUNTEERING FOR A DAY CAMP.

retake the medical examinations necessary to practice in the US. He rapidly learned English, and within months was able to notify the Frierdiker Rebbe that he had received his medical license. The Frierdiker Rebbe responded with many *brochos*. Dr. Seligson immediately began serving as the personal physician to the Frierdiker Rebbe and the entire Beis Harav. The Rebbe would call him frequently to visit the Frierdiker Rebbe, and as he lived close by he was available at a moment's notice.

The Frierdiker Rebbe relates in several *sichos* that during the *nesius* of the Alter Rebbe and the Mittler Rebbe, the doctor in Liozna was R' Avraham Harofeh. He was a *ga'on* in *nigleh* and a brilliant medical mind. The doctor serving during the time of the Rebbe Maharash, whom he praised greatly, was also called Avraham Harofeh. Dr. Seligson, whose first name was Avraham, merited to serve both, the Frierdiker Rebbe and the Rebbe for forty years.

On Yud Shevat 5710*, the Frierdiker Rebbe's health deteriorated

A LETTER VERIFYING DR. SELIGSON'S STATUS AS THE REFUGEES' DOCTOR, NECESSARY FOR A PERMIT TO BREAK THE NIGHTLY CURFEW.

The Rebbe sent a message to him through Rabbi Shusterman that in the *Litvishe* circles Dr. Seligson would be considered a *gaon*.

dramatically. Dr. Seligson was called in and rendered treatment. Chassidim commented after the Frierdiker Rebbe's *histalkus* that day, that a Kohen - Reb Sholom Ber Eichorn, a Levi - Reb Shmuel Levitin and a Yisroel - Dr. Seligson, were present in the room at the time of the *histalkus*.

Dr. Seligson davened in 770. He gave a *shiur* in Shulchan Aruch Hilchos Shabbos every Shabbos morning after davening. The *shiur* was clear, brilliant and well attended. At the outbreak of the Korean War, Dr. Seligson received a draft notice. The Rebbe pointed out that since he delivered a weekly *shiur* in the shul, he was a member of the clergy and thus exempt from the draft and instructed that a letter should be sent to the authorities, indicating this fact.

Marriage

In 5712*, Rabbi Herschel Shusterman, the rav of Bnei Reuven, the Lubavitcher shul in Chicago, suggested Rochel Pinsker of Chicago as a *shidduch* for Dr. Seligson. The Rebbe supported the idea and continued to be involved in every step of the *shidduch* from the engagement through the wedding. Her father Reb Yitzchok Meir Pinsker was a *talmid* of the Chofetz Chaim and he expressed hesitation at taking a *chosson* for his daughter who was a doctor. The Rebbe sent a message to him through Rabbi Shusterman that in the *Litvishe* circles



THE REBBE AT DR. SELIGSON'S CHUPPAH

RABBI MICHAEL SELIGSON

Dr. Seligson would be considered a *gaon*.

The engagement was on Chof Cheshvan in Dr. Seligson's apartment. The Rebbe and Rebbetzin sent over their own serving utensils to be used at the seudah. The Rebbe suggested that Dr. Seligson sponsor the publication of the Rebbe Rashab's maamer סמוכים לעד תר"פ and the Rebbe personally composed the dedication, noting that the chosson was a doctor by including the words גומל חסד בגופו. The Rebbe set the wedding date for the fifth night of Chanukah. In *yechidus* with the couple, the Rebbe spoke with the kallah's father at length, praising the chosson in glowing terms. The ufruf was held in 770 on Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev and during the farbrengen the Rebbe spoke about the concept of marriage.

It was common then for the Rebbe to be *mesader kiddushin* by the weddings of *anash* that were held in New York but there were several conditions. One of the conditions was that the *chosson* must have a beard. At the time Dr. Seligson did not have a beard and the Rebbe asked Reb Shmuel Levitin whether it was halachically permissible for him to

make an exception to this rule since it was already done more than three times and had the stringency of an oath.

Reb Shmuel immediately responded that the Rebbe's condition applied only to the *talmidim* of Tomchei Temimim and Dr. Seligson was not a *talmid* in Tomchei Temimim. In addition, he was a relative of the Rebbe, so this was not an issue. The Rebbe was pleased with the answer.

The wedding was in Manhattan, and the Kabbolas Ponim began when the Rebbe arrived. The guests included venerable chassidim, as well as prominent Litvishe Rabbonim. The Chassidim sang niggunim, while the Rebbe spoke to the chosson and reviewed the kesuba. Afterwards the Rebbe spoke a *sicha* explaining the connection between a Chasuna and Chanukah¹. At one point, the chosson started to pour a drink for the Rebbe. The Rebbe declined saying that Chazal compare a chosson to a king and one should not be served by a king. Later, the chosson and the Rebbe took the elevator to the ground floor for the Chuppa. The Rebbe insisted that the



“The Rebbe Got Rid of My Termites”

Reb Chaim Drizin shared the following story about his father, Reb Mendel Drizin a”h.

My father bought his house around 5733*. Before that, my parents lived in East Flatbush because my mother’s parents lived nearby. It was a nice compromise—it was walking distance from Crown Heights so my father was able to come in for *farbrengens* and the like, but it was a little distant.

A house came up for sale right near my uncle’s home in Crown Heights. It was a large house and my father really wanted to move to Crown Heights. He pitched the idea to my mother, and she told him, “If you’re buying that house—a nice big house—I’m happy to move to Crown Heights.”

The problem was that the homeowner, who was a very wealthy Yid, wanted a lot of money for the house, about a third more than the market rate for such a house. Additionally, the house was infested with termites.

My father went to the Rebbe and asked what he should do. The Rebbe told him to buy the house, even for the higher price, and with regards to the termites, the Rebbe said he shouldn’t worry about it, and he can use them as an excuse to take some money off the price.

My father went back to the seller and indeed negotiated a lower price on account of the infestation. He then called in a company to remove the termites, and there were no termites in the house. My father would always tell us this story and say, “The Rebbe got rid of my termites.”

This was the story I grew up hearing.

But a number of years ago, I was at a wedding in Rose Castle, a hall in Williamsburg, and I was sitting near a fellow. We introduced ourselves, and it turned out that this was the previous owner of the house. We spoke about how we each grew up in the same house (he was much older than me), and he told me, “You know, we really loved that house, and we didn’t want to sell it, but the neighborhood was changing.”

Then he told me that he had to ask me *mechilah*. “What for?” I asked. “You know, your father was a really nice guy, but he was a little bit naive.” Now for those who knew my father, naive was the last thing he was. He was friendly, yes, but naive he wasn’t. “How was he naive,” I asked.

“Well, we took advantage of him,” he replied. “We had such problems with termites in that house. We brought company after company to try to remove these termites, and no one could get rid of them. We didn’t really make clear to your father how extensive the problem was, so I’m sure he had major headaches after that.

I replied, “You didn’t hear the story?” “Which story?” he asked. I told him the story of how the Rebbe told us we had nothing to worry about, and I told him that there have never been termites in the house since then. The man’s face turned white, he couldn’t talk to me anymore, and he got up and walked away...¹ ①

1. As told by Reb Chaim Drizin to a member of the *Derher* staff.



Lost On The Way To Lubavitch

It became known to Reb Nechemya of Dubrovna that the Russian government was planning to raid the home of the Tzemach Tzedek in Lubavitch and search through his papers and books to seek out incriminating evidence against him. There was also talk of conducting an interrogation. (Due to the Tzemach Tzedek's ongoing opposition to the members of the "Haskalah," there was constant fear that someone would inform the government of supposed anti-Czarist sentiment in his writings.)

Knowing the danger and calamity if such a thing were to take place, Reb Nechemya quickly called a wagon driver and put a plan into motion.

"Take this letter I have prepared to Lubavitch," he instructed the driver. "When you arrive at about 1:00 a.m., give this letter over to the Rebbe. If he is sleeping then instruct the attendant to wake him."

The wagon driver looked at a clock and noticed that it was about 10:00

p.m. He was surprised about the arrival time because according to his calculations, even arriving before day break would be remarkable.

He set out on his journey and immediately a deep exhaustion washed over him and he fell asleep. When he woke up, he was in Lubavitch and the time was... just after 1:00 a.m!

He went straight to the Tzemach Tzedek's home and informed the *shamash* that he had an urgent letter with him.

"The Rebbe is sleeping. Give me the letter and I will take care of it."

The wagon driver remembered his explicit instructions and replied, "Then please wake him."

"Give me the letter and I will take care of it. You have nothing to worry about," answered the *shamash*.

The messenger realized that he would take the letter and wait until the morning to take care of it. "No. My instructions are to give it to the Rebbe directly and if he is asleep he should be woken up."

With no choice the *shamash* knocked on the door and shortly after the Rebbe came out and read the urgent content of the letter.

The Rebbe instructed him to wait a short while and returned to his room.

Soon after, he reemerged and instructed the wagon driver, "Go back to Dubrovna but make sure to use the side roads that run through the forest; do not go on the main thoroughfare."

As he made his way through the forest, he began hearing the sound of bells ringing and he realized it was an official government carriage. Such was the law in Russia, every official wagon needed to be accompanied by loud ringing.

After some time he noticed that he was riding side by side with the government wagon.

"Halt!" Someone inside ordered, "Do you know the way to Lubavitch?"

"To Lubavitch?" He responded, "You are headed in the opposite direction from Lubavitch." At that moment the idea entered

his mind to keep them away from their destination and so he gave them a roundabout, backwards route that would keep them on the road for much unnecessary time.

His plan worked.

The government officials reached a distant village and concluded that they would have no choice but to remain there, rest up and switch out their horses.

A full day elapsed before they reached Lubavitch, enough time for the Chassidim to get rid of anything that might be misconstrued as incriminating papers and prepare answers to the expected questions.

Reb Nechemya concluded the story by saying: This was all in the merit and power of the Tzemach Tzedek: The fact that the wagon driver had a speedy unnatural trip and that, on his own accord, he was quick to send the government officials on the wrong route to Lubavitch. **1**

(Likkutei Sippurim
(Perlow) #9)