

Derher

A Chassidisher

א חסידישער דערהער

The Rebbe in Berlin

The Rebbe's Man in Mathematics

PROFESSOR PAUL
ROSENBLUM

The Essence of It All

THE TWO APPROACHES
IN UNDERSTANDING
HASHEM'S INFINITE
GREATNESS



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לעבן מיטן רבין



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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

Celebration Thirty

YUD SHEVAT 5740*



Yud Shevat 5740* marked 30 years of the Rebbe's *nesius*, ushering in an entirely new *tekufah* in the Rebbe's leadership. The unique farbrengen that year is remembered today as one of the biggest farbengens in all the years of the Rebbe's *nesius*. Here, we present a description of Yud Shevat 5740*, as well as of the days before and after. Much of this story is reprinted from the diary of Reb Zalmon Jaffe of Manchester, UK.

"ויהי בשלושים שנה..."

Close to the end of the Shabbos farbrengen of Parshas Vaeira, Rosh Chodesh Shevat, the Rebbe quoted the *possuk*: "ויהי בשלושים שנה..." (a *possuk* the Rebbe would quote often in the coming days) making note of the fact that the coming Yud Shevat will be 30 years from Yud Shevat 5710*.

This, the Rebbe continued, is connected with the "*Merkava*"—the famous *nevuah* of Yechezkel

Hanavi which begins with the words “יהי בשלושים שנה”—an occasion where *Elokus* was observed in a revealed way, which is the idea of *penimiyus haTorah* in general.

When ending off with a *bracha* that *before* Yud Shevat Moshiach should already be here, the Rebbe added parenthetically that talking about this is not in contradiction to the Gemara which states that “Moshiach will only come through *hesech hada’as*” (which seems to denote the opposite of being preoccupied with Moshiach), because, indeed, our *koch* in Moshiach does *not* stem from *da’as*—logical calculations—rather from *emunah* (which transcends rationale).

During the week that followed, many guests began to arrive in preparation for the big day, amongst them groups from Eretz Yisroel and Brazil.

At *krias haTorah* on Thursday, Vov Shevat, the *zal* was filled with *orchim*, and many of the guests had the privilege to *bentch* “Hagomel” in front of the Rebbe.

The same day, as the Rebbe was leaving 770 to go to the *mikveh*, he met Mr. Rosen, one of the Brazillian guests who is a member of the S. Paulo City Council.¹ The Rebbe inquired how he and his family are doing, as well as about different matters relating to his city.

PIDYON SHVUYIM

After Mincha, Rabbi Chanoch Glitzenstein and Rabbi Avraham Shemtov entered *Gan Eden Hatachton* and presented the Rebbe with a gift: 11 *sefarim* written in the handwriting of the Tzemach Tzedek and the Rebbe Maharash! Until then, these manuscripts had been in the possession of the Israeli National Library located in Yerushalayim.

At the Rebbe’s behest, after Maariv, Rabbis Glitzenstein and Shemtov went back into the Rebbe’s room together with their families, and the Rebbe *bentched* them: “Just as this was a case of *pidyon shvuyim*, so too may we merit to soon experience a *pidyon shvuyim* on both a personal and global level with the *geula ha’amitis v’hashleima*.”

The Rebbe wished them, “*Ah freilichen Shabbos un ah freilichen hemshech*” and gave each one of them five dollars and five *lirot*. The Rebbe also gave five dollars for the lawyer who was involved in obtaining the *sefarim*.

The following Shabbos, Parshas Bo, was the Shabbos before Yud Shevat and when the Rebbe



AN AD IN THE MONTREAL GAZETTE BEFORE YUD SHEVAT ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO INCREASE IN TORAH AND MITZVOS, AND SPECIFICALLY THE TEN MITZVOIM

came to 770 in the morning he notified that there will be a *farbrengen* that day. The first *sicha* of the *farbrengen* was devoted to the day of Yud Shevat—“העשירי יהי קודש”. Later in the *farbrengen*, the Rebbe discussed what preparing for Yud Shevat means for boys and girls under bar and bas mitzvah.

After Maariv and *kiddush levanah* the Rebbe left to go home. When the Rebbe came out of his room, Reb Zushe Vilnovsky started to sing the *niggun* “*Nyet nyet nikavo*” and the Rebbe motioned with his hand in his direction to intensify the singing. (The Rebbe actually began this *niggun* himself *twice* during the day, once at the end of the *farbrengen* and then again after Mincha.)

That night, a new sound system was set up in the main shul of 770 in preparation for the Yud Shevat *farbrengen* on Monday night. Additionally, the showcase in the lobby of 770 which displays the latest *sefarim* from Kehos was replaced with a new one.

Erev Yud Shevat was Sunday.

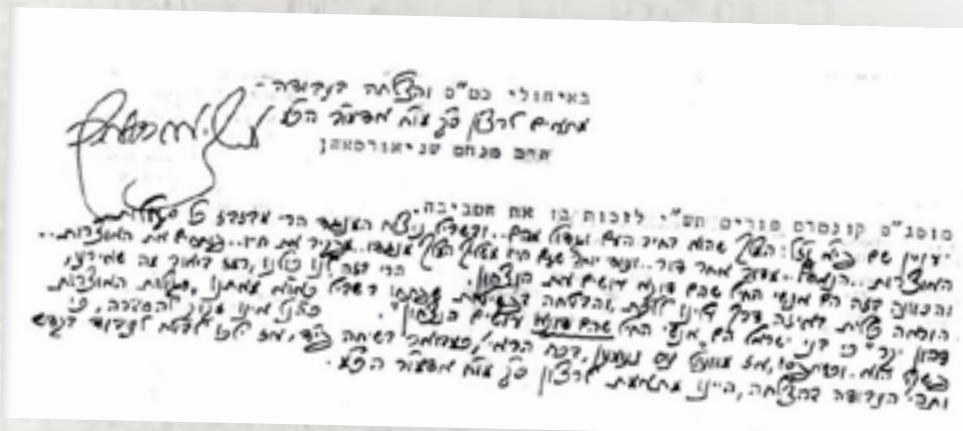
Dr. Resnick, whose wedding was that day, went into *Gan Eden Hatachton* to receive the *siddur* from



כתב יד קודש

What's At Our Disposal?

Postscript to a letter in the Rebbe's holy handwriting about the *maamar Basi Legani*, how it alludes to the Frieddiker Rebbe's *histalkus* and the action to be called in its wake:



לזכות
הרה"ת ר' שאול אליעזר
וזוגתו מרת ציפה שרה מנוחה
ומשפחתם
מנחם מענדל, שושנה מרים, ישראל,
שמואל, ושניאור זלמן שיחיו
וורטהיימר



[Enclosed is the *kuntres* for Purim 5710, to be used for the benefit of your surroundings.]

See there, chapter 11:

"The king, who is the greatest and most prized individual of the nation, in order to be victorious in battle against the enemy, will disburse all the cherished treasures collected over generations. ...Moreover, he will even lay down his very life and jeopardize it [if need be]... The treasures are opened [specifically for the use of] the footsoldiers, for *they* are the ones who bring about the victory."

This is a hint of an explanation for all of us about what has just happened [i.e. the *histalkus* of the Frierdiker Rebbe], and a general directive showing us how we need to proceed, along with the clear guarantee that "the cherished treasures of wealth" have been opened for each and every one of us. For [we] the Jewish people, the "footsoldiers, are the **only ones** to bring about the ultimate victory."

All of this needs no [additional] explanation, for it is quite simple. When people will "get this;" when we will behold it with our power of sight, as explained in the *sicha* ch. 14,¹ then we will be able to continue our holy work assuredly, and successfully. i.e. in accordance with the will of the Rebbe, my father-in-law, מה"מ.²

1. In the *sicha* printed at the end of the *kuntres*, the Frierdiker Rebbe discusses that when one sees something, the sight has a profound effect on every facet of his *nefesh*. *Sefer Hamaamarim* 5710 p. 143.

2. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 3, p. 249.

[מוסג"פ קונטרס פורים תש"י לזכות בו את הסביבה.]

יעויין שם פי"א וז"ל: המלך שהוא בחיר העם וגדל מהם . . ובשביל ניצוח המנגד הרי מבזבז כל סגולות האוצרות . . הנאסף . . מדור אחר דור . . ועוד יותר שגם חייו משליך המלך מנגדו . . מפקיר את חייו . . פותחים את האוצרות . . והכוונה בזה הם אנשי החיל שהם דוקא עושים את הנצחון.

הרי בזה לנו כולנו, רמז ביאור מה שאירע, הוראה כללית באיזה דרך עלינו ללכת, והבטחה בפשיטות שפתחו בשביל כאו"א מאתנו "סגולות האוצרות דהון יקר" כי בנ"י הם "אנשי החיל שהם דוקא עושים הנצחון".

כהנ"ל אינו זקוק להסברה, כי פשוט הוא. וכשיתפסו, אז מ'ועט עס נעמען, בכח הראי', כמבואר בשיחה פי"ד, אז ילכו לבטח לעבוד בקדש ותהי' העבודה בהצלחה, היינו מתאמת לרצון כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הכ"מ.

THE ESSENCE

of it. A

לע"נ
שד"ר רבותינו נשיאנו
הרה"ח הרה"ת
ר' מנחם שמואל דוד הלוי ע"ה
רייטיק
גלב"ע ח' שבט ה'תשנ"ח
תנ"צ'ה'
נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו



NCE



THE TWO APPROACHES IN UNDERSTANDING HASHEM'S INFINITE GREATNESS¹

PART I

When we say that in recent generations there have been new revelations of Penimiyus haTorah—of the inner secrets of Kabbalah and Chassidus—one might assume that it is a matter of **explanation**: In previous generations these esoteric ideas were not explained to regular people and now Chassidus explained these ideas to all.

The truth, however, is that Kabbalah and Chassidus do not only explain what had already been revealed—rather, they revealed completely **new** depths in the way we view *Elokus*. In every generation, this revelation was taken to new levels.

Perhaps the most important discussion in Jewish philosophy is the fundamental question of “What is Hashem?” In this article, we will explore some ways Jewish philosophy answers the question—and the depth that Kabbalah and then Chassidus brings to it.

RAMBAM AND MAHARAL

There is a famous argument between the Rambam and the Maharal (quoted multiple times in Chassidus, and discussed at length in *Derech Mitzvosecha Mitzvas Ha'amanas Elokus*²):

In an oft-quoted passage in *Hilchos Yesodei Hatorah*³, the Rambam writes that Hashem's attributes and manner of knowledge are utterly beyond our human understanding:

"He is the knower, He is the subject of knowledge, and He is the knowledge itself. All is one. This matter is beyond the ability of our mouths to relate, [or our] ears to hear, nor is there [the capacity] within the heart of man to grasp it in its entirety."

In his *sefer Gevuros Hashem*⁴, the Maharal argues strongly against this description:⁵ "Intellect is a specific thing: intellect means knowing something as it is. But one cannot place Hashem into a specific category, and if we say that Hashem is intellect, we are thereby categorizing Him.

"And if someone says: If Hashem is not intellect, nor is He physical, *chas veshalom*—then what is He? We will answer: does a person know his own *neshama*? How much more so the Creator of all! One cannot ask any questions, 'for Man cannot see me and live.'

"...This is why Hashem is called '*Hakadosh Baruch Hu*' and not '*Hasechel Baruch Hu*,' for we cannot know His true

existence, only that He is removed from physicality and bodily things. This is why we say '*Hakadosh Boruch Hu*:' *Kadosh* refers to something that is utterly removed, and Hashem is *pashut b'tachlis hapshitus*."

DEFINING THE ARGUMENT

What, exactly, is their argument?⁶ The Rambam never suggested that Hashem is intellect! To the contrary, he writes that Hashem's knowledge is utterly beyond our understanding! No one was suggesting that He should be called *Hasechel Baruch Hu*!

Furthermore, the Maharal agrees that Hashem knows everything. As he writes, "Being that Hashem is *pashut bitachlis hapshitus*, and he has no specifics—nothing is removed from Him. Thus, He knows everything and can do anything, and all of this is because He has no specifics..."⁷

How is that different from the Rambam? As the Or Sameach⁸ phrases it: *These words [of the Maharal] are puzzling in our eyes... It is utter folly to say that Hashem is pure intellect—no religious person or philosopher ever said such a thing, Heaven forbid... Is there anyone who negated conventional attributes (to'arim chiyuvi'im) like the Rambam in the Moreh [Nevuchim]?*

Note: These fundamental concepts are quite profound. They are very accessible, but can take time to digest (and are often taught in live classes). The article has been divided into sections, each containing a single general theme that can be understood on its own.

SECTION 1: THE MEANING OF INFINITY

Let us delve into the perspective of the *chokrim* (otherwise termed the “*philosophim*”—a general term used to describe the Rishonim and Achronim who explained *Elokus* based primarily on an intellectual approach, including the Rambam, the Ikarim, Abarbanel, and others).

The *chokrim* look at our reality and see that the state of our existence raises fundamental questions: We take it for granted that everything we see must have a cause—everything comes from somewhere. A person has parents, and so do animals. Trees and plants were seeded from a prior plant. Even inanimate matter (like rocks and dirt) must have a cause—they could not have just been sitting here forever.⁹

There is clearly a Higher Being who causes everything else to be—Hashem.

But this leads to an obvious question—what does it *mean* that Hashem Himself doesn’t need something else to create Him?

The answer is that Hashem exists differently than anything else we know of.

MECHUYAV HAMETZIUS

All existence that we know of is *efshari hametzius*, which means “possible existence”—it can exist, or it can not exist. This table in front of me can exist—or it can not exist. It *happens* to exist. If you burn it, it will be gone. If it never was, it wouldn’t be missed.

Hashem’s existence is an entirely different realm; He is *mechuyav hametzius*—He *must* exist. As the Abarbanel writes, “His existence is the most fundamental and the most complete of all creations. His existence is not *possible*, like all the other beings, rather He fundamentally *must* exist, *mechuyav hametzius*.”¹⁰

Let us examine a (very limited) example for this from our world: a logical rule.¹¹

It is a logical rule that a father must be older than his son. It is impossible to imagine differently—a father must be older than the son.

It is a logical rule that a father must be older than his son. It is impossible to imagine differently—a father *must* be older than the son.

Unlike something physical, which just *happens* to exist—like the table, which *happens* to be here as long as it’s here—this logical rule *must* exist. It is not that two plus two *happens* to equal four—we cannot imagine it any differently.

The difference between these types of existences isn’t only in *how long* they will exist for; it is in their *current* existence now. In what way does a table exist? By actually existing. You can capture the entire depth of its existence by knowing that it actually exists. The word “exists” refers to the fact that it happens to exist here in front of you.

In what way does a logical rule exist? It exists *fundamentally*, we cannot imagine it any differently. The word “exists” takes on an entirely new meaning. Therefore, the depth of its existence *cannot be captured* in actual facts. The logical rule can be *expressed* in actual facts, but it cannot be *captured* in any fact.

To explain: Physical things exist by actually existing; If you have one table—you have one table. If you have ten tables—then the room is full of tables. If you have a million tables—you have a million times more tables, and that one table is suddenly small.

Now let us try applying this same logic to the idea that fathers must be older than sons: *if you have only one example, Yaakov and Reuven—then the idea is true one time. If you have ten examples, then the idea is ten*

A Desire Discharged "[כל אחד] רוצה להיות מישראל..."



"מאחר שהוא רוצה להיות מישראל רוצה הוא לעשות כל המצוות ולהתרחק מן העבירות, ויצרו הוא שתקפו, וכיון שהוכה עד שתשש יצרו ואמר רוצה אני כבר גרש לרצונו." (רמב"ם הל' גירושין ספ"ב)

"Since he wants to be a part of [am] Yisroel, he wants to perform all the mitzvot and eschew all the aveiros; it is only his evil inclination that presses him. Therefore, when he is beaten until his [evil] inclination has been weakened, and he consents [to the divorce forced by Beis Din], he is considered to have performed the divorce willfully." (Rambam, Hilchos Gerushin end of ch. 2)

A Hidden Flame

The analogy of the *neschama* to a candle is a familiar one.

Akin to a flame that consistently soars upwards—regardless of the way it is positioned—as though there is a magnet pulling it to its source, so too the soul in every Jew has a burning desire, an unceasing drive to cleave

to its source on high. To quench this thirst, however, there is only one "water" — the study of Torah and the fulfillment of *mitzvot*. This is the only way one can break past the barrier of the body and connect to Hashem. It is the access accorded to the finite, to allow a relationship with the Infinite.

It is therefore understood that at our essence we are always yearning to do the mitzvot of Hashem and can't bear the separation we suffer from the lack thereof. This is true of every single Jew, anyone with a spark of G-dliness inside them.

With this, we can understand the famous ruling of the Rambam quoted above. According to *halacha*, a *get* must be given willingly to be effective. If so, how can a *get* be given by force and yet be granted halachic recognition? Based on our preface, the answer is obvious. If the Beis Din decreed that he must divorce his wife, then that is what he truly wants to do. As for his resistance, that is due to the

yetzer hara's deception. His true self only wants to do Hashem's will.¹

While this idea is inspiring in its own right, its impact is not limited to inspiration alone. As you keep reading, we will analyze this *halacha* and we will uncover a surprising relevance it has to the *avoda* of every one of us.

Never Changing

We are always encouraged to take on new challenges in Yiddishkeit. We encourage others to do so as well. If they decline the offer, we offer again. Occasionally, they accept the challenge only after several methods of persuasion are used.

At times, we find it intimidating to offer someone to try a mitzvah for the first time, especially if he declares that he resolutely decided to pass on the opportunity.

The same challenge arises and hinders our own growth. It's tiring enough to keep up with our set standards, taking on new *hachlatot* is

Dedicated In honor of my wife
 Rivka תרח' **Rivka**
 And my children
Menachem, Laya, Bayla, Devori,
Nechama, and Yossi שיחיו
 By Danny Fishman



daunting! Maybe we should take life a little easier...

We are taught, however, that such thoughts and decisions are only a facade. As the Rebbe insisted, time and again, the words of the Rambam are a *psak din*: The true wish of every Jew will always be that of his *neshama* deep inside of him. Simply put, what he wants—or more precisely, craves—is to be able to do the will of Hashem. Any other decisions or fancies (whether it is a passion towards something that negates Torah, or perhaps a philosophical barrier) are the result of outside influences, namely, his *yetzer hara* which can easily deceive a person at any given opportunity. That fervent desire may be buried deep in his core but it cannot be suppressed and will stay alive in any situation he is in.²

(As we often see, one may feel pangs of guilt after submitting to a forbidden impulse. If all he did was what he wanted to do, what is he feeling sorry about? Yet once we realize that he was only temporarily persuaded to transgress his own will this question is answered.³)

The Rebbe articulated this idea clearly one Sunday by “Dollars.” Rabbi Avraham Kanelsky of Bris Avrohom brought a Russian immigrant who had

a *bris* a short time previously. Together with them was another Chossid introduced as “the one who convinced him to have the *bris*.”

The Rebbe immediately replied: איר האט ער געזאגט און געוואלט, ער איז—דאך א איד, ער האט אליין געוואלט—You didn’t need to convince him, he is a Yid, *he* wanted to [do it]!”⁴

We never *convince* anyone to do a mitzvah. Nobody really refuses the offer; in fact, their *etzem* jumps at the opportunity! It is just that every now and then it takes some time and prodding to strip the soul of its coverings and to let our fellow Jew in on the truth: that he really, truly wants.

Far Reaching Sight

At a Sukkos meal on the balcony near the Friediker Rebbe’s apartment, the Rebbe requested of Reb Yankel Katz from Chicago to relate a heavenly incident he experienced in the Friediker Rebbe’s presence.

Reb Yankel began: “After he started reading the *nusach* that invites the *ushpizin* of Sukkos, the [Friediker] Rebbe turned to me and said, ‘We have other *ushpizin*. The Baal Shem Tov, the Maggid, the Alter Rebbe, the Mittler Rebbe, etc.’ He then began pointing at seats around the table saying, ‘Here sits the Baal Shem Tov, here sits the Maggid, etc. *he who has eyes, sees!*’” With that, Reb Yankel concluded his tale.

“Where can I find such ‘glasses’ to help me see?” asked an elderly Chossid present.

The Rebbe answered, “The Baal Shem Tov teaches ‘במקום שרצונו של’ — so all you need to do is want.”

“This must mean a very strong and powerful want.”

“Don’t limit the Baal Shem Tov. Especially since the Rambam says that internally everything is as it should be [so he already has this desire]. He only needs to ensure that it is the same on the outside as well.”

(*Toras Menachem* vol. 29 p. 38)

לזכות
החיילת בצבאות ה'
חי' מושקא תחי'
לרגל הולדתה י' תמוז ה'תש"פ
נדפס ע"י הוריה
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל
וזוגתו מרת דבורה לאה שיחיו

The Rebbe in Berlin



KEHOT PUBLICATION SOCIETY

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In recent years, much information has been unearthed about the early life of the Rebbe, in the years before his bright light was seen illuminating the entire world. The Rebbe tried as much as possible to hide his true greatness from the public and was immersed in his own world of Torah and *kedusha*. At the same time, the Rebbe stood at the ready, fulfilling many important *shlichus'n* for the Frierdiker Rebbe in various ways. Below is a compilation of some of these stories from the time that the Rebbe lived in Berlin, Germany, from 5688* until 5693*.

Chronological context: When the Frierdiker Rebbe left the Soviet Union in 5688* and settled in Riga, Latvia, his immediate family, including his future son-in-law, our Rebbe, traveled along with him. From there, the Rebbe traveled to Berlin where he lived for about one year prior to the wedding, and then returned there together with the Rebbetzin shortly after their wedding for nearly four and a half more years.

Much of the information contained in this article is from the books *Admorei Chabad V'Yahadus Germania*, and *Early Years* by JEM.

On the Frierdiker Rebbe's Behalf

As the Rebbe arrived in Berlin on 3 Teves 5688*¹, the international conference of Agudas Yisroel was taking place. The very next day would be the first General Session. The Rebbe participated in the conference as the Frierdiker Rebbe's representative.

After the first day of the conference, the Rebbe wrote a detailed report to the Frierdiker Rebbe describing the sessions of the past day: "Baruch Hashem, *I arrived safely yesterday evening... the chairman, Dr. Kohn [spoke]... He began by reading the bracha that was received from the Lubavitcher Rebbe...*"

In the following days, the Rebbe wrote another report to the Frierdiker Rebbe about the continuation of the conference.

At the Rabbiner Seminar

At that time, Berlin had a well-known "Beis Midrash L'Rabbanim," or the "Rabbinerseminar zu Berlin," headed by Rabbi Yechiel Yaakov Weinberg. (Rabbi Weinberg held this position from after World War I until the yeshiva was destroyed during the pogroms of Kristallnacht in 5698*.)

Many *talmidim* of Rabbi Weinberg later recalled and related their memories of the Rebbe from those years. The Rebbe would frequently come to the *beis midrash* to learn or to listen to *shiurim* delivered by Rabbi Weinberg and by Rabbi Chaim Heller, oftentimes remaining after the *shiur*, participating in lengthy Torah discussions.

One day, shortly after his arrival in Berlin, the Rebbe came to the Seminar, and asked Rabbi Weinberg to give him *semicha*, explaining that in order to be allowed entry to the Government Library at the Friedrich William University of Berlin, one needed to present a certificate.²



EXIT STAMP FROM LATVIA IN THE REBBE'S PASSPORT



RABBI WEINBERG



RABBI DR. YOSEF WOHLGEMUTH

One of Rabbi Weinberg's *talmidim*, Rabbi Chaim Nachman Kovalsky, related the exchange between the Rebbe and Rabbi Weinberg as he heard it from Rabbi Weinberg himself:

When the Rebbe requested to be tested for *semicha*, Rabbi Weinberg asked him in what area of Torah he can be tested. "Wherever Rabbi Weinberg would like," the Rebbe replied.

Rabbi Weinberg handed the Rebbe one of his own works. "I figured I would test him on something I wrote myself, so I gave him a *kuntres* I had published. The Rebbe took the *kuntres* home with him and studied it overnight, returning the next morning to be tested. He knew the whole *kuntres*, with every detail by heart!"

In the Rebbe's Reshimos,³ the first entry written in Berlin⁴ is dated, "Teves. 88. Berlin." and is titled "He'aros al [] shel Harav R. Y.Y. Weinberg," containing *he'aros* on issues Rabbi Weinberg raises in his *kuntres* titled 'Pinui Atzmos Meisim' on the topic of

relocating remains from one grave to another. Despite this being quite an obscure and difficult subject, the Rebbe mastered it successfully overnight, to Rabbi Weinberg's amazement. (It should be noted that, years later, when Rabbi Weinberg's *talmidim* reprinted his *sefer*, *Shailos u'Teshuvos Sridei Eish*, they included these notes from Reshimos.)

The dean of the Rabbiner Seminar at that time was Rabbi Dr. Yosef Wohlgemuth. In a letter⁵ to his son years later, the Rebbe said that he visited his father's home one Shabbos night, where he was giving a *shiur* in *Rambam*. The Rebbe also said to Rabbi Wohlgemuth's daughter, "His *talmidim* were devoted to him like Chassidim to a Rebbe!"

Encounter On a Simple Day

Rabbi Azriel Zelig Slonim related that while he was living in Yerushalayim, upon hearing the news that the Frierdiker Rebbe had left the USSR and settled in Riga, he decided to travel to Riga for Shavuot 5688*.



THE REBBE'S RESHIMA ON RABBI WEINBERG'S COMPILATION

However, at that point one was not able to receive an entry visa to Latvia without an invitation from a Latvian citizen. Nonetheless, he began his journey and traveled to Berlin, where he would seek the Rebbe's assistance. (He had already met the Rebbe a few years earlier while on a visit in Yekaterinoslav.)

Rabbi Slonim related:

"When I arrived at the home where the Rebbe was staying, on a regular afternoon during the month of Iyar, they told me 'he is fasting today,' implying that this was a typical occurrence.

"I knocked on the door, then as I entered, I saw the Rebbe sitting and learning Talmud Yerushalmi while wearing Rabbeinu Tam's tefillin. The Rebbe recognized me and motioned to me to have a seat and to wait until he finished a certain piece."

After the Rebbe took off his tefillin, he greeted Rabbi Slonim with a warm 'Shalom Aleichem.' Rabbi Slonim explained his problem, after which the Rebbe went out with him to the post office and sent a telegram to the Frierdiker Rebbe requesting that an invitation be sent, which arrived a short while later.



THE BERLIN RABBINER SEMINAR CIRCA 5660

On 29 Tammuz 5688*, the Rebbe wrote a letter in Yiddish, addressed to his future mother-in-law, in which he describes life then in Berlin:

...Here, too, it was raining the entire time until these past few days, when the weather reversed itself with an unusual heat wave. Only at night it cools off.

The Germans allow themselves to go about in the streets while their jacket is held over one arm, and in the other hand there is a handkerchief they use to wipe their sweat.

As the sun sets, all the home doors open. One who walks down the street, encounters at each house a family sitting together. They gaze at the moon, feeling pleased with the world—and especially with themselves, their wives and their children...

[Rabbi Meir] Hildisheimer⁶... informed me that when he passed through Berlin for two days he visited the Chortkover Rebbe... I thought it would be worthwhile to go see how they conduct themselves... I pushed my way inside and could see everything... Everyone gave him 'Shalom'... They brought out a barrel of beer... They sang and danced. 'Vu drei vochen, voss drei vochen, (what three weeks... i.e. it was of no concern to anyone for) der Rebbe iz gekumen!' (the Rebbe has arrived!)

"...I heard about the farbrengen of Yud-Beis Tammuz in Riga. While I was standing on Unter Den Linden⁷ waiting for the bus, a young man suddenly ran towards me saying, 'Shalom Aleichem! I am from Riga!' He was traveling through Berlin and must have recognized me from your house. So he told me about Yud-Beis Tammuz..."

In another letter, dated "Erev Tishah B'Av—the day Moshiach Tzidkeinu was born," the Rebbe wrote:

"I received your invitation. Heartfelt thanks for your kind offer... How is everything by you? You will receive this letter after Tisha B'Av, how was your fast?

"There is no special news with me. The heat has become a bit milder, so the fast will be easier. How will the German Jews manage [tomorrow], when it is forbidden to greet one another with 'Gutten Tag,' I cannot fathom. However, after all, Hashem is capable of everything!"

לזכות
הרה"ת ר' רפאל דובער
וזוגתו מרת רבקה
בנותיהם ובנם
חיה מושקא, שיינא,
מנחם מענדל, רחל שיחיו
גורביץ

Long Life

Rabbi Alter Tenenbaum, who directs Chabad of Irvine, shared the following story. It took place with his father, Rabbi Yosef Menachem Mendel Tenenbaum, who was a tomim in Tomchei Temimim in Otwock and was the longtime menahel of United Lubavitcher Yeshiva.

My father had to be hospitalized for a surgery in Adar 5747*. The surgery was scheduled for Shushan Purim, and of course, we wrote to the Rebbe for a *bracha*.

The day before the surgery was to take place, on Purim, the Rebbe gave the *mazkir* Reb Leibel Groner twenty-two dollars—a \$20 bill and two single dollar bills—to give to my father, along with a *bracha* for a *refuah sheleimah*.

Try as he might to come up with some sort of interpretation, my father could not decipher the meaning of the 22 dollars. But he had received a *bracha* from the Rebbe and dollars for *tzedakah*.

The twenty-second day of his hospitalization was the day he was discharged and allowed to go home.

A few months later, my father planned to go to the Rebbe for dollars. At the time, everyone was *nudging* him to change his schedule; to take it easy a bit. He was the *menahel* of United Lubavitcher Yeshiva and many people felt he should relax his duties to take better care of his health. He decided he would ask the Rebbe about it.

When he came to the Rebbe, before he could even say anything, the Rebbe gave him a dollar and said “אריכות ימים אין תומכי תמימים—Long life in Tomchei Temimim.”

Well, that was the end of any plans of slowing down or anything of the sort. **T**



29 ELUL 5751 LEVI FREDIN VIA JEM 158070

The Rebbe's Man in Mathematics

Professor Paul Rosenbloom



לזכות
החתן הרה"ת ר' שמואל
והכלה המהוללה מרת נחמה פראדל שיחיו
לברטוב
לרגל חתונתם אור לי"ד כסלו ה'תשפ"א
נדפס ע"י
משפחת פעלדמאן
פלארידא. טעקסאס.



Over the past few years, the *Derher* magazine has presented several profiles of a unique genre of Chassidim: The Rebbe's Professors.

Everything that exists in the world can be used for the benefit of *kedushah*, and that obviously includes higher education. Indeed, over the years of the *nesius*, the Rebbe was *mekarev* a number of high profile professors and scientists, and guided them in using their positions of influence to spread Torah and Yiddishkeit. [This should not be confused with the Rebbe's strong and unequivocal opposition to college attendance. For a comprehensive review of the subject, see "How to Make a Living – What The Rebbe Says About College," in *Derher Sivan 5777*.]

One such individual was Professor Paul—Pesach Betzalel—Rosenbloom (5680*—5765*). A quiet and unassuming personality, he was not very well-known amongst *anash*. One notable *zechus* he had was to work on a manuscript of the Rebbe's brother, Reb Yisroel Aryeh Leib, at the Rebbe's personal behest. This stemmed from a discussion about this project that took place during the farbrengen of Yud Shevat 5735*, and was recorded on video for posterity.

A *Chassidisher Derher* sat down with some of his family and friends to hear about his—and his family's—unique connection to the Rebbe. We extend a special thank you to Rabbi Moshe Feller, Rabbi Hirshel Okunov of F.R.E.E., Mr. Eli Magy (Professor Rosenbloom's son-in-law), Mr. Lee Rosenbloom (the professor's son), Rabbi Tzvi Freeman, and Rabbi Zalman Baumgarten.

Early Beginnings

Mr. Eli Magy: My father-in-law grew up in Philadelphia, but he settled down in S. Paul where he found work at the University of Minnesota. His first connection with Lubavitch was with Rabbi Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky, who would visit Minnesota on fundraising missions from Lubavitch in New York. But that connection was minor. When the Fellers arrived on shlichus from New York, they took it to a new level.

He was a very interesting individual. He had the ultimate curious mind. He was brilliant and learned languages very well. Whenever he visited a place, he would read the local newspaper thoroughly, to be able to talk to people there about issues that mattered to them. One year, he was on a sabbatical at Princeton, where he spent time with Albert Einstein and they would ride to the university every morning together.

On the other hand, he was exceedingly humble and very absent-minded. He couldn't drive because it would have been too dangerous. He once returned home in a taxi and instructed the driver to pull up at the yellow house on the block. However, my mother-in-law had just repainted the house white, so they circled the block several times until my father-in-law was able to identify his own home. One time, he was in a *yechidus* for several hours and the family began to get worried that he had been kidnapped during his trip through crime-ridden Brooklyn.

Rabbi Moshe Feller: The story of our connection to Paul—or as the Rebbe always addressed him in his letters, Pesach Betzalel—was actually a small miracle of the Rebbe.

During our *yechidus* before our departure to Minnesota in 5722*, the Rebbe gave us a one-of-a-kind directive: He instructed my wife to

The First Yechidus

The first meeting Dr. Rosenbloom had with the Rebbe was scheduled for 11:00 p.m. Dr. Rosenbloom realized that the Rebbe would be seeing many people before and after him. Feeling that the area in which he shared the greatest common interest with the Rebbe was education, and to save the Rebbe time, he wrote some of his ideas down and gave them to one of the Rebbe's secretaries.

When he gave him the note, Dr. Rosenbloom told the secretary the general thrust of his thinking: That the programs of Torah studies and secular studies in Jewish day schools should be integrated.

The secretary reacted with shock. "There must be a distinction between the holy and the mundane!" he told the professor. "A child must know what is sacred and what is not."

When speaking to the Rebbe, however, Dr. Rosenbloom received a different picture. "Children should be taught to appreciate that everything is connected with the Torah," the Rebbe told him. "When they perform an experiment in a science lab, they should know that it is G-d's creative power that is causing the chemical reactions they observe.

"There are some," the Rebbe continued, "who have two sets of bookshelves, one for *sefarim* [sacred texts] and another for secular books. That is the wrong approach. If a person thinks of secular wisdom as something unrelated to the Torah, he does not understand the Torah, nor does he truly understand the secular subject he is studying."

(As related to Rabbi Eli Touger and published in *To Know and To Care*)

join the department of mathematics at the University of Minnesota. She had a prestigious degree and the Rebbe felt that she would be able to utilize it for spreading Yiddishkeit.

At the department, she found a job working for Professor Rosenbloom, who was working on a program called mini-math, a very successful math curriculum for children.

Professor Rosenbloom was a world-class professor. He would counsel the United Nations and other international organizations. Although he was a prominent member of the Jewish community—we first met him at a function of the Jewish community—he knew very little about Yiddishkeit. We recognized how prominent he was, so my wife was glad

to work for him, and I also made sure to build a close relationship with him.

We became very close friends. When his children were young, I carpooled them every single day in the summer to our day camp, because the professor didn't drive—he was too absent-minded. They were very appreciative of the gesture and we began to spend a lot of time together.

Over a short period of time, they strengthened their Yiddishkeit in a drastic way. I bought him tefillin and *kashered* his kitchen, they began observing Shabbos, and we studied Chumash-Rashi together. I saw from the outset that he was a spiritual person and a phenomenal *keili* for Yiddishkeit.

His first inspiration for Yiddishkeit came from the lectures of Professor



AT A MEETING IN MINNESOTA, CIRCA 5722. STANDING L-R: MR. ELI MAGY, REB YOSEF ARYEH FELLER, RABBI YAAKOV NEMTZOV, MR. VELVEL GUTTMAN, MR. HARRY INGBER. SITTING: DR. YITZCHOK BLOCK, RABBI D.M. LIEBERMAN, PROFESSOR ROSENBLUM AND RABBI MOSHE FELLER.

Abraham Joshua Heschel, who spent a semester in Minnesota. Professor Heschel was a prominent figure in Conservative Judaism who descended from a *rebbe* background, and was a well-known orator and writer on Jewish topics.

When I told the Rebbe that the professor viewed Heschel as his *mashpia*, the Rebbe responded, “*Mir art nisht az s’vet zain shnayim ochazin b’tallis*—I don’t mind if there will be ‘two people tugging at the corners.’” The Rebbe also told me that Professor Heschel himself—although associated with the Conservative movement—was actually an observant Jew in his private life.

Rosenbloom was a very refined person, and he had a brilliant mind. About half a year after our initial



DR. ROSENBLUM’S WORK IN DEVELOPING METHODS FOR TEACHING MATHEMATICS WAS DOCUMENTED BY MANY BOOKS AND NEWSPAPERS

meeting, I realized that he had to see the Rebbe. I had already given him everything I had to offer; my own

“brilliant mind” and “knowledge of advanced mathematics” wasn’t going to cut it. I was confident that the

Rebbe would take him to the next level.

I called Rabbi Groner and said, "I have a world-class professor, and I need a *yechidus* for him immediately."

Very politely, Rabbi Groner responded, "Moshe, I could give him a slot in two and a half months."

That wasn't good enough. I decided to go over Rabbi Groner's head and write directly to the Rebbe. The answer I received was classic.

"אינו ענין איינלייגן וועלטן מיר צו זעהן.
אלא להמשיכו להתוועדות.

There is no purpose to put in great effort to [have people] see me. Instead, bring him to a farbrengen."

It was a proverbial "slap on the hand," but I actually got what I wanted. A few days after he attended a farbrengen, I received a call from Rabbi Groner. The Rebbe would see him immediately.

I wasn't wrong about my hunch. He had a lengthy *yechidus* and was totally taken by the Rebbe. The Rebbe's knowledge of mathematics made a profound impression on him. During the conversation, Professor Rosenbloom mentioned a certain famous math professor and he was shocked to hear the Rebbe remark, "I attended his class in Berlin..." [See more about the *yechidus* in the sidebar].

The Columbia Chabad House

Rabbi Feller: The *yechidus* with the Rebbe gave the professor the push that he needed. However, several years later Minnesota lost him. He was "kidnapped" by Columbia University in Manhattan, a more prestigious institution which offered him better terms.

The university provided him with an apartment on campus, and his home essentially became a campus Chabad House where many students became closer to Yiddishkeit.



THE MERKOS SHLICHUS BOCHURIM TO VANCOUVER IN 5734*

Mr. Lee Rosenbloom: It was interesting to see how much my father enjoyed teaching Yiddishkeit. While his expertise was mathematics, he had a particular passion for long Chassidic tales, which he would tell over with relish at our Shabbos table.

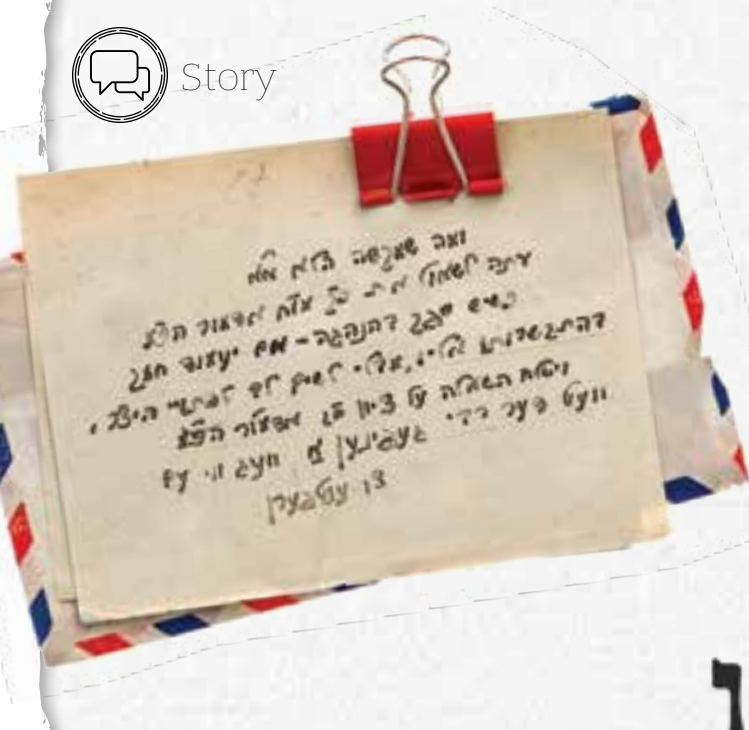
Many people grew in their Yiddishkeit tremendously at Columbia. For example, one secular Jewish student from Sweden once noticed me running around with tzitzis on campus. He approached me, and I introduced him to my father. They became quite close, and over time, he made a complete return to Yiddishkeit. He married a Lubavitcher *baalas teshuvah* from Boston and raised a beautiful family in Monsey.

Rabbi Tzvi Freeman: Professor Rosenbloom's high standing in the academic world made a big impression on me during my first steps towards Yiddishkeit. I first encountered him during a mathematicians conference in my hometown of Vancouver during my first year of university in 1974.

Four dynamic Merkos Shluchim—including Rabbi Yossi Hecht, now from Eilat—happened to be visiting the city at the same time. Yossi Hecht made a deep impression on me and I spent a lot of time with him. It was the first time I saw "black-hatters" with beards. However, while I felt a genuine pull to them, I didn't identify with them at all. I couldn't converse with them about politics or world history. It felt as if a gulf divided between us.

That is where Professor Rosenbloom made a difference. He was a classic absent-minded professor who spoke science, mathematics—logic. He spoke about quantum physics and about his conversations with Albert Einstein as a young man at Princeton. Yet he was profoundly religious.

That is what told me that Yiddishkeit could be relevant to me too. That's when it clicked: You could be intelligent, well-versed and educated, and still be a Chossid. This is ultimately what encouraged me



דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

לזכות
הנערה חנה תחי'
לרגל הגיעה לגיל שנים עשרה
היא עונת בת מצוה
כ"ט שבט ה'תשפ"א

נדפס ע"י הוריה
הרה"ת ר' איסר וזוגתו מרת ח' מושקא
ומשפחתם שיחיו
ניו

I Needed A Hug

AS TOLD BY MR. GABY SILVER (MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA)

I am originally from Melbourne, Australia and despite the fact that I grew up going to a Jewish school with Jewish friends, the extent of my family's observance was making *kiddush* on Friday nights, attending Pesach *seders* and going to shul for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. In 5763* I was married to a non-Jewish woman and living in Oceanside, California.

Around that time, Rabbi Boruch and Nechama Greenberg first moved on shlichus to Oceanside. They started a Chabad House and I was from their early *mekuravim*. They organized a Shabbos *minyan* once a month and after participating a number of times and learning more about Yiddishkeit, I would move into their home for those Shabbosim since I lived quite a distance away from them.

Among the several young men who participated in those *minyanim* was a young marine named Ben who was stationed at Camp Pendleton and over time we grew very close. On Shabbosim when there was no *minyan*, Ben would stay over at my home and we would host large fun Friday night dinners with many Jewish and non-Jewish friends.

The two of us were growing in our Yiddishkeit at the same pace and through our shared experiences we developed a very strong and deep friendship. Eventually Ben left the Marines, moved back to Philadelphia and the last I heard from him was that he was planning a trip to Israel with Birthright.

By this time I had grown in my Yiddishkeit to the point that my non-Jewish wife and I both realized that we were



headed in separate directions and we went through a very amicable divorce. I very much wanted to start a Jewish family but finding a *shidduch* proved to be very difficult. I knew that I wanted to live a *frum* lifestyle but I was not yet on that level in my personal observance.

I was at a crossroads in my life with one foot in Yiddishkeit and one foot still firmly set in my old lifestyle, far away from my family in Australia, and my best friend had just moved away. My family was not very happy with my sudden interest in religion and the rest of my friends in Oceanside, although they were supportive, really had no way of relating to my situation. I felt isolated, vulnerable, and emotionally distraught and I desperately needed some guidance, so I decided to go to the Rebbe.

I took the red-eye flight from John Wayne Airport in Long Beach, California to New York City, landed at JFK Airport very early in the morning and hailed a taxi straight to the Ohel.

After going to the *mikveh* and davening Shacharis, I sat down to write my letter to the Rebbe. I poured out my heart in my writing and after detailing my situation and asking for clarity and *brachos*, I expressed myself in these words "Rebbe, I need a hug." I needed someone to support me and give me the feeling that they've "got my back."

It was a cold, winter Teves morning. When I entered the Ohel so early in the morning, it was practically empty but as I stood there engrossed in saying Tehillim many more people started coming in and shuffling past me. At some point, someone stood right next to me but I paid no attention to him as I was very focused on my *tefillos*. All of a sudden I was startled to overhear the person next to me mentioning my Hebrew name "Gaby ben Leah."

I looked up and was astonished to see that my good friend Ben was standing right next to me!

He had just returned from his Birthright trip, landing at JFK around 45 minutes after I had and he also came straight



to the Ohel. We were both unaware of each other's plans and there we were standing side by side at the Ohel without realizing it. When Ben mentioned my Hebrew name he had no idea that he was standing right next to me!

"Ben!" I exclaimed.

"Gaby!" he said, equally astonished and we embraced each other with great excitement.

Aware that we were standing in the Ohel we quickly quieted down and continued with our respective *tefillos* but at that moment I felt that the Rebbe had sent me the hug I so desperately needed.

Ben and I spent the morning together in Crown Heights catching up on the past few months. I purchased a pair of *tzitzis* since that was the *hachlata* I had made at the Ohel that morning.

Needless to say, that morning I received the clarity and support I needed to make the proper decisions in the right direction and today I am, *baruch Hashem*, married and raising a *frum* Chassidishe family, all thanks to the Rebbe's *brachos*.

I was 19 years old on Gimmel Tammuz but despite the fact that I sporadically attended a Chabad shul in Melbourne, I never had the opportunity to see the Rebbe *b'gashmiyus*. It is the greatest regret of my life but experiencing what felt to me as a clear response from the Rebbe in such a powerful and surreal way, allowed me to develop a deeply personal relationship with the Rebbe today. **1**

YOUR STORY

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



לע"נ
אבינו הרה"ח הרה"ת
ר' יוסף מנחם מענדל
ב"ר יצחק ע"ה
ואמנו מרת זיסל דבורה
בת ר' אלי' הכהן ע"ה
טענענבוים
תנ"צ'ה'



EREV YUD SHEVAT

9 Shevat - Erev Yud Shevat 5751