

A Chassidisher **Derher**

א חסידישער דערהער

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת אֶל
ה' בְּצַרְתָּהּ לִי
קָרָאתִי
וַיַּעֲנֵנִי

(תהלים קכ, א)

A Cradle of Greatness

NIKOLAYEV AND ITS CHASSIDIM

What's In A Name?

ITS SIGNIFICANCE, POWER, AND POTENCY

**Yud-Aleph Nissan
Moments with the Rebbe**

HISVAADUS CHASSIDIM



NISSAN 5781
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מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו
בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן

נדפס ע"י

הרה"ת ר' הלל דוד וזוגתו מרת שטערנא שרה ומשפחתם שיחיו
קרינסקי



לעילוי נשמת

הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל ב"ר אברהם (מאיור) ז"ל
דריזין

נלב"ע יום ג' דחוקה"מ פסח י"ט ניסן ה'תש"פ
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה'

נדפס ע"י בנו

הרה"ת ר' חיים יצחק עזרא וזוגתו מרת פיגא ומשפחתם שיחיו
דריזין

לעילוי נשמת

הרבנית מרת רחל דוואשא בת הרה"ג ר' ישראל ע"ה
שלוחה של כ"ק אדמו"ר מוהררייץ וכ"ק אדמו"ר הנשיא
נלב"ע י"ט ניסן ג' דחוקה"מ פסח ה'תש"פ

ולזכות

הת' אייזיק הכהן שיחי' ראזענפעלד
לרגל הגיעו לעול מצוות ל' ניסן ה'תשפ"א
ולזכות הוריו הרה"ת ר' מרדכי אליהו הכהן וזוגתו מרת שיינא ראזענפעלד

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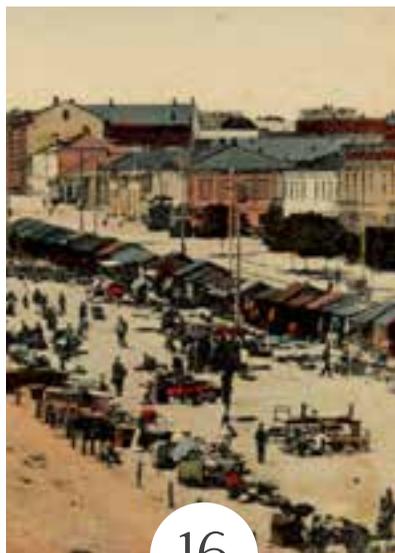
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has been made possible

לזכות

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

אייזיקוביץ

בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן
קי"ט שנה להולדת ב"ק אדמו"ר

“שיר המעלות אל ה' בצרתה לי קראתי ויענני”

(תהלים קכ, א)

Every Yud-Aleph Nissan is special. As a day that marks the birth of the *nossi hador*, the day that his bright light began illuminating the world, it is a special day for every Yid and indeed for every person of this generation.

The Rebbe explains, based on the Alter Rebbe's words in *Iggeres Hakodesh*, that each year a brand new light is manifest in the world that was never here before, so each year we experience every special day on a higher, more refined level.

But then there are times when this day is even more unique than a regular year. Just like we have a *shemittah* year every seven years when the whole year becomes like Shabbos, when we are supposed to dedicate more time to spirituality and Torah learning, similarly when it comes to a birthday, there are years when the date itself is more special and more holy, even relative to the way we mark this day in an ordinary year.

This, explains the Rebbe, is when the birthday marks the beginning of a new decade.

Forty-one years ago, the Rebbe held a *farbrengen* marking Chof Cheshvan, the birthday of the Rebbe Rashab—as he entered his 120th year.¹ The Rebbe dedicated much of the *farbrengen* to elucidating the meaning of this milestone birthday, and how it is unique to all the preceding years.

As we begin the Rebbe's 120th year this Yud-Aleph Nissan, it is a good time to reflect on the Rebbe's words in those *sichos* and see how they can offer lessons and inspiration for us, today.

The number “120” connotes the full lifespan of a person. As the *possuk* says, “והיו ימיו מאה ועשרים שנה—His days [of his life] shall be 120 years...”

Moreover, the number 120 has significance in another way: Rashi says that Hashem promised to restrain his wrath from the people of the generation of the *mabbul* for 120 years, giving them the opportunity to do *teshuva*. If they indeed changed their evil ways, He would not bring the *mabbul* upon them, but instead transform the water to “גשמי ברכה—rain of blessing.”

This is the power of 120 years; allowing the transformation of a harsh decree like a destructive flood into a deluge filled with *brachos*.²

Let us indeed hope that with the start of the Rebbe's 120th year, any hardships and challenges we faced over

the past year will indeed be transformed into *brachos*, most importantly: the *bracha* of the *geula ha'amitis v'hashleima*.

Another very important point about the beginning of the 120th year, the Rebbe points out, is that the *kapitel*—קכ—marks the start of a new section in Tehillim: the 15 “*Shir Hamaalos*.”

The Midrash relates that when Yaakov Avinu was working for his uncle and father-in-law, Lavan, for 20 years, his work ethic did not allow him any sleep. As the *possuk* says, “וַתִּסְרֶנּוּ מֵעֵינַי שְׁנַתִּי מֵעֵינַי”—My sleep was removed from my eyes...”

The Midrash asks: “What was Yaakov saying for those 20 years? Rabbi Shimon Ben Levi says he recited the 15 *Shir Hamaalos*... Rabbi Shmuel Ben Nachman says he recited all of Sefer Tehillim.”

Why?

Yaakov was stranded in a deep *galus*. He had to deal with a lowly man like Lavan and salvage whatever sparks of *kedusha* he was able to elevate with his holy *avoda*. How was he able to endure? What gave him the strength to do his *avoda*, day in day out, awake for nights on end?

It was the 15 chapters of *Shir Hamaalos*!

The same is true for us today, in our prolonged and difficult *galus*. We often face terrible *tzaros* and challenges. How can we endure?

Or as Dovid Hamelech puts it in one of the chapters of *Shir Hamaalos*: “מֵאֵינָן יִבּוֹא עֲזָרִי—From where will my help come?”

The answer is: These 15 chapters of *Shir Hamaalos* give us the necessary strength; along with all of Sefer Tehillim.

As a matter of fact, the answer lies in the words of the question itself, “מֵאֵינָן יִבּוֹא עֲזָרִי.” The word “אֵינָן” also refers to Hashem Himself in His essence. From there will come all the help we need to make it through the bitter *galus*.

Furthermore, Yaakov Avinu did not just recite the *Shir Hamaalos*. The word “שִׁיר” means “song”; he sang through the *galus*!

How is that at all possible?

Because Yaakov was able to sense and feel that the *galus* itself is not the “be all—end all.” He knew that the real reason for enduring all these hardships and living through such darkness was to experience the “יתרון האור מן” החשך—The increased light that comes from the darkness.” Of course, the *galus* itself is a terrible thing. But the point

of it all is the immense gain and illumination that will be brought to the surface as a result of the *galus*.

We too, as we are suffering for the time being in this terrible *galus*, have the ability to experience the “אֵשׁ אֵינִי”—to truly open our eyes and realize that the only reason we are here is in order to bring about the immense spiritual light, the “יתרון האור.” This gives us the strength and the fortitude to carry on even while in *galus*, and even to do so happily—with a “שִׁיר,” in song!

This will bring us to the ultimate “*Shir Hamaalos*”—the 15 steps of the *Beis Hamikdash*, to be rebuilt with the coming of Moshiach speedily in our days!³

Right in the beginning of the new *kapitel*, the *possuk* says, “שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת אֵל ה' בְּצָרָתִי לִי קָרָאתִי וַיִּעֲנֵנִי”—A song of ascents, I called out to Hashem in my distress, and He answered me...”

Speaking to the children of Tzivos Hashem,⁴ the Rebbe points out:

Sometimes, a Yid might feel overwhelmed or lonely by the fact that he or she is part of such a small group of people who follow Hashem's ways. A Yid might be in a truly distressing situation—a real time of *tzara*. But one should never give up hope. Always take comfort in the fact that our “Commander-in-chief,” Hashem, will immediately answer our call for help. Not only will Hashem get rid of the *tzara*, but He will also switch the situation from one of “צָרָה” (distress) to “צִהָרָה” (illumination). The darkness of *galus* will be transformed into the light of *geula*.

This allows us Yidden to take on the *galus* with a “שִׁיר—a song,” with a happy tune and with optimism, and in a manner of “הַמַּעֲלוֹת—ascension,” constantly growing and climbing higher in our joy.

With that, Hashem will certainly answer our call, our prayer that we express in song—“We want **Moshiach now!**”

Teikef umiyad Mammosh!

A Chassidisher Derher

ימי הפורים, ה'תשפ"א

1. Shabbos Parshas Vayera, Chof Cheshvan 5740; Likkutei Sichos vol. 20, pp. 386-416.

2. Se'ifim 22-25.

3. Se'ifim 27-32. See further in the sicha for many more explanations of the significance of the 15 Shir Hamaalos and the number of 120 years, as well as further explanation in kapitel 120 specifically.

4. 27 Menachem-Av 5742, se'ifim 9-10.



Take Responsibility

רמב"ם הלכות רוצח ושמירת נפש, ט:ב

After they measure and establish which city is closest [to the body of the unknown wayfarer], they bury the person who was murdered in the place he was found. The elders from Yerushalayim return to their city, and the *beis din* of the city that was designated brings a calf paid for by all the inhabitants. They bring the calf to a river that flows forcefully. This is the meaning of the term ‘*eisan*’ found in the Torah.

אחר שמוֹדְדִין וְנוֹדְעָה
הָעִיר הַקְּרוֹבָה קוֹבְרִין אֶת
הַנֶּהֱרָג בְּמִקוֹמוֹ וְחוֹזְרִין זְקֵנֵי
יְרוּשָׁלַיִם לְמִקוֹמָן. וּבֵית דִּין
שֶׁל אוֹתָהּ הָעִיר מְבִיאִין
עֶגְלַת בָּקָר מְשֻׁל אֲנָשֵׁי
אוֹתָהּ הָעִיר וּמוֹרִידִין אוֹתָהּ
אֶל נַחַל שְׁשׁוּטֵף בְּחֵזְקָה
וְזֶהוּ (דְּבָרִים כ"א ד) "אֵיטָן"
הָאָמֹר בְּתוֹרָה:

If a murdered body is found in a field, the Torah prescribes the mitzvah of *eglah arufah*.

The elders of the city nearest to the dead body, accompanied by the members of the *beis din hagadol*, must bring a young calf, and decapitate it.

Where should the decapitation take place?

The Torah says at a *nachal eisan*.

What is a *nachal eisan*? There are two opinions:

1) Rashi says it means a valley with hard, infertile soil.

The reason Rashi gives is:

“Hashem says: Let the calf which is in its first year and has, therefore,



מחזור הארבעים

40 CYCLES OF LEARNING RAMBAM

לע"נ
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' אהרן
בן הרה"ח הרה"ת יהושע שניאור זלמן ע"ה
נלב"ע ט' ניסן ה'תשע"ט
תנ"צ ב"ה
נדפס ע"י בנו
הרה"ת ר' יוסף וזוגתו מרת חנה רחל שיחיו
סערעבריאנסקי

produced no fruits, come and be decapitated at a place [the valley that was not tilled] which has not produced fruits, in order to atone for the murder of this man, whom they [the murderers] did not allow to produce fruit...”

2) The Rambam says it means a river with a strong current.

In Moreh Nevuchim, the Rambam offers a different line of reasoning: The primary goal of the *eglah arufah* is to bring awareness to the murder; the more people hear about it, the more people will ask questions and the more the chance the murder will be solved.

Additionally, the land around the area where the decapitation happens may not be planted, the soil must remain barren. The goal of this is to put pressure on the land owner to do whatever he can to solve the murder so that he can use that land.

This reasoning is what prompts the Rambam to give the opposite interpretation of *nachal eisan* than Rashi.

If *nachal eisan* is an infertile parcel of land, why would the land owner care if he could not plant there. However, if it means a strong flowing river like the Rambam learns, then the land is extremely valuable and it would

be very upsetting to the land owner that he can't plant there. He would therefore do what ever he can to solve the murder.

The message of this mitzvah is, when there is a spiritual casualty, a Yid in a spiritual state of death, it is not relevant where and why it happens. Even if it seems like the victim was roaming in dangerous places alone, still, it becomes the responsibility of the entire city closest to the event—and even the *beis din hagadol* in Yerushalayim must come down to help solve it.

(*Likkutei Sichos vol. 24 p. 128*)



לעבן מיטן רבין



11 NISSAN 5732, JEM 104412

<p>ע"י בנם ר' יקותיאל יהודה וזוגתו מרת פעסל לאה ומשפחתם שיחיו רוהר</p>	<p>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</p>
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Ma Nishtana and the Russian Yidden

PESACH 5732*



Yud-Aleph Nissan 5732 will forever be remembered as one of the largest celebrations in the history of *Dor Hashvi'i*. For months beforehand, Chassidim and Yidden across the globe prepared for the momentous occasion when the Rebbe would celebrate שבעים שנה. At the farbrengen which took place on the eve of Yud-Aleph Nissan (which is available on video), the Rebbe famously announced the establishment of

71 new *mosdos*, a new beginning in the world of shlichus and the Rebbe's transformative efforts in *hafatzas hamaayanos*, and thus, the beginning of a new era in the Rebbe's *nesius*.

A full article about the story of Yud-Aleph Nissan and the days which preceded it has been featured in *Derher*, Nissan 5776.

For those who merited to be in 770 at the time, Pesach 5732* was a continuation of this incredible Yud-Aleph Nissan, never to be forgotten.

While the first days of Pesach in 770 was usually a quieter Yom Tov (especially after the Rebbe no longer *farbrenge*d on the second night), Pesach 5732* was filled with *giluyim*, including a *farbrengen* on every day of Yom Tov!

Here we present an overview of that very unique Pesach with the Rebbe. This article is based on descriptions of the *farbrengens* published by the *Vaad L'hafatzas Sichos*, and which were reviewed and edited by the Rebbe at the time. It is also partially based on the *yomanim* of Rabbis Mendel Wolosow and Moshe Chaim Levin (*bochurim* at the time), as well as on *hanachos* of the *sichos*.

VISITING THE BOCHURIM

On Erev Pesach the Rebbe distributed *matzos*. There were many, many people waiting to receive matzah from the Rebbe, and shortly before *shkia* the Rebbe said that the locals will be able to continue receiving matzah after Maariv. Even after Maariv, with just those living within walking distance waiting in line, there was still a large number of people.

Afterwards, the Rebbe visited the *seder* of the *bochurim*. After passing through the yeshiva dining room, the Rebbe entered the kitchen and looked around. The Rebbe's picture was hanging on the wall and the Rebbe looked up at it a few times.

The Rebbe then *bentched* the *bochurim* with a "*chag kosher v'sameach*" and that very soon they should see with their own eyes the fulfillment of the words in *kapitel* ט"ז (the Rebbe's new *kapitel* of that year): "*K'mofes hayisi larabim...*" all the way to the conclusion of the *kapitel*, "*T'raneina sefasai...*"

The Rebbe then went to visit the *seder* of the *bochurim* in Hadar Hatorah. The Rebbe wished the non-Jewish workers a "Happy Holiday" and blessed everyone present with a "*Chag haPesach kosher v'sameach*."

Reb Yankel Katz of Chicago accompanied the Rebbe on his visit to the *sedarim*, and the Rebbe conversed with him while they walked. When the Rebbe returned to 770, he first stopped in the shul downstairs and gave a look around, and then went upstairs to his room. Reb Yankel then went into the Rebbe's room and the Rebbe gave him matzos

as well as the new *haggadah* printed in connection with Yud-Aleph Nissan. His son went inside afterwards and received matzah as well.

FARBRENGEN AT 3:30!

After Shacharis on the first day of Yom Tov, the *gabbai* Reb Shea Pinson made an announcement about visiting different shuls in the afternoon to share words of Chassidus. To everyone's great surprise, there was no word about the time for Mincha. This was a sign that there would be a *farbrengen* in the afternoon; something that had never happened before on the first day of Pesach!

After returning to his room, the Rebbe asked Rabbi Hodakov what time people are leaving to go to the shuls to *chazer* chassidus. Rabbi Hodakov responded with the time, and the Rebbe instructed him to inform the *olam* that there will be a *farbrengen* at 3:30 p.m.

The Rebbe began the *farbrengen* by explaining at length the passage in the *haggadah* beginning with the words "*Hei lachma anya*:" Taking a closer look at the first sentence, it would seem that the *haggadah* should have said: "*K'hei lachma anya*"—adding a *kof* in the beginning of the word—which would then translate as: "This [matzah sitting before us] is *like* the bread of affliction that our forefathers ate..." But instead, we say "*Hei*," implying that the matzah sitting on our *seder* table is the *same* matzah that left Mitzrayim! But the truth is, the Rebbe explained, this is precisely the message the *haggadah* is seeking to convey to us: The story of *yetzias Mitzrayim* is not meant to be viewed as ancient history—and not even *as if* it is happening right now. Rather, when we sit by the *seder* and read the *haggadah*, one has to *re-live* the story; to feel that he is *actually*—albeit in a more spiritual form of expression—leaving Mitzrayim!

Then the Rebbe made a surprising request:

Calling upon those who had recently emerged from behind the Iron Curtain, the Rebbe observed that since for them it is easier to re-live such an experience as *yetzias Mitzrayim*, it would therefore be appropriate that they now ask the *Ma Nishtana*.

The Rebbe added that if there are any such children present, it would be even better that they ask the questions.

There were two Russian children present by the *farbrengen*, and the Rebbe gave them a *haggadah* so that they could read the *Ma Nishtana*. When



SIGNS PROTESTING THE ISSUE OF MIHU YEHUDI AT A GATHERING IN ERETZ YISROEL, NISSAN 5732.

they concluded with the closing words in Yiddish that appear in many *haggados*: “*Tatte, ich hob ba dir gefregt fir kashes...*” in which the son asks his father for an answer to his questions—the Rebbe’s face broke into a smile.

The Rebbe then gave a lengthy interpretation of the whole “*Ma Nishtana*” according to the Rebbe Rashab’s explanation (mentioned in *Hayom Yom*), employing *meshalim* and using simple terminology, making it easy for even a young child to understand.

Afterwards, the Rebbe said a *biur* on the second *possuk* of *kapitel* א”ע in *Tehillim*.¹

During the *farbrengen*, the Rebbe remarked that it is not too late to give people the opportunity to have *shmurah matzah*.

At the end of the *farbrengen*, the Rebbe stood up and vigorously encouraged the singing while facing towards the Chassidim who had recently come out of Russia. After the singing ended, the Rebbe did not sit back down but rather went straight to his *shtender* to daven *Mincha*.

After *Maariv*, the Rebbe informed Rabbi Hodakov that tomorrow there will be a *farbrengen* too. The Rebbe also wanted to know if people will be going on *tahalucha* the next day as well. Tonight the Rebbe continued distributing *matzah*.

BRING THE CHILDREN

The next morning, the Rebbe instructed that everyone should bring their children to the *farbrengen* that will take place later that day. During the *farbrengen*, the Rebbe said, they can play

outside, but when it comes time for saying the “*Ma Nishtana*” they should be present.

The *farbrengen* started at 3:30 p.m like yesterday. The Rebbe began by continuing to discuss “*Hei lachma anya*.”

At the end of the *biur*, the Rebbe pointed out that in this short section of the *haggadah*, we are suggesting that one could be in *Eretz Yisroel* and still be in *galus*.²

The Rebbe then began speaking about a very painful subject, the terrible *gzeira* of “*Mihu Yehudi*.” Amongst other things, the Rebbe painfully noted that in the long history of the Jewish people, such a thing never occurred; that *in the land of Eretz Yisrael* a decree should be made to *chas v’shalom* assimilate the Jewish nation into the *goyim* around them!

Afterwards, the Rebbe said a short *sicha* about children asking questions (“*Ma Nishtana*”), noting that the child’s asking—an expression of his or her interest in *Yiddishkeit*—is a testament to the good *chinuch* the parents gave to the child.

The Rebbe then requested all the children present to recite together the “*Ma Nishtana*” on behalf of the entire *Klal Yisroel*.

The Rebbe poured wine into his *becher* (from his personal bottle), and gave it to the *vaad hamesader* to distribute amongst all the children to say *l’chaim*.

Some of the children were not standing together with the others, and the Rebbe emphasized that all the children should stand together.

The Rebbe asked a few times if all of the children had already received wine, making sure that everyone got. The Rebbe also instructed that before they begin, the children should choose a *niggun* to sing. When one of the usual *menagnim* started to sing, the Rebbe stopped him: “They themselves should choose the song.” The children began to sing “*Utzu eitza*.”

Throughout the recital of the “*Ma Nishtana*” the Rebbe gazed at the children with a solemn expression. After the children finished reciting the “*Ma Nishtana*,” the Rebbe instructed that they all be given more *l’chaim* as a “reward for asking the questions well.”

The Rebbe then said: It is known that in the days of King Achaz, the Yidden were in a spiritually poor state, as the Midrash says: “Why is he called with the name Achaz? שאחז בתי כנסיות ומדרשות; because he barred entry to the houses of study and worship.” And yet, despite all of this, when Yeshayahu Hanavi observed the pure ways of the *Yiddishe* children, he



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expressed hope for the future of the Jewish people. If it was true then, the Rebbe continued, how much more so now when we are *baruch Hashem* not living under such dire conditions, that the appropriate conduct of *Yiddishe* children will bring about the nullification of all undesirable things, beginning with the *gzeira* of “*Mihu Yehudi*.”

“Certainly, Hashem will bring us the true and complete *geula* as Yeshayahu proclaimed,” the Rebbe said, “in the spirit of the *niggun* that was

recently brought out from behind the Iron Curtain.” The Rebbe then began to sing the Russian song: “*Ee vadye mee nye patonim*; In water we shall not drown, and to fire we shall not succumb...”

Everybody joined in the singing, and once again, the Rebbe got up from his chair and danced with great enthusiasm in his place for quite a while.

Later, the Rebbe asked that the children sing “*Utzu eitza*” a second time.

The farbrengen concluded around 5:30 p.m.



10 SHEVAT 5730, CB HA LBERSTAM VIA JEM 308654



OIF DEM IZ ER DOCH A YID!

On Shvi'i Shel Pesach the Rebbe held yet another farbrengen, beginning at 3:30 p.m.

At the farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke about the special events that occurred on this day: *Krias Yam Suf* and *shiras hayam*. The same way one is supposed to relive the story of *yetzias Mitzrayim*, so too on Shvi'i Shel Pesach, the anniversary of *Krias Yam Suf*—one must experience his own personal *Kriyas Yam Suf*.

Later, the Rebbe directed his attention to the Chassidim who recently came from the Soviet Union, asking that they say *l'chaim* with joy, since they are individuals who are able to relate better to the concept of reliving the events of *yetzias Mitzrayim*.

The Rebbe then asked that those who left the Soviet Union within the last three years should say *l'chaim* too. The main thing, the Rebbe concluded, is that they should be a living example for those who already spent many years in our free society, and have grown accustomed to a relatively easy lifestyle. The lesson should be that there is no need to be *nispoel* when faced with challenges. Even in circumstances where one needs to have *mesiras nefesh*, there is still no reason to become intimidated—*oif dem iz er doch a Yid; ah mesiras nefesh-zach*—that is what a Yid is all about, the ultimate embodiment of selflessness and dedication.

The Rebbe then began to sing the Russian *niggun* “*Ee vadye...*” and during the singing, he stood up and danced in his place for some time.

Afterwards, the Rebbe requested that “*V’hi She’amda*” be sung, and after the *niggun* he again spoke with much pain about the *gzeira* of “*Mihu Yehudi*,” explaining how recent events make it clear that the primary way to rectify the situation is through communicating directly with the government itself, and not through members of the religious party in the Knesset.

ACHARON SHEL PESACH

The farbrengen of Acharon Shel Pesach began shortly before *shkia* and went on until 1:00 a.m. Over the course of this farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke no less than 13 *sichos*!

Among many other topics, the Rebbe elaborated on the tremendous *zechus* and obligation of populating and living in the *shechunah* of Crown



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Heights, as well as other neighborhoods in which Yidden live.

The Rebbe spoke again about the recent events in Eretz Yisrael, where the religious members of the Knesset were refusing to stand up for a rectification of “*Mihu Yehudi*.”

Later in the *farbrengen*, the Rebbe continued the *hadran* on *Maseches Pesachim* that he began at the Yud-Alef Nissan *farbrengen*.

Again, the Rebbe said a *sicha* directed towards the Chassidim who recently arrived from Russia, encouraging them to continue living with *mesiras nefesh* as they had until now, especially with regards to the *chinuch* of their children.

After the last *sicha*, the Rebbe started singing the Russian *niggun*: “*Ee vadye mee nye patonim...*”

The Rebbe led *birchas hamazon* holding a cup of wine, and after *Maariv* and *havdalah* he distributed *kos shel bracha*. After everyone received, the Rebbe began “*Ki Vesimcha*” and left the shul amidst the singing of the Chassidim. ❶

1. Starting on Shabbos Hagadol, the Rebbe began to elucidate the new *kapitel* of the year, *possuk* by *possuk*. At each *farbrengen* that followed, the Rebbe expounded on another *possuk* of his *kapitel*; *possuk beis* on the first day of Pesach (at the *farbrengen* of Yud-Aleph Nissan the Rebbe explained *possuk aleph* a second time), *possuk gimmel* on the second day of Pesach, *possuk daled* on Shvi'i shel Pesach, and so on.

2. We say the words “השתא עבדין” after we say the words “לשנה ארעה” implying that it is possible to be in “דישראל ארעה” and still be an “עבד”.



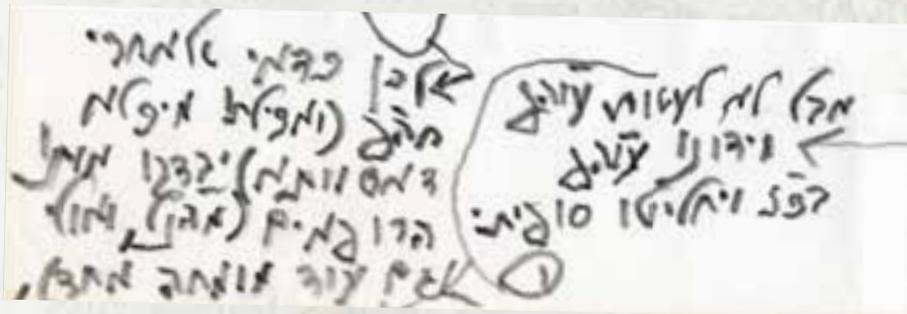
כתב יד קודש

לעילוי נשמת
 הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' מרדכי ב"ר מרדכי ע"ה
 רב קהילת חברת ש"ס - קראון הייטס
 כאן צוה ה' את הברכה
 נלב"ע ביום ש"ק פ' ויקרא
 ג' ניסן ה'תש"פ
 ולע"נ זוגתו מרת פעסא רחל לאה
 בת ר' שניאור זלמן ע"ה
 נלב"ע ביום ש"ק כ"ח תמוז ה'תשע"ז
 גורארי'
 ת'נ'צ'ב'ה'
 הוקדש ע"י בני משפחתם שיחיו



A Higher Remedy

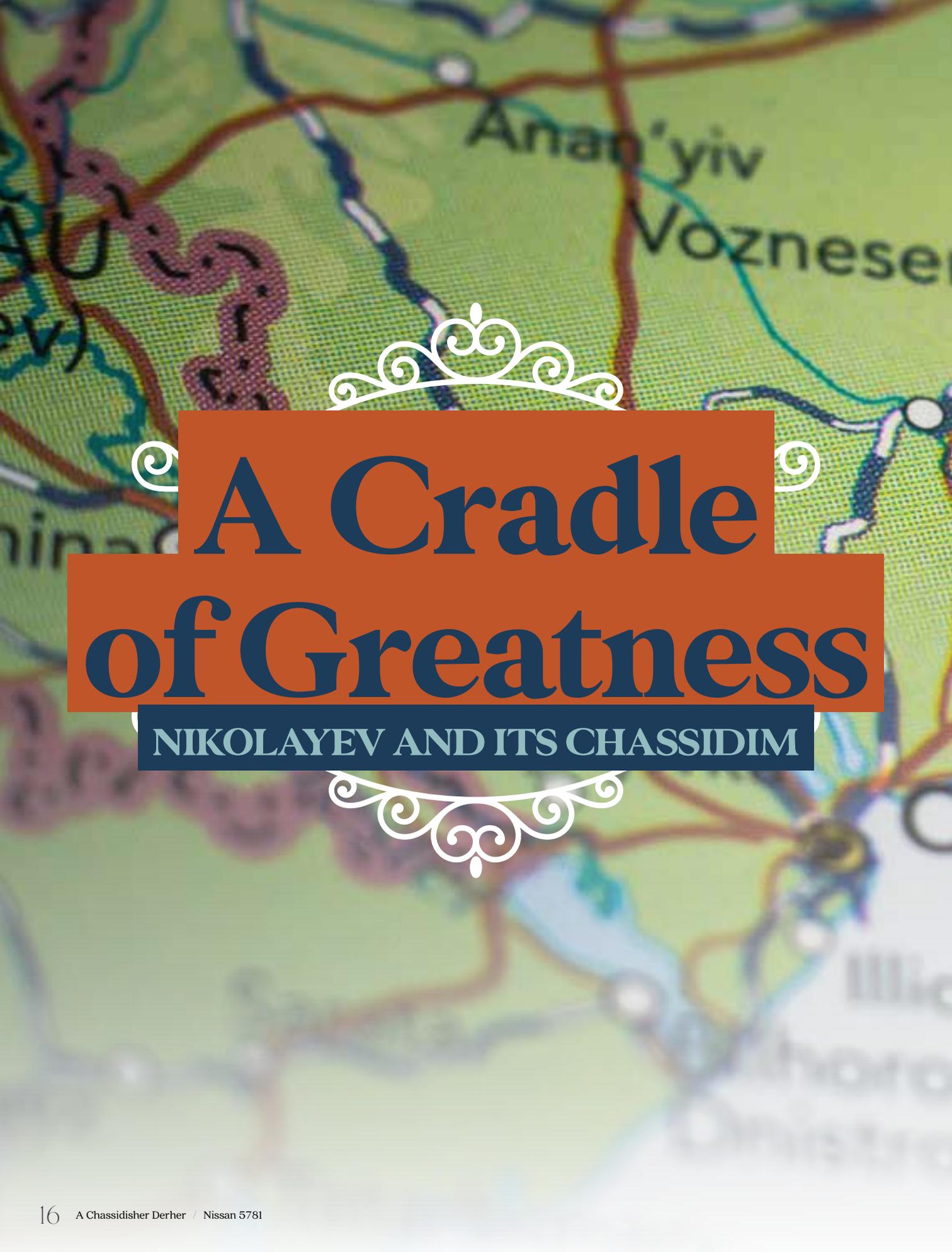
The following was written by the Rebbe in response to an individual who had a heart condition, and after performing a catheterization, the doctors decided they would operate after Pesach.



According to this, it would be worthwhile that after Pesach (when you will eat the [matzah] “bread of healing,”) the doctors (one of your previous doctors, and perhaps an additional specialist) should examine you again. But do not undergo another [catheterization]. Let them examine the issue again and come to a final conclusion.

לכן כדאי שלאחרי חה"פ (ואכילתו) מיכלא דאסוותא) יבדקו אותו הרופאים (מהג"ל, ואולי גם עוד מומחה אחד), אבל לא לעשות עוה"פ [צינתור] וידונו עוה"פ בכ"ז ויחליטו סופית.

(Teshura Wilshansky-Shemtov 5779)



Anap'yiv

Voznesen

A Cradle of Greatness

NIKOLAYEV AND ITS CHASSIDIM



מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר
בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל
וזוגתו מרת חנה שיינא
ומשפחתם חיל' מושקא, לוי יצחק,
רבקה מאריאשא, ברכה,
יקותיאל זוסמאן וגיטה שיחיו
גנזבורג
שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר
לטאראנטא, קאנאדא



With the approach of Yud-Aleph Nissan, we present the story of the Rebbe's birthplace, the city of Nikolayev, Ukraine. It was the Rebbe's hometown for only six years, but it has a storied career in the annals of Chabad history. Rabbanim from the Rebbe's family, famous Chassidische characters, and countless niggunim and stories — many of which were passed down first-hand by the Rebbe himself.

Mume Leah's Intervention

Nikolayev was born out of war.

For centuries, the Russian and Ottoman Empires had been at each other's throats. In a strategic move in 5549* (תקמ"ט), the Russian government established a shipyard to service the navy in the nearby Black Sea. People began to settle near the shipyard, and it soon morphed into a cosmopolitan city which they named Nikolayev.

Many Jews moved to the city as well. Twenty years after its founding, Czar Nikolai I — who took great interest in the city — approved the appointment of a Reb Efraim Zalman to be the city's rav. He personally met with Reb Efraim Zalman and commented that he was “*razumne*,” a shrewd person. The name stuck, and he was henceforth known as Reb Efraim Zalman Razumne.

Not much is known about him. He was a Chossid of the Alter Rebbe, and is best remembered for writing the *hanacha* of the *maamar* the Alter Rebbe delivered at the Shabbos *sheva brachos* of the famed *Zhlobiner chasunah*.¹

The original Jewish community in Nikolayev was short-lived. In 5589* (תקפ"ט), an expulsion order was handed down to the Jewish community which declared the city outside of the Pale of Settlement. Local authorities were able to delay the implementation of the decree for five years, but in 5594* (תקצ"ד) the Jewish community was expelled.

A small group of Jews managed to remain, thanks to an unusual individual known as Mume Leah. She was a Jewish woman married to the non-Jewish Military Governor of Nikolayev, Admiral Aleksey Greig. She had helped set up her nephew, Reb Sholom Yishaya Rafalovitch in the business of ship-building, and he had become quite wealthy. Although

she had left the faith of her ancestors, she maintained a connection with the Jewish community; she was known to send large sums of money to the *Heiliger Ruzhiner*, and became famously known throughout Russia as *Di Mume Leah*. When the Jews of Nikolayev were expelled, she arranged for special permits for Reb Sholom Yishaya and his workers (including Reb Efraim Zalman Razumne who lived in Nikolayev until his passing some 25 years later).²

Under the Guise of Pier Workers

Around the year 5610* (תר"י), a thirty-five-year-old rabbinic personality joined the community in Nikolayev. His name was Harav Avraham Dovid Lavut. A Chossid of the Tzemach Tzedek and close student of Reb Hillel Paritcher, he had previously served as the rav of Romanovka, a nearby settlement. Today he is remembered as the great-great-grandfather of the Rebbe.

“Reb Sender [Reb Sholom Yishaya's son] invited³ Harav Avraham Dovid to be the rav and *moreh tzedek* for the community,” the Rebbe wrote about his ancestor. “Slowly, the Jewish population grew, as Reb Sender obtained residential permits for many Jews, listing them as pier workers. Upon the advice of the rav, those included *talmidei chachamim*, *shochtim*, *melamdin*, and so on.”⁴

The city quickly became a thriving Jewish community once again, with many of its residents of Chabad extraction.

The leadership of the community remained in the Rebbe's family throughout its existence. Harav Avraham David Lavut was succeeded by his grandson, Harav Meir Shlomo Yanovsky, who served as rav for over 40 years. He was succeeded by his son-in-law Harav Shmuel Schneerson, who served as rav until his arrest, exile



THE PALE OF SETTLEMENT. NIKLAYEV IS CENTERED ON THE BOTTOM.

and untimely passing in Turkmenistan in 5704*. [See next section for more about these personalities].

The Heartbeat of Nikolayev

Many famous Chassidim families settled in the area. One well-known individual was Reb Asher “*Nikolayever*,” Reb Asher Grossman — a prominent Chossid of the Rebbe Maharash and Rebbe Rashab. Other notable Chassidim were members of the Althaus and Charitonov families. (Emanuel Harusi, a grandson of the Althaus family and a nephew of Reb Asher, wrote a fascinating account of his memories, and several stories are included in this article).⁵

Uniquely, Nikolayev remained a bastion of Lubavitcher Chassidim even after the passing of the Tzemach Tzedek, when many Chassidim left to follow the Rebbes of Kapust, Niezhin, and Liadi. The rav himself — Reb Meir Shlomo — was a *yoshev* in Lubavitch during the time of the Rebbe Maharash.

The Chassidim of Nikolayev were known for their joy and their *breitkeit*. In a letter to Reb Shmuel Betzalel Althaus, the Rebbe concludes by

wishing him with “...*simcha, kiminalhag Nikolayev v'ansheha me'az*, with joy — in the age-old tradition of Nikolayev and its inhabitants...”⁶

Nikolayev also became known as a center of Chabad *neginah*.

“One of my father [Reb Shamshon Charitonov]’s earlier memories,” relates Reb Sholom Charitonov, “was sitting on Reb Meir Shlomo’s lap and being asked to sing a niggun.”

Many of the city’s Chassidim were talented *baalei menagnim*, and they would often bring new or adopted *niggunim* to the Rabbeim in Lubavitch. Over 60 of these beautiful melodies have been preserved to this day. Many of the Rebbe’s *niggunim*, as well, have their source among the Chassidim of Nikolayev.

As in the age-old Chabad tradition, the Chabad Chassidim didn’t just have a regular shul.

“In Nikolayev there were *two* shuls,” the Rebbe said. “Chabad, and *shpitz* Chabad.”⁷

In the memoirs of Emmanuel Harusi, he adds some color to the description. “There was the shul of the Chabad Chassidim,” he writes, “and in addition, a minyan-room named *shpitz* Chabad, which served as the ‘strike force,’ the *palmach* of the Lubavitcher Rebbe’s dedicated Chassidim.”⁸

Emmanuel also describes a visit to the home of the rav for a special event:

“One fall evening, my uncle⁹ appeared with his carriage and took me to the home of the rav.¹⁰ A large group of Chabad Chassidim had gathered to hear a talk of the rav’s son-in-law, himself a prominent rabbi in a different city and important Chabad leader [referring to Harav Levi Yitzchok, the Rebbe’s father]. I stood at the doorway of the living room. It was packed with bearded men who filled the entire space to capacity. The table and bench in the hallway were piled high with coats and furs. I saw the speaker, an erect, pale young man,

quickly enter the small antechamber and take a drink, and then return to the main hall to begin his address. He fixed his eyes at a distant point in the ceiling, above the audience, and began to speak... I don’t know how long he spoke. I soon got tired, climbed onto a pile of coats, and fell asleep.”

Small But Determined

The decades before World War I brought massive change to the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe and many abandoned the faith of their ancestors. New movements — Socialism, Zionism and others — swept the youth of the Jewish communities.

In a letter from one anonymous Tomim living in Nikolayev to his friend in Schedrin, he complains that the local situation was unfortunately no different.

“I have no friends with whom to share my thoughts. The street is engulfed in the darkness of ‘freedom,’ which has spread its wings throughout the youth of our nation...”

“To add salt to injury, the Russo-Japan war has conquered everyone’s attention. Men, women, young and old have abandoned everything to follow the news. Even in the shuls, politics has set its wings around the

oven. Everyone has an opinion about which side is right. One person sides with Japan, which has a better navy and brilliant tactical maneuvers. Another person sides with Russia due to its massive strength. As they speak, the door swings open and someone rushes in — ensuring that he is first to share the latest news, that the Japanese have sunk ships in this or the other fashion...”

However, he does mention one positive element of his stay in the city: “The revelations of Levik” — an apparent reference to the Rebbe’s father — “when he reveals his inner depths to *yechidei segula* on Motzei Shabbos...”¹¹

A core group of Chassidim banded together to preserve Yiddishkeit and Chassidus.

“The Jews of Nikolayev,” writes Emmanuel Harusi, “were careful not to profess their Judaism publicly, and spoke Russian on the street. Soon, the Russian language infiltrated their homes... However, there was always a group of the Lubavitcher Rebbe’s dedicated followers — small but determined — who proudly portrayed their Yiddishkeit with their *tzitzis* and *peyos*.”

Following the lead of the Rebbe Rashab in Tomchei Temimim, the



SHUL OF HARAV AVRAHAM DOVID LAVUT.

local Jewish community invested great efforts in establishing a Jewish school that would educate their children in the time-honored Jewish fashion.

The children's magazine of Tomchei Temimim, known as *He'och*, lists many names of Nikolayev children who participated in its challenges and donated to its cause. A number of them even traveled to Lubavitch to enroll in the yeshiva themselves.

War, Revolution and Famine

The years following World War I brought profound misfortune over the city. The Bolsheviks took over, and their policies brought a terrible famine in Ukraine.

"I have a letter from Reb Elya Chaim Althaus of Nikolayev," the Frieddiker Rebbe writes to a supporter from Boston, "where he writes that in Cherson, people are dying daily — *Hashem yishmor* — from the terrible famine, and in his own city, Nikolayev, too. He sent a list of names; it is absolutely shocking..."¹²

Many of the Jews — and Chassidim — moved away from the city, and the Communists made every effort to

stamp out any vestige of Yiddishkeit that remained.

When Harav Meir Shlomo passed away, his son-in-law Harav Shmuel Schneerson remained active in the city, working alongside his older brother Harav Levi Yitzchok in Yekaterinoslav, to keep the flame of Yiddishkeit alive. In a letter to Harav Levi Yitzchok before Pesach, he describes his efforts to arrange for the large-scale baking of matzah before Pesach, and other matters of Yiddishkeit.

"After great efforts, the head of the bakery agreed to speak to me, but he hasn't promised to bake matzah. When I spoke to him about *kashrus* and the necessary preparations, I wasn't pleased with his response. I am deeply afraid that they won't do it properly, and *chas veshalom*, our efforts will be for naught... From the workers union, we have yet to receive a permit [which would allow Jews to abstain from work on Shabbos] but they did promise to send it.

"The situation is not very good," Harav Shmuel writes, "*v'laHashem hayeshuah...*"¹³

Harav Shmuel was soon arrested and exiled for his "criminal" offenses.

The End of an Era

During World War II, thousands of Jews fled the city when the front lines approached the area. When the Nazis entered the city at the end of 5700*, only 7000 Jews remained. Among them was the Rebbe's grandmother, Rebbetzin Rachel, the wife of Reb Meir Shlomo, who was too old to travel and was hidden by her non-Jewish neighbors.¹⁴

The Nazis rounded up all the Jews into a ghetto. Rebbetzin Rachel was betrayed by an anonymous informer and rounded up by the Nazis as well. After a short while, they were marched out of the city and killed, *Hy"d*.¹⁵



KSAV HISKASHRUS TO THE FRIERDIKER REBBE. THE FIRST SIGNATURE IS THAT OF HARAV MEIR SHLOMO YANOVSKY.

A small number of Jews remained in the city throughout the Communist years, but Jewish life was dormant.

With the fall of the Iron Curtain, Yiddishkeit began to come back out into the open. A number of *bochurim* and *shluchim* began to visit the city and rekindle the sparks.

Rabbi Shalom Dovber and Nechama Dina Gotlieb arrived as permanent *Shluchim* in 5756*. Since then, they have established a thriving shul, a *mikveh*, a kindergarten of 50 children and an award-winning school of 100 students. There is also a yeshiva, a *kolel Torah*, organizations for the needy, *Tzivos Hashem* youth groups, women's groups, and activities for all ages.

Once again, to paraphrase an earlier quote, "a group of the Lubavitcher Rebbe's dedicated followers — small but determined — walk the streets proudly portraying their Yiddishkeit with their *tzitzis* and *peyos*."



A FUNDRAISING LETTER FOR YESHIVAS TOMCHEI TMIMIM, SIGNED AND STAMPED BY RABBIS YISRAEL EISENSTEIN AND MEIR SHLOMO YANOVSKY.

LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD

HEICHAL HABAAAL SHEM TOV

Love, Commitment and Self-Sacrifice Force THE RABBANIM OF NIKOLAYEV

THE FATHER OF THE COMMUNITY HARAV AVRAHAM DAVID LAVUT

Harav Avraham David Lavut was born in 5575* (תקע"ה), and grew up in the colony of Romanovka, where his parents settled at the behest of the Mittlerer Rebbe. The Tzemach Tzedek appointed him to lead a *kolel* in his hometown, where he remained until his appointment in Nikolayev.

He lived through the *nesius* of four Rabbeim. He was 13 at the *histalkus* of the Mittlerer Rebbe (although it is unclear if he saw him). He was a dedicated Chossid of the Tzemach Tzedek and the Rebbe Maharash, and in his older years, of the Rebbe Rashab, with whom he corresponded extensively.

When the Rebbe published his *sefer, Kav Naki*, in 5710*, he included a short biographical sketch based on the stories he heard from his mother, Rebbetzin Chana, and newspaper reports from that era.

Harav Avraham David worked hard to improve the physical and spiritual welfare of the Yidden in the entire region, and for many years to come was remembered as the father of the Jewish community. "He breathed new life into the spiritual life of the local community," the Rebbe writes. "He enacted many *takanos* in matters of public behavior and *shmiras hamitzvos*, which were kept long after his passing. Thanks to his efforts, the entire Cherson region became a place of Torah and *mitzvos*."

After his passing, on 18 Iyar 5650* (1890), he was eulogized in the national Jewish newspaper, *Hamelitz*:



WITH THE SIDDUR TORAH OR IN HAND, THE REBBE LEAVES THE SHUL AFTER HATORAS NEDORIM.

29 ELUL 5739; LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 191868

“Nikolayev has lost a great man. He was famous for his broad Torah knowledge and sharp mind, and his excellence in *shaalos u'teshuvos* in *halacha*. His *tzidkus*, uprightness and purity of heart endeared him to his flock, who supported him throughout his 40 years of leadership...

“Being a dedicated and trustworthy individual, he was appointed by the government as the rav of Nikolayev and 40 colonies surrounding it. For his 20 years of service, the government honored him with two medals, one of gold and one of silver: One for his dedicated service, and a second for his personal efforts to help the colonies during an outbreak of illness.

He personally arranged for hospitals, doctors and medication to ensure the wellbeing of the inhabitants.

“The entire community honored him one final time, and accompanied his *aron* all the way to the cemetery with tears and broken hearts...”

Harav Avraham David wrote five *sefarim*, which are all held in high esteem.

- Kav Naki — a guide for rabbanim in *gittin*.
- Nesiv Hachaim — glosses on a popular *halacha sefer* where Harav Avraham David notes all the Alter Rebbe's disagreements.

- Beis Aharon V'hosafos — an index of every *posuk* in Tanach and every place *Chazal* mention it. This *sefer* has the Rebbe Maharash's *haskama*.
- Siddur Torah Or — an edition of the Alter Rebbe's siddur that corrected the errors of previous printings.
- Shaar Hakolel — explaining the Alter Rebbe's *nusach*. The Rebbe said that many of its teachings were actually based on the Rebbe Rashab's responses to Harav Avraham David's questions.



FIRST PRINT OF BEIS AHARON VEHSOFOS, STAMPED AND SIGNED BY HARAV AVRAHAM DOVID. NOTE THE HASKAMA OF THE REBBE MAHARASH.

EXEMPLARY AHAVAS YISROEL HARAV MEIR SHLOMO YANOVSKY

Harav Meir Shlomo¹⁶ was the grandson of Harav Avraham David Lavut, son of his daughter Beila and Reb Yisroel Leib Yanovksy, who was a *rosh yeshiva* in Romanovka.

He was raised in his grandfather's home, where he learned from him and basked in his presence.¹⁷ Being that Reb Yisroel Leib predeceased Harav Avraham David, the latter asked the community to appoint his grandson, Reb Meir Shlomo, as his successor.

"Harav Meir Shlomo excelled in his Talmudic knowledge," the Rebbe writes in the introduction to *Kav Naki*, "and in his Chassidus and his excellent *midos*. And — like his grandfather — he loved peace and fled from honor, and the community wasted no time to fulfill Reb Avraham David's last request." He served as the *rav* of the city until his passing, on 23 Elul 5693* (תרצ"ג).

As a young man after his marriage, he was a *yoshev* in the court of the Rebbe Maharash for several years. The Rebbe once spoke about the impact these years had on the *yoshevim*, and on his grandfather in particular:



"This period in Lubavitch served as the foundation for the home they built for the rest of their lives. In addition to the value of the *yoshevim* years themselves, it also 'imprinted' their identities afterwards. In our case, the *ba'al hayahrtzeit* [Harav Meir Shlomo]'s entire *rabbanus*, *piskei dinim*, *yiras Shamayim* and so on, were all 'imprinted' with the *hashpa'ah* that he received as a *yoshev* by the Rebbe Maharash."¹⁸

Rebbetzin Chana once shared an anecdote with Reb Berel Junik which exemplified his *yiras Shamayim*.

"My father would sell *esrogim* to supplement his small rabbinic salary. After a buyer would be ready to purchase an *esrog*, my father would encourage him to inspect it again, to ensure that it was truly a *hadar*. With this type of behavior, many *esrogim* would remain unsold, but to him, the most important thing was that the buyer received a *mehuderdike esrog*."

Rebbetzin Chana shared a similar anecdote in her memoirs:

"My father truly exemplified, 'What's mine is yours and what's yours is yours.'¹⁹

"I recall that as soon as he would receive his monthly salary, he would immediately make a calculation of how much was needed to support his sisters, brother-in-law and brother. There was always someone who needed assistance. He first deducted what had to be given to them, leaving only a small portion for his own family. We always needed a loan to make it through the month. This was how my father conducted himself throughout all facets of his life."²⁰

Reb Meir Shlomo was also a talented *baal menagen*. Chassidim passed down two beautiful *volochs* that he would sing, and in addition, the Rebbe taught *Rachamana D'anei*, which Rebbetzin Chana identified as his *niggun* as well.

Reb Avraham Dov Yanovsky, the Rebbe's cousin, once shared the following story about Reb Meir Shlomo's *voloch*:

"A message once arrived to Reb Meir Shlomo, that Harav Levi Yizchok in Yekaterinoslav was severely ill.

"Reb Meir Shlomo became very serious. With one foot on a bench, he began to sing his famous *voloch*, in the sweetest, most beautiful form. When he finished, he said earnestly, 'If something is *bashert* to happen to him, I want to be his replacement...'"

[For more about Harav Meir Shlomo, see the section about the Rebbe's childhood in Nikolayev.]

THROUGH THICK AND THIN HARAV SHMUEL SCHNEERSON

Harav Shmuel was the Rebbe's uncle from two sides: he was the brother of the Rebbe's father, and he was married to the Rebbe's mother's sister, Rebbetzin Gittel.

He was well-known for his brilliant and lengthy *divrei Torah*. At every *farbrengen*, he would share a *pilpul* in *nigleh* and then explain it according to Chassidus. One time, a listener challenged him to speak without preparation. Harav Shmuel accepted the challenge, and on the spot delivered a *pilpul* on a randomly selected *sugya*.

Following his marriage to Harav Meir Shlomo's daughter, he became his father-in-law's right hand man. While Harav Meir Shlomo was the spiritual leader of the city, Harav Shmuel ran many of the day-to-day affairs, and was even elected as the 'official' *rabbi* of the city.

From letters that have come to light in recent years, we learn that Harav Shmuel was very close with his nephew, the Rebbe. He granted the Rebbe his first *semicha*, and he was also the one who shared with him the details of the celebration in



CHERSON STREET, NIKOLAYEV, CIRCA 1860



Yekaterinoslav on the evening of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's wedding. The Rebbe also kept a close connection with Harav Shmuel's son, also named Menachem Mendel, and wrote him letters which were preserved in the Rebbe's *reshimos*.

During the years of Communism, Harav Shmuel fought hard to keep Yiddishkeit alive in an increasingly hostile environment. After the passing of Harav Meir Shlomo, he was the last standing rabbinical figure in the city.

Unfortunately, the end of his life was rife with misfortune. Rebbetzin Gittel passed away at a relatively young age in 5701*, and shortly afterwards, he was arrested by the Communist government for his illegal activities and sentenced to exile in Tomsk, Siberia. He remained there for two years, until he was released due to failing health.

The war was raging and it was no longer possible to return to Nikolayev. He joined his son in Turkmenistan, where he fell ill and passed away on 10 Kislev 5704*.

A Cradle of Greatness The Rebbe in Nikolayev

This article would be wholly incomplete without a section of the Rebbe's youth in Nikolayev. Better

'Conflict' at the Rebbe's Bris

The Rebbe's bris took place at the home of Harav Meir Shlomo on Chol Hamoed Pesach, 18 Nissan, 5662*. It also marked Harav Levi Yitzchak's twenty-fourth birthday, and he spoke about its significance in his address.²¹

Reb Asher Nikolayever, who obviously attended the celebration, declined to partake of the *seudah*, in keeping with his custom to eat only in his own home on Pesach. Harav Meir Shlomo commented, "In truth, I should take you to task. But what can I do to you since I owe you my life?"

He was referring to a story of many years prior.

Typhus was raging when Harav Meir Shlomo fell ill and was taken by authorities to the typhus quarantine camp outside the city, where patients were essentially left to die. Completely isolated, the patients languished in depression and despair. Harav Meir Shlomo watched as the people around him died one after the other, abandoned and alone.

Reb Asher was determined to help. Each day, he would stand beneath a window of the camp and read loudly the 11th chapter of Iggeres Hakodesh, "*Lehaskilcha Bina*." The powerful letter describes how "...no evil descends from above and everything is truly good," and provides the tools to view one's own suffering as a blessing in disguise. He was unsure if Harav Meir Shlomo could even hear him, but Reb Asher returned every day for 30 days to read to him.

Against the odds, Harav Meir Shlomo recovered and returned home. When he was able to meet Reb Asher, he thanked him profusely, saying that the daily reading of Tanya infused him with new strength each day, enabling him to overcome his illness.²²

said: The entire impetus for this article was the Rebbe's childhood in Nikolayev. Nikolayev is the birth city of the Rebbe, and the Rebbe and his family lived there until the Rebbe was six years old when they moved to Yekaterinoslav.

The following is a collection of stories, anecdotes and interesting items about the Rebbe's childhood in Nikolayev:

Rebbetzin Chana Recalls

In her memoirs, Rebbetzin Chana includes the following details about the Rebbe's childhood in Nikolayev:

I recall the years when he grew up, from early childhood onwards: When he turned two, he was able to ask the Four Questions, although his mode of speech was like a child of that age.

When he turned three, he was, first of all, quite simply very beautiful, with long blond locks, which I stored away on leaving home in 1940. They were lost, together with all our other possessions.

When I walked with my son in the street, people would notice him and stop to gaze at him.

During the 1905 pogroms in Russia, we were among a group of women and children who hid in a pharmacy. It was dangerous for us to be discovered. Other children of his age or even older were crying and making noise. But he controlled himself to the extent that not only didn't he cause any problems but also influenced other children to be quiet.

The people there, and the pharmacist, who kept on coming in to check on us, spoke about my son with amazement. He was just three years old at the time.

Before the pogrom, my son would walk around at home calling out [in Russian] "An end to the autocracy!" He had heard people mouthing this slogan, and seemed to understand that Jews, too, were suffering as a result. I

remember how my father, of blessed memory, was fearful that he might be overheard, and told him to stop saying it.

Subsequently, he started his studies in *cheder*, which continued until we commissioned special teachers to teach him at home. What a pleasure that was!

There was something special about him. At every turn, we seemed to find reason to take pride in him. Not that he desired to be noticed. On the contrary, he always tried to avoid that. But his personality just evoked respect.²³

From Cheder, and Even Before...

In a letter, the Rebbe once shared the following sentiment:

From the time I was a child attending *cheder* and even before, the vision of the future redemption began to take form in my imagination; the redemption of the Jewish people from their final exile. A redemption of such magnitude and grandeur, that through it the purpose of the sufferings, harsh decrees, and anguish of exile will be understood.²⁴

Summer Visits

The Rebbe continued to visit Nikolayev with his family even after their move to Yekaterinoslav.

Once, the Rebbe wrote:

"For several years, I spent the final weeks of summer in Nikolayev. I stayed with [my grandmother] and she cared for me."²⁵

Batsheva Althaus, Reb Elya Chaim's daughter, recalled the Rebbe's visits:

"Every Simchas Torah, Rebbetzin Chana would travel with her three children from their home in Dnepropetrovsk to Nikolayev to visit her father, Harav Meir Shlomo.

"She and her children would usually visit us. I remember that people would speak about the fact that



her oldest was different from other children. For example, on Simchas Torah, I remember that he would dance energetically, like the older Chassidim. In fact, even more than them."²⁶

The Rebbe's Picture

Shortly before the Rebbe's *upsherenish*, Rebbetzin Chana arranged for a photograph to be taken. She subsequently sent the picture to a relative in Eretz Yisroel.

By the time she arrived in America, all her belongings had been lost, including the picture. However, one of the *shluchim* to Eretz Yisroel in 5716* visited this relative and brought the picture back upon the Rebbetzin's request.

The Rebbetzin mentioned it to the Rebbe during a visit, and the Rebbe commented, "*Mistame iz dos geven uhn a kappel*—it was probably without a *yarmulke*."



NIKOLAYEV CITY HALL, CIRCA 1906



NIKOLAYEV CITY HALL TODAY

In subsequent publications, a *yarmulke* was added.

Memories of the Zaide

In the Rebbe’s Reshimos, he writes that he learned the *niggun* of *Lechatchila Aribet* — which the Rebbe would often ask to sing at farbrengens — from his grandfather.²⁷

On several occasions, the Rebbe recounted the following story about his grandfather:

“My grandfather was a *yoshev* by the Rebbe Maharash for a number of years. Later, he was appointed *rav* in Nikolayev, a city where a number of residents opposed Chassidus at the beginning of his leadership...

“When he told them about the Rebbe Maharash and how he conducted himself, people came to him with a complaint: How is it acceptable?

“The Rebbe Maharash used two gold watches. All of his utensils were made of gold: For snuff he had a golden snuff box, to hold cigarettes he had a golden cigarette case. Everything was made of gold.

“They asked, how is it acceptable?

“We are in *galus*, they continued, and one can use silver and gold for *tzedakah*, so does he really need to insist on using gold utensils even on weekdays? Even when he needed to

Only a Nikolayever

Mrs. Reba Sharfstein shares the following story:

When Rebbetzin Chana came to America, she lived with the Rebbe and Rebbetzin for a short while, and then moved into her own apartment.

My mother, Mrs. Chaya Fraida Kazarnovsky (wife of Reb Shlomo Aharon and daughter of Reb Asher Nikolayever) was very close with Rebbetzin Chana. They had lived in the same courtyard in Nikolayev and they would speak quite often. Living in a new country, the Rebbetzin would often ask her practical questions, and my mother would assist her.

On the first Erev Shabbos in the Rebbetzin’s new apartment, she happened to mention to my mother on the phone that this Shabbos will be a bit lonely for her, as she wasn’t accustomed to living alone.

Soon after that phone call, my mother finished preparing all that was needed for Shabbos and went to spend Shabbos with Rebbetzin Chana.

When the Rebbe heard this, he smiled and said, “*Nor a Nikolayever vet dos ton*—only a Nikolayever would do that.”

write and sign, it was with a gilded pen and pencil...

“My grandfather listened to these complaints passively, and then responded, ‘Fools! Who do you think gold was created for? For the non-Jews? Or for Jews like me and you? If gold exists, it is for a *tzaddik* to use. Otherwise it wouldn’t have reason to exist!’”²⁸

The Lubavitcher Rebbe's Strike Force

FAMOUS CHASSIDIM OF NIKOLAYEV

“ASHER DER SHOCHET” REB ASHER GROSSMAN 'NIKOLAYEVER'

“My uncle Asher,” writes Emmanuel Harusi,²⁹ “was a trusted Chossid of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. When the Rebbe sought out a wife for his son, he heard about one young woman, a Schneersohn herself, who lived in Bessarabia. The Rebbe turned to Uncle Asher and asked him to travel there and give his opinion. After his trip, he wrote to the Rebbe about his good impressions, and that was enough for the Rebbe to approve of the match.”³⁰

Reb Asher Nikolayever *“shochet u'bodek”* was one of the most prominent Chassidim of the Rebbe Maharash and the Rebbe Rashab, mentioned many times in their correspondence. Whenever the Rebbe Rashab would reach out to the Nikolayev community, the letter would be addressed to Reb Meir Shlomo and Reb Asher. He was also a *baal menagen*, and two *niggunim* are attributed to him.

Despite his prominence, he was treated in age-old Chassidic tradition. “The *shochet* Reb Asher was called ‘Asher der Shochet,’” the Rebbe once recounted, “without the title ‘Reb.’”³¹

One of his most famous achievements is the printing of a new and improved Tanya, which corrected the countless mistakes that crept into the old editions. (On the last page of the *sefer*, he tried to include a poem in praise of the Rebbe Rashab, but his plan was foiled at the last minute when the Rebbe Rashab heard about it and instructed him to omit it.)

He also made many edits to his personal Likutei Torah, and they served as the blueprint for the Luach Hatikun which the Rebbe published in 5719*.

“Uncle Asher had many qualities,” writes his nephew. “He was straightforward and honest to a fault, with *yiras Shamayim* and unquestioning *temimus*. He carried his Yiddishkeit proudly, like a soldier. He was afraid of no one. If he saw an injustice, he would speak out forcefully, whether it was a Jew or not.

“One time, a government official inspected the slaughterhouse. Apparently, he didn’t receive the bribe he had hoped for, and began to cause trouble for the *shochtim*. Reb Asher approached him with his characteristic self-assurance and spoke to him forcefully. Hearing what he had to say, the official bid a hasty retreat.”³²

[For more about Reb Asher, see *A Chassidisher Derher*, weekly issues 70 & 72].

FLOWING HEART & FLOWING PEN REB ELYA CHAIM ALTHAUS

“One morning, while riding the speed-train on the Charkov-Moscow line, Reb Elya Chaim took out his tallis and tefillin and began to daven. During a stop, an armed soldier walking down the aisle was infuriated by the sight.

“‘Stop this immediately!’ he yelled. ‘This is not a *zhid* synagogue!’

“The soldier straightened his mustache and left the train, stationing himself haughtily on the platform. A minute later, the train began to move. It was summertime, and Ukraine had



an abundance of watermelon. As his window passed the soldier, Reb Elya Chaim grabbed a half a watermelon and sent it flying in his face...”³³

Reb Elya Chaim Althaus was a colorful personality. He was a successful businessman, talented *baal menagen*, gifted writer, and no small jester. But above all stood his dedication and love for the Rabbeim, which earned him the title *yedid beis Rebbe*.

The Rebbe Rashab and the Frierdiker Rebbe carried out all sorts of missions through Reb Elya Chaim and his brother, Reb Binyamin. They were major donors to Tomchei Temimim and important figures who championed the interests of the Rabbeim in the broader world.

Perhaps most notable among them is Reb Elya Chaim’s shlichus to effectuate the *shidduch* of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin. Reb Elya Chaim also served as the Rebbe’s personal *shomer* on the wedding day, later writing down his experiences in a powerful and quite visionary way.

* 5719-1959, 5690-1929,



REB PINYE ALTHAUS ACCOMPANIES A DELEGATION OF RABBANIM ON THEIR VISIT TO KFAR CHABAD.

Two other letters describe additional important events: The arrest and release of the Frierdiker Rebbe, and the events of Tishrei 5690* in Riga, when the Rebbe led (or refused to lead) the Chassidim during the Frierdiker Rebbe's travels in the United States.

In Nikolayev too, he served as an important member of the community, having a vast network of contacts among Jews and non-Jews. During difficult times under Communism, Reb Elya Chaim established factories which created many jobs for his fellow Temimim and other Jews as well. When he himself was arrested and threatened with a death sentence, a non-Jew who had previously been a recipient of Reb Elya Chaim's kindness repaid the favor by obtaining his release.

And when the news of the Rebbe Rashab's *histalkus* arrived in Nikolayev and the Chassidim gathered to accept the *nesius* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, it was Reb Elya Chaim who wrote, with his warm heart and overflowing quill, a meaningful *ksav hiskashrus* in the name of the entire community.

During the Frierdiker Rebbe's *nesius*, Reb Elya Chaim moved to

Leningrad to be close to the Frierdiker Rebbe. When the Frierdiker Rebbe left Russia, he followed a short time later, settling alongside him in Riga.

When the Nazis overran Riga, Reb Elya Chaim was rounded up into the shul and killed along with the entire Jewish community. An accomplished life was tragically cut short.

[For a full description of Reb Elya Chaim's life, see *A Chassidisher Derher* — *Cheshvan 5777* pg. 18, "Of Heart and Quill."]

HOW IS THE REBBE DOING? REB PINYE ALTHAUS

Reb Pinchas Todros, or Reb Pinye, as he was affectionately known, was from a younger generation in the Althaus family. He was the son of Reb Binyamin, Reb Elya Chaim's older brother, a well-known Chossid in his own right.

Reb Pinye shared the following about his childhood in Nikolayev:

Whenever a Chossid would return to Nikolayev from a visit in Lubavitch, local Chassidim would ask him excitedly, "What was the *maamar* delivered by the Rebbe?" Pinye's father, Reb Binyamin, on the other hand,

would first ask, "How is the Rebbe feeling?" or "Whatever happened to the leak in the Rebbe's home? Was that taken care of?" Only afterwards did he inquire about the Chassidus the Rebbe said.

Reb Pinye was of the last generation of Chassidim in Nikolayev. During Communism, he remained at the Frierdiker Rebbe's side, acting as his personal secretary in running the mammoth underground organization.

Aside for his talents in *askanus* and his very much loved persona, Reb Pinye was known for his staunch dedication and love for the Rabbeim. Before the Frierdiker Rebbe left Russia, Reb Pinye received a *bracha* to see the Rebbe once again, and indeed, nine years later, he managed to escape the Soviet Union and emigrate to Eretz Yisroel. It took several more years, but for Tishrei 5710*, he was reunited with the Frierdiker Rebbe.

In Eretz Yisroel, he became a leading *askan* and had a hand in establishing all of the Chabad institutions on the Rebbe's behalf. He didn't have an official job title, but at one Sukkos farbrengen the Rebbe declared him his 'officer.' He developed Chabad's relationship with Zalman Shazar, and he had a close friendship with the Rebbe's brother Reb Yisrael Aryeh Leib.

Two months after his untimely passing in 5723*, the Rebbe spoke about him at the Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen, with a voice choked with tears:

"One of the people who had a big part in bringing about the release of Yud-Beis Tammuz was Pinye. Considering the close attention he received from the [Frierdiker] Rebbe, we can assume that he is currently participating in a Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen..."³⁴

[For a full description of Reb Pinye, see *A Chassidisher Derher* — *Sivan 5775*, pg. 16, "A Friend of Every Jew."]

A TRADITION OF SONG THE CHARITONOV FAMILY

Among the families of Chassidim that have stood out in Chabad memory is the Charitonov family.

Reb Avraham Charitonov was a *yoshev* in Lubavitch during the time of the Tzemach Tzedek and Rebbe Maharash, and later became a *shochet* — and one of the leading Chassidim — in Nikolayev.

During the *nesius* of the Rebbe Rashab, a dispute arose among Chabad Chassidim [the details are not documented] which led the Rebbe Rashab to write specific instructions for the conduct of the Chabad shul. Among the instructions — which include a ban on all *misnagdisher maggidim* — is the rule that “the only *chazanim* for Yomim Noraim should be Reb Avraham *shu”b* and the likes of him” — a testament to his high regard in the Rebbe Rashab’s eyes.³⁵

He was blessed with a profound talent in *neginah*, and a number of his tunes are included in Sefer Haniggunim.

Reb Avraham had many children, all of whom were well-known Chassidim, *talmidim* in the Rebbe Rashab’s Tomchei Temimim. Many of them were *baalei menagnim* as well.

One notable son was Reb Aharon. He composed many famous *niggunim*, such as the Yud-Beis Tammuz Niggun and “*Ashreinu Mah Tov Chelkeinu.*”

Most notable is his composition which the Frierdiker Rebbe loved deeply — the Beinoni.

Another son was Reb Sholom. He filled his father’s position in Nikolayev, where he would also often *chazzer* Chassidus in shul. The story is told that he received permission from the Rebbe Rashab to add his own explanations in the delivery.

Both brothers — and many others in the family — passed away during the difficult years in the Soviet Union,



REB AVRAHAM CHARITONOV

but Reb Sholom’s son, Reb Shamshon, survived. He was also very musically talented. One of his earliest memories, we said earlier, was Reb Meir Shlomo asking him to sing a *niggun* while sitting on his lap. After years of wandering in underground yeshivos in Russia, Reb Shamshon managed to come to America, where he recorded many of his family’s *niggunim* for posterity. **T**

1. *Tzaddikim Veyididim* chp. 11. The Zhlobiner Chasunah was the famous wedding of the grandchildren of the Alter Rebbe and Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, described in many sources. See “*Di Zhlobiner Chasunah*” by Rabbi Yochanan Gurary,
2. *Oholei Lubavitch* issue 1 pg. 46-7.
3. It is possible that he was first appointed as a *moreh tzedek* and only later as *rav*, following the passing of Reb Efraim Zalman, around 5620. See “*Takanos Chevras Shas Nikolayev,*” *Yagdil Torah* issue 68 pg. 54.
4. Preface to *Kav Naki*.
5. Emanuel Harusi, formerly Novograbelsky, was a nephew of Reb Elya Chaim Althaus. His

memoirs of Nikolayev, published in the Barada Teshura of 3 Teves 5779, paint a fascinating picture of his family and the Chassidim of the city.

6. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 14 pg. 332.
7. Shabbos Parshas Tzav, Shushan Purim 5714.
8. *Ish Ivri b’Nikolaev*, published in *Chadashot Ben Ezer*.
9. Reb Elya Chaim Althaus.
10. Reb Meir Shlomo.
11. *Yagdil Torah* Year 5 pg. 245
12. *Igros Kodesh Admur Harayatz, volume 14* pg. 202.
13. *Archiyon Levi Yitzchak* pg. 43.
14. See *Haktzarim — Harabaniot* pg. 263.
15. *Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, 1933–1945*, pg. 1613
16. All the unsourced details are from Teshurah Geisinsky, 23 Elul 5768.
17. From the Rebbe’s *hakdama* to *Kav Naki*. It was previously assumed that he moved into his grandfather’s home after his father’s passing, but that has proven to be incorrect. His father passed away many years after his marriage. See *Kfar Chabad* issue 956.
18. Shabbos Nitzavim-Vayelech 5746, *Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos* 5746 vol. 4 pg. 438.
19. *Pirkei Avos* Perek Hei.
20. *Rebbetzin Chana’s* memoirs number 29.
21. *Early Years* pg. 22.
22. The account of Reb Mendel Futerfas. Based on chabad.org/4678123.
23. *Rebbetzin Chana’s* Memoirs, number 33.
24. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 12 pg. 414. *Early Years* pg. 26.
25. *Sefer Hasichos* 5750 vol. 1 pg. 63. *Early Years* pg. 60
26. *Early Years* pg. 60
27. *Reshimos choveres* 14.
28. *Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan* 5742. *Ashreinu Audio*, Sich 3, minute 35:17.
29. *Barada Teshura*, 3 Teves 5779, pg. 60. Reb Asher’s sister was Riva Althaus, the matriarch of the Althaus family.
30. This refers to the *shidduch* of the Frierdiker Rebbe with *Rebbetzin Nechama Dinah*, who was born in Kishinev. See *Igros Kodesh Admur Harashab*, letters 741 and 747.
31. *Toras Menachem* 5714 vol. 1 pg. 250.
32. All unsourced details can be found in *Toldos Chabad B’Rusia Hatsaris*, pg. 212.
33. *Barada Teshura*, 3 Teves 5779, pg. 78.
34. *Toras Menachem* vol. 37 p. 157.
35. *Igros Kodesh Admur Harashab* vol. 1 pg. 277.

A Life Illuminated

תורה אור



When you find yourself in an illuminated room and you look around for something, you can immediately find your desired object, go over and pick it up. You can see clearly what is a window, what is a door, what is a table, and so on. If the room is dark, however, then all you can do is feel around. When you find a hollow space, you have no idea if it's a window or a door. You need to keep feeling around and trying your best to determine the truth.

This is what light accomplishes. It doesn't create anything new; it merely shows you the truth about all the existing things in the room, what they really are and what their true purpose is.¹

What's Going On?

Hashem created this world in a way that its very existence conceals its true being. When looking at the physical world, one could think that it has no origin at all and that it has always just been here on its own, *chas v'shalom*. But the truth is, everything is

only here because Hashem created it. In essence, everything is truly *Elokus*. Our purpose here on earth is to reveal that truth within the physicality of the world and allow the truth to shine through.

But with so much concealment and distraction, how can we see and experience this truth?

The answer is: by turning on the light. And the light is Torah.

The *possuk* says, "נר מצוה ותורה אור—a mitzvah is a candle and Torah is light." Just like in the *mashal* above, when the light is on one can see each item in the room and understand its purpose clearly; similarly Torah is the light illuminating every aspect of our world and showing how they each should be used for their G-dly purpose.²

Ultimately, every part of our world can be understood by studying Torah diligently, because Hashem used Torah as a blueprint and created the world with it. As the Mishnah says, "הפך בה הפך בה דכולא בה והפך בה דכולא בה—examine Torah and

re-examine it, because *everything* is in it." By studying Torah properly we can find all the answers that we need.³

The Rebbe often emphasized this point in various contexts. We can rest assured that Torah will never leave us stranded to our own devices, to figure things out on our own. Everything we need to know is explained and elucidated in Torah's words. "We don't need to go about feeling in the dark," the Rebbe says. "Whatever lesson we need to know for today can be clearly found in Torah, *Torah Ohr*..."⁴

Torah is referred to as "*Toras Chaim*," Torah of Life; a guide for every aspect of our lives. At the same time, it is also called "*Torah Ohr*," because these life lessons in Torah are set out in an illuminated fashion, clear and bright for all to see.⁵

In this sense, Torah is the ultimate light that reveals every single thing that needs to be revealed in this world. In fact, even things that are essentially higher than Torah itself must also be revealed through Torah. For

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

example, doing *teshuva*. The reason a person does *teshuva* is to rectify his transgression of Torah's command. The only way to do that is by invoking a truth that is even higher than Torah itself—the concept of *teshuva*. Nevertheless, we only know about *teshuva* because it is a mitzvah in Torah! Torah reveals everything that a Yid needs to know, in every facet of our lives.⁶

Visibility

Not only is Torah the light that illuminates the rest of the world, the lessons in Torah itself are like a light—

shining, clear, and easily discernible for all.

Torah was not given to only one specific demographic of the Jewish nation. “תורה צוה לנו משה מורשה קהלת” —Torah is an inheritance for every single Jew. Every Yid can find and understand the lessons of Torah as they apply to his or her life. True, there are varying levels of how we understand Torah. But that has nothing to do with the visibility of the lessons themselves. Just like there can be a person who has supersonic vision and can perceive sights with

more clarity, while others have less than perfect vision and can see them only with the help of eyeglasses. But that does not take away from each and every Yid's ability to see the lessons of Torah clearly and lucidly.⁷

If Hashem put us in this world with a purpose—to serve Him—He obviously gave us the capability to do so. Hashem is just and kind, He gives us the tools and the knowledge we need to fulfill this mission. There can be no room for doubt as to what and how we are supposed to do our job; everything is clearly stated and accounted for in Torah. And Torah doesn't “beat around the bush” and leave its lessons open-ended or ambiguous. The answers to any and all questions can be found easily, not leaving any room for the *yetzer hara* to sow doubt and cause a person trouble.⁸ If one tried to find the answers and the lessons he needs but is not successful, he may need to try harder. But with the right amount of work and trying again and again, he will certainly be successful. As the *possuk* says “כי לא” דבר רק הוא מכם—Torah study is not an empty thing from you;” if you are finding it empty, explains the Talmud Yerushalmi, it is “מכם,” it's your responsibility to work harder and discover the truth.⁹

Dark What?

In response to your letter filled with complaints, describing your situation in the darkest of colors...

...You write about the need for a lamp and a light to illuminate your dark path:

Your path is not dark at all! Everything is clear and lucid in Shulchan Aruch and in Chassidus. Even when it comes down to the smallest details, where the *yetzer hara* tries to sow doubt, there are a number of solutions offered in response. For example:

1. The statement of the Mittlerer Rebbe is well-known, that one should seek the counsel of a good friend to discuss his spiritual affairs. Thereby he has the strength of two *nefashos Elokis*, against one *nefesh habahamis*.
2. The litmus test to determine the origins of a certain idea is this: Anything that prevents a person from doing something productive in the realm of actual *avoda*, even if this disturbance seems to have the best justification possible, is certainly a scheme of the *nefesh habahamis*...

(*Igros Kodesh vol. 17, #6329*)

Light and Luminary

Torah as a whole is referred to as “light.” But even light itself must have



a source, the “*maor*”—the luminary. In Torah itself, there is the *ohr*—the light, which is *nigleh*, and the *maor* of Torah,

the innermost part of Torah, *pnimius haTorah*—Chassidus.

The fear is that at times the light will extend so far from its source that it will dim along the way. As *Chazal* note, when someone learns Torah for the wrong reasons, or when a person learns Torah while still doing *aveiros*, his connection to Hashem can be severed, *chas v’shalom*. This is why the study of Chassidus is so important—so that we always remain connected with the luminary itself and never be led astray.¹⁰

No Need

The Rebbe often reminded his listeners at farbrengens to take his words seriously and to understand them as they were said, without twisting them or adding any “*p’shetlach*.” In one rare instance, the Rebbe explained:

“No one should try to deduce any hints and allusions in my words. When I need to make a point, I do so clearly, in a manner of *Torah Ohr*...”

(12 Tammuz 5747 sicha 1, from the audio recording)

Electrifying!

I was pleased to hear that the electricity line has been established in Kfar Chabad, and that they were already able to use its light to farbreng on Yud-Tes Kislev. According to the letters I received, this endeavor was made possible thanks to your great work; thank you very much!

...Ancient Jewish tradition suggests that we should attempt to discover hints and lessons in everything that occurs. As the Mishnah says, a wise man learns something from everyone, and the Baal Shem Tov added: We must learn something from every occurrence and every detail of life.

...The power of electricity is one of the hidden powers of nature, not necessarily tangible with one of the five senses. We only know about it once we observe the outcome of its great power; a power that has the ability to dispel the obscurity and illuminate the darkest night.

Similarly in a spiritual sense: The innermost hidden part of Torah is revealed and can be seen through *Toras haChassidus* and the Chassidic way of life, which is powerful enough to pierce through the obscurity of the corporeal world and illuminate the darkness of the *gashmius*...

(The Rebbe’s letter to Mr. Zalman Shazar, *Igros Kodesh* vol. 8, #2343)

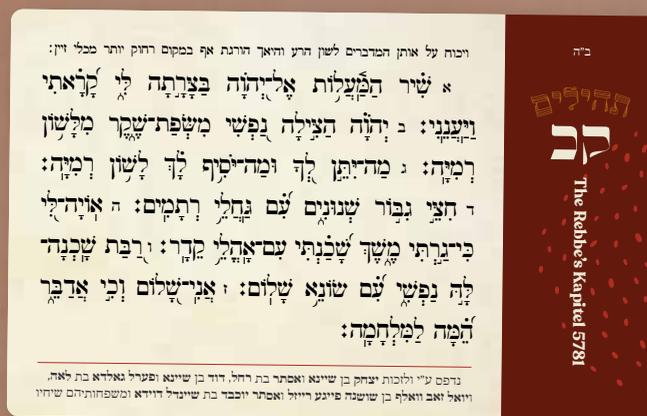
Don’t Keep It

Once a Yid connects with the light of *Torah Ohr*, it is his or her job to allow this light to illuminate the rest of the world as well. Our souls are like candles—“*נר ה’ נשמת אדם*”, and we are here to let that light spread and shine. When we do so, we will gradually chase away the darkness of *galus* and expose the great light of the *geula*, ultimately illuminating the entire world with the light of Torah and *Elokus*.¹¹ **T**

1. Purim 5733 sicha 7; Shabbos Parshas Tavo 5740 sicha 2; et. al.
2. Shabbos Parshas Naso 5742 sicha 1.
3. Chai Elul 5742 sicha 1.
4. Shabbos Parshas Pinchas 5744 sicha 3; et. al.
5. Sicha 25 Iyar 5744, et. al.
6. Simchas Beis Hashoeva 5723 sicha 7; et. al.
7. 13 Tishrei 5743 sicha 1.
8. 19 Kislev 5744 sicha 3.
9. Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha 5745 sicha 2.
10. Sicha Chof Av 5710, et. al.
11. Sicha 27 Iyar 5742, et. al.

The Rebbe's Kapitel

In honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan, we present our readers with this card containing the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's Kapitelach. Please use this gift, conveniently sized to fit straight in your wallet, as a reminder to take the few moments every day and connect with the Rebbe in this special way. May we all merit to see the fulfillment of the Rebbe's *brachos* in our lives.



“It would be worthwhile to recite every day *bli neder*—until the upcoming Rosh Hashanah—the Rebbe’s Kapitel Tehillim (71). This will serve as a channel for the fulfillment of all the brachos he gave you in their entirety.
 (The Rebbe in a letter dated 3 Menachem-Av 5710)



JEM 201925

לזכות
הת' השליח זאב יוסף שיחי'
לאנג
לרגל הגיעו לעול מצוות
כ"ד ניסן ה'תשפ"א
שיגדל להיות חי"ל לנח"ר כ"ק אדמו"ר
מתוך בריאות הנכונה
ורפואה שלימה וקרובה
נדפס ע"י הוריו
הרה"ת ר' ארי' זוזגותו מרת דבורה לאה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
לאנג

The Cure Before the Illness

Rabbi Herschel Pekkar shared the following story:

One Friday, my wife became unwell. We called an ambulance and they took her to the hospital. We were living in England. The hospital admitted her and kept her there on Shabbos. Meanwhile, I went to Reb Berel Futерfas's home for *seudas Shabbos*, and I slept there, as there was no point in going home to an empty house.

When I came home after Shabbos, I saw that I had received a letter from the Rebbe over Shabbos. Of course, I opened it right away and looked inside. The Rebbe had written, "By the time this letter reaches you, those in need of a speedy recovery should have benefited already [from a speedy recovery]."

Normally, it takes a week for a letter to travel from New York to England. This letter was dated 25 days before my wife had fallen ill. I checked in with the hospital, and the doctor had told my wife—on Shabbos, after the letter had arrived at my house—that she had recovered and could go home.

One cannot comprehend or understand the Rebbe's *inyanim*; what they are and how and why. But this much I can tell you:

We had not written anything to the Rebbe.

Once, at the end of a *yechidus* that I was privileged to have with the Rebbe, the Rebbe told me,

“זאלסט נעמען פון דאנעט אויף גשמיות און אויף רוחניות”
“מיט זיך”

“You should take with you from here for the physical and for the spiritual.”

I replied, “I would have wanted to take the Rebbe with me.”

The Rebbe didn't smile—the Rebbe became serious and said,

“אז דו נעמסט פון די רוחניות פון דאנעט, נעמסטו מיר מיט זיך. און אז דו נעמסט מיר מיט זיך, זאלסט מיר אויסנוצן אויף גוטע זאכן.”

“When you take spirituality from here, you are taking me along with you. And when you take me along with you, you should use me for good things.” **T**



מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר
בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' דובער זוגתו מרת אסתר לאה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
גרינבלאט

What Is Shabbos For?

Reb Betzalel was a big Chossid of the Tzemach Tzedek and was often on the road traveling to collect *maamad*.

On more than one occasion he was heard musing out loud, "What do the simple villagers do on a long winter Friday night?" The villagers were mostly illiterate when it came to learning so what was there really to do when they could not be out in the farm working the land?

One cold, short winter Friday he finally had the opportunity to find out, or so he thought...

On one of his journeys to collect *maamad*, he was forced to stay over in a small town for Shabbos and was hosted by the only Jewish villager who lived on the outskirts of the forest.

The table was set with challah as they greeted Shabbos by lighting candles. When the sky turned dark, the host told Reb Betzalel that he should daven Kabbalas Shabbos now because the candles won't

be burning for too much longer.

Kiddush was made over challos that were largely burnt and questionable if considered 'whole' according to Shulchan Aruch. The food was promptly brought out. They ate, and said *birchas hamazon* just as the candles flickered and went out.

The host showed Reb Betzalel where he could sleep for the night and off he went to bed.

Without light and with not much else to do, Reb Betzalel sat deep in thought as the silence of the house surrounded him. Suddenly the quiet was broken by the sounds of conversation coming from the bedroom.

He could hear the villager and his wife discussing their cows and what care they each needed. "She is having a baby soon," he heard them say. "We need to make sure she has what she needs. She is a good cow and will give good milk."

The conversation ended and silence returned.

A few hours later, he once again heard them talking. This time it was about making sure the ducks are nice and fat for Purim.

Some time later there was another discussion about animals, farming and their livelihood in the village.

The next morning they all arose and had some coffee with milk.

Davening was not extraordinary in any way. About an hour after he started, the villager was finished and Reb Betzalel was also ready for *kiddush*.

The challos for the Shabbos day *seudah* were in no better shape then the night before. The meal consisted of a cholent that was taken out of the oven. When the meal and *bentching* had concluded, the villager went back for a nap.

Mincha and the third Shabbos meal continued in the same simple fashion as the rest of Shabbos.

When Shabbos ended, they davened Maariv, made

havdalah and lit the oven to have something warm for *melava malka*.

After Shacharis the next morning, Reb Betzalel told his driver to prepare the horse and carriage so they could continue on their journey.

The villager accompanied them to see them off. As they were about to part ways, he turned to Reb Betzalel and with a discernible hint of rebuke in his tone he said, "Now you know what a simple villager does on a long Friday night..."

His message was clear: "Don't disparage the Jewish people who are all pure and holy!"

It was clear that this villager was a member of the hidden *tzaddikim* who craved a life of isolation so they could serve Hashem without any interference and disturbance.

Reb Betzalel got the message and was pained by this his whole life; a lesson well learned. ①

(Adapted from *Likkutei Sippurim*—Perlow, #443)

י"א ניסן

As we approach the auspicious day of Yud-Aleph Nissan, *A Chassidisher Derher* sat down with three Chassidim who merited to be in the Rebbe's presence over different years, sharing recollections of personal "moments" during a Yud-Aleph Nissan they merited to experience in the Rebbe's presence.

Personal Moments with the Rebbe

HISVAADUS CHASSIDIM

לעילוי נשמת
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' גדלי'
בן הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' יהושע ע"ה
קארף
נלב"ע ה' ניסן ה'תש"פ
ולע"נ בנו
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' יעקב אהרן
בן הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' גדלי' ע"ה
נלב"ע י"ט ניסן ה'תש"פ
ת'נצ'ב'ה'
נדפס ע"י משפחתם שיחיו



THE REBBE SEES OFF THE ORCHIM, NISSAN 5732.

“Tomim Kadarush”

5732*

RABBI SHLOMO ZARCHI

In the year 5730*, shortly after my *chasunah*, I began teaching in the yeshiva at 770. (In fact, already before my *chasunah*, when I was in *yechidus* as a *chossan*, the Rebbe instructed me to learn Chassidus with *bochurim*, which I then began doing in the Yeshiva Hadar Hatorah.) It started off very well, together with the *bochurim* we learned and farbrenged quite a bit. However, on the inside I wasn't quite satisfied because there was one thing that really bothered me. My closest friends had gone on shlichus, something I always dreamed of doing myself, but the Rebbe wouldn't send

me, he wanted me to stay where I was, working in yeshiva. As much as I would ask, I never got a green light from the Rebbe to look into any options of shlichus. I felt like I'm just not worthy of it. Obviously, this notion really troubled me.

A little while later, in Sivan of 5731*, I merited to go into the Rebbe for *yechidus*, and again I asked the Rebbe about the possibility of shlichus.

The Rebbe said to me, “What do you think shlichus is? You'll go to Australia and there you'll have *mesiras nefesh*? If you give yourself over to your work in yeshiva then it's just like a shlichus to Australia!” Hearing these words, I gathered the courage and I asked the Rebbe, “So am I a shliach?” The Rebbe answered me very firmly: “עס ווענט זיך, אויב עס וועט זיין מיט” מסירה ונתנה איז עס א שליחות אזוי ווי אין אסטראליא (It depends [on you]; if you will be properly committed, then it is just like a shlichus to Australia.)

A short while later the Rebbe was approaching his 70th birthday. In the months preceding Yud-Aleph Nissan 5732* there was great preparation amongst all of *anash*. Men and women, young and old, were all preparing themselves spiritually for this most special day. Many people were also preparing ‘*matanos*’ for the Rebbe in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan, as the Rebbe had requested, increasing in Torah and in tzedakah. At the farbrengen of Purim, less than 30 days ahead of Yud-Aleph Nissan the Rebbe spoke about these preparations. The excitement everyone felt in those days leading up to Yud-Aleph Nissan was extraordinary.¹

At the farbrengen of Yud-Aleph Nissan the Rebbe made a surprise announcement, introducing a novel initiative. The Rebbe requested from Chassidim to establish at least 71 new institutions within the coming year, and as a partnership in the new institutions, the Rebbe pledged to participate with ten percent of the costs of each new institution.

Again, I was feeling left out. I wished only to merit to get the Rebbe's permission to go out on shlichus now, and take part in this global initiative. With a pen and a piece of paper, I poured my heart out to the Rebbe. A few months later I received this most uplifting answer from the Rebbe:

“האומנם לדעתו יגיעה אשר תלמיד תומכי תמימים יהי' תמים כדרוש אינו נוגע לכללות הענין דשנת השבעים?! לכתבו שאין בו חיות - זהו מצד חלל השמאלי ולא מצד הענין שבו הוא עוסק ופשוט ומובן”

(“Do you think that working hard for a talmid in Tomchei Temimim to be a ‘Tomim’ as expected, is not relevant to the whole idea of ‘*Shnas Hashivim*?!’ About which you write that you don't feel enthusiastic about your work—that is coming from the *yetzer hara*, and has nothing to do with the work at hand. This is simple and obvious.”)





“Shehechyanu!”

5742*

RABBI YOSSIE SHEMTOV

Toledo, Ohio



Yud Aleph Nissan 5742*—*Shnas Hashmonim*,² it was 80 years since the Rebbe’s holy *neshama* entered this world. Already months prior, people were preparing for this great milestone, mainly with *matanos* to present to the Rebbe in honor of this day. I was then a *bochur* on *shlichus* in Venezuela, so my *kevutza* and I were somewhat disconnected from the details of what was happening in and around 770 in the weeks prior to Yud-Aleph Nissan, yet our return from *shlichus* was scheduled a few days before Yud-Aleph Nissan.

It is well known that a few days prior to that Yud-Aleph Nissan the Rebbe said a *sicha* in which he instructed people to refrain from coming to New York to celebrate Yud-Aleph Nissan, and the expenses that would have been spent on the trip should be given to *tzedakah* instead.

Chassidim the world over were caught by surprise, and for many, especially those who usually would come in knowing how much the Rebbe appreciated it, this was a very tough dilemma. But for *yeshiva bochurim*, especially as *talmidim hashluchim*, we were concluding our *shlichus* and returning to the Rebbe, so we didn’t feel like ‘guests’ coming in for this special day. Rather, 770 was our home; we left for Venezuela from there and we were simply returning home.

We didn’t know beforehand what to expect, how many people would not be able to resist and decide to come even after that *sicha*, and what the Rebbe’s response to guests coming would be. Indeed, one way or another, plenty of people found a variety of ‘excuses’ to have to be in New York at that time. For example, my uncle Reb Shmuel (Mulle) Azimov came

together with a group of *mekuravim* to celebrate his son’s bar mitzvah in New York. Whatever the case is, by the time Shabbos Hagadol Yud Nissan came, 770 was quite crowded with guests (even though many, many people did not come).

At the time, I heard from someone, regarding a Chossid in Eretz Yisroel, Rabbi Avraham ‘Bumi’ Friedland, how he desperately wanted to come to the Rebbe, but what could he do? The Rebbe had instructed...

He went to Reb Mendel Futerfas with his dilemma, the question everyone had at the time. Reb Mendel answered, “I cannot tell you what you should do, however speak to someone who was in Paris with the Rebbe in 5707, and ask him what the Rebbe said then about traveling to the Rebbe.”

Rabbi Friedland didn’t delay, and he quickly learned that at a *farbrengen* in Paris before the Rebbe’s return



20 AV 5736, YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM129845

THE REBBE ENCOURAGES THE SINGING ON THE WAY OUT OF 770. RABBI YOSSI SHEMTOV IS SEEN STANDING FOURTH FROM LEFT.

to New York, the Rebbe spoke of *hiskashrus* to the [Friediker] Rebbe, stressing the necessity of traveling to the Rebbe. One of the Chassidim present asked the Rebbe, “How can we travel if the [Friediker] Rebbe hasn’t given us permission?” To which the Rebbe replied, “With regards to traveling to the Rebbe one needs not ask permission...”

Apparently, he understood that Reb Mendel was telling him that from

the Rebbe’s point of view, he may be permitted to travel, or maybe even that it’s the right thing to do. I’m not quite sure and I don’t know more about what went into his decision, but what I can tell you is that he made it to the Rebbe before Yud-Aleph Nissan and we all would soon know it.

The night of Yud-Aleph Nissan was on Motzei Shabbos, and in 770 you were able to feel the *Yom Tov’dike* atmosphere in the air. I remember vividly how at the conclusion of Maariv, the Rebbe turned around to face the *bimah* where *havdalah* was going to be recited a moment later, when suddenly everyone froze. From the front of the shul we heard the voice of Rabbi Friedland, clearly overwhelmed by emotions, shouting out as loud as he could: “ברוך אתה ד’ אלקינו מלך העולם שהחיינו וקיימנו והגיענו ללזמן הזה!”

From where I was standing I wasn’t able to see Rabbi Friedland, however, I was able to see the Rebbe and his reaction. I watched the Rebbe turn to Rabbi Friedland’s direction and strongly observed him as he made the bracha of *Shehechyanu*, to which the Rebbe responded “אמן.” The emotions felt in the air during those moments were far beyond what my words can describe, it was a special moment, no one in shul could miss it. We felt like he was saying in the name of us all ‘thank you’ to Hashem that we have our Rebbe! For me, it was at that exact moment that *Shnas Hashmonim* had begun! After *havdalah*, the Rebbe left shul vigorously encouraging the singing of the new *niggun* “*Harninu Le’Elokim Uzeinu*” while the crowd in 770 broke out into joyous dancing followed by *lebedike farbrengens* which lasted until it was already light outside.



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD

REB BUMI FRIEDLAND AT A CHANUKAH PARTY FOR YESHIVAS TOMCHEI TMIMIM BUCHARIA, NACHLAS HAR CHABAD 5747.

Unique Attention

5750*

RABBI ELI WOLFF

Eretz Yisroel

During the year 5750*, I was a *bochur* learning in yeshiva at 770. That year, Yud-Aleph Nissan was on a Friday and the Rebbe was spending the few days before Yud-Aleph Nissan at his home on President Street.

Shortly before Yud-Aleph Nissan, word spread that on Thursday night the Rebbe will distribute a *kuntres*, the *maamar* “*V’haya Ki Yishalcha Bincha*” to men, women and children. Generally, as *bochurim*, there were those of us who would refrain from going by the Rebbe at every given opportunity, in order to make the line shorter for the Rebbe. When I heard of the upcoming *chalukah*, I was debating with myself whether or not I should go by the Rebbe at this opportunity.

Naturally, for any *bochur* in 770, although we would see the Rebbe on a daily basis, we each knew that you

don’t just simply “go by the Rebbe.” You need to first prepare yourself. For instance, when one would plan to go on Sunday to the Rebbe for dollars, the few days before would be different, being mindful of the fact that soon *vet men shteyn far dem Rebbe’n* [soon we will stand before the Rebbe]... For whatever reason, this time, I decided to myself that I won’t go to the Rebbe to receive this *kuntres*, and therefore I hadn’t done anything that I would consider a *‘hachana*’.

On Thursday Yud Nissan, the Rebbe left for the Ohel at about 1:10 p.m., spending the rest of the afternoon



19 SHEVAT 5750, LEVI FREDIN VIA JEW 240778

there, returning to his home only at about 9:00 p.m.

The night of Yud-Aleph Nissan had arrived. At the Rebbe's house only a select few (mainly shluchim who came specially for Yud-Aleph Nissan) were permitted to enter for Mincha and Maariv, while the rest of us were downstairs in the back of 770 listening to the hookup from the Rebbe's house. We quietly listened to the *bracha* being given to the Rebbe, and to the *sicha* that followed.

Suddenly, I felt a deep urge that I must go to the Rebbe now! Yet I questioned myself, "You haven't made

any *hachanos*, how can you possibly go by the Rebbe like this?" Nonetheless, I decided to just go. I ran over to President Street where I joined the big line of people waiting to enter the Rebbe's house.

As I entered, there were about 10-15 people ahead of me. As I was watching the Rebbe distribute the *kuntres*, I noticed how the Rebbe was handing each individual a *kuntres* looking straight at them for a very brief moment, and then instantly looking to the next person in line as he approached.

As I approached the Rebbe, unlike the people before me in line, I saw the Rebbe giving me the *kuntres*, but he was still looking at the individual before me, and then in an instant the Rebbe turned his holy eyes and looked at the next individual behind me, as if the Rebbe just didn't see me pass by... I saw it clearly, how I was not *zoche* that the Rebbe should place his holy gaze on me.

I left the Rebbe's house feeling distraught. I was so frustrated and upset with myself. I asked myself again and again, "What were you thinking? The Rebbe knows you didn't make any *hachanos*. What did you expect? You just decided to go over to the Rebbe because you were in the mood of it?! The fact that Yud-Aleph Nissan was coming wasn't a surprise for you, it's marked in the calendar, now you woke up to go to the Rebbe at the last minute?!"

I walked back to 770, where there was a *Yom Tovdike* atmosphere. The shul was full of Chassidim joyously celebrating, many were saying *l'chaim* while dancing and singing to the new *niggun* for that year, alongside others sitting and farbrenging. As you can imagine, after what had just transpired, I wasn't up to dancing in the slightest. Quite the contrary, I felt very uncomfortable walking into 770, feeling down like it was Tisha

B'av while to everyone else it was like Simchas Torah...

I found myself sitting down in a corner attempting to learn from the *kuntres* the Rebbe had given me only a few minutes ago, but I wasn't up to learning; my heart and mind were elsewhere.

All of a sudden it hit me: The Rebbe didn't 'ignore me;' in fact, the exact opposite had happened! The Rebbe showed me how he is paying direct attention to me and took the opportunity to teach me, a simple *bochur*, an important lesson about how one must conduct himself before going to the Rebbe. I suddenly looked at what happened from a completely different angle, while feeling a deep sense of gratitude and love towards the Rebbe.

Think about it: It's Yud-Aleph Nissan, a very serious day for the Rebbe. How busy the Rebbe is with matters far beyond what we can relate to, but still the Rebbe found it important to take the opportunity to show his concern for each and every one of us, by teaching me a lesson I needed to learn at that particular moment, giving me exactly what I needed.

The Rebbe was distributing a *kuntres* to thousands of people who were going by the Rebbe for only a brief moment, yet from the Rebbe's point of view, each and every individual is coming on his own. Like a loving father he doesn't overlook a single one of his children, giving each and every one of us the personal attention in the way we may need it. ①

1. For a more general and detailed account of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5732, see Derher Nissan 5776.

2. For a more general and detailed account of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5742, see Derher Nissan 5774.



לזכות
כ"ק אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו
לרגל יום הבהיר י"א ניסן

נתרם ע"י
הרה"ת הרב שלום דוב בער
וזוגתו מרת חיה מושקא
ובנותיהם ברכה ליפשא,
עליזה ושיינדל שיחיו
שוחאט





WHAT'S IN A NAME?

*Its significance,
power,
and potency*

The use of a name is seemingly merely technical; the most practical way to get someone's attention or to describe whom you are referring to. A name seems to tell nothing about a person's character and personality. Two people who are as different as can be might carry the same name. It seems like a superficiality.

But an interesting incident at the beginning of history hints at the deeper significance of a name.

Before creating Adam, mankind, Hashem consulted the *malachim*. "What value will this man bring?" they asked. Hashem responded: "He will be wiser than you."

As proof, Hashem asked the *malachim* to name various animals. When they could not come up with any names, Hashem asked the newly created Adam if he would be able to name the animals, and he did. He correctly asserted: "This is a *shor*, this is a *chamor*..." and so on.

The obvious question is: What proof is there of such great wisdom by merely naming animals? It seems like just a show of creativity to come up with a different name for each species. Why couldn't the *malachim* do it themselves?

The Mezritcher Maggid famously answers this question: Adam was not just offering an arbitrary name for each animal. He actually looked to the G-dly source of each creature and named it in accordance with its spiritual energy. This in fact does require great wisdom.

The Rebbe explains an even deeper point:

The way an ox or a donkey is in this physical world resembles so little of what they are in their G-dly source. The fact that Adam Harishon was able to look into an ox and see its G-dly source deep within it, is testament to the great wisdom only he had.

As the world progressed, the Torah relates many more incidents where names carry great significance. Chava called her son Kayin because "קניתי איש את ה'"—I acquired a man with Hashem. Meaning: She became partners with Hashem, jointly creating Kayin.

Later we read that Ever named his son Pelleg with *ruach hakodesh*, because he foresaw the revolt at *Migdal Bavel* and the dispersion ("*hafлага*") that would happen in its wake, all during the lifetime of his son.

The significance of a name only increases once we learn about Avraham Avinu, how Hashem added one letter to his name in order to enable him to have children, making him a father to all nations.

Avraham's first son Yishmael had his name chosen by Hashem Himself, called so because Hashem "listened" to Hagar's plight.

Even though Avraham didn't actually hear the *malach* tell Hagar what name to use, he knew with *ruach hakodesh* to give the name Yishmael.

But what about us? Our names, the names our parents gave us at birth, the ones we give our children; what significance could they have?

The truth is that ordinary people, too, are granted *ruach hakodesh* before giving a name. Although a

parent may not consciously know any great things when choosing and giving a name, the reality is that every name is given with *ruach hakodesh*.¹

THE NAME TELLS A STORY

The Gemara relates:

Rebbi Meir, Rebbi Yehuda, and Rebbi Yosi were walking on the road together. Rebbi Meir would analyze names and discern people's nature from them, while Rebbi Yehuda and Rebbi Yosi were not apt to analyze names. When they came to a certain place, they looked for lodging and were given it. They said to the innkeeper: What is your name? He said to them: My name is Kidor. Rebbi Meir said to himself: Perhaps one can learn from this that he is a wicked person, as it is stated: "כי דור תהפוכות הוה"—For they are a generation [*ki dor*] of upheavals." Since it was Friday afternoon, Rebbi Yehuda and Rebbi Yosi entrusted their purses to him. Rebbi Meir did not entrust his purse to him but went and placed it at the grave of the innkeeper's father.

The innkeeper's father appeared to the innkeeper in a dream and said to him: Go take the purse placed at the head of that man, i.e., himself. The following day, he said to the sages: This is what appeared to me in my dream. They said to him: Dreams during twilight on Shabbos evening have no substance and should not be trusted. Even so, Rebbi Meir went and guarded his money all that day and then took it.

The next day, the rabbis said to the innkeeper: Give us our purses. He said to them: These matters never occurred; you never gave me any purses. Rabbi Meir said to them: Why didn't you analyze his name to learn that he is a wicked man? They said to him: Why didn't the Master tell us? He said to them: I said one should be suspicious, but have I said a person should be established as wicked? Could I say to you with certainty that he is wicked based on his name alone?

What did they do? They dragged the innkeeper and brought him to a store and gave him wine to drink. After he drank the wine, they saw lentils on his mustache, showing that he had eaten lentils that day. They went and gave this sign to his wife. They said that the innkeeper had ordered that their money be returned to them upon the sign that he ate lentils at his last meal. And they took their purses and went. He went and killed his wife out of anger that she did this.²

The Rebbe's father, Harav Levi Yitzchok, was prolific in deriving insights and hints from people's names, most notably his own. In a *reshima* he wrote about his arrest and imprisonment, Harav Levi Yitzchok explains how his name tells the story of his life, the details of his imprisonment and exile, the number of days it lasted and the number of locations he was transferred to.³

The Rebbe often did the same, deriving insight and lessons in *avodas Hashem* from people's names.

In a lengthy *reshima* about Yud-Tes Kislev, the Rebbe connects each aspect of the Yom Tov with the Alter

Rebbe's two names: Schneur and Zalman.⁴

Similarly, in a *reshima* written as notes for remarks the Rebbe delivered at the bar mitzvah of Shmuel Pesach Eber, the Rebbe elaborates on various lessons in *avodas Hashem* based on the bar mitzvah boy's two names.⁵

Chassidim relate: The night before the Rebbe was due to leave Paris, in Sivan 5707* (after having come to greet his mother, Rebbetzin Chana and spending several months there), a special "*tzeisheim l'shalom*" farewell gathering was held in his honor. At around 10:00 p.m., after the *baalei-batim* were mostly gone, the Rebbe announced that now the "real *farbrengen*" would begin. One of the memorable events at that *farbrengen* was when the Rebbe asked each individual for their name and connected it with their life's mission.

A few gems from that *farbrengen*:

To one person named Aharon Mordechai Zilberstrom, the Rebbe said that the source for the name Mordechai in the Torah is from Targum Onkleus on the words *מר דרוור = מירא דכיא*⁶ (one of the incenses used for the *ketores*). The fact that his name was sourced in a translation, said the Rebbe, should serve as a lesson for him to devote himself to translate words of Chassidus into French.

To a fellow named Daniel Saks, the Rebbe taught a lesson based on the story of Daniel in the lion's den.

Efraim Zalman Sudakevitch was present too, and the Rebbe told him to look at the Rashi on the *possuk* *ישימך אלקים כאפרים וכמנשה*.

As this was occurring, Reb Zalman Butman turned to the Rebbe and said that he remembers his father, Harav Levi Yitzchok, also expertly connecting individuals' names with Torah themes and deriving lessons for their lives. He mentioned that Harav Levi Yitzchok once said that *דער זון מאכט בעסער*—"my son is better at this than me," to which the Rebbe responded, "That's just what a father is supposed to say about his son..."⁷

As early as 5703*, the Rebbe wrote a letter to Reb Avraham Eliyahu Akselrod, delving deeply into the meaning of his name and showing how it contains his entire *avoda* in this world.⁸

One year later, in the summer of 5704*, the Rebbe penned a famous response to criticism that certain people leveled at the Frierdiker Rebbe's *sicha* on the name *עקביא בן מהללא*. The Rebbe cited many sources proving that every name has meaning, even if the one who gave the name did not have anything particular in mind.

Throughout the years, the Rebbe would explain the meaning of the names of our Rabbeim and the lessons we can derive from them. For example:

In *sichos* on Chof Cheshvan (the Rebbe Rashab's birthday)⁹ and Hoshana Rabba (the day of the Rebbe Rashab's *ushpiza*)¹⁰, the Rebbe would explain how the Rebbe Rashab's name—Sholom Dov Ber,

* 5707-1947, 5703- 1943, 5704-1944,

DOVBER SHLITA

After the birth of their second son, Rabbi and Mrs. Levi Garelik wrote to the Rebbe that they were considering naming him after the Rebbe's brother, Reb Berel (their first son was named Yisroel Aryeh Leib, after the Rebbe's other brother), but they were unsure if this was appropriate. The Rebbe responded in his holy handwriting:

דובער שליט"א. אזכיר עה"צ.



To read the fascinating story of Reb Meir Shlomo Junik, who was named after the Rebbe's grandfather, Harav Meir Shlomo Yanovsky, see Beis HaRav—The Rebbe's Illustrious Lineage, *Derher Elul 5776*.

connotes a “bear” which the Gemara says is “*mesurbal b’bassar*,” full and fatty—applies to our *avodas Hashem*.

In the various sichos of Chof-Daled Teves, the Rebbe would expound on the Alter Rebbe's name, Schneur Zalman.¹¹

Likewise, there are many *sichos* where the Rebbe explains the two names of the Frierdiker Rebbe: Yosef Yitzchok.¹²

The Rebbe also derived lessons in *avodas Hashem* from the name of his brother, Reb Yisroel Aryeh Leib, at farbrengens on or around his yahrtzeit, 13 Iyar.¹³

Interestingly, when Rabbi Moshe Yitzchok Hecht passed away on Erev Shabbos Va'era 5752*, the Rebbe explained that both of his names are connected with the Frierdiker Rebbe: Yitzchok being one of the Frierdiker Rebbe's names, and Moshe alludes to the *ispashtusa d'Moshe*, the spark of Moshe Rabbeinu found in each generation in the *nossi hador*.

Then the Rebbe added a lesson to be learned even from his last name: Hecht is the name of a predatory fish which is nonetheless kosher. The Rebbe explained that this symbolizes the *avoda* of preying on the *klipos* and elevating them to *kedusha*.¹⁴

CHOOSING A NAME

The Rebbe points out that although one cannot be 100 percent certain who a person is based on their name, and certainly regular people like us cannot discern that, what we do know for certain is that

a name influences a person, for better or for worse.

This is why we must exercise the power we have to give a child a good name. In this regard, the Rebbe cites the Gemara¹⁵:

The Gemara asks: What does Rus mean? Rabbi Yochanan said: That she had the privilege that Dovid, who inundated Hashem with songs and praises, would descend from her. [The name Rus is etymologically similar in Hebrew to the word *riva*, which means “inundate.”]

From where do we know that it was her name that caused this?

Rebbi Eliezer said, the *possuk*¹⁶ states: “Go, see the works of Hashem, who has made desolations [*shamos*] upon the earth”. Do not read it as *shamos*, rather as *shemos*, names. [Meaning, the names given to people are indeed “the works of Hashem upon the earth.”]

In other words, Rus's name brought about the fact that she merited to have Dovid Hamelech descend from her!

Based on this, Chassidim choose to name their children after their Rabbeim.

In at least two instances,¹⁷ the Rebbe announced at a farbrengen that those who need a *bracha* for children who will grow up to be Chassidim, should name them after the Frierdiker Rebbe. If they can't give that name, they should give the name Menachem Mendel, like the Tzemach Tzedek.

In addition to this, the Rebbe had tremendous *nachas* when people gave a name to their children after members of the Rebbe's family.

In a letter from 5708*, the Rebbe thanked Rabbi Moshe Yitzchok Hecht for “accepting my suggestion” and naming his daughter Rochel after Rebbetzin Rochel, the Rebbe's maternal grandmother.

Characteristically, the Rebbe continues in that letter by explaining the name Rochel and how it is connected to light and revelation—the mission of a Yid in this world.¹⁸

In a letter dated 12 Sivan 5712, the Rebbe bestows great *brachos* upon Rabbi Menachem Mendel

Brook after he named his son Levi Yitzchok after the Rebbe's father:

"When I am at the *tziyun* of the Rebbe, my father-in-law, I will mention you, your wife and the new baby for good health and physical and spiritual good. And just as you have caused me great pleasure (קורת רוח), so may Hashem cause you great pleasure, and may you have *nachas* from your family both physically and spiritually, and may you always report good news."¹⁹

After the *histalkus* of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, the Rebbe said that by naming children after her and educating them in her ways, this is the fulfillment of *מה זרעה בחיים, אף היא בחיים*—just as her children are alive, so too she is alive.²⁰

GUIDANCE FROM THE REBBE ON NAMES AND NAME-GIVING

1. When asked what to name a child, the Rebbe almost always answered that he does not tell the parents what name to give, because it is up to the parents to make this decision based on the *ruach hakodesh* they are given.²¹
2. If someone does not know or remember their Jewish name, proper research should first be done by checking with parents or relatives, or a birth certificate. If nothing comes up, they can be given a new name at any point in life.²²
3. If a child was named without the parents' consent, the parents should *add* the name they want, but not *chas*
4. *v'shalom* "dispose" of a name already given.²³
5. There should be no remorse once the name is given. No matter what anyone else says, the right name was certainly given.²⁴
6. The father should choose the first child's name, but both parents must agree.²⁵
7. If for whatever reason the parents cannot agree on a name, they should consult a rav.
8. A girl should be named at the earliest possible opportunity (at the Torah reading closest to the birth).
9. If a child is being given a Hebrew and Yiddish name, the Hebrew name should come first, then the Yiddish.
9. An Ashkenazi Jew should not give a child the same name as their living grandparent. If this was done accidentally, the child should be primarily called by a different name.
10. One should not combine any name together with a name of the Rabbeim.
11. If one cannot give both names of a Rebbe (for example, if the father's name is Yosef), it is still worthwhile to give half of the Rebbe's name.
12. It is appropriate and a *zechus* for the child to be named after a person who died *al kidush Hashem* at a young age. There is no need to be worried.



THE REBBE TELLS AN INDIVIDUAL NAMED JORDAN TO TAKE THE NAME YARDEN

ADULTS TAKING A JEWISH NAME

It was quite a common occurrence for people who were not given a Jewish name at birth to ask the Rebbe for a name. Unlike at childbirth where the Rebbe tended not to get involved, here the Rebbe would usually offer a suggestion.²⁶

Presented here is a list of names that the Rebbe suggested based on their secular counterparts²⁷:

It seems בדרך אפשר that the Rebbe followed a few principles:

1. The Hebrew name should be based on the pronunciation of the previous name.
2. A name should only be added when absolutely necessary. In a case where a

person's original name could be somewhat considered Jewish, the Rebbe opted that they keep their original name. The Rebbe explained that any name, even a non-Jewish name, is an essential connector between the *neshama* and the *guf*.²⁸

3. The new name should be based on the secular name's meaning in Lashon Hakodesh.
4. When possible, choose the Hebrew equivalent of the secular name.

Inge רבקה
[She was named Inge after her father Yitzchok.]

Karmela [It can be a Jewish name, no need for another.]

Unknown שמחה חנה
[Because it's important to serve Hashem with simcha.]

Alis עליה

Michelle מיכל

Clair קריינא
[Both names mean "crown."]

Nancy פנינה
[They both have two "N's"]

Claudia מלכה

Marian מרים

Lida לאה

Debra דבורה

Pardus עדנה
[Pardus in Persian means Gan Eden.]

Yanina יצחקה

Lily לאה

Irene אילנה

Flora שושנה
[Both names mean "flower."]

Iris אוריה (woman)

Rima רינה

Janet יונה

Machnas מחנה or מחלה

Irene Cecile צילה

Valerie בלוריה

Lydia Matilde לאה מרטא

Linda לאה

Monique (French female) מלכה

Josiane (French female) שושנה

Paula פוריה

Wendy בינה תרצה

Suzanne (French female) שושנה

THE REBBE'S NAME

On a few occasions the Rebbe pointed out that his name מענדל should be spelled with an "ע" not מנדל. "Because I am named after the Tzemach Tzedek," and that's how the Tzemach Tzedek spelled his name—צדק—is the *gematriya* of מענדל.

In a fascinating letter, the Rebbe's father, Harav Levi Yitzchok, writes to the Rebbe that the merit of the one you are named after should be upon you and your wife.

But the title that Harav Levi Yitzchok gives the Tzemach Tzedek in this instance is "איש חי", this alludes to the fact that the Rebbe was born two-times *chai* = 36 years after the *histalkus* of the Tzemach Tzedek (minus two days).

(*Yemei Melech vol. 1, p. 102*)

On 15 Kislev 5741*, in a letter-coded letter (due to wartime), the Frierdiker Rebbe writes to Reb Sender Reinin about getting a sum of money to the Rebbe and Rebbetzin for their visas to the USA: "Moshe - Hershel's brother - has an acquaintance who is named after the Tzemach Tzedek and his wife is named after the Tzemach Tzedek's wife..."

(*Igros Kodesh Admur HaRayyatz, vol. 13, p. 312*)

Olga - Does not need another name, because its the same as עלקא which is a Jewish name²⁹

Brigitte	בריינא
Sandra	אלכסנדרה
Josette	יוספה
Joanna	יונה טייבל
Felicia	מזל טוב
Carol	עטרה קריינדל
Leonie	אריאלה
Lizet	לאה
Luise	לאה
Arlet	אריאלה
Jully	יהודית
Nadine	דינה
Murielle (French female)	מוריאל
Shantala	שיינדל
Katrina	כתר רינה
Parvin	פוריה
Martine (French woman's name)	מרתא או שרה
[The Gemara records a woman named בייטוס]	
Yevgeny	אברהם or Yitzchok
Robert	ראובן
Donald	דוד או דן
Brian	ברוך
Frank	אפרים
Frederic	פרץ
Pascal	פסח
Ken	קנין
Jack	יעקב
Ricard	שמרי'
Todd	טובי'

To a *ger tzedek* named Ernie, the Rebbe suggested the name Yisroel,

in connection with taking on Toras Yisroel and the *mitzvos* of *am Yisroel*. **T**

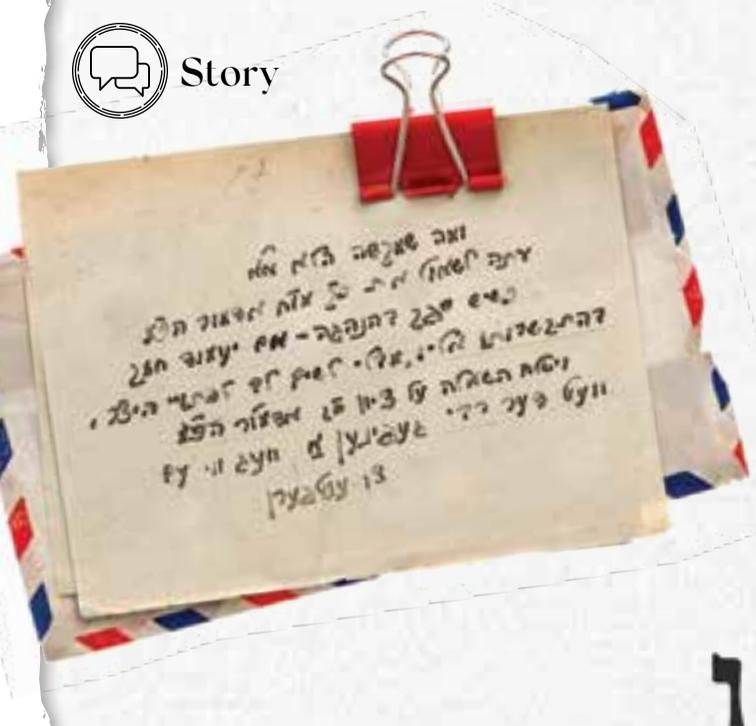
1. Based on Likkutei Sichos vol. 6, p. 35; vol. 15, p. 13.
2. Yoma 83b.
3. Likkutei Levi Yitzchok, Hearos L'Sefer Hatanya p. 4.
4. Choveres 22.
5. Choveres 130.
6. Chullin 139b.
7. *Bikkur Paris 5707*, Lubecki.
8. Igros Kodesh vol. 1, p. 44.
9. Hisvaaduyos 5742, vol. 1, p. 413
10. Ibid. 5745 vol. 1, p. 342.
11. See Likkutei Sichos vol. 6, p. 35; vol. 21, p. 273.
12. See Likkutei Sichos vol. 3, p. 835; vol. 25, p. 480; et. al.
13. Shabbos Parshas Acharei-Kedoshim 5745, Pesach Sheini 5747, et. al.
14. Hisvaaduyos 5752 vol 2, p. 130.
15. Brachos 7b.
16. Tehillim 46:9.
17. Toras Menachem vol. 11, p. 70; vol. 13, p. 101
18. Igros Kodesh vol. 2, p. 317.
19. Ibid. vol. 6, p. 109.
20. Sefer Hasichos 5749, p. 236.
21. Otzar Minhagim V'horaos p. 184.
22. Igros Kodesh vol 6, #1670.
23. Igros Kodesh vol. 8, p. 191.
24. Igros Kodesh vol. 17, p. 201.
25. This and the following points can be found in Otzar Minhagim V'horaos pp. 186-192.
26. Perhaps this was because the Rebbe took the place of the parents and named with *ruach hakodesh*, or because the Rebbe held that the English name given by the parents has significance. -Ed.
27. Based on various compilations, including one by Rabbi Shmuel Lubecki.
28. Igros Kodesh vol. 8, p. 318.
29. Igros Kodesh vol. 8, p. 318.

USING YOUR JEWISH NAME

The significance and impact of a Jewish name cannot be underestimated. Not just having it but actually **using it**.

Even if a child has a biblical name like Abraham, although it technically refers to Avraham Avinu, still the child will not make that connection. It is therefore important that he is called by his Hebrew name Avraham, this way he is constantly reminded that he is named after the Avraham from Chumash he learned about, and this will surely impact him to follow in Avraham's ways.

(Sichos Kodesh Parshas Shelach 5740, p. 395)



דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות

לכ"ק אדמו"ר

בקשר עם יום הבהיר י"א ניסן

נדפס ע"י

הרה"ת ר' בן-ציון וזוגתו מרת בלומא

ומשפחתם שיחיו

שם טוב

The Doctor, Our Friend

AS TOLD BY RABBI LEVI GREENBERG (EL PASO, TX)

Three weeks after our daughter Zelda was born on Rosh Chodesh Sivan 5778, my wife started feeling excruciating back pains which were entirely inconsistent with her previous postpartum experiences. We went to a doctor on Thursday afternoon and her diagnosis was that it was probably a muscle spasm that would heal over time, but out of an abundance of caution the doctor ordered blood work to rule out any major issues.

My wife's pain intensified, but her doctor's lack of real concern made us confident it would soon pass.

On Friday afternoon, 2 hours and 15 minutes before Shabbos I was entering a store when my wife called me and said that the doctor just called her and said she must urgently go to the emergency room for a chest x-ray. The blood work indicated that something was very wrong and the rush was so great that she suggested we go to a nearby freestanding emergency room where the wait time would

definitely be much shorter than most hospitals on Friday afternoon.

We were both shocked to hear this and as I rushed home I called a bochur who was at the Ohel at the time and managed to get through to him minutes before Shabbos started in New York. I dictated to him a brief letter to the Rebbe.

"The doctor ordered blood tests for my wife, found reason for concern and is sending us to the emergency room for a chest x-ray. I ask a bracha that everything works out in the best way possible and she should have a *refuah shleima*."

We were convinced we would be back home before Shabbos so we arranged a babysitter to stay with the children and headed to the emergency room together with the baby. We were admitted almost immediately and the doctor on call did not seem overly concerned after hearing

my wife's story but ordered the x-ray anyway since her doctor had sent her in for it.

After the x-ray was done we waited for a while with no news from the doctor. Finally 30 minutes to *licht bentchen* I sought out the doctor and explained to him that if all was well we wanted to get out of there as soon as possible.

"I need to speak with you two. Let's go into the room," he said to me.

"The bad news is that the x-ray shows you have a pulmonary embolism, which is a blood clot in your lungs," he tells my wife. "This is a very serious condition and you must be admitted to a hospital immediately to get you on a course of recovery. The good news is that you are perfectly healthy otherwise and you should get over this with no problem."

At that moment we had a hard time focusing on my wife's serious medical condition and needed to immediately make arrangements for the other children and especially the newborn who would not be able to accompany my wife to the hospital. Fortunately we live a few blocks away from my parents and my mother was able to pick up the children while I raced over to her home with the baby and rushed home to prepare some things we would need in the hospital over Shabbos.

During my short ride my father called me from the Chabad House, where the minyan had already gathered for Kabbalas Shabbos, to find out what was going on. I told him the x-ray found a serious problem, so he called a radiologist who was in shul over to the phone and after I described the situation to him he said that it makes sense we were being sent to the hospital.

As they walked back into shul the radiologist told my father, "That new doctor that's here, he's a pulmonary specialist. He's the guy your son really needs to talk to."

Let me explain who this new doctor was. Several months earlier, Dr. Dan Schuller moved to El Paso to chair the Department of Internal Medicine at a new hospital in town and teach at the local medical school. He lived previously in Omaha, Nebraska and was very close to the shlichim there, Rabbi and Mrs. Mendel Katzman.

When Dr. Schuller moved to town, he visited the Chabad House to purchase *mezuzos* and that was the only time I had met him. He was very preoccupied with setting up his new department and that Friday night was the first time he came to the Chabad House for services.

My father approached Dr. Schuller, described the situation and invited him to the phone to speak with me.

I was already rushing back to the emergency room when my father called me back and said, "Dr. Schuller is here in shul. He is a pulmonary specialist, would you like to speak with him?"



At that moment I felt an overwhelming sensation. Here we were faced with an unfamiliar medical emergency on a late Friday afternoon and the earliest we could hope to see a doctor in the hospital would be Monday morning. Now, I was suddenly given access to a specialist in the field and a doctor that I automatically considered a *rofeh yedid* based on his close relationship with the shlichim in Nebraska.

"Rabbi, don't let them send your wife to the hospital," Dr. Schuller said. "There are new methods to treat this issue and going to the hospital will be counterproductive."

"Doctor, I can't argue with the ER doctor. He's already making arrangements for her transfer."

"I'm coming to the emergency room right now. Don't do anything without me."

Dr. Schuller did not belong to the same network as the emergency room we were in but after I explained to the ER doctor that he is a close family friend and that we very much want his opinion on the matter, he graciously allowed Dr. Schuller to see the x-rays and an interesting debate ensued between the two of them.

For me this was significant since the three main instructions the Rebbe would give in medical situations were to seek a second opinion, to confer with a specialist and a doctor who is a friend. Here, minutes after learning of the emergency we had all three things happening in the emergency room. My wife and I both felt the Rebbe's *brachos* and were confident that all would turn out well.

We ultimately followed Dr. Schuller's advice and he assumed responsibility for her medical treatment going forward, resulting in a complete recovery. **T**

YOUR STORY

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



TEFILLOS

Adar I - II 5749*

During the *shloshim* after the passing of Rashag, the Rebbe's brother-in-law, the Rebbe davened all *tefillos* in his apartment on the third floor of 770, which was transformed into a makeshift shul. We present a gallery from these *tefillos* from JEM's living archive.





1 ADAR II 5749, LEVI FREDIN VIA JEM 261374



2 ADAR II 5749, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 261376

The Rebbe would go up to the *tefillos* using the elevator outside *Gan Eden Hatachton*.

1 ADAR II 5749, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 261681



2 ADAR II 5749, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 261705



Due to the limited amount of space, only select individuals were able to participate in the *minyanim*, and the first *bochurim* who were at Chassidus in the morning as well as *bochurim* who kept the *sedarim* throughout the week were also allowed to join.



6 ADAR II 5749, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JFM 261745



6 ADAR II 5749, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 261758



6 ADAR II 5749, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 261756



Letters

A forum for readers to send their feedback, add to, or ask any questions about articles. Submit your letter to feedback@derher.org.

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

Torah Conversations on Shabbos Afternoon

Dear Editors,

In the Kislev issue there was an interesting article about Dr. Seligson and his relationship with the Rebbe. I would like to share a story I heard that might add additional light on their relationship with regards to Torah:

My great-grandfather Rabbi Yechezkel Deren A"H spent the war years in Tomchei Tmimim in Shanghai, China together with Dr. Seligson.

During his years as a *bochur* in the yeshiva at 770 in the late 5700s, my *elter zeide* noticed that on Shabbos afternoons, Dr. Seligson would wait for the Rebbe in *Gan Aden Hatachton* where he would ask the Rebbe various questions in *nigleh*.

Sensing the opportunity in hearing the Rebbe speak in Torah, my *elter zeide* would go up the steps of *Gan Eden Hatachton*, where he would be able to hear these remarkable conversations.

(In the article you mentioned Dr. Seligson's conversations with the Rebbe on Friday nights in the winter of 5714, so based on the above story I would suggest that those conversations were possibly of a similar nature and dealing with various Torah-topics.)

Menachem Deren

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

Chassidus for Non-Jews

Dear Editors,

First of all, I want to thank you for all the amazing work that you do for Lubavitch in general and for *bochurim* in particular!

Personally speaking, I've been reading your magazines since they began coming out monthly, and the amount of knowledge I gained and more importantly, the effect they have had on me, is indescribable.

In the Kislev issue, you mentioned how learning Chassidus is even for non-Jews. In connection with that, I wanted to point out two interesting points:

1) On Yud-Tes Kislev 5743 the Rebbe explained how part of the *giluy* of Yud-Tes Kislev is that knowledge of Hashem should even reach *umos ha'olam*. The *hora'ah* from that is "that we must see to it that the officers and nations should recognize that everything comes from Hashem... the way the Alter Rebbe explains in Shaar Hayichud V'haemunah."

From here we see that non-Jews are not just capable of learning the basic knowledge that everything comes from Hashem, but that they also have the capacity to understand these concepts in depth as they are explained in Shaar Hayichud H'haemunah, and we must teach it to them.

2) On 14 Elul 5748 the Rebbe mentioned a story how the Frierdiker Rebbe once told someone to speak to a non-Jewish professor

about Chassidus, and the professor inquired about deep concepts in Chassidus. (This seems to be referring to the story recorded by Reb Elye Chaim Althaus in Likkutei Dibburim (Lashon Hakodesh) volume 5).

3) On Shabbos Bereishis 5729, the Rebbe expanded on this point: Since Hashem is continuously creating everything, it is therefore impossible for there to be an existence that contradicts that. Seemingly one can ask, “*Meile my goy (nefesh habahamis)*, I can explain to him the above concept. But how can I explain this to a *goy (kipshuto)*?”

The Rebbe went on to say two points:

1. Lately non-Jews have become much more receptive to hear the truth. Moreover, they want to hear even more than you want to tell them. A story is told about someone who wanted to pay a doctor who was a good friend of his and he thought the doctor wouldn't want to take money. So he started thinking of ways to give him the money secretly. In the end, he couldn't find a way to do that, so he had no choice but to give him the money openly. As he gave him the money, the doctor exclaimed “This isn't enough money, I need more...”

The *nimshal* is that the Yid thinks the non-Jew won't want to hear what he's saying and in the end, the non-Jew will ask him to explain more.

2. Even if you won't be able to get the non-Jew to listen to him, at least it will be firmly set in a Yid's mind that *ein od milvado*, and then you won't be scared of the non-Jew and you will speak with the proper courage. The non-Jew will be

nispoel and will do as the Yid suggests. As the *possuk* says, “When the nations will see that the name of Hashem is upon you, they will fear you”.

Berel Shmotkin

STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT

Shir Hamaalos

Dear Editors,

I took along the Teves Derher issue to read on my flight from New York to Phoenix, where I was traveling to be of assistance to my daughter, who was at the end of her ninth month.

I landed at 5:00 on Wednesday of Chanukah, my daughter picked us up and took us right to the menorah parade of a neighboring shliach. We drove around the community in the procession of menorah cars, then we came home and lit the menorahs. Meanwhile my daughter went into labor from zero to 60, and she and her husband scrambled to get their things together to leave for the hospital. But there was a problem: They could not find the one *Shir Hamaalos* she had prepared. You really need two, and now she had none. I told her I have one! I grabbed my Derher out of my travel bag, cut out the *Shir Hamaalos* replica out from the Derher, put it into a ziploc, and sent her off. *Baruch Hashem*, a healthy baby boy was soon born!

Thank you! Not only were your articles tremendously inspiring and edifying, but you were *mekayem hamaaseh hu ha'ikar!*

Mrs. Gitty Stolik

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

