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OF PNIMIUS HATORAH

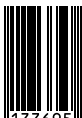
Physician To Royalty

THE LIFE OF DR. AVRAHAM
ABBA SELIGSON

The Mezritcher Maggid

גל עיני
ואביטה
נפלאות
מתורתך

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KISLEV 5781
ISSUE 100 (177)
MARCH 2021

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A Chassidisher Derher (ISSN 2641059) (USPS 21880) is published monthly by A Chassidisher Derher Inc, 784 Eastern Pkwy, Brooklyn, NY 11213. Subscription price \$71 a year. Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn, NY. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to A Chassidisher Derher, 784 Eastern Pkwy, Brooklyn, NY 11213.

About the Cover:

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

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



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

לרגל יום הבהיר ר"ח כסלו

Derher **Editorial**

On the day that the Alter Rebbe was born, the Baal Shem Tov said: "On this Wednesday, the day that the great luminaries were fixed in the heavens, a *neshama chadasha*, a 'new' *neshama* has come down to this world. One who will illuminate the entire world with the light of Torah—*nigleh* and Chassidus, and will have *mesiras nefesh* for the ways of Chassidus. He will succeed all the way through the coming of Moshiach..."¹

We now celebrate the month of Kislev—the month of *geula*, with so many dates pertaining to the revelation of Chassidus throughout the generations: Rosh Chodesh Kislev (the day the Rebbe recovered from a heart attack); Beis Kislev (the day the *seforim* were returned to 770 after the theft); Yud Kislev (the Mittler Rebbe's *geula*); Yud-Daled Kislev (date of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's wedding); and of course Yud-Tes Kislev, the Alter Rebbe's *geula* and the day that *hafatzas hamaayanos* of Chassidus began in earnest; and culminating with Chanukah, the *yom tov* that celebrates light—with its special connection to Chassidus. Let us delve into the meaning of the Alter Rebbe's *neshama chadasha* and why it was such an integral part of the revelation of Chassidus.

Many people understand the term of *neshama chadasha* as one that has never been in this world before in a previous *gilgul*. But in addition to that, there is a deeper meaning as well.

In the famous discourse about what Chassidus is—ענינה של תורת-החסידות—the Rebbe mentions that Chassidus Chabad was specifically revealed by the Alter Rebbe—a *neshama chadasha*, thereby breathing *new* life into all other areas of Torah.

As one of the sources, the Rebbe cites a *maamar* in Likkutei Torah, Shir Hashirim, where the Alter Rebbe explains the meaning of "*neshamos chadashos*" that will come to this world in the times of Moshiach:

There are two types of *neshamos*: Today's *neshamos* that emanate from the *neshama* of Adam Harishon, and the future *neshamos* which are sourced from a much higher place, at the *pnimius* of *Attik*. The *neshamos* of Moshiach will draw down from the *pnimus* of *Attik*, while everything we experienced in this world until the time of Moshiach only drew from the *chitzonius* of *Attik*.

In other words, the Rebbe seems to imply that the nature of the Alter Rebbe's *neschama chadasha* is like the *neshamos* at the time of Moshiach, stemming from the highest levels of *Elokus*.

This fits perfectly in context with the explanation the Rebbe offers about the essence of Chassidus:

The benefits of Chassidus are many. In this *sicha* the Rebbe cites four various points. But all these advantages of Chassidus are mere details; they don't explain what Chassidus is about at its core.

In order to understand what Chassidus really is, says the Rebbe, we need to take a look at the reward for the study of Chassidus: the coming of Moshiach. As Moshiach himself famously told the Baal Shem Tov, he will come when the wellsprings of Chassidus reach the *chutza*.

Moshiach's coming is said to have many advantages to bring to the world. But those are mere details that stem from the main point of Moshiach:

Moshiach is the "*yechida*" of the entire world. Before him, Dovid Hamelech is considered *nefesh*, Eliyahu Hanavi is *ruach*, Moshe Rabbeinu is *neschama*, and Adam Harishon is *chaya*.

Just like every individual *neschama* has its innermost point, its *yechida*, the epicenter that gives all the various levels of the *neschama* their *chayus*, similarly—Moshiach is the *yechida* of all of *hishtalshelus*. All of the great advantages that Moshiach offers to the world are mere details stemming from the main point—the *yechida*. Hence, when the *yechida* of the world will finally be revealed, all the other details will fall into place automatically.

This is what Moshiach is all about, and this is what the revelation of Chassidus is all about. Chassidus is the *yechida* of Torah—a taste of the innermost *chayus* of the world to be revealed with the coming of Moshiach.

In this vein, the Rebbe cites in a footnote that the Baal Shem Tov's famous teacher, Achiya Hashiloni, was referred to as the "*Chaya-Yechida*," and likewise the Rabbeim in each generation, who taught Chassidus—a taste of the times of Moshiach—are considered the *yechida haklolis*, the communal *yechida* of all of *klal Yisroel*. This is what our Rabbeim are at their very essence—revealing and teaching Chassidus as we draw closer and closer to the *geula*.

The teachings of Chassidus as revealed by the Rabbeim are thus the ultimate preparation of the world for the *geula*, and in fact, they will usher in the coming of Moshiach, כשיפוצו מעיינותיך חוצה, when they finally reach the entire world.

May it be *teikef umiyad Mamosh*.

לשנה טובה בלימוד החסידות ובדרכי החסידות תכתבו ותחתמו,

A Chassidisher Derher

מוצש"ק כף מ"ח ה'תשפ"א
שבעים שנה לנשיאות כ"ק אדמו"ר

1. Sefer Hasichos 5705, p. 129.



It's Up to You

רמב"ם הלכות שמיטה ויובל, יג:יג

וְלֹא שָׁבַט לוֹי בְּלֶבֶד אֱלֹא כָּל אִישׁ וְאִישׁ מִכָּל בְּאֵי הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר נִדְבָה רוּחוֹ אוֹתוֹ וְהִבִּינֵנוּ מִדַּעַו לְהַבְדִּיל לְעַמּוּד לִפְנֵי ה' לְשִׁרְתוֹ וּלְעַבְדוֹ לְדַעַה אֶת ה' וְהִלָּךְ יֵשֶׁר כְּמוֹ שֶׁעָשָׂהוּ הָאֱלֹהִים וּפָרַק מֵעַל צְוָאָרוֹ עַל הַחֲשִׁבּוֹנוֹת הַרְבִּים אֲשֶׁר בִּקְשׂוּ בְּנֵי הָאָדָם הֲרִי זֶה נִתְקַדֵּשׁ קֹדֶשׁ קַדְשִׁים וְיִהְיֶה ה' חֵלְקוֹ וְנִחְלָתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וּלְעוֹלָמֵי עוֹלָמִים וְיִזְכָּה לוֹ בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה דְבַר הַמַּסְפִּיק לוֹ כְּמוֹ שֶׁזָּכָה לַכֹּהֲנִים וְלַלְוִיִּם. הֲרִי דָוִד עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם אָמַר "ה' מִנְתַּחֲלָקִי וְכֹסֵי אֶתָּה תוֹמִיד גּוֹרְלִי

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

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

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

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

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



מחזור הארבעים
40
CYCLES OF
LEARNING RAMABM

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



<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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Kennedy's Assassination and Kuntres Bad Kodesh

KISLEV 5724*



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



THE NEWLY PRINTED KUNTRES

KEHOT PUBLICATION SOCIETY

came as a continuation of the Rosh Hashanah farbrengen:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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





GPO

AMBASSADOR HARMAN (SECOND FROM LEFT) AND PRIME MINISTER ESHKOL MEETING WITH PRESIDENT JOHNSON, 1964.

Shazar told the Rebbe that as part of his regular *shiur* Chassidus he learns “*Shoresh Mitzvas HaTefillah*” from the Tzemach Tzedek with the participants. The Rebbe voiced his surprise at this, being as it is a very long *maamar*. The Rebbe also noted that, recently, the *maamar* was printed from the *ksav yad* of the Tzemach Tzedek.

Shazar mentioned that they want to start learning in the *shiur* the *hemshech* of *maamarim* from the Alter Rebbe titled “*Es’halech Liozna.*” The Rebbe responded that if the participants of the *shiur* want this, and everybody is in agreement with this—then “I am very happy, and it should be *b’hatzlacha.*”

The Rebbe also inquired how Mr. Shazar is doing, since he sees from the newspapers that he is working many hours. The Rebbe added that, probably, he is doing all this in a manner of *בכל דרכיך דעהו*.

During the conversation, the Rebbe said that he had hoped they would be able to be together on Yud-Tes Kislev, but being that this will not be the case (as was mentioned earlier), therefore, they will be together in *machshava.*

Shazar commented about the riots that occurred recently here in America, and the Rebbe responded that there is a major difference between the riots that took place here and riots that take place in Eretz Yisroel: The riots that happened here are in the name of only a specific group of Yidden, not in the name of all Jews. Riots that happen in Eretz Yisroel, on the other hand, are translated by the rest of the world to mean that *all* Yidden have that same agenda. Shazar commented that the organizers of the recent riots claimed that Lubavitch also agreed with the rioting, to which the Rebbe responded that they themselves are against Lubavitch...



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 284918

ZALMAN SHAZAR AT THE YUD TES KISLEV FARBRENGEN IN Kfar CHABAD, 5724.

During the call, Shazar also invited the Rebbe to come visit Eretz Yisroel.

On Shabbos there was a farbrengen but there was no *maamar*. I trust that by the next time I write to you I will already have a *hanacha* of the *sicha*, and I will send it to you.

The piece of news which is most worthy of note though, is the following, and I ask you to please not spread it amongst the *bochurim*.

This past Thursday, Yud-Beis Kislev, the Rebbe had an incident with his heart. The Rebbe did not let anything show at all, even taking people in for *yechidus* that night. It is so not visible on the Rebbe that there is anything wrong, that had I not have heard it from Dr. Seligson myself—I would never have believed it:

As I was leaving 770 after Shacharis on Thursday morning, I saw Dr. Seligson exit the building in a haste and go into his car. He looked very disturbed. The unusual haste with which he came out of 770 really piqued my curiosity. I decided to stay in the area in case of any developments.

Sure enough, after a short while, Dr. Seligson returned to 770 and went into *gan eden hatachton*, coming back out together with Rabbi Leibel Groner. There was no one else outside when they took a

type of medical device out of the car and quickly brought it into the Rebbe's room. I think I was the only one to notice all of this because the whole thing took a matter of seconds.

After more than an hour, Dr. Seligson exited the Rebbe's room. When I approached him and asked him what had happened, at first he tried to avoid the question. But after I told him that I had seen them carrying the machine, he agreed to tell me the general situation on condition that I do not publicize it.

This is what he told me: At around 10:00 a.m. when Rabbi Groner went in to notify the Rebbe about *krias haTorah*, the Rebbe asked him to call for Dr. Seligson after Shacharis. When he arrived, the Rebbe told him that the day before he had strained himself and had afterwards felt pain in the heart (or the heart area), and he had also hurt his foot. The Rebbe wanted him to perform a cardiogram for him.

After he brought the machine to 770, he asked Rabbi Groner to bring two benches into the Rebbe's room and to arrange them next to each other. As Rabbi Groner was arranging the benches, the Rebbe said to him with a smile that he will probably not make a big deal out of this... Then Dr. Seligson went inside and was alone with the Rebbe.

He did not say exactly what happened in the room, except that the machine showed that, in general, everything is in order, besides some minor issues. He also shared with me that he suggested to the Rebbe that he should have with him medicine for heart pains in case he will need it. But the Rebbe asked him to instead give him something that will take care of the issue completely, so that he will not need to take anything else in the future.

Regarding the pain in the Rebbe's foot, the Rebbe said that he does not know what he did that caused it, but that he will try to walk slower. The Rebbe also said that the Rebbetzin does not know about this, and that she had asked him in the morning why he is walking slower than usual.

It is interesting that even with all of this, the Rebbe did not go home by car, rather by foot. It is also worth noting that the same night that this all happened, the Rebbe received people for *yechidus* almost until midnight! This is totally not within the normal human capacity...

The *Aibershter* should send a *refua shelaima* to the Rebbe Shlita, and we should be *zoche* that he should lead us, in good health, to Eretz Yisroel *b'karov mammash*. ❶



RABBI YOSEF GOLDSTEIN



כתב יד קודש

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות
לכ"ק אדמו"ר

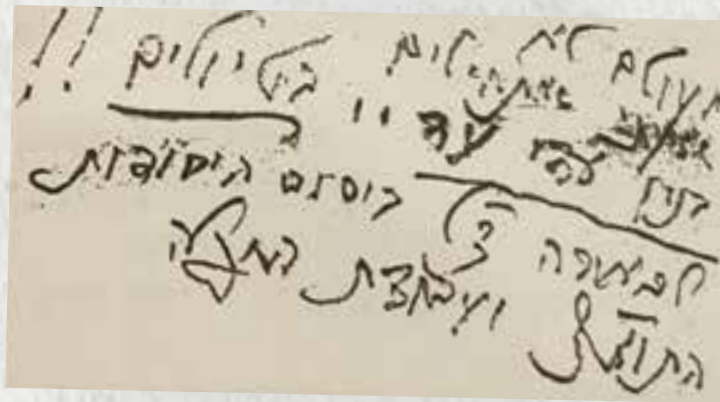
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בכל אתר ואתר
המסורים לענייני כ"ק אדמו"ר
באופן ד"תיר מבחיה"ל" ממש

נדפס ע"י
הרוצה בעילום שמו



From the Ground Up

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



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

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

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

לכאורה צ"ל ביסוס היסודות

התומ"צ ועבודת התפלה



The MEZRITCHER MAGGID



A Reinvigorating Vision

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

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

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

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

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

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

Reb Berenyu

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

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

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

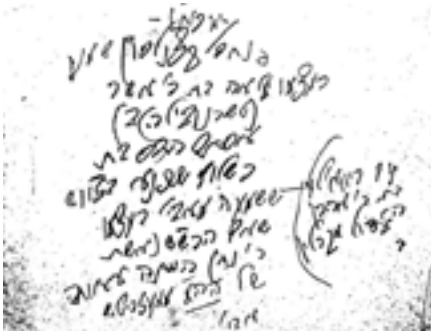
At first, he studied Torah under the tutelage of Reb Dovber [Berish] Halbershtat, the rav of Lukatch. When he grew further in his learning, the rav suggested his own father-in-law, Reb Yehoshua Falk—the Pnei Yehoshua. For several years the Maggid learned Torah in his yeshiva and reached significant heights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

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

The Rebbe's Relation

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

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



The First Meeting

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A New Style

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

New Achievements

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

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

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

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

The First Torah

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

(*Hayom Yom 24 Av*)

permitted to daven at the *amud* but now the practice was discontinued.¹⁰

The Maggid set up his *talmidim* in places where he knew they would have maximum influence. His first shlichim to Lithuania, a great center of learning in *nigleh*, were *gedolim* in *pnimius haTorah* but they experienced significant difficulties in their shlichus. Afterwards, the Maggid sent students who were great in *nigleh* as well, such as the Alter Rebbe, and Chassidus began to make significant inroads in those areas too. Within five to six years of his leadership, Chassidus had spread throughout a large expanse of Eastern Europe.

A Growing Problem

The growth of the new movement frightened its opponents. Many of the leading Torah scholars of the day opposed the newfound emphasis on *avodas hatefillah and ahavas Yisroel*. Additionally, Jewish affairs were tightly controlled by community leaders and the idea of separate shuls and Jewish infrastructures presented a significant threat to their monopoly.

Initially, the opposition was muted. During the Baal Shem Tov's generation, the opposition was small and largely ideological, and even during the first 10 years of the Maggid's leadership, when Chassidus made much greater inroads, the opposition didn't take on an ugly form.

But 5530* (תק"ל) marked a turning point. Around that year, as the Frieddiker Rebbe related in a famous letter to the Rebbe,¹³ Reb Avraham Kalisker began teaching students a new approach to *darkei haChassidus* which entailed severe exercises in *bittul*: They would publicly humiliate themselves, wear simple clothing, do somersaults and daven with wild motions. He had a group of very talented young men who disregarded their own dignity and often went out of their way to deride the *misnagdim* as well.

The antics of these Chassidim played into the hands of the *misnagdim*, who grabbed the opportunity to put an end to this increasingly bothersome new movement.

For the first 10 years of his *nesius*, the Maggid had been living in the town of Mezritch, where he held the title Maggid of the city. He also was—for some period of time—the official Maggid of nearby Koznitz as well. However, at some point before 5532* (תקל"ב), for reasons unbeknownst to us, the Maggid moved from Mezritch to Rovno (his hometown, according to some accounts), which was some 40 kilometers west of Mezritch.¹⁴

During the winter of 5532* (תקל"ב), with the persecution of Chassidim becoming stronger, the Maggid sent his *talmidim* to attempt to resolve the *machlokes*. The Alter Rebbe traveled to Vilna with Reb Mendel Horodoker to meet with the Gaon, but to their disappointment, he refused to receive them.

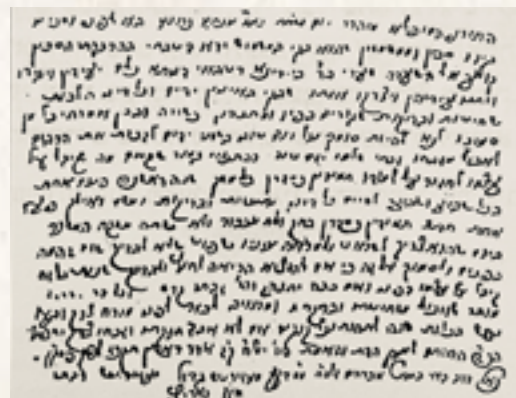
Afterwards, the Alter Rebbe traveled with Reb Avraham Kalisker to Shklov, where a debate was held on the merits of Chassidus.

Shklov was a disappointment as well.

Although the questions about Chassidus were answered adequately, the questions posed to Reb Avraham about his Chassidim's conduct were not.

In a letter, the Alter Rebbe described the aftermath of the debate.

"He [Reb Avraham] had no answer for [his students' behavior]. The Shklov rabbis wrote and informed the Vilna Gaon who came to the conclusion that Chassidim should be treated as *apikorsim* who humiliate *talmidei chachamim*, and that the somersaults are a form of *avodah zarah* [this is a reference to the *cherem* declared on Chassidim].



KSAV YAD KODESH OF THE MEZRICHER MAGGID

Defining the Differences

During the Maggid's *nesius*, Chassidim began to take on a number of distinct *minhagim*. It was during these years—notably during the end of the Maggid's *nesius*—that Chassidim became more distinguishable from other Jews in many ways.

Perhaps the most significant of those changes was the widespread adoption of Nusach Ari (Nusach Sefard), under the Maggid's instructions.

The Maggid's *beis medrash* also was the source of new *piskei halacha*. Although there is almost no *nigleh* recorded in the Maggid's *sefer*, *Maggid Devarav L'Yaakov*, we know that there was a strong emphasis on *halacha*, especially on practical *halacha l'maaseh*.

The greatest example may be the Maggid's appointment of the Alter Rebbe to formulate an updated and enhanced version of the Shulchan Aruch. The *halacha sefarim* of the day were already hundreds of years old and the Maggid wanted a *halacha sefer* that was up-to-date and would provide final rulings and clarification to the many questions that arose since the *piskei dinim* of the Beis Yosef and Rema had been published.

Similarly, the only known *haskama* written by the Maggid is to *Halacha Pesukah*, a compilation of *halacha l'maaseh* for the laws of Yoreh Deah.¹¹

We know of several *piskei halacha* that can be attributed to the Maggid himself.¹²

Matzah Shruyah

“Over the past 20 years,” the Alter Rebbe writes, “a *zehirus* has spread through the holy nation of Israel, to hurry the kneading of the dough. Sometimes, the kneading isn't completed well, and therefore some flour may be left on the matzah.”

The Alter Rebbe doesn't identify the source of the custom, but his *talmid*, Reb Yitzchok Eizik of Vitebsk, writes that the custom stemmed from “*Raboseniu*, our teachers of Mezritch.”

Doubly-sharpened Chalaf

The Alter Rebbe was a notable proponent of the doubly-sharpened shechita knife. His brother, Reb Yehudah Leib, wrote about the source of the custom:

“Our first rabbis to introduce it were the famous *shochtim* of Mezritch with the support of the great Maggid and, following his lead, all of his students.”

This was a flashing point in the controversy between Chassidim and *misnagdim*, which stemmed not so much from a halachic point of view but from pure animosity. In the Alter Rebbe's own words:

“When Reb Chaim Volozhiner visited our region in 5563*, he told several prominent members of the community, not from *anash*, in the name of his Rebbe, the Chossid [the Gra] *z"l* that there is no prohibition on the doubly-sharpened knives from Gemara or *poskim*. If he forbade the use of those knives, it was as a *harchaka*, similar to the other *harchakos* and *gezeiros* that were said as a *שגגה מפ"י*—a mistake from the mouth of the ruler,³ in the year 5532* (תקל"ב) [regarding Chassidim] as literal *apikorsim*...”

Over the years, as more *rabbonim* and *poskim* began to learn about the Maggid's *chalaf*, they quickly understood its halachic benefits. Today, the Maggid's *shechitah* is the only *shechitah* accepted throughout the Jewish world.

Selling Chametz after the Zman

Will the sale of chametz after the *zman biur* protect the individual from transgressing *bal yera'eh*?

According to the Maggid's *talmid* Reb Yitzchok Eizik of Koritz, “there was a similar story in Mezritch... and I heard from the Maggid in the name of [his teacher] Reb Berish that a similar story took place during his *rabbanus* in Lukatch, and he leaned towards *heter* because the *goy* acquired the chametz.”

A Sircha

A major controversy arose between Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berdichev and the other *rabbonim* in his city regarding the *hechsher* of a certain *sircha*. When the Alter Rebbe visited Berdichev after Reb Levi Yitzchok's passing, the question was brought to him. In his response, where he supported Reb Levi Yitzchok's position, he attributed it to a discussion he had with the Maggid:

“In the summer of 5532* (תקל"ב), when I was in the home of the Rebbe in Rovno, he agreed with this opinion, and brought the following proof from Gemara...”

“From Vilna they wrote to Brod, where they published the Kuntres *Z'mir Aritzim* [a hate-filled polemic against Chassidim] that summer.

“All the *tzaddikim* of Vohlin [a region in Poland] suffered greatly and could no longer remain in their homes. They all gathered to Rovno, to the home of Rabbeinu Hagadol, to come up with a solution.”¹⁵

The Alter Rebbe and Reb Avraham Kalisker also traveled to Rovno following the debate in Shklov. Knowing that the Maggid was disappointed in his behavior (to put it mildly), Reb Avraham remained at the edge of the city until the Alter Rebbe arranged for Reb Mendel Horodoker to plead on his behalf before the Maggid. When the Maggid did receive him, he rebuked him severely.

However, the deed was done. The constant persecution was the new reality for all Chassidim, not just for Reb Avraham Kalisker and his *talmidim*, and the matter needed to be resolved.

The continuation of the story is recorded in Beis Rebbe:

Among the *talmidim* gathered in Rovno was Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev who at that time was the rav of Pinsk. In his absence, the *misnagdim* in his city appointed a new rav by the name of Avigdor, who later became infamous as the *mosser* of the Alter Rebbe.

Afraid that Reb Levi Yitzchak would return to demand his post, Avigdor attempted to chase his family out of the city. In distress, they dispatched a letter to Rovno.

When the *talmidim* read about the persecution of their colleague's family, they suggested that the letter be read before the Maggid during the Shabbos *seudah*. Reb Levi Yitzchak indeed read the letter but the Maggid didn't respond.

On Motzei Shabbos, the *talmidim* gathered for a meeting. In desperation, they decided that there was no choice but to declare a *cherem* against the *misnagdim*, based on the *psak din* in Shulchan Aruch regarding someone who was unlawfully put in *cherem*.¹⁶ Nine *talmidim* were present, and they convinced the Alter Rebbe to join, thereby achieving the necessary *minyán*.

That night, the tapping of the Maggid's crutches was heard approaching the room.

“My children, what have you done tonight?”

The *talmidim* admitted that they had reached the breaking point.

“You should know,” the Maggid said, “that with this you have lost your head,” intimating that he would soon pass away.

“But what you have gained,” he continued, “is that whenever there will be a *machlokes* between Chassidim and *misnagdim*, the Chassidim will gain the upper hand, יד החסידיים על העליונה.”

I Need the Merchandise

The Mezritcher Maggid had an old friend from before he became a *talmid* of the Baal Shem Tov. This friend once met the Maggid and asked him why he davens for so long.

“I also think all the *kavanos* of the Arizal,” he said, “yet my davening is not nearly as long as yours.”

Instead of answering his question, the Maggid asked him what he does for a living. He answered that his wife owns a store and earns a comfortable living, so he is free to learn Torah. Once a year though, he has to travel to the wholesale market and buy products to keep the store stocked. Of course, even while on the road, he never misses his regular *shiurim* so the journey ends up taking a few weeks.

“I don't understand,” said the Maggid, “why travel all the way to the market and go through all the trouble? Wouldn't it be easier to just imagine you were traveling, and then imagine you were buying the merchandise, and imagine you were coming home? That way, you can be done in a couple of hours instead of a few weeks!”

“But I need the merchandise!” his friend answered.

The same applies to davening, explained the Maggid.

“I need the merchandise.”

The Rebbe explained many times that the Maggid meant: If you wish to have the positive impact of the *kavanos*, you need to actually reach and attain all the levels you are contemplating about, and that takes a long time!

(*Toras Menachem* vol. 3, p. 239, et. al. *Reshimas Hayoman* p. 391).

A First Hand Account

Segments of a description from a visitor to Mezritch:

“A young man who had been initiated into the society of Chassidim, and who had had the good fortune to have spoken with its leaders face to face, passed through the place where I was staying. In an attempt to seize the opportunity, I asked the stranger to explain the organization of the society, how one became a member, etc.”

The Chossid explained to the young man that anyone who strives for perfection was already considered a Chossid. The *tzaddikim*, he said, could see straight into one’s heart and discover what was hidden inside it. He also mentioned that they didn’t compose sermons. They saw themselves as *bottul* to Hashem, and hence, Hashem would speak through them as long as they didn’t add anything of their own.

“The stranger’s description delighted me; so I asked them to share some of these divine teachings. He pressed his hand to his forehead, as though waiting for inspiration from the holy spirit. Then he turned to me, and with a solemn expression and arms sticking out of their sleeves, he began to speak...”

The Chossid related several *toros* of the Maggid [which are actually included in *Maggid Devarav L’Yaakov*].

“I couldn’t help but admire the high quality of these thoughts and I was impressed with the ingenious exegesis supporting them. The stranger’s account of the movement fired my imagination, I wanted nothing so much as to have the good fortune to be part of such a praiseworthy group. And so, I decided to travel to Mezritch, where the leader, Ber, lived.

“The journey took several weeks. After resting a while, I went to the leader’s house, hoping to be introduced to him immediately. I was told that he couldn’t speak with me just yet. But I was invited to share a meal with him on Shabbos together with other guests, who had also come to visit him. I would then have the good fortune of speaking with the holy man in person and hearing the most exalted teachings directly from his mouth. In other words, our meeting was to be open to others, but it would have individual parts meant just for me, and I should therefore consider it as a special audience.

“I arrived on Shabbos for the festive meal and found that a large number of important men from all over the region had gathered for the occasion. The great man finally appeared, cutting an impressive figure, dressed as he was in a white robe. Even his shoes and his tobacco container were white. He gave each one of the arrivals *shalom*, that is, the great man greeted each of them.

“We sat down to eat, and a solemn silence reigned during the meal. After we had finished, the leader sang a celebratory, spiritually uplifting melody.

“He held his hand in front of his forehead for a few moments, and then began to call: Z. From H.! M. from R.! S.M. from N.! — the names and places of residence of all the new arrivals, something that astonished us more than a little.

“Each of us was asked to recite a verse from Tanach. We did this. Thereupon the leader began to give a sermon, taking the verses we had recited as the text. Even though they were completely unconnected verses from the different books of Tanach, he linked them together with such artistry that they seemed to form a single whole. Even more extraordinary was that each of us felt that the part of the sermon dealing with his words contained something referring directly to his own pressing personal concerns. Naturally we were amazed.”

Rosho Ketem Paz

The Maggid's final months were spent in the town of Anipoli. The Alter Rebbe and many of the *talmidim* were still present.

In the days leading up to the *histalkus*, he shared several *divrei Torah* with his *talmidim* and with the Alter Rebbe individually. [These were shared by the Alter Rebbe at the *shalom zachar* of the Tzemach Tzedek. The Alter Rebbe's son, Reb Chaim Avraham, later recounted them to the Tzemach Tzedek's oldest son Reb Baruch Shalom, who shared them with the Raza and the Rebbe Rashab. The Rebbe Rashab, in turn, shared them with the Frierdiker Rebbe in the year 5666* (תרס"ו) who transcribed them in his diary.¹⁷]

During one conversation on Sunday, 17 Kislev, the Maggid told the Alter Rebbe that during a person's final three days, he sees only the *dvar Hashem* in physical matter.

On Tuesday, Yud-Tes Kislev 5533* (תקל"ג), the Maggid was *nistalek*, and buried in Anipoli.

The following story is recorded in Beis Rebbe:

A disagreement arose between the local *chevra kadisha* and the *talmidim*, regarding who would have the merit to participate in the *taharah*. A *din Torah* ensued, and the final ruling was that the *chevra kadisha*, along with any *talmid* who was a member of the *chevra kadisha* in his hometown, would carry out the *taharah*.

The Alter Rebbe, as a member of the Liozna *chevra kadisha*, was permitted to participate. A raffle was held over who would do the *taharah* of the Maggid's holy head, and the Alter Rebbe won.

When they brought the Maggid's *guf* to the *mikveh*, the Alter Rebbe said:

"Our *chachamim* said, גדולים צדיקים במיתתן, יותר מבחייהן—*tzaddikim* are greater after their passing than during their lifetime.' Our Rebbe should *tovel* his own head in the water."

And that is what happened. The Maggid bent over and *toiveled* his head in the water three times. **T**

1. See Toras Shalom pg. 83, Hatomim 140-142.

2. Toras Menachem 5745 vol. 1 pg. 243.

3. Reb Yisrael Ruzhiner was a great-grandson of the Maggid, and many anecdotes about the Maggid were passed down through his family.

4. Os 424.
5. Shabbos Parshas Noach 5721, Sichos Kodesh ois 4.
6. Sefer Hasichos 5704 pg. 130-131
7. Likutei Sichos vol. 3 pg. 874.
8. Sichos Kodesh 5721, Simchas Beis Hashoevah os 6
9. Yoman of Reb Moshe Slonim, *Lubavitch Sheb'Lubavitch*, issue 5 (14).
10. See Sefer Hasichos 5709, pg. 291.
11. *The Great Maggid* pg. 171
12. All of these examples are collected in *Toldos Chabad B'Rusia Hatzaris*, pg. 13 and on.
13. Hatomim Issue 2 pg. 156
14. *Toldos Chabad Brusia Hatzaris*, pg. 13 and on.
15. *Igros Kodesh Admur Hazakein* pg. 344.
16. Yoreh Deah, siman 334 se'if 39.
17. Sefer Hasichos 5703 pg. 155.
18. *Shnei Hameoros* pg. 60.
19. *Igeres Hakodesh* siman 25.
20. *Toras Shalom* pg. 47

On A Journey


The Baal Shem Tov once asked a Chossid to convey his regards to the Maggid, who served as a poor *melamed* at the time. With great difficulty the messenger found the Maggid's small and neglected home. The visitor found him seated on a rough block of wood, with his students seated on planks of wood supported by similar blocks of wood. The only other furniture in the room was a wooden table.

Since the Maggid was in the middle of teaching, the visitor agreed to return later. When he did so, he found the scene changed. The pupils had gone; the "table" had been converted into a "bed;" the Maggid was still seated on the block of wood, studying alone. The visitor could not hide his astonishment at the conditions in which the great rabbi lived.

"Do you have nicer furnishings with you?" the Maggid asked.

"In my home you will find a chair, a bench, a bed and other home furnishings. Obviously, while on a journey it is different."

"Indeed," the Maggid answered, "on a journey things are different." (In other words, our time in this world is merely a journey for the *neshamas*, and overindulgence in materialism is unnecessary.)



Words of the Living G-d

Thirty years after the Maggid's passing, a controversy arose on the topic of Chabad Chassidus. Reb Avraham Kalisker accused the Alter Rebbe of straying from the true path of Chassidus. The Alter Rebbe, on the other hand, publicly defended himself, asserting that his Chassidus didn't diverge whatsoever from the teachings he had received from the Maggid and his son, Reb Avraham Hamalach. His claim was fiercely supported by Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev.

The basic disagreement was about the role of intellect in the life of a Chossid. According to Reb Avraham, a Chossid's task was to strengthen his simple *emunah* and reach *ahavas Hashem* and *yiras Hashem* through *dveikus* to a *tzaddik*. The Alter Rebbe maintained that every Chossid had a personal responsibility to contemplate matters of *Elokus* and reach *ahavah* and *yirah* on their own. For this reason—to provide a Chossid with the tools for *hisbonenus*—the Alter Rebbe expounded extensively upon the concepts of *Elokus* described in the Kabbalah of the Arizal.

When examining the Maggid's teachings, Chassidus Chabad may indeed seem to be an aberration. Some *talmidim* do record statements of the Maggid about the importance of personal *hisbonenus*, but those statements are not found in his *sefarim*. And while the Maggid did base his Torah on the Arizal's Kabbalah (as opposed to the Baal Shem Tov, who rarely referenced them at all), it takes a comparative back-seat to the main corpus of his teachings, which focus on “*avodah*” and “*mussar*.”

This discussion never really ended. Through the generations, there has always been a stark difference between the styles of Chabad and Chagas Chassidim. A casual observer would automatically assume, based on the external appearances, that Chagas Chassidim were the true heirs of the Baal Shem Tov and Maggid.

However, a closer look at the writings of the Maggid's *talmidim* reveals a different picture.

The Maggid's Torah was recorded by his *talmidim*—primarily Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev—and passed around in manuscript form for several decades. Later, these manuscripts were brought to print by various individuals under different names: *Maggid Devarav L'Yaakov*, *Or Torah*, and so on—but their contents all closely resemble one another.

When comparing those teachings to the *sefarim* of his *talmidim*, the stark differences are inescapable. Each of the Maggid's *talmidim* has a different focus. Kedushas Levi is not similar to Noam Elimelech, and Maor Einayim is not similar to Panim Yafos. In many aspects, their teachings seem to contradict one another.

In a practical sense as well: The Chassidus practiced in Karlin did not resemble the Chassidus of Amdur, and neither of them resembled the Chassidus of Chernobyl. In truth, almost no *talmid* can be described as a “direct successor” to the Maggid.

These differences point to a striking phenomenon: The Maggid managed to attract and retain *talmidim* who were profoundly different from one another. Yet, despite their differences, the teachings of the Maggid served as the basis of their own unique paths in Chassidus.

One *talmid*, Reb Zev of Zhitomir, describes how this unique ability was evident even in a single Torah delivery: From a Torah said before a large gathering of people of all ages and styles, he writes, each individual found a personal lesson and individual message. In a different entry, which perhaps sheds light on this phenomenon, he writes that the Maggid's Torah was delivered with complete *bittul*, as a conduit for the words of the *Shechinah*. "There were times we saw with our own eyes, that *Shechinah medaberes mitoch grono*, they were not his words at all."

Clearly, the Maggid's ideas left space for wide interpretation and application, and no *talmid* or another can be justly accused of misrepresenting his teachings.

However, with regards to the Alter Rebbe, there is another important factor involved. We find that the Maggid held personal discussions with some select *talmidim*—namely, Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev and the Alter Rebbe—where he taught them concepts that he didn't speak of publicly.

Reb Levi Yitzchok transcribed his personal conversations, and they were later printed in *Kedushas Levi* and *Maggid Devarav L'Yaakov*. There, the Maggid dwells at length on topics associated with Kabbalah which are not found in his regular writings.

A close inspection of the writings of the Alter Rebbe and his students reveal that he also received many teachings from the Maggid in a similar manner. His demand for personal *hisbonenus* and the resulting focus on the Arizal's Kabbalah are all clearly attributed to the Maggid and his son Reb Avraham Hamalach.

"I personally heard from the [Alter] Rebbe," writes Reb Eizik Homiler, "that *the Maggid of Mezeritch told him in the name of the Baal Shem Tov... to delve into the concepts which bring a person to ahavas Hashem...*"¹⁸

"It is impossible to properly understand [the concepts of Chassidus]," the Alter Rebbe himself writes elsewhere, "without prefacing from the writings of the Arizal . . . as I received from my Rebbes..."¹⁹

A long list of uniquely Chabad concepts are linked directly to the Maggid. These include concepts such as the difference between *Atzmus* and *ein sof*, the meaning of *ein aroch* and the interpretation of *tzimtzum shelo kipshuto*, to name just a few.

From these *maamarim*, many of which were published only in recent decades, it is clear that the Alter Rebbe's Chassidus indeed had a firm foundation in the Torah he received—albeit privately—from the Maggid. As Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev attested, "We all ate from the same plate in Mezritch, but the Litvak [the Alter Rebbe] took the *smetene* [the fattiest portion]."²⁰

The Maggid gave over these concepts to the Alter Rebbe as *nekudos*, and he expanded upon them greatly "after Petersburg," when he returned from his imprisonment with a newfound liberty to spread the *maayanos* of Chassidus.

In a famous letter published in Hatomim, the Frieddiker Rebbe compared the progression from the Maggid to the Alter Rebbe to the growth of flax and its ultimate refinement into fine cloth. Although the first stage is the growth of the rough product, the ultimate goal is for the production of a much more developed and refined result.

In another *pisgam*, he put it as follows:

"The Baal Shem Tov taught how one *should* serve Hashem. The Alter Rebbe taught how one *could* serve Hashem."

The above segment is based on an essay in Heichal Habaal Shem Tov, Tammuz 5764, pg. 45, by Rabbi Nochum Grunwald.

Rebuilt & Restored — The Maggid's Resting Place

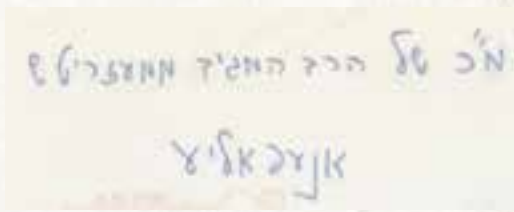
For generations, the Maggid's Ohel in Anipoli, Ukraine, was a treasured place for the Jews of the region. “There are three *Ohalim* next to each other,” the Rov of Anipoli described in 5664* (תרט"ד), “that of the Maggid, Reb Zushe, and Reb Yehuda Leib Hakohen...¹ Only special people are allowed into the Ohel itself, after immersing in the *mikveh* and removing their shoes.”²

Before Reb Aharon Chazan (a Chossid from Russia) immigrated to Eretz Yisrael in 5726*, he visited Anipoli where he was horrified to discover that everything had been uprooted, aside for a few holes in the ground from the sticks that had held up the small wooden *Ohalim*. He asked the rov of nearby Slavita³ to help determine the exact location of the graves and convinced a local Jew—Reb Boruch Shuchat—to arrange for a new *matzeva*.⁴

He left Russia before hearing any results. During a visit to the Rebbe for Yud Shevat 5730*, Rabbi Chazan (along with the Skulener Rebbe) arranged for a *yechidus* to discuss the issue with the Rebbe. The *yechidus* did not materialize, but Rabbi Hodakov asked him to write up a detailed plan — how much it would cost to rebuild, who would do it, and so on — which he would present to the Rebbe.⁵ We do not know what came of this plan, but we do know that the Rebbe opposed the rebuilding of the Baal Shem



THE SLAB OF CONCRETE POURED OVER THE THREE KEVORIM, AS PHOTOGRAPHED BY REB BEREL LEVY IN 5744.



BACK OF THE PICTURE AS GIVEN IN TO THE REBBE



A LETTER, WRITTEN IN BASIC YIDDISH, FROM A LOCAL JEW TO REB AHARON CHAZAN DETAILING THE ATTEMPTS TO REFURBISH THE SITE.

LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASSIDEI CHABAD

CHAZAN FAMILY ARCHIVES

Tov's Ohel, out of an abundance of caution for the safety of the Jews of Russia (however, a basic *matzeva* did exist for the Baal Shem Tov).⁶

As it turned out, Reb Boruch Shuchat had been partially successful. He had bribed a non-Jew to obtain building materials and had begun to restore the *matzeva*, but government officials had stopped the work after a layer of cement had been poured. When one of the local Jews had claimed that it was his grandfather's burial spot, the officials had responded, "We know better than you who is buried there." The Slavita rov was called for a full-night interrogation, and warned that the work should not continue.⁷

It was many years before a proper Ohel was built. In the years of 5749*-5751*, Reb Dovid Nachshon and Reb Avi Taub made a series of journeys — with the Rebbe's guidance — to rebuild all the *Ohalim* of the Rabbeim. In Anipoli, a basic monument had been installed by Karliner Chassidim. With the guidance of a local Jew, Reb Dovid and Reb Avi erected a full Ohel (which has since been refurbished and expanded by other organizations) and exact *matzeivos* were built based on diagrams from Rabbi Chazan. The full text of the Maggid's *matzeiva* was obtained from Sefer Hatoldos.

After the trip, they brought the key of the new Ohel to the Rebbe.⁸ Finally, in 5751* — some 50 years after it had been destroyed — the Maggid's Ohel had been reinstated.

1. Several other prominent Tzaddikim were buried nearby as well.
2. Haskama to *Menoras Zahav*.
3. Rabbi Yitzchok Gedalia Liberzon. Rabbi Liberzon led a small shul in Slavita throughout the years of the Soviet Union, and was the main caretaker of the Maggid's tziyun. His daughters were also instrumental in the rebuilding of the Ohel.
4. *Hama'avak Vehanitzachon* pg. 253-4.
5. Skulener Rebbe's letter to Rabbi Chazan (chabadpedia page on the Maggid), account of Rabbi Yaakov Chazan.
6. *Guidance From the Rebbe* pg. 78. But see also *Hiskashrus* issue 957 pg. 9.
7. Letter from a friend of Reb Boruch to Rabbi Chazan, 1980. (Chazan Family Archives).
8. See *Yoman 13 Cheshvan 5751*.



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REB DOVID NACHSHON AND REB AVI TAUB GIVE THE REBBE THE KEY TO THE MITTELER REBBE'S OHEL, 3 TEVES 5750.



MEASURING THE AREA TO DETERMINE THE ACCURATE LOCATION OF EACH OF THE KEVORIM, SUMMER 5750.



REFURBISHING THE MATZEIVA, CHESHVAN 5751.



BUILDING THE OHEL, CHESHVAN 5751.



THE COMPLETED MATZEIVA AND OHEL, SIVAN 5751

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THE MATZEIVA AND OHEL TODAY, AFTER RENOVATIONS IN 5779.



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

לרגל יום נישואיהם - יום הבהיר
ראש חודש כסלו

ולזכות בנותיהם ברכה ליפשא,
עליזה ושיינדל תחיינה



The Time Is Now!

*THE EVOLVING
REVELATION
OF PNIMIUS
HATORAH*





גל עיני ואביטה נפלאות מתורתך

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

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

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

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

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

Reb Chaim Vital explains at length:

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

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

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

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

The Whole of the Torah

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

(*Yud-Tes Kislev 5722 p. 188*)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Moshiach Through Pnimiyus HaTorah

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

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

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

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

The Only Way to Love Hashem

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

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

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

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

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

In previous generations, people were more spiritual, and they were able to feel *ahavah* and *yira* naturally, even without *pnimiyus haTorah*. But today, with our lower *neshamos*, we are more coarse people—and without *pnimiyus haTorah*, the Rebbe Rashab writes, the *nigleh* “becomes poison for him, *Rachamana litzlan*, for it causes him to fall, as he becomes a big *yesh* and very coarse.”⁸

So far we have established two major reasons for *pnimiyus haTorah*'s being ever more important as we get closer to Moshiach: 1) This is the study that will bring Moshiach. 2) The *neshamos* of our generation are on a lower level, necessitating this study to achieve *ahavah* and *yirah*.

There are several additional reasons for learning Chassidus:

1) Without Chassidus one cannot truly believe in Moshiach, because some things need to be tried in order to be understood. Chassidus is a taste of what the revelation of the time of Moshiach will be like, and to really understand and await that time, one needs to have a taste first.

Like the well known story of the Alter Rebbe: At a time when Chassidim were suffering greatly from their detractors, the Alter Rebbe succeeded in winning

over tens of *misnagdim*, not by logical persuasion to the merits of Chassidus but by simply saying (in his trademark tune): טעמו וראו כי טוב ה'. *Try it and you will see.*⁹

2) In today's day and age, one cannot have *yiras Shamayim* without learning Chassidus.

The obvious question is: Was there no *yiras Shamayim* amongst Jews until a few hundred years ago? The answer is that not all generations are created equal, just as not all people are created equal. Just like in Hilchos Talmud Torah we find that there are different categories of people when it comes to the obligation of Torah study: Some people are only obligated to study Torah for an hour a day while others must study for many hours. Hashem created some people in a way that a little Torah will be enough to sustain them. Similarly, previous generations could have been sustained with little to no Chassidus. Today, however, a Jewish lifestyle without Chassidus is unsustainable.¹⁰

The *Aseres Hadibros* starts off with the greatest and deepest of all mitzvos, to know and understand that there is one G-d. In other words, *achdus Hashem* has a basic element of *emunah* to it which includes the deepest ideas of knowing Hashem.

But then it proceeds to address those who need to be told not to murder, and its not enough to tell them, they needed to hear it with the thunder and lighting of *matan Torah* in order to get it through to them.

These two *dibros* come together for a reason. The only thing that speaks to this Yid is *pnimiyus haTorah*, Chassidus. While the revealed part of his *neshama* is obviously not functioning well, his *pnimiyus haneshama* is awake. But to talk to his *pnimiyus haneshama* you must speak its language, and its language is Chassidus.

On the other hand even a spiritual Jew must learn Chassidus. He cannot rely on his spiritual intuition to keep him safe from “*lo tirtzach*” for the only way to guarantee that you keep “*lo tirtzach*” is if it comes from your knowledge of “*Anochi Hashem Elokecha*”—truly knowing and appreciating Hashem's existence. Today this can only be done properly through learning Chassidus.¹¹

In a letter to Reb Shimon Yisroel Pozen, a Chossid of the Munkatcher Rebbe and a *rosh yeshiva* in Williamsburg, the Rebbe urged him to spread Chassidus, noting that studying Kabbalah without Chassidus is dangerous because one will not know how to be *mafshit hadevarim m'gashmiyusan* (properly understand the lofty, G-dly concepts for the abstract matter

But why specifically Chabad Chassidus? Doesn't Chassidus come in various forms?

Evolving Revelation

The revelation of *pnimiyus haTorah* occurred in a process that spanned many generations. As we grew closer to Moshiach, the deepest secrets of the Torah were revealed in ways unimaginable in the past.

The greatest revelation of *pnimiyus haTorah* occurred at *matan Torah*, when the Yidden saw Hashem's *merkava* revealed before them (whereas *nigleh* of Torah was only hinted within the *Aseres Hadibros*). Afterwards, however, the study of Kabbalah was very limited; only being taught to select people who had the proper level of *yiras Shamayim* and not in public settings.

Many notable figures in Jewish history authored works on Kabbalah, beginning with Avraham Avinu (who authored *Sefer Yetzira*) and Moshe Rabbeinu (who authored *Raaya Mehemna*). The *nevi'im* throughout the generations spent their lives contemplating the secrets of Hashem's greatness, as the Rambam describes at length. But the majority of Yidden did not learn it at all. And it wasn't only that they didn't learn it—they *couldn't* learn it, for these were the secrets of Hashem's wisdom, the *sod* of Torah that was not meant for the masses.

The first step in the revelation of Kabbalah was the revelation of the Zohar, authored by the Rashbi—yet, he only allowed one student to transcribe his teachings and even he was told to keep it quiet.

Many generations later came the Arizal, who declared that it was now, “permitted and a mitzvah to reveal this wisdom.” His *sefarim* were accepted throughout the Jewish world and many Kabbalistic *minhagim* and *halachos* have become common practice. Still, it was very limited. The only student who was allowed to transcribe his teachings was Reb Chaim Vital—and he ordered his writings buried with him. (It was dug up later upon receiving approval in a dream.)

The Baal Shem Tov was the one who revealed Chassidus and brought *pnimiyus haTorah* to the masses, through stories and inspiring teachings so that even the simplest of people could live their lives with the energy and lifestyle of Chassidus, with an emphasis on the love of Hashem and fellow Yidden, even if they couldn't comprehend it themselves. But when it came to the *study* of Kabbalah—the Baal Shem Tov emphasized that it should be limited to those who could remove it from its physical trappings and understand the underlying abstract concepts.

The Mezritcher Maggid spoke Chassidus more openly, without clothing it in stories, but he did so only for his select students.

With the revelation of Chassidus Chabad, the Alter Rebbe affected a fundamental revolution in the study of *pnimiyus haTorah*. Up until that point, the study of *pnimiyus haTorah*—the study of Hashem Himself—was limited to spiritual people who could inherently relate to such concepts by virtue of their lofty *neshamos* and

it is, without getting distracted by the material-sounding terms).¹²

But why specifically Chabad Chassidus? Doesn't Chassidus come in various forms?

We'll understand this with a *mashal*:

When a new disease is discovered, it requires a new type of medicine or treatment. Also, if an old disease becomes prevalent again it is necessary to increase the power of the medication or the vaccine.

This is all true even for those who are not sick. Everyone must take necessary precautions to protect themselves and perhaps vaccinate themselves from the ensuing danger.

Today's spiritual dangers occupy people's mind and intellect. In order to combat that, the cure must be one that can consume and enchant the human intellect; i.e. Chabad Chassidus.¹³

In another letter¹⁴ the Rebbe responds to this very question in a different way by comparing the

works of the other Chassidus to Mishna and Chabad Chassidus to Gemara. It would be silly to ask why one must learn Gemara if most of it is anyway just explaining the Mishna...

To the argument that they all come from the same source, the Baal Shem Tov, the Rebbe responded:

One only needs to take a look at the works of the other students of the Baal Shem Tov to see the difference between Chagas and Chabad Chassidus.

avodas Hashem. A regular person using his physical brain would have no entry into even beginning to comprehend *pinimiyus haTorah*. Just as you cannot capture smell with your ears, and you cannot hear music with logic, *pinimiyus haTorah* was a spiritual arena *unexplainable* in logical terms.

The Alter Rebbe changed this forever. As a *neshama chadasha*, he took the deepest secrets of *pinimiyus haTorah* and *put it into intellect*. By studying Chassidus Chabad, every person is able to access the depths of *pinimiyus haTorah* in an intellectual manner. After his release from imprisonment—which signified the divine agreement to the dissemination of Chassidus—the Alter Rebbe declared that Chassidus is for the entire *klal Yisroel*, it is now a part of Torah that everyone can and must learn.

With every subsequent generation, as the time for Moshiach comes ever closer, *pinimiyus haTorah* has become more understood and more available, reaching ever growing audiences, as each Rebbe continued the revelation of Chassidus. The very same concepts that the Alter Rebbe said succinctly were developed and explained further by each Rebbe, revealing ever further depth.¹⁶ The Friediker Rebbe truly brought it to the world, explaining it in simple terms and translating it into multiple languages so that even people who didn't understand *Lashon Hakodesh* or Yiddish are able to study the deepest secrets of the Torah.

(It should be noted that this wasn't a risk-free endeavor, to say the least. The Rabbeim were subject to dangerous *kitrugim* from above about the validity of spreading Chassidus in such a free manner, leading to severe imprisonment and more.)

In our generation, the final generation before the *geula*, the Rebbe campaigned for the study and dissemination of *pinimiyus haTorah* with tremendous urgency, at unprecedented levels. While the Friediker Rebbe expected regular Chassidim to study Chassidus three times a week (and only *temimim* to learn it every day), the Rebbe expected everyone to learn Chassidus on a daily basis. Whereas in previous generations tremendous care was taken about explaining Chassidus using "*osiyos harav*"—the words and terminology of the Rabbeim—the Rebbe encouraged adaptations and explanations of Chassidus in all languages and styles. Whereas previous Rabbeim allowed only a few *sefarim* of Chassidus to be published, the Rebbe published hundreds, opening the entire archive of the Rabbeim's manuscripts to be published.

(Here, too, the Rebbe alluded to *kitrugim* that came as a result, see *Establishing a Yom Tov*, Derher Teves 5775.)

Often quoting the words of Reb Chaim Vital, the Rebbe exerted tremendous efforts so that every type of person can study *pinimiyus haTorah*. "The demand of Reb Chaim Vital to study *pinimiyus haTorah* is accepted by all communities of Yidden—Sefardim, Ashkenazim, Litvishe, Hungarians, Lubavitchers—for Reb Chaim Vital was accepted by all!"

Chagas Chassidus is mostly brief anecdotes and even with great labor, it is doubtful that the student will understand the true depth and meaning of what they're reading. Just as you can hardly trust yourself to arrive at the breadth and depth of the explanations of the Gemara on your own, just from the words of the Mishna.

This is in addition to the fact that the Gemara includes many *chidushim* not attainable from the Mishna.

The Rebbe also notes that the tremendous benefits of Chassidus have a positive effect as soon as one begins to learn it. Just as someone who enters a store of perfumes, even before he purchases anything, the beautiful smell already sticks to him.¹⁵ **T**

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1. The Rebbe would often point to certain details in *nigleh* that have no true reasoning without *pinimiyus haTorah*.

2. Mishlei, 10.
3. Zohar vol. 1 117a.
4. Zohar vol. 3 124b.

5. See *Investing in the Real Future*, Derher Sivan 5779.

6. Shabbos Parshas Bereishis 5729; *Toras Menachem* vol. 54, p. 241. Et. al.

7. *Kuntres Eitz Hachayim* p. 39-41.

8. *Kuntres Eitz Hachayim* p. 43.

9. *Toras Menachem* vol. 9 p. 65

10. *Toras Menachem* vol. 30 p. 331.

11. *Toras Menachem* vol. 33 p. 111.

12. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 22 p. 58.

13. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 12 p. 364

14. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 14 p. 406

15. *Toras Menachem* vol. 9 p. 66.

16. See *Toras Menachem* vol. 14 p. 80

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



Physician To Royalty

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



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 191042

WITH RABBI KAZARNOVSKY, 29
ELUL 5740

* 5740 35

Early Life

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

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

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

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

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

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



RABBI MICHOEL SELIGSON

AVROHOM SELIGSON IN HIS EARLY 20S

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

YALE UNIVERSITY
THE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

April 27, 1938

Dear Dr. Seligson:

Thanks greatly for the reprint of your excellent paper published in *La Presse Médicale* with its carefully made observations on a case of presumed pituitary basophilism.

We unfortunately have made no observations on the presence in the blood of the adrenocortical hormone, and perhaps should do so.

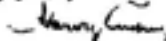
You are of course aware that from a clinical standpoint it is most difficult or impossible to differentiate between the clinical syndrome produced by a basophilic (pituitary) adenoma and an adrenocortical adenoma or adenocarcinoma.

The striae distense in both are apt to be of a deep purple color; whereas the striae in your patient as well as those that occur in typhoid fever, etc., are usually pale in color.

That we are chiefly interested in at the present time are the postmortem findings in the clinical diagnosis without verification at necropsy at the present time remains only a guess.

Always with regards, I am

Sincerely yours,



Healthy Digestion

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

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

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

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

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

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

RABBI MICHAEL SELIGSON

CORRESPONDENCE WITH DR. CUSHING

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

Shanghai

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

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

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



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

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

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

America

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

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

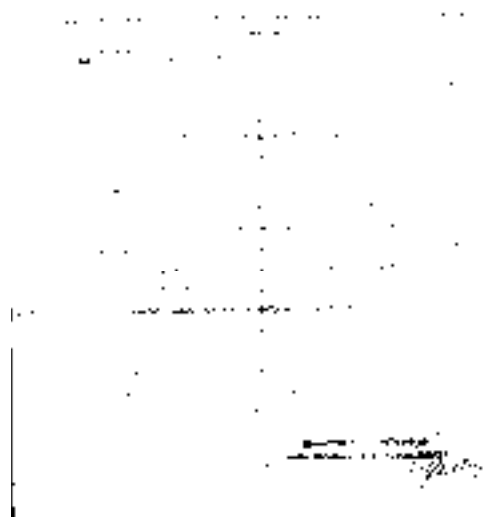


A REPORT FROM 5710 ABOUT DOCTORS VOLUNTEERING FOR A DAY CAMP.

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

Marriage

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



THE REBBE AT DR. SELIGSON'S CHUPPAH

RABBI MICHAEL SELIGSON

Dr. Seligson would be considered a *gaon*.

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

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

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

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

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

chosson enter and exit first since he was comparable to a king.

The Rebbe was mesader kiddushin and recited all of the Sheva Brachos. The Rebbe offered the final bracha to the father of the Kallah, who refused and requested that the Rebbe recite the final bracha as well. The Rebbe watched the *bochurim* dance for several minutes and then returned to 770. After the wedding, the Rebbetzin borrowed the wedding album from Mrs. Seligson for a few days. It was understood that she wanted the album to show the Rebbe.

Several years later Reb Moshe Groner collected all the photos of the Rebbe then available, most of which were from when the Rebbe was mesader kiddushin. He showed them to the Rebbetzin Chana, who browsed through the photographs and commented on all of them. When she reached the photos of Dr. Seligson's wedding she told Reb Moshe, "For this wedding the Rebbe made an exception by being mesader kiddushin although he does not have a beard."

The Rebbe's Doctor

From the earliest days of the Rebbe's *nesius* Dr. Seligson was a permanent fixture in 770. He davened there every morning, and then spent hours seeing patients and attending to the medical needs of the *bochurim*. For many years, the Rebbe and Dr. Seligson would converse almost every morning. In the winter months of 5714*, he would go into the Rebbe's room after Kabbolas Shabbos and remain there for over an hour.² This happened in later years as well. No one knows with certainty what they discussed, although it is assumed that it pertained to medicine. For 40 years Dr. Seligson merited to serve as the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's personal physician, as the dedicated doctor of the Crown Heights community and

"...You, the doctor, should eat the cake and the patient will recover."



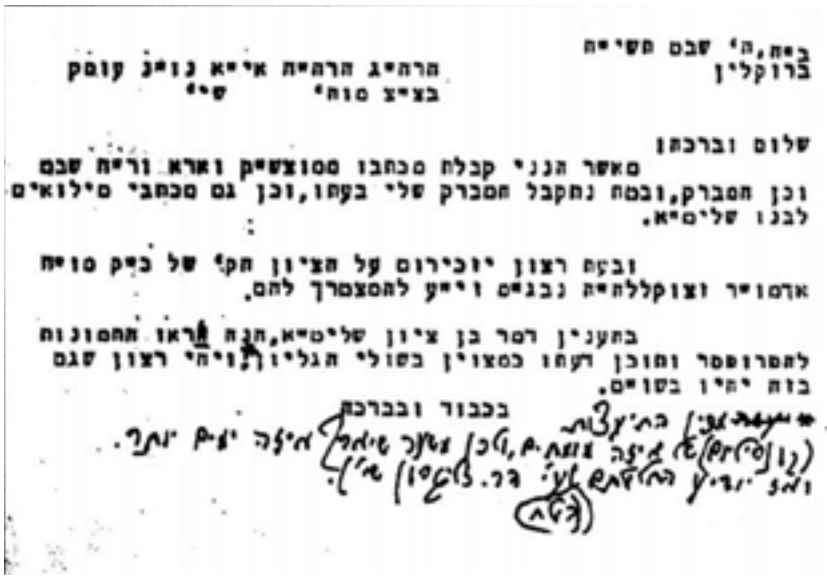
LEAVING 770 WITH HIS DOCTOR'S BAG

to serve as a conduit for many of the Rebbe's *brachos* for people's health.

One year on Shemini Atzeres Rabbi Shneur Zalman Gurary contracted pneumonia. During the *farbrengen* before *hakafos* on Simchas Torah night, the Rebbe gave a piece of cake to his son, Rabbi Yitzchok Meir

Gurary, to give to his father. The Rebbe then stood up and handed a piece of cake and wine to Dr. Seligson saying, "In the times of the *Beis Hamikdosh*, when the *Kohanim* ate their portion of the *korbon* the owner of the *korbon* achieved atonement. Likewise, you, the doctor should eat the cake and the

26 TISHREI 5736, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 22782



AN ADDITION IN THE REBBE'S HOLY HANDWRITING TO A LETTER STATING THAT HE IS CONSULTING A GROUP OF SPECIALISTS ABOUT A CERTAIN PATIENT, WITH THEIR CONCLUSION COMMUNICATED THROUGH DR. SELIGSON.

patient will recover. Know that you are a great doctor. . . If other doctors disagree with me [in my directives regarding patients] I will refer the patient to you [so I will have a medical authority to support my opinion]. When³ I refer a patient to you, you will understand why I sent him."

Throughout the years, the Rebbe sent countless patients to consult with Dr. Seligson. Once⁴ at a farbrengen the Rebbe told someone, "If there is a person who occupies his nefesh elokis with the Shulchan Aruch, and his nefesh hativis with medicine, what more do you need?" In conversation with Rabbi Dr. Nissen Mindel the Rebbe said, "When other physicians use strong medicine, Dr. Seligson manages to cure them with an aspirin." In a letter⁵ dated 1 Iyar 5718* the Rebbe writes, "I received your letter... Upon my instructions, my friend Dr. Seligson contacted one of the top specialists in the field and enclosed is his opinion on the matter."

Reb Michel Raskin was in yechidus in 5722* and asked the Rebbe about a complicated medical issue regarding his mother. The Rebbe told him to consult with Dr. Seligson. Reb Michel

wondered if he was an expert in the field. Sensing his hesitation the Rebbe said, "Dr. Seligson is one of the greatest doctors of our time."

Dr. Seligson was completely devoted to the Rebbe's health. During every major medical crisis, Dr. Seligson was at hand. The Rebbetzin once said to Reb Sholom Ber Gansburg, one of the aides in the Rebbe's home, "Where can you find a doctor like Dr. Seligson? He hears my husband cough in the other room and immediately prescribes the right medication." In the terrifying moments during *hakafos* on Shemini Atzeres 5738*, Dr. Seligson rushed to the Rebbe and immediately diagnosed the Rebbe's condition. Later, a team of cardiologists were brought in. The Rebbe asked that the cardiologists brief and consult with Dr. Seligson. He requested that Dr. Seligson should continue to monitor his health when the cardiologists left.

As a devoted Chossid, it was important to him that the Rebbe not be concerned with his (Dr. Seligson's) own problems. In his later years, waiting on line to receive matzah from the Rebbe, he put his cane to the

side, so the Rebbe should not see him using it. Every year he would receive a full matzah and the Rebbe would say to him "מיכלא דמהימנותא מיכלא" - the food of healing and the food of faith. The Rebbe once gave him matzah before the second seder, as well.

Although he was an excellent diagnostician and a scientist, Dr. Seligson was involved in many medical incidents that defied the rules of nature. Once⁶ the Rebbe walked out of his room holding a letter and asked Dr. Seligson if there was a cure for a specific illness (described in the letter). He answered in the negative, and the Rebbe left only to come back ten minutes later with the same question. This time Dr. Seligson stated confidently that surely there was a cure for the illness. Satisfied, the Rebbe returned to his room.

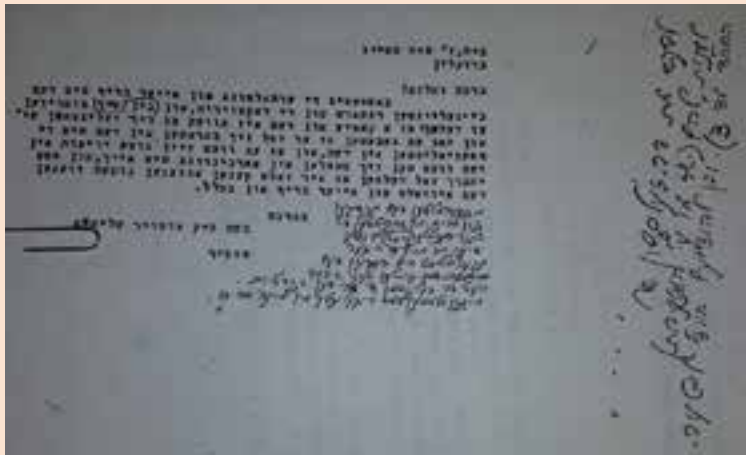
On another occasion, a woman suffering from a heart condition asked the Rebbe for a bracha and advice. The Rebbe advised her to consult with Dr. Twersky, who referred her to a top cardiologist. The cardiologist said that she needed immediate surgery. Reluctant to go under the knife, she notified the Rebbe who sent her to Dr. Seligson. He in turn asked the family, "Did the Rebbe tell you to consult with a *rofeh yedid* (a doctor who is a friend) or did he say Dr. Seligson?" They said that the Rebbe specified Dr. Seligson. Hearing that, Dr. Seligson said that there was no need for surgery.

Faced with two conflicting opinions, the family asked him to discuss it with the cardiologist. Initially he refused but ultimately had a ten-minute phone conversation with the cardiologist. He then told the family, "He has his opinion and I have mine." The patient notified the Rebbe of Dr. Seligson's opinion, and received a bracha. She decided not to have the surgery and lived for another 18 years.⁷

“Either he knows of a medication that we are unaware of or he performed a miracle.”

Kisvei Yad Kodesh

At the conclusion of a *shana tova* letter from Yemei Haselichos 5721*, the Rebbe writes to Dr. Seligson:



להצלחה ברפואת חב"י [חולי בני ישראל] שליט"א מתוך בריאות ושמחה
[A blessing] to be successful in healing the sick amongst the Jewish people, *shlita*, with health and happiness.

In a letter from 7 Cheshvan 5717* to a Yid requesting a *bracha* and advice on a medical issue:

אפגעהאלטן דעם אפשיקען פון בריף, און ערשט ערהאלטן די צופרידענטע לענדע
דיעה אז אויך א היגער ספציאליסט איז געגען דעם ערשטן וועג. זיכער וועט דר. זעליגסאן
ש' שרייבען בפרטיות. איינגעשלאסן דעם בייגעלייגטע אין אייער בריף.

The delivery of this letter was delayed, and in the meantime I just received the joyous news that also a local specialist opposes the first approach. Certainly Dr. Seligson will write in detail about this. Included the attached in your letter.

לבקש את דר. זעליגסון ש' לענות להם (ישר או ע"י המזכירות) החו"ד ע"ד (3) וכן
להודיעם חו"ד לייטער

Ask Dr. Seligson to respond to them (either directly or through *mazkirus*) with his opinion regarding section 3. Also notify them about the opinion of Leiter.



EREV YOM KIPPUR 5749

In the early 5730s* on Simchas Torah night, as the shul was being reconfigured for the *hakafos* at midnight, Reb Leibel Raskin's young son was critically injured in 770. All efforts to revive him were

unsuccessful. Rabbi Raskin ran to Rabbi Hodakov and begged him to ask the Rebbe for a *bracha*. The Rebbe was preparing for *hakofos* and could not be disturbed. Hearing how dire the situation was, Rabbi Hodakov decided

to enter the Rebbe's room. The Rebbe instructed that Dr. Seligson should be notified.

Dr. Seligson took one look at the boy and said everything would be fine. He then went into the Rebbe's



YOSSI MELAMED VIA JEM 135963

room to report on the situation and the child regained consciousness shortly thereafter. Later that evening, Dr. Seligson shared with Rabbi Raskin that the Rebbe once told him if he ever concluded that a patient could not be

helped medically, he need only visit the patient and declare him well and the Rebbe would then do his part.

Rabbi Berel Baumgarten from Argentina had a serious illness and came to the United States for

treatment. After all the tests were completed and the doctors had given their diagnosis, he brought the entire folder of medical records to the Rebbe who instructed him to show them to Dr. Seligson. Dr. Seligson examined

the x-rays, and asked him to point to the illness. He did so but Dr. Seligson kept saying that he saw nothing. Confused, Rabbi Baumgarten told the Rebbe in *yechidus* that Dr. Seligson saw nothing in the x-rays. The Rebbe glanced at the x-rays and said, "I also see nothing there." Upon further examination, he was found to be disease free.

In the 5720s*, Mrs. Menucha Rochel Groner was having problems with her lungs. Dr. Seligson insisted it was nothing but referred her to a specialist nonetheless. The specialist claimed there was a problem, but after conferring with Dr. Seligson over the phone, he told her, "Dr. Seligson, without special instruments, knows better than I do with my instruments."

A guest from France came to the Rebbe for Tishrei in the late 5730s*. He had a skin irritation on his hand and the doctors were unable to help him. While in Crown Heights, he visited Dr. Seligson who prescribed a cream that caused the irritation to disappear. When he returned to France, he showed the hand to his physician who exclaimed, "Either he knows of a medication that we are unaware of or he performed a miracle."

The Rebbe once told someone who consulted with him, "When you go to Dr. Seligson, you already feel better; Malach Michoel accompanies him." Sometimes Dr. Seligson would simply tell the patient to go home and eat a fruit or to learn a certain topic in Torah, and they became well.

The Rebbe once told Reb Getzel Rubashkin, "*Daloi doktoirim* - enough with the doctors." Before the summer, Reb Getzel wanted to go for a check-up, but wasn't sure if he should, since the Rebbe told him "*Daloi doktoirim*." He asked the Rebbe who told him that he should only speak with Dr. Seligson in learning and nothing else, and that

would be enough to maintain his health.

Dr. Seligson once commented to Reb Dovid Shkolnik and to Reb Elya Chaim Roitblat, respectively, that if he were to share all the miraculous medical experiences that he had with the Rebbe he would fill many books.

A "Lamed-Vavnik"

In those pre-Hatzolah days Dr. Seligson was on-call for the community 24/7 and almost never went on vacation because he did not want to leave the community without a doctor. Having finished with his patients, he would learn for hours after midnight. In a *yechidus*, Mrs. Seligson expressed concern about his difficult schedule and the Rebbe replied, "Don't you know that your husband is a *Lamed-Vavnik*?"

Dr. Seligson was dedicated to his patients and gave each one as much time as they needed. He would see patients in 770 at no charge, make house calls, and starting in the late afternoon, he saw patients in his office at home until late at night. After prescribing treatment, he would follow up and modify his instructions if he found a better solution. Before prescribing a medication, he would research it to ensure its *kashrus*, especially before Pesach, and was in constant contact with pharmaceutical companies. Dr. Seligson often utilized his medical consultations to engage in Torah. For example, a patient⁸ described a certain food he had eaten, Dr. Seligson began an animated discussion on the proper *bracha*.

He charged minimally for his services. A patient once did not respect Dr. Seligson's diagnosis because of the small bill, and arranged to visit another doctor in Manhattan. After being examined he heard the doctor making a phone call in the next room. "Dr. Seligson, I am interested in your opinion regarding this issue I



DR. SELIGSON'S DIAGRAM OF A SHOR, LATER PRINTED AND DISTRIBUTED FOR FREE



DR. SELIGSON'S SECOND HANDWRITTEN COPY OF THE TANYA WITH HIS NOTES, THE FIRST OF WHICH HE GAVE TO THE REBBE'S LIBRARY.

encountered." Patients were examined by prominent doctors and would leave without a diagnosis. They would later visit Dr. Seligson, who immediately found a solution.

During the first years of the Rebbe's *nesius*, people witnessed him conversing with the Rebbe in Torah outside the Rebbe's room. On Thursday nights, he would spend hours in the yeshiva library at 770 researching halachic *sefarim* on various issues. In Cracow, when he first started practicing medicine, Dr. Seligson drew a diagram of the body of an ox based on sources in Shas and Poskim. He sent a copy to a family member in New York. When he arrived after the war, years later, he made copies and shared them with the *bochurim* in 770, who were learning Yoreh De'ah and Meseches Chulin. The

diagram was in use for many years. He sent it to the Rebbe for his consent, and the Rebbe suggested that a Rav Moreh Hora'ah should review it. Rabbi Yisroel Piekarski, the Rosh Yeshiva in 770, confirmed that it was accurate. (See photo).

Dr. Seligson would write notes in the margins of his volumes of Chumash and Gemara, as well as in his Tanya. When the Rebbe heard about his notes on Tanya, he requested that Dr. Seligson lend him the Tanya. Years later, Dr. Seligson asked the Rebbe for the Tanya so he could copy the notes for himself. The Tanya was returned to the Rebbe's library where it still remains. Many of his notes on Chumash and Tanya were published in the Ha'oros HaTmimim V'anash in 5749* after his passing.

Dr. Seligson passed away on Tuesday, 25 Shevat 5749*. During that time, the Rebbe worked from his home on President St. The Rebbe came to 770 from President St. to participate in the *levaya* and returned home immediately afterwards.

Once during a farbrengen in the 5710s*, people approached the Rebbe and asked for brachos for health for themselves and for others. The Rebbe turned to Dr. Seligson, "How will doctors make a living when Moshiach will come? People will visit the doctor, he will confirm that they are all healthy and he will be paid for it!"⁹ **T**

1. Likkutei Sichos vol. 30 page 311. This sicha was edited by the Rebbe in 5750 to be included in the Sefer Toldos Avraham Harofeh.

2. Told by Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky.

3. Told by Rabbi Shneur Zalman Lipsker, Philadelphia, PA.

4. Told by Rabbi Heshke Gansbourg a"h.

5. Igros Kodesh vol. 17, p. 63.

6. Told by Rabbi Moshe A Geisinsky a"h.

7. Told by Rabbi YY Wilenkin.

8. Told by Rabbi Moshe A. Geisinsky a"h.

9. Told by Rabbi Shmaryohu Roitblat.



DR. SELIGSON IN THE MAZKIRUS OFFICE.

104561



THE REBBE ATTENDS DR. SELIGSON'S LEVAYA.

MOSHE STOCK



IEM 201925

“The Rebbe Got Rid of My Termites”

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

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

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

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

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

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

This was the story I grew up hearing.

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

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

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

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

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



Lost On The Way To Lubavitch

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

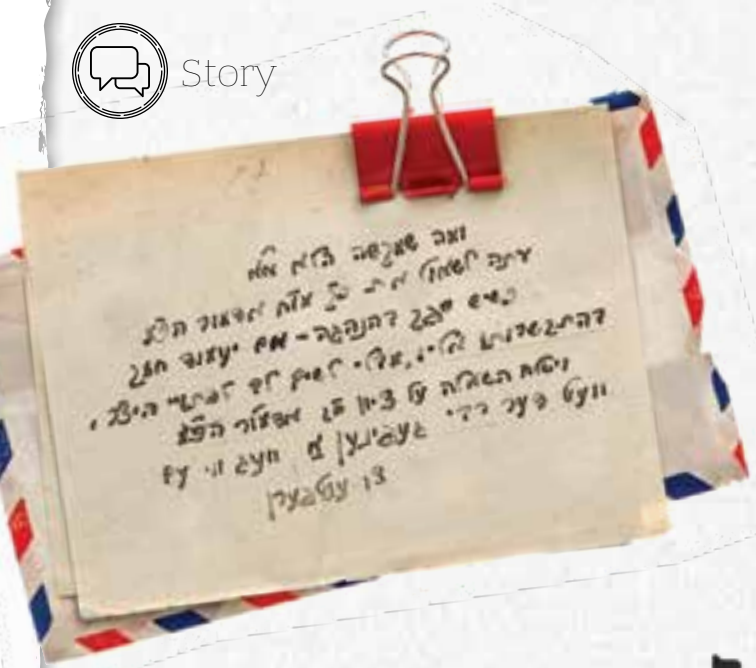
His plan worked.

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

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

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

(Likkutei Sippurim
(Perlow) #9)



דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

לעילוי נשמת
ר' בנימין בן ר' דוד ע"ה
גלב"ע ו' אלול ה'תשע"ט
ת'צ'ב'ה'

נדפס ע"י בנו
הרה"ת ר' צבי הירש וזוגתו מרת חנה רחל שיחיו
נאוואק

Chabad on Campus -
Rohr Center for Jewish Life
at Washington University in S. Louis

Minutes Later

AS TOLD BY RABBI YOSHI MAJERCZYK (BROOKLYN, NY)

It was Thursday night after Purim 5780* when I started experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. I had a high fever, felt very ill, and the next day I was barely able to get out of bed. After spending days in bed burning up with fever, unable to sleep, I contacted my doctor's office and learned that I probably got the coronavirus. They suggested that I drink a lot of fluids, especially Powerade.

Although it's hard to imagine now, at the time almost no one knew what to expect of this new and terrifying virus. One thing I knew with certainty was that this was not the flu. It was much worse.

For two weeks I was unable to function. Even davening was close to impossible and I started becoming confused,

having trouble connecting with events taking place around me.

On Monday, 27 Adar, Hatzalah rushed me to the hospital since I was having trouble breathing. I started to feel relief that now my illness would finally be treated. I was placed in a solitary room on high doses of oxygen but over the next few days my doctors were very concerned that I was not improving and constantly needed higher doses.

I had taken my tefillin with me to the hospital and my rav advised me to just put them on every day even if I could not daven a full Shacharis. I did this every day with great difficulty and needed to recount the straps again and again to be sure I did it correctly.

Thursday evening the doctors entered my room and notified me that if I would need higher doses of oxygen they would need to intubate me. I was too sick to know what that meant but it was scary nonetheless.

By now I had trouble following what they were saying but it became clear to me that things were bleak and I started to fear the worst.

The next day my friend Rabbi Sholom Simon texted me that a group of activists in Crown Heights commissioned a new *sefer Torah* to be written for the recovery of everyone affected by the virus and asked me if he could purchase a letter in the *sefer Torah* on my behalf. I agreed immediately and he made the purchase right away.

Twenty minutes later the doctors rushed into my room and told me that I was suddenly starting to turn around. They said that they just got test results back and my numbers were starting to improve despite what they saw just the evening before.

Still on oxygen, I was transferred on Sunday to a different wing in the hospital together with another Jewish COVID patient and we had each other for company. While I started feeling better and stronger every day, there was no improvement with my oxygen intake and I was not being discharged because I was dependent on the machine.

A few days later, a research doctor came to see me. He informed me that I had beaten the virus but they were not sure why I still needed the oxygen and that this might be my new normal. He said I may need to be connected to the oxygen tanks for the rest of my life. He made arrangements for machines and a few tanks to be delivered to my home in anticipation for my imminent discharge.

I was terrified and devastated to think that I would be hooked up to an oxygen tank for the rest of my life. I'm just 37 years old...

When I received the receipt from the rental of the machine and tanks that were delivered to my home I saw the rental duration was 99 months and I started to really panic. I couldn't bear to think of spending the rest of my life like this.

Unfortunately that time period was a very busy season for the members of the *chevra kadisha* and that day my friend Rabbi Moshe Schmukler was going to the cemetery for a funeral. He called me on the way to see how I was doing and I said to him desperately, "Moshe, please go to the Ohel and daven for me. I can't spend the rest of my life on machines!"

He assured me he would do so.

A few hours later, the research doctor who had previously broken the terrible news to me, returned to my room and apologized.



"I may have scared you earlier unnecessarily. I just reviewed your charts and your imaging and I see now that you are doing much better than I thought. You should make a full or close to full recovery, even if it takes many months."

Looking at my oxygen levels he said, "In fact, you seem to be doing well enough now that you don't need the machine." And with that he disconnected the oxygen machine from my face.

I was stunned by the remarkable turn of events. This was not even my regular doctor, just a research doctor who was studying COVID and he was taking me off the machine!

After a minute I collected myself and called Moshe Schmuckler and asked him, "When were you at the Ohel?"
"Ten minutes ago."

I started shaking. Minutes after my friend mentioned me for a *bracha* by the Rebbe I was already off the machines!

The next day I was discharged and haven't needed an oxygen supply since. I still don't know the extent of the damage (if there was any permanent damage at all), and *baruch Hashem* I have all my energy back and seem to be almost completely back to normal. **1**

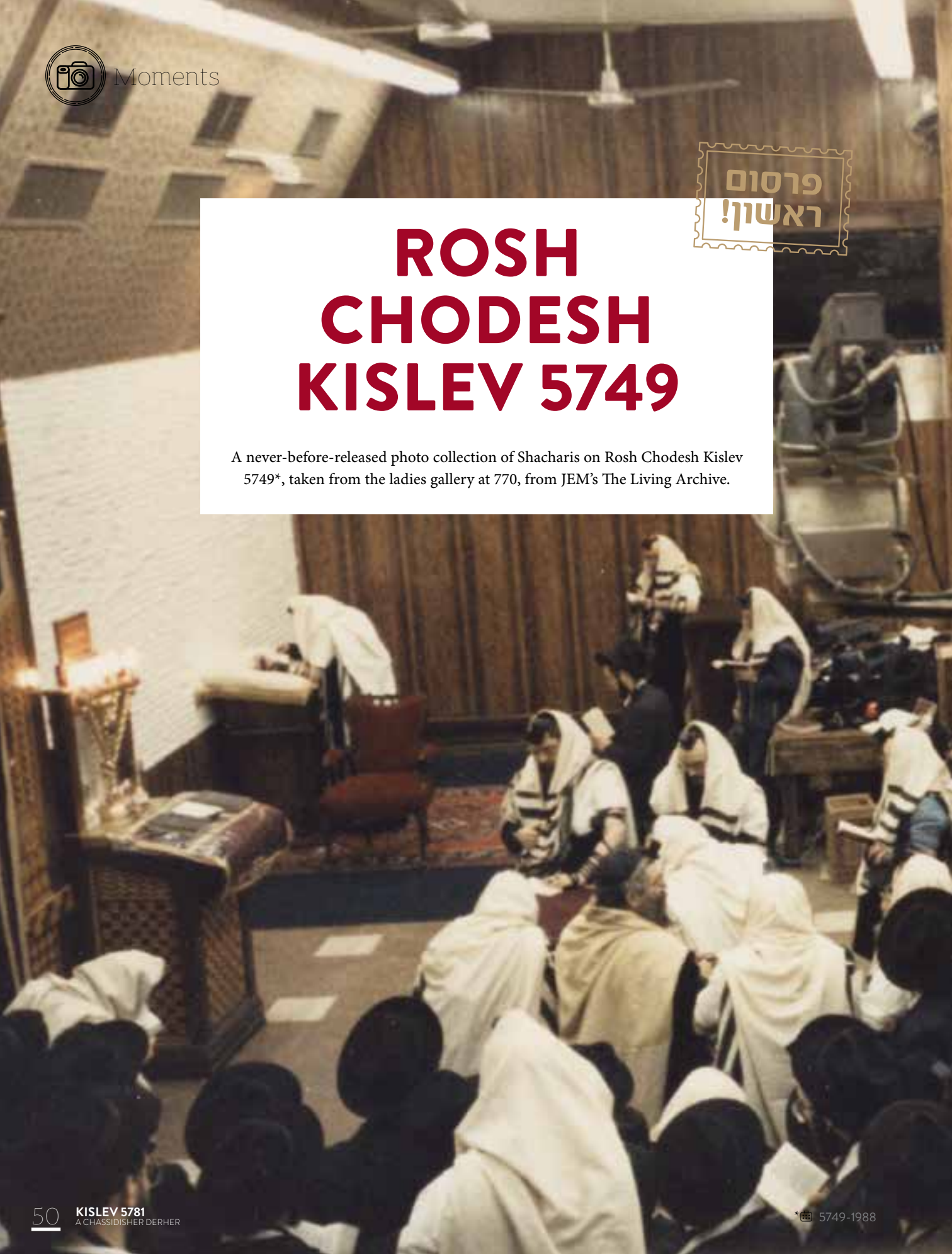
YOUR STORY

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

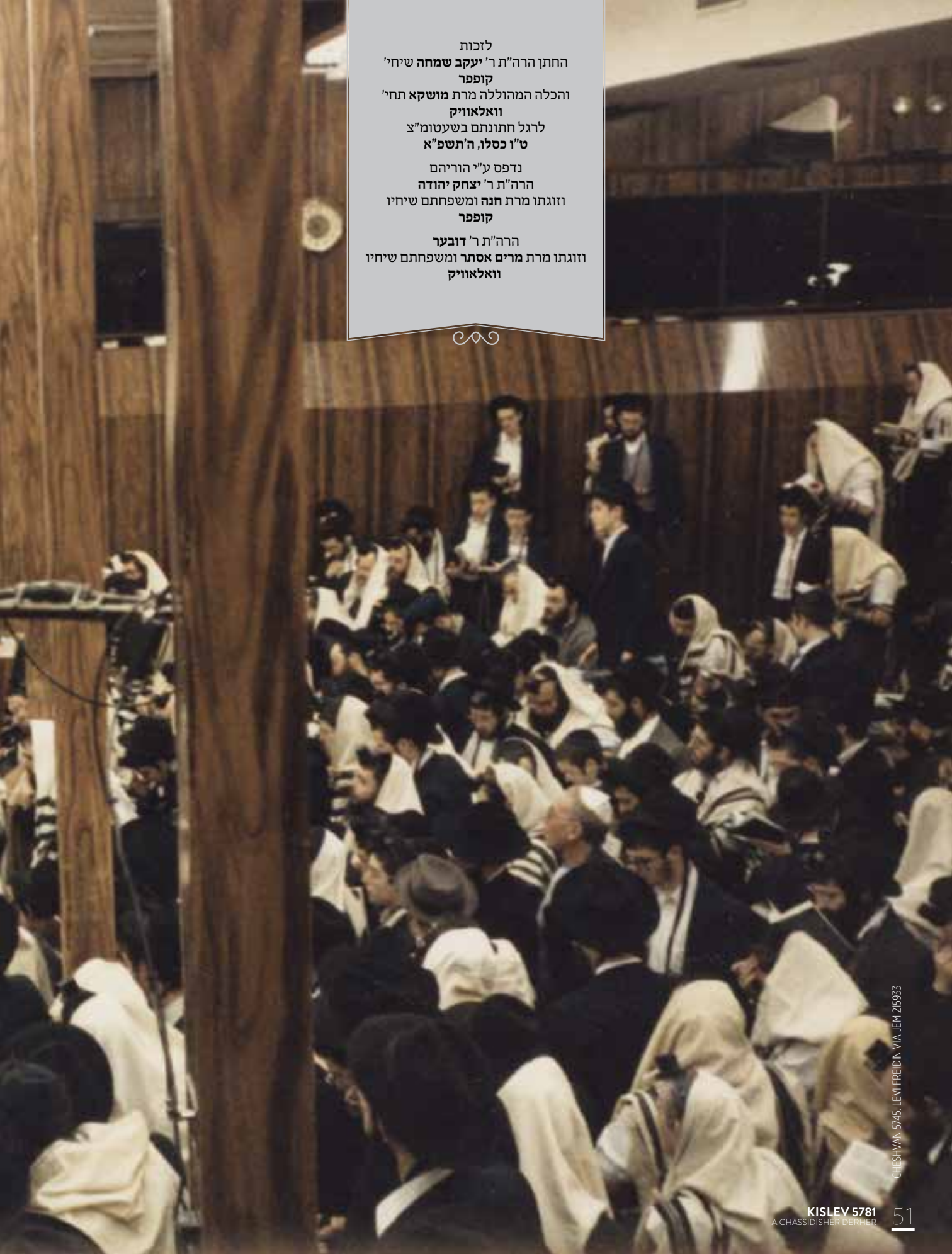


ROSH CHODESH KISLEV 5749

A never-before-released photo collection of Shacharis on Rosh Chodesh Kislev 5749*, taken from the ladies gallery at 770, from JEM's The Living Archive.



לזכות
החתן הרה"ת ר' **יעקב שמחה** שיחי'
קופפר
והכלה המהוללה מרת **מושקא** תחי'
וואלאוויק
לרגל חתונתם בשעטומ"צ
ט"ו כסלו, ה'תשפ"א
נדפס ע"י הוריהם
הרה"ת ר' **יצחק יהודה**
וזוגתו מרת **חנה** ומשפחתם שיחי'
קופפר
הרה"ת ר' **דובער**
וזוגתו מרת **מרים אסתר** ומשפחתם שיחי'
וואלאוויק





The Rebbe straightens his tefillin straps after saying *Oseh Shalom*.



KRIAS HATORAH



MUSAF



Derher**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.

Dear Editors,

In a recent magazine, you featured an article [*Seeing Our Rabbeim*, Derher Menachem-Av 5780] about photos of the Rabbeim and the various changes over the years regarding the Rebbe allowing his pictures to be taken.

“During the farbrengen of Chai Elul 5739 the Rebbe asked Reb Yoel Kahn to ask a Yid standing nearby taking pictures if he learns Tanya. Even after he responded that he does, the Rebbe took out a pocket size booklet of Iggeres Hateshuva from his breast pocket and handed it to Reb Yoel Kahn to learn a few lines with the Yid and then allowed him to continue snapping photos”.

A very similar incident occurred around that time when I and a friend, Schneur Zalman Stern came to Crown Heights to shoot a film of the Rebbe.

We were sitting at one of the tables in front of the Rebbe and Schneur Zalman was snapping pictures. He was a professional photographer, not a *bochur*. Suddenly, the Rebbe called Reb Yoel over, took a small size Tanya out of his pocket and handed it to him.” In the video of the other incident (footnoted in the article) it looks like a thin card/pamphlet, and he takes it out from his *siddur*, not his pocket as was written in the article.

I recall that when Reb Yoel brought over the Tanya, he said “The Rebbe said to learn a *perek* Tanya and then you can take a picture.” Not “a few lines” as can be heard in the video.

The Tanya was opened to Perek Tes in Iggeres Hateshuva, and Schneur Zalman right away learned the entire *perek* about האם רובצת על האפרוחים. Reb Yoel didn’t learn it with him. In fact I think the Rebbe sent him the Tanya opened to that *perek*.

Interestingly, Schneur Zalman was later involved in teaching a course on *hisbonenus* based in part on that *perek* (I was involved with that too for a while) so it was certainly no coincidence that the Rebbe opened it to that page.

I believe this took place around Lag Baomer 5739, just a few months before the incident written about in the article.

The photo taken at that farbrengen is actually AMAZING. I used to have the original slide but don’t know where it is now. Another friend (L.G.) has it hanging on his wall in Los Angeles.

Thank you for the wonderful publications.

Simcha Gottlieb
Miami, Florida

”

To the Editors,

Following up on the article about Professor Yitzchak Block a”h [*From Harvard to 770*, Derher Elul 5780] which was published in a recent magazine:

Dr. Block spent a year here in Princeton on a sabbatical in the early 5740s, before we arrived on shlichus. He printed the first Tanya in the city

when the Rebbe came out with the *horaah* at the time to print Tanyas everywhere.

Because he had made connections with the University, he would come back to Princeton from time to time to give lectures. Each time, he would visit us. There was one particular Shabbos later on when he stayed at our house, and on Friday night I was fortunate to sit with him for many hours and hear many of his incredible stories.

I will share one fascinating story that was not included in the article:

Dr. Block got married on 11 Elul 5719. At the time, the *seder* in 770 was that the Shabbos after one of the *bochurim* got married, if the Rebbe farbrenge, arrangements would be made for *sheva brachos* to take place at the Rebbe's farbrenge. One person would recite all the *brachos*, and afterwards the crowd would sing *Od Yishama* which the Rebbe would usually encourage. This was obviously not possible later on when there were so many *chasunos*, but at the time Lubavitch was small and it was sustainable.

The Shabbos after Dr. Block's *chasunah* was not a special date so no farbrenge took place. However the following week was Shabbos Mevorchim Tishrei and Shabbos Slichos. That week, two *bochurim* got married and both had their Shabbos *sheva brachos* at the farbrenge. First Reb Shmaryahu Pruss and then Reb Moshe Gurkov (from Boston).

After they gave the *chosson* Reb Moshe Gurkow to drink and say *l'chaim*, the Rebbe asked Reb Leibel Groner about Dr. Block. Rabbi Groner responded that his *sheva brachos* had already concluded the week before.

“*Oib azoy, zol er zog'n l'chaim fun Gurkovs kos—* if so he should have a *l'chaim* from Gurkov's cup,” the Rebbe responded. Dr. Block did as he was told and eventually forgot about the whole incident.

Thirty six years later, in 5756, Dr. Block sat with his *mehutan*, Reb Moshe Gurkow as they prepared the *kesubah* for Dr. Block's youngest daughter with Rabbi Lazer Gurkow. Suddenly, it struck him like lightning that years earlier the Rebbe had told him to share *l'chaim* with Reb Moshe just after both of their weddings.

Dr. Block felt that the Rebbe had this in *shidduch* במחשבה thirty six earlier!

Rabbi Dovid Dubov
Princeton, New Jersey

An addendum to the letter of Rabbi Dubov:

When my *shver* a”h remembered the story, he asked my father *yibadel l'chaim tovim* if he remembers it, and my father replied that he does not, and besides, such things never happened. My *shver* said that he went to Reb Leibel Groner a”h and asked. Rabbi Groner replied that he certainly remembers this and he added, let me tell you why I remember it. Because something like that never happened before and never happened again.

My wife and I have always felt that we were fortunate to have received the *bracha* but at first we never understood why we alone, of all her siblings, were *zocheh*. After all, my wife is the youngest child. We assumed it had to do with the fact that she was the only one to be married after Gimmel Tamuz. Many years later, we moved to my *in-laws'* a”h *makom hashlichus* to continue their shlichus along with Rabbi Mordechai and Nechama Silberberg. Moreover, after my *shviger's* passing, we moved into their home. We eat at their table, in their kitchen, and continue their shlichus from their home. We now understood that this was not only a *bracha* for our *chasunah* but for our shlichus. Keep in mind that my *shver* and *shviger* had never even heard of London, Ontario at that time, and you will appreciate דעם רבנים ווייטער בליק

We celebrate the Shabbos before Rosh Hashanah as the day we received our *bracha* to move on shlichus.

Rabbi Lazer Gurkow
London, Ontario