

A Chassidisher **Derher**

א חסידישער דערהער

The Rebbe's Gvir
REB YOSSEL ROBINSON

The Ultimate Joy
HOW TO CELEBRATE A SIMCHA

היי טעב
נבדח!

THE STORY
OF HEI TEVES



TEVES 5782
ISSUE 113 (190)
JANUARY 2022

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Editor in Chief

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Circulation and Marketing

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Photo Research/Editing

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Editors

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Rabbi Mendel Misholovin

Rabbi Dovid Olidort

Copy Editor

Rabbi Eliezer Zalmanov

Design

Mendel Bergstein

Rabbi Mendy Weg

Printed by

The Print House

Contributors

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

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A Chassidisher Derher (ISSN 26411059) (USPS 21880) is published monthly by A Chassidisher Derher Inc, 784 Eastern Pkwy, Brooklyn, NY 11213.

Subscription price \$71 a year. Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn, NY.

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to A Chassidisher Derher, 784 Eastern Pkwy, Brooklyn, NY 11213.



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JEM 10801 (CHESHVAN 5725)

<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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The Winter Selichos

TEVES 5725*



The year 5725* started off on a painful note with the passing of the Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Chana. Consequently, throughout the year the Rebbe would daven at the *amud*, and would also farbreng every Shabbos.

The following is an account of what transpired during the month of Teves 5725*. It is primarily sourced from the diaries of Rabbi Meni Wolff, who was a *bochur* in 770 that year. Included is a transcript of his personal *yechidus* which took place that month.

THURSDAY - 5 TEVES

During *chazaras hashatz* of Mincha, the Rebbe cried profusely from *Shema Koleinu* until the end of *shemoneh esrei*.

Later that night the *hanhalah* of 770 had *yechidus* with the Rebbe (as was the custom every month). After all the other *hanhalah* members left, Reb Shmuel Levitin remained, to share good news with the Rebbe intending to lift the Rebbe's spirits. He informed the Rebbe that the *temimim* are active in their efforts of "*Ufaratzta*" and they are teaching Chassidus to many who have not yet been exposed to it.

The Rebbe responded, “In 5715* the gates were opened for Moshiach. Since then, all that is left to do is to spread *sichos* wherever possible, in every shul, yeshiva, and anywhere else. We are especially fortunate that nowadays there is much less opposition to this endeavor.”

(The Rebbe then named several such shuls, that were formerly against the prospect of visitors coming to teach *sichos* but have since become open to it, as well as several *baalei batim* who would go frequently.)

The Rebbe then went on to say that if only the *baalei batim* who hear *sichos* at farbrengens would go out and publicize them, Moshiach would have already come. There is a direct correlation between the spreading of Chassidus and Moshiach’s arrival. Although the idea of “*Ufaratzta*” was only formally launched in 5718*, the gates for Moshiach were open since 5715*. Whoever works to publicize the *sichos* will have it good both *begashmiyus* and *beruchniyus*.

These passionate words to Reb Shmuel Levitin generated much excitement amongst the *temimim*, and many of them committed on the spot to go to different shuls and speak between Mincha and Maariv on Shabbos.

SHABBOS PARSHAS VAYIGASH - 7 TEVES

The farbrengen of Shabbos left the crowd in high spirits, and the Rebbe was particularly joyous.

Towards the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe distributed *l'chaim* to those for whom this Shabbos was a special occasion. Reb Shlomo Giladi, who was returning to Eretz Yisroel that week, was given a bottle and instructed to farbreng in Lod, Kfar Chabad, and Yerushalayim.

Hatomim Shimon Lazaroff, who was a *chosson*, nervously approached the Rebbe with a bottle of *mashke* and hastily backed away before he took back the bottle. The Rebbe called him back and made an amused gesture and smiled at him. He was followed by Reb Hirshel Shifrin and then Reb Chaim Tashkenter (Horowitz) who was also flustered and promptly forgot to say *l'chaim*. The Rebbe chuckled at this as well.

That night, Motzei Shabbos, the Rebbe did *kiddush levana*. At the words “*tipol aleihem*” the Rebbe touched his lips three times. At the end of *kiddush levana*, the Rebbe shook the corners of his *tzitzis*, the right corner towards his right



and the left towards his left. The Rebbe then wished everyone “*A gut voch, a gut chodesh.*”

TUESDAY - ASARA B'TEVES

Throughout *selichos* the Rebbe was choked with emotion and sobbed a great deal. At certain points, he had to pause and simply could not continue.¹

Many of those present were particularly struck by how the Rebbe expressed himself in such a raw and open manner without restraint. Chassidim had never heard anything like this in the past and it was the topic of conversation amongst *anash* for a while afterward.

At the conclusion of *Selichos*, the Rebbe sang “*Rachamana D'anei*” with added fervor as he banged on the *shtender* and shook his head. The singing continued longer than usual.

SHABBOS PARSHAS SHEMOS - 21 TEVES

During the farbrengen the Rebbe told a story of Rebbetzin Sheina (Horenstein, the third daughter of the Friediker Rebbe), as Shabbos was her birthday. The story was that once as a young girl, her grandfather (the Rebbe Rashab) told her that anything done on Shabbos should be done with the intent of honoring Shabbos, even (trivial things like) sleep. She responded that she is indeed able to do everything with the



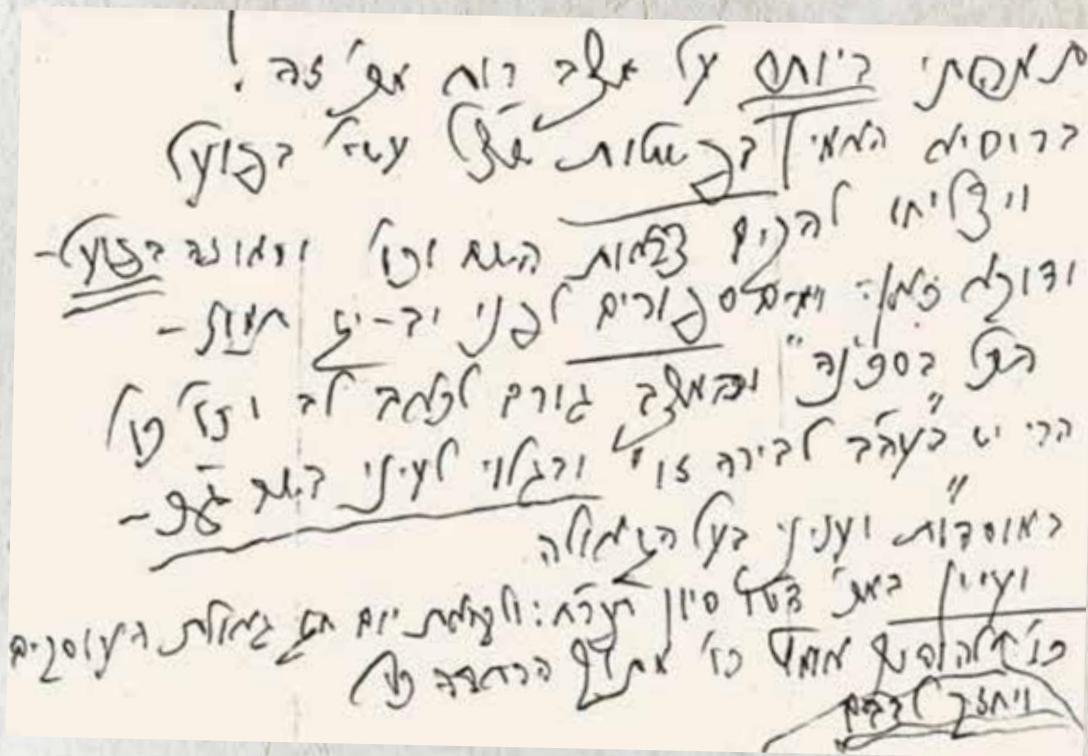
A PICTURE OF REBBETZIN SHEINA AS A CHILD.



כתב יד
קודש

Now You Worry?!

The Rebbe's response to a Chossid who in the past was active in spreading Yiddishkeit in the Soviet Union, and now was facing difficulties in his activities in the free world:



I was **extremely** shocked by the mood of this letter!

תמהתי **ביותר** על מצב רוח מכ' זה!

[Even] in Russia you **unambiguously** believed that you needed to take action and you would see success in establishing Hashem's legions [i.e. children going in the ways of Hashem], etc. and you indeed saw this **actualize**.

ברוסיה האמין **בפשטות** שצ"ל עש"י בפועל ויצליחו להקים צבאות השם וכו' וראו זה **בפועל** -

But now that you're here [in the free world]—a **mere few** days before Yud-Beis and Yud-Gimmel Tammuz—[you think that] everything is "in danger" [of falling apart], and this situation is causing you great heartache, etc. etc.

ודוקא כאן - וימים **ספורים** לפני יב-יג תמוז - הכל "בסכנה" והמצב גורם לכאב לב וכו' וכו'

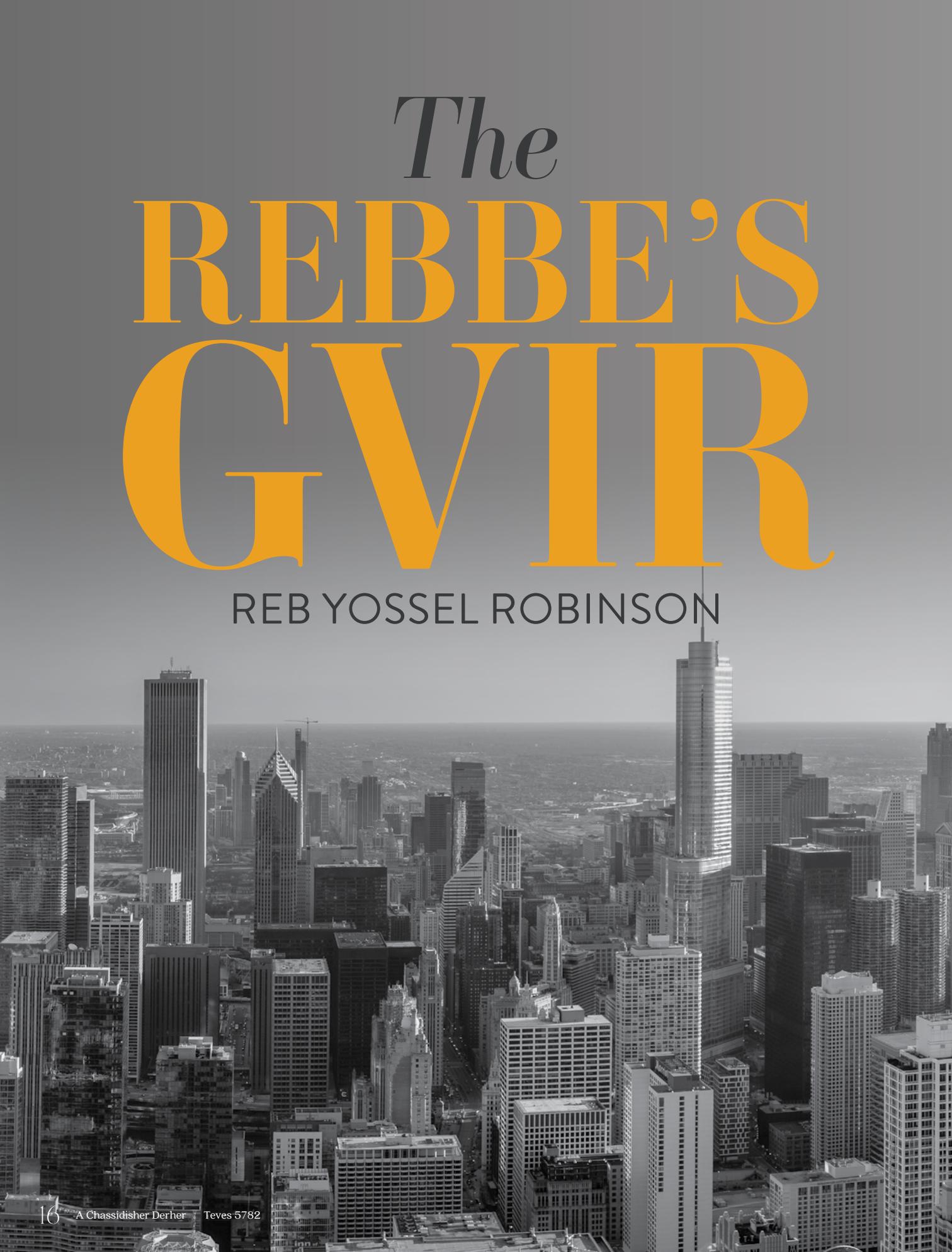
[Don't you realize that] "there is a Master of this metropolis," **revealed and visible to humans too**—over all of the institutions and activities of the *baal hageula* [the Frierdiker Rebbe].

הרי "יש בעה"ב לבירה זו" **ובגלוי לעיני בשר ג"כ** - במוסדות וענייני בעל הגאולה

You should also **analyze** the letter dated 15 Sivan 5688* [one year after the Frierdiker Rebbe's liberation]: In preparation for the day of liberation of all those who engage [in spreading Torah], etc. [May Hashem bless them] and **strengthen their hearts** to redouble their efforts... With abundance, etc.¹

ועייני במכ' דט"ו סיון תפר"ח: ולקראת יום חג גאולת העוסקים כו' **ויחזק לבבם** להוסיף אומץ כו' מתוך הרחבה כו'

1. Igros Kodesh Admur HaRayatz vol. 2, p. 81.

An aerial, black and white photograph of a dense city skyline, likely New York City, featuring numerous skyscrapers and buildings. The image is used as a background for the book cover.

The
REBBE'S
GVIR

REB YOSSEL ROBINSON

One of the characters who had the merit of partaking in the Rebbe's holy work in the early years was Reb Yossel (Mr. Joseph) Robinson, a Chicago businessman and philanthropist.

A Chassidisher Derher spoke with Chassidim and shluchim to hear his story.

Special thanks to Rabbi Yosef Greenberg, Rabbi Boruch Hertz, Rabbi Mendel Hertz, Rabbi Leibel Shapiro and Rabbi Gershon Shusterman for their time and efforts.

לע"ו
מרת רחל לאה בת הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' ניסן ע"ה
פעוונגער
גלב"ע כ"ו טבת ה'תשע"ג
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה'

נדפס ע"י
משפחתה שיחיו

Officers of West Point

Rabbi Gershon Shusterman relates:

“Early one morning in 5727*, at about seven o'clock, a fellow came in and sat down in the first seat in the *zal*. His appearance was somewhat unique; he wore a suit and an old fashioned yarmulke and at first I thought he might be a *schnorrer*. I asked him if he needed assistance but he said that he did not.

“He proceeded to sit there for two hours, and I didn't pay too much attention to him. After all, many different personalities would wander through 770.

“At Mincha, Rabbi Mentlick made an announcement: After Maariv at 9:30, there will be an *asifa* (assembly) for all the *bochurim*.

“This was uncommon. I had been learning in the yeshiva for three years, and no *asifa* had ever been held. Needless to say, it piqued our interest. After Maariv, the *zal* was packed with many *bochurim* — I finally discovered how many *bochurim* officially learned in 770...

“Then, Rabbi Mentlick showed up. This was unusual as well. He was a very punctual person; he would return home at the end of *seder nigleh* at seven o'clock and



REB YOSEF ROBINSON AT HIS SON'S WEDDING ON ROSH CHODESH ELUL 5709*. SITTING NEAR HIM IS RABBI SHLOMO AHARON KAZARNOVSKY WHO TRAVELED TO CHICAGO AS THE FRIERDIKER REBBE'S REPRESENTATIVE AT THE WEDDING.

would never be seen afterwards.

“At exactly 9:30 p.m., Rabbi Mentlick walked out of his office together with the gentleman I had seen in the morning. I now understood that he was no *schnorrer*. He brought him to the *bima* and announced, ‘I want to introduce to you a friend of the yeshiva, Mr. Yosef Robinson.’

“That name immediately rang a bell. The yeshiva had a *gemach* called the Joseph Robinson Gemilas Chesed Fund, which would give *bochurim* a \$25 loan, free of interest.

“I later found out more about him: Reb Yossel lived in Chicago, where he was a very successful businessman and philanthropist; there was a *mikveh* and other institutions in his name.

“When the Frierdiker Rebbe came to Chicago in 5690* (תר"צ), Reb Yossel wasn't even 20 years old. He was just starting out in business, but he had an important asset: he owned a car. The Frierdiker Rebbe made a very big impression on him, so he went into *yechidus* and offered to be his driver during his stay in the city.

“The Frierdiker Rebbe agreed and Reb Yossel had the merit to spend a considerable amount of time in his presence, becoming very devoted to him.

“He once told the Frierdiker Rebbe that he wanted very much to donate towards his causes, but he was just starting out in business and didn't have any money to give. The Frierdiker Rebbe responded that if he wanted to give *mit an emes* (sincerely), Hashem would give him the opportunity to make a lot of money and give a lot of *tzedakah*.

“Indeed, as the years went on, he became phenomenally successful and donated large sums of money to the



RABBI MENTLICK FARBRENGS WITH THE BOCHURIM IN 770.

Friediker Rebbe and the Rebbe.

“Anyways, back to his speech in the yeshiva.

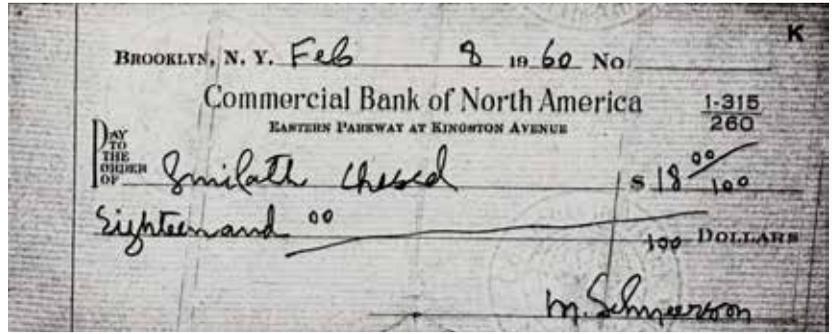
“He said that he had visited 770 and spent the day there to observe the yeshiva. The key line that he told us was this: ‘This is not a yeshiva. This is West Point. You are not here to merely learn Torah or learn how to learn Torah. You are here to become officers for Yiddishkeit. And to be an officer, you must have discipline.’

“He gave a long speech about keeping *seder*. ‘I expect everyone here at 7:30, after *mikveh*, not half-asleep. At 9:00, you put on your tefillin and meditate! And when Rabbi Mentlick leads the services at 9:30 [Rabbi Mentlick was saying *kaddish* that year]! I expect everyone to daven with him! Then your day will proceed in an organized and principled way.’

“I must say, it was quite a unique *farbrengen*. There was no *mashke*, and the *mussar* wasn’t coming from Reb Dovid Raskin or Reb Yoel or even Reb Shmuel Levitin. It was an American businessman, and his words made an impact.”

From the Earliest Supporters

Reb Yossel Robinson was among a small group of Chicago



THE REBBE'S CHECK TO THE GEMILAS CHESED FUND FOR THE BOCHURIM ESTABLISHED BY REB YOSEF.

supporters (alongside Reb Yankel Katz and the Palmer brothers) that supported the Friediker Rebbe and the Rebbe during the first years in America, helping them lay the cornerstone for the *hafatzas hamaayanos* of the following decades.

Yossel was a strong personality, a go-getter, who — despite supporting many Jewish causes — harbored a particularly deep and profound love for the Rabbeim.

According to his grandson, Mr. Elliot Robinson, Reb Yossel cared deeply for the future of the Jewish people, and therefore he chose to support Lubavitch. He felt that Lubavitch was doing work that no one else was doing, and therefore it was vital to support them.

Mrs. Simon, Reb Yossel's daughter, is quite elderly, but she clearly

remembers her father always talking to Rabbi Kazarnovsky (his main contact in Lubavitch, along with Reb Yankel Katz and Reb Shlomo Zalman Hecht) and with 770. She even remembers 770's telephone number!

Rabbi Yosef Greenberg of Alaska shared the following:

“Many years ago, I became friendly with Reb Yossel's son, Sheldon, and he shared several stories about his father with me.

“This is one such story, which describes his personality well:

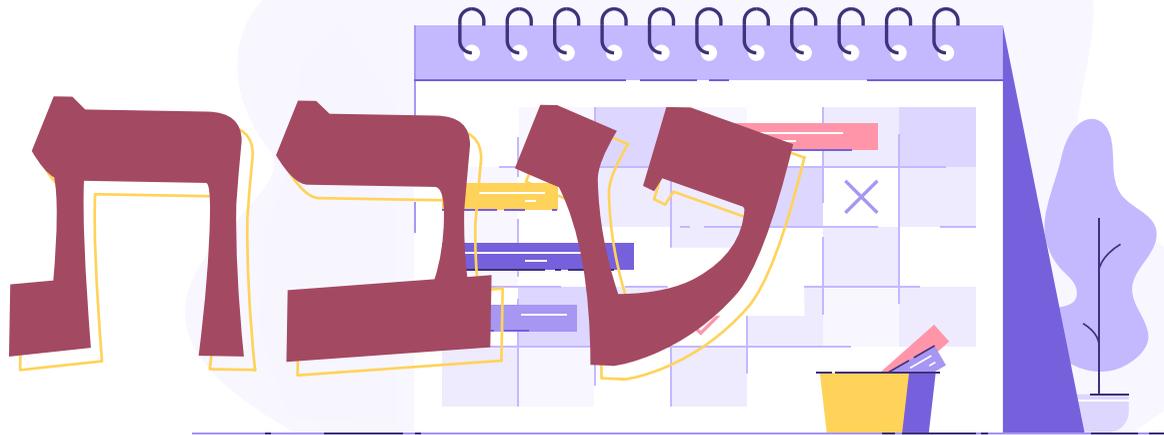
“The Friediker Rebbe once told him that the *mikveh* in Chicago was no longer in good condition, and a new one needed to be built. Reb Yossel called a meeting with the leading philanthropists of Chicago, bringing them all into a room. After they were seated, he locked the door and hid the key. ‘Nobody is going home tonight until the *mikveh* is fully funded!’

“You can just imagine the reaction of the people in the room. Needless to say, in the face of such determination, funding for the *mikveh* was quickly arranged, and until today, it is named for Reb Yossel Robinson.”

Reintroducing a Halachic Work

One of Reb Yossel's most well-remembered accomplishments is sponsoring the publication of *S'dei Chemed*, the work of Reb Chaim Chizkiyahu Medini.²

770 EASTERN PARKWAY SHORTLY BEFORE THE FRIEDIKER REBBE MOVED IN.



ZOS CHANUKAH

- On the last day of Chanukah, the Rebbe instructed Chassidim to intensify the *peulos* of Chanukah to the fullest extent and to fill in whatever is yet to be finished.¹
- It is also a time to join a Chassidishe farbrengen, to learn Chassidus, and to take upon oneself to increase the learning of Chassidus throughout the year.¹

HEI TEVES - THE SEFARIM VICTORY

- In the *sicha* said immediately following the verdict on Hei Teves, the Rebbe explained that we should see the whole trial and the false claim that Chabad was “inactive” as an indication to double and redouble our efforts in all matters of spreading Yiddishkeit and Chassidus, achieving incomparably more than ever before.²
- A day like this must be utilized to its fullest, by buying new *sefarim*, specifically those about the laws of a

Yid's daily *avodah*. *Sefarim* should also be bought for the whole family. The Rebbe also instructed that *sefarim* be purchased for shuls and other institutions, as well as sending *sefarim* to the library of Agudas Chabad. Buying these *sefarim* will lead to learning the *sefarim*, and sharing their teachings with others.³

- The Rebbe also instructed to reinstate the custom of buying *sefarim* and giving them as presents, primarily to young children, for a birthday or Yom Tov.
- Following the fall of the USSR, much effort was exerted to obtain the release of many *sefarim* belonging to the Frierdiker Rebbe's library. The Rebbe explained that the way to hasten their return is by bringing more *sefarim* into the home and the library.⁴

ASARAH B'TEVES - DAY OF FASTING

- In 5738*, the Rebbe initiated the custom to say *divrei kivushin*, words of inspiration, intended to motivate people and rouse their hearts and do *teshuvah*.⁵

לזכות
החיילת בצבאות ה'
זעלדא רחל תח"ל
לרגל יום הולדתה י"ט מר חשוון

נדפס ע"י הוריה
הרה"ת ר' חיים אפרים וזוגתו מרת ח'ל'
מושקא ומשפחתם שיחיו
גאלדשטיין

12-TEVES

- In 5747*, the Rebbe instructed Chassidim to start the spiritual preparations for Yud Shevat, primarily by increasing Torah learning. The Rebbe specified that this applies especially to yeshiva students, but also to lay people.⁶

CHOF-TEVES – THE HILULA OF THE RAMBAM

- Being that the lifetime work of the Rambam is revealed on his *yom hilula*, a resolution should be made, in a public forum⁷, to take upon ourselves to learn his *sefarim*, primarily the “Mishneh Torah.”⁸
- We should make farbrengens in all Jewish communities on this special day.⁹

CHOF-DALED TEVES – THE HILULA OF THE ALTER REBBE

- Just like every *hilula* of a *nossi*, it is important to increase in the Torah and *horaos* of the *baal hahilula*, by establishing a set time to learn Tanya and Shulchan Aruch.¹⁰ It would also be proper to offer *shiurim* in the above subjects as well as increasing the spreading of Chassidus to others.
- We should make farbrengens on this day, at which selections of the Alter Rebbe’s Torah should be learned, and *hachlatos* should be made in fulfilling his *horaos*.¹¹

- The year 5723* was known as “*Shnas Hakan*,” commemorating 150 years since the *histalkus* of the Alter Rebbe. A few months prior to the *hilula*, the Rebbe instructed Chassidim to prepare by:

1. Dividing the Tanya to be studied and completed by the community,
2. Dividing the Shulchan Aruch to be finished by Chof-Daled Teves of the coming year and,
3. To increase in giving tzedakah to the *Keren Schneur* fund which supports the printing of the Alter Rebbe’s Torah and the *mosdos* of his followers.¹² ⓘ

1. Sefer Hasichos 5750 vol. 1 p. 209.
2. Hisvaaduyos 5747, vol. 2, p. 171.
3. Sefer Hasichos 5748 vol. 1 p. 183.
4. Sefer Hasichos 5752 vol. 1 p. 226
5. Likkutei Sichos vol. 20 p. 352
6. Sefer Hasichos 5748 vol. 1 p. 244
7. Hisvaaduyos 5752 vol. 2 p. 107
8. Hisvaaduyos 5750 vol. 2 p. 148
9. Hisvaaduyos 5751 vol. 2 p. 153
10. Ibid. p. 175
11. Hisvaaduyos 5750 vol. 2 p. 161.
12. Farbrengen 18 Elul 5722.

THE ULTI

Simcha

HOW TO CELEBRATE A SIMCHA

לזכות

התנ"ר' יוסף שאול הלוי בן אסתר
לרפואה שלימה וקרובה בכל רמ"ח
איבריו ושס"ה גידיו

נדפס

הרה"ת ר' יצחק יהודה וזוגתו מרת חנה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
קופפר



MATE

What's Most Important

The time of a *simcha*, especially a wedding, is a very special milestone in a person's life. Chassidus explains that the joy brought out in a person on the day he marries off a child is great enough to do away with all the external constraints of life, even his very nature.

For example: A person who is usually known to be frugal, at times going to extremes to save even a small amount of money, is suddenly able to splurge many thousands of dollars on a wedding feast for his child. The reason is that the sense of *simcha* reaches the deepest recesses of the *nefesh*, and its power is powerful enough to change even the longest standing nature of a person.¹

A powerful occasion as it is, the time of a *simcha* is also a holy time for the celebrant and their family. A bar or bas mitzvah marks the time that the *neshama* completes its entry into the body. A wedding is a day that the *chosson* and *kallah* are united into an everlasting covenant, along with Hashem, to build an everlasting home within the Jewish nation. *Chazal* say that a *chosson* on the day of his wedding is absolved of all his prior sins, and sources compare the day of a *chupah* to a miniature Yom Kippur for the couple.

The Rebbe famously signed and sent a letter to each and every family celebrating a *simcha*, whether a birth, upshernish, bar or bas mitzvah, or wedding, wishing “*mazal tov*” and offering his *brachos*.

Obviously then, the time of a *simcha* is supposed to be utilized in an appropriate manner. It's a holy time to draw on the heavenly energy available to the celebrants to bring the greatest *brachos* for the rest of their lives.

Below we will present some of the Rebbe's instructions as to how to (and how not to) prepare for and celebrate a *simcha* in the best possible way.

How to Spend

“You ask about how to arrange the upcoming wedding,” the Rebbe writes in a letter. “Whether to invite a large crowd, which according to your letter will saddle you with much debt. I don’t think it’s a good idea. The Rambam’s ruling is well known: The best path to take is always at the middle of the road. This is understood according to Chassidus, which explains that only the middle line of the *sefiros* [*Daas, Tiferes, Yesod*] is the one that penetrates all levels and ascends all the way upwards...”²²

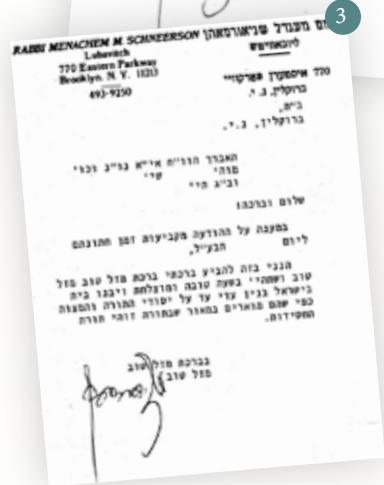
In another letter, the Rebbe writes:

“As a general rule, I am displeased by those who waste money on renting a hall and other such expenses, which serve no real purpose, even in the material sense. Although *Chazal* extolled the virtue of bringing joy to a *chossan* and *kallah*, obligating every person to join in, nevertheless, we see that greater joy is attained by doing a wedding not in a fancy hall that comes with a huge price tag, but in a much simpler manner. Obviously though, this decision must be done in a peaceful and pleasant way, with both sides in agreement.”²³

“Even if money is not an issue,” the Rebbe says, “these funds could have been used for much better purposes. If you want to make a ‘great feast,’ *Chazal* say that it must be made in the presence of ‘the greatest of all the worlds’—Hashem Himself. If you will do it in a proper spiritual manner, inspiring everyone to strengthen their commitment to Torah and mitzvos, and especially the new couple, to establish their home as a Chassidische home in all respects, then certainly the ‘greatest of all the worlds’ will grace the event with His presence and bestow His blessings upon it in all matters necessary...”²⁴

In a lengthy and fascinating discussion in *yeichidus* with the venerated *meshpia* Reb Nissan Nemanov, the Rebbe bemoaned the lavish style that has become commonplace when celebrating *simchos* in America, asking Reb Nissan to publicize his words on the subject as much as possible:

“In America, people make weddings in a big hall, necessitating huge loans to pay for them, making people work hard for long periods of time afterwards to pay up the loans. Then there is another consequence: Attendees at the wedding feel obliged to bring a big check as a gift. Even if the husband feels he cannot afford it, his wife will be embarrassed to go without the check. So one of two things will happen: Either they will not go to the wedding at all, missing out on a beautiful opportunity to celebrate a *simcha* with their friends, or they will go and he will force himself to write a check that is not within their budget, taking on debt that he cannot handle.



1. THE REBBE'S STANDARD LETTER OF BRACHOS FOR A BAS MITZVAH
2. THE REBBE'S STANDARD LETTER OF BRACHOS FOR A BAR MITZVAH
3. THE REBBE'S STANDARD LETTER OF BRACHOS FOR A WEDDING

“Then there is the issue of renting a big hall and making the right table placements: If you assign one of the important guests to the wrong table, they will be very offended. So the *baal hasimcha* has to be busy with figuring out how to place everyone at the right table.

“Just imagine: When people are so preoccupied with all these types of issues, what kind of Chassidische *farbrenge* will become of their *simcha*?

“In previous generations, a Chassidische *simcha*

would naturally turn into a meaningful Chassidische farbrengen, inspiring all the participants in the spirit of Chassidus. The atmosphere at a *simcha*, when everyone was happy and in good spirits, was a most opportune time for a good Chassidische farbrengen. But with all the petty issues at the weddings nowadays, no Chassidische farbrengen will be happening at all!

“This is a problem not only with ordinary *yungeleit*. It is an issue even with some of the more advanced, respectable Chassidim. The ones who daven at length and know how to study Chassidus, etc.

“I can’t simply tell individuals to refrain from doing this, because I don’t want to single out one person to go against the tide.

“...This and other materialistic issues that preoccupy the minds of Chassidim in America lead to a double problem: a) People tire themselves out with petty things and bring on unnecessary stress into their lives, which is a bad enough thing in and of itself. b) Every person only has a finite amount of time and energy. When one’s mind is busy with things like this, he obviously does not have time to learn *nigleh* and Chassidus, etc.”

Photos of the First Wedding

Many aspects of American culture that crept into the Chassidische community bothered the Rebbe immensely. One of these items is the obsession with taking photos at a wedding, going to great lengths to

have colored photos, at a time that is supposed to be so holy and pure for the *chossan* and *kallah*. In the earlier years when the Rebbe was *mesader kiddushin* at many of the weddings of *anash*, he made a condition that only two, at most three, photos were allowed to be taken at the *chupah*.

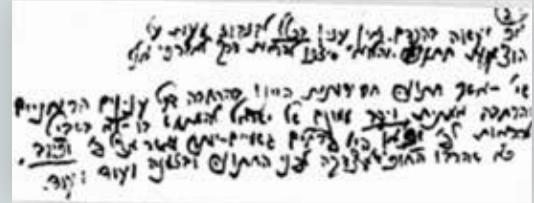
In *yechidus* with Reb Pinye Korf before his wedding, the Rebbe mentioned with regret that “with the money spent on pictures at



* 5731-1970

A CHASSIDISHE WEDDING

A response written in the Rebbe’s *ksav yad kodesh* from Cheshvan 5731* about what is important for a Chassidische wedding (*Igros Kodesh* vol. 27, p. 11):



א”כ יעשוה בהקדם. ואין ענין בכלל לבזבז מעות על הוצאות חתונה. והלואי שיזכו להראות דרך לאברכי אנ”ש שי - אשר חתונה חסידותית היינו בהרחבה בכל ענינים הרוחניים והרחבה אמיתית, ויקר ממונם של ישראל להשתמש בו - לא בשביל להראות לפי שכאן היו פרחים גשמיים - יותר מאשר אצל פ’ וכי”ב, כ”א שהרבו החו”כ שי’ בצדקה לפני החתונה ובזמנה ועוד ועוד.

If so, you should have it [the wedding] as soon as possible. And in general, there is no point whatsoever in splurging money to pay for a wedding. If only you would merit to [be the one who] shows the young people of anash sheyichyu that a Chassidische wedding is done with abundance of all matters spiritual; a true abundance. A Jew’s money is precious and should not be used merely to show off to so-and-so that we had real flowers, more than so-and-so, etc. Rather, [it should be used to show that] the chossan and kallah gave vast amounts of tzedakah before the wedding and at the time of [the wedding], etc.

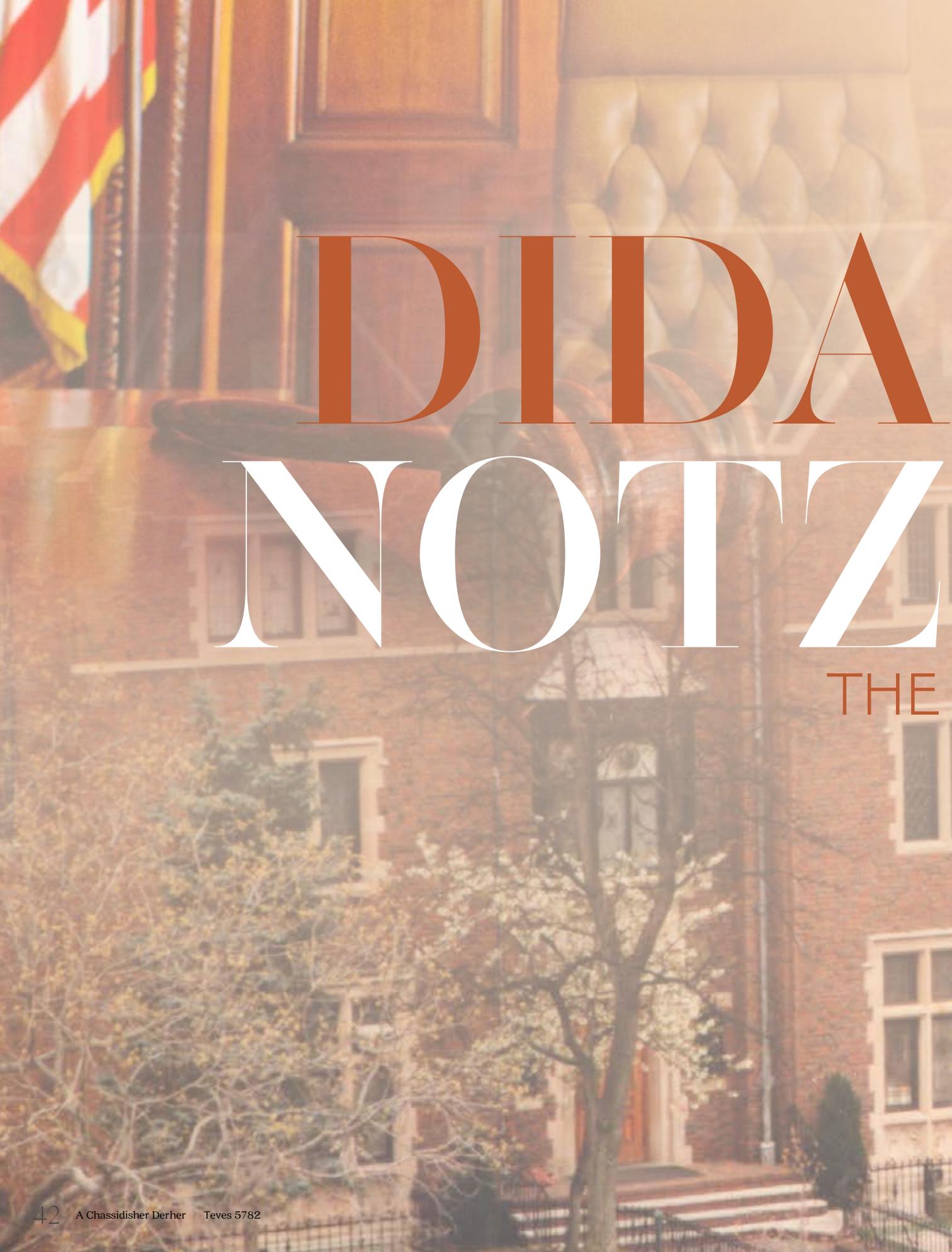
one wedding, we could support a full *cheder* in Morocco!”

When discussing the issue at a farbrengen, the Rebbe explained:

“Instead of being preoccupied with all the externalities of the wedding, worrying about the flowers and the pictures—nowadays people don’t suffice with black and white photos, they must have colored pictures only, *Rachmana litzlan*—it would be a better use of the time to do teshuvah over all of one’s past deeds and increase in Torah and mitzvos.

“The story is told about the Mittlerer Rebbe, when he was asked about which *shidduch* he preferred, he said that he wishes to go with whichever one can be finalized quicker. He knew that the Alter Rebbe would say additional Chassidus in honor of the occasion and he could not wait to hear it...

“Today’s *chassanim* aren’t expected to be at



DIDA NOTZ

THE

לזכות
עליזה תח' שוחאט
לרגל יום הולדתה - כ"ב טבת

ולזכות הוריה
הרה"ת ר' שלום דוב בער וזוגתו מרת חיה
מושקא שיחיו
ולזכות אחיותיה ברכה ליפשא, שיינדל,
ואחיה מנחם מענדל שיחיו

N ACH!

STORY OF HEI TEVES

In honor of the Yom Tov of Hei Teves—Didan Notzach—celebrated this month, we present the complete story of this Yom Tov in chronological order. Much has been written about Hei Teves in our magazines throughout the years, including collections of sichos from the Rebbe about the inner meaning of the trial and victory, and its spiritual significance to our avodah in dor hashvi'i. We encourage our readers to refer back to those articles in order to better understand and appreciate the celebration of Hei Teves.¹

CHABAD LIBRARIES

From the very beginning of Chassidus Chabad, the Rebbeim collected libraries of *sefarim*. With time, in addition to valuable *sefarim*, these repositories amassed the *ksavim* of Chassidus the Rebbeim wrote themselves or that were transcribed by dedicated *chozrim* and *manichim*.²

Unfortunately many of these libraries were lost either in the many fires that raged in the city of Lubavitch or because the *sefarim* were often divided among family members after the *histalkus* of a Rebbe, and each Rebbe built their own collection of valuable *sefarim*.

When the Rebbe Rashab fled Lubavitch in 5676* during World War I, his extensive and valuable library was packed and stored away. A few years later the Communist Bolsheviks seized the precious library which is still held in captivity to this day.

The Frierdiker Rebbe established a new library and official appeals were sent to authors and collectors of *sefarim* to donate their new publications as well as precious antique *sefarim* to the library for the benefit of the public. Many *sefarim* were donated and many were

purchased with money collected through *maamed* (the fund collected for the Rebbe's household use) or that had been donated to the Frierdiker Rebbe specifically for this cause. This library was not limited to Torah *sefarim* and it contained many books deemed inappropriate for a frum Yid to read, since it was meant to attract even a non Jewish clientele.³

Following the Frierdiker Rebbe's arrest and miraculous liberation on Yud-Beis Tammuz 5687*, the Soviets made it clear that remaining in Russia any longer would be extremely dangerous for him. The day after Simchas Torah 5688* the Frierdiker Rebbe was set to leave Russia with his entire family, but refused to travel without his extensive library. This was a demand that jeopardized his life at the time, but after much effort the Communists were forced to allow the library to leave Russia together with the Frierdiker Rebbe.

In Elul 5699*, Germany invaded Poland while the Frierdiker Rebbe was living in Otwock. While escaping to America in a daring and miraculous operation, the large library remained behind under Nazi occupation and was eventually lost due to the chaos of war. In 5737* it was miraculously discovered and returned to Lubavitch



THE CARDS USED BY THE FRIERDIKER REBBE TO CATALOGUE HIS SEFARIM COLLECTION

in Cheshvan 5738* in a fascinating operation coordinated with the Rebbe's direct encouragement and guidance.⁴

The Frierdiker Rebbe continued building the Chabad library in America and its contents were stored both in his *yechidus* room on the second floor of 770 and in a large room in the basement.

With the onset of *dor hashvi'i*, the Rebbe also started collecting *sefarim* from authors all over the world, often sending Kehos publications in reciprocation. Shluchim in North Africa and Europe were instructed to seek out ancient *sefarim* collections stored in old and neglected shuls and to arrange for their appropriate transfer to 770. Over time a collection of tens of thousands of valuable *sefarim* were amassed and contained in various locations until the house adjacent to 770 (766 Eastern Parkway) was purchased and officially became known in Lubavitch as "The Library." All of this was separate from the library the Frierdiker Rebbe collected until Yud Shevat 5710*.

SHEVAT - SIVAN 5745*

THE THEFT

During the month of Shevat 5745* a relative of *beis harav* started stealing *sefarim* from the Frierdiker



THE FRIERDIKER REBBE'S LIBRARY FROM POLAND ARRIVES IN THE UNITED STATES, CHESHVAN 5738*.



Rebbe's *yechidus* room and from the library in the basement of 770. He was known to visit his parents in 770, and no one suspected that the heavy suitcase he was carrying out of the building during those visits contained invaluable *sefarim*.

The theft went unnoticed until after Pesach, when Rabbi Yitzchok Wilhelm, a member of the Rebbe's library staff also involved with the upkeep of the Frierdiker Rebbe's library realized that *sefarim* were missing from the shelves.

At the same time Rabbi Yehoshua Zirkind, a shliach and an antique *sefarim* dealer in Eretz Yisroel, notified *mazkirus* that he noticed *sefarim* belonging to the Library of Agudas Chasidei Chabad being sold at exorbitant prices.

A security camera was installed by Rabbi Chaim Boruch Halberstam at the entrance of the basement library and after several weeks he was horrified to discover the identity of the thief. The locks were changed immediately to stop the theft of more *sefarim*, but by this time 400 *sefarim* had been removed and 120 of them had been sold all around the world!

All diplomatic efforts to persuade the relative to return the stolen *sefarim* in a peaceful manner failed. He claimed to be an heir with full

ownership of the library, which he intended to sell for a profit.

TAMMUZ 5745*

HU BACHAYIM!

On Rosh Chodesh Tammuz, the following Chassidim, members of Agudas Chassidei Chabad, were notified separately that the Rebbe wanted to speak with them at 8:00 p.m.: Rabbis Chaim Mordechai Aizik Hodakov, Binyomin Gorodetzky, Mordechai Mentlik, Moshe Pinchas Katz, Zalman Gourary, Nissen Mindel, and Dovid Raskin.

The Rebbe said three main points to the assembled at the surprise *yechidus*.

The fact that Agudas Chassidei Chabad owns the building of 770 was not for tax purposes. Rather, every room of the building is meant to be used for davening, learning Torah, and working on *hafatzas hamaayanos*.

According to *halacha*, heirs do not inherit until the entire inheritance is divided among them. The Frierdiker Rebbe never arranged a division of inheritance and no such thing happened since Yud Shevat 5710*; hence, all of the *sefarim* and *ksavim* that belonged to him remain his and must remain in his domain. Besides, the Torah tells us that "מה זרעו בחיים אף הוא בחיים" (just as his children are alive, he too is alive). There is no basis for the concept of inheritance here. The Rebbe also negated the suggestion to buy the stolen books back, since that would imply that the theft was justified.

A new building should be built in Kfar Chabad for Torah, *tefillah* and *hafatzas hamaayanos*, with the name *Oholei Yosef Yitzchok Lubavitch*.

The Rebbe said that if the issues were not sorted out before Yud-Beis Tammuz, he would need to speak about them publicly.

Twelve days later, towards the end of the televised Yud-Beis Tammuz

farbrengen, the Rebbe shocked Yidden around the world by revealing that several people had removed valuable *sefarim* and *ksavim* from the Frierdiker Rebbe's room and library. When they were caught, two of them returned everything they had taken but one refused to do so and was selling the *sefarim* around the world.

In a relatively brief but powerful *sicha*, the Rebbe shared the points from the *yechidus* of Rosh Chodesh Tammuz with the members of Agudas Chabad. The Rebbe declared that the talmidim and Chassidim of the Frierdiker Rebbe are still here in a very tangible way, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe continues to live among us, and there is no concept of inheritance here.

Emphasizing the seriousness of the situation, the Rebbe explained that obtaining any of the Frierdiker Rebbe's possessions through the theft that was just committed was like having a bomb in one's house that could explode, *Rachmana litzlan*, at any moment. All the *sefarim* must be brought back to their rightful home immediately, and anyone that would present a receipt for the purchase would be fully reimbursed.

Two days later, on Yud-Daled Tammuz during the *yechidus klolis* for the guests who arrived in honor of



RABBI YITZCHOK WILHELM WORKING IN THE REBBE'S LIBRARY IN THE 5740S



In our county, when one applies for a change to their zoning, the county sends letters to all the neighbors within a certain radius of the home notifying them about the prospective change. If a neighbor notifies the county that they object to the zoning change, the issue is then discussed at a public hearing.

Enduring a public hearing is never a positive experience and we had good reason to suspect that someone would try to cause us trouble with our growing preschool, but we had no choice. There was no other way for us to secure the necessary permits to grow our school.

Sure enough, after we applied to the county for the larger permit, a certain neighbor raised an objection and we were notified that a public hearing would soon be scheduled to review our request.

On the night of Yud-Beis Tammuz 5779* I was at the Ohel and I wrote a lengthy letter to the Rebbe about our new preschool, the tremendous success we had during the first year and our desire to expand it. I described the challenge of securing the permit since a neighbor had raised an objection and that we would need to have a public hearing to review our case.

I asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* that we should receive the permit without difficulty and succeed in providing a proper *chinuch* for more Jewish children.

Throughout the summer we waited to hear from

the county about our hearing date, but there was no news. On Motzei Shabbos Selichos I received an email from a neighboring shliach, Rabbi Yisroel Resnick. It was an email he received from a member in his community about a new law that was just enacted by the State of California several weeks earlier.

SB-234 is a law that aims to make it easier for daycares to open throughout the state. From now on, a larger home daycare would only need a permit from the state and the Fire Marshall, but would no longer require a permit from their local jurisdiction. In other words, our dreaded public hearing was now completely irrelevant!

I approached the county and showed them the new law. I was advised to withdraw my application and to reapply for the new permit once the new law went into effect on January 1, 2020.

A few months later we reapplied for the permit and received it with no unnecessary hardships, thanks to the Rebbe's *brachos*. **T**

YOUR STORY

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



JEM 286795

לזכות הורינו
ר' אברהם שמואל זוגתו מרת רבקה
מירל שיחיו שפאלטר
ר' משה חיים זוגתו מרת שרה שיחיו
גיפּען

נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' יצחק מאיר זוגתו מרת לאה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
שפאלטר



THE REBBE HEADS HOME

Zos Chanukah 5734*

Following the farbrengen¹, at around 9:15 p.m., the Rebbe heads home to 1304 President Street with a bag. The bag would often contain printed materials for the Rebbe to edit and letters sent from around the world which the Rebbe would work on late into the night.

1. See Illumination—Mivtza Chanukah, Derher Kislev 5776.