

# *A Chassidisher* **Derher**

אגודת דערהער

YUD  
ALEPH  
NISSAN  
*with the*  
REBBE

CELEBRATING  
YUD-ALEPH  
NISSAN **127**  
YEARS



**Derher** A Chassidisher  
א חסידישער דערהער

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#### Director of Operations

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#### Photo Research/Editing

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Rabbi Avremi Browd

#### Editors

Rabbi Mendel Alperowitz

Rabbi Mendel Misholovin

Rabbi Dovid Olidort

#### Copy Editor

Rabbi Eliezer Zalmanov

#### Design

Mendel Bergstein

#### Contributors

Rabbi Yanky Bell • Rabbi Yossi Bendet

Rabbi Koppel Chaiton • Rabbi Tzemach Feller

Rabbi Mendy Goldberg • Rabbi Levi Greenberg

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Greenberg

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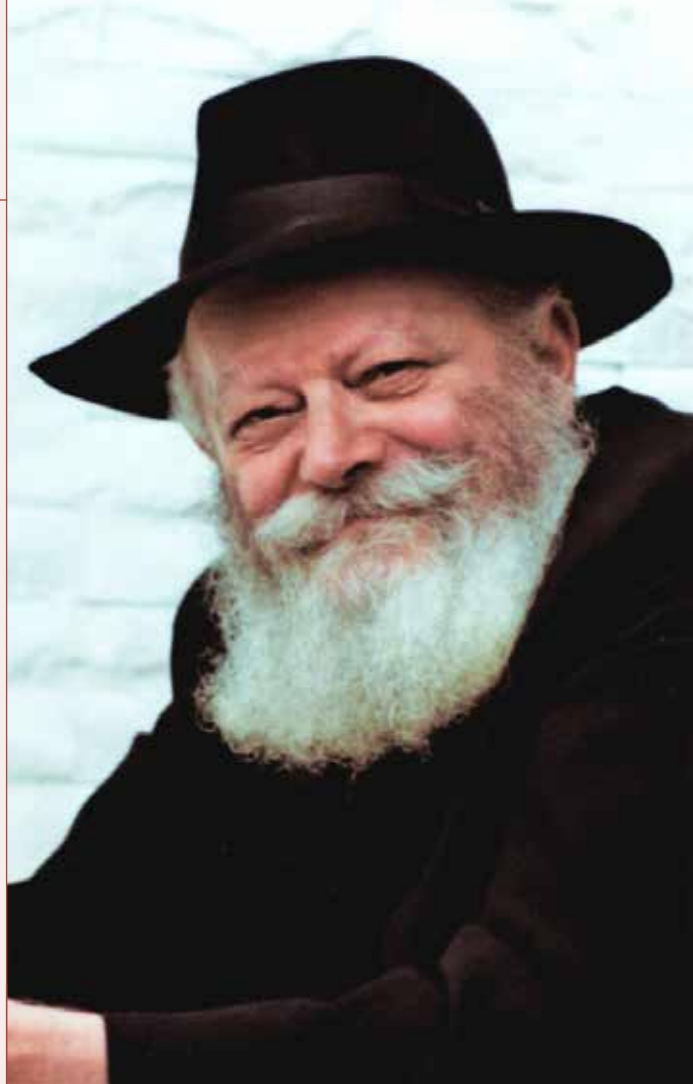


The Living Archive

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](http://TheLivingArchive.org)

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## ABOUT THE COVER PICTURE:

This picture was chosen by the Rebbetzin from hundreds of pictures as a gift to a friend. for the full story, see the editorial to Derher of Adar II, 5782

# Editorial

In honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan—120 years—we present this special edition of A Chassidisher Derher.

We hope that this humble contribution will help enhance the great *shturem* of Chassidim around the world in preparing for this momentous occasion.

May we be zoche to celebrate this Yud-Aleph Nissan with the Rebbe, in the physical sense, and the Rebbe will lead us out of *galus* to the *geula ha'amitis v'hashleima*, now!

A Chassidisher Derher

ימי הפורים ה'תשפ"ב  
שנת המאה ועשרים להולדת כ"ק אדמו"ר



ש



# BIRTH OF A YOM TOV

EARLY YUD-ALEPH NISSAN CELEBRATIONS

5662-5731





# What is the joy of Yud-Aleph Nissan, the Rebbe's birthday?

Seemingly, the essence of a person is his *neshama*, and the Rebbe's *neshama* existed before birth. So what is the significance of the physical birthday?

In the farbengen of Yud-Beis Tammuz 5722 the Rebbe explains that when the *neshama* is born, it immediately starts its *avoda* in the world. Thus, on the Rebbe's birthday we celebrate a world-changing event — the day the Rebbe's glow entered the world.

“Regarding Moshe Rabbeinu, the Torah says, ‘And she [Yocheved, his mother] saw that he was good.’ Rashi explains that ‘the house was filled with light when he was born.’

“But Moshe's *neshama* was in the house before he was born, albeit in his mother's womb. So why does Rashi say that the house was filled with light only after he was born? This is because, before Moshe was born, the house—and in a broader sense, the world—was dark; he had yet to impact the world. Only when he was born was ‘the house filled with light.’

“This idea extends itself further. Before birth, while the *neshama* is in the mother's womb, a *malach* teaches it the entire Torah, and thus the

*neshama* reaches the deepest levels of *limmud haTorah*. Yet, only when the *neshama* is finally born does it begin its *avoda* in the world.

“Similarly, on Yud-Beis Tammuz when the [Frierdiker] Rebbe was born, that is when he began his *avoda* of giving *koach* to all Yidden—and especially to his Chassidim and *mekusharim*—to accomplish their *avoda* of making a *dirah b'tachtonim*, to make the ‘house filled with light.’

“This is the reason that the Rebbe's birth was such a monumental event,” the Rebbe concluded.

“As we read in the Megillah, “הימים האלה נזכרים, ונועשים” — These days are remembered and celebrated, every year. Every year the Rebbe's birthday is an occasion for immense joy and celebration, not only for those who had the *zechus* to learn the Rebbe's Torah, but for every single Yid, because this is the day that the Rebbe began lighting up the world.”

In the following pages, we will go through the early years of Yud-Aleph Nissan, the years when the Rebbe's light had just begun to shine and illuminate the world.

# “The Home Filled with Light”

11 Nissan 5662\*

“Jewish date of birth: 11 Nissan. Circumcised, 18. Place of Birth: Nikolayev. Parents’ Names and Rank: Father – Hereditary Honored Citizen Levi son of Zalman, Schneerson. Mother – Chana. Name and gender of child: Boy, Menachem Mendel.”

These are words inscribed in the Nikolayev Jewish community’s Registration Book of Jewish Births of 1902-1903, recording the Rebbe’s birth on Yud-Aleph Nissan 5662\*.

Surrounding the period of the Rebbe’s birth, Harav Levi Yitzchok, the Rebbe’s father, received six telegrams from the Rebbe Rashab with detailed instructions regarding the care of the newborn baby.

“From the day of his birth,” described Rebbetzin Chana, the Rebbe’s mother, to Reb Berel Junik, “my husband instructed me that whenever my newborn son awoke, I should wash *negel vasser* with him before nursing him, something he didn’t instruct me to do for the other



THE REBBE’S BIRTH RECORD IN NIKOLAYEV

children. This was apparently on instruction of the Rebbe Rashab.”

It was later revealed that the Rebbe Rashab’s involvement began even prior to the Rebbe’s birth. Reb Zalman Duchman once wrote to the Rebbe that he had heard some unknown information (“באהאלטענע” “זאכן”) from Rebbetzin Chana. As an example he writes that he was told that the Rebbe was born from a *bracha* of the Rebbe Rashab<sup>1</sup>.

The Rebbe’s *bris* took place on the fourth day of Pesach, Yud-Ches Nissan, in the home of Rebbetzin Chana’s father, Harav Meir Shlomo Yanovsky. Incidentally, this day was also the birthday of Harav Levi Yitzchok, the Rebbe’s father. The Rebbe did not have a *pidyon haben*, as Rebbetzin Chana was a *bas-Levi*.

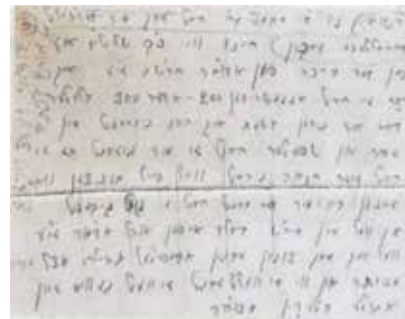
## A Communal Celebration

5675\*-Bar Mitzvah

*If the birthday of a Rebbe is an important day every year, his bar mitzvah day – a pivotal day in the life of every Yid—must definitely hold a tremendous significance.*

*The Rebbe once said<sup>2</sup> about the Frierdiker Rebbe’s bar mitzvah, that on this day he became a fully-grown Yid, and it served as a preparation for all his accomplishments later on in his life, including his leadership as nossi.*

It was a Shabbos to be remembered. Friday, Yud-Aleph Nissan 5675\* was the bar mitzvah of the Rebbe. The entire community showed up to the celebration in honor of their spiritual leader — the rav of Yekaterinoslav — Harav Levi Yitzchok. A few years prior, in the early years of Harav Levi Yitzchak’s tenure, there was some opposition from the *misnagdim* and Zionist communities to his appointment as the city’s rav. By now however, seven years later, Harav Levi



## “UNDISCLOSED”

The Rebbe responds to a letter from Reb Zalman Duchman, an elderly Chossid who, with the Rebbe’s steadfast encouragement, meticulously recorded his recollections of what he heard and saw in previous generations.

Here he writes to the Rebbe about the many stories and facts he heard from the Rebbe’s mother, Rebbetzin Chana, referring to them as “באהאלטענע זאכן” — undisclosed things.”

As an example, he cites the fact that the Rebbe was born as a result of a *bracha* from the Rebbe Rashab. The Rebbe circles the words “באהאלטענע זאכן” and comments:

בודאי יעלה וירשום אותם בכתב

You will certainly transcribe and commit them to writing.

Yitzchok was most respected and beloved by his community, and all came to participate in their esteemed rav’s celebration. A festive *seudah* was held on Shabbos afternoon continuing much past Shabbos and into the following Sunday morning, 13 Nissan, *yom hilula* of the Tzemach Tzedek, namesake of the Rebbe.

The house filled to capacity with well-wishers young and old, with the guests including people from all types of backgrounds. The Rebbe’s *zeide*,



## NULLIFIED IN A MIRACULOUS WAY

On the second night of Pesach 5699\*, the Frieddiker Rebbe related the following while explaining the *haggadah*:

“In the year 5662\*, there were horrible decrees [made] on *klal yisroel* (ל"ר), and before Pesach they were nullified in a miraculous way. [During the Seder on that year] my father (the Rebbe Rashab) said while reciting the *haggadah*: ‘*Vacharei chein yaitzue b'rechush gadol*’ - the ‘*rechush gadol*’ [refers to] the revelation of *gadol havaye...*”

One is amazed by the fact that in that same year, the Rebbe was born right before Pesach, on Yud Aleph Nissan 5662\*.

Harav Boruch Shneur Schneerson, had traveled to Yekaterinoslav especially for the celebration. This was a pleasant surprise, especially as he had brought with him the holy *bracha* of the Rebbe Rashab. “Hashem should help that he should be an *ehrlicher Yid*,” the Rebbe

Rashab had told Harav Boruch Shneur before leaving for Yekatrinnislov. “[Reb] Levik [the Rebbe’s father] should have *nachas* from him and from the other children as well.”

On his father’s signal, the Rebbe began a lengthy discourse, wowing all the assembled. He spoke for a while delving into the deepest parts of Chassidus as his father looked on, deriving much *nachas* from his eldest son. Most of the crowd was unable to follow the long and deep *drasha*.

After concluding the lengthy address in Chassidus, with the crowd still sitting in disbelief, the Rebbe began speaking yet again, this time in *nigleh*. The exceptional impression made on the audience would never be forgotten.

Unfortunately, not much more has been recorded about this historic event. One memorable moment — told over in later years by Rabbi Moshe Leib Schapiro — was during the address of Harav Levi Yitzchok, the father of the bar mitzvah boy. It was in the middle of his address when he suddenly turned to the Rebbe and asked: “Do you understand the significance this day has for you?” The Rebbe’s response took the form of tears, something that left an emotional impact on all those present.



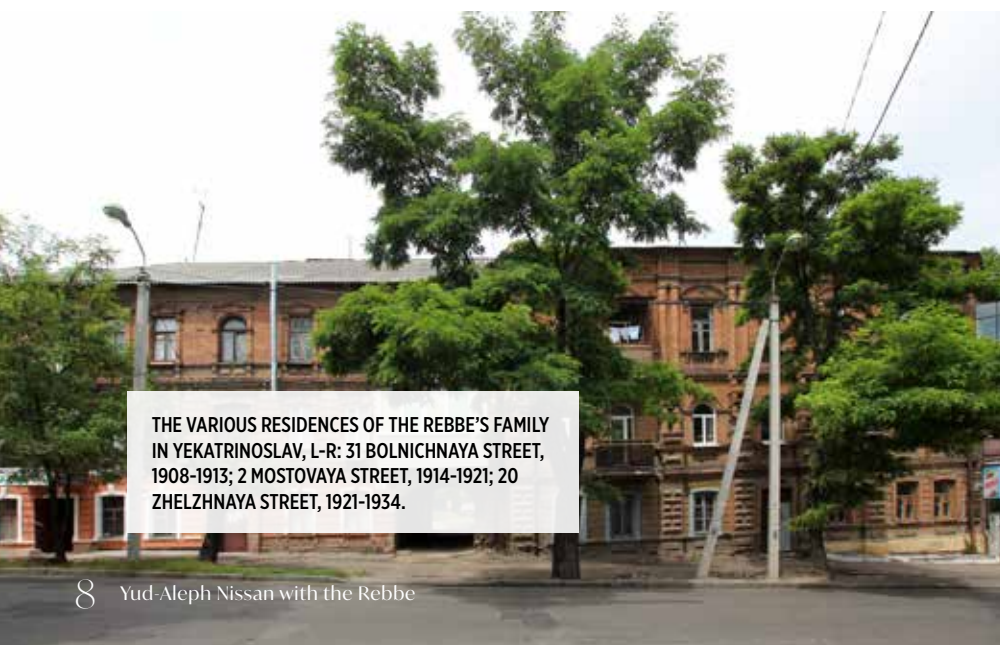
REBBETZIN CHANA'S RESHIMOS

One more, perhaps heavenly event, is recorded in the diary of the Rebbe’s mother, Rebbetzin Chana<sup>3</sup>:

“... All the bar mitzvahs of our sons were celebrated by us in a fine manner. But my older son’s was something special, extraordinary, on a highly sublime level. It was our family’s first personal celebration.

“... It was held on a Shabbos, and many guests attended. At that time we had a large home, and all its rooms were packed. Because it was so crowded, there was a constant interchange of guests, with some leaving while new ones came to take their place. I had many female guests, and there were also many young people. All these groups included guests from all sorts of backgrounds.

“I don’t remember exactly when it



THE VARIOUS RESIDENCES OF THE REBBE'S FAMILY IN YEKATRINOSLAV, L-R: 31 BOLNICHNAYA STREET, 1908-1913; 2 MOSTOVAYA STREET, 1914-1921; 20 ZHELZHNYA STREET, 1921-1934.



\* 5699-1939, 5662-1902



started, probably around 12:00 noon, after the conclusion of prayers at shul. The men sat in the large hall, while we women were in the large dining room. Of course, the tables were beautifully set with abundant food, for both the men and the women.

“Around 3:00-4:00 p.m. we saw some of the male guests, both old and young, emerging with weeping faces. I tried looking inside the main hall to discover the reason for their tears, but it was so crowded in there that I couldn’t see through all the heads.

“When I asked those who had been inside, they told me that the father—my husband—had requested our son (long may he live) to promise him something. I wasn’t inside, so I don’t know the actual course of events. But our son’s reply, apparently, wasn’t immediate. Everyone was amazed by the great character of such a young boy, that he was so guarded and cautious about giving his reply.

“I don’t know the details of what actually happened there, but around 6:00-7:00 p.m.—I remember it wasn’t so light any more—the weeping faces I had previously seen became very happy. Now from inside we heard the sound of such joyous dancing and singing, and the joy became so intense that it affected those outside, too.

“One sensed that the enthusiastic rejoicing held some deep significance, and that both the nature of the request and the one who gave his reply would remain memorable for a long time.”

Years later, in an interview with Mr. Nissan Gordon, Rebbetzin Chana expressed that already when the Rebbe became Bar Mitzvah, he already was a *gaon oilam*. “She related this in a certain tone,” Mr. Gordon wrote in the article, “one could see that her words were counted and exact, as if she didn’t want to stray from the words she had most probably heard from her great husband...”

## A Yom Tov is Born The Early Years

The entry for Yud-Aleph Nissan in Hayom Yom, published in 5703\* reads: “ביום ההולדת, על האדם להתבודד, ולהעלות זכרונותיו ולהתבונן בהם, והצריכים תקון ותשובה ישוב ויתקנם”. [On one’s birthday, he should spend time in seclusion, recalling his experiences and thinking deeply into them. He should then repent and correct those (of his past deeds) that need correction and repentance]. At the time of publication, one could have wondered why the date chosen for this

entry wasn’t Yud-Beis Tammuz—the birthday of the Frierdiker Rebbe, or even Chof Cheshvan—the birthday of the Rebbe Rashab. Only later did Chassidim realize that the date the Rebbe had chosen to describe the appropriate behavior on a birthday was his own birthday.

At the time however, the date of the Rebbe’s birthday was unknown to Chassidim.

Many years later, with the publication of the writings of the Rebbe’s father in “Likkutei Levi Yitzchak,” some more early mentions of Yud-Aleph Nissan were discovered. In these volumes, some of Harav Levi Yitzchak’s correspondence with the Rebbe was published, including letters written in honor of the Rebbe’s birthday.

In honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5692\*—the Rebbe’s thirtieth birthday—Harav Levi Yitzchak wrote a most heartfelt letter *bentching* his eldest son. Although most of his letters are hard to decipher being that they discuss deep Kabbalistic concepts, in this specific letter, heartfelt emotions flow from Harav Levi Yitzchak’s pen as he tells the Rebbe of his longing to see him once again. (The Rebbe left home four years earlier prior to his *chasuna* in 5689\*





THE REBBE REUNITES WITH REBBETZIN CHANA IN PARIS, 5707.

and had not returned since then.)

Another interesting fact found in these letters, is a topic that the Rebbe would discuss during Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengens in the years to come. In a letter written before Yud-Aleph Nissan 5698\*, Harav Levi Yitzchak explains at length the significance Yud-Aleph Nissan has as the day that the *nossi* of *shevet Asher* brought his *korbanos* during *chanukas hamizbeach*. The Rebbe would later speak about this point many times, even mentioning it in the Pesach *michtovim klotim*.

Interestingly, the exact date of the Rebbe's birthday was revealed to a select group of Chassidim even before the start of the Rebbe's *nesius*. It was 5707\* when the Rebbe traveled to Paris to greet his mother, Rebbetzin Chana, who had recently escaped the clutches of the Soviets. The Jewish community of Paris, filled with Chassidim of different backgrounds—as well as a large Chabad community—used the opportunity to farbreng with Rebbe (known then as the Ramash),

and spend time in his presence.

Rabbi Nochum Aharon Yakobovitz related:

On Yud-Aleph Nissan, several Chassidim were sitting together on the second floor of the home of Reb Zalman Schneerson, Rebbetzin Chana's host during her stay in Paris. Unexpectedly Rebbetzin Chana suddenly appeared in the doorway. "Did you know that today is Yud-Aleph Nissan?" she asked. The Chassidim had no clue as to what she was referring to. "Yud-Aleph Nissan is my son's birthday," Rebbetzin Chana explained. "Perhaps you should ask him to farbreng." The Chassidim, led by Reb Bentzion Shemtov, approached the Rebbe and asked him to farbreng. The Rebbe responded: "*Avadeh, a gleiche zach* (—Certainly, a most appropriate idea)." A table was immediately brought, and the first Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen took place<sup>4</sup>.

Rebbetzin Chana later said about this farbrengen: "It was then that the Russian Jews [Chassidim]

first realized who he is...and from then on, they haven't left him..."

This is the first reference we have making note of Yud-Aleph Nissan as the Rebbe's birthday. From then on, we find several references to this special day. Slowly but surely, a Yom Tov was born.

As the Rebbe stood at the helm of Kehot Publication Society, he would publish *kuntreisim* of the Friediker Rebbe's *maamarim* before each Yom Tov. Beginning in 5708\*, the Rebbe signed the preface of the Pesach *kuntreisim* with the date "11 Nissan." [Interestingly, in the preface to the Beis Nissan *kuntreisim* the date signed was "25 Adar"—the birthday of the Rebbetzin.]

In the *kuntres* published for Pesach 5709\*, a *sicha* the Friediker Rebbe said to Reb Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky on Yud-Aleph Nissan of that year was included. The *sicha* discusses the chain of Chassidus Chabad throughout the generations, and the transition between one *nossi* to the next. After Rabbi Kazarnovsky

left the Frierdiker Rebbe's room, he met the Rebbe and repeated the *sicha*. The Rebbe immediately instructed that the *sicha* be included in the *kuntres* to be published for Pesach, which was being printed that very day!

On Yud-Aleph Nissan 5710\*, mere months following the *histalkus* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, several Chassidim gathered the courage and wrote a letter to the Rebbe, wishing him *brachos* in honor of his birthday. The Rebbe answered: "In response to your letter, may those who bless be blessed from Hashem, as promised in the Torah, 'Va'avarcha mevarachecha,' with the overflow of Hashem's blessing adding more than the principal."

Even after Yud Shevat 5711\* when the Rebbe officially accepted the *nesius*, few Chassidim knew the exact date of the Rebbe's birthday. This fact is expressed in the following anecdote:

Around Beis Nissan time of 5711\*, Reb Shmuel Levitin asked the Rebbe if he would be traveling to the Ohel on Beis Nissan in connection with the Rebbe Rashab's *yahrzeit*. The Rebbe answered that he would not, but that he would in fact be going ten days later. In answer to Reb Shmuel's question as to why the Rebbe would be going to the Ohel on that particular day, the Rebbe answered: "For a personal matter."

On Yud-Aleph Nissan, just before the Rebbe left for the Ohel, Rabbi Leibel Groner (then still a *bochur*) exited the Rebbe's room with the following message: "Those who wish to give themselves over and follow without asking questions, should sign a note with their name and their mother's name. There is nothing to

fear, as there will not be anything [requested] such as 'ascending to heaven,' etc., however those who sign must know that they must follow." The Rebbe added: "This is not a playful matter." Many *bochurim* immediately signed their name and handed in their notes. When the Rebbe saw the many signatures he said: "This is a serious thing," but then added again: "Though it will not be demanded 'to ascend to heaven.'"

Shortly thereafter, the Rebbe left for the Ohel. Chassidim noticed that while standing at the *tziyun* the Rebbe said over the *maamar* "*Basi Legani*" he had said on Yud Shevat. Upon returning from the Ohel, the Rebbe instructed that the *maamar* be published together with footnotes and many edits made by the Rebbe himself. The Rebbe cautioned that it should not be printed in an official way, rather in typewriter format on onionskin paper. Before publishing, the Rebbe was shown the *kuntres* together with its *sha'ar blatt*, where the title "*Kevod Kedushas Admu'r M'Lubavitch*" was written. The Rebbe agreed for it to be published so, and instructed that the *kuntres* be printed before 13 Nissan. Indeed, already on 13 Nissan the *kuntreisim* were being sold in 770...

Historically, this was the first *sicha* or *maamar* to be published with the Rebbe's *sha'ar blatt*. It is also noteworthy that just like the first *maamar* of the Rebbe was published on Yud-Aleph Nissan, the first volume of *Likkutei Sichos* bears the date "11 Nissan 5722\*," as well as the first volume of *Igros Kodesh*—"11 Nissan 5746\*."

## A Birthday Maamar

5712\*-5722\*

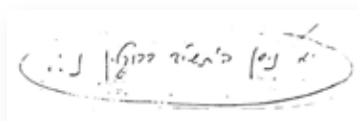
It was in Yud-Aleph Nissan 5712\*, the Rebbe's fiftieth birthday, when

## "MY BIRTHDAY IS ALSO IN NISSAN"

Interestingly, there is one prior reference made by the Rebbe to his birthday, a few days before Rebbetzin Chana revealed it to the Chassidim.

Rabbi Shmuel Butman related that his father, Reb Zalman Butman merited to be in Paris in 5707\* when the Rebbe was there. A few days before Pesach, he approached the Rebbe and asked for a *brocha* for his upcoming birthday. "Which year were you born?" the Rebbe asked. Reb Zalman replied that he was born in the year 5663\*. "You are from 5663 and I am from 5662\*" the Rebbe told him. The Rebbe then inquired as to exactly which day in Nissan Reb Zalman's birthday was, and Reb Zalman replied that it was on Rosh Chodesh. "My birthday is also in Nissan," the Rebbe said. Reb Zalman delicately inquired if he may ask the Rebbe which day his birthday is. The Rebbe answered, "Yud Aleph, and eleven days a year we say the same *kapitel* [Tehillim]"...

this Yom Tov began to take its present form. On Yud-Aleph Nissan in the evening, after the Rebbe returned from the Ohel, the small group of the "*Vaad Chazaras Dach*" (a committee devoted to spreading Chassidus by speaking weekly in shuls) was invited into the Rebbe's room for a short *sicha*. Following the *sicha*, Rabbi Hodakov invited some 20 people, pre-selected by the Rebbe in a written note, to enter the Rebbe's room. The list included a number of elder Chassidim



THE REBBE WRITES THE DATE OF THE PESACH DAVAR OF KUNTRES CHAG HAPESACH 5712\*: YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5712 BROOKLYN N.Y.





and some *bochurim* from the “*Vaad Chazaras Dach*.” It was before them that the Rebbe delivered the first Yud-Aleph Nissan *maamar*, *dibbur hamaschil* “*A-dnai Sefasai Tiftach*.” The *maamar* was based on a *possuk* from *kapitel* 51, the *kapitel* the Rebbe—and Chassidim—began saying on that very day, the Rebbe’s fiftieth birthday.

Towards the end of the *maamar* the Rebbe wept as he spoke about the demand of a Yid, who in a state of total *bittul* “beseeches from the depths of his heart, as the *mizmor* continues ‘*lev tahor b’ra li Elokim . . . Al tashlicheini m’lefanecha . . . Hashiva li seson yishecha . . .*”

After the *maamar* Reb Shmuel Levitin approached the Rebbe’s desk to give the Rebbe a *bracha*. He concluded by saying: “As the *mizmor* says: “*Tashmi’eini sasson v’simcha*—let me hear tidings of joy and gladness.” The Rebbe answered him with a smile: “The *mizmor* also continues ‘*Tageilna atzamos dikisa*—let the bones You have crushed exult’...”

This was the first official *farbrengen* held in honor of the Rebbe’s birthday. The *maamar* said, the explanations on the new *kapitel*, and the *brachos* given

to the Rebbe, opened the flood-gates, ultimately becoming a Yud-Aleph Nissan tradition for years to come.

On Yud-Aleph Nissan of the following year, 5713\*, several Chassidim entered the Rebbe’s room and asked the Rebbe to say a *maamar*. The Rebbe said he was unprepared, but will segway into the *inyan* during the *maamar* on Acharon Shel Pesach. Sure enough, during the *maamar* on Acharon Shel Pesach, the Rebbe spoke on the new *kapitel* (52). In years following, the Rebbe continued to explain *pesukim* from the new *kapitel* in the *maamar* on Acharon Shel Pesach.

Usually during the *maamar* said on Acharon Shel Pesach, the Rebbe would expound on the new *kapitel*. However in the year 5717\*, on Shabbos Hagadol, Chassidim were surprised to hear a *dibbur hamaschil* to the words “*Pada Veshalom*.” After some time Chassidim realized that the Rebbe was speaking on the outgoing *kapitel*, *mizmor* 55. During the *farbrengen* of Shabbos Hagadol 5724\* the Rebbe said two *maamarim*: one expounding on the outgoing *kapitel* (62), and one on the new, incoming *kapitel* (63).

Although the Rebbe would not make any official mention of Yud Aleph Nissan after 5712\* for the next ten years, Chassidim would still do their part in doing what they felt they should be doing on the Rebbe’s birthday.

Almost every year on Yud Aleph Nissan throughout the next ten years, a group of elder chassidim would enter the Rebbe’s room to *bentch* him in honor of the day. The Rebbe would always acknowledge their *brochos*, and would answer with a *brocha* of his own.

## “Yoma Tava L’Rabbanan” 5722\*-60 Years

As the years went on, the Yom Tov of Yud-Aleph Nissan became more known and thus more celebrated. Every year Chassidim would gather together, rejoicing and *farbenging* with each other in honor of this special day. However, the celebrations were done privately, in an almost secret manner. Chassidim felt nearly ashamed to publicly celebrate the Rebbe’s personal day.

Reb Gershon Mendel Garelik related, that when he and his friends were *bochurim* in the early 5710s\* they would farbreng together in the dormitory of the yeshiva on Yud-Aleph Nissan, and wish each other that the day will yet come when the entire world will join in the celebration...

The hope in the heart of all Chassidim was, obviously, that the Rebbe himself would celebrate with them, giving the Yom Tov an unequivocal “approval” from on high.

It was on Yud-Aleph Nissan 5721\*, as a group of Chassidim farbrenged together in the small *zal* of 770, saying “*lchaim*” and wishing that their high hopes—of the Rebbe farbrenging in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan—would become a reality. In the midst of the *chassidishe* farbrengen Sholom (Sydney) Hecht approached the table. “I am about to enter the Rebbe’s room,” he said. “If you wish, I can pass on a message to the Rebbe.” The Chassidim sitting there gathered the courage and made the following request: “Give over to the Rebbe,” they said, “that a group of Chassidim are farbrenging in the main shul, and it is our deepest wish that the Rebbe participate in the celebration by holding a farbrengen.” The Rebbe’s answer was short but to the point: “I will farbreng myself here, they will farbreng there, and the ‘*Kol Yachol*’ [—Hashem] will connect us.” It was only a year later, 5722\*, that the first official Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen took place, and this time not just for a few people gathered in the Rebbe’s room, but in the main shul of 770 for all who wished to participate.

As the day of Yud-Aleph Nissan—the Rebbe’s 60th birthday—drew closer, the energy felt by Chassidim throughout the world grew. Although ideas for new initiatives and revolutionary projects were broached, they were quickly silenced. After all, nothing was done on such

a large scale back then, so who knew if the Rebbe would approve.

Rabbi Leibel Alevsky related<sup>5</sup>: In those years, the *hanhala* of Tzach would hold a meeting every Motzei Shabbos, with the results of the meeting being reported to the Rebbe. As the weeks went by, and Yud-Aleph Nissan approached, discussions were held about the upcoming milestone and ideas were discussed as to how it should be marked. With much trepidation, they recorded their ideas and submitted them in their weekly *duch* to the Rebbe, hoping for an approval. The Rebbe did not give a positive or negative answer. Taking this as a green light—as the Rebbe had not rejected what they had written—preparations went into high gear.

Immediately, letters were sent to Chassidim around the world, calling on them to begin preparing for the upcoming milestone. Suggestions included: To add in Torah, *avodah* and *gemilus chassadim* with an emphasis on the number 60; to give tzedakah in increments of 60; to learn 60 lines of *Tanya baal peh*; and more.

Every Chossid was requested to send back his resolutions to the central Tzach office in New York. As the days went on, letters began pouring in from the world over to the offices of Tzach. Incidentally, some of the envelopes mistakenly found their way to the Rebbe’s desk. On the first two envelopes the Rebbe wrote “*shayach l’Tzach*” (this should be forwarded to Tzach), on the third envelope the Rebbe wrote “*shyach l’keren hashishim*” (this should be forwarded to the “60 fund”). This was definitely a most pleasant surprise! The Rebbe had now (somewhat) officially endorsed the *hachanos* of the Chassidim.

Although nothing was confirmed, a hopeful yet tense feeling—perhaps of anticipation—filled the air as Yud-Aleph Nissan drew close. For some reason many Chassidim felt

that the Rebbe would finally hold a public farbrengen marking this special day. On Yud-Aleph Nissan itself, before the Rebbe left for the Ohel, the Chassidim presented *duchos* containing their *hachlatos* in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan. They also presented to the Rebbe a large sum of tzedakah money — \$22,000 — to be used at the Rebbe’s discretion. After returning from the Ohel and davening Mincha and Maariv, Rabbi Hodakov came out of the Rebbe’s room and announced that a farbrengen would take place in the main shul. Many saw the farbrengen as a direct result of the *hisorerus* of the Chassidim.

The Rebbe entered the farbrengen with the first volume of Likkutei Sichos in his hand (this volume had been published in connection with Yud-Aleph Nissan), and began speaking about the *possuk* “כל הנשמה תהלל יה הללויה”<sup>6</sup>, expounding on the words of Chazal on this *possuk* that “one must thank Hashem for every breath.”

In the following *sichos* the Rebbe explained at length the story told over in the Gemara describing the *seuda* Reb Yosi held on his sixtieth birthday. The Rebbe explained that specifically Reb Yosi, whose life was clearly a spiritual one, marked his sixtieth birthday with a special celebration because he was certain that his *neshama* was still enlivening him just as before. This *sicha* was later edited by the Rebbe and published in Likkutei Sichos vol. 5.

The Rebbe also delivered a *hadran* on *Maseches Pesachim*. During the end of the *sicha* the Rebbe’s voice choked with tears as he spoke of the Yidden in *galus* and how Hashem will redeem us speedily. This *sicha* was also edited by the Rebbe and published in Likkutei Sichos vol. 11.

Another novelty of this farbrengen was that the Rebbe delivered two *maamarim*. The first *maamar* “*Acharei*

\* 5710S-1950S, 5721-1961, 5722-1962



*Mos Shnei B'nei Aharon*,” was followed by a few *sichos* and *niggunim*. The Rebbe thanked those who sent *brachos* in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan, and mentioned the plight of Russian Jewry stranded behind the Iron Curtain. After the next *niggun*, a Chossid stood up to give the Rebbe a *bracha* in the name of all those assembled. Immediately following the *bracha*, the Rebbe began the second *maamar*, “*Gadol Ha'oneh Amen*,” (“Greater is the one who answers *amen* than the one who says the *brocha*...” ) almost as a direct response to the *brocha* of the Chassidim.

It should be noted that some of the topics discussed in these *maamarim* seemed to share a theme with the *maamarim* of Yud Shvat. The Rebbe discussed the enormous *kochos* invested in our generation, as well as the general concept of *hiskashrus*, being dedicated to the Moshe Rabeinu of the generation.

As the farbrengen went on, the Rebbe remarked with a smile: It's a “*rachmanus oifen olam*,” acknowledging the lengthy *sichos*.

This farbrengen also marked

the first time a special *niggun* was sung with words of the Rebbe's new *kapitel* in the Rebbe's presence. The *niggun* was sung by Reb Yitzchok Dubov with the words “*Yamim al yemei melech tosif*” from *kapitel* 61.

Chassidim hoped that perhaps starting from this year the Rebbe would hold a farbrengen on Yud-Aleph Nissan annually. Sadly this was not to be and the next time the Rebbe would hold a Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen would be nine years later, in 5731\*.

On the eve of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5723\*, the elder Chassidim entered the Rebbe's room to give the annual Yud-Aleph Nissan *brocha*. The Rebbe expressed to them his disappointment in the fact that Chassidim didn't prepare for Yud-Aleph Nissan as they should have. Since Yud-Aleph Nissan that year occurred on Friday, Reb Shmuel Levitin asked if the Rebbe would be saying a *maamar* on Friday night. The Rebbe replied, “*Es felt kainem nit ois*—no one will miss it.”

## A Surprise Farbrengen

5731\*

Yud-Aleph Nissan 5731\* marked the start of the annual Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengens. From then on, the Rebbe farbrenged every year on Yud-Aleph Nissan until 5745\*, the last year—*le'eis ata*—we were *zoche* to such a farbrengen. At the time however, the farbrengen came as a complete surprise. The Rebbe returned from the Ohel, washed his hands and told the *mazkir* that after Mincha a short farbrengen will take place. With Pesach just a few days away, 770 was completely unprepared; the shul was in the midst of being cleaned and prepared for Yom Tov!

The farbrengen was announced so suddenly that there wasn't even enough time to set up the sound system before the farbrengen started. In the middle of the *maamar* (the farbrengen began with a *maamar*) a technician came to set up the sound system. However, the speaker started



making noise and the Rebbe motioned for him to stop. Only towards the end of the *maamar*, did they manage to connect the microphone.

The farbrengen started off with the famous *maamar* “*B’yom Ashtei Asar*.” This *maamar* is unique not only in its remarkable depth but also in the special tune in which it was said. It was later edited by the Rebbe and published in *kuntres* Yud-Aleph Nissan 5749\*. It should be noted that this *maamar*, and the *maamar* of 5732\* which carries the same *dibbur hamaschil*, are the only Yud-Aleph Nissan *maamarim* that are not connected to the topic of Pesach specifically.

The Rebbe then followed with a short *sicha* thanking those who sent their heartfelt wishes and *brachos* for Yud-Aleph Nissan, and asking that the time still remaining until Pesach be used out to distribute matzah to as many Jews as possible. The Rebbe then made a *bracha acharona* and

exited the shul after starting the niggun “*Al Achas Aamah Vekama*.”

Although the farbrengen was a surprise, some Chassidim did anticipate that the Rebbe might farbreng based on a remark the Rebbe had made sometime earlier. On 15 Shevat of that year, the Rebbe held a surprise farbrengen upon returning from the Ohel. It was then that the Rebbe famously announced: “The time has come to conquer the world through *limmud haTorah*.” On Shabbos Hagadol of that year (days before Yud-Aleph Nissan) the Rebbe spoke about that now famous farbrengen, saying: “At the time I was prompted (at the Ohel [i.e. by the Frierdiker Rebbe]) to farbreng and I didn’t understand for what purpose. But afterwards it was discussed [in America] whether or not the yeshiva *bochurim* should be drafted [to the army to fight in the Vietnam War], and this *hisorerus* [in *limmud haTorah*] turned out to be the *hakdama* of the *refuah l’makah*.”

The Rebbe ended off by saying that from now on, “אויב מ’שטופט מייר, דארף מען נישט שפארן—If I will be prompted, I won’t look for a way out.” Chassidim understood that perhaps the Rebbe meant, if he will be “pushed” from the Ohel to do something that wasn’t usually done, he would accede to what was being asked of him. This expression lit a flicker of hope in the hearts of Chassidim that perhaps if they tried hard enough, they would merit a farbrengen of the Rebbe on Yud-Aleph Nissan.

1. See Early Years p. 21. *Early Years*, Derher Nissan 5777.
2. Likkutei Sichos vol. 2 p. 597.
3. Part 39. Translation copyrighted by Kehot Publication Society.
4. See *The Reunion*, Derher Adar II 5782.
5. See *Yud-Aleph Nissan with the Rebbe*, Derher Nissan 5772.
6. Igros Kodesh vol. 5, p. 106.
7. *Minhagei Yom Holedes*, Sefer Hasichos 5748 vol. 2.

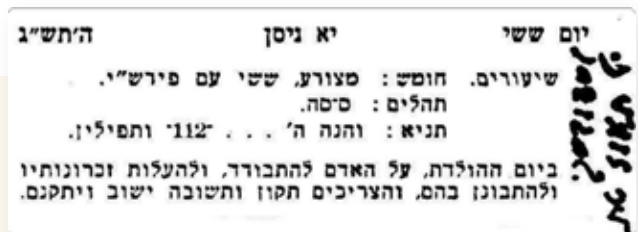
## A REBBE’S BIRTHDAY

It is well known the depth and hidden treasures that can be found in Hayom Yom. *Biurim*, *remazim*, and even lengthy *pilpulim* based on these short yet weighty *pisgamim* fill volumes.

The source of the Hayom Yom entry for Yud-Aleph Nissan sheds a unique light on the day’s *pisgam*:

Reb Shlomo Sudevsky wrote to the Frierdiker Rebbe about his declining state of health. The Frierdiker Rebbe responded<sup>6</sup>: “I received your letter on the day of my rejoice, the anniversary of Yud-Beis Tammuz. As it is brought in *sefarim* that on one’s birthday, he should spend time in seclusion. He should recall his experiences and think deeply about them. He should then repent and correct those of his past deeds that need correction and repentance.

“Upon opening your letter, I remembered your arrival in Lubavitch, your study of *nigleh* and Chassidus, my father [the Rebbe Rashab]’s words about you, his hope that you would eventually



IN HIS PERSONAL COPY, THE REBBE WROTE THE SOURCE FOR THE HAYOM YOM OF YUD ALEPH NISSAN.

aid in strengthening the ways of Chassidus just as the first students and *temimim*...”

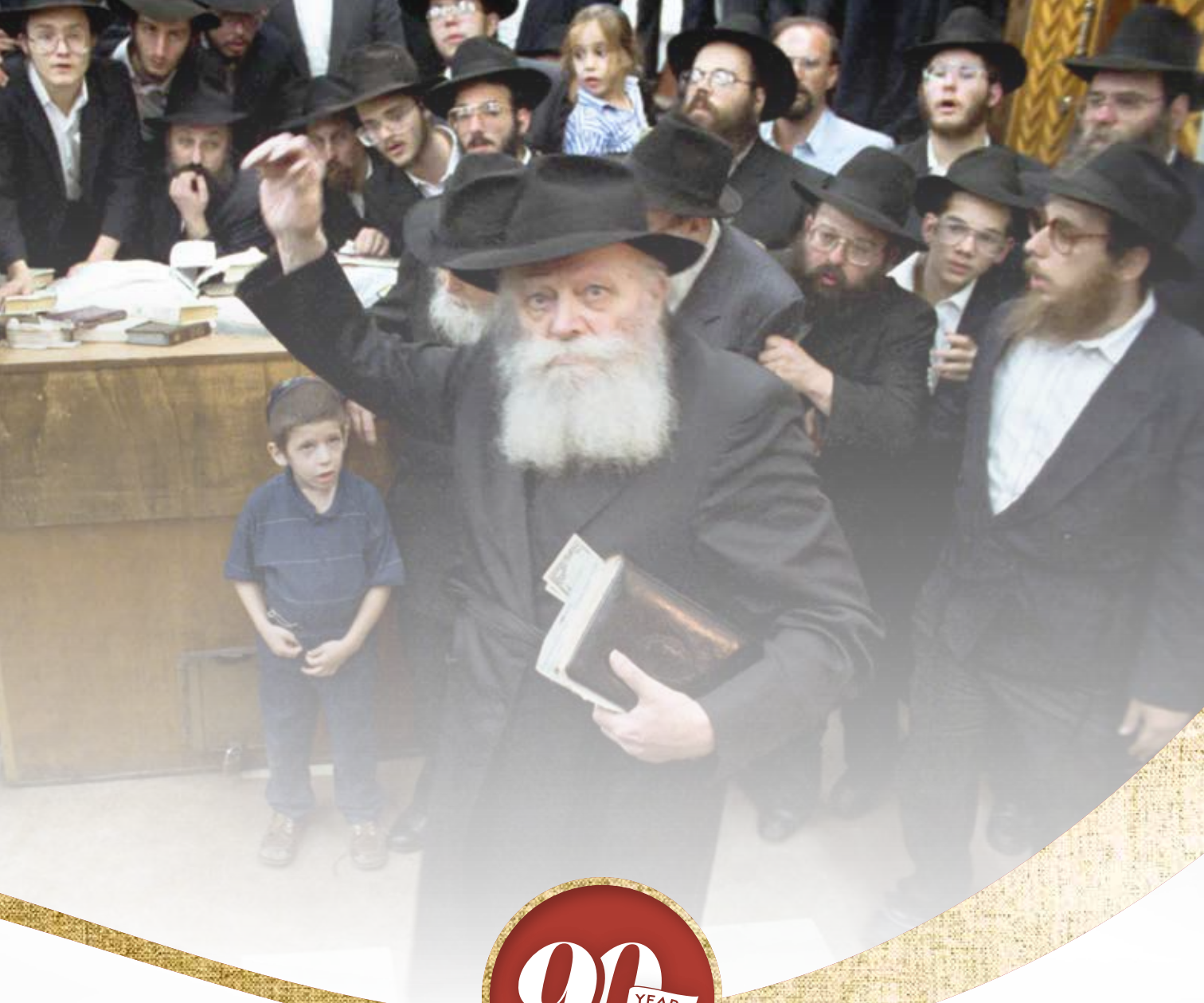
Chassidim understood from this letter that perhaps the Frierdiker Rebbe is hinting at the thoughts of a Rebbe on his birthday. Indeed, it is the thoughts of Chassidim that fill the Rebbe’s mind on that special day. It is the Chossid’s upbringing and the hope that he will yet grow to join the ranks of the Rebbe’s Chassidim, that are being “thought about deeply.”

Fascinatingly, in a small footnote the Rebbe writes that the same thing is demanded of a Chossid on his birthday<sup>7</sup>: “To envision in his mind one of his *yechidusen*; what he asked and the answer he was given, and then to learn from his [the Rebbe’s] Torah.”



# YUD-ALEPH NISSAN MILEST CELEBRATI





# ONE ONS

מצינו במנהגי העולם שהגיעו גם בתוככי בני ישראל, שישנם ימי הולדת מיוחדים שהם שונים מיום הולדת סתם. ובכללות הרי זה מעשר שנים לעשר שנים.

It is common practice in the world, also found by Klal Yisroel, that there are “special” birthdays celebrated differently than regular birthdays; generally these are the ones celebrated every ten years.

*Yud-Aleph Nissan 5722*





70  
YEARS

י"ד' חסידי אל אבושה לעולם  
YUD-ALEPH  
NISSAN 5

## Preparations

Already<sup>1</sup> from the beginning of the Rebbe's 70th year in 5731\*, thoughts of Chassidim worldwide turned to the upcoming milestone: the Rebbe's seventieth birthday.

Lubavitch communities worldwide began assembling and preparing themselves for the approaching Yom Tov. Young and old spent months preparing sizable *matanos* for the Rebbe, befitting such a milestone.

In Eretz Yisroel for example, the official preparations were launched on Chof Cheshvan, during the yearly Tzach convention. The convention was dedicated in its entirety to discussing how to urge Chassidim to prepare for Yud-Aleph Nissan, as well as practical ideas for how to do so. Following the convention, a public notice was written up recording the *hachlotos* that were taken, which included: Giving tzedakah in amounts of 70 (to be distributed at the Rebbe's discretion); to add in learning in amounts of 70; that all Chassidim should learn *Kuntres Heichaltzu*; and to be *mekarev* Yidden in amounts of 70, specifically through *mitvza tefillin*.

Chassidim from across the spectrum, from small children learning in *cheder*, to the many *bochurim* learning in yeshivos, as well as shluchim and *anash* worldwide, understood that something unprecedented was about to take place, and began to prepare themselves accordingly.

Rabbi Yisroel Noach Vogel relates<sup>2</sup>:

"During the months preceding Yud-Aleph Nissan I was learning in the Lubavitch Cheder of London. Although we were small children, we too wanted to take part in giving the Rebbe a *matana*. Starting a few months before Yud-Aleph Nissan we began to memorize Gemara by heart, and with the encouragement

of our teacher — Reb Berel Levin *a"h* — we memorized 70 pages of Gemara by Yud-Aleph Nissan!

"After Pesach, we were informed of a pleasant surprise: The Rebbe had sent a pocket sized Tanya with a *michtav kloli* pasted in the back cover to every single child that participated in this gift! The class younger than me, who had also given the Rebbe their own gift for Yud-Aleph Nissan, received a pocket sized siddur with the same *michtav kloli* attached.

"One small difference in the letters was that in our letter the Rebbe wrote: "... As it is written in this Tanya you shall contemplate that Hashem is always over you..." However in their letter the Rebbe wrote: "... As it is written in this siddur [printed] before *Modeh Ani*, that immediately after awakening one should remember that Hashem is over him..." (The Rebbe sent the siddur and Tanya, as well as the letters to children worldwide in thanks of their gifts in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan.)

As the months went by and Yud-Aleph Nissan drew nearer, the excitement and preparations rapidly increased and began in earnest, especially for the *bochurim* learning in New York at the time. As time passed, their feelings of joy and sense of elation grew stronger and stronger. Their hearts and minds focused on the Rebbe, as they prepared themselves for the long awaited day<sup>3</sup>. As Rabbi Sholom Charitonow—then a *bochur* in Oholei Torah—describes this special time period: "All winter long we were living with Yud-Aleph Nissan..."

The *bochurim* learning in 770, in addition to each one's personal *hachanos*, began a daily 70 minute *seder* in Likkutei Sichos, in preparation for Yud-Aleph Nissan. This in-depth learning of the Rebbe's Torah would later lead to the establishment of the concept of *kovetzei haaros u'biurim*.

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Gourarie

PH  
732

\* 5731-1971



relates<sup>4</sup> how on the long winter Friday nights, *bochurim* would go to sleep early and wake up early Shabbos morning, using the extra time to learn what they took upon themselves as a *matana* to the Rebbe. Sometimes, already at two in the morning, the *zal* in Oholei Torah would be filled with *bochurim*.

Being that the entire concept of giving the Rebbe gifts was initiated by Chassidim, some people were skeptical about the idea. “Who are we to give the Rebbe a gift, and what do we understand about Yud-Aleph Nissan?” they claimed. “The Rebbe’s birthday is a personal affair which we shouldn’t mix into. Who knows what the Rebbe’s reaction will be?”

During the month of Teves, the *bochurim* in Mesivta Oholei Torah, with the encouragement of their *mashpia* Reb Pinye Korf, took upon themselves to give the Rebbe a joint *matana* from their class. They decided that they would each memorize 70 *sichos*, as well as finish the whole *maseches* Bava Kama before Yud-Aleph Nissan.

Being that they were hesitant to inform the Rebbe of their gift (because of the above mentioned concerns), they decided that the next member of the class to go into *yechidus* will write about it in his *tzetel* in the name of the entire class.

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Itkin was scheduled to go into *yechidus* at the time in honor of his birthday, and included the class undertaking in his *tzetel*. When the Rebbe read about the class *matana*, the Rebbe said: “Regarding what you wrote about Yud-Aleph Nissan, it is an appropriate thing to do, and it gives [me] pleasure; others should learn from this.”

When he came out of *yechidus* and repeated the Rebbe’s words to the other *bochurim*, they were all quite excited. This was the first time the Rebbe acknowledged and even



BOCHURIM STUDYING IN THE SMALL ZAL UPSTAIRS 770.

expressed his pleasure in Chassidim’s preparation for Yud-Aleph Nissan<sup>5</sup>.

About a month before Yud-Aleph Nissan, during the Purim farbrengen, the Rebbe himself spoke about preparing for Yud-Aleph Nissan:

“About those who are asking about my birthday, now is the time to express that they should connect it with *limud haTorah*, in both *nigleh* and Chassidus. Although it is seemingly improper to [go into] detail and ask for a certain kind of gift, however because the intent of those giving [the gift] is to cause pleasure by the recipient, it is thus a fair and good thing to request that [the gift be] connected with learning Torah.”

During the week before Yud-Aleph Nissan, Reb Dovid Raskin went into *yechidus* together with his fourteen-year-old son. In the course of the *yechidus* the Rebbe turned to the boy and asked: “What present will you give me for my birthday?” The boy replied that he is memorizing 14 pages of Gemara as a present to the Rebbe. The Rebbe smiled and wrote down the boy’s answer.

During this time period, the *chazzan* Reb Moshe Teleshevsky wrote to the Rebbe that he prepared a *niggun* to the words of *kapitel ayin-*

*aleph* (the Rebbe’s new *kapitel*), “*Becha Hashem chasisi*.” The Rebbe answered that he should teach the *niggun* to the crowd and see if they like it.

All together, four *niggunim* were put to *pesukim* from the Rebbe’s new *kapitel*. “*Becha Hashem chasisi*,” “*Kemo feis hayisi*,” “*Avo b’gvuros*,” and “*Teranaina sefasai*.” The most popular, however, was “*Bechah Hashem Chasisi*,” a *niggun* that the Rebbe particularly enjoyed and encouraged.

## A Global Celebration

The preparations for Yud-Aleph Nissan were not felt only in Lubavitch communities. As Yud-Aleph Nissan approached, mayors of cities, governors of states, and other elected officials from all over began sending the Rebbe their good wishes in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan, recognizing the Rebbe’s greatness and world leadership.

By the time Yud-Aleph Nissan came, the Rebbe had received hundreds of letters from world leaders and public figures. Virtually every mayor in Eretz Yisrael sent his well wishes, as well as many foreign dignitaries and leading intellectuals.



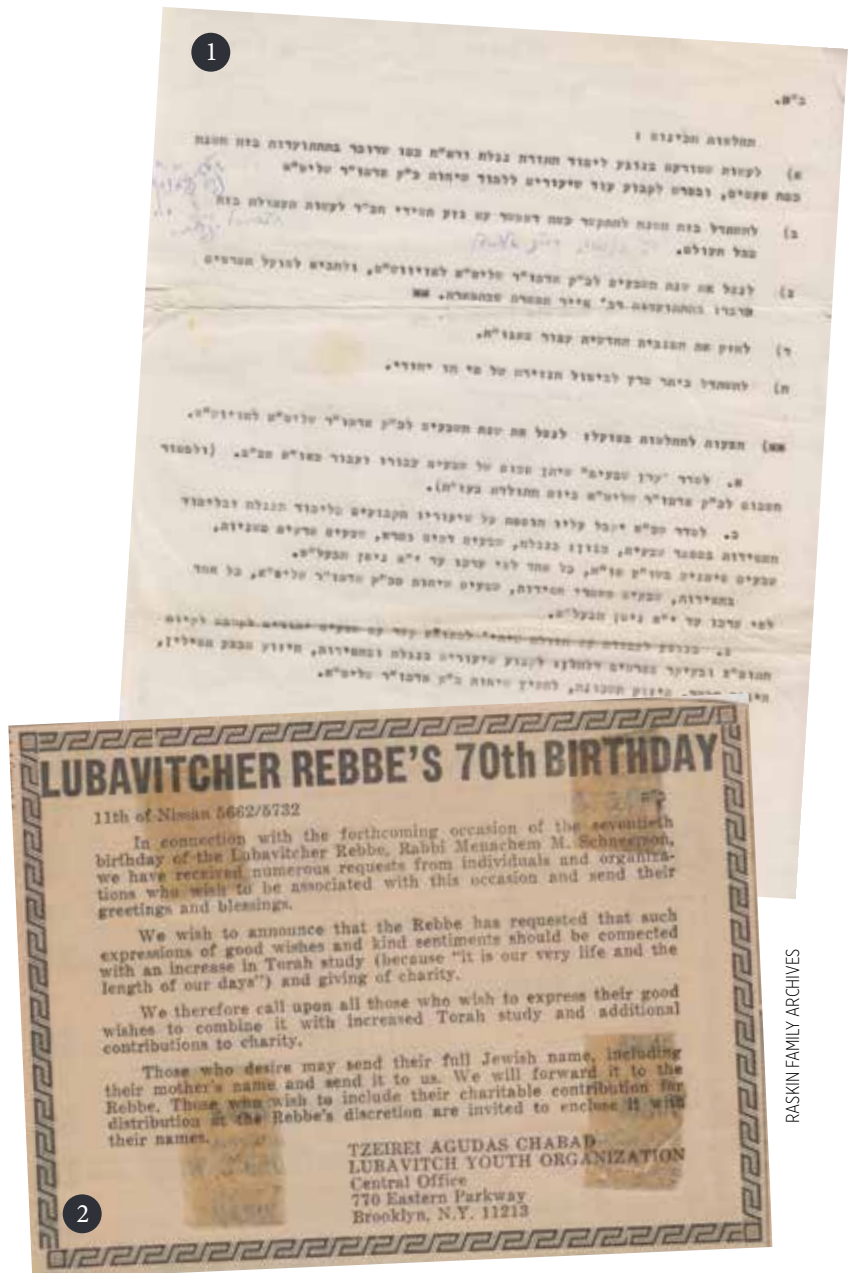
Some heads of state went a step further, sending their greetings with a personal emissary to 770. President Nixon sent the famous Jewish author Herman Wouk as his personal representative to bring his greetings, and to present the Rebbe with the President's own personal letter. Yitzchak Rabin, then the Israeli ambassador to the United States, was dispatched to bring personal regards from President Shazar, as well as the entire Israeli government.

Feeling the global excitement in the air, major newspapers and magazines published articles, interviews, and reports about the Rebbe and this special milestone. The Israeli newspaper "Shearim" dedicated an entire edition to Yud-Aleph Nissan. A reporter from the New York Times was sent to 770 to observe the festivities and record his impressions. This reporter was also granted a *yechidus* after Yud-Aleph Nissan, in which he interviewed the Rebbe for the purpose of his article.

## A Yom Tov Atmosphere

As the long awaited day neared, Chassidim were informed that the Rebbe would hold a special farbrengen on Yud-Aleph Nissan in honor of his birthday. Along with the announcement came instructions that the news should not be publicized in any newspapers, television, or radio stations — unlike other weekday farbrengens which did receive wide publicity.

Although this was not the first time the Rebbe would hold a farbrengen on Yud-Aleph Nissan, the farbrengens in previous years had always been a surprise with no advance notice. Being so, the fact that Chassidim were informed of this farbrengen beforehand was a cause for great



1. A LIST OF HACHLATOS SUGGESTED BY TZACH IN ANTICIPATION FOR YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5732\*.  
2. AN AD PLACED IN LOCAL NEWSPAPERS CALLING FOR INCREASED TORAH STUDY AND SUGGESTING PEOPLE TO WRITE LETTERS TO THE REBBE IN HONOR OF YUD-ALEPH NISSAN.

excitement. Chassidim felt that the Rebbe wanted to include them in his personal celebration; a public predetermined farbrengen meant that everybody would be coming to New York to personally celebrate with the Rebbe in his holy presence.

Shluchim, *anash* and *bochurim* began preparing to travel to New York. Thousands began to flock to

770, and the shul slowly began to fill with guests who had come to spend Yud-Aleph Nissan with the Rebbe. A Yom Tov-like feeling filled the air.

Yud-Aleph Nissan fell out on Motzei Shabbos. On Friday, a *michtav kloli* was released, partially discussing the saying of Chazal "אדם לעמל יולד" — Man was born to toil." This saying of Chazal turned out to be a central topic



THE REBBE ENCOURAGES THE SINGING AS HE ARRIVES AT 770, YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5732\*.

of the grand farbrengen that took place on Sunday evening. Historically, this *michtav kloli* was the first to bear the date “Yud-Aleph Nissan,” and the first to quote a *possuk* from the Rebbe’s new *kapitel*, a custom that continued for the years to come.

Before Shabbos, the Rebbe edited (for the second time) the *sicha* said during the farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Beshalach 5729\*, in which he thanked the many people who sent their well wishes in honor of the fortieth wedding anniversary of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin. It seemed as this was in connection to the many well wishes pouring in from every corner of the world

in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan.

On Shabbos the shul was packed with Chassidim. There was a festive atmosphere, and the Rebbe encouraged Reb Zalmon Jaffe to sing *Hoaderes V’hoemuna*, a custom reserved for Yom Tov in those years. For *krias haTorah*, Moshiach’s *sefer Torah* was used, and during Musaf *Hu Elokeinu* was sung, also a rare occurrence at the time.

During the Shabbos Hagadol farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke about the *possuk* “*Becha Hashem chasisi al ayvosha leolam*,” and explained it according to the Midrash.

This farbrengen also featured two *maamarim*. The first was a *maamar*

*kein sicha* on a *possuk* from the outgoing *kapitel*, (70) “*Lamnatzeach l’Dovid l’hazkir*.” The second *maamar* was said (this time with the regular *niggun* and tune) on the *possuk* “*B’asor lachodesh*.” It should be noted that this *maamar* has the same content as the *maamar* said on Yud-Aleph Nissan itself, “*B’yom Ashtei Asar*.”

Towards the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe said: “Being that tomorrow is “*מיין טאג*” (“my day”), therefore, those that are involved in *mivtza tefillin* can notify people that if they commit to putting on tefillin every day, they will receive a free pair of tefillin on my personal account. When something is free however, it loses its value. Therefore, those receiving the tefillin should pay a symbolic amount of one dollar.”

The Rebbe then continued and said: “Since tomorrow is an important day for me, anyone who is in charge of a [Chabad] institution, can come and take money from my personal *cheshbon*, as my contribution to the *mosdos*.”

On Motzei Shabbos, after reviewing the *sichos* the Rebbe said by the farbrengen, Chassidim sat down to farbreng. The tremendous joy was palpable. The built up excitement from all the many preparations broke loose. The spirited dancing lasted until early morning.

That night, after Shabbos, a group of elder Chassidim, representing Chassidim and all of *klal Yisroel*, entered the Rebbe’s room to *bentch* the Rebbe in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan. As they stepped inside, the Rebbe noticed that Rabbi Zalman Shimon Dvorkin (the *rav* of 770) was not present and asked that he be called. After the other Chassidim left, Rabbi Dvorkin stayed in the Rebbe’s room for a few more minutes.

Also entering the Rebbe’s room that night—at the Rebbe’s explicit request—was the delegation of

Chassidim from England, led by Rabbi Nachman Sudak, who presented to the Rebbe a new Tanya printed there. The printing was done after Rabbi Sudak had been informed (just two weeks earlier) that the Rebbe would like a Tanya to be printed in England in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan. The Rebbe gave each of the members of the delegation a pocket sized Tanya in return, saying that he is giving it to them on condition they don't just leave it on the shelf, but to learn from it too.

## “My Day”

On Sunday, Yud-Aleph Nissan itself, the Rebbe spent a large part of the day at the Ohel, returning to 770 at 8:30 p.m. As the Rebbe got into the car to leave for the Ohel, a large crowd was standing outside. Locals together with the many guests watched as the Rebbe—the *nossi hador*—prepared to spend his most personal day *davening* for *klal Yisroel*. Around the time the Rebbe was to return to 770, many Chassidim standing outside began to dance right there out on the street!

Soon after the Rebbe left 770, a sizable line accumulated outside Rabbi Hodakov's office. The Rebbe had announced on Shabbos that heads of Chabad institutions should come and collect a personal contribution in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan, and Rabbi Hodakov was distributing \$71 to each *mosad*, regardless of its size. The feeling was that the Rebbe was celebrating with each of his shluchim by personally participating in the costs of their activities.

Obviously the peak of all celebrations would be the Rebbe's farbrengen that evening. The farbrengen was a special one indeed. The shul at 770 was jam-packed from wall to wall like never seen before. Many thousands of people, including many from outside the community, packed into the shul to



take part in this unique farbrengen. Among the many guests, one could make out many well known figures. From great rabbanim to *chassidishe rebbes*, well known activists to famous politicians, all came to personally give the Rebbe their well-wishes for his seventieth birthday.

From the very start of the farbrengen, even before the Rebbe entered the room, one was able to feel that something new and special was about to take place. In those years, when the Rebbe would enter a farbrengen, silence would reign in the shul. This time however, the Chassidim sang with excitement the *niggun* of the Rebbe's new *kapitel*—“*Becha Hashem Chasisi*”—and the Rebbe entered the shul to this energetic singing.

The Rebbe seemed to be in an exalted mood during the farbrengen, and conducted it with much joy.

After the first *sicha*, the crowd once again burst forth with the *niggun* “*Becha Hashem Chasisi*.” They sang with great energy, jumping and dancing in their places, eyes trained at the Rebbe as they raised their cups to say *l'chaim*. The Rebbe smiled as he looked back at the crowd, a look of discernible satisfaction on his holy face.

(It should be noted, that the Rebbetzin later requested a recording of this *niggun* as it was sung at the farbrengen, saying that she had heard that it was a very special *niggun*<sup>6</sup>).

A large part of the farbrengen was also dedicated to *Chazal's* words “אדם לעמל יולד”. The *sichos* were long and rich and the Rebbe explained in a unique and unparalleled manner the important job man was given to fulfill on this earth, the lofty levels one can attain through fulfilling this duty, even becoming a partner with Hashem in the creation of the world.

These *sichos* were seen as a sort of explanation to the *sicha* that came after the *maamar*, in which the Rebbe strongly emphasized that although he has reached the age of retirement, he has no plans to *chas veshalom* retire from his holy work. On the contrary, the only plans are those which call to increase and do more:

“I am asked, since I have already completed [as the *possuk* refers to it] the ‘days of our lives, seventy years’—what am I planning to do afterward? Presumably, this would be the time to start thinking about rest, etc.

“My answer is: First of all—the question does not depend so much on the number of years listed on one's passport, but rather on his feelings



and—primarily—on how many of these years were actually years with a lasting effect, for there is nothing noteworthy in the fact that it is recorded on one's passport (or birth certificate, etc.) [that he has lived] so many years. Rather, most important is that one knows that he has 'arrived in years' ('בא בימים') as the Zohar interprets it — that he arrives [to an advanced age] and all his days come with him, to the point that he is not missing 'even one day.'

"Nevertheless, 'it is the custom of the Jewish people [which] is Torah' to reckon the years of a person's life in their plain sense as well, particularly since we find in Torah authorities — in *Chavos Yair*, which is cited in the *Pri Megadim*, etc. — distinct ideas associated with completing 70 years of age, and the reference there is to years in the simple sense.

"Therefore the answer to the question as to what must be done after completing 70 years, is found in the very next words in the verse—'and if in strength...' ('ואם בגבורה'): One must add [new activities] and reinforce those in which there may have been weakness in the preceding years—taking honest account, for 'a person knows himself...'"

## 71 Institutions

The Rebbe then unveiled the call of the hour; the famous request which became synonymous with *shnas*



*hashivim*. The Rebbe said that because this is something that demands special strength to put into action, he waited for an opportune time when there will be a "noticeable and fitting *hisorerus*." Therefore, the Rebbe said, he is using this time to request that in the course of *shnas hashivim*, 71 new *mosdos* should be established. The Rebbe added that due to the importance of the project, he would give an advance participation of 10 percent of the funds needed to establish each institution, enabling the project to immediately get off the ground.

The next *sicha* was a deep *hadran* on *Maseches Pesachim*<sup>7</sup>. Before the Rebbe began, Rabbi Simcha Elberg approached the Rebbe to give his *bracha* before leaving the farbrengen. The Rebbe thanked him warmly and said that "if you will stay for the

*hadran* I will be very happy." The Rebbe then explained to him that the reason he waited so long to say the *hadran* was that he first wanted to give over the practical instructions (regarding the new institutions). It can be learned from these words, that the long explanation about אדם לעמל יולד (which took most of the first half of the farbrengen—four full *sichos*) was in fact a lead up to the request of 71 new *mosdos*.

Afterwards the Rebbe said two more *sichos*. In them the Rebbe spoke about the lesson that can be learned from the Yidden stuck behind the Iron Curtain, especially in matters of education. Another topic spoken about was the importance of *shleimus ha'aretz*.

In between the *sichos* many people approached the Rebbe to present their *matanos*, to ask for a *bracha*, or to extend their blessings in honor of this great milestone. Many spoke not only on behalf of themselves, rather on behalf of countries and governments.

Towards the end of the farbrengen, the Alter Rebbe's *niggun* was sung followed by *Nye Zuritche Chluptzi*. During *Nye Zuritche Chluptzi*, the Rebbe stood up and danced by his place with great joy. Before leaving, the Rebbe mentioned how there are still a few days left until Pesach and



A CHECK FROM THE REBBE FOR SEVENTY-ONE DOLLARS TO THE "NATIONAL OFFICE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF 71 MOSDOS" IN ERETZ YISROEL.



much can be still done in regards to *mitvza matzah*. The Rebbe ended off by reminding the crowd to make a *bracha achrona*, “before we leave this farbrengen, in order to gather again for joyous occasions.”

At 2:20 a.m. the Rebbe left the shul after starting the *niggun* of *Al Achas Kama V’kama*.

Even after the farbrengen, Chassidim continued to dance with great joy and energy to the new *niggun* “*Bechah Hashem Chasisi*.” At the height of their excitement, they decided to create a circle of dancing around the Rebbe’s room. A train of dancing Chassidim began ascending the backstairs of 770, and out the front door, entering 770 again through the back entrance.

Later, as the Rebbe left for home, Chassidim again escorted him to the car with singing and dancing.

After the Rebbe left 770, Chassidim continued farbrenging, singing and dancing until morning.

## Shnas Hashivim

Even after Yud-Aleph Nissan, the special atmosphere and excitement refused to die down, and continued throughout the rest of the month. The Rebbe farbrenged on the first and second day of Pesach, as well as the days of Shevi’i and Acharon Shel Pesach—every day of Yom Tov! Such an occurrence had never happened before and did not repeat itself ever again to date. In the course

of these farbrengens, the Rebbe continued to teach the *pesukim* from the new *kapitel*, and Chassidim took these special farbrengens to be directly connected to the special events of Yud-Aleph Nissan.

To many people who went into *yechidus* during this time period, the Rebbe handed the newly reprinted *haggadah* (compiled by the Rebbe), which had the words “א”ןיסן - שבעים שנה לכ”ק אדמו”ר שליט”א printed in bold on the cover.

The events of *shnas hashivim* continued throughout the following year:

In the month of Sivan the Rebbe sent Tanyas and siddurim with a *michtav kloli* pasted in the back cover to children who sent

the Rebbe *matanos* for Yud-Aleph Nissan (see above). During every farbrengen until Elul of that year, the Rebbe taught the *pesukim* of the new *kapitel*, one at a time (These *sichos* were later edited and printed in the back of Likkutei Sichos vol. 7). However, the matter that definitely kept Yud-Aleph Nissan in everyone's mind, was the monumental project of 71 new *mosdos*, which involved Chassidim everywhere.

Another memorable occurrence connected with *shnas hashvim*: During the *hakafos* on Simchas Torah 5733\*, the Rebbe agreed that the first *pasuk* of his *kapitel* (71) be sold following the *pesukim* of *Ata Hareisa*<sup>8</sup>. Naturally, the Rebbe was honored with reciting the *pasuk*. After the Rebbe recited the *pesukim* of “*Vehaya zaracha*” and “*Hineni meivi osam*”, the Rebbe continued and recited the first three *pesukim* of his *kapitel*, as the crowd repeated after him *pasuk* by *pasuk*.

1. The following information was collected from many different sources, among them the diaries of Rabbi Mendel Wolosow and



Reb Zalmon Jaffe, as well as articles printed in Derher Nissan 5776 and Kovetz Hameah Veser (Vaad Talmidei Hatmimim, 5772).

2. Techayenu Nissan 5776.
3. *Hisvaadus Chassidim*, Derher Nissan 5775.
4. Derher 5775, *ibid*.
5. Derher 5775, *ibid*.
6. *A Time to Expand*, Derher Nissan 5776.
7. The Rebbe noted that although he had

already said a *hadran* on this *mesechta* before (10 years earlier during the farbrengen of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5722), he will discuss the topic again. The Rebbe did not finish the *hadran* during this farbrengen and continued it five weeks later on Shabbos Parshas Acharei.

8. During many years, other *pesukim* (besides the regular *pesukim* of *atah hareisa*) would be sold and recited before *hakafos*, most notably the *posuk* of “*ufaratza*”.

## AYIN-ALEPH MOSDOS

Shortly after Yud-Aleph Nissan, in a *yechidus* with Rabbis Shlomo Maidanchik and Ephraim Wolf, two of the main Lubavitcher *askanim* in Eretz Yisroel, the Rebbe gave clearer guidelines and instructions:

The new institutions were not intended to increase the workload of the already busy Chabad activists. Fresh workers were needed, who would throw themselves into their work with complete dedication, and make it their life, not just a nine-to-five job.

The institutions should be more than an expansion of existing programs and activities; they should be completely new, including, as mentioned before, new people at the helm. On the other hand, they did not have to be massive new undertakings; any new institution, however modest its scope may be, would be counted. There was no need for specifically 71 institutions—that was the minimum, but the more the better.

No time was wasted, and immediately following Yud-

Aleph Nissan, work began to fulfill the Rebbe's request. Soon a number of countries had their own “*Vaad Ayin-Aleph Mosdos*,” tasked with coming up with ideas of what to build, how to build, and whom to recruit.

At a *kinus* in Kfar Chabad on Chol Hamoed Pesach, Chassidim in Eretz Yisrael were invited to a meeting to be held the day after Pesach. At that meeting, anyone with an idea for a new *mosad* would be able to make his case before the *vaad*, who would then decide which ideas were most viable. Some of the ideas that were presented were: Yeshiva summer camps; new Chabad settlements; to establish shuls on *kibbutzim*; and a program of *shiurim* in secular *yishuvim*.

The Rebbe did not stop encouraging and propelling the Chassidim forward in this monumental task. During the Shavuot farbrengen the Rebbe mentioned the fund for the establishment of the new *mosdos*, and said that all summer camps will receive between 10-20 percent of the funds needed to run that summer.



The Rebbe made it very clear that good ideas were a good start, but what he wanted was *poel mamesh*—practical action.

Members of the *vaad* threw themselves into the work, and by the next Yud-Aleph Nissan, 71 new *mosdos* had been founded in Eretz Yisrael alone.

Three months after Yud-Aleph Nissan, at the Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen, the Rebbe once again spoke about establishing the new *mosdos*, and encouraged those who did not yet take part to do so. The Rebbe also asked that those who are already active in this field should send in a report about what was done in the past three months. The Rebbe then announced that anyone who established, or was working on establishing, one of the *ayin-aleph mosdos*, should come forward and receive *l'chaim*.

When Rabbi Shlomo Cunin came up the Rebbe asked: “How many *mosdos*?” He replied that he was involved in seven *mosdos*, so the Rebbe poured seven times into his cup. At that farbrengen the Rebbe also requested that a *duch* be sent every month.

Two days later, Rabbi Hodakov sent a letter to all activists with more guidelines: 1) A *duch* should be sent with a report of all activities of the last three months, including a financial report. 2) From now until Yud-Aleph Nissan 5733\*, a *duch* should be written every month on Yud-Aleph. 3) The purpose of the *duch* is to report what was done. Therefore, if nothing was accomplished in the last month, no report should be sent, and it will be self-understood that nothing was done in the last month. 4) In order to immediately distinguish these *duchos* from among the many letters that are received here, the words “מבצע מוסדות השבעים ואחד” should be written on the envelope. 5) A check for \$100 is enclosed for those *mosdos* that have already begun operating.

An article written by Rabbi Chanoch Glitzenstein for the Israeli newspaper “She’arim,” published for Yud-Aleph Nissan 5733\*, sums up the previous year: “The campaign was crowned with great success. In the course of this past year, tens of schools were founded; *yeshivos* were established; hundreds of thousands of *lirot* (then the Israeli currency) went into housing these *mosods*; many new *sefarim* were printed; Chabad Houses were established; many libraries were opened across the country; and absorption centers were founded for new immigrants from Russia, Georgia, and Uzbekistan. In summary, Chabad Chassidim in Eretz



THE REBBE'S HANDWRITTEN COMMENTS ON A LETTER FROM RABBI HODAKOV DATED 15 TAMMUZ 5732\* REGARDING THE NEWLY FOUNDED INSTITUTIONS, ASKING FOR MONTHLY REPORTS.

Yisrael have carried out the holy mission placed upon them to open 71 new *mosdos* in one year *שנת השבעים*.”

The Rebbe continued mentioning the campaign during many farbrengens throughout the year. That Yud-Aleph Nissan, exactly one year from the launch of the campaign, the Rebbe expressed his satisfaction:

“In continuation to what we spoke about on Yud-Aleph Nissan 5732\* regarding the *ayin-aleph mosdos*: Baruch Hashem there were much more than that. We must hope, though, that the saying ‘He who has a hundred wants two hundred’ will apply here as well, until there will be many times more than what there is now.”

A year later, on Yud-Aleph Nissan 5734\*, the Rebbe spoke once again about the *mosdos*: “A few years have passed since the initiation of the *ayin-aleph mosdos*. When one makes an honest reckoning of something, it encourages him to do more in the future as well. So those who were involved in the *ayin-aleph mosdos* should notify as soon as possible the current status of their *mosad*, as well as the status of those who work there.

“It is self-understood that the purpose of the accounting is to realize that even more *mosdos* are needed to reach even more Yidden, who until now did not know that they are descendants of Avrohom, Yitzchok, and Yaakov. To educate them about who they are, that they have a *neshamah* which is a part of Hashem Himself, and this will affect their entire households, their families, and all their descendants. For this task, we need even more *mosdos*, and we need to expand the existing programs. Until it will be *כי מלאה דעה את השם כמים לים מכסים*.”



80  
YEARS

יום עידנו חדישו לאלקי יעקב  
YUD-ALEPH  
NISSAN 5





JEM 125468

# הַדְּבָרִים לְאַחֶי YUD-ALEPH 5742

## Preparations

The months leading up to Yud-Aleph Nissan 5742\* were full of excitement. After all, the Rebbe's eightieth birthday was no small matter! Chassidim the world over did their best to prepare appropriate *matanos* for the Rebbe for this monumental occasion.

The yeshiva *bochurim* in particular prepared for the upcoming milestone with extra energy. They each increased with an additional undertaking in Torah study, placing an emphasis on multiples of "80" (e.g., 80 *blatt* Gemara, 80 *maamarei Chassidus*, etc.). Many yeshivos printed *kovtzim* and *sefarim* containing their written *chiddushei Torah* in honor of the day. Overall, everyone anticipated Yud-Aleph Nissan very eagerly.

Some more of the preparations:

New *sefarim* were published, including the first Kovetz Yud-Aleph Nissan, a collection of *biurim* from all the Rabbeim on the Rebbe's new *kapitel* (a long standing tradition that continued for many years), the eighteenth volume of *Likkutei Sichos*, a collection of *maamarim* said by the Rebbe on previous Yud-Aleph Nissans, and many more.

Noteworthy is also a book of poems, written by the illustrious poet and dedicated Chossid, Rabbi Tzvi Meir Steinmetz (known by his pen name "Tzvi Yair"), published for Yud-Aleph Nissan. Most of the poems were dedicated to the Rebbe.

Honoring the occasion, many world leaders—such as the president of Brazil, the prime ministers of England, Austria, South Africa, and more—sent letters with their good wishes to the Rebbe. Many spiritual leaders also sent their well-wishes, with letters arriving from *admorim*, *rabbonim*, and prominent *roshei yeshivos* from across the spectrum. The

renowned halachic authority Rabbi Moshe Feinstein sent a warm letter to the Rebbe with his heartfelt *bracha*.

The city of New York announced the dedication of 81 days of education in honor of the Rebbe's eighty-first year, and the President signed the annual Yud-Aleph Nissan Education Day proclamation during a special reception in the Oval Office.

The annual Yud-Aleph Nissan *niggunim* also took a step up this year: In previous years, Chassidim would take words from the Rebbe's *kapitel* and put them to existing tunes. This year, in honor of *shemonim shanah*, Reb Feitel Levin composed an original tune to the words "*Harninu L'Elokim Uzeinu*." Composing an original *niggun* turned into a yearly tradition that continues until today.

Those who recalled the occurrences ten years earlier in 5732\*, when the Rebbe reached the completion of his seventieth year, would tell of the sense of joy and gratitude to Hashem that prevailed amongst Chassidim during that period. At the farbrengen on Yud-Aleph Nissan that year, the Rebbe clearly notified the public of



RABBI SIMON JACOBSON'S LETTER TO THE REBBE ABOUT AN IDEA TO PUBLISH A COLLECTION OF BIURIM FROM ALL THE RABBEIM ON THE REBBE'S NEW KAPITEL. THE REBBE RESPONDED WITH SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS.

\* 5742-1982, 5732-1972



his intentions to continue with all his activities, and to know no rest during the coming years. Indeed, in the past decade, the Rebbe's holy work had only expanded in an immeasurable manner — notwithstanding the Rebbe's recovering from a heart-attack at the start of the year 5738\*.

Now, with the completion of the Rebbe's eightieth year, it may have been presumed that the Rebbe might ease his tremendous workload and take some time to rest. Nevertheless, the Rebbe again indicated very clearly that he had no intentions of entertaining such thoughts at all. Quite the contrary: In *yechidus* with a family visiting from London, the Rebbe said, "I have plans of action for the next 10 years!"

## Traveling To The Rebbe

On Thursday, 7 Nissan, with Yud-Aleph Nissan just a few days away, numerous guests flocked to New York to spend these days in the Rebbe's presence.

Although the Rebbe generally davened Mincha and Maariv in the small *zal* upstairs in those years, due to the increased number of people davening with the Rebbe's *minyan*, it was relocated to the big shul downstairs.

It came as somewhat of a surprise to see so many Chassidim arrive in 770. A mere week earlier — on Rosh Chodesh Nissan — the Rebbe

addressed a Tzivos Hashem rally for children, where he instructed Chassidim not to travel from distant places to be in his presence for Yud-Aleph Nissan. The Rebbe explained that being as it was so close to Pesach, it would seem more appropriate that everyone stay in their cities and coordinate *mitzvot*, assisting other Jews with their Pesach preparations.

When one celebrates Yud-Tes Kislev — the Rebbe continued — he is doing so with the Alter Rebbe in mind, as it is his day of liberation. The same applies to Yud-Beis Tammuz with the [Friediker] Rebbe. As for Yud-Aleph Nissan, it is my day, and therefore all are to take my word for it and not travel here. The Rebbe clarified that the above is true in body only, but in spirit we will be very much together. As the saying of the Baal Shem Tov, "Where the *ratzon* of man is, there he can be found..." As for the expenses of the proposed trip, half should be given to *tzedakah*, while the remaining half should be used to cover the costs of the household's Pesach needs.

The Rebbe added: "It says in Hayom Yom that a birthday is to be used for in-depth thought and introspection; a time when one would prefer to be alone.

"Therefore, I will be unable to [personally] greet each and every guest, although they are undoubtedly worthy that I should do so." The Rebbe did clarify that although he had asked that the guests not come, he intended to hold a *farbrengen* on Yud-Aleph Nissan.

Although many people from all over had been planning on coming in, including a number of chartered flights, now with the Rebbe's clear instruction, they immediately changed their plans. Still, there were some who couldn't resist and made their way to 770 to spend these precious moments with the Rebbe.



JEM 200733, VIA LEVI FREIDIN 9 TISHREI



## Shabbos Hagadol – Erev Yud-Aleph Nissan

Due to the large crowds who came to spend Yud-Aleph Nissan with the Rebbe, a *bimah* — usually used only during Tishrei — was constructed at the Rebbe's place in the main shul, giving the many Chassidim the ability to see the Rebbe during davening.

The Rebbe entered the shul on Friday night to the thunderous singing of the new *niggun* “*Harninu L'Elokim*.” After davening too; the Rebbe wished the crowd “*a gut Shabbos*,” and the Chassidim once again burst into the new *niggun*. As the Rebbe left the shul, he encouraged the singing and the dancing continued late into the night.

Throughout Shacharis, the Rebbe held a Tehillim on his *shtender*, open to *kapitlach pei* and *pei-aleph*, and read from it very intensely. The farbrengen this Shabbos was very high-spirited; very *Yom Tov'dik*. Indeed, Yud-Aleph Nissan was already

felt in the air. After the *maamar*, the Rebbe acknowledged the presence of the many guests who had arrived, and said: “Since there are many guests who have come in connection with the ‘*shnas hashmonim*,’ we will now discuss the *pesukim* of *kapitel pei* in Tehillim, as well as a few words on *kapitel pei-aleph*.”

“We will keep it very brief, for if not, we may very well be stuck here for an entire year, until the beginning of the eighty-second year!”

The Rebbe went on to give a beautiful interpretation of both *kapitelach*, *possuk* by *possuk*. The outgoing *kapitel (pei)* itself expounds upon the hardships that the Yidden endure throughout the years of *galus* and their heartfelt prayers to Hashem that he put an end to their suffering. True, we understand the advantages of our being in *galus*, where we serve Hashem in foreign lands and refine the mundane world, but nevertheless, we cry to Hashem with bitter tears, “Enough is enough!”

One of the greatest difficulties we face in *galus* is described in the seventh *possuk*: “Mockery from our

foes.” In our time, we have those who mock us for demanding the *geulah*, and they have the nerve to claim to do so in the name of “*daas Torah!*” The Jewish people have been in *galus* for more than 1900 years now, how much longer can we wait? (“וויפל איז א שיעור?”)

With each additional *possuk*, the *kapitel* emphasizes with increasing passion the urgent need that Hashem take us out of *galus* and lead us to the final *geulah b'karov mamosh!*

In between *sichos*, the Rebbe vigorously encouraged the singing, especially that of the newly-composed Yud-Aleph Nissan *niggun*, “*Harninu L'Elokim*.”

The Rebbe also motioned to some of those present to say *l'chaim*, including Rabbi Avrohom Shemtov, whom he instructed do so on a large cup. While encouraging the singing, the Rebbe seemed to show extra attention to Dr. Ira Weiss who had come in from Chicago to be with the Rebbe for Yud-Aleph Nissan.

To Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda Hecht the Rebbe signaled something with his hand. After a few minutes of not

understanding the Rebbe's intent, Rabbi Hecht approached the Rebbe. As he came up the Rebbe told him: "Why do you sit near me with a sour face? Are you worried about the Yom-Tov needs for [your] institutions? I have someone that will pay for them!"

## "Shehechyanu!"

Rabbi Yossi Shemtov, shliach in Toledo, Ohio, relates:

"The night of Yud-Aleph Nissan was Motzei Shabbos and in 770 you were able to feel the *Yom Tov'dike* atmosphere in the air. I remember vividly how at the conclusion of Maariv, the Rebbe turned around to face the *bimah* where *havdalah* was going to be recited a moment later, when suddenly everyone froze. From the front of the shul we heard the voice of Rabbi Avrohom ("Bumi") Friedland, clearly overwhelmed by his emotions, shouting out as loud as he could: "ברוך שהחיינו וקיימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה"

"From where I was standing I wasn't able to see Rabbi Friedland, however, I was able to see the Rebbe and his reaction. I watched the Rebbe turn to Rabbi Friedland's direction and strongly observed him as he made the *bracha* of *Shehechyanu*, to which the Rebbe responded "אמן." The emotions felt in the air during

those moments were far beyond what my words can describe, it was a special moment, no one in shul could miss it. We felt like he was saying in the name of us all 'thank you' to Hashem that we have our Rebbe!

"For me, it was at that exact moment that *shnas hashmonim* had begun! After *havdalah*, the Rebbe left the shul, vigorously encouraging the singing of the new niggun '*Harninu L'Elokim Uzeinu*' while the crowd in 770 broke out into joyous dancing."

After hearing the *chazara* on the Rebbe's Shabbos farbrengen, Chassidim sat down to farbreng throughout the night, until the light of dawn.

Words cannot do justice to the mood that dominated at the Chassidim's farbrengen on that joyous night, celebrating the Rebbe's special day. Some will recall the words of Rabbi Gershon Mendel Garelik, as he spoke passionately about the significance of a day such as this: "When the Rebbe appears at 770 on Yud-Aleph Nissan, the sun shines extraordinarily bright!"

Chassidim said *l'chaim* with one another and wished heartfelt blessings that the Rebbe should be well, "געזונט, און שטארק" and continue to lead the Jewish people to the final *geulah*!

## Yud-Aleph Nissan

On Yud-Aleph Nissan in the morning, a *nichtav kloli* — bearing the date Yud-Aleph Nissan — was released. In the morning, when the Rebbe was arriving from his house, a crowd gathered outside excitedly singing the new *niggun*. As the Rebbe entered 770, he vigorously encouraged the singing.

During the course of the day 81 mitzvah tanks filled with *bochurim* and *anash* drove around New York City giving other Yidden the opportunity to do a mitzvah in honor of the Rebbe's birthday.

When the Rebbe came downstairs for Mincha at 3:15, the shul was in the process of being set up for that night's farbrengen. As the Rebbe left the shul after davening he began to sing "We Want Moshiach Now."

As the Rebbe came to his room, a delegation of elder Chassidim were standing outside to give the annual *bracha*. Rabbi Moshe Pinchas Katz then handed the Rebbe a communal *pan*, signed by thousands of Chassidim, asking Hashem that the Rebbe should be healthy, succeed in all his work, and lead us to greet Moshaich.

## The Grand Farbrengen

From the early hours of the afternoon, the shul at 770 filled with people who had come to hold their places for the Rebbe's farbrengen. At 6:00 p.m. it was already difficult to find a space to stand, and prior to the Rebbe's arrival at 9:30, it was virtually impossible to get in. There was an initial plan to erect a tent outside where the overflowing crowd would be able to watch the Rebbe on a screen, but, with the



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freezing weather temperatures, the idea was dismissed. In order to maintain a path with sufficient space for the Rebbe to enter the shul, the organizers had to keep an empty bench on the floor, which they later shifted upon the Rebbe's entrance, thereby creating an open space of sorts for the Rebbe to pass through. The accumulating excitement finally reached its climax, as the crowds of Chassidim anticipated the Rebbe's arrival at the grand farbrengen, breaking out into an ever so joyous singing of "*Chayolei Adoneinu*."

The platform upon which the Rebbe sat, was filled with many distinguished guests, including then-Mayor of New York City, Mr. Edward Koch, as well as other government officials, senators, *rabbanim*, and many more dignitaries.

The farbrengen was broadcasted live on television and radio. Prior to Yud-Aleph Nissan, advertisements were placed in all the major newspapers informing the public of the upcoming farbrengen. At the conclusion of the first *sicha*, some of

the guests approached the Rebbe to share a few words and say *lchaim*. The first one was Mr. Koch. The Rebbe greeted him very warmly and, with a very large smile, asked, "You don't have a chair?" A folding chair was immediately brought forward and the mayor sat down right near the Rebbe for a few minutes.

In between each of the *sichos*, the Rebbe greeted a few additional guests and conversed with each of them for a short while.

The Chassidim sang lively *niggunim* all the while and the Rebbe occasionally encouraged them. Mr. Abe Sacks — the famous basketball coach who maintained a unique relationship with the Rebbe and often attended farbrengens — stood up on a bench and danced quite vibrantly along with the *niggun*, and the Rebbe seemed to yield much pleasure from the scene. Dr. Ira Weiss also received the Rebbe's attention, when, during one of the *niggunim* the Rebbe smiled broadly towards him while showing the doctor his pulse...

Those present at the farbrengen

will recall that evening to be one of the most over-crowded moments in 770 throughout the years. It was simply impossible to move about, as the shul was packed from wall to wall. Ironical as it may have seemed, all the prestigious officials who had come to join the farbrengen, were forced to spring around on the tables in order to reach their places, and they also underwent a rather difficult time as they made their way up to the Rebbe's place to meet with him.

## Sichos

Every year on Yud-Aleph Nissan, the president of the United States signs a bill calling on the American people to increase their efforts in the realm of education, in recognition of the Rebbe's incredible dedication in this regard: "Education and Sharing Day, USA."

During the second *sicha* of this farbrengen, the Rebbe expressed his appreciation for the recognition, which he said is an acknowledgement of the work of the entire Lubavitch as

a whole and what Lubavitch stands for, rather than a personal honor. The Rebbe went on to expound upon the importance of ascertaining a proper education for the youth of today in order to ensure a moral and ethical society for the future.

As expected, the Rebbe addressed a most timely issue, one that must have been occupying the minds of many: The Rebbe has reached 80 years; what now? To answer this, the Rebbe explained: “The prevailing custom in this country is for one to decrease activity as his years progress. The truth, however, demands quite the contrary: When Hashem grants an individual with additional years, he is to utilize them by increasing his efforts to fulfill his purpose on earth. True, with each passing year one may feel less capable to do so as his strength seems to dwindle; but, nevertheless, so long as one remains connected ‘Above,’ he will always maintain the power to do more and achieve yet greater heights.”

The Rebbe concluded with the famous anecdote of soldiers on their way to war: As they march, they sing an upbeat tune indicating their confidence in the anticipated victory.

When following Hashem’s will and fulfilling His mission here in this world, one can be sure that he will always have the necessary capabilities, and he can thus go about his work joyously and with utmost confidence!

Upon the conclusion of this *sicha*, the Chassidim enthusiastically sang “Napoleon’s March.”

Before conducting a *siyum* on Rambam, the Rebbe prefaced: “Although tomorrow is indeed a work-day and it is already quite late — being as things dragged out to take longer than initially intended — we must, nevertheless, still conduct a *siyum* as always, in addition to the recitation of a *maamar Chassidus*.

The Rebbe then continued with a

*hadran* on Rambam, explaining the various details of the final *halachos* of the Sefer Hayad and linking them to the beginning of the *sefer*.

## The Tanya

Towards the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe disclosed a pleasant surprise, completely unexpected by the crowd. “It is imperative to show appreciation, from the depth of my heart, for all those who took of their time and came to participate in this farbrengen for so many long hours,” the Rebbe said.

“An appropriate token of appreciation,” continued the Rebbe, “would be to give a Tanya to each and every one of the participants at this farbrengen. The farbrengen is an expression of unity amongst Yidden. True *achdus* amongst the Jewish people is achieved through Torah, and, from all areas within Torah itself — the innermost part of the Torah does so best. As the soul of it all, it transcends the apparent diversity prevalent in the other facets of Torah. This particular edition of the Tanya displays the idea of Jewish unity yet furthermore: At the end of the *sefer*, is a copy of every title-page of Tanyas printed all over the world. So, it would indeed be a suitable gift to those attending this farbrengen — which, itself, is a symbol of Jewish unity, bringing so many people together at once. Along with the Tanya, everyone will also receive a dollar to be given to tzedakah, which bears the inscription ‘*E Pluribus Unum*’ — out of many, one — yet another indication of unity. The learning and spreading of Chassidus (“הפצת המעיינות חוצה”) that will be increased with the distribution of the Tanya, as well as the giving of tzedakah, both hasten the final *geulah*; may it come about speedily.”

The Rebbe concluded with a wish that everyone should accept the gift

graciously (בסבר פנים יפות), inasmuch as the giving will be done in that manner.

While the Chassidim sang the Alter Rebbe’s *niggunim*, the Rebbe instructed Rabbi Groner to go ahead and begin bringing the boxes of Tanyas into the shul. The boxes were passed in through the windows of the women’s section on Kingston Avenue. When the piles of boxes began accumulating next to the Rebbe’s chair, the Rebbe asked Rabbi Groner, “How will the people be able to pass through here?” Rabbi Groner pointed to the other side of the table, indicating that the crowds will pass by there, and the Rebbe would hand them each their Tanya from across the table. The Rebbe then inquired as to whether passing through in that area would be sufficiently safe, as to avoid any potential hazards. Rabbi Avraham Parshan of Toronto then approached the Rebbe, requesting that he be granted the privilege of sponsoring the Tanyas of this unique evening, but the Rebbe smiled and said, “Even the Tanya that you’ll receive for yourself you will not pay for!”

After making a *bracha acharona*, the Rebbe requested that everyone assist in maintaining order, and avoid any extra pushing and shoving.



THE TANYA THE REBBE DISTRIBUTED ON YUD-ALEPH NISSAN.



“Especially,” underlined the Rebbe, “since, essentially, there is no need to push, as there are enough Tanyas for everyone. After all the men receive their Tanyas, they will be asked to leave the shul, thus allowing the women who participated in this farbrengen to come by and receive Tanyas for themselves, for women are obligated to learn Chassidus as well.”

No sooner than the very beginning of the distribution, chaotic pushing erupted in the shul amongst all the participants. Seeing the situation, the Rebbe sat down and announced over the microphone, “As long as there will be pushing, I will not give out any Tanyas!” The Rebbe then waited a few seconds, after which he resumed the distribution.

With the farbrengen having lasted five and a half hours, the distribution only began at 3:00 in the morning! At first, the Rebbe handed out the Tanyas

while standing, and at 3:45, he sat down and continued from his seat. One can only imagine the amount of energy that the Rebbe put forth during the hours-long distribution; something that displayed itself when the Rebbe eventually held one hand with the other for support... Still, the Rebbe continued to give more and more to each and every individual who passed by that night. After all the men had received their Tanyas (around 4:55 a.m.), the Rebbe stood up and motioned for everybody to exit the shul while he began to sing “*Ki Vesimcha*” with a big smile.

The distribution for the women then commenced, continuing until 6:10 a.m. Again, the Rebbe started while in a standing position, and after a while sat down.

It was then that Chassidim realized the tremendous appreciation the Rebbe had to all those who had

participated in the farbrengen. True, the Rebbe had mentioned that traveling to New York was not necessary, but now he expressed his gratitude to all those who had come in nonetheless.

When the Rebbe left the shul, Chassidim made their way to the small *zal* upstairs in anticipation for the Rebbe’s arrival to hear *krias haTorah* (it was Monday morning). It was a beautiful sight to behold; each Chassid entered, one after the other with their Tanyas in hand...

After hearing *krias haTorah*, the Rebbe went into his room and spent some time with Dr. Weiss, before leaving for home at 7:25.

All the while, the Chassidim sang and danced joyously with their Tanyas in hand; a most natural effect of the unbelievable occurrences they had just merited to witness over the past two days.





90  
YEARS

אָסאָפּיעה וואָרען ב'שנע  
YUD-ALEPH  
NISSAN 5



JEM 161665

אֶרֶץ יָמִים  
ALEPH  
5752

## “Shnas Hatzaddik”

In order to fully appreciate and understand the goings-on of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5752\*, an introduction must be made describing the buildup of events which took place during the year preceding it, starting with Yud-Aleph Nissan 5751\*:

Preceding Yud-Aleph Nissan 5751\*, great excitement overtook Chassidim everywhere. Lubavitch was entering into a new monumental phase—*shnas hatzaddik*. If Yud-Aleph Nissan every year called for big preparations and a large celebration, how much more so the Yud-Aleph Nissan entering the Rebbe’s ninetieth year.

This was not just the natural *hergesh* of Chassidim, but from the *sichos* the Rebbe spoke at the time, it was clear that something special was happening. Already before Yud-Aleph Nissan 5751\*, the Rebbe began to speak about *shnas hatzaddik*, and continued to do so throughout the entire year. In fact, already at the farbrengen of Shabbos Hagadol 5750\* (!), the Rebbe discussed how *kapitel* 89 (the new *kapitel* of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5750\*) represents the end of *galus*, and *kapitel* 90 (the *kapitel* of *shnas hatzaddik*) represents the time already after Moshiach’s arrival<sup>1</sup>.

Obviously, Chassidim prepared themselves accordingly for this milestone. The central offices of Tzach published a full page notice calling on *anash* to prepare for Yud-Aleph Nissan, along with some practical suggestions on how to do so.

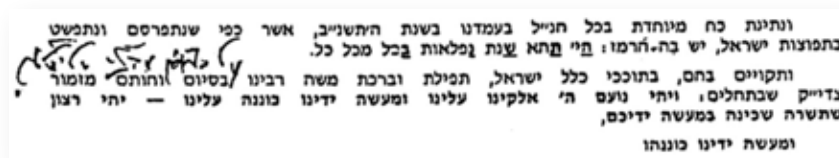
The world too took note of this tremendous event. Prior to Yud-Aleph Nissan, *brachos* and well wishes poured in from countries worldwide. In the Kfar Chabad magazines from those weeks, one can see tens of full page advertisements, sponsored by the offices of the Israeli government, important businesses, among many other well known individuals, congratulating the Rebbe and Lubavitch for this tremendous milestone.

Apparently, the celebrations in Eretz Yisroel for Yud-Aleph Nissan 5751\* were so elaborate, that the chief rabbinate included in their yearbook (where any nationwide event that took place that year was recorded) the large event Tzach arranged in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan in the main shul of Kfar Chabad<sup>2</sup>.

Another unique part of *shnas hatzaddik* was the famous *niggun* “*Shuva*,” composed by Reb Feitel Levin. The Rebbe’s fondness of the *niggun* was very noticeable. He vigorously encouraged its singing while entering and exiting the shul, as well as at farbrengens, sometimes even encouraging the singing with both of his holy hands. The *bochurim* felt that even compared to the Yud-Aleph Nissan *niggunim* of the previous years, this one was extra special.

Clearly, the events of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5751\* were a notch up from the usual celebrations. The above mentioned circumstances gave a unique lens through which the warmth and speciality of what was going on could be seen.

However, only after Yud-Aleph



IN A MICTAV KLOLI OF KISLEV 5752, THE REBBE ADDED ABOUT KAPITEL 90: “תפילת וברכת משה רבינו” - לְכָאוּ אֶת מִבְּנֵי שְׁלִיטָא [KAPITEL 90] IS THE PRAYER AND BLESSING OF MOSHE RABBEINU TO EVERY YID SHLIT”A”.

\* 5752-1992, 5751-1991, 5750-1990





JEW 219535, VIA LEVI FREDIN 18 TISHREI 5752

Nissan did the full impact of what was taking place begin to settle in. The Rebbe began to mention the fact that we find ourselves in *shnas hatzaddik* over and over, picking up pace in 5752\*.

Some examples:

After Maariv on Shemini Atzeres 5752\*, the Rebbe turned to the crowd and suddenly began saying a *sicha*, in which he gave *brachos* according to the letters of the *aleph beis*.

When the Rebbe got up to the letter *tzaddik*, the Rebbe closed his eyes and called out in a loud voice heard throughout the packed shul, “Then comes [the letter] *tzaddik*, and as mentioned many times that this year is called *shnas hatzaddik*, and Hashem reveals himself through ‘*tzaddik olamim...*’<sup>3</sup>”

In the *sicha* of Shabbos Parshas Vayera 5752\*, the Rebbe discussed how every single Yid must yearn for Moshaich’s coming, and do all he can to hasten his arrival. The Rebbe then

laid out how our generation is the generation of Moshiach, making the above mentioned especially important, and how the current time period was most appropriate for Moshaich’s coming. The Rebbe explained that we are the generation in which the battle to bring Moshiach comes to a close, as the Friediker Rebbe already said, that the work of *galus* has already ended. Especially after the continuation of the work done by the *Chayalei Beis Dovid* in the last 40 years, and particularly in our generation, as we find ourselves in *shnas hatzaddik*<sup>4</sup>.

In a similar vein, in the *yechidus klolis* after Yud-Tes Kislev the Rebbe said that we find ourselves in *shnas hatzaddik*, which is connected with the third and final *geulah* and the *Beis Hamikdash Hashlishi*<sup>5</sup>.

Chassidim realized that the Rebbe did not see *shnas hatzaddik* as just another year, or even as another milestone anniversary such as 5732\* or 5742\*. This was no longer just

the Rebbe’s personal milestone, rather the Rebbe saw his ninetieth year—*shnas hatzaddik*—as a crucial moment in Jewish history, playing a pivotal role in Moshiach’s arrival.

Understandably, as Yud-Aleph Nissan 5752\* came closer, the excitement of Chassidim grew stronger and stronger.

## Preparations

Starting during the early months of winter 5752\*, Chassidim began preparing for Yud-Aleph Nissan. Meetings were held in Lubavitch communities all over the world about how to prepare for this most significant occasion. Together with each person’s personal *hachanos*, everyone according to their level, many communal *hachanos* were put into motion.

After Yud Shevat, *bochurim* in 770 began a global “*besuros tovos*” campaign calling for *bochurim*



everywhere to write to the Rebbe about their preparations for Yud-Aleph Nissan. The campaign called on every *bochur* to learn (at least) one *sicha* and *maamar* of the Rebbe every week; to strengthen his own *shemiras sidrei hayeshiva*; and to write to the Rebbe at least one “*besurah tovah*” about his accomplishments in learning or improvement in davening and/or *yiras Shamayim*, each according to his level.

The campaign took Lubavitch yeshivos everywhere by a storm. From Eretz Yisroel to Russia, and obviously America, letters began pouring in to 770. In the month of Adar Aleph, after submitting to the Rebbe two general reports about the worldwide campaign, the organizers counted over 1,000 (!) *besuros tovos*. The yeshiva in Migdal Haemek received a special answer from the Rebbe after reporting that they were joining this global campaign: אשרי חלקם וגדול זכותם וכי' אזכיר עה"צ (Fortunate is their lot and great is their merit, I will mention [this] at the *Ohel*).

A special television program was being prepared, organized by Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky under the auspices of the “Lubavitch News Service.” The program was to be produced by the anchorman Jerry Levine, and would

focus on the Rebbe’s work during the past 90 years and its global impact. The Rebbe even agreed for a special film crew to come to 770 to take high quality videos in preparation of this television program. (The crew ended up filming the *tefillos* and *sichos* of Yud Shevat and Chof-Beis Shevat of that year, as well as Shacharis of 6 Adar I. These videos are known as the most high quality films we have of the Rebbe.<sup>6</sup>)

Full page ads were being prepared, to be published in the New York Times. The ads, spanning two full sized pages, featured a full sized picture of the Rebbe and called for the people of the world to add in acts of goodness and kindness in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan.

On Sunday, Yud-Tes Adar I, Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky introduced Mr. Gabriel Erem, the CEO and publisher of Lifestyles Magazine, to the Rebbe during the dollars distribution. “On the occasion of your ninetieth birthday,” Erem told the Rebbe, “we are publishing a special issue... On the occasion of your ninetieth birthday, what is your message to the world?”

“Ninety,” the Rebbe replied, “in Hebrew means ‘*tzaddik*,’ which means ‘righteous.’ That is a direct indication for every Jew to become

a real *tzaddik*—a righteous person, and to do so for many years, until 120.” When Mr. Erem asked what the Rebbe’s message was to the world at large, the Rebbe answered that this applies equally to non-Jews, only for them it means the fulfillment of the *sheva mitzvos bnei Noach*.

Exactly two months before Yud-Aleph Nissan, during the farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Tetzaveh (Yud-Aleph Adar I) the Rebbe spoke about the month of Nissan being a month of the *geulah*, and “especially this year, that [on] Yud-Aleph Nissan concludes the *shnas hatzaddik* which is connected with *kapitel tzaddik* . which ends off [with the words] “*U’masei yadeinu konenehu*” — referring to the descent of the *Shechina* into the *Beis Hamikdash* [which will come] through the completion of the work of our generation, *dor hashvi’i*.”

The Rebbe ended off with a *bracha* that already on Yud-Aleph Adar we should see the completion of the *avodah* of Yud-Aleph Nissan. The day of Yud-Aleph Nissan is connected with the *nossi* of *Shevet Asher*, which received a special *bracha* in their oil (the *shemen hamishchah*, as discussed in our parsha of Tetzaveh), [relating to] the anointing of the Melech Hamoshiach<sup>7</sup>.

## Chof-Zayin Adar

Three weeks later, at the end of Adar Aleph, as the global preparations were well underway, the unthinkable happened. The events of Chof-Zayin Adar shook Lubavitch and the world at large to its very core. No one knew what to think or what to say. This was not an eventuality anyone had dreamed of.

Chassidim gathered in 770 to say Tehillim, davening for the Rebbe’s *gezunt*. Massive gatherings were held everywhere where Yidden from all walks of life davened for



THE REBBE SPEAKS WITH MR. GABRIEL EREM, THE CEO AND PUBLISHER OF LIFESTYLES MAGAZINE, ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SHNAS HATZADIK.



JEM 2/9611, VIA LEVI/FREDIN 18 TISHREI 5752

the Rebbe's *refuah shelaima*.

Of course, it was decided that the worldwide preparations for the Rebbe's milestone *yom huledes* would continue, albeit in a more subdued atmosphere. The *hachlotos* and *matanos* being prepared for Yud-Aleph Nissan, were now also dedicated to the Rebbe's *gezunt*.

With Yud-Aleph Nissan approaching, and thoughts of Chassidim turned to the Rebbe's *gezunt*, Chassidim strengthened themselves in their regular activities as well:

The daily *minyanei Tehillim* which took place, during which Chassidim *davened* for the Rebbe's *gezunt*, saw a heightened attendance, and the new *shiurim* and *chalukos* of the Rebbe's Torah received many new participants.

The above mentioned campaign

to report to the Rebbe *besuros tovos*, took on a whole new urgency. If until now it had been mainly a campaign of the *bochurim*, many *shluchim* and *anash* now joined the effort to bring the Rebbe as much *nachas ruach* as possible.

One of the *mazkirim* related, that when a *duch* reporting that the *bochurim* were strengthening themselves in following the *sedarim* of *yeshiva* was read to the Rebbe, the Rebbe looked noticeably pleased, and motioned for the *duch* to be read again...

The senate of New York State announced 90 days of education—from Yud-Aleph Nissan to Yud-Beis Tammuz—to be proclaimed in New York. An elaborate reception was held in Albany with the participation of the Governor in honor of the Rebbe.

As every year, the President signed the Education Day proclamation as Rabbi Avrohom Shemtov and a delegation of *shluchim* looked on.

The world of print was not to be left out of the festivities, and many new *sefarim* were published in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan, among them: *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 30; a new *sefer* containing the Rebbe's *hadranim* on Rambam and *Shas*; numerous *sefarim* and *kovtzim* with the *chidushei Torah* of Lubavitch yeshivos worldwide; and more.

Two *sefarim* which deserve their own mention: 1) *Sefer Hayovel—Karnos Tzaddik*, a *sefer* in which many unpublished works of the *rishonim*, together with the *chidushei Torah* of many prominent rabbonim were printed, all in honor of the Rebbe. 2) The *sefer Tiferes Tzaddik*,



a beautiful album focusing on the participation of the many *gedolei Yisroel* in the Yud-Aleph Nissan celebrations of the previous year—the beginning of *shnas hatzaddik*.

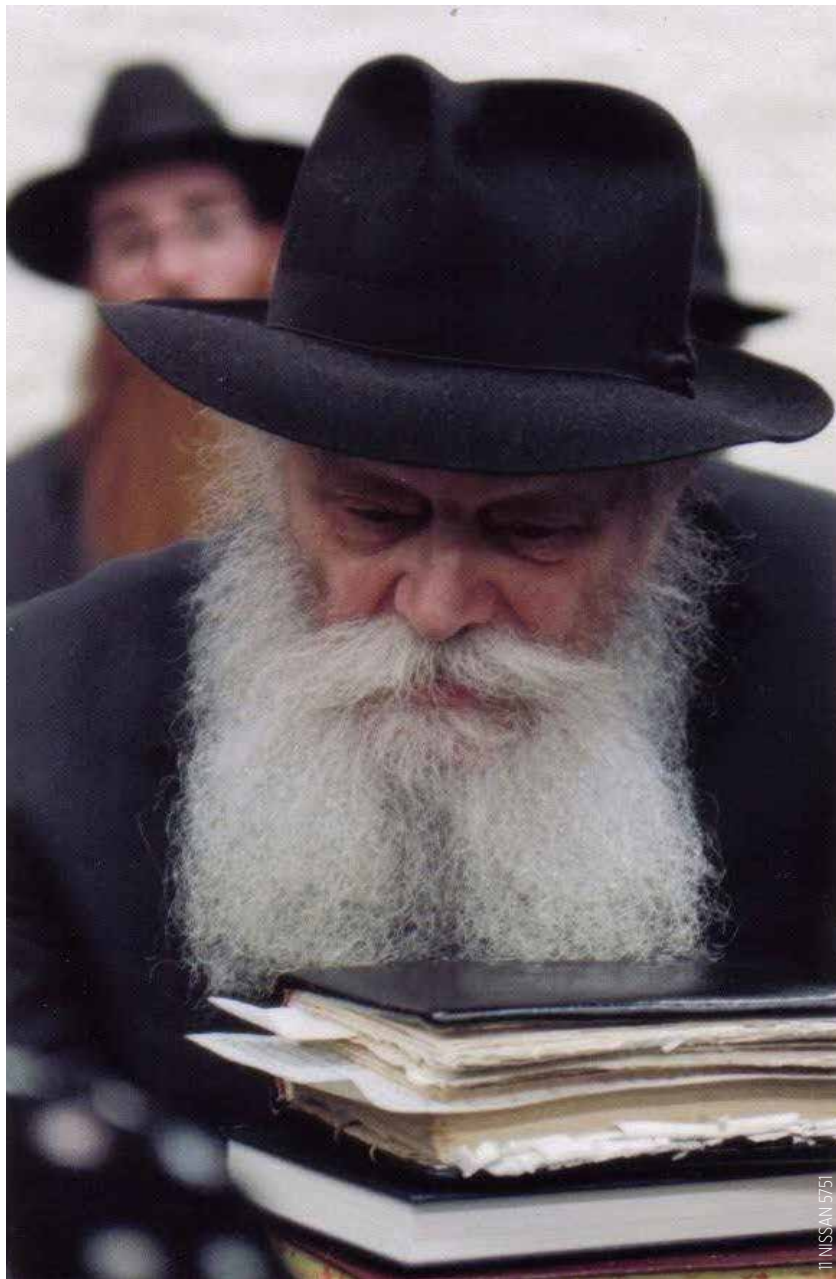
In the days before Yud-Aleph Nissan, the *niggun* “*Orech Yomim*”—composed by Reb Sholom Bruchshat—was chosen as the *niggun* for the Rebbe’s *new kapitel*.

## Yud-Aleph Nissan

As<sup>8</sup> Yud-Aleph Nissan approached, thousands of Chassidim began to travel to 770. Although no one could promise that the Rebbe would participate in the celebrations physically or that the guests would even be able to see the Rebbe for that matter, they were firm in their faith that the Rebbe would be *gezunt*. Even if they would not merit to see the Rebbe, where else besides 770 could one celebrate Yud-Aleph Nissan *tzaddik shanah*?

Already on Shabbos Hagadol, 8 Nissan, the Yud-Aleph Nissan atmosphere was felt in the air. The presence of the many guests was noticeable as the shul began to fill with people.

On Sunday evening, a large *kiddush levanah* gathering was held outside 770. The event was held as per the Rebbe’s instruction that *kiddush levanah* should take place in the streets, with a large crowd. The gathering was dedicated to the Rebbe’s immediate *refuah shelaima*. During the event, instructions were given about the official proceedings of the Yud-Aleph Nissan celebrations. It was also announced that when the elder Chassidim would gather outside the Rebbe’s room to *bentch* the Rebbe as every year, everyone should gather in the shul downstairs to participate via live hookup.



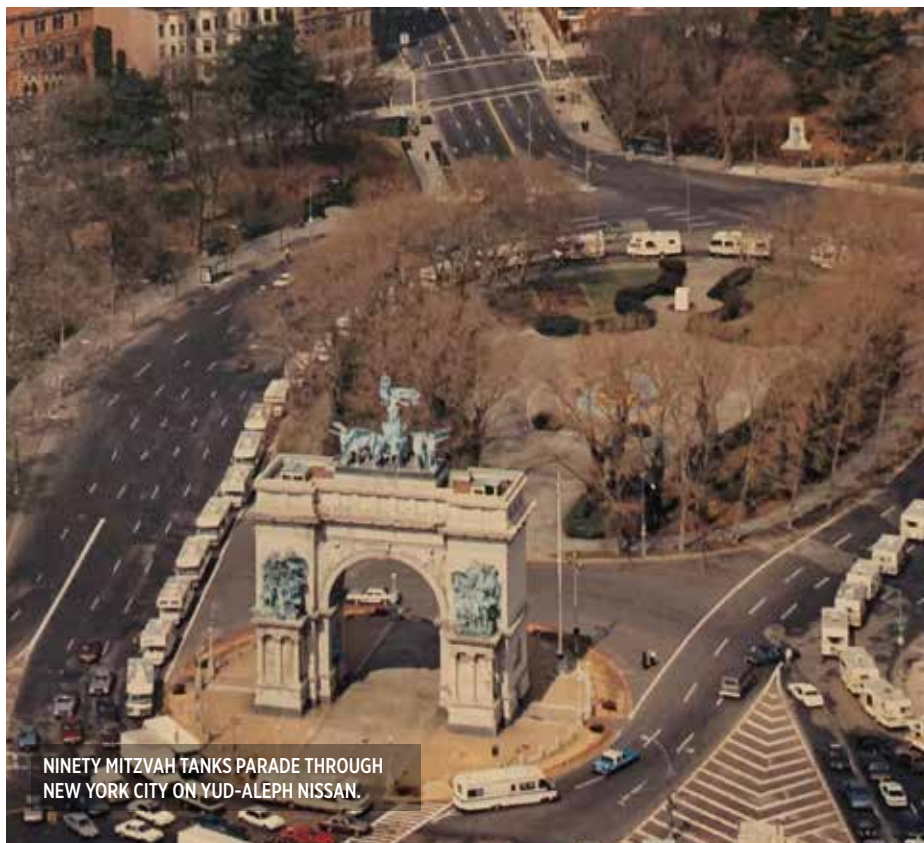
On Monday afternoon it was announced that the *bracha* would take place at 8:00 that night. Starting already in the late hours of the morning, the shul began to fill with Chassidim. The grand Yud-Aleph Nissan event taking place in Eretz Yisroel in the Yad Eliyahu stadium was streamed live from the WLCC office to the Chassidim downstairs.

The event was a massive gathering of Lubavitcher Chassidim in Eretz Yisroel in celebration of the Rebbe’s

birthday. Leading rabbonim and rebbes, along with prominent politicians, sat at the long head table in the middle of the stadium.

The Prime Minister of Israel, Mr. Yitzchak Shamir, apologized for not being able to attend, and sent his personal greetings to the event with a messenger. The chief rabbis of Israel and other rabbonim and politicians addressed the assembled, speaking of the Rebbe’s greatness and immense work for world Jewry.





The guest speaker of the evening was Reb Yoel Kahn, who received the Rebbe's *bracha* before traveling to the event. The gathering made a large *kiddush Hashem*, and was widely reported in Israeli news stations.

At exactly 8:00 p.m., as the first moments of Yud-Aleph Nissan dawned upon the world, a group of elder Chassidim gathered outside the Rebbe's room. In a tear-choked voice, Rabbi Zalman Gourary *bentched* the Rebbe in the name of Chassidim worldwide, as well as world Jewry, that the Rebbe should be *gezunt* and have *arichas yomim*, and lead us to the *geulah* now.

As he finished the *bracha*, the thousands gathered in the shul downstairs, along with the many participating throughout the world via hookup, fervently answered "*amen!*" The *bracha* concluded with *birkas kohanim*.

Later that evening an emotion-

laden *farbrengen* took place in the main shul downstairs. The *farbrengen* was officially arranged by the *gabbaim* of 770, and emceed by Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky. All the *mazkirim* addressed the assembled. They spoke of the Rebbe's *gezunt*, the difficult time Chassidim found themselves in, the need for Chassidim to strengthen themselves in *hiskashrus*, and the importance of *achdus* and *ahavas Yisroel*—especially in these hard times. Afterwards a number of *shluchim* and *mashpi'im* addressed the crowd.

Following the official part of the event (which ended at 2:00 a.m.), Chassidim sat down and *farbrenged* until the morning. The first issue of the "Tzaddik Lamelech" series was published as a memento of the *farbrengen*, and was quickly emptied from the boxes. As the first people came to shul to daven Shacharis, groups of *bochurim*, *shluchim* and *anash* could still be seen sitting

around the tables *farbrenging*.

## Conquering New York City

At 10:00 a.m. on Yud-Aleph Nissan morning, the last *bochurim* could be seen standing up from the tables where they were *farbrenging*. Sleep however, was not on the schedule... The biggest tank parade New York had ever seen was about to roll out from Lubavitch World Headquarters.

Months earlier *bochurim* began arranging for a parade of *ninety* tanks to conquer the streets of New York City with *mitzvoim* on Yud-Aleph Nissan. This was to be a historic mitzvah tank parade, as befitting for this historic milestone. Lubavitch communities from across the globe had the opportunity to participate in this parade, with each community sponsoring one of the 90 tanks. All night long volunteers



worked to adorn the tanks with the necessary signs and posters. Every tank had on it a sign about Yud-Aleph Nissan *tzaddik shanah*, a paper stating which community or Chabad House sponsored it, as well as a prominent picture of the Rebbe.

A large crowd, with many standing on the surrounding rooftops, gathered outside 770 to see the parade off. With 90 loudspeakers blaring “*Chayalei Adoneinu*,” the parade set off with police leading the way, closing off the streets from oncoming traffic. Upon reaching the Grand Army Plaza, the parade stopped to form the number ninety, which was filmed from the news helicopters flying above.

An unprecedented *kiddush Hashem* unfolded on the streets of New York City, as swarms of people left their offices to watch the tanks drive by. Hundreds of people were given the opportunity to put on tefillin, thousands of boxes of

*matzos* were given out, along with other *mitzvot* material. Above all, the entire city now knew that this was no ordinary day, rather that today is Yud-Aleph Nissan—the Rebbe’s ninetieth birthday.

As befitting such a public affair, the parade was well reported in the newspapers, television and radio stations. Every reporter that came received a package with an example of the explanatory material about Yiddishkeit that each mitzvah tank carried.

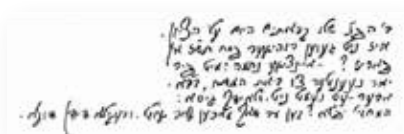
As the tanks passed by 770, a children’s rally was taking place outside the Rebbe’s room on the sidewalk of Eastern Parkway. A representative of the all children read a *pan*, informing the Rebbe of their *matana* in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan, and davening that the Rebbe should be *gezunt*.

That night—Motzei Yud-Aleph Nissan—Chassidim once again sat down to farbreng, celebrating this historic milestone once again.



Recalling all these special Yud-Aleph Nissan celebrations with the Rebbe brings to mind a *ksav yad kodesh* written by the Rebbe to Reb Bentzion Shemtov, dated Yud-Aleph Nissan 5711\*.

Four years after the Rebbe’s had spent time with him in Paris, after the Rebbe had already accepted the *nesius*, the Rebbe wrote this note, reminding him of the peaceful days in France, before the histalkus of the Friediker Rebbe. Noting the pleasant times in Paris, the Rebbe concluded that our only true comfort will be with the coming of Moshiach:



ב' הפ"נ שלו קראתים היום על הציון. איז  
ניט געווען רוהיגער פסח תש"ז אין פאריז?

- איינציגע נחמה: מיט פיר יאר נענטער  
צו ביאת המשיח ב"א. אבער - עס נעמט  
ניט. ולאידך גיסא: המה'ר' יפלא? קען ער  
דאך מאכען גאר גוט. ובעגלא דידן דוקא.

*I read both of your panim at the Ohel today. Wasn't it calmer Pesach 5707\* in Paris? The only comfort is [that] we are four years closer to the coming of Moshiach, [may it be] speedily in our days. [Such a comfort though], is not particularly convincing. Yet on the other hand: is there anything too difficult for Hashem? He can certainly improve the situation immensely. And may He do so quickly.*

We are certain that every year that passes since those golden years - when we were *zoche* to see the Rebbe physically celebrate with us on his most special day, when we saw the Rebbe walk through 770, encouraging Chassidim with a swing of his holy hand, as they sang the new Yud-Aleph Nissan *niggun* - brings us closer to Moshaich's coming... however, *es nemt nit*...

May we finally merit that already now - in this special *tekufah* of 120 years - even before Yud-Aleph Nissan, to be reunited with the Rebbe - in a physical sense - and he will lead us to *geulah teikef umiyad Mammosh!*

1. Sefer Hasichos 5750 vol. 1 page 401 footnote 110
2. Shana Beshana, (Heichal Shlomo) 5752 page 445.
3. See Yemei Bracha page 114.
4. Sefer Hasichos 5752 page 94.
5. Sefer Hasichos 5752 page 171.
6. Unfortunately, after the events of Chof-Zayin Adar I, this project was put on hold, and was later produced after Gimmel Tammuz (in 5755) under the name “Windows to the Soul.”
7. Sefer Hasichos 5752, pages 408-9.
8. Much of the following information was culled from the Kfar Chabad magazine issue 521.





# GUT YO

*An overview of Yud-Aleph Nissan with  
the Rebbe throughout the years*







# M TOV!



*The first two sections of this magazine went through the evolution of the Yud-Aleph Nissan celebrations—from the Rebbe’s birth in 5662\*, to the milestone celebrations marked publicly with great fanfare. Although every year’s Yud-Aleph Nissan events were undoubtedly special and deserve to be described in detail, due to space constraints, it is impossible to describe each year’s celebrations in full. Instead, in the following pages we present an overview of the central Yud-Aleph Nissan themes throughout the years.*

# TIME

## DAYS BEFORE

Another annual reference to Yud-Aleph Nissan was the *michtav kloli* released for Pesach, bearing the date “Yud-Aleph Nissan.”

Each year, the days prior to Yud-Aleph Nissan each year were accompanied by a special aura of preparation and excitement, as Chassidim readied themselves for this day. During this time, reports from all over would arrive in 770 with details of the preparations and *matanos*.

Beginning in 5730\*, in these days a *niggun* on the *pesukim* of the Rebbe’s new *kapitel* would be chosen.

In the days preceding Yud-Aleph Nissan, as well as the days after, the Rebbe would usually explain part of his new (and old) *kapitel* in *sichos* and *maamarim*, as well as in the footnotes of the *michtav kloli*. In the years before 5732\*, (before the advent of the yearly Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengens), these explanations on the *kapitel* were the only public reference the Rebbe made to his birthday.

As Yud-Aleph Nissan came closer, guests would flock to 770 to spend this special day with the Rebbe.

# LINE

## LEIL YUD- ALEPH NISSAN

In the years after 5738\*, as a precaution to the Rebbe's health, the Rebbe would not farbreng on a day he visited the Ohel. Accordingly, in the years 5739\* through 5745\* the Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengens took place on this night. (In the year 5738\* itself the Rebbe did not visit the Ohel on Yud-Aleph Nissan, and thus farbrenged the next night).

After the Rebbe returned from the Ohel, he would daven Mincha, and in some years the *bracha* from the Chassidim would follow.

Most years, the Rebbe would go to the Ohel on Yud-Aleph Nissan. In the years the Rebbe did not go on Yud-Aleph Nissan itself, he would go either the day before or after<sup>1</sup>.

Beginning in the 5730s\*, the day of Yud-Aleph Nissan was usually spent doing *mitzvoim*<sup>2</sup>. In the years that the Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen took place today, as the hours ticked by 770 would begin to fill with thousands of people, in anticipation of the Rebbe's farbrengen.

In some years (mostly the later years) a delegation of elder Chassidim would wait outside the Rebbe's room after Maariv to give the Rebbe the annual Yud-Aleph Nissan *bracha*. In other years, this event would take place after Mincha on the day of Yud-Aleph Nissan.

In the years before the *histalkus* of Rebbetzin Chana in 5725\*, a farbrengen would sometimes be held in her apartment on Yud-Aleph Nissan, with her participation and the attendance of a few elder Chassidim.

## YUD- ALEPH NISSAN DAY

During many years, before the Rebbe walked into Maariv on the eve of Yud-Aleph Nissan, Chassidim would burst into the new *niggun* composed on the Rebbe's new *kapitel*. The Rebbe would enter the shul to the thunderous and joyous singing of the Chassidim, at times encouraging the singing with a swing of his hand.

In the years 5732\*-5738\* (as well as 5722\*) the Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen would be held later tonight.

\*📅 5732-1972, 5738-1978, 5722-1962, 5725-1965, 5730S-1970S, 5738-1978, 5739-1979, 5745-1985



# THE WORLD AGLOW

## *A Celebration for Every Person*

Although Yud-Aleph Nissan had been celebrated in the years before 5732\*, it can be said that the events of *shnas hashivim* set the tone for Yud-Aleph Nissan celebrations in the years to come. The Rebbe had farbrenged and said *maamarim* on the *pesukim* of his new *kapitel* in years prior, and even the concept of giving *matanos* and composing *niggunim* existed in earlier years. Nevertheless, Yud-Aleph Nissan 5732\* was definitely special and out of the ordinary. From then on, Yud-Aleph Nissan wasn't just another *Chassidishe yoma d'pagra* observed by Lubavitcher Chassidim; it became a most special

day of the year—a global celebration.

As the Rebbe himself explained<sup>3</sup>, the Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengens were not merely celebrating a personal milestone, but are a recognition of (the Rebbe's and) Lubavitch's work for world Jewry and the world at large (see chapter אָנא נסיב מלכא—*Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengens*). Venerated rabbonim as well as renowned public figures, in both religious and secular circles, many which were not necessarily regulars at 770, crammed onto the benches to participate in these farbrengens.

Public figures from across the spectrum of society found their place

on the stage seated behind the Rebbe. A Torah leader and a famous non-religious celebrity could be found sitting next to each other. Government officials from opposing political parties could be seen conversing with the Rebbe in between *sichos*. Many people divided on almost every other issue, came as one to pay their respects to the *nossi hador* on his birthday.

Elected officials, often influenced by shluchim and *anash*, would have their governments send the Rebbe their well wishes in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan.

The Rebbe expressed much pleasure from the many *brachos* and well wishes.

The *askanim* of Eretz Yisroel, most notably Reb Shlomo Maidanchik and Reb Shmuel Chefer, worked every year to gather wishes and greetings from many government officials in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan. They would put them all together and present them to the Rebbe in a beautiful album each year. During the weeks before Yud-Aleph Nissan, Rabbi Maidanchik would start going from office to office in the government buildings, using his vast array of connections to accomplish this mission. The Rebbe very much appreciated the gesture.

The Rebbe even mentioned the wishes from the Israeli government



CHIEF RABBI MORDECHAI ELIYAHU SPEAKS AT A FARBRENGEN IN Kfar CHABAD CELEBRATING THE BEGINNING OF THE REBBE'S 90TH YEAR, 11 NISSAN 5751\*.



JEW 39860 BY CHAIM BORUCH HALBERSTAM 9 SHEVAT 5750

at a farbrengen on Motzei Shabbos, Yud-Gimmel Nissan 5747\*: During the Shabbos farbrengen, the Rebbe said that on Motzei Shabbos an additional farbrengen will be held, in which a topic that is not appropriate to mention on Shabbos will be discussed. The Rebbe was referring to a revolutionary new idea that surprised many Chassidim listening: To build a “Lubavitch settlement” in Yerushalayim for the Russian immigrants who recently emigrated to Eretz Yisroel.

The Rebbe proceeded to explain the significance of the walled city of Yerushalayim, being a holy city, the city of Dovid Hamelech. The Rebbe also spoke about what prompted this campaign. Firstly, the Rebbe explained, the fact that the Russian Jews recently emigrated demands that we accommodate their needs.

And secondly, “recently those in charge of the distribution of land and money [in Eretz Yisroel] turned to me with their well-wishes. Leading them was the person in charge of the entire portion of Eretz Yisroel that is currently under Jewish control [i.e. the prime minister]...

Being that this *bracha* came at their initiative... it would be most appropriate to use this opportunity...”

## A SERIOUS DAY

Although the Rebbe spent much time celebrating with and uplifting the Chasidim on Yud-Aleph Nissan, a fascinating episode shows us how serious the day was for the Rebbe, and how every moment on Yud-Aleph Nissan was precious:

Ahead of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5738\*, it was suggested for the Rebbe to either meet with the current President, Jimmy Carter, or at least to exchange greetings on the telephone. The idea was retracted. A message was sent from the *mazkir* to Rabbi Avrohom Shemtov, that on Yud-Aleph Nissan the Rebbe is busy at the *Tziyun* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, and thus has no time for a phone call, notwithstanding its personal characteristics.

\*📅 5747-1987, 5738-1978

# אבא נסיב מלכא

## *Yud-Aleph Nissan Farbrengens*

Aside from rare instances such as the Rebbe's sixtieth birthday in 5722\*, the Rebbe would not hold farbrengens on Yud-Aleph Nissan in the earlier years of the *nesius*. The annual Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengens only began in the year 5731\* and continued until 5745,\* after which the Rebbe stopped farbrenging regularly on Yud-Aleph Nissan. These farbrengens stood out for their public and global characteristics, serving as a unique expression of honor to the Rebbe and the Lubavitch movement,

and also featuring a wide range of attendees of all backgrounds.

The Rebbe explained<sup>3</sup> many times over the years that these farbrengens were not (only) a private celebration, but a celebration of the entire Lubavitch movement dedicated to the furtherance of its activities. In the farbrengen of 5745\*, the Rebbe explained: "This farbrengen is not tied to an individual or a private person, rather to the entire group (Chassidus Chabad), and its teachings; the desires, goals, and purpose of its

efforts as an ongoing 200-year-old edifice. To further the work of the Chabad Chassidus movement and the general Chassidic movement, which dates back even longer."

However, at times, such as during the farbrengen of 5738\*, the Rebbe seemingly did recognize the farbrengen as his own personal celebration: "When Yidden come together... with the main reason being to honor someone who because of his ancestry merits to have a part in the spreading of Chassidus performed by the assembled here, as well as those who are listening to what is being spoken here (via hookup)—whether they know about it or not..."

From 5741\*, these farbrengens were broadcasted live on television, reaching an even larger audience. It was during these farbrengens that the Rebbe spoke of many national or global issues, including: education, moment of silence, *sheva mitzvos b'nei Noach* and more. Many times the Rebbe dedicated time to publicly thank the president of the United States for his warm wishes and the Education Day proclamation. The Rebbe would also speak many times about the *pesukim* of his new *kapitel* and make a *siyum* on a *masechta*, often *Maseches Pesachim*.







JEM 6589 BY LEVI FREIDMAN SVAN 5/17

Special time was also devoted to the presentation of *matanos*. From the Rebbe's seventieth birthday in 5732\*, until 5737\*, Chassidim and *askanim* would approach the Rebbe in between the *sichos* and present a gift. In 5737\*, the Rebbe's seventy-fifth birthday, the amount of *matanos* presented swelled

tremendously. The many boxes, frames, *sefarim*, and proclamations piled up high on the table in front of the Rebbe as more and more people approached with their gifts (see sidebar "A Three-Foot Pile of Gifts").

With the many changes made following the events of Shemini

Atzeres 5738\*, *mazkirus* sent out a notification before Yud-Aleph Nissan 5738\* that all gifts should be delivered to *mazkirus*, instead of being presented to the Rebbe during the farbrengen.

### "EM ZOL ZEIN GUT!"

Rebbetzin Chana, the Rebbe's mother, would occasionally hold a farbrengen in her home on Yud-Aleph Nissan (also on Chof Av, *yahrzeit* of Harav Levi Yitzchok).

In 5724\*, Rebbetzin Chana began the farbrengen saying: "*L'chaim, em zol zein gut! Es kumt em—l'chaim*—All should be good for him! He deserves it." Reb Zalman Duchman, who was present at the farbrengen, expressed that perhaps such a *bracha* is said when one is not sure how to express anything else. Rebbetzin Chana answered: "No, this is a *bracha* befitting him."

Reb Shmuel Lew, who was also present at that farbrengen, traveled to the Rebbe for Yud-Aleph Nissan 5751\*. Upon arriving he remembered that story and decided to write it down and send it to the Rebbe. He concluded the letter echoing a similar *bracha*—"Imru tzaddik ki tov." The Rebbe responded, thanking him for the *brachos*, and added: "ת"ח על הפרטים שכותב—Thank you for the details you wrote."



AN ADVERTISEMENT PLACED IN THE NEW YORK TIMES ANNOUNCING THE FARBRENGEN ON YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5742\*.

# THE GREATEST PLEASURE

## *Gifts Presented to the Rebbe*

From the early years of the Yom Tov of Yud-Aleph Nissan, Chassidim naturally wished to present the Rebbe with a gift. In 5722\*, ahead of the Rebbe's sixtieth birthday, Chassidim gave gifts of Torah and tzedakah. Already then, it was clear that the Rebbe had tremendous *nachas* from this gesture. In fact, Chassidim felt that their preparation of *matanos* for Yud-Aleph Nissan, is what ultimately caused the Rebbe to farbeng<sup>4</sup>.

However, leading up to Yud-Aleph Nissan 5732\* this idea took on a whole new excitement. The early preparations of Chassidim were referred to by the Rebbe at the Purim farbrengen of 5732\*, one month before Yud-Aleph Nissan. It was then that the Rebbe expressed that the main focus of the gifts he would like to receive should be in Torah; both in *nigleh* and Chassidus.

A similar sentiment is expressed in a letter to Mr. David Chase dated 12 Nissan 5741\*: "The birthday gift that I have in mind, which I would consider an honor, as well as a great pleasure, is that you devote a quarter of an hour of your time every weekday morning and dedicate it for the sacred purpose of putting on Tefillin, with the appropriate prayer that goes with it, such as the Shema and the like."

One area to which the Rebbe paid unique attention was the *matanos* of the *bochurim*. Among the big projects the *bochurim* launched for Yud-Aleph Nissan that year are the now-ubiquitous *kovtzim* of *haaros* and *biurim*. These *kovtzim* were initiated in the months leading up to Yud-Aleph Nissan 5732\*, the Rebbe's seventieth birthday, when the *bochurim* took upon themselves to add a special *seder* in the Rebbe's Likkutei Sichos. As a result of the in-depth study of the Rebbe's Torah, they published a few booklets with some *iyunim* and *ha'aros*.

In the summer months a *maareches* of *bochurim* decided to collect the *haaros* and compile them into a proper *kovetz*, to benefit the greater public. Not only did the Rebbe approve, but he gave detailed instructions on the publishing of the *kovetz*. Most surprisingly, the Rebbe instructed that 10% of the *kovetz* be paid for by *mazkirus* from the "Keren Hashivim," a fund in support of the new institutions founded in the Rebbe's 70th year. This indicated that the Rebbe viewed this publication as a new *mosad*, just like the other 71 institutions!

In addition to the many *matanos* in areas of Torah, Chassidim gifted the Rebbe with an array of different things. Here are a few examples:

The annual Yud-Aleph Nissan *niggunim* are definitely amongst the most famous gifts presented to the Rebbe by talented composers throughout the years. In honor of the Rebbe's eightieth birthday in 5742\*, a Chossid in Eretz Yisroel composed a *niggun* with an original tune; a novelty that continues until today. After he composed the *niggun*, already in the month of Teves, the Rebbe wrote to him in a post-script: "ות"ח על הניגון וכו' ויעבוד ה' בשמחה" וט"ל—Thank you for the *niggun* etc. and may you serve Hashem with joy and gladness of the heart."

Many heads of government would present the Rebbe with a key to their country or city, and medallions from their respective governments.

Throughout the years we find many incredible expressions from the Rebbe about these Yud-Aleph Nissan *matanos*: To a child who told the Rebbe in *yechidus* about the Tanya and Mishnayos he learnt by-heart, the Rebbe asked: "Can you influence your friends to also give such gifts?"

In response to a notification from Tzach in Eretz Yisroel about a Tanya study session on the radio in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan, the Rebbe wrote: "נת"ח ות"ח ת"ח (כולל גם על הנח"ר)"—The letter was





REB CHAIM LAPIDUS PRESENTS THE REBBE WITH A NEW VOLUME OF LIKKUTEI SICHS.

THE REBBE IS PRESENTED WITH A KEY TO THE CHABAD HOUSE OF TULSA, OKLAHOMA.

A REPRESENTATIVE OF TOMCHEI TEMIMIM OF KIRYAT GAT PRESENTS THE REBBE WITH A SEFER PILPULIM PUBLISHED IN HONOR OF YUD-ALEPH NISSAN.

MR. RAPHAEL NOURIL, AN ACCLAIMED JEWISH ARTIST, PRESENTS THE REBBE WITH A PAINTING BEFORE YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5751\*.

received; many thanks (including also the great *nachas-ruach* they caused by connecting it with this specific date).

The Rebbe at times even reminded people to fulfill the *matanos* and *hachlatos* they had taken upon themselves.

In the months following Yud-Aleph Nissan 5732\* and leading up to Yud-Aleph Nissan 5733\*, the Rebbe encouraged the development of the 71 new institutions, asked for constant updates as to where things were holding, and even dedicated *sichos* reminding the Chassidim to complete what they began. Similarly, in Elul 5732\* Rabbi Chadakov sent a letter—on the Rebbe’s instruction—to Rabbi Moshe Halperin following up on the *hachlatos* the students of the *yeshivas erev* in Kfar Chabad took upon themselves in honor of *shnas hashivim*. The letter even asked for a list of the students who did not learn what they had pledged to.

Another special gift was the publishing of *sefarim* in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan. From *sifrei pilpulim* of *bochurim* and rabbonim to *sefarim* privately published by individuals, the Rebbe expressed deep *nachas-ruach* from these *sefarim*. The Rebbe once expressed to Reb Zalman Posner when he presented the Rebbe with a new edition of an old *sefer* of his: “Why did you not publish a new *sefer*? I want the new *sefer* to be brought to me as a gift for Yud-Aleph Nissan.”

Many similar expressions are found as the Rebbe encouraged people of all backgrounds to have a publishing project finished by Yud-Aleph Nissan.

Some noteworthy *matanos*:

On Erev Yud-Aleph Nissan 5731\*, the group of *talmidim hashluchim* to Australia returned to New York after two years of *shlichus*. They brought with them a priceless gift from Reb Isser Kluwгант (shliach in Australia): the Baal Shem Tov’s

tefillin. When they notified the Rebbe, he instructed them to enter for *yechidus* the following day, Yud-Aleph Nissan. When they entered the Rebbe’s room (they went in the morning, before the Rebbe left for the Ohel), the Rebbe took the tefillin with both hands, saying “*a groisen yasher koach*.” The Rebbe continued holding the tefillin with both of his hands even after the group left the room.

In 5732\* President Shazar sent the Rebbe the silver tefillin cases of the Mitteler Rebbe. The Rebbe responded: “I confirm the receipt of your letter and of the honorable gift—both holy and a reminder of our forefathers and *nesi'im*—and many thanks from the depths of my heart.”

On Yud-Aleph Nissan 5734\* after the farbrengen, Rabbi Shlomo Cunin brought a delegation of supporters into the Rebbe’s room where they presented the Rebbe with a wooden *aron kodesh* built especially for a Torah

\* 5732-1972, 5742-1982, 5733-1973, 5751-1991, 5731-1971, 5732-1972, 5734-1974





that had been recently brought to the Rebbe from Morocco. The Rebbe gave each member of the delegation one dollar (as per the Rebbe's custom when people gave gifts), and sent them a letter (dated 12 Nissan) explaining the uniqueness of the *aron kodesh*; despite its physical characteristics, it holds the Torah, which is *ein sof*.

Following the group from

California, a delegation from Detroit presented the Rebbe with "A Thought for the Week" in English and other languages. The Rebbe responded: "It should be brought down from 'thought' to speech and to action. We should not suffice with what was done until now, as was spoken at the farbrengen."

In 5736\*, the Rebbe received a

most unique present from Reb Aharon Klein. In honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan he gifted the Rebbe with a 24 inch menorah made of pure gold, with the *posuk* "Arachti ner l'mishichi, Yud-Aleph Nissan 5736, Nesie Yisroel" engraved on its base. When he arrived at the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's home with his gift, the Rebbetzin exclaimed in surprise: "How much debt did you fall into now?" Mr. Klein answered that when buying the Rebbe a gift he tries to make sure to use "wholesome" money without falling into debt.

A most emotional and perhaps the most recent and final reference—*le'eis ata*—we were *zoche* to from the Rebbe was in Nissan 5752\*. Rabbi Leibel Groner had read before the Rebbe several reports from *bochurim* regarding their *matanos* for Yud-Aleph Nissan, the Rebbe's 90th birthday. The Rebbe indicated to Rabbi Groner to read the reports over again, showing special attention and *nachas*.

## THE UFARATZA BUS

An interesting story regarding a *peula bochurim* did in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan took place in 5723\*:

Rabbis Moshe Kagen, Shlomo Cunin and Simcha Piekarsky were *bochurim* in 770 at the time, and before Yud-Aleph Nissan, in light of the Rebbe's "ufaratza" campaign at the time, they decided to do something in that vein as a *matana* for the Rebbe.

They took an old bus, painted the words "Ufaratzta yama vakeidma..." on the top with large Merkos logos on the sides, and the "Ufaratza Bus" was born! Bookshelves were fastened inside the bus along its walls, making it a mobile Jewish library, to spread Jewish literature. In the back of the bus, behind a curtain, there was a small table with tefillin, so that they could offer passersby a chance to perform this mitzvah. The reason this half of the bus was separated from the rest, was in the case that someone was embarrassed to be seen while putting on tefillin, he could do so in private. [Note: this was before the Rebbe started Mitzvah tefillin, and long before the era of the Mitzvah Tanks!]

On Yud-Aleph Nissan morning, they parked the

bus outside 770, so that the Rebbe would see it as he walked down Eastern Parkway from home. When the Rebbe came down the street, Rabbi Cunin invited the Rebbe inside the bus to have a look! "The Rebbe took one leap" Rabbi Kagen related, "and was inside the bus". The Rebbe proceeded to walk down the length of the bus taking in all its contents. Upon reaching the curtain in the back, the Rebbe inquired as to what it was for. After hearing Rabbi Cunin's explanation that it was in case someone was shy and didn't want to be seen putting on tefillin, the Rebbe remarked that one must not be embarrassed about putting on tefillin.

The books were fastened on their shelves with several wires, each one with a different length and tone. On the Rebbe's way out, the Rebbe walked to the back of the bus, and with a smile on his face proceeded back towards the exit while flicking each of the wires listening to the different tones they emitted. The Rebbe looked noticeably pleased by the *bochurim's* initiative, and even spoke about the "new innovations people have invented to help further *hafatzas hamaayanos*" in a farbrengen later that year<sup>10</sup>.



TM ID #3766, BY YOSSIE MELAMED/11 NISSAN 5737

## “A THREE-FOOT PILE OF GIFTS”

*Yud-Aleph Nissan 5737-75 Years*

The Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen of 5737\*, the Rebbe’s 75th birthday, stands out for the multitude of *matanos* presented to the Rebbe. In between the *sichos*, dozens of dignitaries, rabbonim, and shluchim and their *baalei batim* approached the Rebbe, presenting gifts and well wishes. The Rebbe instructed them to say *l’chaim* and blessed them in response.

Rabbi Sholom Ber Hecht and members of the Queens Sephardic community gave the Rebbe *sefarim* and ancient handwritten notes from European *ge’onim*, which they had purchased as a present for the Rebbe. Among these, was a 500-year-old large handwritten siddur, used by the *chazzanim* in a shul in Tehran over the generations. In the period preceding Yud-Aleph Nissan, the Tzach Levi Yitzchok Library had collected the transcripts from all the Rebbe’s *maamarim* and *sichos* to date and bound them together in many volumes. These volumes would serve as a basis for the large set of *Sichos Kodesh*, published a number of years later. Rabbi Avraham Parshan, a supporter of the library, presented the Rebbe with three volumes from this collection, along with the *sefer* Biurei Rashi.

Reb Leibel Raskin, shliach in Morocco, gave the Rebbe a Tehillim Ohel Yosef Yitzchak printed in Morocco. As he gave it to the Rebbe, the Rebbe turned to him and said, “Where is the Tanya in Arabic?” Rabbi Raskin had printed a Tanya in Arabic a few months before and sent it to the Rebbe. But the Rebbe wanted it to be presented to him again on Yud-Aleph Nissan! Rabbi Raskin ran upstairs to the *hanhalah* office in 770,

where his brother, Reb Dovid Raskin, had this particular Tanya, and brought it back down for the Rebbe.

Two Russian artists, Vladimir and Gregory Dashevsky, brought a portrait they had painted of the Rebbe with a *sefer Torah* in a large frame: “Dear Rebbe, in the name of the Russian Jewry who came here and are happy to be here with you, I am an artist and I have the honor to present this to you... We want to give you this as our heartfelt gift. We believe you will have many healthy years for all the Jews.” The artists raised the picture in the air to show it to the entire crowd. Motioning that they should put the picture down, the Rebbe told the artists with a large smile “They already see the original! Thank you and be well. The main thing is, strive that it be obvious about you that you follow in the footsteps of this picture: Torah.”

Mr. Yitzchak Berez, a photographer, uncovered a large print of a photo he had taken of the Rebbe. Following the Russian artists’ cue, he too picked up the photo and showed it to everyone. The Rebbe smiled and told him to say *l’chaim*.

As the Rebbe had specifically encouraged in previous years, many yeshivos prepared *kovtzim* of *pilpulim* and *chiddushei Torah* as gifts to the Rebbe.

In between visitors, the Rebbe nodded his head and clapped his hands to encourage the singing. Reb Zalmon Jaffe related: “[The pile of presentations and letters had grown so large] that there was a three-foot high pile of gifts on the table, in front of the Rebbe—who was barely visible. [Rabbi] Leibel [Groner] obtained some paper sacks and packed up all the gifts. It needed four sacks to clear the pile, and Leibel and [Rabbi] Yudel [Krinsky] carted them away [up to the Rebbe’s room].”





# ואברכה מברכך

## *Brachos from Chassidim to the Rebbe and from the Rebbe to Chassidim*

Every year, thousands of letters would be sent to the Rebbe from all sorts of people with *brachos*, well-wishes and the like, in connection with Yud-Aleph Nissan. In the Rebbe's letters during the month of Nissan, he would often acknowledge the well-wishes of the sender and thank them warmly. In many years, the Rebbe would also publicly thank the well-wishers at the Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen.

As the years went by, a *minhag* was established that aside from the personal *brachos* given, a public, communal *bracha* would be given to the Rebbe by a group of elder Chassidim representing Chassidim worldwide.

The first time known to us that this occurrence took place was on Yud-Aleph Nissan 5712\*—the Rebbe's fiftieth birthday. After the Rebbe said a *maamar* in his room to a preselected group of Chassidim,<sup>6</sup> Reb Shmuel Levitin approached the Rebbe's desk and *bentched* him. He concluded his *bracha* by saying: "As the *mizmor* says<sup>7</sup>: "*Tashmi'eini sasson v'simcha*, let me hear tidings of joy and gladness." The Rebbe responded with a smile: "The *mizmor* also continues '*Tageilna atzamos dikisa*, let the bones You have crushed exult..."

It is not clear if in the next few years this occurrence repeated itself, and until Yud-Aleph Nissan 5723\* the only official *brachos* documented are 5715\* and 5716\*.

From 5723\* and on, it seems that this became a yearly occurrence. The *bracha* usually took place either after Maariv on the night of Yud-Aleph Nissan, or after the Rebbe davened Mincha upon arriving back from the Ohel the following day. When the Rebbe would return from shul, the delegation of elder Chassidim would be waiting outside the Rebbe's room. As in the earlier years, Reb Shmuel

was usually the one to actually give the Rebbe the *bracha*, in the name of Chassidim worldwide. After Reb Shmuel finished, the Rebbe would usually thank the delegation and follow with a short *bracha* of his own. In an interesting twist, in 5723\*, the words the Rebbe used were; "May Hashem help, that all the *brachos* you *bentched* me with, and the *brachos* I will *bentch* you with—should come to fruition."

In the later years, until Yud-Aleph Nissan 5746\*, Reb Moshe Pinchas Katz, the venerated *gabbai* of 770 gave the *bracha*. Many times, in the

### AT THE OHEL

Interestingly, it seems that on Yud-Aleph Nissan the Rebbe would make a point of being at the Ohel alone. Until the summer of 5717, whenever the Rebbe would go to the Ohel, Rabbis Hodakov, Kazarnovsky and Groner would come along with the Rebbe in the car. However, in an entry dated Yud-Aleph Nissan 5715, Rabbi Hodakov records in his diary how on that day he was planning on traveling to the Ohel with the Rebbe as always. However when he came to 770 in the morning, he found out that the Rebbe had already left for the Ohel, and said not to tell the others. He also writes how, unusually, the Rebbe left his house at 5:30 in the morning, had gone to the *mikveh* twice, and left to the Ohel at precisely nine in the morning.

In Rabbi Groner's diary he relates that one year, Rabbi Krinsky (who drove the Rebbe to the Ohel) had told him that on Yud-Aleph Nissan the Rebbe asked that he not enter the Ohel while was inside.

\* 5712-1952, 5723-1963, 5715-1955, 5716-1956, 5746-1986, 5717-1957, 5715-1955



JEMID44040 BY CHAIM B. HALBERSTAM 13 NISSAN 5750

Rebbe's response, the Rebbe would include references to timely events, such as "*veheishiv lev avos al—yedei—banim*, in 5740\* (a campaign to intensify the activities with Jewish children, with the spirit that every child can make a tremendous impact), or printing Tanyas, in 5744\*.

In later years the *bracha* turned to be a full-length *sicha*, and beginning

from 5736\* the Rebbe would edit the *bracha* for publication.

On Yud-Aleph Nissan 5745\*, the last year that Reb Moshe Pinchas Katz delivered the *bracha*, the Rebbe reacted in an unusual way. The Rebbe appeared to be looking at the ground as Reb Moshe Pinchas gave the *bracha*, and seemed to be trembling in an unusual way while answering

with a *bracha* of his own. Another unusual factor was that the Rebbe's response was relatively longer than in prior years. Reb Moshe Pinchas passed away the next year. Reb Zalman Gurary replaced Reb Moshe Pinchas and continued delivering the *bracha* from 5746\* and on.

# THANK YOU FOR COMING

## *Traveling to the Rebbe for Yud-Aleph Nissan*

A very large part of Yud-Aleph Nissan is definitely the many Chassidim who travel to New York to celebrate in the Rebbe's presence every year. The Rebbe expressed special appreciation for the many guests who came from far and near, at times even thanking them publicly for coming.

The first time many guests came to 770 for Yud-Aleph Nissan was in 5732\*, for the Rebbe's seventieth birthday. The mammoth preparations taking place around the world inspired many Chassidim to physically join the festivities in 770, also attracting many important and influential people to come as well.

Several weeks after Yud-Aleph Nissan, Rabbi Hodakov asked Reb Efraim Wolf for a list of people who had traveled from Eretz Yisroel to 770 for Yud-Aleph Nissan, as the Rebbe wished to personally participate in their travel expenses. The immigrants from Georgia and Bukhara were *zoche* that the Rebbe fully covered the expense of their tickets, aside from a symbolic amount of 18 lira. The Rebbe also participated in the travel expenses of many other individuals.

Although guests would continue to come every year, the next "big" year was 5737\*, the Rebbe's seventy-fifth birthday. The guests were

*zoche* to receive a special thank you from the Rebbe, and the Rebbe's satisfaction was quite apparent.

In 5733\*, a wandering Jew, in the spiritual sense, was staying around 770. He was having thoughts of conversion to another religion *r"l*, and was attempting one final look at authentic Jewish life. When he wrote to the Rebbe that he thinks his time in Crown Heights is up and he will be leaving the area, the Rebbe responded: "...Stay until after the upcoming Tishrei, enabling us to celebrate together all three *regalim* (and my birthday)."

Another expression of the *nachas ruach* the Rebbe derived from the guests who came for Yud-Aleph Nissan, was in 5740\* concerning the Glitzenshtein family. That year, Reb Yisroel Tzvi Glitzenstein arrived with his family to celebrate Yud-Aleph Nissan in the Rebbe's presence. On the day of their arrival, 9 Nissan, they waited outside 770 for the Rebbe's arrival from home. That day, Rabbi Chaim Pupko, an activist for *shleimus ha'aretz*, was waiting outside 770 too, with the intention to speak with the Rebbe about some important topics.

When the Rebbe arrived, Rabbi



\*📅 5732-1972, 5737-1977, 5733-1973, 5740-1980





THE REBBE SEES OFF A GROUP OF GUESTS WHO CAME TO JOIN THE REBBE FOR HIS SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY — NISSAN 5732\*.

Pupko immediately approached and began an animated discussion lasting a few minutes. After the conversation was over, the Rebbe began walking up the stairs to the main entrance of 770, seemingly without noticing the guests. Suddenly, the Rebbe turned with a broad smile while pointing at the Glitzensten family and told Rabbi Pupko: “*Dos iz gest fun Eretz Yisroel*—these are guests from Eretz Yisroel.” The Rebbe continued again: “*Dos iz gest fun Eretz Yisroel*,” still smiling.

On the day the family was supposed to return to Eretz Yisroel, they gathered to receive the Rebbe’s *bracha*, this time after Mincha in the 770 lobby. Several minutes later, Rabbi Hodakov informed them that the Rebbe had just called him on the intercom, notifying that he would take part in the family’s travel expenses, both to New York and back to Eretz Yisroel. If they wanted the payment in cash, the Rebbe said, it could be provided as well.

Interestingly, in a *yechidus* earlier that year, the Rebbe clearly requested for guests to come in

honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan:

Rabbi Dovid Wetiman, shliach in S. Paulo, Brazil, had been working with a supporter of his, an attorney, to translate a book about Torah belief and science to Portuguese.

On Yud Shevat 5740\*, Rabbi Weitman came to New York and brought the attorney working with him to meet the Rebbe in *yechidus*. The attorney presented the Rebbe with a sample of the nearly-finished book,

and told the Rebbe that he hopes the book will be ready on time for Yud-Aleph Nissan, just a few months later.

The Rebbe responded: “Instead of the book, bring me the hundreds of students who will read the book. They should come to the farbrengen and see that Torah is not dependent on science, but is far higher.”

Another amazing expression of the Rebbe’s *nachas ruach* from those who traveled to be with him on

## THANK YOU FOR COMING

לכל לראש ישנו חוב, ויתירה מזו: זכות נעימה, התחייבות טובה ומתוקה, לבטאות יישר כח לכל אלה שהתאספו כאן, וכל אלה שהתאספו ביחד במקומות אחרים וכל אלה ששומעים את הפארבריינגען, או שלאחר מכן יקראו או ישמעו את מה שדובר בהתוועדות (מכיון שגם הם רוצים להשתתף בזה), ומכיון שכמה קישרו זאת גם עם פלוני בן פלוני — ישנה זכות נעימה לבטא גם הכרת טובה פרטית.

Moreover, it is a sweet and most pleasurable obligation to express my thanks to all those gathered here and all those gathered in other places listening to the farbrengen, and also those who will hear about this farbrengen (because they also wished to participate). And being that they connected it with an individual — there is a pleasurable merit to express personal thanks.

*Yud-Aleph Nissan 5738*

Yud-Aleph Nissan took place during the early 5740s\*. In early Nissan of that year Rabbi Chaim Gutnick reserved flights for the *talmidim hashluchim* flying to Australia for shortly before Yud Aleph Nissan.

When Rabbi Binyomin Klein wrote this to the Rebbe, the Rebbe wrote back: “מהו הטעם וההעשמה שאיננו שולחים אותם לפני יא ניסן?” (What is the reason and pleasure to travel from here a few days before Yud-Aleph Nissan?)

As the Rebbe’s eightieth birthday, on Yud-Aleph Nissan 5742\*, approached, Chassidim from around the world prepared to travel to 770 to participate in the festivities. On Rosh Chodesh Nissan, during a Tzivos Hashem rally, the Rebbe spoke, naming several reasons why people should refrain from traveling to New York to participate in the celebrations, saying that it was inappropriate for people to leave their homes so close to Pesach. The Rebbe explained that “the Torah is concerned about the money of Yidden,” and therefore the travel expenses should instead be given to tzedakah in connection with the upcoming Yom Tov of Pesach. The Rebbe also instructed that everyone should go on *mivtzoim* “on the special day, Yud-Aleph Nissan.”<sup>8</sup>

Although many people from all

over had been planning on coming in, now, with the Rebbe’s clear instruction, they immediately changed their plans.

Still, there were some who couldn’t resist and made their way to 770 to spend these precious moments with the Rebbe:

Mr. Zalman Jaffe related in his diary, how unsure of how to proceed, he called the Rebbetzin (on two separate occasions) asking what to do in light of the Rebbe’s instructions. (Both times) the Rebbetzin said that she did not hear this directly from the Rebbe, but she believed that the Rebbe was referring to large groups “of hundreds of people, but I am sure that the Rebbe does not mean you.” The Rebbetzin did reiterate however, that she was not to be held accountable if the Rebbe would express displeasure to Mr. Jaffe for coming...<sup>9</sup>

Rabbi Mendel Raskin—son of Reb Leibel, the legendary shliach in Morocco—related: “Personally, we assumed from the outset that the Rebbe’s request not to physically travel was only to those who were not sure or who had doubts as to how they can balance the Pesach preparations together with coming to the Rebbe.” Not only did Reb Leibel himself come to New York that year, he even brought a group of 25

## PLEASURE SEEING YOU

It was a pleasure to see you at the farbrengen on the occasion of the 11th of Nissan, and exchange l’chaim blessings.

*Letter to Mr. David Chase—12 Nissan 5741*

Yidden from Morocco to celebrate Yud-Aleph Nissan with the Rebbe.

Sure enough, there were considerably less Chassidim who traveled to participate in the Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen that year. Surprisingly however, the Chassidim who were present were *zoche* to some extraordinary *kiruvim*:

During the Shabbos Hagadol farbrengen, the Rebbe said: “Since guests arrived in connection with the eightieth year,” he will explain a part of his outgoing *kapitel*, as well as the incoming one. This lifted the spirits of the guests who had arrived, as they sensed that the Rebbe appreciated their attendance.

This notion was reinforced during the big farbrengen, Yud-Aleph Nissan night. The Rebbe farbrenged for six hours (until 3:00 a.m!) and then declared that because many people had traveled from far and near to attend this farbrengen, he will distribute a Tanya to all the participants as a memento and as a symbol of appreciation for coming. The *chaluka* went for another three hours, until 6:00 a.m!

In the coming years, 5743\*-5744\*, the Rebbe again instructed that Chassidim not travel to New York for Yud-Aleph Nissan. Interestingly, in 5745\* (the last Yud-Aleph Nissan on which the Rebbe farbrenged, *le’ei ata*) the Rebbe did not address the topic at all.



# ETERNAL MEMENTOS

## *Yud-Aleph Nissan Chalukos*

A new era of Yud-Aleph Nissan celebrations began in 5746\*. The Rebbe had stopped farbrenging, choosing instead to explain the new *kapitel* on the Shabbos before (or immediately after) Yud-Aleph Nissan, and the pinnacle of the Yud-Aleph Nissan celebration became the annual *bracha* given by an elder Chossid—on behalf of all Chassidim—and the subsequent *sicha* spoken by the Rebbe.

Although Chassidim were obviously saddened by the change of events, there were some heartening changes in this new stage, namely: *Chalukos* of dollars and *kuntreisim*, as well as the publication of *mugedike maamarim* in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan.

In reality, the Rebbe distributing something on Yud-Aleph Nissan was not a new concept, and had taken place already in the past. In 5742\*, the Rebbe's eightieth birthday, at the end of the Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen, the Rebbe distributed a Tanya to each person present. This was the first time the Rebbe had ever publicly distributed a *sefer* to everyone—men, women and children.

The Rebbe explained that the *chaluka* was in appreciation for all those who took the time to travel to spend Yud-Aleph Nissan with

him, and stressed that the point of the *chaluka* is so that the Tanyas should be learned from, to the point that they tear, and new ones will need to be printed.

While distributing the Tanyas, the Rebbe seemed to be in a particularly uplifted mood, smiling to many people, especially children, even showing one child to kiss the Tanya. (For more details about this *chaluka*, see earlier - *Eighty Years*—5742.)

The same occurred—though in a slightly different way—at the end of the farbrengen of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5744\*. Earlier that year the Rebbe instructed that Tanyas be printed in every country or city that had not yet had one. By Yud-Aleph Nissan time, a celebratory 1,000th edition of Tanya had been published. This edition included a copy of the title page of all the editions published to date. At the end of the Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen, the Rebbe announced that he would like to distribute this Tanya to all the assembled. However, unlike the last time the Rebbe distributed a Tanya, where the distribution took six hours, the Rebbe said that in order to make it easier for the crowd (that they shouldn't need to wait a long time) the distribution will be done through the *kolel yungerleit*.

As the Rebbe sat, waiting for the *kolel yungerleit* to be ready, the Rebbe told Reb Leibel Groner: "Why are you shouting instructions from here? Go there and help!" The Rebbe then looked around, searching for Reb Binyomin Klein. "Where is my second general?" the Rebbe asked.

The Rebbe said that he will remain seated in his place until the *yungerleit* will be ready for the *chaluka*. Boxes of Tanyas together with stacks of dollars were passed to all the *yungerleit* in the shul. When all was ready, the Rebbe said: "Nu, now I can go get my Tanya." The Rebbe began walking towards the exit of the shul, and received a Tanya and a dollar from Rabbi Yosef Levertov, who was standing near the door. In his excitement, Rabbi Levertov mistakenly gave the Rebbe two dollars stuck together. The Rebbe separated the two dollars, showed Rabbi Levertov that he gave two dollars, and put them in his pocket, all while smiling. While leaving the shul the Rebbe motioned to a woman with his Tanya, as if asking: "Where is your Tanya?"

These two occurrences however, were definitely out of the ordinary and unexpected by Chassidim. *Chalukos* on Yud-Aleph Nissan would only become the norm two years later, beginning



with Yud-Aleph Nissan 5746\*.

The weeks leading up to Yud-Aleph Nissan that year were different from the familiar festive preparatory time-period preceding Yud-Aleph Nissan regularly. The *sefarim* case was at its peak, and the atmosphere in 770 was heavily impacted by the Rebbe's seriousness at the time.

To add to all this, Chassidim were pained by the Rebbe's state of health: In the weeks preceding Yud-Aleph Nissan, the Rebbe's foot was unwell. Because of this, the Rebbe was not using the *mikveh* or going downstairs for *tefillos* or *sichos*, in order to prevent any unnecessary strain.

Although the atmosphere at the time was a saddened one, especially after hearing that the Rebbe would not hold the annual Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen, the spirit of the Chassidim began to lift as some of the Rebbe's routine returned to normal. On Yud-Aleph Nissan the Rebbe went to the *mikveh* for the first time in over a month. And finally, it was on that Yud-Aleph Nissan that the Rebbe gifted the Chassidim a historic gift, lasting for the years to come: "Sunday dollars."

The big surprise took place on Yud-Aleph Nissan morning, when the Rebbe arrived in 770 surprisingly wearing a silk *sirtuk* (usually worn on Shabbos and Yom Tov) and began distributing dollars, wishing each recipient, "*A kosher un freilichen Pesach.*" Despite the attempts of the *vaad hamesader* to cut the line early, the Rebbe insisted that every person have a chance to pass by and receive a dollar. The hour-and-a-half *chaluka* finished at 11:45 a.m.

(An additional joyous occurrence took place when the Rebbe returned from the Ohel and entered 770: Chassidim were singing the new *niggun* composed for Yud-Aleph Nissan, "*Ratzisa Hashem,*" and the Rebbe encouraged the singing of the Chassidim. The *bochurim* were



FOLLOWING THE TANYA DISTRIBUTION ON YUD-ALEPH NISSAN 5744\*, THE REBBE LEAVES 770 WITH A TANYA IN HIS HAND.

particularly overjoyed, as the Rebbe had not encouraged the singing while entering the shul in the past while.)

In 5747\*, although the Rebbe did not farbreng, he did distribute dollars on Yud-Aleph Nissan eve following the annual *bracha* and the subsequent *sicha*. As the *sicha* was coming to a close the Rebbe suddenly notified he would like to distribute dollars. The *chaluka* began at 8:45 p.m. and lasted close to midnight.

In 5748\*, the Rebbe once again distributed dollars on Yud-Aleph Nissan eve, this time in his home on President Street (where the Rebbe had been since the *histalkus* of the Rebbetzin on Chof-Beis Shevat).

On Yud-Aleph Nissan 5749\*, the Rebbe distributed dollars—like every Sunday—in the afternoon, and after Maariv the Rebbe began distributing a limited amount of "*Kuntres Ahavas Yisroel*" along with two dollars. After the *kuntreisim* ran out, the Rebbe gave an additional dollar, totaling three dollars, instead.

On Yud-Aleph Nissan 5750\*, the Rebbe distributed a *maamar* of his own for the first time, "*Ki Yishalcha Bincha*" (edited by the Rebbe in

honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan that year) with a dollar inside each *kuntres*. In 5751\*, the Rebbe distributed dollars after the *sicha* at night and again the next evening after Maariv.

The annual publication of *maamarim* edited by the Rebbe for Yud-Aleph Nissan began in 5747\*. That year, a *maamar* was submitted to the Rebbe for *hagaha* and the editors, not wanting to decide on their own, sent in two options for the date: "Pesach" or "Yud-Aleph Nissan." The Rebbe circled "Yud-Aleph Nissan," and the *pesach davar* included details about Yud-Aleph Nissan as well.

In honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5749\* the Rebbe was *magiah* the famous *maamar* "*B'yom Ashtei Asar Yom,*" said on Yud-Aleph Nissan 5731\*. In 5750\* the Rebbe edited and distributed (as mentioned) the *maamar* "*Ki Yishalcha Bincha.*" For Yud-Aleph Nissan 5751\*, the beginning of the Rebbe's ninetieth year, the Rebbe was *magiah* the *maamar* "*Tefilah LeMoshe,*" based on *kapitel* 90 in *Tehillim*.

\* 5746-1986, 5747-1987, 5748-1988, 5749-1989, 5750-1990, 5751-1991

# EDUCATION DAY USA

## *A National Holiday*

The year 5736\* was declared by the Rebbe to be a “*shnas hachinuch*.” Throughout this year, as well as during the years 5737\* and 5738\*, the Rebbe consistently spoke about the importance of Jewish parents giving their child a Jewish education, as well as the need to raise the bar on education in general. The campaign caused a rush of activities in the area of education, including the establishment of schools and other educational programs across the country.

In recognition of the Rebbe’s work in this field, in honor of the Rebbe’s seventy-fifth birthday on Yud-Aleph Nissan 5737\*, the state of New York decided to proclaim Yud-Aleph Nissan to be “Education Day.”

As Yud-Aleph Nissan 5738\* approached, both chambers of the United States Congress passed a joint resolution recognizing the Rebbe’s work in the field of education, and calling for all Americans as well as the president, to set aside one day on the calendar “devoted to the importance of education to the lives of its citizens and to the general well being of the nation.” The resolution went on to declare, that because all the educational work Lubavitch has done is at the Rebbe’s

initiative and instruction, Congress is suggesting that Yud-Aleph Nissan be inaugurated as Education Day USA, “thus concluding the year of Lubavitch monumental activities dedicated to the ‘Year of Education.’”

After affixing his own signature to the congressional resolution, President Jimmy Carter issued a proclamation calling on all Americans to observe Education Day as a time to reflect on their commitment to education, and its importance to the welfare of the nation.

During the Yud-Aleph Nissan farbrengen of that year, the Rebbe publicly thanked the United States government and the President for

the generous gesture. The Rebbe then declared that the fact that the government of America, the most powerful country in the world, had publicly recognized the importance of education, was in itself a historical step, and a sign of Moshiach’s imminent arrival. The Rebbe then spoke at length about the topic of education and its importance. The Rebbe noted that the fact that America—a central player on the world stage—had taken this step, recognizing the importance of the education its citizens receive, would encourage other countries to do the same.

The Rebbe’s words were



PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP RECEIVES A GROUP OF SHLUCHIM TO SIGN THE PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION IN HONOR OF EDUCATION AND SHARING DAY, 5778\*.



AN EVENT IN WASHINGTON ON THE FIRST EDUCATION DAY, 5738\*.

published by the “American Friends of Lubavitch” on a full page ad in national newspapers, prompting a reply from the President: “I read with great interest the full page ad [...] portions of your response to the resolution passed by Congress designating April 18, ‘Education Day U.S.A.’ I admire the thoughts which you expressed—and am grateful for your support and prayers.”

In the above-mentioned farbrengen as well as in additional farbrengens throughout that year, the Rebbe laid out a broader vision for this national holiday. The Rebbe spoke about a day during which people would reflect on the importance of investing in their children’s education, a time for reflection on how to better educate the child as a human being, with an emphasis on moral and ethical values. Only then, the Rebbe stressed, would the American people be able to live in a healthy and normal society, and not in the jungle the world sometimes appears to be. At the Chof Av farbrengen of that year, the Rebbe called on smaller government bodies to learn from the example set by the federal government, and declare one day a year as “Education Day,” thereby placing an official emphasis on education. The Rebbe asked that the same be done in countries throughout the world.

Ever since the inaugural Education Day, every president without fail has followed suit, each publishing his own Education Day proclamation. During a ceremony which takes place in the Oval Office before Yud-Aleph Nissan each year, a delegation of shluchim, headed by the Rebbe’s shliach to Washington D.C. Rabbi Avrohom Shemtov, look on as the President signs that year’s proclamation. The text of the proclamation varies from year to year, with every President emphasizing different points, varying in tone or style.

It is needless to point out the tremendous honor these proclamations bring to the Rebbe’s name, as well as the prestige they bestow upon Lubavitch. The proclamation’s text usually points to the Rebbe as an example for all the peoples of the nation. For example, the proclamation of 5744\* declares: “The Lubavitch movement and its greatly respected leader have shown Americans of every faith that true education involves not simply what one knows, but how one lives.”

Some years, the President would publicly acknowledge in the proclamation different milestones Lubavitch has reached. In 5742\* the proclamation declared: “One shining example for people of all faiths of what education ought to be is that provided

by the Lubavitch movement, headed by Rabbi Menachem Schneerson, a worldwide spiritual leader who will celebrate his 80th birthday on April 4, 1982. [...] He has provided a vivid example of the eternal validity of the Seven Noahide Laws, a moral code for all of us regardless of religious faith. May he go from strength to strength.” The same occurred in 5752\*, when the President took note of the Rebbe’s 90th birthday. In 5748\*, the year of the Rebbetzin’s passing, the proclamation saluted the Rebbe’s “lasting achievements in education, as well as those of his late wife, the Rebbetzin Chaya Moussia Schneerson.” More recently, in 5780\* the President recognized the year as marking 70 years since the Rebbe accepted the *nesuim*.

Today, in countless countries worldwide, shluchim are invited to the government offices of their country, state or city, to be presented with their president’s, mayor’s, or governor’s proclamation declaring Yud-Aleph Nissan as “Education Day.” This timeless tribute, to the world’s most important leader, will forever be treasured and observed.

1. Additionally, for many years the Rebbe would also visit the Ohel on Yud-Gimmel Nissan (*hilula* of the Tzemach Tzedek) — twice in four days.
2. It should be noted, that in the *sicha* of Rosh Chodesh Nissan 5742, the Rebbe asked that instead of people traveling to New York for Yud-Aleph Nissan, the time should better be used for *mitvoim*.
3. Yud Aleph Nissan 5745, et. al.
4. See “Yoma Tava L’Rabbanan” in issue 1 for details.
5. Hamelech B’mesibo vol. 2 p. 173.
6. See “Yoma Tava L’Rabbanan” in the previous issue.
7. The Rebbe’s new *kapitel*—51.
8. See *Eighty Years*—5742 in the previous issue.
9. My Encounter with the Rebbe, vol. 13.
10. Shabbos Parshas Ki Savo 5723.