

A Chassidisher **Derher**

א חסידשער דערהער

A Staunch Soldier

REB BENTZION SHEMTOV

Hisvaadus Chassidim

כ"ז אדר-ראשון תשנ"ב

RABBI YOSEF YITZCHOK JACOBSON
AND RABBI AVROHOM MANN



SICHOS SIE **IN ENGLISH**

Bringing the wellsprings of Chassidus
to the English-speaking world

INSIDE

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CHASSIDISHER DERHER!

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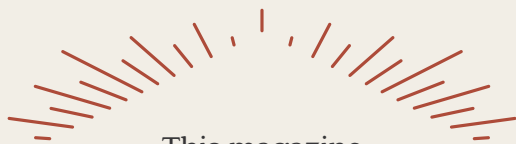
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has been made possible

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

לזכות המערכת וכל הצוות המסור של
א חסידישער דערהער



The month of Adar is a joyous month, as the Megillah records: "החדש אשר נהפך להם"—the month in which everything transformed from mourning to celebration and Yom Tov.

The Rebbe points out that in a year that has two Adars—like this year—we have 60 consecutive days of joy, the exact amount needed to cancel out all things undesirable, like the halachic precept of "בטל בשישים." One of the occurrences we are reminded of every year in the month of Adar, especially in the month of Adar I, is the events of Chof-Zayin Adar I 5752 (as well as two years later on Chof-Zayin Adar 5754).

This year will mark 30 years since the day the Rebbe took ill while at the Ohel, after which he no longer spoke words of Torah and the guidance the world so desperately needs. We hope and daven to Hashem from the depths of our hearts that this year, by the time this magazine is published (and even earlier), we won't have to mark this day in a negative way anymore because everything will have been transformed into open and revealed good. Moshiach will have arrived and we will see the Rebbe again and hear *Torah chadasha*, "מלך ביפיו" in his full glory.

For the time being, we reflect on the occurrences of 30 years ago: The Rebbe was in terrible physical pain, coupled with the great *he'elem v'hester*, the difficult darkness when we were no longer able to

see the Rebbe for half a year. Later, we were *zocheh* that the Rebbe reappeared and joined Chassidim again for a whole year while sitting on the balcony, only to be physically distanced once again, leading to the ultimate *he'elem v'hester* of Gimmel Tammuz.

True, in all the years since that time the pain has not gotten easier and it lingers constantly on our hearts and minds. But when the date comes around again each year and especially this year, in another *shana me'uberes*, when we approach it for the 30th time, we are compelled to face this challenging subject with more intensity.

Reflecting on the occurrences of Chof-Zayin Adar, an interesting *sicha* comes to mind:

The Rebbe once explained at a Simchas Torah *farbrengen* how the Frierdiker Rebbe's *avoda* was fraught with turmoil: Right from the beginning of his *nesius*, he was faced with harassment from the Soviet government, particularly the Yevseksia, ultimately leading to his arrest. And even after he arrived in the United States, where he should have been able to go about spreading Torah and Chassidus unabated, he was faced with failing health and the inability to properly speak. In a sense, says the Rebbe, the challenges he faced here in the free world were even more difficult than those in Russia: While the Russian government presented external disruption to this *avoda*, the challenges in the free world were internal; from within. The Frierdiker Rebbe's health challenges primarily affected his ability to speak and teach Chassidus, also diminishing the amount that could be published in writing.

One of the doctors tending to the Frierdiker Rebbe asked him: How does a believing Jew like you explain the fact that Hashem presented you with this health ailment, not allowing you to carry out your most important mission in this world?

The Rebbe notes that the doctor probably asked this question with an intended purpose: He knew that it was his job to help the Frierdiker Rebbe get better, but he saw no way to do so within the natural means. Instead, he hoped to arouse within the Frierdiker Rebbe the will to heal himself through spiritual powers. If the Frierdiker Rebbe would see that his illness is causing the weakening of another Yid's *emunah*, he would definitely do all he could to get rid of it!

Either way, concludes the Rebbe, the Frierdiker Rebbe did not allow any of these challenges to deter him from carrying on with his work. The results can be seen until today, with an immense reach of *hafatzas hamaayanos* all over the world!¹

In the famous *sicha* of Gimmel Shevat 5752, less than two months before Chof-Zayin Adar, the Rebbe told this story again. This time, the Rebbe compared the Frierdiker Rebbe's situation to that of Moshe Rabbeinu, who complained to Hashem that "אני ערל—שפתיים—I am of closed lips..." In response, Hashem told Moshe Rabbeinu that his brother Aharon would be his mouthpiece. In other words, Hashem agreed that Moshe Rabbeinu's complaint is a valid argument according to the Torah! The Rebbe concludes that it is our responsibility to be the "Aharon" of the Frierdiker Rebbe, learning and spreading his Torah, acting in his stead.²

So as we approach the day of Chof-Zayin Adar, it is important to recognize what we have to do on our part:

On the one hand, the Rebbe is clearly indicating that the time in which we find ourselves is immensely challenging. In certain respects, the *he'elem v'hester* that we now experience, a time when we cannot see and hear the Rebbe physically, is even more difficult than the challenges we had in Soviet Russia!

But on the other hand, the Rebbe explains that everything that happens to a *tzaddik*, and especially a *nossi*, is only of his own will.³ Even the arrest and imprisonment of the Rabbeim was certainly done with their consent, because they wanted the great increase of *hafatzas hamaayanos* that would come about as a result. Like an olive that gets crushed in order to produce pure olive oil, the hardships of *golus* produce this increased spiritual light.

Obviously then, the situation in which we find ourselves after Chof-Zayin Adar is also in accordance with the Rebbe's will. We were not left devoid of a connection with the Rebbe, *chas veshalom*. Everything that happens is part of an intended plan, paving the way for even greater revelations to come, with the revelation of Moshiach speedily.

It is our job to speed up the process by fulfilling the Rebbe's instructions, especially as it pertains to Chof-Zayin Adar, by being the "Aharon Hakohen," learning the Rebbe's Torah, teaching the Rebbe's Torah, and fulfilling all the *hora'os* that the Rebbe pointed out will bring Moshiach sooner.

In closing, there is another important point to remember when discussing Chof-Zayin Adar:

There has never been another *nossi* in history that made himself so accessible through thousands of hours of audio and video recordings. Hours and hours of *sichos*, *maamarim*, communal *yeichidus*, conversations

at dollars, davening, and much more. One is amazed realizing how much the Rebbe made himself available in these mediums of technology throughout the years and even encouraged their dissemination. First with the audio recordings: The Rebbe is said to have sent audio recordings of the farbrengens to Reb Gershon Mendel Garelik on his shlichus in Italy. And in the later years, on video as well. The Rebbe allowed videos to be captured of so many events at 770, encouraging the photographers like Levi Friedin and others, even allowing a camera crew to accompany him into the Ohel!

Even before Chof Zayin Adar and Gimmel Tammuz, the Rebbe acknowledged the importance of these mediums, encouraging people to listen to the recordings of previous *sichos* and the like.⁴ The Rebbe pointed out that hearing the words in exactly the same way they were delivered at the original farbrengen has the ability to inspire the listeners in a way that nothing else really can.⁵ At a children's rally in the summer of 5751, the Rebbe mentioned the "*lebedike*" pictures being captured at the event, and instructed people to take a video of the event with them to Russia.⁶

The Rebbe gave us this beautiful and vital gift, enabling us to connect with him in a very real way even in times like these!⁷

May we indeed be *zocheh* that the two Adars of this year, comprising 60 days of *simcha*, do away with all the undesirable things, including the darkness of the *galus*. And bring us straight to into the month of Nissan—Yud Aleph Nissan, the Rebbe's 120th birthday,⁸ when we will be able to celebrate together with the Rebbe, in the literal sense, seeing with our physical eyes the revelation of Moshiach—*teikef umiyad Mammosh!*

The Editors

יום ההילולא כ"ב שבט ה'תשפ"ב
שנת המאה ועשרים להולדת כ"ק אדמו"ר

1. Night of Simchas Torah 5745.
2. *Sichos Kodesh* 5752 vol. 2, p. 559; *Sefer Hasichos* 5752, p. 292.
3. *Maamar Ata Echad* 5742.
4. See for example 27 Tishrei 5745; *Hisvaaduyos* 5745 vol. 1, p. 475, et. al.
5. See 13 Elul 5742; *Hisvaaduyos* 5742 vol. 4, p. 2150.
6. See *Hisvaaduyos* 5751 vol. 4, p. 114.
7. See *Maamar Vayihyu Chayei Sarah* 5720, about the importance of seeing a *tzaddik* for *avodas Hashem*.
8. See *Yud Shevat* 5733—*Sichos Kodesh* 5733 vol. 1, p. 303; an extra month of Adar gives us more time to prepare for *Yud-Aleph Nissan*.

WE ASK

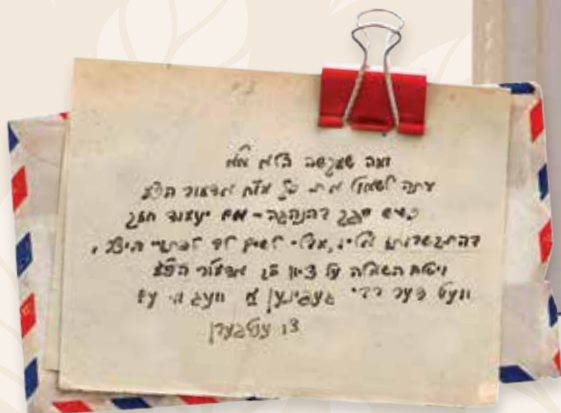
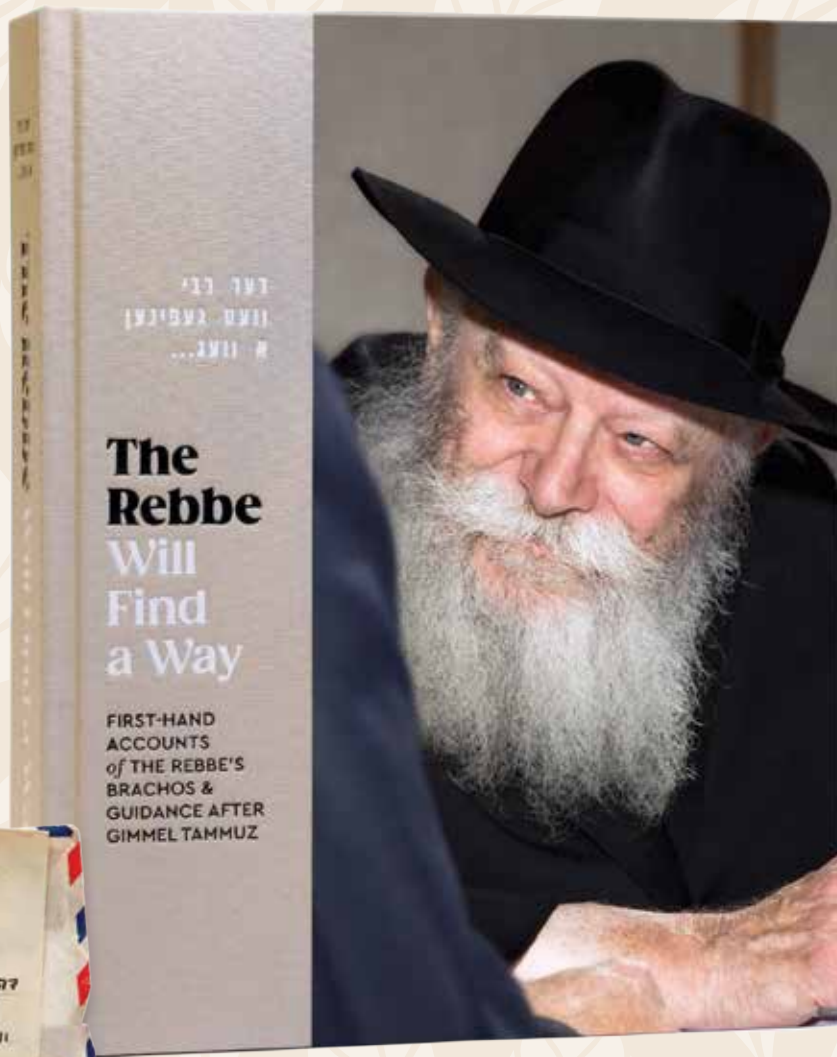
And the Rebbe answers

Today as always, when in doubt we write to the Rebbe. And today as always, the Rebbe finds a way to answer.

THE REBBE WILL FIND A WAY is a collection of such stories.

This impressive book features:

- ◆ Over 75 inspiring accounts of the Rebbe's perpetual Brachos and guidance
- ◆ Topics include: Health, Parnasah, Shlichus, Children, Encouragement and General Guidance
- ◆ Unique imagery, historic photos, and visual documentation from the JEM Living Archive and personal collections.



"...send the question to the resting place of my father-in-law, the Rebbe haka"m, *vet der Rebbe gefinen a veg vi em tzu entferin*, [the Rebbe will find a way to answer you]."

—Igros Kodesh vol. 3 pg. 266

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לזכות
החיילת בצבאות ה'
קיילא תחיל'
לרגל הולדתה ז' טבת ה'תשפ"ב

ולזכות הוריה הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל וזוגתו מרת איטא שיחיו
סופער

נדפס ע"י זקניה
הרה"ת ר' חיים שניאור זלמן וזוגתו מרת מלכה מליא גיטל
ומשפחתם שיחיו
גורקאו



Shabbos For A Year



Although the distinction of the coming year as *Shemitah* is primarily connected with Eretz Yisroel and with the holiness of the Land, where all the laws of *Shemitah* are in force, above all the *Shemitah* (“release”) of our land, fields, vineyards, etc., from any agricultural activity —

It has been explained on many occasions that a Jew, wherever he is, is expected in his everyday life, especially in his spiritual life, to transform his environment—his home as well as his surroundings—into a (spiritual) “Eretz Yisroel.” In other words, since Eretz Yisroel is a “land on which G-d’s eyes rest continuously, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year”—a similar atmosphere of G-dliness must permeate every Jewish home and all around it, to the extent of breathing the very “air of Eretz Yisroel,” wherever a Jew is.

Besides, also in the Diaspora, the law of *shemitas kesofim* (remission of debts) is in force, which emphasizes the spirit of *Shemitah* also in the material aspects of life, particularly in inter-human relationships (*bein adam lachavero*)...

...The general purpose of a human being is, as written, “A man to toil is born” — toil, do useful work, and to achieve good results. Shabbos cannot contradict this purpose, G-d forbid. On the contrary, the “toil” of Shabbos is the true and purposeful kind of toil, which our Sages call the “toil of Torah” (Torah meaning “instruction,” namely, the fulfillment of the Mitzvoth, including the Mitzvo of learning Torah in a manner that leads to action), and the “toil of Tefilah (prayer).” Therefore, come Shabbos, when a Jew is free from weekday activities, it is filled with Mitzvoth

(even the ordinary activities of eating, drinking, sleeping become a Mitzvo, — the Mitzvo of Oneg Shabbos) with additional time for Torah study, for more devout prayer, with appropriate preparation that prayer calls for. And this is, as mentioned above, the true Oneg Shabbos (aside from the pleasurable anticipation of the reward and blessings that come with the observance of Shabbos).

The same is true of the Year of *Shemitah*: both in regard to the Jew’s Shabbos-like conduct during this year, utilizing the “released” time from work for additional Mitzvoth, Torah and prayers; as well as in regard to the influence of the *Shemitah* Year throughout all the “week” — years of the cycle. **1**

(*Michtav Kloli*, 18 Elul 5739)



לעבן מיטן רבין

THE TALMIDIM HASHLUCHIM MEET UP WITH REB ELIYAHU SIMPSON AT THE AIRPORT.

טור 'לעבן מיטן רבין' הוקדש לזכרון ולעילוי נשמת
 ר' שמואל ב"ר יהושע אליהו ז"ל
 ואשתו מרת שרה ע"ה בת ר' יקותיאל ומרת לאה הי"ד
 ת"נ'צ'ב'ה

ע"י בנם
 ר' יקותיאל יהודה
 וזוגתו מרת פעסל לאה ומשפחתם שיחיו
 רוהר

Conquering Australia

ADAR 1 5727*



In 5727*, the first group of Talmidim Hashluchim to Australia was sent to support and establish the yeshiva there. The Rebbe invested a great deal of energy and interest in the group, and they even merited to have a *sicha* said for them in *yechidus*.

Presented here is a letter written by Reb Avrohom Gerlitzky, which details some of the events that transpired during this month in 770.¹

Bs"d

Monday Night - Beis Adar Sheni, 5727*

Greetings and blessings!

Enclosed in this letter is the *sicha* the Rebbe said to the *talmidim hashluchim* last week, as well as the *sicha* said last Shabbos.

On Monday last week, the *talmidim hashluchim* departed to Australia to help establish the yeshiva there. After some last minute changes, the *talmidim hashluchim* who were chosen to go were: 1) Yosef Minkowitz, 2) Aryeh Leib Kaplan, 3) Avrohom Altein, 4) Hirshel Lipskier, 5) Shlomo Majeski, and 6) Hirshel Marozov.

On the night before they left, they all went in for a group *yechidus*. The *yechidus* lasted for approximately 20 minutes (or longer), during which the Rebbe said a *sicha*. (As I mentioned before, I am enclosing the *sicha* here, however, the Rebbe instructed that it shouldn't be made public [see below -Ed.]. So I trust that you will not show it to anyone else.)



After the *yechidus*, a *tzeischem l'shalom* ceremony took place. Rabbi Hodakov addressed the *talmidim*

hashluchim and spoke about their great *zechus*, that they were privileged to be *shluchim*. He also warned them about the responsibility that comes with it—that every small movement they make

is consequential and leaves an impression. After the formalities, a *farbrengen* ensued, led primarily by Reb Mendel Marozov.

Since their flight was scheduled to take off at approximately 5:00 p.m., the Rebbe davened Mincha earlier than usual so that they could leave in time. The Rebbe requested that all of the *bochurim* in the yeshiva should escort the *shluchim* to the airport. Immediately after Mincha, the Rebbe accompanied the *talmidim hashluchim* out of 770 and stood there waiting until the bus was out of sight.



REB AVROHOM GERLITZKY



THE YECHIDUS:²

The Rebbe told the *talmidim hashluchim* that their mission is to transform the Australian community into Chassidim. In order for this to happen there needs to be an “*isarusa d'leila*” (a inspiration from above), the arrival of the *shluchim*—who have all seen and heard the (Friediker) Rebbe—and will accomplish that for them.

The means through which this will be accomplished is through the *talmidim hashluchim* establishing an institution (the yeshiva) that will bear the Rebbe's name. In this capacity, the *shluchim* will be *neiros le'hair*, they will influence their environment and will proceed to conquer the entire Melbourne, and then Australia, and transform it into a “*chassidishe country*.”

The primary focus of the *shluchim* is to influence the *bochurim* in Australia. As a result, the ripple effect will then spread to their parents, siblings, and Yidden of all ages and stages.

Practically, it is incumbent upon the *talmidim hashluchim* to sit and study diligently. They are to learn copious amounts of *nigleh* and Chassidus,

which will also impress the *baalei batim*.

They should also be in contact with the local branch of Agudas Chasidei Chabad and be available to assist them when the need arises.

The Rebbe gave them all copies of the *maamar* that was said the previous Shabbos. (One of the key points of the *maamar* was a *mashal* that compared the effects of the *shluchim* to ספיחים—wild produce. The nature of wild produce is to grow freely and cast seeds that plant more of the same. Similarly, *shluchim* inspire and transform individuals who can influence others in turn.)

At the conclusion of the *yechidus*, the Rebbe gave them three bottles of *mashke* and instructed them to use it on specific occasions: The *farbrengen* upon their arrival; the Feldman–Gutnick wedding and its subsequent *sheva brachos*; and the *farbrengen* of Purim.

The Rebbe told them, “This is ‘toil *mashke*,’ which was brought here from *mesiras nefesh Yidden* in Russia so that you shall be able to fulfill your mission with dedication and joy. Your parents who have given their consent for you to travel shall be blessed.

On Wednesday, Rabbi Chaim Gutnick from Australia called to inform the Rebbe that the *talmidim hashluchim* had arrived safely. He related that upon their arrival they were welcomed by a large reception at the airport in Melbourne. It was an incredible scene. The shluchim said *l'chaim* immediately and were whisked away to Rabbi Gutnick's house where Reb Mendel Futerfas (who was in Australia on a short visit) farbrenged.

On Thursday, we were treated to a guest *shiur* in 770 by Reb Boruch Shimon Schneerson, who was in town for a visit. He is a very *bittuldiker Yid*.

On Shabbos morning, the Rebbe came to 770 and upon seeing the son of the *mazkir*, Sholom Yisroel Hodakov, the Rebbe told him that at the farbrengen later that day he will address the Rashi on the *dibbur hamaschil* ויקטר עליו קטורת. The Rebbe asked him to relay this information to Reb Yosef Waldman. (I've written to you about him before—he is the individual who asked the Rebbe on Erev Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim to tell him in advance which Rashi he plans on speaking about so he can prepare accordingly. The Rebbe responded to his request, “In general I cannot tell you, as I myself don’t even know which Rashi will be discussed until the farbrengen.”)

As you will see (in the enclosed *sicha*), at the end of the second *sicha* this past Shabbos the Rebbe spoke very powerfully about the *talmidim hashluchim* and what they accomplish. The Rebbe's face radiated with emotion and he held back tears



JEM 2003/2, VIA LEVI FREIDIN

REB YOSEF WALDMAN, WHO THE REBBE WOULD NOTIFY ABOUT WHICH RASHI HE WOULD BE SPEAKING, RECEIVES KOS SHEL BRACHA ON MOTZEI ROSH HASHANAH 5742*.

as he said, “Over here, we are not accomplishing anything... When Moshiach will come he will ask us to write down on a paper - *vifel Chassidim hostu gemacht* (how many Chassidim have you made).” While the Rebbe said, “write down on a paper”, he pointed his finger at the table, as if to say “put what you have done on the table.”

The Rebbe also spoke at length about Shabbos Mevarchim Tehillim and the *koch* the Frieddiker Rebbe had in it. That morning, when the Rebbe came in for Tehillim, he had looked around the room and surveyed the crowd.

After the *sicha* about the shluchim, *Ufaratzta* was sung and the Rebbe was in a joyous mood.

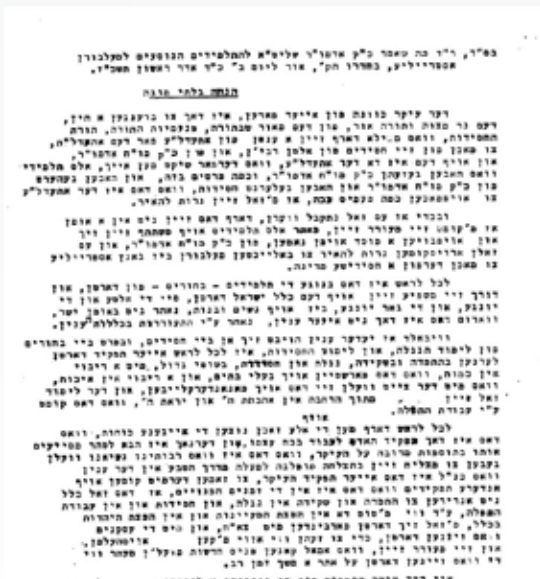
On Motzei Shabbos, Leibel Schapiro and I spoke to Yossel Minkowitz (one of the shluchim who just went to Australia) over the phone. Many other *bochurim* joined in our conversation and we told over the *sicha* the Rebbe had said that Shabbos.

The *maamar* “*Vekibel Hayehudim*” was published, and I heard a rumor that the Rebbe sent 100 copies to Australia in honor of the wedding of Rabbi Pinchus Feldman.

The *sicha* of Parshas Ki Sisa has not yet been published. Reb Yoel is still working on it and we hope it will be finished soon. For now, he has only published the *sicha* of Parshas Tetzaveh.

Recently, the Rebbe sent a letter to Montreal for the dinner that took place. The message of that letter was: From the way the Purim salvation came about, through the gathering of the Yidden, particularly the children learning Torah, we see the importance of the education of children.

I’m sure you have heard that there are plans to make a Yeshivas Kayitz in Newark. They



THE REBBE'S SICHA TO THE TALMIDIM HASHLUCHIM BEFORE THEIR DEPARTURE



THE REBBE SEES OFF THE DEPARTING SHLUCHIM. 26 ADAR 1 5727

already have a building for it, however, it is uncertain exactly how it will work out, as the yeshiva wants to charge all of the *talmidim* several hundred dollars. The *hanhala* wrote to the Rebbe about this, and the Rebbe answered that they should discuss it with the *bochurim*. At this stage, it is unclear what will be.

Yesterday evening, the (soon to be) chief rabbi of England came for a *yechidus*. He was in the Rebbe's room for many hours. He told the Rebbe that he will help out the Lubavitcher *mosdos* in England, and the Rebbe responded that the Lubavitcher Mosdos will be helping **him** out.

After him, a *bochur* came into *yechidus* and asked the Rebbe which yeshiva he should learn in for the coming year. The Rebbe answered, "Why must you think about it now, if by then Moshiach may already have come?!"

During *yechidus* the Rebbe took a break to speak to someone over the phone.

Your dear friend,

Avrohom Yitzchok Boruch **T**

1. Several details have been added or slightly edited for proper context.
2. From a *hanacha* of the *yechidus* which can be found in the *sefer* "Venichbesha Ha'aretz."
3. Reb Eliyahu Simpson was travelling to Australia for the wedding of his grandson, Rabbi Pinchus Feldman. Although he had left earlier, the shluchim met up with him in the airport in Honolulu (as related by Rabbi Yosef Minkowitz).

PARTING WORDS

On the day of their departure, the Rebbe spoke to the shluchim in his room right after Mincha.

"What was said last night regarding 'conquering Australia,' shall—for the time being—not be made public, as the Australian *baalei batim* are not yet ready to accept that."

The Rebbe continued, "Rabbi Simpson will be travelling with you³. He is from the *ziknei haChassidim* and was one of the founders of Tomchei Temimim. You will seek his advice frequently, and allow him to guide you as a *mashpia* and as a *rosh yeshiva*. However, you will primarily be relying on your own *kochos*, but with the *brachos* of the Rabbeim. *Furt gezunterheit un freilicherheit*, and here is a Tanya for each of you."

The Rebbe then handed them each a Tanya.



באחי' לגני

Basi LeGani

Chassidic Discourses

ICHOS
IN
GLISH

5738

Volume 1



לזכות הגה"ח הרב אברהם ליב זזוגתו
שיחיו שוחאט
שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר למדינת ונצואלה
מאז שנת תשמ"ה
להצלחה רבה בכל המצטרך
נדפס ע"י בנם הרה"ת שלום דובער שי'
שוחאט

SICHOS *in* ENGLISH

*The inside story of the dynamic organization charged with bringing
the wellsprings of Chassidus to the English-speaking world*



Over two decades into the Rebbe's *nesius*, the number of Yidden discovering their Yiddishkeit and becoming Balei Teshuva through the efforts of Lubavitch was rapidly growing. In the late 5730s*, non Yiddish-speaking Yidden were fast becoming a permanent fixture of the Rebbe's farbrengens and aside from some isolated opportunities, there were no official tools to help them understand the Rebbe's words.

In the summer of 5737* a group of *bochurim* took initiative and started translating the Rebbe's farbrengens to English on a regular basis under the unassuming name of "Sichos in English." Eventually, this informal operation evolved into a world-class organization charged with bringing the Rebbe's words to the English speaking world.

Taking Initiative

Rabbi Levy Wineberg: When I was a shliach in the yeshiva of Melbourne, Australia between 5735* and 5737*, hearing the Rebbe's weekday farbrengens live via telephone



THE OFFICE OF SICHS IN ENGLISH, 5740S*

hook up was extremely expensive.

In order to justify the exorbitant costs, Yossi Friedman and myself started preparing our own *hanachos* of the *maamarim* for the benefit of *anash* in Melbourne. If there was a farbrengen on Erev Rosh Hashanah, they had the *maamar* by the time Yom Tov started, well before it was possible for them to receive the official *hanachos* from New York.

However, there were many *balebatim* and even *talmidim* in the yeshiva that were unable to understand the Yiddish or Lashon Kodesh of the *hanachos* we prepared, so in addition we started preparing a synopsis of the *sichos* in English to be circulated in the yeshiva and the Lubavitcher shuls. It was completely unofficial.

This was my first foray in translating the Rebbe's *sichos* to English. Upon returning to 770 in the spring of 5737*, at the conclusion of our two-year shlichus, I noticed an amazing phenomenon. There were hundreds of Baalei Teshuva either attending the various yeshivos in the area or newly married and settled in Crown Heights. These newly minted Chassidim and many others would attend the Rebbe's farbrengens every week without understanding one word the Rebbe was saying!

Their *kabbalas ol* and dedication was a real inspiration for me.

Something needed to be done to bring the Rebbe's Torah to the English-speaking crowd.

Rabbi Dovid Leib Grossbaum:

"When I returned from shlichus in the yeshiva in Miami, I suggested to my tech-savvy friend Moshe Kugel that we arrange a system for the English-speaking attendees of the farbrengens to hear a simultaneous translation of the Rebbe's *sichos*."

I wrote a note to the Rebbe about our idea and the Rebbe instructed us to get permission from the *Mazkirus*. After some trial and error we determined that a radio system would be best for this project.

With the help of Moshe's uncle Yaakov Rubin, we built a shortwave radio in the Kolel building behind 770 capable of broadcasting only in the vicinity of 770. We then purchased several dozen transistor radios with earphones and by the summer of 5737* we were offering simultaneous translations under the auspices of an organization called Simultaneous Translation System (STS).

There were three frequencies; one dedicated to English, another to Hebrew and the third channel varied based on the need, whether



A TRANSISTOR RADIO FROM THE 5730S*

it was French, Russian, Portuguese etc. Levy Wineberg, Aharon Chitrik and Yosef Yitzchok Rivkin alternated translating the Rebbe's *sichos* to English and Rabbi Alter Metzger always translated the *maamarim*.

Rabbi Levy Wineberg: Aside from the tremendous service STS provided, we understood that more official publications were needed to make the *sichos* of the Shabbos farbrengens accessible in English. In addition to helping the local English-speaking Chassidim understand the *sichos*, this would also provide an opportunity for out-of-town English-speaking *anash* to be in touch with the Rebbe's farbrengens.

The first *sicha* was produced in the summer of 5737*, printed on stencil under the unassuming name of "Sichos in English."

Dovid Leib Grossbaum dealt with the technical and financial aspects of the operation and I organized a group of 8 to 10 *bochurim* who each translated a different part of the farbrengen. I then compiled and edited the different translations to produce a full translation of the most recent Shabbos farbrengen.

Some of the *bochurim* were very good at it and others were very raw. Most of them were frightened at the thought of mistranslating the Rebbe's *sicha* and I assured them that they would remain anonymous. Initially none of the *bochurim* knew of each other but eventually they saw others submitting parts of *sichos* and it gave them more courage.

In those early days our product was definitely amateurish. We worked from a typewriter set up on a chair and the operation was very primitive. Initially we faced criticism from elder Chassidim about the fact that *bochurim* were taking matters into their own hands and publishing the *sichos* in English which were far from perfect. Our rationale was that anyone

had the right to prepare *hanachos* of the farbrengens in Yiddish or Lashon Kodesh, so why could we not offer a *hanacha* in English?

On the other hand there was much positive feedback from the many hundreds who benefited from the translations and we pressed on despite the naysayers.

A Shockwave in the Moised

Rabbi Levi Avtzon: My father, Rabbi Yonah Avtzon was 19 years old when he came to learn in 770 in 5737*. He was a *kan* (- an advanced student tasked with extra learning and teaching -) in *nigleh* but was soon drafted into working with the *bochurim* in Sichos in English. Sometime in the spring of 5738* he assumed responsibility for the operations of the fledgling *moised*. He established a proper office space in 788 Eastern Parkway and arranged a proper system for subscriptions to enable broader circulation.

Rabbi Eliyahu Touger replaced the original collection of *bochurim* as the official writer but SIE still had the feel of an ad-hoc operation with

no official standing. Then an episode occurred that changed everything.

Vaad Lehafotzas Sichos commissioned Rabbi Emanuel Schochet to translate the first two volumes of Likkutei Sichos into English. In the winter of 5739* the *sichos* for Sefer Bereishis from the first volume of Likkutei Sichos were ready and Vaad Lehafotzas Sichos submitted the translation to the Rebbe requesting permission to publish them as a single volume. To everyone's shock the Rebbe inquired about the connection of Sichos in English to this project as SIE was already involved in translating *sichos*.

Rabbi Eliyahu Touger: Until then we only received general responses from the Rebbe when we submitted translated *sichos*. We were told by the *mazkirim* on numerous occasions that the Rebbe was pleased with the fact that the *sichos* were being translated regularly, but we never had specific recognition from the Rebbe as an official *moised*. This episode with the English Likkutei Sichos sent a shockwave through the *moised*. Although we were all still *bochurim*, we were now recognized by the Rebbe as the *moised* charged



REB YONAH AVTZON, AT WORK IN HIS OFFICE, CIRCA 5740S*.

MITHTOVIM KLOLIM

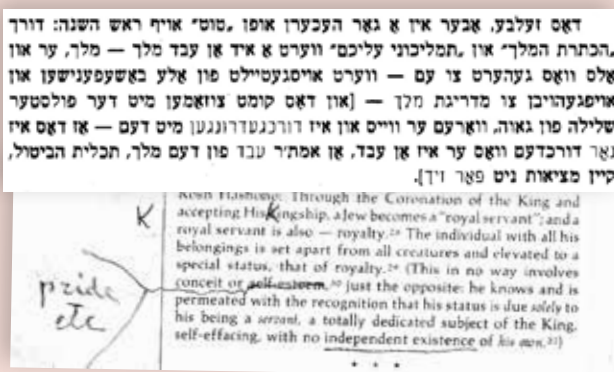
Reb Yosef Loebenstein: In 5740*, when Sichos In English became the first Lubavitch organization in Crown Heights to purchase a computer, the process of preparing the *sichos* changed drastically. Until then every new draft needed to be fully retyped and the risk of introducing new errors to the script was inevitable. With a computer, the text just needed to be corrected and the grueling process was shortened by many hours. It also enabled us to use many different fonts and enhance the layout. Yitzchok Turner was in charge of the typing and layout.

Once they realized how much time this saved them in preparing the *sichos*, Yonah approached the Rebbe's *mazkirus* with an offer to assist Rabbi Nissen Mindel in preparing the *Michtovim Klolim* in English. Instead of Rabbi Mindel retyping new drafts after each time the Rebbe edited the *michtav*, the staff at SIE would type Rabbi Mindel's first draft on their computer and update it with the Rebbe's corrections, thus shortening the arduous process by many hours.

Soon, SIE became the official conduit through which the Rebbe's English *michtavim kloli'im* were prepared for publication.

Rabbi Shmuel Avtzon: Years later, the translations of the *Michtovim Klolim* were prepared by the translators of SIE as well.

In addition to the *Michtovim Klolim*, SIE was at times instructed to prepare certain English letters for the Rebbe and my father was entrusted with a sizable amount of the Rebbe's blank stationary!



IN THE ORIGINAL SICHA, THE REBBE MENTIONED THE CONCEPT OF "GA'AVAH" AND THE WRITER TRANSLATED IT AS "CONCEIT AND SELF ESTEEM." THE REBBE CROSSED OUT "SELF ESTEEM" AND SUBSTITUTED IT WITH 'PRIDE ETC.'

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with translating the Rebbe's words into English!

Soon afterwards, at the conclusion of a farbrengen the Rebbe distributed bottles of *maskhe* to heads of *moisdos*. I was standing next to Yonah and he nudged me saying that we should both go up to receive a bottle for SIE. "No Yonah. As the one financially responsible for the *moised* you are the leader. Go up yourself." After a moment of hesitation, he squared his shoulders and approached the Rebbe on behalf of SIE.

Everything changed after that. That's when Yonah started thinking beyond just translating the most recent farbrengens, but the *sichos* always remained the main focus. There is no doubt that the translations literally made Chassidim. In fact, the biggest supporter of Sichos in English today told me numerous times that the translations of the *sichos* is what turned him into a full fledged Chossid.

Rabbi Shmuel Avtzon: The weekly English *sichos* became very popular and after some time they were compiled and published as a *sefer*. When the first volume of the *sichos* from 5738* was printed, SIE wrote in a note "We hope the Sichos in English are a source of *nachas* to the Rebbe Shlita." The Rebbe added the word "רב" meaning that they are a source of much *nachas*. From 5738* through Adar I, 5752* a total of 52 volumes entitled "Sichos in English" were published.

When Rabbi Touger moved away after Tishrei 5741*, Rabbi Yossi Loebenstein, who was then a *bochur*, assumed responsibility for the translations. When he moved away in Cheshvan 5745*, Rabbi Sholom Ber Hecht became the translator for approximately 4 years until 5749*. In 5749* Rabbi Touger returned to SIE as the main translator of the *sichos* through Shabbos Vayakhel 5752*. He worked remotely from Israel.

SIE received tremendous feedback from a diverse group of Yidden. Here is an example of a note from a woman in Wisconsin:

Dear Fellow Jew,

Please send me all the sichas of the Rebbe that are translated into English. I cannot read Yiddish or Hebrew yet my love for the Rebbe desperately seeks to hear his words. No matter how far back in time they go, I am assured their insight will give me the guidance needed.

Reb Yaakov Cohen: In the early 5740s* I started learning Chassidus with Rabbi Shmuel Kaplan, the Rebbe's shliach to Baltimore, MD. In those days



REB YONAH AVTZON PRESENTS THE REBBE WITH A SERIES OF TAPES WITH LECTURES ON THE SUBJECT OF MOSHIACH. 19 ADAR I 5752*.

there were very few Chassidus texts translated into English, and Rabbi Kaplan would learn *maamarim* with us from the original text. Although I could not follow in Hebrew at the time, I enjoyed the learning very much and we gradually grew in our Yiddishkeit as a family.

In addition to the regular *shiurim*, Rabbi Kaplan shared with me the translations of the Rebbe's farbrengens produced by SIE every week. This was the first time I was able to learn the Rebbe's words in my own language and these texts became a lifeline for me. I can say with certainty that the Rebbe's *sichos* in English are what led me to become a Chossid, and I am forever grateful for that.

Reb Yitzchok Turner: I started working in SIE together with Yonah towards the end of 5739* as a *bochur*. In those days my work was mainly keeping track of subscriptions and stuffing envelopes, but as the *moised* grew we worked hard to keep up to date with new ways to make the publication of the

sefarim more efficient and beautiful. We never went to school for this profession but we learned how to do everything on the job. Today SIE is at the forefront of publishing high quality *sefarim* in English.

Reb Yosef Loebenstein: In the early 5740s* our goal was to have the translations ready as soon as possible. The main *hanachos* were ready on Sunday night or Monday morning after the farbrengen and we raced to have the translation ready for Tuesday or Wednesday so *anash* in cities throughout the US were able to learn the *sichos* the following Shabbos.

It was intense work and Yonah and I were rarely able to join the regular *seider hayeshiva* in 770. We were both older *bochurim* at the time, but still enrolled as *talmidim* of the yeshiva. Members of the *hanhala* once called us in for a meeting and when we explained to them how time consuming translating the Rebbe's *sichos* was, they gave their approval to our absence from *seider*.

Essays by the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Rabbi Eliyahu Touger: In the summer of 5740* we realized there were many important topics in the *sichos* which required more in-depth clarity to the English speaking crowd. Thus the idea of preparing official essays on specific themes from the *sichos* was born.

The first essay was about the Torah approach to family planning. The Rebbe spoke about the topic in the *sicha* to the N'shei Chabad convention in Sivan 5740* and after translating the original *sicha* for publication, I developed an essay on the topic with more background and context. This essay was later updated based on the later *sichos* in the topic from Shevat 5741*.

Reb Yosef Loebenstein: We published essays on many important topics such as the Torah approach to the elderly, public education and Birkas Hachamah and even controversial topics such as Shleimus Ha'aretz and Mihu Yehudi. These essays were published with the title "An Essay by the Lubavitcher Rebbe" despite the fact that the Rebbe rarely edited them.

Writing essays was an entirely different process than regular translation. Whereas in the main *sicha* translations we aimed to deliver the content of the Rebbe's *sichos* as close as possible to their original format and style, the essays allowed us to gather information from other areas of the Rebbe's Torah and to compose a full rendition of the specific topic in idiomatic English.

Such things had rarely been done before even in Hebrew and definitely never in English. Especially in light of the fact that these essays were rarely

RAMBAM ON THE TELEPHONE

Rabbi Shmuel Avtzon: In the early 5740s* my father decided to make Chassidus *shiurim* in the English language available in audio format on the telephone. He commissioned an elaborate phone system in the SIE office and arranged for various Chassidim to record *shiurim* in Chassidus and Chassidishe stories in English.

On Acharon Shel Pesach 5744* the Rebbe launched Mivtza Limmud HaRambam with three respective tracks. There were no audio *shiurim* on Rambam available at the time so my father immediately arranged for a daily shiur on the one *perek* daily track to be recorded and available on the SIE phone system. This program was called Rambam-on-the-Line.

He received much encouragement from the Rebbe for this specific project. When there was a *siyum* of a sefer in the one *perek* track (which happens only several times a year) my father arranged a festive siyum and received a bottle of mashke from the Rebbe during the Shabbos farbrengen preceding the siyum.

Once the Rebbe referred to my father as “דער רבי דער שווערס שליח ללימוד הרמב”ם.

edited by the Rebbe, the concept was really revolutionary. For the first time a new-comer to Yiddishkeit had access to a proper comprehensive rendition of the Rebbe’s approach to many important Jewish and general topics. SIE’s publications eventually reached thousands, both in the US and overseas. Many of these essays were

also reproduced in the publications of other Lubavitch organizations.

More importantly, it was during these years, as farbrengens were broadcast more often on cable television, that the Rebbe started speaking directly to the world. The Rebbe was expressing the Torah view on hot button issues such as family planning, moment of silence, prison reform, women in positions of power and alternative lifestyles and the essays were the tool through which these messages were reaching the world after the farbrengen ended.

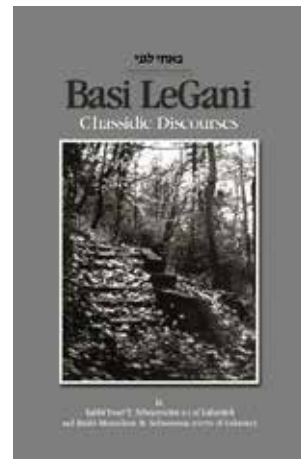
Early on we received a very powerful endorsement to the idea of writing essays.

At the farbrengen of Yud Shevat 5741* the Rebbe spoke a *sicha* about the importance of voluntary prayer in public schools. We developed the content of the *sicha* into an essay entitled “In G-d We Trust” which was edited by the Rebbe and read into the congressional record by Senator Jesse Helms on March 26.

On a similar note, on Yud-Alef Nissan that same year the Rebbe spoke the famous *sicha* about President Reagan and the duties of the office of the president. Senator Strom Thurmond read an excerpt of the English translation of this *sicha* in the congressional record on May 14.

But my proudest moments during my work at SIE were the times we saw the Rebbe walk into shul for Kabbalas Shabbos with a copy of the most recent essay in his siddur.

We also produced essays about the Yomim Tovim, Chassidishe Yomei Depagra, the Arba Parshiyos, fast days and the like. Similar to the “topical essays,” the ideas were distilled from many *sichos* and *maamarim* and presented in a restructured format. These essays were appreciated even by those capable of learning the original *sichos*. Years later they were published as a book called *Days of Destiny*.



A TRANSLATION OF THE BASI LEGANI MAAMARIM BY SIE

Rabbi Shmuel Avtzon: I recently found a *duch* my father wrote to the Rebbe in which he reports these essays “have made a great impact on the general Jewish public as well as secular institutions. (To cite a few: some have been printed in the Congressional record; in England they are distributed to members of parliament; they have been reprinted in various papers and magazines such as the Jewish Press, Jewish Week, Jewish Homemaker, etc.; and are distributed on Mivtzoymim...).”

Expanding the Mandate

Rabbi Shmuel Avtzon: Once the translation of the *sichos* had achieved a certain routine, my father felt it was appropriate to translate certain classical Chassidus texts to benefit the growing English speaking community of *anash*. In 5740* SIE published a translation of the *maamar* Basi Legani 5710*.

Reb Uri Kaploun: In 5742*, when I traveled to the Rebbe from Eretz Yisroel, a *bochur* at 770 named Yonah Avtzon approached me and inquired about translating *Likkutei Dibburim* to English. I had never met Yonah beforehand and, especially since he was still an inexperienced

bochur, I did some research about him before even considering such a large project. Everyone I asked gave me glowing reports about him and I was ready to consider the project.

I gave Yonah a sample draft and he asked me for a quote. I had just completed the second volume of *A Treasury of Chassidic Stories* - a translation of Rav Yosef Zevin's classic *Sippurei Chassidim* - published by Mesorah Publications, and I figured that translating *Likkutei Dibburim* would be similar to that.

Having no head for business, I grossly underestimated the time it would take to translate it. Yonah laughed aloud at my initial quote and insisted that I charge a higher fee.

At first the translations were published as pamphlets and eventually he was ready to publish the first volume. When he submitted the work to the Rebbe we were instructed to add only source references, without extra explanations or commentary.

The project took years to complete: it was entirely different from simply translating Chassidic stories. Later, many years ago, a young man approached me in Yerushalayim and identified himself as the son of a certain prominent Chossid. He shared that in his youth he had veered off the path of Chassidus and *yiras Shamayim*, and what brought him back was the English translation of *Likkutei Dibburim*.

Rabbi Eliyahu Touger: In the early 5740s* the Rebbe Rashab's *maamar Heichaltzu* was translated by Rabbi Chaim Citron and serialized in a Chabad periodical in California. Yonah found out about it and suggested that I prepare the translation for publication and after some time submitted the first 17 *se'ifim* of the *maamar* that focus on *avodah* to the Rebbe asking for permission to print. The later 15 *se'ifim* of the *maamar* are very deep

בשורות טובות

Rabbi Shmuel Avtzon: On 4 Teves 5747* my father notified the Rebbe that Rabbi Yossel Gutnick donated several new computers, funds to refurbish the SIE offices and committed to funding future projects. The Rebbe responded:

כן יבש"ט (יבשר טוב) תכה"י (תמיד כל הימים)
בטח תועלת בקאמפיוטער אצל כאו"א (כל אחד ואחת)
שי' מהנ"ל - כי אין קאמפ' חובת גברא ולא דנשי

So too you shall always report good tidings, I will mention it at the Tziyun.

Surely there must be a benefit in each one of the above-mentioned having a computer - because [having] a computer is not incumbent on every man or woman.

The next day, the joyous news of Didan Notzach broke at approximately 11:00 a.m. Before joining the crowds celebrating in front of 770, my father called Reb Chaim Tzvi Spiegel - a strong supporter of SIE from Los Angeles - and secured funding for the publication of another volume of *Sichos in English*. He immediately notified the Rebbe and received the Rebbe's response before Mincha!

כן יבש"ט (יבשר טוב) לע"ל (לעתיד לבוא)

You shall share good tidings in the future as well.

Rabbi Groner later related that this was one of only two *maanos* the Rebbe gave on Hei Teves 5747*.



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haskalah which would be very difficult to translate. The Rebbe responded that the translation should be completed and not published piecemeal.

Reb Uri Kaploun: In 5748*, when the Rebbe strongly urged *anash* to study the *maamar Heichaltzu*, Yonah asked me to edit its translation by various hands and to prepare it for publication. The Rebbe Rashab had inserted all the short and lengthy source references in parentheses mid-sentence. However, since in English, without abbreviations, they are a few times longer, I placed them at the foot of the page as footnotes, so that they should not interrupt the flow of the sentences for the English-speaking student.

When Yonah submitted the printing templates to the Rebbe, we received this *maaneh* (see image):

מה ההכרח להכנס לשינויים? באם תתעכב
עי"ז ההו"ל [= על ידי זה ההוצאה לאור] למשך

זמן - בפעם הזאת להניח כפי שסודר כבר

Why the need to make changes [to the original format]? If publication will be delayed for a considerable time [to correct this], leave the format as is for this edition.



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Interestingly, although the Rebbe was not pleased with the format, he did not want to delay publication to correct it. In later editions of the *maamar*, the sources were returned to their place in the main body of the text, though in a smaller font.

I would like to note that Yonah brought a pleasant zeal to the work of SIE. He had a way of bringing people together to do the Rebbe's work, so that everyone involved with SIE, from the translators, layout professionals and supporters,

all became like one family.

Rabbi Sholom Ber Wineberg:

In the early 5740s* I started giving a college course at one of the local universities. There was a dearth of English Chassidus texts available at the time so I started translating the Frieddiker Rebbe's *maamarim* from Sefer Hamaamarim Yiddish.

When Yonah caught wind of what I was doing he suggested SIE publish the *maamarim* as pamphlets with the intention of one day publishing all the *maamarim* in a *sefer* or two.

During the difficult months of the *sefarim* trial in 5746* the Rebbe made a big *shturem* to publish *sifrei Chassidus*. Days before Yud Shevat the Rebbe asked Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky whether there were any *sifrei Chassidus* being prepared for publication for Yud Shevat, and he mentioned that I was translating Sefer Hamaamarim Yiddish into English together with SIE. The Rebbe said "Wineberg can be relied on. The *sefer* should be ready for Yud b'Shevat."

When Rabbi Krinsky notified

מגולה לגאולה

Rabbi Levi Avtzon: In 5746*, as the Rebbe started speaking more frequently about Moshiach, the lack of English-language content about Moshiach needed to be addressed. My father commissioned Rabbi Eliyahu Friedman to collect all the content about Moshiach throughout the Rebbe's *sichos* and *maamarim* with the intention of translating it into English for publication by SIE.

He soon realized that the collected content would be a tremendous resource in its original language, but when he asked for permission to publish the *sefer* the Rebbe responded:

ברור:

שספר כהנ"ל יעורר מלחמה באמונה בביאת המשיח בקרוב, או יגדלה יותר - בחוגים שכבר נלחמים. והתוצאות מובנות אנ"ש והקרובים אליהם - אין זקוקים להנ"ל, כי בהנחות מתעניינים יותר מאשר בספר. הס' לא יוסיף כלל בהפצת התומ"צ וכיו"ב, יזיק להצלחת המבצעים וכיו"ב

Clearly:

Such a sefer will awaken a war against the belief in Moshiach's imminent arrival, or increase [the war] - in circles already fighting [this belief]. And the results are self-understood.

Anash and those close to them - do not need this [sefer], because they are more interested in the hanachos than in a sefer.

The sefer will not contribute at all to dissemination of Torah and mitzvos and the like, it will damage the success of the mivtzoim and the like.

On Shabbos Parshas Tazria-Metzora 5751* the Rebbe famously declared that the דרך



to bring Moshiach is through learning as they are explained in Chazal and *Sifrei Chassidus* and especially the *maamarim* and *Likkutei Sichos of nesi doreinu*.

A few days later the Rebbe gave permission for the *sefer* to be published and a month later my father submitted the first section of the *sefer*. He added that it was being translated into English by Reb Uri Kaploun and concluded that he hopes this will cause the Rebbe *nachas*.

The Rebbe edited my father's words "גרום נחת רוח" to read "גרם נחת רוח רב" - *this caused much nachas*.

The *sefer* מגולה לגאולה was published several months later and the Rebbe edited the publisher's forward and determined the date of publication in his holy handwriting, 6 Elul.

The English translation is entitled "From Exile To Redemption."



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THE REBBE RECEIVES NEW VOLUMES OF "SICHOS IN ENGLISH" DURING A YECHIDUS WITH THE MEMBERS OF MACHNE YISROEL, 26 ADAR 5751*.



Yonah of the Rebbe's instruction he jumped into high gear. In point of fact, considerable work still needed to be done to ready the *sefer* for print, but if the Rebbe wanted it done in a mere few days, failure was not an option.

I immediately flew into New York and Yonah and I worked ceaselessly to prepare the *sefer* for publication. With the assistance of Empire Press who also worked through the night so that it would be published on time, the first copies rolled off the press for Yud Shevat and it was immediately submitted to the Rebbe. The finished product consists of the two volumes entitled "Chassidic Discourses."

Afterwards I started working on "The Chassidic Dimension" - abbreviated translations of *Likkutei Sichos* - in conjunction with Vaad Lehafotzas *Sichos* but always with the technical and editorial support of SIE. In general SIE was involved in many Chassidus publications in English, even when they were not

published under the SIE trademark.

How to Translate

Reb Yosef Loebenstein: When I became the official translator, Chassidim were still struggling with our style of translation. Some claimed that one must translate the Rebbe's words as literally as possible. Of course such translations are very difficult to follow or comprehend and translations of *sichos* are meant to be idiomatic; presented in the way a normal English-speaker would speak. It differed from the original style, but as long as we were true to the Rebbe's content, the style of the translation was done with the reader in mind. I prepared the translations, Yitzchok Turner typed and prepared the layout and Yonah always reviewed the content.

There were several occasions when we were *zoiche* that the Rebbe

personally edited our work. When we received the edits I would often study them for hours to understand the depth of each word the Rebbe changed, or any change to the order of a sentence or paragraphs. I was always amazed at the brilliance conveyed in the succinctness of the Rebbe's edits. Although one can argue that for the Rebbe this was no big feat, beyond bringing clarity to the Torah teachings themselves, it taught me the power of language and how much the Rebbe respected it.

Reb Uri Kaploun: In accordance with the Rebbe's specific instructions for the translation of *Likkutei Dibburim* (mentioned above), we obviously omitted all the commentary, but took the liberty of adding important explanatory notes when necessary. For example, a newcomer to Chabad would find it strange that a participant in a *farbrengen* would interrupt the speaker, or the like. For that reason I

added specific background notes to bring the reader into the social and personal context of the stories. It's obviously important to understand one's audience. One can't take it for granted that they pick up all the sensitive nuances that flavor the insiders' vocabulary of the seasoned Yiddish speakers of the Old World.

Yonah told me on numerous occasions that the Rebbe instructed him to personally review everything published by SIE. Aside from his comments and corrections to the work, the Rebbe taught us that a writer must always have someone else review his work before it is published.

Rabbi Eliyahu Touger: I once showed my work to Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, a venerable Torah translator and author. "You're a Lubavitcher, right?" he said. "You are involved with *kiruv* work. Would you speak to young assimilated Jews in this manner? Translate as if you are speaking to them and not to express prowess with the English language." It was a very valuable lesson.

Rabbi Shmuel Avtzon: At the farbrengen of Rosh Chodesh Nissan 5740* the Rebbe delivered the famous *sicha* on the topic of אבות לב אבות

על בנים. In retrospect this *sicha* was the prelude to the establishment of Tzivos Hashem six months later and more immediately inspired the Matzah Ball Contest which inspired tens of thousands of Jewish children in New York City alone to get involved in the mitzvos of Pesach.¹

The Rebbe instructed a rally be organized for the children the next day, and everyone was surprised when the Rebbe joined the children for Mincha and started speaking a *sicha* to them afterwards. The Rebbe sent a message to SIE requesting an English translation of the *sicha* from the rally for the Rebbe to edit.

The Rebbe returned the first draft with many edits to the first two pages, and the following response:

צ"ל תרגום חפשי - בפועל
(ובמילא נוחה לקרוא)
קראתי רק ב' עמודים
ורשמתי חלק מהנכון לשנות
וישתפו עוד מומחה בתרגום לתרגום.

It needs to be a free translation – in actuality (and thus pleasant to read)

*I read only the first two pages
And I indicated some of the
changes that would be appropriate*

*They should involve another
translation-expert to [help
with] the translation*

Additional writers with experience in translation were approached to help draft a second version. With a focus on making the new translation user-friendly, they completely rewrote it as a summary, an essay incorporating the key messages of the *sicha*.

Shortly after the second draft was submitted, my father received an urgent message from the Rebbe's *mazkirus* that the Rebbe wanted to know who was responsible for all the radical changes in the new version.

My father quickly conferred with the writers and editors located all around the world, to determine the correct response and they

ultimately submitted the names of multiple individuals involved in this translation in any way.

Upon receiving the list the Rebbe replied:

וכולם השמיטו המ"מ! והסעיפים!
ועוד כולם כיוונו לאותם השינויים
הנס דזקני תלמי

*And all of them omitted the
footnotes! And the sections!*

*And moreover, they all
thought of the same changes
[This is] the miracle of
the Sages of Ptolemy²*

The Rebbe also returned the document with many edits to the choices of wording and the grammar, as well as the following comment at the end:

הענין דג' הקווין וכו' !!

*The concept of the 3
avenues [of avodah] etc!!*

On the front page the Rebbe wrote:

ב"פ "הגהה" שלי - מספיקות והותר
באם זוהי "הגהה" ולא אגיהה יותר

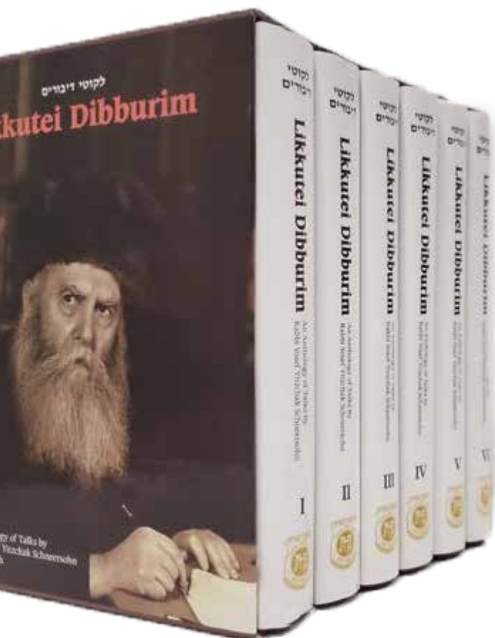
*My "editing" twice - is more than
enough (if this is even "editing")
and I will not edit it anymore.*

This was a reference to the last section of the *sicha*, about how the rally included the three foundational aspects of Torah (children recited the 12 Pesukim), Tefillah (Mincha) and Tzedakah (the Rebbe distributed coins to the children.)

Thus the Rebbe educated the translators to strike a balance between remaining true to the details of the content the Rebbe spoke in the *sicha*, while still providing a text that was readable and relatable to the reader.

Round-the-Clock Operation

Rabbi Eliyahu Touger: When I returned to SIE in 5749*, the fact that I was living in Eretz Yisroel at the time presented a tremendous advantage.





A COLLECTION OF MANY OF THE TITLES PUBLISHED BY SIE OVER THE YEARS

It gave us the opportunity to present the content of the farbrengens in English in record timing.

Every Motzei Shabbos a short synopsis of the farbrengen - called a *ra"d* (*roshei devarim*) - was prepared within a few short hours after Shabbos and immediately faxed to shluchim and *anash* around the world. This operation was known as Fax-A-Sicha.

I received the *ra"d* in Eretz Yisroel early Sunday morning due to the time difference and was able to work on the translation immediately - after a full night's sleep. Several hours later the translation was complete and Chassidim all over America received a fax early Sunday morning with an English translation of the *ra"d* entitled "Digest" - barely 12 hours after the farbrengen had ended! By then the official *hanachos* were ready and I translated the full *sichos* which were available to Chassidim in the US by Monday evening at the latest.

If the Rebbe said a surprise *sicha* during the week, Yonah called me immediately afterwards with the basic rundown of the *sicha* and faxed

whatever materials were available late at night in New York. Thus we were able to prepare translations very quickly but it was all consuming work and there was no time to write essays.

In 5750* when the Rebbe made a big *shturem* about Shnas Nissim I felt terrible. The Rebbe had foretold that the year would be filled with miracles and when Soviet Russia disintegrated without a shot being fired the world was unaware of what the Rebbe had said. Although our translations made the *sichos* available to English speakers, our main readership were *anash* and *mekuravim* who wanted a genuine rendition of what the Rebbe said by the farbrengens. This was hardly the style that caught the attention of the world.

The next year when the Rebbe made a *shturem* about *Niflaos Ar'enu*, I decided to write essays on the topics of the *sichos* which shluchim had published in newspapers around the world. When the tremendous miracles of the Gulf War occurred, the Rebbe's message about the miracles of the war received global exposure.

Rabbi Shmuel Avtzon: There were some notable occasions that the Rebbe edited the SIE translations.

Following each *yechidus* for the members of the Machane Yisroel Development Fund each member received a letter from the Rebbe with a copy of the Rebbe's *sicha* in English enclosed.

On Shabbos Parshas Vayikra 5750* the Rebbe spoke a powerful *sicha* about the tremendous value of every Yid based on the *possuk* of the *Haftara* "עם זו יצרת לי" in response to statement made in Eretz Yisroel against certain Yidden.

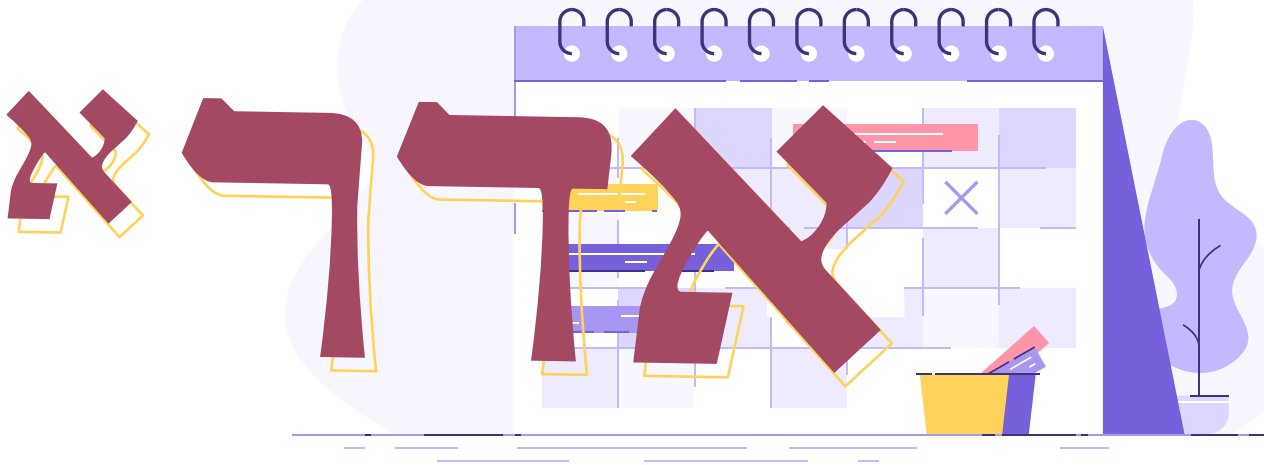
After Shabbos the Rebbe specifically requested an essay be composed based on the *sicha* which was edited and published in many newspapers throughout the world.

On the Forefront of Hafatzah

Today SIE continues to publish high quality translations of the teachings of Raboseinu Nesieinu. Aside from the hundreds of *maamarim*, *sichos* and *igros* that have been published in various formats - **all available online at www.sie.org free of charge** - SIE embarked on several ambitious projects over the years. These include: a new translation of Hayom Yom with commentary and explanations expounding on each day's entry; an unprecedented translation of the *Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch*; *Likkutei Sichos* is currently being translated and published in bilingual format, with thousands of copies in circulation; over a dozen volumes of *Lessons in Maamorim* and the Frierdiker Rebbe's *sichos*; a groundbreaking series entitled *The Basics of Chassidus*, and many more projects. Fulfilling their mandate and obligation to bring the wellsprings of Chassidus to the English speaking world. **T**

1. See *A Chassidisher Derher*, Sivan 5774 - *Children at the Forefront*.

2. This is a reference to the story in Gemara Megillah 9a: King Ptolemy, the Greek-Egyptian ruler of Eretz Yisroel at the time, placed 72 *chachamim* into separate rooms and ordered each of them to translate the Torah into Greek. Recognizing the danger of misinterpretation that could arise from a literal translation of certain phrases, they each made several changes. When they concluded, all 72 translations turned out to be identical. Through *ruach hakodesh*, every one of them was led to make the same 13 changes.



THE MONTH OF ADAR

- As the month of Adar begins, we must take in the joy of Adar immediately by accepting *hachlatos* upon ourselves to increase in things that bring joy, the motto of Adar.
- The *hachlatos* should be related to Torah, whose words are “*mesamchei leiv*” (bring joy to the heart), both in learning Torah and fulfilling its mitzvos, which will ultimately bring a person to have material joy as well.
- This joy should be shared with others, starting with the family, a husband with his wife, and parents with their children—to find ways to increase their happiness.¹
- On 6 Adar I, in connection with the *yahrtzeit* of his-brother-in law Rashag, who was appointed by the Frieddiker Rebbe to administer Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim, the Rebbe said that this day should be marked by the yeshiva *bochurim* with farbrengens

at which *hachlatos* should be taken regarding the increase of learning *nigleh* and Chassidus, and spreading the teachings of Chassidus.

- The Rebbe also requested to print a *maamar* speaking of *geulah* and *techiyas hameisim* in Rashag’s memory.²

7 ADAR - THE BIRTH AND PASSING OF MOSHE RABBEINU

- Moshe Rabbeinu’s life’s work was “Torah.” On this day, we must add in learning Torah, including the commitment to teach Torah every Shabbos to a group of Yidden as Moshe Rabbeinu did, and also an increase in observance of mitzvos.
- Although in Chabad there are no *minhagim* specifically connected with this day, it does not negate the need to spend this special day in the right way, in addition to our regular observance of Torah and mitzvos.

לע"נ הו"ח א"א נר' חיים בן הו"ח
 ר' יעקב ע"ה
 ומרת דינה
 בת ר' משה ע"ה
 גרייזמאן

נדפס ע"י ולזכות
 הרה"ת ר' חיים וזוגתו מרת ביילא מינדל
 בניהם ובנותיהם
 מנחם מענדל, חי' מושקא, לוי יצחק, חנה
 דינה, משה אליהו, שיחיו
 גרייזמאן

- Once, while mentioning the *minhag* of Chassidim to make a farbrengen in honor of a *yahrzeit*, the Rebbe said that “even the seventh of Adar was changed from a day of fasting to a day of farbrengens...”³

PURIM-KATAN

- Since the day of Purim is when Yidden displayed great *mesiras nefesh*, the Rebbe strongly encouraged the increase of learning Chassidus, which brings a person to serve Hashem with a full heart, the equivalent of *mesiras nefesh*.
- On Purim Katan, the day when the Frierdiker Rebbe said the *maamar* “*Vekibbel Hayehudim*” with great *mesiras nefesh*, the Rebbe instructed Chassidim to learn that *maamar*.
- Together with the Torah being learned, giving *tzedakah* should also be increased, which is especially connected to Purim, and they should also increase in joy.⁴

SHABBOS SHEKALIM

- Shabbos Shekalim is when we read about the yearly donation the Yidden gave in the times of the *Beis Hamikdash*. The lesson from this is for every one of us to increase in *tzedakah*. It should be done not only as a mere action, but the mindset should be a full devotion as if it is “*kofer nafsho*”—giving oneself over completely.⁵ T

- Hisvaaduyos 5752 vol. 2 p. 296-297.
- Hisvaaduyos 5750 vol. 2 p. 338.
- Hisvaaduyos 5748 vol. 2 p. 392
- Hisvaaduyos 5749 vol. 2 p. 349-350
- Hisvaaduyos 5752 vol. 2 p. 366



HISVADUS CHASSIDIM

כ"ז אדר-ראשון, תשנ"ב



לזכות
החיילת בצבאות ה'
שיינא צילה תחי'
לרגל הולדתה עשרה בטבת ה'תשפ"ב

נדפס ע"י הוריה
הרה"ת ר' שלום דובער זווגתו מרת ריקל
ומשפחתם שיחיו
פעוונזנער
שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר - קיימן איילענדס



Thirty years ago, the Jewish world, and especially Lubavitcher Chassidim, received a devastating blow. On Chof-Zayin Adar 5752*, the Rebbe had a stroke while standing at the Ohel and no longer spoke *sichos* and *maamarim* to a world desperately thirsting for the *maayanos* of Chassidus and the clear authoritative direction the Rebbe always gave.

In the years since, Chassidim have stayed true to the Rebbe's mission and kept our *emunah* in the Rebbe's words repeated so many times in those final months before the stroke, that the coming of Moshiach is literally at our doorstep. It remains up to us to only finish the last few tasks and make the *geulah* physical reality.

To gain some insight and inspiration to continue our work, and to hear a little more about the feelings of Chassidim at the time before and after Chof-Zayin Adar, we sat down with two Chassidim, both of whom served as *chozrim* of the Rebbe during that period, to share some thoughts with our readers.

A farbrengen with **Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Jacobson** of Monsey, NY, and **Rabbi Avrohom Mann** of Toronto, Canada.

REFLECTING ON THE REBBE'S SICHOS OF WINTER 5752



RABBI YOSEF YITZCHAK JACOBSON
Monsey, NY,

Rabbi Jacobson, please share some background information about how you got involved in the *chazara* process in the later years, and what was your role in it during the months leading up to Chof-Zayin Adar:

I was born in Sivan 5732*, so in the months before Chof-Zayin Adar I was 19 years old.

The way I got started with *chazara* was as follows: My brother Reb Simon was doing *chazara* since 5737*, and he brought me in to help some years later. The truth is that I did my first *chazara* already as a very young child, even before my bar mitzvah. I remember one year, Reb Mendel Futerfas asked me to review the Rebbe's *sichos* on the nights of Sukkos for him, and that's how I got started.

As I got older, I started helping my brother with his job doing *chazara*. Publicly, I started doing *chazara* in 5750*. It was Shabbos Parshas Bo, Yud Shevat, 5750*, when the Rebbe celebrated 40 years since Yud Shevat. At the Shabbos farbrengen, the Rebbe requested that in honor of this milestone of "*arbaim shana*," everyone should establish a new "*mosad*." Rabbi Menachem Gerlitzky approached me on Motzei Shabbos after the Rebbe finished Maariv, and asked, "Nu, what's your new *mosad*?" I replied that I'm a young *bochur* and I don't think the Rebbe meant that even I was supposed to establish a *mosad*. I am learning in yeshiva and that is my "job."

He insisted that if a *bochur* had the opportunity to open a *mosad* it was his duty. He suggested that I should

start doing *chazara* every Motzei Shabbos on the hook up, this way people all around the world could tune in and hear the Rebbe's farbrengen fresh—immediately after Shabbos, by calling in the WLCC hook-up lines. With that, he schlepped me over to WLCC and informed Reb Chaim Boruch Halberstam and Reb Yonasan Hackner that I would be doing *chazara* every week on the telephone from now on. Indeed, many communities of *anash* around the world would call in and listen to my *chazara*, including Kfar Chabad, Yerushalayim, Miami, Montreal and other places.

In the last few months before Chof-Zayin Adar, the Rebbe delivered many sichos, even more than usual for those years. What comes to mind as some of the themes the Rebbe

touched upon in those sichos?

In the last few months, a major theme emphasized by the Rebbe time and again, that I remember, is the concept of “*achdus*.” Firstly, the tremendous *achdus* that every Yid has with Hashem and with other Yidden. During those months the Rebbe also spoke about the infinite greatness and limitless holiness of each and every Jew in ways that he never did before, to my knowledge. The Rebbe also spoke about the unique qualities of the *Yiddishe guf* in extraordinary ways — explaining how the body of a Jew embodies the deepest core essence of Hashem. The Rebbe was revealing how every *Yiddishe neshama* and every *Yiddishe guf* are completely beyond darkness and toxicity.

The Rebbe also spoke a lot about the *achdus* of the “*yesh hanivra*”— the material created reality, with the *Yesh Ha’amiti*, the One and true reality (the Creator Himself). The Rebbe elaborated on the intrinsic connection between the physical body and *Atzmus* (Hashem’s very essence), and in general, the unification of the world and Hashem in the most amazing of ways.

Basically, the Rebbe was introducing the concept of *geulah*—a world of absolute oneness. A world where there is no external or internal conflict; a reality in which you realize that the *yetzer hara* is just waiting for transformation. No person will feel horrible about himself or distant. None of that.

The Rebbe, it seems to me, was teaching us how to live right now with a *geulah* consciousness, in a *geulah* world. A *geulah* world is a reality where a person’s consciousness is one with Hashem, and in which I see myself as an ambassador of infinity. I am never part of the problem, I am part of the solution. I am not a victim of *galus*, I am the



RABBI YOSEF YITZCHOK JACOBSON ALONGSIDE HIS FATHER REB GERSHON JACOBSON DURING KOS SHEL BRACHA ON MOTZEI ACHARON SHEL PESACH 5748*.

solution to bring *geulah* into *galus*.

The Rebbe also spoke often how history has reached a new era — where the light of the *geulah* is already present, and we need to open our eyes to a new reality and a new *avodah*.

Not many understood what the Rebbe meant, but it was clear that the Rebbe was speaking in a way that was different than in earlier years.

What was unique about the Shabbos farbrengens at that time? Did they differ from previous years?

The Shabbos farbrengens in the last few years changed dramatically.

In the previous years, the Rebbe’s farbrengens had a much clearer structure: Each *sicha* would start with one particular point, a *nekuda*, and then it would develop throughout the *sicha*.

In the last few years, starting with 5749*, it was harder to sense the structure; each *sicha* seemed to be comprised of many various *nekudos*. The Rebbe might start a *sicha* talking about the *parsha* of the week, and then immediately launch into heartfelt *brachos* for the imminent coming of Moshiach, and then go on to something else entirely. In one *sicha*, the Rebbe could cover 100 brief points.

Additionally, the Rebbe spoke much more concisely, to the point that it was often difficult to grasp the ideas he was saying because the Rebbe would not elaborate, and he would just say, “as discussed in previous years,” or “in the previous farbrengen.”

In previous years, there was a very clear structure to each *sicha*, and there was also a fairly predictable structure to the whole farbrengen. The first two *sichos* were usually on the theme of the week, like the *parsha*, a holiday, an upcoming special day, etc. Then there was a *maamar* (usually a *maamar ke’ein sicha*). Then there was the Rashi *sicha* — questions on a Rashi from that week’s *parsha*, questions on the Rebbe’s father’s notes to the Zohar, Pirkei Avos (in the summer), and in the later years, on the daily Rambam as well. After laying out all these questions the Rebbe would usually give out *mashke* to people making events. Then the Rebbe would answer all the questions from the previous *sichos*. Occasionally, there may have been an additional *sicha* with a timely *hora’a*; like to prepare for the summer by ensuring that all kids are enrolled in proper camps, or to prepare for an upcoming Yom Tov by arranging all the *mitvtzoim* needs, and so on.

But in the later years, that structure

no longer existed. The Rebbe also stopped saying *maamarim* (besides a few exceptions), and stopped giving Rashi *sichos* and Zohar *sichos*.

Can you describe the sense of anticipation for the *geulah* that built up over the years?

Indeed, there was tremendous anticipation. The expressions the Rebbe used about the imminence of the *geulah* were very intense, very powerful. These were words we never heard before. There is no question that there was tremendous anticipation for the coming of Moshiach, especially amongst the *bochurim* who were immersed in the *sichos*.

Can you talk a little bit about the Rebbe's health at the time, leading up to Chof-Zayin Adar?

While all this was going on, together with the great excitement about the coming of Moshiach, we also observed things the Rebbe did that year that were different.

We all know the Rebbe's famous *sicha* on Gimmel Shevat, about the fact that the Frieddiker Rebbe suffered in his last years from deteriorating health, most significantly debilitated speech.

I remember standing next to my friend Shaul Vishedsky after that *sicha*, and noting that "this is scary." Nobody actually thought that the Rebbe was intimating, *chas v'shalom*, something that was about to happen. But it was nevertheless very strange that the Rebbe would talk about this subject on a random day.

The truth is, looking back now, there were other hints in the Rebbe's *sichos* of that time. For example, on Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe spoke about the special connection between the Tzemach Tzedek and his son, the Rebbe Maharash, both of whom passed away on the 13th of the month—the Tzemach Tzedek on

Yud-Gimmel Nissan and the Rebbe Maharash on Yud-Gimmel Tishrei. The Rebbe explained that the Tzemach Tzedek to some degree appointed the Rebbe Maharash to be his successor, because he knew that it is possible that the coming of Moshiach wouldn't materialize and there would be "אל עפר תשוב"—the *histalkus*.¹

At the same farbrengen, the Rebbe quoted the words in Shulchan Aruch that a person should blow the shofar "עד שיאדימו פני התוקע"—until his face turns red. Why does this occur? Through the intense effort in blowing the shofar, blood rises to the face of the blower. But then the Rebbe added: When the blood flows through, it should, *chas v'shalom*, not diminish the health of the blower at all; on the contrary, his health will only get better in the process!²

The Rebbe was basically describing the process of a stroke.

Then on the first day of Sukkos, the Rebbe stood for more than six hours, watching every Chossid come by and shake his lulav and esrog. I will never forget the seriousness on the Rebbe's face at that occasion. In retrospect it seemed to me that the Rebbe was saying goodbye to each and every one and filling us up with energy and *kochos* to not only endure but to grow

and prosper and change the world!

Shemini Atzeres night, the Rebbe suddenly said a *sicha* after Maariv. Going through each letter of the Aleph-Beis, the Rebbe gave *brachos* for the upcoming year, and when he reached the letter Pei, he said—a year of "פדיה"—redemption, especially in the realm of reciting Torah with the "פה"—the mouth.³ This was a highly unusual term for the Rebbe to use.

Again, no one predicted that something undesirable was going to happen. But later in the year, after Chof-Zayin Adar, we started seeing things in this perspective.

Another incredible *sicha* that comes to mind was said the night before, on Hoshana Rabba 5752*. The Rebbe said that the title "אדמו"ר" which is usually only reserved for a Rebbe has now become accessible for each and every Jew! The Rebbe's words were shocking. In fact, the Rebbe himself said that this is a shocking concept. Yet we say in davening on Yom Tov, "ויתקיים בנו מקרא שכתוב"—that the words of the *possuk* which is stated about Moshiach should be fulfilled in each and every one of us.⁴

All these years later we go back and realize that perhaps the Rebbe was empowering each and every one of us to become a conduit for



the Rebbe — that from now on the light and love of the Rebbe should shine through each and every Chossid in his and her daily life.

Of course, I recall Shabbos Parshas Noach when the Rebbe suddenly declared seven times “*Hashem Hu Ha'Elokim*,” like at the end of Yom Kippur. This too was very unusual. I do not think it ever happened before, as far as I know.

I also recall that in 5752* the Rebbe mentioned a story about Reb Hillel Paritcher twice. It happened once that there was no visible moon, and he asked the Tzemach Tzedek for a blessing that the moon should appear for him to do Kiddush Levanah. He later said that now in his older age had the moon not come out, he would have not survived!

It was strange that the Rebbe shared this story, and twice, in Tishrei and Cheshvan 5752*. But later I learnt that in Adar I of that year the moon did not come out in time for the Rebbe to do Kiddush Levanah.

It is above my capacity to understand what all this means. I am just sharing some things we spoke about at the time.

Was there a unique theme in the sichos through the month of Adar I?

Yes, there was a tremendous focus on the fact that the month of Adar is referred to as a time when “*bari mazlei*”—the fortune of the Yidden is stronger. The Rebbe repeated this theme, elaborating on the importance that a Yid should always be healthy, both in *guf* and in *neschama*. The Rebbe also spoke about living with *harchavah*, with vastness and a broad mind; that Yidden should be rich, both spiritually and even materially. It fit right into the theme of the *geulah* consciousness. Living in a mindset and in a world where heaven and earth converge, where

spiritual abundance and physical abundance are all one. The Rebbe also spoke about *bittul b'shishim*; that with 60 days of Adar this year, all the undesirable things are nullified.

The Rebbe generally spoke amazingly about the virtue of the Jewish people, and how each Jew is higher than Torah. The Rebbe, in the second to last fabrenge, presented a sweeping *sicha* about the entire journey of Jewish history, and how even the sins of the Jewish people were somehow part of the plan.

When these various points were mentioned in the sichos again and again, what feelings did they arouse? Fear? Excitement? Joy?

Yes, there was excitement, there was joy.

But truthfully, as *bochurim*, and even myself who was involved in listening to the Rebbe and doing *chazara* afterwards, we didn't really understand the full depth of what the Rebbe was saying.

But it was very uplifting. The Rebbe's words brought tremendous excitement.

On the other hand, we saw that the Rebbe was physically weaker. The way the Rebbe walked, the way he spoke, we could see that the Rebbe's health was declining.

I remember this one incident very well: One evening, my father wasn't well and I went to Rabbi Leibel Groner's office to ask him to notify the Rebbe and ask for a *bracha*. I happened to be standing there when the Rebbe came back from the Ohel and walked into his room through Rabbi Groner's office. It was, for me, a scary sight to see. The Rebbe was completely hunched over, walking very, very slowly, the likes of which I had never seen before. The Rebbe was holding the large brown bag, and he seemed so tired.



THE REBBE EXITS THE MIKVEH BUILDING ON UNION STREET DURING THE MONTH OF ADAR I 5752*.

And then, ten minutes later, the Rebbe came downstairs for Mincha and he was like a different person. The Rebbe was walking straight, encouraging the singing with his hand and generating such *simcha*. I was amazed: Privately the Rebbe seemed so tired, but when the Rebbe appeared in front of the Chassidim, even after fasting and standing all day on his feet, he walked like a king.

The last maamar that the Rebbe gave out was Ve'ata Tzeaveh. Was there discussion about the uniqueness of this maamar and its application at the time when the Rebbe gave it out?

It was a new *maamar*, and like every new Torah that came out from the Rebbe, the guys learned it and discussed it. I don't recall that we sensed anything unique about it immediately at the time. Obviously, we all learned the *maamar*; it's a

very special *maamar*, discussing the depth of *emunah* and the role of a *nossi* in each generation.

I heard from Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook of Lahak Hanachos that after every *maamar* was published, he would write a *duch* to the Rebbe about where it was sent, how it was disseminated, etc. The answer to the *duch* about Ve'ata Tetzaveh was different than usual.

I also heard from Rabbi Chaim Baruch Halberstam of WLCC that when he wrote to the Rebbe about the hook-ups of the weekday *sichos* during the last month, he also received an answer that was different than usual.

Can you tell us about the farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel, two days before Chof-Zayin Adar? What was unique about this farbrengen? Did you realize at the time that it was something special?

I will never forget Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel 5752*.

I kid you not, immediately after Shabbos I told a friend of mine that this farbrengen was different. In many ways, this last farbrengen reflected those of the earlier years.

Firstly, the Rebbe spoke much louder than usual. You could hear the Rebbe's voice even from far away.

Secondly, the first *sicha* was much longer than usual; it was close to an hour long. Also, the Rebbe explained the concepts with more *harchavah*, and there was a clear "*binyan*," a structure to the *sicha*.

This was a different type of farbrengen.

The first *sicha* was a *moiredike sicha*. I still remember as the Rebbe walked into the farbrengen, his opening words were: "אין יעדן ענין"—In every area of Torah, there are many allusions (and lessons)." In many



THE REBBE SEEN WITH TWO KUNTREISIM OF THE MAAMAR "VE'ATA TETZAVEH" IN HIS SIDDUR, PLACED THERE AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE KUNTRES ON 14 ADAR I 5752*

years, the *parshios* of Vayakhel and Pekudei are read together in one week. The fact that the *parshios* are separated this year contains allusions and lessons for us: Namely, sometimes the community and the individual need to come together at the same time, but sometimes you need to stress the importance of the collective before you get to each individual.

The Rebbe explained this point at great length, and enumerated how it spells itself out in a person's own *avodah*, within himself, how it spells itself out in the *avodah* between one Yid and another, and how it applies to our *avodah* with the entire world around us.

There were many side points and anecdotes with beautiful *biurim* throughout the *sicha* as well. For example, I remember the Rebbe asking: Why do we start the day with the words "מוֹדָה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ"? It would seem more sensible to say "אֲנִי מוֹדָה לְפָנֶיךָ—I give thanks to you."

The Rebbe explained with an amazing *chiddush*: A Yid is always one with Hashem. Like the Rambam says in Hilchos Geirushin, deep down

every Yid always wants to do only what Hashem wants. It is only that sometimes the *yetzer hara* gets in the way and persuades the Yid to do what is not in his own best interest. But that's only during the day. At night, when a person is asleep, the *yetzer hara* is also asleep, so a Yid goes back to his natural state of only wishing to do what Hashem wants. So immediately when he wakes up, the first thing he says is "מוֹדָה," he lays himself down before Hashem. The concept of "אֲנִי"—the "I" does not yet exist! A Yid is still in a state of oneness with Hashem!

Then the Rebbe concluded, and I'll never forget this, the Rebbe gave a scream: "ועוד והוא העיקר, איצטער איז דר'—צײַט אויפֿכאַפֿן זיך פֿון שלאָפֿן"—Now is the time to wake up from our sleep..."

I remember that when I wrote up the *hanacha* of this farbrengen, even though I was writing in Lashon Hakodesh, I had to include many of the Yiddish expressions from the original. It was really a very, very special farbrengen.

The Rebbe also spoke about how none of the Chabad Rabbeim ever visited Eretz Yisroel. (Even the

Frierdiker Rebbe, the Rebbe said, went there simply because he could not go to the burial places of his predecessors in Russia.) This too was quite unusual.

Can you tell us a little bit about the day of Chof-Zayin Adar itself; where were you and what was going through your mind?

The truth is, I barely ever went by the Rebbe for dollars, but on that Sunday, 26 Adar I, I was scheduled to leave for Eretz Yisroel for a cousin's wedding, so I decided to go by and get the Rebbe's *bracha* before my trip.

I remember watching the Rebbe distribute the dollars and giving personal attention to each and every person; it was something I rarely, if ever, saw from up close. Right before my turn, I told Rabbi Leibel Groner that I was traveling to Eretz Yisroel that night. When my turn came, the Rebbe gave me a dollar, and wished me "*bracha* and *hatzlacha*." Reb Leibel told the Rebbe that I was leaving that night to Israel, and the Rebbe handed me a second dollar and said: "*Upgeben af tzedakah in Eretz Hakodesh*." Give it to *tzedakah* in the Holy Land.

By the time I passed by the Rebbe it was already close to the end of the distribution, 6:00 or 6:30 in the evening. Standing in line right before

me was a small girl who said, "Rebbe M'Lubavitch, I love you!" and the Rebbe broke out in an unbelievable smile, gave the girl an extra dollar, and said: "This is for your love..." (Today you can see this exchange on video.)

I flew out that Sunday after midnight, arrived in Eretz Yisroel Monday evening and went to Toras Emes in Yerushalayim. Having not slept all Motzei Shabbos due to my writing of the *farbrengen*, and not sleeping on the plane, I was exhausted and lay down to take a nap. Around midnight, someone woke me up and shared the news that the Rebbe fell at the Ohel. We immediately went to the Kosel to daven.

Did you suddenly come to the realization that the Rebbe was hinting at this occurrence all along?

No. Everyone was in total shock and startled. Our system was disrupted. The *bochurim* in 770 started to make rotations of groups to recite Tehillim throughout all 24 hours of the day in the *zal* upstairs. It was a very difficult time for us, very, very hard. No one saw the Rebbe again until Shavuot, but most of us only saw the Rebbe on Rosh Hashanah 5753*, more than half a year later. It was very hard.

The lives of all the *bochurim* were

put on hold. There were conflicting rumors coming out of the Rebbe's room, and truthfully, there was nobody to guide us or help any of us.

On Sukkos 5753*, the Rebbe was in the big shul again. I was standing right there, literally a few inches away from the Rebbe. The Rebbe's face was shining incredibly—it was something of another world! We sang some *niggunim* and then after about 20 minutes, they took the Rebbe back upstairs. We all said that's how the revelation of Moshiach is going to look like.

Interestingly, I was also there by the Pesach Seder in 5753*, when the Rebbe came out for *Shefoch Chamascha*. There were only a few people present at the time, and the Rebbe's face was very radiant; it was really something special. We began singing, and the Rebbe encouraged it with his left hand.

What is the message that you would like to relay that we can apply 30 years after the occurrence of Chof-Zayin Adar?

I think the Rebbe articulated the mandate of our generation, that every person should realize how powerful and connected they are, and how we are all completely one with Hashem. That all the darkness a person may feel is something external to their essence which is always wholesome and Divine.

Every person should realize that they are a *shliach* of Hashem, an ambassador of the infinite light of *geulah*. And even if you are dealing with pain and challenges, it is all really an "alarm clock" to wake you up and realize who we are: A manifestation of *Atzmus*, of Hashem's essence in the world. That you and I, and each of us, embody the deepest and most real connection possible.



JEM, VIA CHAIM BARUCH HALBENSTAM, 101014

THE TWO CONFLICTING APPROACHES



RABBI AVROHOM MANN
Toronto, Canada.

A New Era

I came to be by the Rebbe on Erev Shabbos Hagadol 5749*. In 5752*, I was 21 years old and enjoying the best years of my life, basking in the Rebbe's holy presence and listening to the Rebbe's farbrengens each and every Shabbos.

The truth is that in a certain sense, the time that I came to the Rebbe was the start of a new era in the Rebbe's *sichos* in general. That first Shabbos I was in New York, the Rebbe gave a lengthy explanation on the meaning of Yud-Aleph Nissan, based on the significance of the number 11 according to Chassidus, and how it applies to revealing the *yechidah*—the deepest part of the *neschama*. This subject became a continued theme throughout the Rebbe's *sichos* in the following years, as the Rebbe applied it to Yud-Aleph Shevat as well (in 5750*), and also connected it with the Rebbetzin's *histalkus* on Chof-Beis Shevat (in 5752*)—since Chof-Beis is 11 times 2. That year, the Rebbe edited the

*maamar B'yom Ashtei Assar Yom 5731**, which speaks about the wise man who chooses only the king himself, not being distracted by the various shiny objects (or personalities) in the king's court.

It seemed that from this point on, the Rebbe was sharing with unprecedented *osiyos* about how to connect with the Rebbe himself in a deeper, more profound way than ever before.

I remember that Yud-Aleph Nissan as being very, very special. Yud-Aleph occurred on a Motzei Shabbos, and the Rebbe was given the *bracha* on behalf of Chassidim in the big shul after Maariv. The Rebbe's face was shining brightly and the Chassidim responded with such an outpouring of love. When the Rebbe left the shul, we all started singing the new *niggun*, *Shir Mizmor*, and the Rebbe turned to all sides encouraging the singing and dancing. It was quite an unforgettable moment. (Today you can watch this event on video.)

It wasn't only us *bochurim* who

noticed this. My brother-in-law had brought a group of *baalei batim* from California to 770 that Shabbos, and one of them commented to him that on that night, he witnessed the great love between the Rebbe and Chassidim.

There were other very interesting changes at the time pertaining to Chassidim's connection with the Rebbe. There was a booklet that was published by the *bochurim* called "Beis Chayenu" about the goings-on in the Rebbe's presence, including summaries of the *sichos*, many details about what the Rebbe did throughout each day, etc. In previous years, no one would ever dream that the Rebbe would show any attention to a project of this sort. But then, in the period before Chof-Zayin Adar, the Rebbe was suddenly showing the editors of this booklet tremendous affection, even once writing to them, "כל המפרט ה'ד'—משוכר—The more details, the better..."

A friend of mine, Boruch Kahana, who was involved in this project, wrote to the Rebbe at

one point that he was thinking of stopping, because it seemed to be interfering with his learning. But the Rebbe wrote to him that he should continue. In previous years, no one would have imagined this type of encouragement from the Rebbe!

It is fascinating that at the same time the Rebbe was incessantly talking about the *geulah* and preparing us for its arrival, the Rebbe was also allowing us to connect with the Rebbe at a very personal level. Perhaps this is also connected with the Rebbe's emphasis on "*giluy hayechidah*," the revelation of the deepest part of the *neschama*.

This special era in the Rebbe's *sichos* continued to climb, bringing Chassidim to higher levels of consciousness as time went on.

The Rebbe was speaking so clearly about the *geulah* in ways that were never heard before and the atmosphere amongst Chassidim changed. For example: It was the longstanding practice for many years that when the Rebbe's Shabbos afternoon farbrengen began, after the Rebbe made *kiddush*, Chassidim would sing the *kapitel niggun* of that year. But in Nissan of 5751*, with all the anticipation for the *geulah*, we switched to "*Zol shoin zein di geulah...*" With time, one of the Chassidim, I think it was Reb Kutzy Rapp, changed the words to "*Es kumt*



RABBI AVROHOM MANN RECEIVING KOS SHEL BRACHA FROM THE REBBE ON MOTZEI ROSH HASHANAH 5751*.

shoin di geulah..." i.e. that Moshiach is already coming! It was a reflection of the way Chassidim felt at that time.

It's also noteworthy that throughout this period, the Rebbe had a strong *koch* in "*nissim*"—wonders and miracles. The Rebbe called upon us to implement *nissim* into our own *avodah* of Torah and mitzvos, doing more than our perceived capabilities, in a "*nissim*" spirit.⁵

Geulah At Our Doorstep

That final stretch leading up to Chof-Zayin Adar was really incredible. In fact, I had a family wedding in Eretz Yisroel that winter. I wrote to the Rebbe that I had permission from the *hanhalah* of the yeshiva to travel for it, and I'm asking for the Rebbe's *haskamah u'brachah*. The Rebbe responded by circling both parts of my letter, that I had permission, and *haskamah u'brachah* (i.e. because I had permission, the Rebbe was giving his consent and blessing), and added "*Azkir al haTziyun*."

So I left for Eretz Yisroel in the middle of Shevat. Then all of a sudden at the end of Shevat, I noticed that the Rebbe was starting to say *sichos* almost every night of the week! I

immediately changed my ticket and went back to New York right away to be with the Rebbe at this special time.

[An interesting side point:

I got back to New York on Erev Shabbos Parshas Teruma and wrote a *duch* to the Rebbe about my visit, including the fact that I visited various yeshivos in Eretz Yisroel and did *hafatzas hamaayanos*, etc. I also noted that I gifted *tzedakah pushkas* to my younger siblings, nieces and nephews.

The next day towards the beginning of the farbrengen, the Rebbe mentioned that for the building of the third *beis hamikdash*, children participated by contributing from their own personal money. The Rebbe added that this is especially applicable nowadays, when we educate our children to give *tzedakah* with their own money.

For a moment I thought that perhaps the Rebbe was giving me an answer to what I had written on my *duch*, about giving *pushkas* to my nieces and nephews. But then I dismissed that thought, casting doubt that the Rebbe would actually be addressing something I had written to him.

Obviously, I had never dreamed that the Rebbe was going to give me a written response to the *duch*, but a



THE ISSUE OF "BEIS CHAYENU" PUBLISHED IN THE DAYS AFTER 27 ADAR I 5752*.

few days later, Rabbi Groner told me that the Rebbe had written something on the note I had submitted!

The *duch* I gave had two pages. On the general content of the letter, the Rebbe wrote “וְיוֹסִיף בְּשׂוֹרֵט וְהַזְמִינֵנוּ אֶדָר כְּפִלִּים—May you increase in bearing good news; the time is appropriate, a double Adar...” And then on the first page, where I had written about the tzedakah *pushkas*, the Rebbe underlined that section, and placed an arrow pointing to it on the side, indicating that he especially appreciated that part. I then realized that it was indeed possible that the fact that the Rebbe started the farbrengen specifically with this point about children and tzedakah could have been in part because of what he read in my *duch*!]

I had the *zechus* in those years, together with my friend Efraim Mintz, to write up a “*taktzir*”—a summary of the Rebbe’s farbrengen each Shabbos right away on Motzei Shabbos. This way, Chassidim all around the world would have something fresh to learn immediately following Shabbos, right after the Rebbe said it. Our organization was called “Fax a Sicha.”

Fax a Sicha was *zocheh* that the Rebbe edited the summaries they prepared a few times. The first time was on Motzei Shabbos Parshas Vayera 5751*, shortly after we started writing them. To us, it seemed like the Rebbe

wanted to show his appreciation and encourage us in this new endeavor. A second time was Motzei Shabbos Parshas Vayeshev 5752*. Interestingly, the Rebbe had spoken that week about the spiritual revolution in France, and he had mentioned that in certain respects, Canada is also considered part of France, while some people actually want to make it a part of France again, etc. When we wrote this in our summary, the Rebbe added that “אֵינִי מִתְעַרֵּב בְּפּוֹלִיטִיקָה” —“I don’t get involved in politics. Hashem will certainly determine the best outcome based on the situation etc.” (I.e. since this issue of Canada being part of France is a hotly debated political issue, the Rebbe didn’t want to publicly comment on it.)

The third time was Motzei Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel, the last farbrengen before Chof-Zayin Adar.

Less than two months before Chof-Zayin Adar, the Rebbe said the famous *sicha* on Gimmel Shevat, about the Frieddiker Rebbe’s health and specifically his diminished speech which affected his work of *hafatzas hamaayanos*. The Rebbe spoke in a more serious tone and it seemed unusual for the Rebbe to be randomly talking about this subject. We sensed that it was very serious.

A month later, the tragic incident of Mrs. Lapine’s murder occurred in Crown Heights. The Rebbe said a heartrending *sicha* about her *mesiras nefesh*, and the *kiddush Hashem* that transpired, in the neighborhood of *nesi doreinu*. The Rebbe spoke with painful words about the fact that the *geulah* is still not here, and the shocking fact that we could be faced with such a devastating challenge, despite it being high-time for Moshiach to already be here. After Chof-Zayin Adar, we were able to apply these words to our situation and put them in perspective.

To some of us it felt as though the Rebbe was willing to give up even on his own *gezunt* with *mesiras nefesh* in order to bring the *geulah*.

The Rebbe also spoke so much about *bittul bshishim*, nullifying all the undesirable things with 60 days of *simcha* as this year was a leap year with two months of Adar. In response to a certain *duch*, the Rebbe wrote “להרבות בשמחה ובכפליים שישים יום. אזכיר” (“**Increase** in joy, with a double measure for sixty days. I will mention this at the *Tziyun*.”) A few Chassidim wrote to the Rebbe that they started having dancing every night in 770 as per the Rebbe’s answer, along with acts of Torah, *avodah*, and *gemilus chasadim*. The Rebbe gave them a very encouraging answer “ותהא פעולה” (“**May it be a continuous thing, and increase.** I will mention this at the *Tziyun*.”)

The Devastating Blow

And then it happened. On Chof-Zayin Adar the Rebbe took ill. Obviously, the pain and the shock were indescribable. Nevertheless, the nightly dancing continued. Some people thought it was inappropriate; others thought that the *simcha* itself would bring the much needed *yeshua*. I remember specifically how one Chossid brought to our attention: Many times when there was a difficult situation in the past, the Rebbe always sought to avert it with intense *simcha*, like during the Yom Kippur War or when the Rebbe had a heart attack in 5738*. Now too, as difficult as it may be, the Rebbe would probably expect us to continue with the *simcha* as a means to overcome this challenging situation.

Of course, for us *bochurim*, whose whole lives revolved around the Rebbe, this occurrence was a devastating blow. Many of



THE REBBE ON THE MORNING OF 27 ADAR I 5752*.

the *bochurim* had a hard time concentrating on their learning and instead would say Tehillim non-stop. Obviously, we knew that the right thing was to continue our learning and that this was what the Rebbe wanted of us. But it was really very difficult. Our minds were preoccupied and our hearts were worried.

The situation continued but we kept our *emunah* strong. The truth is that throughout this entire period we had two contradicting feelings in our hearts: On the one hand, we felt broken about the Rebbe's situation and longed to see the Rebbe in his full strength again, but on the other, we knew that *geulah* was literally at hand and our anticipation was only growing with time.

A good illustration of these two opposing sentiments come to mind:

When I became a *chosson* on 9 Adar 5754*, I was one of the last people to be *zocheh* to receive the Rebbe's *bracha* with a nod of his holy head. My *l'chaim* took place a few days later, and present at the *l'chaim* was a family relative of ours who was a Chossid, but not a Lubavitcher. We began the evening by reciting Tehillim for the Rebbe, and this relative was surprised. "You say Tehillim at night?" he asked.⁶

He got two answers: Reb Yisroel Friedman, the *rosh yeshiva* of Oholei Torah said, "Nowadays, it is dark even during the day. So when should we say Tehillim?" And Reb Itche Springer said, "*Vos heist? It's yemos haMoshiach! It's a time when we are already experiencing a taste of Layla kayom ya'ir...*" (I.e. we're already experiencing the times of Moshiach and we don't have to worry about heavenly judgment at night). These two answers captured so well how everyone in the room was feeling.

The truth is that all Chassidim felt both of these points in their hearts. I remember a farbrengen with Reb Yisroel Friedman when he said a lot



DOLLARS DISTRIBUTION ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON, 26 ADAR I 5752*

of *l'chaim*, and he shared with us a deeper part of himself. He said, "The Rebbe says its *yemos haMoshiach*, that we have already entered the time of Moshiach. I don't know exactly what that means, but one thing I'm certain is that when Moshiach comes, we will only experience '*lichtige teg*'—days that are completely illuminated. If so, we should apply the *halacha* that '*ossur lishon bayom*'⁷—it is forbidden to sleep during the day. If we are already in the days of Moshiach, we are not allowed to sleep anymore! *M'tur nit shlufen!*"

We really felt as if Moshiach was coming any moment. I know of a certain Chossid who lived in Crown Heights, who in the winter of 5754* was invited to serve as the *sandek* at the *bris* of his grandson overseas. He decided not to leave New York because he was sure that the *hisgalus* of Moshiach would happen while he was gone and he didn't want to miss it!

The Rebbe's Instructions

The *maamar Ve'ata Tetzaveh* was a very *geshmake maamar* which the Rebbe distributed; it talks about Moshiach and how we have to really want the *geulah* with true feeling, etc. But then after Chof-Zayin Adar, it took on a whole new meaning. The

Rebbe says that we can scream "*ad mosai*" because we feel pained by the hardships of *galus*, or we can really connect with the need for *geulah*, even "*mitoch harchava*," even when everything seems to be going well, both *b'gashmius* and *b'ruchnius*.

Perhaps the Rebbe was hoping to teach us to scream "*ad mosai*" right then, while things were still relatively good, before Chof-Zayin Adar, but unfortunately that didn't happen. When the Rebbe received the *duch* about the dissemination of the *maamar*, he wrote, "ויה"ר שיפעול פעולה—It should have the desired effect..." What the Rebbe meant exactly, we obviously don't know. But perhaps the Rebbe was implying that it should have the desired effect and avoid the tragic occurrence of Chof-Zayin Adar a few days later.

I want to conclude with a *vort* about the last farbrengen before Chof-Zayin Adar, on Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel:

That week, my friend Efraim Mintz had broken his leg and so he was not able to stand in his usual place close to the Rebbe. The responsibility of *chazara* and writing up the "*taktzir*" was solely on me. I stood right in front of the Rebbe, on the floor, probably on top of a little box or something.

The Rebbe spoke with much more



REB BINYOMIN KLEIN OPENS THE CAR DOOR FOR THE REBBE IN THE DRIVEWAY OF THE REBBE'S HOME. CIRCA 5748*

explanation than usual. It was very *geshmak*. The bulk of the *sicha* was about *ahavas Yisroel* and the closeness to Moshiach's times; amazing things. The Rebbe mentioned that we are already seeing the prelude to the ingathering of the *galuyos* with mass emigration to Eretz Yisroel—something we had never heard before!

In that farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel, the Rebbe said that a person has to give everything he has for the sake of *ahavas Yisroel*. He quoted the *possuk* “כל אשר לאיש יתן בעד”—Everything a person has, he should give for his soul... meaning, that whatever a person has, he should give away for the sake of another Yid. And furthermore, said the Rebbe, not only whatever he possesses, but even his very “*nefesh*” itself.

An interesting vort from the Rebbe Rashab comes to mind. He says that when the Alter Rebbe went to prison, he was testing his Chassidim to see if they would maintain *ahavas Chassidim* through this difficult challenge. The Rebbe Rashab added that he looked through various *sefarim* to see if there's a “*hetter*” to do something like that.

Perhaps the Rebbe was hinting that, like the Alter Rebbe, the challenges that we were about to experience

which were connected to the Rebbe himself, may also have been a way to bring out more *ahavas Yisroel* amongst Yidden in general, and especially amongst the Chassidim...

I remember how the longtime *mazkir*, Reb Binyomin Klein once spoke about this farbrengen after Chof-Zayin Adar. In general, Reb Binyomin was not a man of many words, but on that particular occasion he was speaking about the Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel farbrengen at great length.

He said that one time, a Chossid asked the Rebbe a question about what to do in a certain situation, and the Rebbe responded with a clear instruction. A little while later, this Chossid's situation changed, and he thought that the Rebbe might change his instruction as well, so he wrote to the Rebbe again, but this time the Rebbe didn't give him any written answer.

On his own, the Chossid decided not to follow the Rebbe's previous instruction, thinking that since the situation changed, the Rebbe's instruction didn't apply anymore. After a while, the Rebbe asked Reb Binyomin what was going on with this Chossid, and he told the Rebbe

that he had decided to act differently, not in accordance with the Rebbe's original instructions. Hearing this, the Rebbe was unhappy.

The Rebbe explained that “When I give an instruction, it should be followed...” In other words, as long as the Rebbe does not give another instruction, whatever the Rebbe said previously needs to be followed meticulously.

Reb Binyomin concluded his words: In the most recent farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke to us about two ideas: How close we are to the coming of Moshiach, and strengthening ourselves with *ahavas Yisroel*. Until we hear another instruction from the Rebbe, these remain the two most important *hora'os* for us to live with and implement into our daily lives.

And of course, everything needs to be done with *simcha*. The Rebbe very often concluded *sichos* with a call to do things with *simcha*. Even the *sichos* of Chof-Ches Nissan 5751* and Gimmel Shevat 5752*, the Rebbe concluded with the words “מתוך שמחה וטוב לבב...”

May Hashem help that very soon, we will complete all the *avodah* that we have to do, and we will be reunited with Rebbe, and he will lead us out of *galus*;

מתוך שמחה וטוב לבב! T

1. Sichos Kodesh 5752 vol. 1, p. 11.
2. Ibid. p. 18.
3. Ibid. p. 181.
4. Ibid. p. 168.
5. See Shabbos Parshas Tazria 5749, where the Rebbe explicitly says that now begins a new era, one of nissim etc.
6. According to the Arizal, one should refrain from reciting *pesukim* at night, including Tehillim. However, *poskim* allow reciting Tehillim when davening for someone who is unwell or at times of distress. See Tzitz Eliezer, vol. 8, ch. 2.
7. See Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 231:1.



True Discretion

The Chossid Reb Yaakov Cadaner related some of the character traits of the Mitteler Rebbe:

No testimony is needed for the great and vast knowledge of the Mitteler Rebbe, for his works are published and are widely known. He had the ability to take the finest and deepest insights, and relate them to the simplest of people. It was truly unique and exceptional.

His service of Hashem was performed in a very discreet manner. For example, once on Rosh Hashanah he davened Shemoneh Esreh for 3 hours(!), yet he stood completely still without flinching.

After davening he went to his room to change his shirt. As he made his way out of shul, it was difficult to look at his holy face because it was so fiery. Seeing the attendant holding the Rebbe's extremely

wet garment, the Chassidim told him not to hold it with his hands as water would certainly be squeezed out of the garment which is forbidden on Yom Tov.

After Musaf, the Rebbe changed his shirt again as it was once again soaking wet, although, amazingly, all throughout his davening he was completely still as were his discreet mannerisms.

Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev was once attending a wedding in the city of Liadi. The Alter Rebbe honored Reb Levi Yitzchok to lead the crowd in bentching. Reb Levi Yitzchok in turn offered it to the Mitteler Rebbe who was a young man at the time. He had heard earlier from the Alter Rebbe about the young man's greatness and wanted to see it first hand.

The Mitteler Rebbe led the

bentching in a most basic manner.

He read the words like a simple man, without intensity or passion.

Surprised, Reb Levi Yitzchok questioned the Alter Rebbe regarding his son's behavior, for certainly the Alter Rebbe was not exaggerating when he praised his son.

The Alter Rebbe replied, "The same way I know the streets of Liadi like the back of my hand, does my son know the pathways of Heaven, from the highest level of *hishtalshelus* to the lowest. His service of Hashem is permeated with love and fear of Hashem and not at all superficial or external. Such a high level of *avodas Hashem* is only possible with a *neshama d'iskasya* (a *neshamah* from a concealed and very high source)". ①

(*Sippurim Noraim* pg. 18; pg. 46 in the new edition.)

Presidential Preparations



JEM 108404, VIA VELVEL SHILDKRAUT

The second time Mr. Zalman Shazar visited the Rebbe as President of Israel was on Purim 5731. Presented here is a schedule of events proposed by the vaad hamesader of 770 and submitted to the Rebbe for approval. The Rebbe made a number of interesting changes in his holy handwriting, which we will now explore.



We hereby present a proposed schedule (along with a few questions for the Rebbe) for the upcoming Erev Purim and Purim night:

1. Do we need to send a delegation to greet him at his lodgings (like we did last time¹). If yes, the Rebbe's mazkirus will certainly notify who should be included in this delegation.

The Rebbe crossed a line through "certainly" and half-circled around "mazkirus will notify..."

2. A choir will be arranged to greet him when he reaches 770 (similar to the way it was last time). The Rebbe added a question mark after the parentheses and asked:

האומנם הי'?

Was there indeed [a choir]?

3. On the path leading up to the entrance of 770, arrangements should be made for two rows

consisting of representatives of various mosdos.

The Rebbe added:

או של בעלי כח שיהי' סדר (ולא ע"ד שהי' אז)

Or [the rows should consist of] stronger people who can maintain order (not like it was last time).

4. Electric lights will be added to illuminate the entrance of 770 and the surrounding area.

5. The (upstairs) shul will be empty (in accordance with the request of his security detail).

6. Will anyone enter that shul before going into the Rebbe's room (like what happened last time)²?

The Rebbe responded:

קרוב שלא

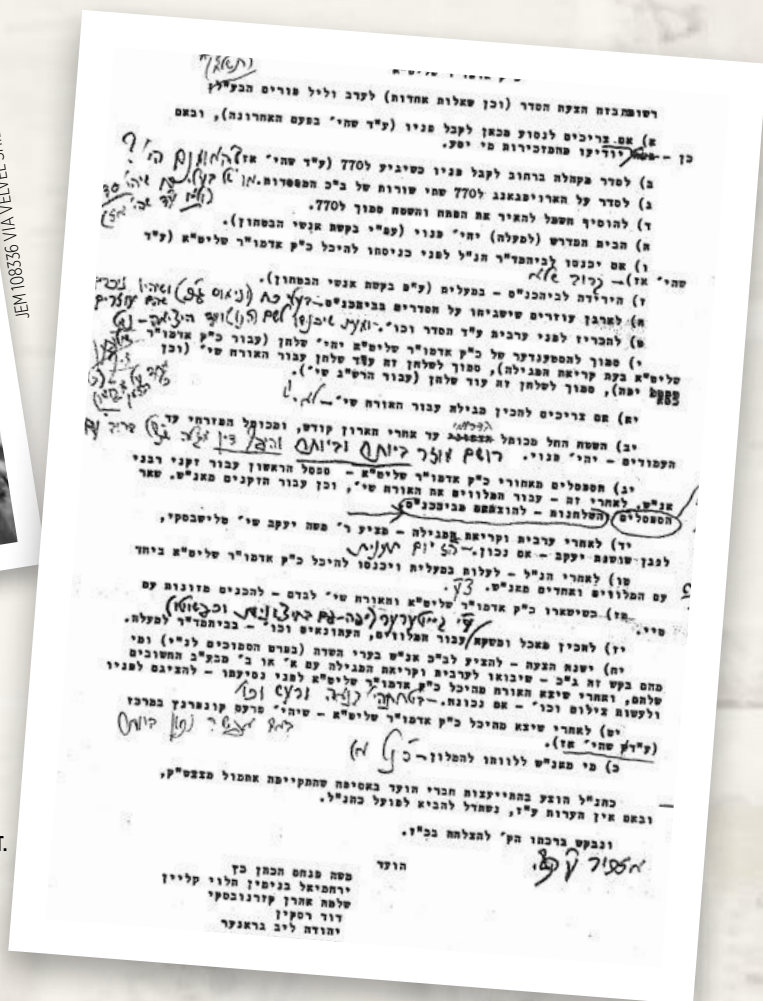
Most likely not.

7. Going downstairs [to the big shul] will be done with the elevator (as per the request of his security detail).



THE REBBE GIFTS MR. SHAZAR WITH A MEGILLAH IN A SILVER CASE

THE REBBE'S EDITS ON THE SUGGESTIONS FOR MR. SHAZAR'S VISIT.



8. Attendants should be pre-arranged who will maintain order in the shul.

The Rebbe added:

בעלי כח (ונימוס ג"כ) ושיהיו ניכרים.

Strong people (but with proper manners), and they should be easily recognizable.

9. An announcement should be made before Maariv detailing the schedule, etc.

The Rebbe added:

ומעת שיכנסו לשם (הנ"ל) ועד היציאה - ניט שטופען זיך (כל אחד על מקומו כל הזמן)

And from the time they (the abovementioned) come in [i.e. the Rebbe and the President] up until they leave, no one should be pushing (everyone should stay at their places for duration).

10. Near the Rebbe's shtender there will be a table (for the Rebbe to use during the Megillah reading). Next to this table, there will be another table for the guest (along with a nice bench), and next to that table will be an additional table (for Rashag).

11. Do we need to prepare a Megillah for the guest?

The Rebbe responded:

לא

No.³

12. The area of the beginning from the southern wall until the aron kodesh, and from the western wall until the pillars, will be empty.

The Rebbe responded:

רושם מוזר ביותר וביותר והיפך דין מגילה שצ"ל ברוב עם. This would leave a very very strange impression, and contradicts the halacha that the Megillah should be read with a large crowd.

13. About the benches directly behind the Rebbe: The first row will seat the elderly rabbanim; behind them will be members of the entourage of the guest, and elderly members of anash. The rest of the tables and the benches will be removed from the shul.

The Rebbe circled portions of the last sentence and commented:

ואיפוא ישובו? כן הרי אז לא יהי' בכלל כל סדר, כ"א שטופען און האפען!! Where will people sit?! Also, this guarantees that there will not be any order, only pushing and grabbing!!

14. After Maariv, [the Chazzan] Reb Moshe Yaakov Teleshevsky suggests that he should sing Shoshanas Yaakov. Is this appropriate?



The Rebbe responded:

ה"ז יום תענית

It's a fast day [and we shouldn't keep people waiting in shul longer than necessary].

15. After this, return upstairs with the elevator, and enter the Rebbe's room with the [President's] entourage and some members of anash.

The Rebbe responded:

צ"ע

Debatable.

16. When the Rebbe and the guest are left alone in the room, tea and mezonos will be brought in.

17. Food and drink will be prepared for members of the entourage, the journalists, etc., in the shul upstairs.

To the word "food," the Rebbe added:

ע"י קייטערער (יפה—גם בחיצוניות וכפשוטו) [Provided] by a caterer (fancy—also externally in the most literal sense).

18. There was an idea to suggest to Chabad representatives out of town (especially those in the New York area), and some of them have actually asked us about this, that they should come to Maariv and Megillah reading with one or two of their biggest supporters, and after the guest leaves the Rebbe's room, before he departs on his way, they should be introduced to him and allowed to be photographed with him, etc. Is this appropriate?

The Rebbe responded:

בטח תהי' קנאה ורעש וכו'

This will certainly cause jealousy and [unnecessary] uproar, etc.

19. After he [the President] leaves the Rebbe's room, there will be a press conference in the

Merkos office (like there was last time).

The Rebbe underlined the words "like there was last time" and added:

באם אפשר נכון ביותר

If this is possible, it is very appropriate.

20. Some members of anash will accompany him [the President] back to his hotel.

The Rebbe responded:

כנ"ל א

As was mentioned in section 1. [I.e. the mazkirus will notify who should go.]

21. All of the above was suggested by the advice of the members of the committee during a meeting that was held last night, on Motzei Shabbos Kodesh. If there are no comments or changes [from the Rebbe] on this, we will try to implement all of these ideas.

We request the Rebbe's holy brachos for success in all of the above.

The Rebbe responded:

אזכיר עה"צ

I will mention it at the Ohel.

The committee:

Moshe Pinchas Katz

Yerachmiel Binyomin Halevi Klein

Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky

Dovid Raskin

Yehuda Leib Groner

Chaim Yehuda Krinsky

1. See *Presidential Visit*, Derher Av 5781.

2. When President Shazar visited in 5726, the Rebbe took him on a "tour" of the first floor of 770 before bringing him into the Rebbe's room.

3. The Rebbe gifted the President with a new Megillah in a silver case.



I'm NOT EVEN Sick

This story was related by:

RABBI TZVI HIRSH FOX

There was a young kallah from a Satmar family who, as her wedding day approached, wanted to go to the Rebbe for a bracha. Her family members tried to persuade her not to go but she was adamant.

Her older sister tried to scare her out of it. “It’s dangerous to go to Crown Heights,” she said. “But it will be in the middle of the day on a Sunday, and thousands of people will be there,” the young woman replied.

After much cajoling, her sister agreed to accompany her to the Rebbe for “dollars.”

The sisters stood together in the long line that snaked through the downstairs *shul*. As they approached the steps leading upstairs to the Rebbe’s holy room, the sister became nervous and wanted to leave, but she was swept by the crowd up the stairs and soon stood before the Rebbe.

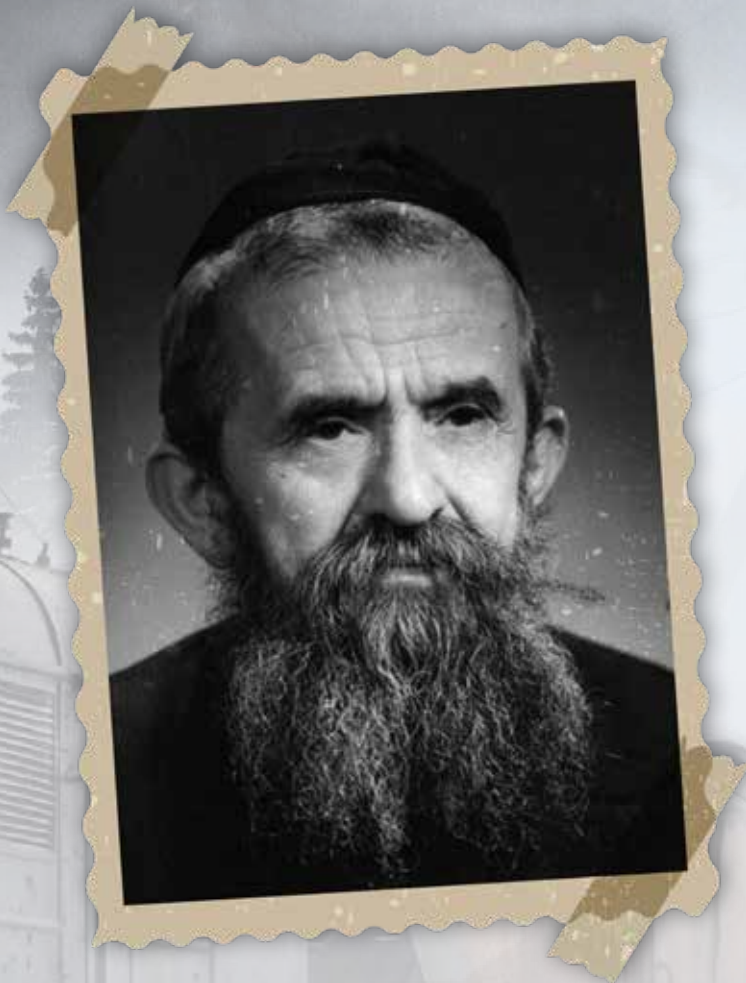
The younger sister — the *kallah* — received a dollar and a *bracha*. When the older sister passed by the

Rebbe, the Rebbe gave her a second dollar and said “this is for a *refuah sheleimah*” — a speedy recovery.

She laughed it off, and jokingly told her mother about it. “I’m not even sick,” she told her mother with a laugh. But when her mother heard what had happened, she said, “You must go to a doctor for a checkup.”

And so she did. She was examined and x-rayed, but nothing unusual was found. Then the mother told the doctor that the Rebbe had blessed this girl with a *refuah sheleimah*. Upon hearing this, the doctor checked again. The examination found that she was in the early stages of cancer, and the doctors were able to successfully treat it.

The father of these sisters told this story over to Rabbi Tzvi Hirsh Fox and explained that had they waited until the girl would have started feeling ill, it would have been too late to treat that particular form of the disease. The Rebbe saved her life. **T**



לע"נ
אבינו היקר ר' **בנציון** בן ר' יעקב ע"ה
נלב"ע כ"ח שבט ה'תשפ"א
ת"נ צ"ב ה' *

ולזכות בתנו
הדסה אסתר תחי'
לרגל הגיעה לגיל ששים עשרה היא עונת בת מצוה
כ"ט שבט ה'תשפ"ב

נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' **מנחם ארי'** וזוגתו מרת **עדינה רחל ומשפחתם**
שיחיו לנדא
נאוואטא, קאליפארניא



THE REBBE'S STAUNCH SOLDIER

REB BENTZION SHEMTOV

For the publication of this article, we were greatly assisted by Rabbi Yossie Shemtov of Tucson, Arizona, who shared his compilation about his grandfather Reb Bentzion with us. All of the information in this feature was culled from his collection, unless noted otherwise.

“Rabbi Shemtov was an extraordinary person, an outstanding example of a true Lubavitcher Chossid.”

These words were written¹ by Mr. Zalmon Jaffe, a close friend of Reb Bentzion “Bentche” Shemtov, shortly after Reb Bentche passed away in 5735*.

“He was a devoted and loyal soldier who carried out the Rebbe’s orders unhesitatingly and without question, with courage, gladness and self-sacrifice. He was the Rebbe’s ‘roving’ ambassador abroad and represented Lubavitch with enormous and good effect. His exemplary conduct, determination and *mesiras nefesh* (self sacrifice) for Jews everywhere enhanced his reputation but, even more so, enhanced the entire Lubavitch movement, too.

“Shemmy, as we affectionately called him, referred to my office as his ‘Manchester HQ.’ He always found plenty of work for me to do. He drove me crazy with wild and preposterous schemes which somehow, in retrospect, always turned out to be such wonderful and inspired notions.

“One perfect example is the time in 1961 when he arrived at my office with an idea that ended up with my phoning a company to charter a flight to New York. This flight ultimately enabled 118 passengers to visit the Rebbe for a ridiculously low price.

“The Rebbe has lost a staunch soldier.”

THE WHITE LINEN SHEET

Reb Bentzion Shemtov was born in Cheshvan of 5662* in the town of Droya, near Minsk, to his parents, Reb Kasriel and Basya. His mother was a descendant of Reb Shalom Shachne, the father of the Tzemach Tzedek.²

During the first years of her marriage, Basya miscarried several times. Hoping for children, she went for a *yechidus* with the Rebbe Rashab who blessed her to have healthy children. He gave two special instructions: The baby should be called Bentzion, and he should be wrapped in a white linen sheet.³

During his childhood, he learned in *cheder* with two close friends, Zalman Droyer and Avrohom Mayorer (Drizin), who lived in the next town over.

When they approached bar mitzvah age, they began to look for a yeshiva. Avrohom’s older brother, Yehudah Leib, was acquainted with graduates of several Lithuanian *yeshivos*, and was unimpressed with their *yiras Shamayim*. Therefore, he suggested that Avrohom go to Lubavitch. The young Bentzion asked his friend to write back about his experience.

Within several months, a letter arrived back in Droya with enthusiastic descriptions of the yeshiva. “You need to come here!”



RABBI PINNY LEW

REB BENTZION SHEMTOV WITH MR. ZALMON JAFFE ON THE MORNING OF THE SECOND CHARTERED FLIGHT TO THE REBBE, 29 SIVAN 5722*.

Reb Avrohom concluded.

He didn’t need more convincing. Bentzion immediately left for Lubavitch, where he was accepted as a student in the year 5675*.

However, his peaceful years in Lubavitch were short lived. The next year, due to the chaos of World War I, the Rebbe Rashab left Lubavitch and the yeshiva left some time later. Over the next few years, as the war turned into a brutal revolution, the yeshiva wandered from place to place.

During those turbulent times, already as a young *bochur*, his unique talents in *askanus* came to light. Under the circumstances, it was occasionally necessary to deal with the authorities. Reb Chatche Feigin, the *menahel* of the yeshiva, chose Reb Bentzion, seeing him as most fitting for the job.⁴

STREET SCENE IN THE TOWN OF DROYA, WHERE RABBI BENTZION GREW UP.

UNTIL THE LAST DROP OF BLOOD

Soon, the Bolsheviks took over the country and began a concentrated campaign to abolish all practice of religion. In response, the Frierdiker Rebbe fought like a lion to preserve *yeshivos*, shuls, *mikvaos* and Jewish institutions all over the Soviet Union.

During a visit to Moscow, the Frierdiker Rebbe called nine Temimim for a fateful meeting. “We swore,” the Frierdiker Rebbe later related about that day, “to be *moser nefesh* for Torah until the last drop of blood. We divided up the work of the entire country, each one taking a region.”⁵

Reb Bentzion was one of those select ten. In a letter from the Frierdiker Rebbe to Reb Menachem

“FOR ANIMALS, IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE”

Reb Mendel Futerfas related the following story:

“Chassidus explains that at 20 years old, a person reaches a higher spiritual level, based on the Gemara, *בן עשרים שנה למכור בנכסי אביו*.

“When I was 17 years old, I asked my twenty-year-old friend Reb Bentzion [who later became his brother-in-law] if he felt the difference in being 20. He answered, ‘For a *beheimah* there is no difference between 20 and 30...’

“Many years later, when he reached 70 years of age, I asked if he began to feel it, and he responded, ‘I still haven’t become a *mentch*...’

(*Reb Mendel*, page 251)

Zemba about the *mesiras nefesh* of the Chassidim in Russia, the Frierdiker Rebbe describes Reb Bentche and his work in beautiful words:

“Bentzion is a *bochur*, a *lamdan* and *yarei Shamayim*, with significant talents in learning *nigleh* and Chassidus. He is *boki* in Gemara and many *halachos* of Yoreh Deah and Choshen Mishpat. A great future in learning was predicted for him.

“...When I suggested to a small group of our *talmidim* to take part in the work [of strengthening Yiddishkeit], he was the first to indicate that he wanted to take part. He was assigned to the region of Vohlin [an important Jewish region, today divided between Poland, Belarus and Ukraine] to travel throughout the region and raise awareness with regard to *chadarim*, public Torah classes, kosher *mikvaos* and more.

“For two-and-a-half years, he worked with diligence, establishing many tens of *chadarim*. He gave fiery speeches about Torah learning and about *taharas hamishpacha*, and a new spirit enveloped the entire Vohlin...”⁶

An amazingly detailed description of his work is found in a letter written by Reb Shlomo Yosef Zevin.⁷ This letter was written to Jewish supporters outside the Soviet Union, and describes the work of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s shlichim in great detail. As an example, he cites verbatim a letter the Frierdiker Rebbe had received from Reb Bentche:

“I arrived [in Zhitomir] on 4 Shevat... So far, we organized three small *chadarim* with 36 students. After Shabbos, another three will be established... Several *balebatim* were inspired; they divided up the city and went door to door to ask for monthly donations to support the *chadorim*. At the moment, there is enough money to support teachers for 250 students. I also plan to establish a yeshiva... I have a list of 200 cities in the region



JEM, 102214

THE FRIERDIKER REBBE, CIRCA 5689*.

in which to establish *chadarim*.”

Rabbi Zevin continues to report: “We should note that this messenger also established a yeshiva in Cherkas, and small groups for learning Gemara in Sdeh-Lavan, Tarashtze, Chevnah, and more...”⁸

MAFTIR — A YOUNG BOCHUR?

An account of one fascinating shlichus for the Frierdiker Rebbe was written by Reb Bentche himself.

In 5687*, a large rabbinic conference was planned to be held in Leningrad. “The government supported it,” Reb Bentche explains, “with the intention of creating a wedge between the *chareidi* rabbonim and the liberal rabbonim, as they successfully did amongst the non-Jewish religious clergy.”

Seeing the danger in allowing the government to interfere with the affairs of rabbonim, the Frierdiker Rebbe opposed it. “The Rebbe’s holy opinion was that having a rabbinic conference [in general] was a good thing, but not a public conference.”

However, a number of non-Chabad

“MY SECOND MAZKIR”

In a letter that year, the Frierdiker Rebbe wrote:

“May Hashem help me to soon bring over my secretary and confidant Reb Elchonon Marosov, who has been sent to Siberia for the past year-and-a-half (all by my fault) and also my second secretary, Mr. Bentzion Shemtov who was in prison for a year and recently sent to Siberia for three years for the sin of establishing tens of *chadarim* and several *yeshivos*...”

(Igros Kodesh Admur Harayatz vol. 2 pg. 68).

rabbonim, who were wary of the vast support the Frierdiker Rebbe enjoyed from Jews in Russia and from supporters in other countries, saw an opportunity to gain power.⁹ Many unsuspecting rabbonim went along with their plan. A pre-conference was held in Karasten, and Reb Bentche was dispatched by the Frierdiker Rebbe to counter their efforts.

The Jews of Leningrad were asked to send two representatives to the pre-conference. The Frierdiker Rebbe and the *kahal* of the *misnagdim* reached an agreement that they would each send one representative, but the *misnagdim* reneged on the deal and unscrupulously managed to “steal” both places. “Don’t allow the Leningrad representatives to speak at all; let them receive their *schar b’hai alma*, their reward in this world,” was one of the instructions Reb Bentche received from the Frierdiker Rebbe.

“I arrived in Karasten before Shabbos,” he writes. “Many distinguished rabbonim attended, some of whom had served as

rabbonim for over 60 years. I arranged to receive *maftir*; the fact that a young *bochur* received *maftir* only because of his *mishleach* already broke the opposition. The rabbonim Zevin, Zamsky and Gershon Chein [also sent by the Frierdiker Rebbe] arrived on Sunday, and made it clear that ‘the Rebbe and his entourage’ would be controlling the proceedings.”

Through the efforts of Reb Bentche and the others, they managed to scuttle the endeavors of the opposition. Whenever the Leningrad delegates attempted to speak, Reb Bentche and the other Lubavitchers immediately raised a ruckus. They worked hard to explain to all the rabbonim the danger in the large conference, and in the end, the government dropped the entire plan.¹⁰

THE ARREST

In his letter to Reb Menachem Zemba, the Frierdiker Rebbe continues his account about Reb Bentche:

“The Yevseksiya smelled that a hidden hand was creating a massive commotion for Torah... for three months, he felt a shadow following him and counting his footsteps. Nonetheless, being dedicated to his work, he could not bring himself to leave his work.”

Finally, the Yevseksiya caught up with him. In 5687*, as he visited Ovruch to establish a *cheder*, he was caught and arrested. But he was no easy prisoner to deal with.

“While in prison,” writes a friend of his, “he drove the jailers so crazy to allow him to put on tefillin at the right times and so on, that the heads of the secret police called in Chief Rabbi Milikovsky with the hope that he would be able to ‘calm him down.’”¹¹

Somehow, Reb Bentche made a good impression on his jailers and they granted him a temporary release. Despite the restrictions placed on him, he continued his work and was even involved in the efforts to obtain the Frierdiker Rebbe’s release later that year. Before the Frierdiker Rebbe left Russia, Reb Bentche made a — totally illegal — trip to see him one last time.

Soon, his actions caught up with him. He was rearrested and sentenced to three years in a distant exile.

By this time, he was engaged to be married to Esther Golda Futerfas, the sister of Reb Mendel. Not willing to wait three years, she traveled to his forsaken place of exile to hold the wedding. A Jewish welder formed a ring out of a metal spoon, the ice in the river was broken for the *mikveh*, and Reb Shmuel Levitin —



REB BENTZION (LEFT) IN HIS YOUTH WITH HIS FRIEND REB DOVID BRAVMAN



REB BENTZION STANDS BEHIND THE REBBE AND REBBETZIN CHANA, DURING THE REBBE'S VISIT TO PARIS, FRANCE IN 5707*.

who was exiled to the same village — was the *mesader kiddushin*.

Despite the suffering, Reb Bentche never complained.

“His toes were frostbitten because of the severe Siberian cold,” writes Zalmon Jaffe, “and he had to wear specially made boots. This did not stop him from walking thousands of miles on the Rebbe’s business and he was, nevertheless, always cheerful and constantly saw the bright side of things. For example, his daughter Frieda (Sudak) was once criticizing his Siberian exile, denouncing the Soviet authorities for their cruelty. Rabbi Shemtov rebuked her. He pointed out that the cold weather was good for his asthma! In any case, he continued,

Siberia was preferable to being called up to serve in the Russian Army.”

In a letter to Reb Bentzion’s father, the Frierdiker Rebbe lauds Reb Bentzion’s efforts, and blesses his father that soon his son will be released, and be able to resume his activities in an ever stronger effort!¹²

TRUE AHAVAS YISROEL

Upon returning from exile, Reb Bentche continued to use his talents for holy work. In those days, many Chassidim suffered from terrible poverty for their refusal to work on Shabbos. Thinking big, Reb Bentche arranged agreements

with sewing factories allowing Chassidim to work from home, giving them control of their own work hours. Hundreds of people owed their livelihood to his efforts.

During a *sicha* in America, the Frierdiker Rebbe spoke about Reb Bentche as an example of the special *ahavas Yisroel* and *hanachas atzmuso* that was part and parcel of the character of Temimim in Russia.

“Bentzion Shemtov was literally *moser nefesh* to do a physical act of kindness for another Jew, and moreover, he traveled around with literal *mesiras nefesh* to do a favor for another Jew...”¹³

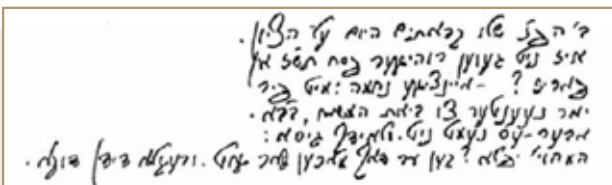
Reb Bentche once saw a young Chossid being led away by a Russian policeman. Thinking quickly, he ran over to the policeman shouting, “Hello Ivan! How are you? I haven’t seen you for so long! What’s doing? How are you managing?”

He started hugging and kissing the policeman, while nudging the young Chossid to run away.

“But who are you? I don’t recognize you!” said the policeman.

“Don’t you remember we were in the army together?” Reb Bentche carried on until the other Chossid was well out of sight.

Realizing that his prisoner had escaped, he began yelling at Reb Bentche, “You made me lose my



Four years after the Rebbe’s visit to Paris, after the Rebbe had already accepted the *nesius*, he wrote this postscript in a letter to Reb Bentzion, reminding him of the peaceful days in France, before the *histalkus* of the Frierdiker 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 נעענטער צו ביאת המשיח בב"א. אבער - עס נעמט ניט. ולאידך גיסא: המהו"י 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.

prisoner, you idiot! You're really going to get it now! I'm going to take you to court and I'm going to make sure you go to prison."

"Listen," Reb Bentche reasoned with the officer. "If you report this incident, it will be you who will end up in jail, for you have released a wanted prisoner. I, on the other hand, can only be charged for mistakenly hugging an old friend." Reb Bentche took out a bottle of vodka and gave it to the policeman, who then dropped the whole case.¹⁴

The authorities were always looking for Reb Bentche, and the family was forced to move several times. Soon, World War II broke out and Reb Bentche and his family fled to Samarkand, along with many others.

The situation was dire. Thousands of refugees swarmed the city; there was not enough food or shelter to go around. There were times when the family was forced to suffice with animal food. Still, Reb Bentche taught his children the true meaning of *ahavas Yisroel*.

One night, as the children slept on their "bed" (a large table), Reb Bentche came home and woke them up with exciting news; he had procured a full loaf of bread. As they excitedly drew around the table for their first taste of food in a while, Reb Bentche cut the bread in half.

"Take this to the house of Shlomo Chaim [Kesselman]," he



REB BENTZION SHEMTOV SPEAKS PASSIONATELY AT A SIMCHA.

instructed his oldest son, Mendel.

"But they have less people," he protested. "Why should they have an equal amount?"

"Because they haven't eaten for longer," his father replied.¹⁵

LEAVING RUSSIA

In 5707*, Reb Bentche and his family had the good fortune to leave Russia on the Polish "*eshalons*" (trains). As his family settled in the Pocking DP camp, Reb Bentche didn't rest and immediately got involved in all sorts of *askanus*. He soon found himself in Paris, where a very special guest had arrived — the Rebbe himself had flown to Paris to greet his mother and accompany her to America.

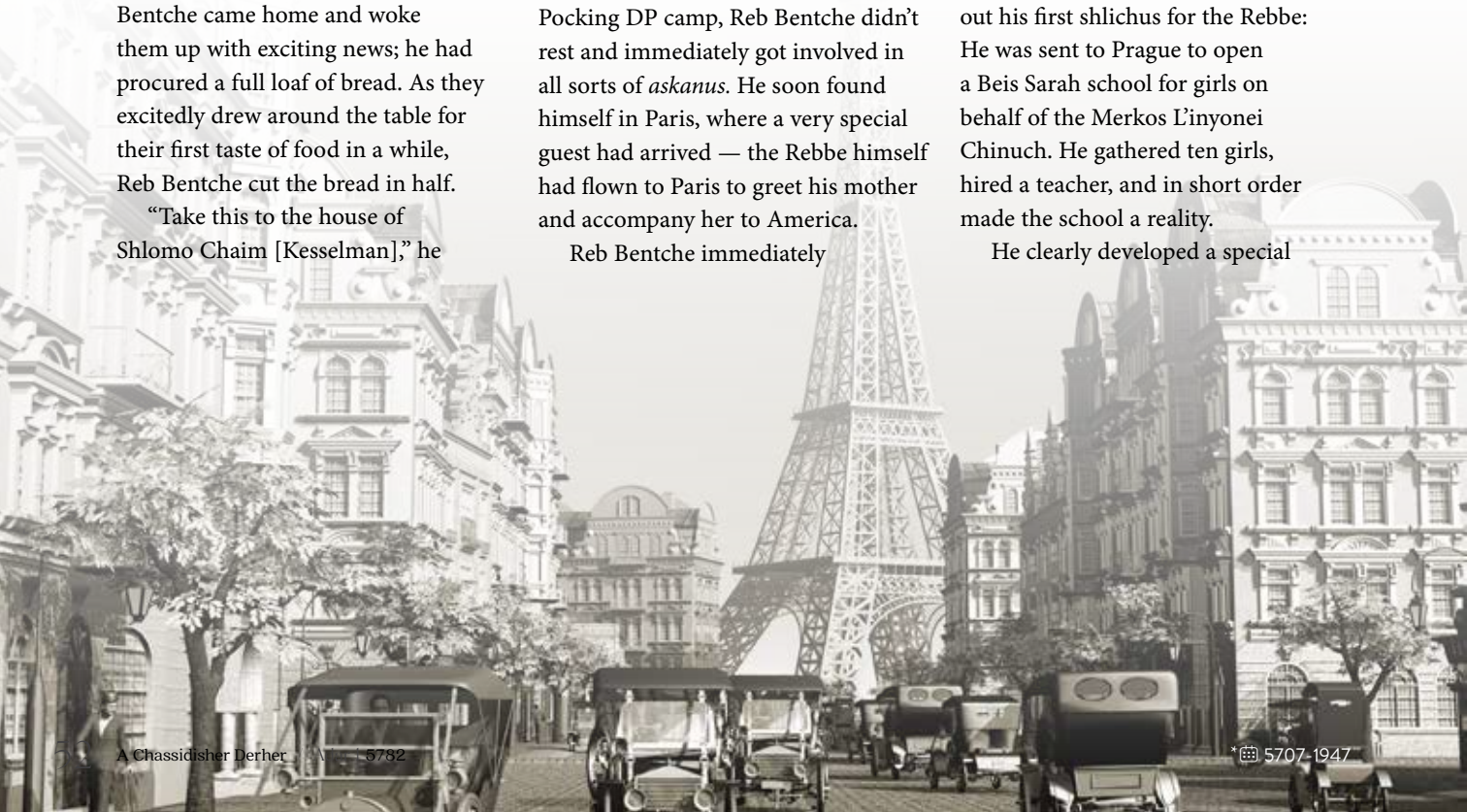
Reb Bentche immediately

"connected" himself to the Rebbe, attempting to remain in his close proximity at every possible moment. At one point, the Rebbe actually asked Reb Bentche to leave his hotel room so that he would be able to learn in peace.¹⁶

Reb Bentche shared his excitement about the Rebbe with the other Chassidim. "I noticed," he told them, "that the bed has been filled with *sefarim* for several days in a row. The Ramash literally doesn't go to sleep!"¹⁷

During that visit, he also carried out his first shlichus for the Rebbe: He was sent to Prague to open a Beis Sarah school for girls on behalf of the Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch. He gathered ten girls, hired a teacher, and in short order made the school a reality.

He clearly developed a special



connection with the Rebbe during that visit. When the Rebbe returned to America and published *Sefer Hasichos Kayitz Tof Shin*, he sent a box to Europe with the following instructions:

“Please give two copies to ‘Kibutz Lubavitch,’ two to Pocking, one to Kalmenson in Prague, and one for Reb Bentzion Shemtov...”¹⁸

THE REBBE'S NESIUS

On 10 Shevat 5710*, Chassidim worldwide were hit with the unthinkable news. The Friediker Rebbe had been *nistalek*. At the time, one of the English Chassidim — Reb Yitzchok Dubov of Manchester¹⁹ — was visiting New York. During the *Shiva*, he came to the conclusion that the Rebbe, then known as the Ramash, should immediately be appointed as Rebbe.

Upon his return to England, he proceeded to the home of Reb Bentzion Shemtov. After a long conversation, they both gathered the *anash* of London and wrote the first *ksav hiskashrus* to the Rebbe, addressing him with the title “*Kvod Kedushas Admur Shlit”a*.”

Reb Bentzion began to encourage others to do the same. In a letter to his brother-in-law in Australia, Reb Shneur Zalman Serebransky, Reb Bentche encouraged him to be *miskasher* to the Rebbe, even indicating that it was known to be the Friediker Rebbe’s express will.

“At the moment, he refuses to accept the *nesius*,” Reb Bentche writes. “However, based on my conversation with one of *anash* in England who spoke with him, it seems that he also received a *hora’a*, and with Hashem’s help, we will have a Rebbe very soon.”

During a visit to Eretz Yisroel, he farbrenged with the *anash* of Tel

Aviv, encouraging them to accept the Rebbe’s *nesius* as well. He also began to direct Jews in England to request the Rebbe’s *brachos*. Reb Bentche’s house became an in-between point between the Rebbe and English Jewry, and many letters and telegrams were sent his way.²⁰ (Later, in 5712*, Reb Benche was tasked with the burial of the Rebbe’s brother, Reb Yisroel Aryeh Leib, when he passed away in England, and he also became the Rebbe’s primary contact with his wife.)

However, it was a long time before the Rebbe indicated that he would accept the *nesius*. The Rebbe responded to Reb Bentche’s *ksav hiskashrus* with a *michtav klali-proti* that ignored the matter entirely. In handwriting, at the bottom of the letter, the Rebbe simply added, “I received your letter... Surely Reb Yitzchok Dubov shared our conversation with you...”²¹

But Reb Bentche wasn’t one to give up. He printed new stationery for Tomchei Temimim in England declaring it to be under the *nesius* of the Rebbe, and sent a letter to Rebbetzin Chana. Soon after, a telegram was rushed to his house; the Rebbe demanded that all the papers be immediately destroyed and that no such endeavors be initiated without his express *reshus*.²²

A CHOSSID THROUGH AND THROUGH

For the next 25 years, Reb Bentche dedicated every waking moment to the Rebbe’s *inyanim*. His entire life was dedicated to strengthening the *hiskashrus* of Chassidim, growing the Rebbe’s *mosdos*, and bringing the Rebbe *nachas*. Many Chassidim throughout the world received their first “taste” of *dor hashvi’i* from Reb Bentche, who tirelessly traveled and wrote letters to promote the Rebbe’s *inyanim* — always doing so with his characteristic splash.

In the invitation to his son Yisroel’s bar mitzvah, Reb Bentche included his wish that the bar mitzvah “be a Chossid, *yarei Shamayim* and *lamdan*, according to the will of our *noSSI*, the Rebbe.” Needless to say, it caused a commotion among the Yidden of London (where Reb Bentche settled — see next section). One well-known *iluy*, Rav Moshe Shternbuch (today the *av beis din* of the Edah Hacharedis in Yerushalayim), wrote to the Rebbe about it.

In a fascinating response, the Rebbe defended Reb Bentche’s language.



REB BENTZION RECEIVES LEKACH FROM THE REBBE, HOSHAANA RABBA 5721*.

KIRUVIM

During the historic Yom Tov of Sukkos 5731*, the Rebbe established a “United Nations,” speaking at length about its spiritual significance [see *Derher*, Tishrei 5779, “Transforming the Nations”]. During *hakafos*, the Rebbe appointed various individuals as delegates of their countries. “Being that everything must be done according to Torah,” the Rebbe said, “these will be individuals who have *smicha* or are *roshei yeshivos*.”

When the Rebbe announced Reb Bentzion Shemtov as England’s envoy, someone remarked that he’s not a *rav*. Hearing that, the Rebbe responded that it was “under my *achrayus*.”

Another special *kiruv* the Rebbe showed Reb Bentche was also on Sukkos: Until 5730*, the Rebbe would give *daled minim* to a very select group of some seven people (later, the group became much larger). One of those annual recipients was Reb Bentche.

Another special gesture was during the Hachnasas Sefer Torah Shel Moshiach.³⁷ Reb Bentche was one of the 15 individuals personally honored by the Rebbe to read a *possuk* of *Atah Horeisa*.³⁸

“Regarding your question — what connection is there between the wish of a Jewish heart and the desires of a *basar vadam* (a mortal).

“...The *yetzer hara* is a master at his profession... The greater the wish and *bracha*, the greater it will try to get involved... Therefore, the only option is to place the *tefillah al daas* (at the discretion of) another person, who is objective in the matter...”²³

“When I visited London shortly after leaving the Soviet Union,” related Professor Herman Branover, “I met Rabbi Bentzion Shemtov. I knew nothing about him and his special work in the Soviet Union and Europe, but a few words that he told me in our short conversation made a deep impression on me.

“‘I think,’ he said, ‘our biggest problem is that we don’t appreciate how good it is and how much we should rejoice at every moment over the fact that we have such an amazing Rebbe!’”²⁴

When Mrs. Bassie (Posner) Garelik was around 12 years old, her parents enrolled her in Beis Yaakov, being that Beis Rivkah did not have a class for her age. Reb Bentche once visited her home; hearing that she was too old for Beis Rivkah, he suggested a perfect solution: “Why don’t you act as if you don’t know much and then they’ll let you into the younger classes — of Beis Rivkah!”²⁵

Traveling to the Rebbe was, to



REB BENTZION STANDS BEHIND THE REBBE AT THE FARBRENEGN OF YUD SHEVAT 5730*.

Reb Bentche, the most important part of a Chossid’s life. When Reb Yitzchak Dubov made a special trip to the Rebbe in 5716*, he attributed the *zechus* to Reb Bentche. “I never pulled together so much money, but Reb Bentzion reminded me of the saying of Radatz Chein, that it is worth begging from door to door in order to be able to go to the Rebbe.”

Reb Leibel Raskin recounted that he once heard from Reb Bentche that “to travel to the Rebbe, one need not receive permission, because in these matters we ask the opinion of the *choleh*, not the doctor...”²⁶ (On one occasion, Zalmon Jaffe records that Reb Benche traveled to the Rebbe without express permission, and the Rebbe didn’t accept his decision; he was treated by the Rebbe as if he was still in England).²⁷

In front of the Rebbe, Reb Bentche always displayed the ultimate *bittul*. He never sat in the Rebbe's presence, even in his old age when his contemporaries occupied the seats behind the Rebbe at the farbrengens. During one surprise farbrengen on Shavuot 5711*, the Rebbe told him to "be seated, without *kuntzen*," taking him by the hand and seating him on the bench. The Rebbe held his hand for the duration of the farbrengen!²⁸

Zalmon Jaffe notes that Reb Bentche refused to attend the *seudos* in the Frierdiker Rebbe's apartment, because the Rebbe was not seated at the head of the table. "He could not bear to see the Rebbe take a back seat."²⁹

"In 5718*," Reb Leibel Raskin related, "Reb Bentche picked me up from the airport [in London]; on the way to his home, we passed the palace, where we saw the soldiers standing at attention. Reb Bentzion told me, 'Do you see how they stand? We should learn a lesson in *bittul* from them...'"

This was not a type of behavior that was generally expected of Chassidim. Once, during Sukkot 5714*, the Rebbe happened to walk into the public sukkah. Surprised by the Rebbe's sudden appearance, Reb Bentche immediately backed away, and the Rebbe commented, "*Iz dos ahavas Yisroel — zich dershreken far a Yidden? Is it ahavas Yisroel to be frightened by a Yid?*"³⁰

During that same Tishrei, the bochor Elya Gross recorded Reb Bentche's farbrengen. "Don't assume," Reb Bentche told the *bochorim*, "that when you fulfill a shlichus you are doing the Rebbe a favor. We see clearly that everyone who fulfilled the Rebbe's instructions without asking 'why' had *hatzlacha* in everything." Elya notes further: "Reb Bentzion told me that this was told to him by the Rebbe himself, in a letter."³¹



REB BENTZION TOGETHER WITH THE BOYS OF THE LUBAVITCH SCHOOL IN THE 5710S*.

TURNING OVER ENGLAND

In 5708*, the Frierdiker Rebbe appointed Reb Bentche to be his *shadar* to London, responsible for spreading Yiddishkeit and strengthening the Chassidim of England.

One of his first activities was declaring a "*cheder*" — his own three sons and nephew, Reb Shalom Ber Futerfas. A Beis Rivkah was also quickly opened. Both institutions started out small, but soon began to experience significant growth. When he wanted to send his sons to New York, the Frierdiker Rebbe instructed that they remain in London. "It would be better to establish a Tomchei Temimim in London itself."³² Two months later, Reb Bentche duly reported back to New York: Tomchei Temimim had become a reality.

Reb Bentche's presence in a city was one that could not be ignored. Everyone quickly got to know the fiery and energetic Lubavitcher Chossid who was afraid of nothing and no one. With his characteristic *ahavas Yisroel*, countless people benefited from his quiet acts of aid,

but when it came to matters of the Rebbe, "quiet" wasn't in the lexicon.

In one *yoman* about a Yom Tov *seudah* in the Frierdiker Rebbe's apartment, a *bochor* records that Zalmon Jaffe told the Rebbe: "From the day Bentzion Shemtov came [to England,] and from the day the Rebbe became Rebbe, Manchester has become a different place!" The Rebbe smiled and said, "He still has more work to do."³³

Reb Bentche himself related that the yeshiva of Manchester — where his sons learned before coming to 770 — wasn't officially a Chabad yeshiva, but the Rebbe told him that it was "*unzere yeshiva*, our yeshiva," despite not having the name "Tomchei Temimim." This was because Reb Yitzchok Dubov served as the *mashgiach* there, implemented many *minhagei Chabad*, and was *mekarev* many *bochorim* to the Rebbe.³⁴

Professor Velvel Greene, during his stay in London, had an encounter with Reb Bentche:

"I was in the midst of my work in the hospital, when I received a message: 'There is an emergency meeting at the Chabad House, drop everything and come immediately. We received a message from the Rebbe, it is important that you come.'"



REB BENTZION AND HIS FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHED ON EREV YOM KIPPUR 5710*, AT THE BEHEST OF THE FRIERDIKER REBBE, WHO HAD REQUESTED PHOTOS OF HIS CHASSIDIM AND THEIR FAMILIES "ווי זיי שטייען" (STANDING).

"I ran onto the subway and made my way to Stamford Hill. When I arrived at the shul, I saw the following scene: Rabbi Shemtov was sitting at the head of the table, surrounded by many people, but he wasn't saying a word. *Anash* were gathering from all over, and he wouldn't say anything.

"Rabbi Sudak told me that his father-in-law had just arrived that morning, and refused to eat or drink anything until he gave over the Rebbe's message.

"Suddenly, he stood up and declared: '*Der Rebbe hot gezogt az davenen muz zein shein!*' The Rebbe said that davening must be nice!"

"That was it. The meeting was over.

"It was only nine words, but they had an amazing impact. From that day onward, all *anash* davened in one single *minyan*, and nobody spoke during davening. It was really a revolution; the davening indeed became '*shein*.'"³⁵

Reb Bentche wasn't content with England.

"Among my earliest Chassidische memories," related Mrs. Risha Slavaticki from Antwerp, "are the Chassidim that used to visit the city. Reb Bentche Shemtov, for example, would go to shuls to *chazzer*

Chassidus. He once went to the shul of Reb Itzik'l of Pshevorsk and began repeating a *sicha*. Some *yungeleit* asked him to stop, but Reb Bentche wasn't exactly one to be *nispoel* from a few young men. When their words fell on deaf ears, they physically removed him from the building, only for him to return. They removed him again and locked the door, but the window suddenly opened, and he was back inside. When Reb Itzik'l heard the commotion, he instructed that Reb Bentche be permitted to continue."³⁶

"SHICHOS!"

One of Reb Bentche's greatest passions was the dissemination of the Rebbe's *sichos*.

In the early years, the Rebbe's *sichos* were not published in an organized fashion. Only in 5718*, under the initiative of three or four bochurim, the Rebbe began editing a *sicha* each week for the *tahalucha*.³⁹ When Reb Bentche would visit New York, he would often enter the office, watch the typing, and rub together his hands in delight. In the summer of 5719*, he arranged for Tzach in London to republish the *sichos* for wide dissemination, ensuring that it

was printed in a high quality fashion.

Reb Bentzion wasn't satisfied with the one year's worth of *sichos* that were released.

In 5722*, at the Tzach convention on Sukkos, Reb Bentzion Shemtov declared with his inimitable lisp, "*Mdarf nemen a mensch, cholen gelt, un s'vet zein shichos*." Tzach, he said, needed a permanent employee whose job would be to publicize the Rebbe's *sichos*. With volunteer work, nothing would ever be properly done.

After the Rebbe received the *duch* of the *kinus*, Rabbi Hodakov told Reb Dovid Raskin that he would pay a beginner's salary for a permanent employee, and Rabbi Leibel Alevsky was hired.

"One of the first things I organized was Likkutei Sichos. That year, the Rebbe began editing the second round of *sichos* (volumes 3-4), and I was heavily involved in all of the work."⁴⁰

This produced another year of *mugadike sichos*.

A few years later, towards the end of 5727*, Reb Bentche once again took action. He asked Reb Zalman Chananin and a group of *bochurim* and *yungeleit* to form Vaad L'hafotzas Sichos. Every week, they would take a *sicha* that had been previously edited by the Rebbe (in 5718* or 5723*) and print thousands of copies, sending them around the world. Reb Bentche was very involved, constantly *koching* in and helping fundraise for the "*shichos*."

Before Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz 5729*, after two years of reprinting old *sichos*, they realized that they had run out of *sichos* for that week. Reb Bentche asked Reb Yoel Kahan to prepare a new *sicha*, and the Rebbe agreed to edit it. Within a short time, Likkutei Sichos again became a reality.

But printing wasn't enough. Each week, between Mincha and Maariv on Friday night, Reb Bentche would announce "*Shichos!*" encouraging everyone to sit down and learn

the Rebbe's *sichos*. He would do so in 770, in any Lubavitcher shul, and in non-Lubavitch shuls he visited as well. Wherever he went, the *sichos* went along with him.

In 5733*, Likkutei Sichos began to be published in Lashon Hakodesh. Reb Bentche, whose wife had already passed away, sold his home in London, went to Eretz Yisroel, and paid for the establishment of a printing press in Kfar Chabad ("Machon Levi Yitzchok") to disseminate the *sichos* in Eretz Yisroel.

THE REBBE'S "ARMIYA"

On a summer day in 5735*, Reb Bentche was walking across the street at the entrance to Kfar Chabad when, in a terrible accident, he was struck by a passing truck. Several days later, on 5 Tammuz, he returned his soul to his maker.

On Yud-Beis Tammuz, at the farbrengen, the Rebbe made mention of this special Chossid.

"Since the arrest and imprisonment is connected to Russia and especially to the army which the *baal hasimcha*

THROUGH AND THROUGH

A *mashpia* shared the following recollections of Reb Bentche:

"Reb Bentzion Shemtov was a fascinating blend between the different generations of the Rabbeim. On one hand, he was a *talmid* of the yeshiva in Lubavitch, and that was evident in everything he did. On the other hand, there was nobody more excited about *mivtzoim*, *sichos* and all of the Rebbe's *inyanim* than Reb Bentche, placing him squarely in *dor Hashvi'i*.

"It was expressed in interesting ways. I recall, for example, how he sat with us *bochurim* one Shabbos in 770 and farbrenged about the importance of dedicating ourselves to the Rebbe's *mivtzoim*, even if it needs to come at the expense of *avodah pnimis*.


"Had you thought that he was simply *mezalzel* in *avodah pnimis* (*chas veshalom*), you just needed to stay a few minutes longer. After he finished his speech, I saw him sit down in a corner of the *ezras nashim* with a *Samach Vov* and proceed to daven at great length. With all his restlessness and globe-trotting, you saw who he really was — a Chossid with no greater *taavah* than a *Samach Vov* and a few hours to daven."

v'hageulah established... it is an appropriate time to sing a Russian *niggun*, and specifically a *niggun* that speaks about 'Mi Armia Admura,' the army of the Rebbe."

This was a Russian military song which Reb Bentche had repurposed into a *niggun* about the dedication of Chassidim to the Rebbe.

Hinting to Reb Bentche, the Rebbe continued: "This is associated with

the fact that the Kovetz Michtavim of Tehillim was just published in English, in memory of a person who had the merit to be exiled for spreading Torah.

"*Yehi ratzon* that this army, which continues to exist today, should be an appropriate continuation; the young should look at those soldiers, in that army, and likewise raise their children and grandchildren..." 

1. *My Encounter with the Rebbe - Volume 2*, Shavuot (and Tanya) 5735 (1975), "A Tribute to Rabbi Bentzion Shemtov." Chabad.org/2593583.

2. As told by Reb Avrohom Mayorer. Some details are from *Kiddush Hashem* by Reb Aharon Gershuni.

3. As told by Rabbi Avremel Shemtov.

4. *Kiddush Hashem* pg. 92.

5. 12 Tammuz 5702. *Sefer Hasichos* 5702 pg. 154.

6. Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz vol. 2 pg. 149.

7. See Derher Sivan 5779, "Gaon and Chossid."

8. Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz vol. 1 pg. 579.

9. See Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz vol. 1 pg. 619.

10. Toldos Chabad B'Rusia Hasovietis pg. 92

11. *Kiddush Hashem* pg. 91.

12. Igros Kodesh Admur Harayatz vol. 16 pg. 171.

13. Shavuot 5705. *Sefer Hasichos* 5705 pg. 106.

14. Teshura, Shemtov Bar Mitzvah 5767.

15. As heard from Rabbi Berel Shemtov.

16. As told by Rabbi Yaakov Yehoshua Laufer, who was in Paris at the time.

17. Harabi Bipariz pg. 441.

18. Igros Kodesh vol. 21 pg. 85.

19. For the article about this special Chossid, see Shevat 5779, "The Lamplighter from Lubavitch."

20. See Igros Kodesh vol. 4 pg. 151.

21. I.e. about the Rebbe's refusal to accept the nesius. See Yemei Bereishis p. 105.

22. Yimei Bireishis pg. 147.

23. Igros Kodesh vol. 7 pg. 213.

24. *Peleh Hadorot* pg. 35.

25. *Sippur Ishi* pg. 407.

26. Raskin-Minkowitz Teshurah 5774 pg. 18.

27. *My Encounter* issue 26, pg. 44.

28. Derher Sivan 5777 pg. 8

29. *My Encounter with the Rebbe - Volume 1*. Shavuot 5728 (1968), "Royal Dining." Chabad.org/260028.

30. *Chodesh Tishrei Bibeis Chayenu* pg. 31.

31. Yoman Gross Tishrei 5714.

32. Letter, 6 Cheshvan 5710.

33. Teshura Cohen-Sossover 5757 pg. 18.

34. Teshurah Vogel-Huss 5773 pg. 23, Derher Shevat 5779 pg. 38.

35. Professor Greene, Shalom Uvracha pg. 152.

36. *Koach Nashi*, pg. 220.

37. See Derher Shevat 5776, "Sefer Torah Shel Moshiach."

38. Toras Menachem vol. 59 pg. 62.

39. See Derher Tammuz 5777, "The Written Torah."

40. Derher Iyar 5778 pg. 51.



ואה שערות הלא חלה
דבר השלם את כל צאת המצור העל
ביום שלום דהנהגה - אם יעמוד חזק
דהתשדונו הלי, עלי. חסד רחמי הילי,
ויטה השורה על ציון ממצור העל
ועל בער ידי לעפול / וועל וי
13 עשרה

דער רבי וועט
געפינען א וועג...

לע"נ
מרת רייזל
בת ר' צבי יהודה ע"ה
נלב"ע ג' אדר ה'תש"ע
ת"נ צ"ב ה'

נדפס ע"י בנה
הרה"ת ר' אברהם אבא וזוגתו מרת חנה פרומא
ומשפחתם שיחיו
פערלמוטער

“It happened a week later!”

AS TOLD BY MR. HENRY BELMAN (MEDIA, PA)

Although I lived in Brooklyn for many years, had an Orthodox Jewish education in my youth and passed by 770 quite often, I never had the opportunity to engage with Chabad in a meaningful way. Approximately 11 years ago, my son and his family living in Pittsburgh, PA became involved with Rabbi Yisroel and Chani Altein, Chabad shluchim in Squirrel Hill.

My wife and I had the opportunity to meet them

during one of our visits there. We were so impressed with their friendliness and passion for Yiddishkeit that we decided to introduce ourselves to our local Chabad rabbi and rebbetzin in Media, PA at the time, Rabbi Eli Dovid and Rivkah Strasberg.

Several months later, Rabbi Strasberg invited us to join him and several other couples on a day-long trip to New York to visit the Ohel and Crown Heights.



When we arrived at the Ohel we were advised to write a note to the Rebbe with requests for blessings we wished for.

Our son Philip was 40 years old at the time. He was always studious and hard working and was never inclined to get married and start a family. We as Jewish parents wanted very much to see him marry a Jewish woman and have children, so we both decided to write in our notes a request for Philip to find a nice Jewish girl and start a family soon.

We entered the Ohel, recited several chapters of Tehillim and tore up the notes as we were told is customarily done. On our way out we gave tzedakah and the entire experience was very special for us.

A week later Philip called us with the news that he just met a Jewish girl online. We were amazed at how quickly and miraculously the Rebbe's blessing

seemed to be materializing just a week after we had davened at the Ohel for this to happen.

Philip eventually dated and married the woman he met online that week and they are now the parents of a wonderful little girl. All this happened because of the Rebbe's blessing and we are proud supporters and members of our local Chabad ever since.

I share this story all the time with people and I know many friends of ours that went to visit the Ohel as a result of hearing our story.

YOUR STORY

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



*Today as always, when in doubt we write to the Rebbe.
And today as always, the Rebbe finds a way to answer.*

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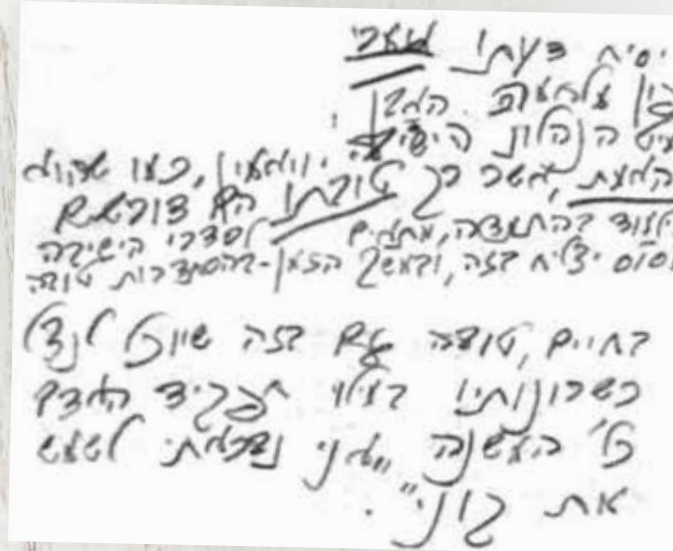
כתב יד קודש

לזכות

הילד חיים לוי יצחק שיחי'
לרגל יום הולדתו ט"ז אדר א'
יה"ר שיגדל לתורה לחופה
ולמעשים טובים מתוך בריאות
נכונה ושפע בגו"ר
לנח"ר כ"ק אדמו"ר והוריו הי"ו

Move On

The Rebbe advises a yeshiva bochur how to adopt the proper application of his time and energy:



Take your mind **completely** off the idea of battling with the administration of your yeshiva, and believe the real **truth**, that they only seek the **best** for you. Learn diligently in accordance with the *seder* in yeshiva, and ultimately you will succeed at it. Then with time, you will also do good in life in general; good in the sense that you will be able to maximize your talents to fulfill the purpose for which every person was created, as the Mishnah states: "I was created to serve my Master [Hashem]..."

יסיח דעתו לגמרי פון מלחמה האבן מיט הנהלת הישיבה, ויאמין, כמו שהוא האמת, אשר רק טובתו הם דורשים וילמוד בהתמדה, מתאים לסדרי הישיבה וסו"ס יצליח בזה, ובמשך הזמן - בהסתדרות טובה בחיים, טובה גם בזה שיוכל לנצל כשרונותיו במילוי תפקיד האדם כל' המשנה "אני נבראתי לשמש את קוני".



Moments

לזכות
ר' מיכאל יוסף וזוגתו מרת גיטל ברכה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
בלאק
West Hartford, Connecticut



MAARIV IN THE SMALL ZAL

Circa 5726*

In this month's issue we present a brand new collection of photos of
the Rebbe davening Maariv in the small *zal* upstairs in 770.

UPON ENTERING THE
REBBE DONS HIS GARTEL.





HEMA



SHEMONEH ESREH



Letters

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

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

The Rebbe's Check to Gemilas Chesed

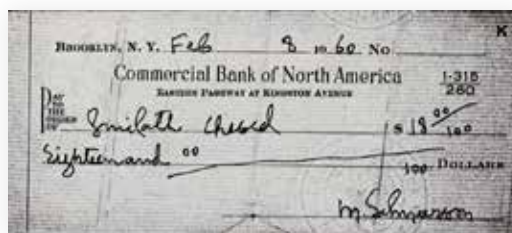
Dear Editors,

In the article about Reb Yosef Robinson [*The Rebbe's Gvir*, Teves 5782, p. 19], you published a picture of a check that the Rebbe sent to the "Gemilas Chesed Fund" established by Reb Yosef.

I was *zoche* to be the recipient of this check. Let me explain the background:

I was learning in 770 in 5720*. The *mosad*/account had been established years earlier to lend money to *bochurim* in need, but no funds remained.

Those days were different than now. *Bochurim* had no money at all and couldn't afford basic needs. My friend Velvel Konikov and I, both learning in 770 at the time, decided that we must reopen it. We wrote a letter to Reb Yosef asking him to send a donation which would make this possible. As we didn't receive a reply, we proceeded to raise funds from others and added a few dollars of our own. Eventually we had enough money that would ensure that every *bochur* in



770 would be able to receive a loan of up to \$10, quite a large sum at the time.

When I wrote in a *duch* to the Rebbe with all the details, I suggested reopening the *mosad* which was originally called "The Joseph Robinson Gemilas Chesed Fund."

The Rebbe responded to the *duch* by sending the \$18 check and wrote just the words "Gemilas Chesed." The *mazkirim* were excited by this, because when the Rebbe would write checks to *mosdos* in those days, he would just write the amount and signature, leaving everything else blank. Here the Rebbe filled out all the details, including the exact name that he wanted the *mosad* to be called.

Pesach Bernstein
BROOKLYN, NY

Correction: In the Front Seat

Dear Editors,

Firstly, as has been expressed by so many, a big *yasher koach* for a fantastic uplifting publication month after month.

I just want to make a small correction to the Teves issue:

You published a display of photos dated after the farbrengen of Chanukah 5734*, 9:15 p.m.

The photos are actually from 2 different occasions.

1) Two photos of the Rebbe leaving

his office with a white bag. This was usual for the Rebbe to take home paperwork.

2) Three photos of the Rebbe walking with a brown bag. This is on the way to the Ohel as is evident from the Rebbe entering the front seat of the car, that is where the Rebbe sat when he travelled to Ohel. All other times, he was always in the rear seat. Also, daylight can be seen. The Rebbe would leave for the Ohel in the afternoon and return after dark.

Avremi Kievman

LIVERPOOL, ENGLAND

