

## VEASK And the Rebbe answers

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The Rebbe a wav

FIRST-HAND ACCOUNTS of THE REBBE'S BRACHOS & GUIDANCE AFTER GIMMEL TAMMUZ

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"...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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ב"ה





The Rebbe's Chief of Staff Rabbi Chaim Mordechai Aizik Hodakov



The Conduit for Blessings A closer look at the takanah of Chitas



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A Chassidisher Derher Magazine is a publication geared toward bochurim, published and copyrighted by A Chassidisher Derher under the auspices of Vaad Hatmimim Haolami.

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has been made possible

לזכות. הרה״ת ר׳ **שלום** וזוגתו מרת **שרה** וילדיהם ישראל, ריסא, חי׳ מושקא, אמונה מלכה, יעקב יהודה, ולאה שיחיו אייזיקוביץ

ולע"ג זקנינו הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' ישראל בן הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' שניאור זלמן ע"ה דוכמאן נלב"ע ז' אייר ה'תשמ"ט ת'ג'צ'ב'ה'

hen living through difficult times, we usually look for something to keep us going; to allow us to continue our *avodah* and inspire us to do even more. Coming from Yud-Aleph Nissan—120 years, the Rebbe's new *kapitel* is a beautiful source of inspiration. In a fascinating *sicha* explaining the *pesukim* of kapitel 121, the Rebbe asks:

We all know that a most important element of our *avodas Hashem* is to be *besimcha*. Not just in theory, but to really and genuinely feel joyful.

But looking around at events unfolding in our world, this becomes a difficult if not impossible task. Darkness covers the earth and the situation seems untenable.

Of course, we know that the darkness is only temporary, there to allow for an even greater light to emerge. But in the meantime, while we still find ourselves in turmoil, we are expected to be joyful. Not just to act as if we're joyful, by forcing a smile on our faces; we are supposed to really feel it. How is this at all possible?

The answer, says the Rebbe, is in Tehillim 121:

The *possuk* says "מאין יבא עזרי". "The meaning of these words should be understood, not as a question—"From where will my help come?"—but as a statement: My help will come from "אין"—from a transcendent level, way above and beyond the means of nature.

But that's not enough.

We need the help to come down into a tangible realm, where we can feel and appreciate it here on earth. So the *possuk* continues: "עזרי מעם ה' עשה שמים וארץ"—our help will come from Hashem Who creates heaven and earth.

Hashem's help manifests itself into the world, "heaven and earth," to the extent that we can rest assured that: "לא ינום ולא יישן שומר ישראל": We might find ourselves in a world where G-dliness is so hidden, to the point that it appears no one is taking heed to our plight. But nothing could be further from the truth. Hashem's watchful eye never closes, and He is constantly guarding us from all evil; because His protection emanates from the level of "mainter", a level completely unaffected and unchanged by anything that happens in the lower worlds. Hashem Himself is ever-present and unchanging—"אני ה' לא שניתי; and so is His protection—"לא ינום ולא יישן שומר ישראל."

With this in mind, we can continue our *avodah* in the most joyful manner.

And our *avodas Hashem* with *simcha* will ensure that even in these darkest moments of *galus*, we will remain unfazed. Like the Yidden in Mitzrayim who, even while still in the final moments of their exile, they already experienced ""יהור שראל הי" it was light in their dwellings.

Similarly, we will see the great wonders and miracles of the *geulah* out of this current *galus*, speedily, now, *Mammash*!

The Editors יום הבהיר י"א ניסן ה'תשפ"ב מאה ועשרים שנה

1. Chof Cheshvan 5741 sicha 1.



לזכות התלמידים והתלמידות, המלמדים והמורות, וכל צוות חדר ליובאוויטש שיקאגא שיחיו

נדפס ע"י הרה"ת ר' **משה פינחס** וזוגתו מרת **עלקא ומשפחתם** שיחיו **וואלף** 

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# Shabbos and Shemitah

Observing Shabbos reminds us of two things:

1. That Hashem created the world and rested on the seventh day.

2. That we were enslaved in Mitzrayim and Hashem performed supernatural miracles to take us out, and so we are beholden to Him. We show this by following His orders and refraining from doing what He forbade us to do on Shabbos.

*Shemitah* also reminds us of the first point, for by not working the land we remind ourselves that it belongs to Hashem because He created it.

However it does not remind us of the miracles of *yetzias Mitzrayim*. Thus, Shabbos is important even during a *Shemitah* year for the purpose of remembering *yetzias Mitzrayim*.

In truth, however, even in regards to the first point of remembering that Hashem created heaven and earth, *Shemitah* alone is not enough. This is because *Shemitah* only serves as a reminder during those times and moments of the year when one would have been working the land, not while sitting at home eating, learning, etc. Additionally, *Shemitah* only serves as a reminder for an individual who owns land.

In contrast, Shabbos—being an entire day—encompasses and thus elevates every action of the day, including eating, learning, sleeping, etc.

On the other hand *Shemitah* has the advantage that it permeates even a non-holy day when one can do work, and yet in the seventh year he still has the limitations of *Shemitah*.

(Adapted from Shabbos Parshas Behar-Bechukosai 5726) **1** 



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

טור 'לעבן מיטן רבי'ן' 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'

## Through Fire And Water

IYAR 5726\*

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Despite the gloomy weather forecast, the Lag B'omer parade of 5726\* was truly one to remember. Thousands of Jewish children, from schools on all ends of the spectrum, proudly marched in solidarity to celebrate their heritage. The highlight of the parade was when the Rebbe stood on a *bima* outside 770 and addressed the large audience.

> Here are selections from letters written by Reb Sholom Ber Wolpo, then a *bochur* from Eretz Yisroel who was learning in 770.

#### PARADE PLANS

7 Iyar: Lag B'omer will fall out again on a Sunday this year. As the schools have off on Sundays, Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch utilizes the opportunity to arrange a grand parade for Jewish children enrolled in New York public schools. In previous years (with the exception of 5723\*), the Rebbe came out in front of 770 to address these children.

Hopefully, this year, the Rebbe will come out again. It looks rather promising, as the Rebbe has expressed significant interest in this year's parade, urging us to try to get tens of thousands of children to attend.

Today, I went on Released Time to a public school around half-an-hour away from 770. As usual, we waited for the children to trickle out of their respective classes and then transported them to a nearby shul. We sat with them and told stories, taught halachos, sang songs, etc. Afterwards, we went to the school gates and upon dismissal distributed pamphlets advertising the upcoming Lag B'omer parade.

#### FIRE

15 Iyar: Last night, we were learning in zal when at around 11:30 p.m., we were interrupted by a sudden commotion and the sounds of sirens from approaching fire trucks. We watched as the Rebbe left his room and walked out of 770. Naturally, we ran outside after him to see what was going on. The Rebbe went over to the Rebbetzin, who was waiting in a car nearby, and told her something. He then turned towards the firefighters, who had just stopped at their destination-the building on the corner, which housed the yeshiva dormitory where we slept...<sup>1</sup>

The Rebbe said, "Lomir geien zehn vos tut zich" (let's go see what's going on) and went to the entrance of the building. There were tens of firefighters running about, all dressed in protective gear and wearing oxygen masks as they descended into the basement of the building. This was no minor blaze. It was a very dangerous situation, as the building and its surrounding buildings were all made of wood and thus very flammable. Worse still, the basement housed the building's central heating with fuel canisters lying around! All this was happening to a building that was attached to 770!

Moving closer to the building, the Rebbe approached the firefighters and inquired about



the situation. They informed the Rebbe that they had already extinguished the fire and that everything was under control. Apparently, the janitors were partying wildly in the basement when they started the fire in a state of intoxication.

The Rebbe returned to 770 and knocked on the door of the office of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, seeking Rabbi Hodakov. One bochur ran to retrieve him. The Rebbe told Rabbi Hodakov what had transpired: "S'iz geven a sreifah in unzere binyan un m'hot gerufen di parzharnikes, un di bochurim dreyen zich un s'iz nito keiner vos zol reden mit di parzharnikes." (There was a fire in our building, the fire department was called and the bochurim are loitering about, but there is no one [responsible] to speak to the firefighters.) Then the Rebbe turned to the bochurim and, clearly displeased, said, "Dos iz a farbrengen? Vos leift men mir noch?" (Is this a farbrengen? Why are you all following me?")

The Rebbe went back to the Rebbetzin, and after the fire trucks left, her car was able to pass. At the end, everything worked out, and there was no severe damage except for one old couch in the basement.

#### EXTRACURRICULAR ENDEAVORS

Last Thursday night, 8 Iyar, the hanhala had a yechidus. The Rebbe requested that the bochurim

from Eretz Yisroel draft a written commitment to increase their learning of *nigleh* and Chassidus after *seder* and to have it signed by every *bochur*. This would be a concrete implementation of a previous request, as the Rebbe had urged several months ago that the *bochurim* from Eretz Yisroel should study more outside of *sedarim*.

And so it came to be. We committed to learning every evening, from the end of *seder* until 11:30, and on Thursday nights until midnight. Over the next few nights, we noticed Rabbi Hodakov would "casually" drop in to survey the *zal*. He would scrutinize the *bochurim* to see who kept their commitment, and reported it to the Rebbe.

#### YECHIDUS

The Ashkenazic chief rabbi of Eretz Yisroel, Rabbi Yehuda Unterman, was slated to arrive for a *yechidus* today. However, due to technical difficulties, his visit was postponed until next week.

Instead, the first to enter for *yechidus* was the rav of Antwerp, Rabbi Medalie. His *yechidus* lasted for an hour and a quarter. After him, Rabbi Kalman Kahana<sup>2</sup> entered. His *yechidus* will probably last for a long while. A *bochur* who was standing next to the Rebbe's room saw how the Rebbe got up and extended his hand in welcome when he walked into the room. My grandfather

#### NO RAIN ON MY SCHEDULE

As the morning of the parade was very wet, alternate arrangements were being prepared for the parade, that some children would gather inside the shul and others would remain on the buses.

Earlier that day, Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda Hecht met the Rebbe on his way back from *mikveh* and exclaimed, "There is no rain on my schedule!" The Rebbe responded, "There is no rain on my schedule either."

When it came down to it, by the time the Rebbe was ready to come out, the rain had stopped. For the rest of the day, the weather was nice.

Interestingly, during the *sicha*, the Rebbe avoided using the words "*Im bechukosai*" and "*V*'*nasati gishmeichem*." When Rabbi Hecht repeated the *sicha* in English, he wasn't conscious of those omissions and included those *pesukim*.

Afterward, the Rebbe corrected him: "When so many Yidden gathered here it is not "*Im bechukosai*" (if you will heed my laws) as it is certain that they will! Also, there is no need to say "gishmeichem" (rains) as now is a time that we would prefer that it shouldn't rain."



A VIEW OF THE PARADE FROM THE ROOFTOP OF 788 EASTERN PARKWAY.

(Reb Ezriel Zelig Slonim) was also scheduled to have a *yechidus* tonight, but it too was postponed until next week.

#### THE PARADE

Over the past few weeks, we have all been very busy with the parade preparations. All in all, it was a beautiful parade. Although we had anticipated over ten thousand children, the torrential downpour that afflicted New York City that morning brought the number down to around five or six thousand.

I will write a brief rundown of today's parade:

The police closed off five large blocks on Eastern Parkway, from Albany to Rogers. The children were situated in four neat rows along Eastern Parkway, facing 770. There was a *bima* set up on the steps of 770, which allowed the Rebbe to walk right out and address the crowd.

Once everybody got into position, the Rebbe came out and spoke for approximately 15 minutes. The *sicha* was about essential lessons children can learn from the story of Lag B'omer.

Here is the general outline of what the Rebbe said:

"When the Roman senate issued a death warrant on Rebbi Shimon Bar Yochai, he took his son, and together they hid in a cave where they studied Torah for many years. In the merit of their learning, not only did they miraculously survive, but once they emerged, they became great Torah leaders.

"Thankfully, nowadays we do not suffer from such cruel edicts. However, one decree is still relevant – that is, the decree of the *yetzer hara*, who does everything in his power to prevent us from learning Torah and doing mitzvos. When a child realizes that the *yetzer hara* is baiting him, he should emulate Rashbi and seclude himself in a cave. That is, to hide from worldly matters and distractions, instead focusing on learning Torah and doing mitzvos, thereby foiling the *yetzer hara's* plans. And just like Hashem sustained Rashbi in the cave by providing him with a carob tree, etc., so too Hashem will provide anything you may need. Your parents will reap much *nachas* from this, and it will further hasten Moshiach's coming."

Of course, I shortened it for brevity, but in a nutshell this was what the Rebbe said.

The *sicha* left a strong impression on all those present. In fact, after the parade, a woman (who had come to bring her children) told me that while the Rebbe said the *sicha*, she noticed women around her weeping emotionally.

Indeed, the scene of the parade left an indelible impression on anyone fortunate to be present at this momentous occasion. Just picture five or six thousand Jewish children marching together while carrying banners emblazoned with phrases like "*Ein Od Milvado*" and other slogans in English and Yiddish urging the observance of Shabbos and *kashrus*...

After the Rebbe delivered the *sicha*, the parade coordinator, Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda Hecht, repeated the *sicha* in English. Then the parade began. In groups of four, the children marched along Eastern Parkway and were led past the Rebbe by their counselors. Each group proudly carried their banners which also identified their school. The procession lasted for about an hour until all the children had walked past.

Throughout the procession, the Rebbe smiled and waved to the children. It was a spectacular scene vividly demonstrating how the Rebbe's greatness expresses itself in his humility. He gives so much of his precious attention to small children because every Jew matters dearly to him.

The procession continued all the way to Eastern Parkway and Rogers, where 180 buses were waiting to take the children to the largest park in Brooklyn. I wouldn't be exaggerating if I claimed that this park is bigger than the entire Yerushalayim. Upon arrival, we distributed sandwiches and fruits to all the children, and of course, we washed and *bentched* with them. Then the counselors entertained their groups with activities and games.

It is incredible that we were able to source so many yeshiva *bochurim* to be counselors. We recruited counselors from almost every yeshiva in Brooklyn; for example, Yeshivas Yitzchak Elchanan (Yeshiva University) provided us with 70 *bochurim*.

I was appointed to distribute the food to each group. Once I had finished, I was given a group to take charge of. I had to keep them entertained with all sorts of games and amusing "*shtick*." My co-counselor speaks English, so he told them interesting stories. Every set of counselors was paired up with that in mind.

At 3:00 p.m., megaphones blasted, summoning all the children to the center of the park. They raffled off fancy prizes like cameras and bikes for all the children who participated. After the raffles, the children boarded their respective buses and went home content after a full day of fun and excitement.

Overall, the event was a great success and will hopefully result in many positive outcomes.

<sup>1.</sup> This is the basement of 788 Eastern Parkway, which was purchased by Merkos in 5725. During those years it was occupied by 770 *bochurim* and several *anash* families. See "The Heartbeat of Lubavitch," part 2 in Derher Iyar 5775.

<sup>2.</sup> Rabbi Dr. Kalman Kahana was a rav in Eretz Yisroel, and a member of Knesset from the Poalei Agudas Yisroel party. He started a *beis midrash* dedicated to learning *halachos* of an agricultural lifestyle.



IN ORDER TO HELP WITH THE TRANSLATION OF SICHA, RABBI HECHT RECORDED THE REBBE'S WORDS AND THEN LISTENED TO THEM WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY OFFERING AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION (IN ADDITION TO TAKING NOTES, AS HE USUALLY WOULD). IN THE VIDEO OF THE EVENT, RABBI HECHT IS SEEN SHOWING THE REBBE THE RECORDING DEVICE BEFORE BEGINNING THE TRANSLATION AND THE REBBE SMILES AT HIM. WHILE RABBI HECHT SPEAKS, THE REBBE FOLLOWS ALONG IN RABBI HECHT'S NOTES, PICTURED HERE IN THIS NEWLY RELEASED PHOTO FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE NCFJE.

IN THE ENSUING YEARS, RABBI HECHT USED A SEPARATE PODIUM DURING THE PARADES.

### Stories of the Rebbe



## 'Do you have a pan to give the Rebbe?

RABBI CHAIM HILLEL MALIK OF BROOKLYN, NY RELATED THE FOLLOWING STORY:

I grew up in a family of Kosover Chassidim in Boro Park. The Chassidus of Kosov was all but wiped out by the Nazis, and the remaining Kosover Chassidim joined the court of Vizhnitz, which Kosov was originally an offshoot of.

In the early 5740s\*, I was studying in the main Vizhnitzer yeshiva in Bnei Brak. At one point I began learning *maamarim*, and started becoming involved with Chabad Chassidus.

My interest in the Rebbe's teachings grew, and I started to try and get my hands on the Kfar Chabad Magazine, which would include the Rebbe's farbrengens. If I happened across a Likkutei Sichos in a shul, I would quickly sit down and learn a *sicha*.

When I returned to Boro Park in 5746\*, I started going to 770 often to daven Mincha with the Rebbe. I remember the first time I walked in and saw the Rebbe. After this period of following the farbrengens and learning Chassidus, I felt pulled to the Rebbe. I started walking the hour and a half or so to 770 from Boro Park every Shabbos to join the Rebbe's farbrengens. And from then until 5752\*, I rarely missed a farbrengen.

In the late 5740s\*, I decided to go to the Frierdiker Rebbe's Ohel, together with a friend named Aharon Klein, who was also becoming closer to Chabad. We were completely unfamiliar with the finer points of etiquette surrounding when and how Chassidim did so.

One day when we were at the Ohel, two people suddenly came in and started setting up the booth in which the Rebbe would stand when visiting the Ohel. As they set up the booth, running a generator and turning on lights, they summarily told us that the Rebbe would soon be here, and we were expected to leave.

We were quite taken aback by the whole scene,

and we stood outside the Ohel in the area between the resting places of Rebbetzin Chana and Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka. We hadn't even had a chance to put our *panim* in the Ohel, so there we stood with our *panim*.

The Rebbe's car stopped in the roadway adjacent to the Ohel. Rabbi Krinsky got out and opened the Rebbe's door, and the Rebbe stepped out of the car, holding a brown bag of *panim*, his holy lips moving — though we could not know what the Rebbe was saying.

The Rebbe glanced at us for a moment, and the Rebbe put out his hand, signaling us to bring our *panim*. The Rebbe took them and brought them into the Ohel.

Several months later, we were at the Ohel again, and again we didn't know that the Rebbe would be there — we had just visited on our own. My friend had already torn up his *pan*, and suddenly, once again the same two people came hustling in, began setting up, and told us that the Rebbe was coming and we should go out. They

apparently thought that these two *bochurim* knew that the Rebbe was coming and were waiting to give the Rebbe their *panim*, and so they were very clear with us.

לזכות הרה"ת ר' שלום דובער וזוגתו מרת טויבא ובתם חי' מושקא שיחיו ווייס להצלחה רבה בנסיעתם בשליחות כ"ק אדמו"ר לבלגרביה, אנגליה נדפס ע"י הוריהם הרה"ת ר' יהודה בנימין וזוגתו מרת חנה ווייס הרה"ת ר' משה וזוגתו מרת חנה ומשפחתם שיחיו ווילאנסקי

> We left the Ohel, and stood on the side to watch the Rebbe come again. This time we stood a bit farther back, and one of the individuals stood in front of us, making sure to block us.

Once again the Rebbe stepped out of the car, and lifted his holy eyes for a split second. Then the Rebbe went into the Ohel. The moment the Rebbe entered the Ohel, Rabbi Krinsky ran out of the room and made a beeline straight to me. "Do you have a *pan* to give the Rebbe," he asked." I gave him my *pan* and then he asked whether anyone else had a *pan* to give. "I already put mine in the Ohel," my friend replied.

The Rebbe knew what his Chossid needed, come what may.



RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON Lubavitch 770 EASTERN PARKWAY BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.

Ales NACE DAVE 1331 In over leve with (G.2.2) Brigh 34 Viz) B the 1 ch NO AND A

Blessing and Greeting:

I received your letter of the 14th of Kislev, and may G-d grant the fulfillment your heart's desires for good in all the matters about which you write.

With the approach of Chanukah, I tru you surely remember what our Sages tell un about the role which Jewish women played the miracle of Chanukah, in those days at this season. The purpose of the remembrau and celebration of our festivals is to cor vert the inspiration of the festival into the daily life. The message of Chanukah, in particular, emphasizes the need to spre the light of the Torah and Mitzvoth in a growing measure, just as the lights of Chanukah are kindled with an additional Chanukah light each day.

Wishing you a happy and inspiring -rie (21-10)

איסור לקציר אישי אייני אייני

לזכות הרה"ת ר' **אברהם יהודה** הלוי וזוגתו מרת דבורה לאה ומשפחתם שיחיו סאסקינד נוביי, מישיגין

# WHERE **DOES THIS** QUESTION **ORIGINA**

The following was written in the Rebbe's holy handwriting as a postscript to a typed letter in English, dated 20 Kislev 5725\*. The Rebbe addresses a woman's concerns and guides her in her growth in Yiddishkeit:

[Instruction to the secretary] to add:

About which you write that you are not always able to find answers to the questions others ask you, regarding proof [of the authenticity] of Yiddishkeit, Torah and mitzvos:

It is obvious that you should not be disheartened by this, because even elders who spend all their days in Torah study don't have answers for every single question. Why is it surprising that a human being is unable to understand the full depth of the wisdom of Hashem, which He revealed in His Torah? Certainly this need not hinder our fulfillment of the mitzvos whatsoever.

If you think about it, you will realize that most of those who are asking these questions are not doing so out of a quest to know the truth. Rather, they wish to justify their own lifestyles (whether for other people or for their own conscience): They rejected the way of life of their ancestors, many of whom gave up their lives for the sake of Yiddishkeit, while they [the questioners] abandoned the yoke of Torah and mitzvos, trading it [merely] for a comfortable material life.

You are incorrect in your writing that one should live in a nonobservant community, as a way to test their strength and resolve. On the contrary: every single person, even a *tzaddik gamur*, prays every day at the **beginning of the day**, asking that Hashem should not put us to a test. It is only **if Hashem** has already placed you in a situation that tests [your faith], that you must stand firm and pass the test. Engaging in debates is a job for rabbonim, etc. For everyone else, it is only when absolutely necessary.

Obviously, you are correct in writing that one cannot make compromises when it comes to Torah and mitzvos.

(How would it even be possible to make a compromise about something which is absolute **truth**, given by the true G-d!)

Regarding what you've been told about compromises: For example, when we suspend [the laws of] Shabbos when a life is in danger—that is not a compromise at all, rather it is a true ruling just like any other ruling of the Torah of Truth. [Just like it is a mitzvah] to fast on Yom Kippur, it is prohibited to fast on Shabbos and *yom tov*, and there is a prohibition to fast when a life is in danger. [Similarly,] it is prohibited to light a fire on Shabbos, but it is a **mitzvah** to light a fire to save an endangered life, as well as on the *mizbeiach* in the *Beis Hamikdash*.

(Teshura Levin-Simpson 5767)

#### להוסיף

לכתבה שלא תמיד מוצאה המענה לשאלות ששואלים אותה ראיות ליהדות ותומ"צ - פשוט שאין לה ליפול ברוחה מזה, כיון שאפילו זקנים שעוסקים כל ימיהם בת"ת לא כל השאלות יכולים לתרץ ומה פלא שאדם נברא אין ביכולתו להבין חכ' ה' שגילה בתורתו עד תכליתה?! ופשיטא שאין זה צריך כלל לנגוע ח"ו בקיום המצוות.

כשת[ת]בונן - תראה שרוב המקשים - זהו לא שמחפשים האמת כ"א רוצים להצדיק א"ע (לפני אחרים וגם מצפונם) על שעזבו דרך חיים דאבותיהם וא"א [=ואבות אבותיהם] שכמה מהם מס"נ על היהדות והם פרקו עול תומ"צ בשביל נוחיות החיים הגשמיים.

אינה צודקת בכתבה שצ"ל בסביבה בלתי דתית שזהו הדרך לבחון כחות עצמו - כי אדרבה כאו"א מתפלל ובתחלת היום ואפילו צד"ג ואל תביאנו לידי נסיון. אלא <u>כשהקב"ה</u> מזמין נסיון צ"ל חזק ולעמוד בנסיון. וכניסה לויכוחים - זהו תפקידם של רבנים וכו' - אבל לשאר אנשים הוא רק כשמוכרחים לזה.

כמובן צודקת בכתבה שאי אפשר לעשות פשרות בתומ"צ. (ואיך אפשרי פשרה בעניין שהוא <u>אמת</u> נתון מה' אמת!). ומה שא"ל [= שאמרו לה] שיש פשרות וכמו שדוחין שבת מפני פקו"נ - אי"ז פשרה כלל, כ"א דין אמת כשאר משרה כלל, כ"א דין אמת כשאר ביוהכ"פ, איסור לצום בשויו"ט ואיסור לצום למסוכן. איסור להבעיר אש בש"ק, <u>ציווי</u> להבעיר בביהמ"ק.

## THE MORDECHAIM MORDECHAI AIZIK HODAKOV REBBE'S CHIEF OF STAFF

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות **לכ״ק** אדמו״ר

נדפס ע"י הרה"ת ר' **שלום דוב בער** וזוגתו מרת חיה מושקא בנותיו **ברכה ליפשא, עליזה ושיינדל** ובנו **מנחם מענדל** שיחיו שוחאט Special thanks to Rabbi Shimon Kramer, Mendel Kramer, and other family members for their assistance in the preparation of this article. All stories were culled from Kfar Chabad Magazine's special edition following Rabbi Hodakov's passing, unless indicated otherwise.



abbi Binyomin Klein was once asked to describe Rabbi Hodakov in one word. He responded: "Soldier."

Rabbi Klein explained:

"Rabbi Hodakov ran important institutions and did many important things, but he always behaved like a simple soldier. His only goal was to carry out the Rebbe's will perfectly. He had no other desire, and he had no personal motives at all. Only someone who watched how he entered the Rebbe's room each day, even after 50 years of being acquainted with the Rebbe, could possibly appreciate what a true Chossid and soldier looks like.

"In his official role, he was the director of Merkos, Machne, and Kehos, and later, Agudas Chassidei Chabad. He was also officially the *rosh hamazkirus*, the Rebbe's chief secretary.

"But in more concrete terms, Rabbi Hodakov was the Rebbe's contact with the entire world. For example, he was in charge of running *yechidus*; he decided who would be allowed into the Rebbe's room and when—a very delicate and diplomatic job. He was also the conduit to reaching the Rebbe by phone. The Rebbe never spoke on the phone, but it happened quite often that the Rebbe would listen as Rabbi Hodakov held a conversation on his behalf. In simple terms, he was the one individual who spoke in the Rebbe's name.

"Everything that left *mazkirus* passed through Rabbi Hodakov. Even simple things like the Rebbe's letters for *simchos* which were arranged by Rabbi Simpson, were never sent out without Rabbi Hodakov's approval.

"In everything Rabbi Hodakov did, two main characteristics were expressed: First of all, his *bitul* to the Rebbe, and second of all, his *pikchus*, his wisdom and logic. One more characteristic—he never wasted a moment."

### THE MAN AND THE LEGEND

Rabbi Chaim Mordechai Aizik Hodakov was the Rebbe's legendary "chief of staff," serving in that capacity throughout all the years of the Rebbe's *nesius*. Rabbi Hodakov's presence was ubiquitous; every interaction, every *hora'ah*, every message from the Rebbe—when not delivered publicly at farbrengens—was delivered through the expert hands of Rabbi Hodakov.

Rabbi Hodakov is part and parcel of every story of the Rebbe; his identity is intertwined with *dor hashvi'i*. A simple search of the Derher archives brought up Rabbi Hodakov's name hundreds of times—but almost never was it a story that involved him at all. Every interaction, every mention, was bringing a message of the Rebbe to a Chossid and the Chossid's response back to the Rebbe.

So integral was he that a statement from Rabbi Hodakov could never be taken lightly. Everyone knew that a word from his mouth could have come directly from the Rebbe; he didn't have to clarify it.

Rabbi Leibel Alevsky relates that he once questioned this assumption during his years as director of Tzach. "Rabbi Hodakov once made a suggestion for Tzach which didn't sit right with me. I told him, respectfully, 'If this suggestion comes from the Rebbe, I will obviously accept it without question, but—' Rabbi Hodakov cut me off and said, 'In your opinion, if the Rebbe wants to make a suggestion but doesn't want it to be given over in his name, what exactly should he do?' Needless to say, I quickly accepted the proposal.

"Often, Rabbi Hodakov would make various suggestions regarding our activities. Some of them seemed



RABBI HODAKOV STANDING ALONGSIDE THE REBBE AS THE FRIERDIKER REBBE RECEIVES HIS AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP ON 16 ADAR I, 5709.

to be very impractical. Sometimes I would carry them out, and sometimes I would not. During one *yechidus*, the Rebbe suddenly began speaking about those same suggestions I had received from Rabbi Hodakov—which I had ignored. I was obviously very shocked and surprised... Needless to say, I began to treat Rabbi Hodakov's 'suggestions' with a new respect."<sup>1</sup>

### FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH THE REBBE

Rabbi Hodakov's connection to the Rebbe began in early 5688\*, when the Frierdiker Rebbe left Russia and settled in Latvia. Rabbi Hodakov was a young man and already a noted educator and activist in the community. He also came from a Chabad-Lubavitch background he was born in the Chabad town of Beshenkovitz in Russia before moving to Latvia as a child.

When the Frierdiker Rebbe needed a visa to enter Latvia, Rabbi Hodakov assisted Reb Mordechai Dubin in his efforts, and he immediately connected himself with the Frierdiker Rebbe upon his arrival. He quickly became a dedicated Chossid, and the Frierdiker Rebbe devoted much attention to his new protege.

It was in this context that Rabbi Hodakov came into contact with the Rebbe.

In his own words:

"I entered the home of the Frierdiker Rebbe on Motzei Shabbos after *havdalah* [the first Shabbos after the Rebbe arrived from Russia] and a sight struck me: The new guest from Yekatrinoslav was reciting *Veyiten Lecha*; he was holding a siddur with both hands, looking inside, and reciting the words quietly



and simply. It is hard to describe but the image really took me. At that moment, I recognized *emes b'taharasa*, pure unadulterated truth. It seems like something minor, but this 'minor' thing and similar minor things demonstrated greatness, which I noticed at the time."

The Rebbe was living in Berlin at the time, but Rabbi Hodakov had many opportunities to be in the Rebbe's presence. One notable period was during Tishrei 5690\*, documented at length in the beautiful writings of Reb Elya Chaim Althaus. In the absence of the Frierdiker Rebbe, who was visiting America, the Rebbe led the Chassidim throughout Tishrei and held a memorable farbrengen that Motzei Rosh Hashanah where he instructed all the Chassidim to turn their kapotas inside out to reject "the way of the street." It made a deep impression on Rabbi Hodakov.

One more memorable occasion was Rabbi Hodakov's visit to the Frierdiker Rebbe in Warsaw when he was already the Agudas Yisrael representative in the Latvian Department of Education. "In order to be granted permission to go," Rabbi Hodakov related, "I told the government that my travel to Poland had to do with my work; I was going to get special books and speak to certain people about education."<sup>2</sup>

On the Shabbos of his visit, four individuals were invited to the Frierdiker Rebbe's Shabbos table—the Rebbe and Rabbi Hodakov among them. At the table, the Frierdiker Rebbe delivered a *maamar* on the topic of *hashgacha pratis*. Later, while in *yechidus*, the Frierdiker Rebbe told him, "The *maamar* will come to good use." Rabbi Hodakov never clarified what it meant, but from his way of repeating the story it was clear that he had already discovered its use in his many years working alongside the Rebbe.



A MEMORANDUM PUBLISHED BY MERKOS L'INYONEI CHINUCH IN THE 5700S, NAMING THE REBBE AS CHAIRMAN AND RABBI HODAKOV AS DIRECTOR.

### THE SIX WEEK VACATION

Following the Nazi invasion of Poland, the Friediker Rebbe escaped the country and, on his way to America, spent a short time in Latvia. By that time, Rabbi Hodakov had reached the height of his career; he was the governmentappointed minister responsible for all Jewish education in the country, single-handedly controlling the educational curriculum of thousands of Jewish children.

But the Frierdiker Rebbe had other plans.

The Frierdiker Rebbe wasn't coming to America as a refugee fleeing persecution. He was coming to America on a mission—to change the face of the United States and he wanted Rabbi Hodakov to take part in the revolution.

At the time, Latvia seemed to be a safe place; it was a neutral country, not seeking involvement in the war, and it didn't seem like the Nazis would invade. The Frierdiker Rebbe's mission to America, on the other hand, seemed quite far-fetched indeed. Nonetheless, being a devoted Chossid, Rabbi Hodakov didn't think twice and began to plan his trip.

"I would get two weeks of vacation each year," he related. "Since I never took a vacation and I had been working for the government for three years, I had saved up six weeks of vacation time. So I told the government that I would be taking a six week vacation and began preparing for the trip.

"There was very little room on the ship to the United States and there weren't enough tickets for me. Rashag saw how strongly the Frierdiker Rebbe wanted me to come, so he worked hard until he obtained a ticket for me.

"However, this was shortly after my marriage. I suggested to the Frierdiker Rebbe that since there were no more



RABBI HODAKOV AT WORK IN MAZKIRUS.



tickets on the ship, my wife should just take the next boat and meet me in America. The Frierdiker Rebbe became very serious, and said: אויב זי פארט ניט יעצט, וועט זי ניט פארן—if she doesn't travel now, she will not travel at all. When I approached Rashag, he told me that there was nothing he could do, as there were not enough tickets for my wife. When I reported back to the Frierdiker Rebbe, he suggested that I tell Rashag that I would not come without my wife; that would encourage him to do everything in his power to obtain a ticket. That's what happened; although it was very difficult, Rashag obtained a ticket for her as well."2

While on the boat, the Frierdiker Rebbe called him and asked him to prepare a detailed plan for building Yiddishkeit on American soil. His plan focused on three things: Jewish education, working with youth, and Jewish publications. The Frierdiker Rebbe approved of his plans, and that served as the template for the beginning of *hafatzas hamaayanos*.

When the Rebbe arrived in America a little more than a year later, the Frierdiker Rebbe established the three institutions of Merkos, Machne Yisroel, and Kehos; he appointed the Rebbe to be chairman, and Rabbi Hodakov to be director. From that day on—for over 50 years—Rabbi Hodakov worked together with the Rebbe on a daily basis. At first, they worked together in the Rebbe's office—which was the central office of Merkos —working at the same desk (along with Rabbi Nissan Mindel) until 5707\*, when Merkos was moved across the hall and the Rebbe's room became his alone.

By Rabbi Hodakov's own account, he was already close to the Rebbe in Europe, and the connection only grew in the United States. "I remember that when the Rebbe published the Hayom Yom," he told his grandson, "I came over to his house and helped him edit it; one of us would read, and the other one would check to make sure that the language was correct."

After Yud Shevat 5710\*, as it became increasingly clear that the Rebbe would assume the *nesius*, Rabbi Hodakov assumed the role of *mazkir*, being responsible for *yechidus* and a range of other activities.

## A CAPTAIN TO THE SHLUCHIM

As the director of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch and the Rebbe's chief secretary, Rabbi Hodakov was the one who guided and counseled all the new shluchim of the early years. In later years, one of the main sessions of the kinus was the lengthy address of Rabbi Hodakov, where he would discuss the important matters of the day.

"Rabbi Hodakov spent significant amounts of time with me on the phone and guided me on every aspect of our shlichus," relates Rabbi Pinchus Feldman of Sydney. "When we first moved out, I told Rabbi Hodakov that I didn't know how I would manage to accomplish everything the Rebbe wanted. Rabbi Hodokav wrote to me that I should always remember that 'im katan atah b'einecha, rosh shivtei Yisrael atah—you might be small in your own eyes, but you are a leader in Israel.' One interesting directive I received about my position was that I should receive the highest salary in the organization. This is because baalei batim associate importance with the level of salary. Therefore, it was imperative that I be paid the highest salary."3

Reb Efraim Wolff, who directed the Rebbe's activities in Eretz Yisroel, would speak daily with Rabbi Hodakov.

"My first meeting with Rabbi Hodakov was in Riga, when he was



RABBI HODAKOV ADDRESSING THE GENERAL SESSION OF THE KINUS HASHLUCHIM.

the minister of Jewish education," Rabbi Wolff related. "From my first conversations with him, I understood that he was a unique personality. He was a fascinating blend of genuine *yiras Shamayim* and real, down to earth intelligence. He was also a *masmid*, always finding time to learn. He always spoke with cutting logic; dissecting an issue at its full depth, but always making it clear and understood."

Rabbi Hodakov was also the one who cared for the Rebbe 24/7. He would often "smooth out" the reports he gave the Rebbe at times when a Chossid was involved in something unbecoming, but then he would pick up the telephone and deliver a real *shtikel mussar*. And the individual would make sure that it would not happen again.

"My connection with Rabbi Hodakov began in 5732,\*" writes Rabbi Avraham Shmuel Levin, "when I began to work as a secretary for Agudas Harabanim. At one point, there was an important conference regarding *Mihu Yehudi*, and I received a phone call from Rabbi Hodakov. Suddenly, I realized the Rebbe was on the line; I was a bit overwhelmed, but Rabbi Hodakov continued carrying on the conversation.

"It was interesting to see how he responded. I would hear the Rebbe quietly tell him what to ask, and despite the fact that I heard it, he would repeat it as if I haven't heard at all. Sometimes, the Rebbe would respond with barely a word, but he always understood and delivered a full response to me immediately.

"There was something very unique about Rabbi Hodakov. We all have our moments when we are tense or in a foul mood. But I spoke with Rabbi Hodakov two or three times a week for many years, and he always sounded exactly the same. He never showed any emotion. He never got



RABBI HODAKOV RECEIVES GUESTS IN HIS MODEST OFFICE.

upset and never showed any sign of tension or hurriedness. He always spoke to you in the same measured tone and with full attention."<sup>4</sup>

Rabbi Shimon Lazaroff related his experiences:

"I received countless suggestions from Rabbi Hodakov, all in his unique and original perspective. But more importantly, he didn't just give us advice. He educated us. For example:

"After I received my shlichus to Texas, he told me to draw up a contract which would outline my responsibilities. He told me that his own responsibilities—aside for *mazkirus*—are in Machne, Merkos and Kehos. My responsibilities were the same: First of all, *chinuch* of the youth—youth in years and youth in level of education. Secondly, caring for the *gashmius* of Jews. Third, spreading Yiddishkeit through print.

"Years later, during a conversation, he pressed me regarding the state of *mikvaos* in Texas, wondering why a certain city did not have a proper mikvah. 'Remember,' he told me, 'We discussed before you left that you are responsible for all matters of Yiddishkeit in your region. I want to remind you that this is indeed so—their Yiddishkeit is your responsibility." CIHIILDIHOOD

Rabbi Hodakov was known to be precise in everything he did. Every second of his time was utilized, and every penny of his organizations was accounted for. He rarely spoke about himself; time was always used for Torah learning, and stories were told only with a practical *hora'ah*.

After numerous requests from his grandsons Rabbis Eliyahu and Shimon Kramer, he agreed to relate some of his personal history on one *nittel nacht* evening. The following are segments from those recollections:

"I was born in the town of Beshenkovitz, a Chassidic town, and I was raised with many stories of Chassidim which had a great impact on me. When I was two years old, my family moved to Riga, Latvia, which was then part of Czarist Russia. Jews were not allowed to live in Riga at the time; my father had special permission to live there, because he was a businessman.

"The Jews in Riga were mostly secular, but after the revolution, many Chassidic families moved in. There were three types of Chabad Chassidim living there: Lubavitch, Liadi, and Kopust. The Chassidim bought a long building to house three shuls. On the right was the Lubavitcher Shul, in the middle was the Liadi Shul, which was the smallest, and the last shul was the Kopuster Shul. In general, we had a very close relationship; however, Liadi had a closer relationship to Lubavitch than Kopust.

"My father used to daven in the Liadi Shul. I remember this from when I was very young, since he passed away before my bar mitzvah. I don't know why he davened there, and I don't know if he was a Lubavitcher or not.

"The *maskilim* in Riga had such large schools, that each grade had its own building! The government helped them a lot, even giving them funding, and there were no other good schools. These schools couldn't find enough teachers who were *maskilim*. Thus, many teachers were good, religious, people, and I was enrolled there when I was five years old.

"In the middle of third grade, I became very sick, and I missed six weeks of school. The next year, the principal told me that I must stay in third grade, but I thought that it was below my dignity, so I went to a private school in the house of a good teacher who was a *yarei Shamayim*. This was a great *hashgacha pratis*, because the teacher of fourth grade at the public school was very modern.

"At age 10, I enrolled in a private school which had *limudei kodesh* alongside the *limudei chol*, where I remained for three years until I graduated. At this school I had the opportunity to learn *limudei kodesh* well; my next school had only one or two hours of Torah studies and there I was considered a *gaon*!

"When I was around 13-14 years old, I learned in Tiferes Bachurim, which was run by a *mussarnik* named Rabbi Yoel Barantchik. We learned and davened in one of the *cheder sheini's* of the Lubavitcher Shul. Thus, I ended up davening there on Shabbos and Yom Tov. When the Frierdiker Rebbe came to Riga, he farbrenged with the Tiferes Bachurim, (myself included), and Rabbi Yoel was there too. The Frierdiker Rebbe was *mekarev* him very much.

"In those years, Latvia had many children and few teachers, so many summer programs were opened to train teachers. I decided to go to one of these programs, and I got a diploma for teaching children. Then, I became a teacher at the school Torah V'Derech Eretz—before I even turned 17! "Soon afterwards, I became the assistant principal. Afterwards, I became the principal for the younger division. And then, I became the principal for the older division, followed by becoming the principal for the university. However, I still had a little to do with the younger division.

"This went on until I was in my thirties. Then, I was chosen to be part of the committee for Jewish education. The government paid for all the schools, even the religious ones, and the government made committees to oversee every religion's schools. Later on, I became the head of the whole Jewish committee. Then, since the government was short on money, they made a policy change. Instead of having a whole committee for each religion, they decided to appoint one minister to supervise all the learning for each religion. They picked me to be the minister for Jewish education, and I worked there until leaving Latvia with the Frierdiker Rebbe."

### FIRST CLASS EDUCATOR

Rabbi Avraham Godin was a close friend of Rabbi Hodakov's in Riga.

#### RABBI HODAKOV AS A CHILD.

AN ORIGINAL VORT WRITTEN BY RABBI HODAKOV AT THE AGE OF 11.

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RABBI HODAKOV (BOTTOM ROW, SECOND FROM LEFT) PARTICIPATING IN THE CONGRESS OF THE AGUDAS YISROEL YOUTH IN RIGA IN 5691.



THE REBBE LOOKS ON AS RABBI HODAKOV IS HONORED WITH THE READING OF THE KESUBAH UNDER A CHUPAH.

After Rabbi Hodakov passed away, he shared the following recollection:

"I would go with my grandfather to the Lubavitch shul, where I noticed a 16-year-old boy, dressed in the high school uniform of the local Jewish school. I noticed the seriousness and the *yiras Shamayim* with which he davened from his siddur, always at the same place in shul. But more importantly, I was impressed by his untouched beard—something that was very unique at the time, even among the older people.

"When Reb Yoel Barantchik opened Torah V'Derech Eretz, the first real religious school in the country, he needed a principal that would ensure a high level of learning in the school, and he chose Rabbi Hodakov despite his young years.

"Rabbi Hodakov was a natural *mechanech*. When we arrived in the morning, he was there, and he remained late into the night. Children

notice everything, and we definitely noticed his dedication. He carefully followed the progress of every student and the accomplishments of every teacher, and he made sure to provide assistance to children who were lagging behind.

"Within a short time, the school became very highly regarded. A few years later, a four-story building was purchased, and a few years after that, it was no longer large enough either, and a new facility was acquired."

Rabbi Hodakov soon asked Reb Avraham to become his personal secretary, and later appointed him to lead organized groups of alumni. The organization of religious Jews led to the prominence of the Agudas Yisrael, and soon, the government was providing money for the schools. When the government looked for someone to serve as the Jewish 'Minister of Education,' Reb Mordechai Dubin suggested Rabbi Hodakov.

This was shortly after the arrival of the Frierdiker Rebbe. Rabbi Hodakov had become a devoted Chossid, and the Frierdiker Rebbe supported Rabbi Hodakov in everything, ensuring that all Chassidim sent their children to his schools, even recommending it for girls from out-of-town.

Reb Avraham continues his account:

"Rabbi Hodakov first did a survey of all the Jewish schools, which revealed the low level of Jewish knowledge in the secular schools. His first enactment was to ensure that every school taught classes in Tanach and Jewish tradition. Then, he announced that teachers must wear yarmulkes during those classes. Over time, anti-religious teachers found themselves outside the schools while their places were taken by teachers with a more positive sentiment about Yiddishkeit. For Jewish children in Latvian public school, Rabbi Hodakov arranged Jewish classes for several hours a week.

"Within a short time, the Latvian Jewish community changed drastically. The shuls began filling up, people began to observe Shabbos, and the level of



RABBI HODAKOV IN HIS YOUTH.

Yiddishkeit was greatly improved."

Reb Moshe Blau, the head of Agudas Yisrael in Eretz Yisroel, visited Riga in 5697\* and wrote the following:

"Mr. Hodakov, by dint of his position, has instituted many important reforms in the general Jewish school and even in the Zionist ones. He made religious studies mandatory and forbade the teaching of *kefirah*. The Zionists in Latvia are *ne'enachim vene'enakim*, sighing and groaning, under the yoke of Mr. Hodakov. They are not able to uproot Torah and *emunah* from the young generation as they wish even from their own children..."

Rabbi Hodakov didn't leave his educational duties during his years as the Rebbe's secretary. Chabad educational institutionsespecially Beis Rivkah—received countless hours of Rabbi Hodakov's undivided attention and guidance. He also was the go-to for guidance in Oholei Torah throughout the years. No problem was too small and no issue was too insignificant.

### A MODERN-DAY YEHOSHUA BIN NUN

"We often draw attention to the fact," writes Rabbi Avraham Shmuel Levin, "that the Rebbe never took a day of vacation and never left Crown Heights besides for visits to the Ohel, and the fact that he would receive visitors for *yechidus*  sometimes until ten in the morning. All of these are true also about Rabbi Hodakov. He never took a vacation and he was at all the *yechidusen*, leaving only after the Rebbe left for home... Whenever I think about Rabbi Hodakov, I'm reminded of Yehoshua bin Nun, the student of Moshe Rabbeinu, who never left his tent—lo yamish mitoch ha'ohel." **1** 

4. Kfar Chabad issue 1504.

#### FAMILY MEMBERS REMINISCE

In our conversations with Rabbi Hodakov's family members, they shared some recollections with us.

One notable point was that Rabbi Hodakov never used his position to get his family preferential treatment. In fact, many of his daughter's friends sometimes had a *yechidus* with their fathers, but she never did till around age 18, when she merited a personal *yechidus* after requesting one from her father for a very long time.

In general, when he was 'at work,' he was fully invested, a devoted worker for his boss, and he didn't give any special privileges to family. When they received answers from the Rebbe, they weren't permitted to keep the handwritten notes, as per *mazkirus* policy.



YOSSI HODAKOV DOING HOMEWORK ALONGSIDE HIS ZAIDY'S WORK IN MAZKIRUS.

When the Rebbe gave a *haskama* and *bracha* for his son's engagement, he first called the house as 'Rabbi Hodakov' to give over the Rebbe's answer, insisting on giving it directly to his son—because *mazkirus* policy was to give answers only to the direct individual for concerns of privacy—and afterwards he called back as the father to say *mazal tov*.

He was always very private about the work he did for the Rebbe. Everything was confidential, and he never repeated things that happened in the course of his role. Sometimes, people would tell his daughter stories that involved him; when she would repeat them to him, he would listen attentively as if he was hearing the story for the first time.

His dedication to the Rebbe's work was exemplary. He took no vacations. When he left 770 for any reason, even a family *simcha*, it was per the instructions of the Rebbe. On one occasion, when he was not well and in the hospital, his daughter came to visit. He was on the phone dealing with the affairs of *mazkirus* for so long that she barely had a moment left to speak to him before she had to leave. When he finally hung up, she said, "This looks like a branch of Merkos." He responded, "A temporary one." When he wasn't making calls, many doctors of the hospital would come in to visit and sit with him

<sup>1.</sup> https://anash.org/when-rabbi-chodakov-relayed-the-rebbes-secret-orders/

<sup>2.</sup> Written recollections by Rabbi Shimon Kramer.

<sup>3.</sup> Derher Adar I 5779 pg. 57.

discussing various matters. They realized this patient is someone special and enjoyed conversing with him.

He would often get calls at home at all hours of the night. It could have been an emergency, or perhaps people around the world with a different time zone calling at their convenience. On one occasion, during the night, a call came from a high ranking official in the Israeli government. When Rabbi Hodakov picked up the phone and the caller identified himself, he asked, "How do I know that it is really you?" It seemed the caller then gave him some *siman* to verify his identity before they were able to have the conversation.

Sometimes he was urged to take more time for himself, but he would say, "*Es brent a fire*!" How could he take time when there are so many urgent matters to attend to? However, he never expected the same from others. A shliach told the family that when he arrived from out-of-town and came over to Rabbi Hodakov to discuss urgent matters, Rabbi Hodakov first asked the shliach if he already ate something.

On a regular day, he would come home at approximately 2:00 p.m. for lunch and rush back to 770. He would return for supper at around seven, and again rush back to 770 until late at night, returning after his children were long asleep. His daughter would often leave him a note with what she wanted to tell him. Often, early in the morning, he would wake her up early and give her time to learn or do homework with him. Most mornings, he would wake her up. Even when the Rebbe had those long yechidus nights, when he would sometimes still be at 770 when it was wake-up time, he would call their home to ensure that she woke up in time for school. He was always extremely busy, but he always found time to spend with both his son and his daughter, and it was quality time. Later, he would also spend precious quality time with his grandchildren and also had a shiur with his son-in-law once a week.

Rabbi Hodakov was very careful with time. Every second was important and not to be wasted. He explained to his daughter about class behavior, that if she disturbs the class for two minutes, she steals not only two minutes that she can never give back—but if there are 20 girls in the class whose time she took, she takes from them a total of 40 minutes that she can't return to them. They are gone.

He used every opportunity to teach a lesson. He once took his young children to visit the fire station, where they climbed on the trucks and got to see all



RABBI HODAKOV WOULD USUALLY GO HOME TOGETHER WITH THE REBBE LATE AT NIGHT (IN THE EARLY YEARS BY FOOT AND LATER BY CAR) AND THEN PROCEED TO HIS OWN HOME. IN THIS PICTURE, THE REBBE CAN BE SEEN HOLDING HOSHANOS FOR THE REBBETZIN.

the trinkets. He took them again another day, and then again. Finally, during the third trip, he got what he wanted. While they were at the fire station, the alarm bells rang, indicating that there was a fire. He rushed the children safely out of the way, and they watched in amazement as the firemen slid down the poles in record time. The engines started, the address was announced, the firemen jumped onto the trucks and pulled on their boots and coats with hats, while the trucks were already moving out everything happening within seconds. As they stared in wonder, he told the children, "This is *zrizus*!"

Despite his often serious demeanor, he was very humorous as a father and had a very quick wit. He also stressed a lot about being *besimcha*. He taught a tremendous amount just by his example. With his Torah learning even when very tired; and getting up early and learning even after a long night in 770; or the way he recited a simple *bracha* slowly and carefully; his *middos*; and much more.

When his children were very young, he would sit at their bedsides every Friday night and Motzei Shabbos (the other nights he was in 770 when they went to sleep) and tell them Chassidishe stories and sing *niggunim*, which would include Reb Michele Zlotchover's niggun. On Motzei Shabbos, he would also talk to them about Moshiach and sing Eliyahu Hanavi, telling them that Eliyahu Hanavi will come and bring us the good news that Moshiach is coming. In her young years, his daughter would be so hopeful when she heard a knock on the door, hoping and wishing with all her heart that finally this knock is Eliyahu Hanavi coming to tell us Moshiach is coming. It is these experiences that remain ingrained within her until this very day.





#### THE MONTH OF IYAR

The Rebbe explains that the days of Sefiras Haomer give us the unique capabilities to overcome all challenges and pursue the best performance of Torah and mitzvos.

Specifically, we should increase new Torah classes, specifically in public. There should also be an increase of *siyumim* in Torah.

From all the parts in Torah, a particular focus should be on *ahavas Yisroel*—to speak with another person who differs in opinion, and come to a peaceful conclusion, with the understanding that appreciating opposing views can bring to a better decision.<sup>1</sup>

Women are exempt from Sefiras Haomer. Nevertheless (in addition to the many places where the *minhag* is that women do count), women should certainly help by reminding their husbands and children to fulfill this mitzvah. More importantly, they should perform the purpose of the mitzvah

— to prepare for the receiving of the Torah.<sup>2</sup>

The Rebbe instructed that at least one mishnah of the weekly chapter in Pirkei Avos should be studied in depth.<sup>3</sup>

#### BEIS IYAR – THE BIRTHDAY OF THE REBBE MAHARASH

Every person should take *hachlatos* upon themselves in the manner that follows the footsteps of the Rebbe Maharash — *lchatchilah ariber*. Meaning, by going beyond the limits of the world, and even within the worldly limits, Torah and mitzvos should be performed without intimidation.

There should be farbrengens arranged, on the day itself as well as on the days in close proximity to it, especially Shabbos.

Chassidim should utilize the day by learning and teaching others the Torah of the Rebbe Maharash.

Many Chassidus *sefarim*, especially the Rebbe Maharash's *sefarim*, are only available in script or Rashi letters. We must invest the effort to print these *sefarim* in standard print letters.<sup>4</sup>

#### **PESACH SHEINI**

Pesach Sheini teaches us that we should never give up and there is always a chance to correct our mistakes.<sup>5</sup> The Rebbe advised that everyone, on this day, should make a *cheshbon nefesh* to see what needs improvement and what demands growth—especially in *ahavas Yisroel*, correcting the error of Rebbi Akiva's students.

The Rebbe learns the word the Gemara uses — "Lo nahagu kavod ze ba'ze" — as a directive towards our increase in *ahavas Yisroel*. It should be: 1) ragil — our respect should be one we are accustomed to, and 2) manhig — everyone should be a leader; to לזכות החייל בצבאות ה' **שמעון** בן **חי' מושקא** לרגל ה'אפשערעניש' ל"ג בעומר

ולזכות אחיו ואחיותיו החיילים בצבאות ה' שיינא בת חי' מושקא לרגל יום הולדתה י"ב אייר לבריאות איתנה

מנחם מענדל בן חי' מושקא אסתר הני' רחל בת חי' מושקא

יה"ר שיגדלו חי"לים בצבא **כ"ק אדמו"ר** מתוך שמחה, בריאות והרחבה

influence others to increase in ahavas Yisroel.

To inspire action in all the above areas, farbrengens should take place in the days between Pesach Sheini and Lag Bomer.

Children should be involved in these farbrengens, as they have particular involvement in the Lag B'omer parades.<sup>6</sup>

#### LAG B'OMER

The Rebbe asked Chassidim to make prior preparations for the farbrengen/parade on Lag B'omer.<sup>7</sup>

The preparations should be with full vigor, even if at times it may be very pressing—a '*dochak*' because, as we know, it says about the Rashbi, "*K'dai lismoch alav b'shas hadchak*"—one can rely on Rashbi that it will all turn out well. And more importantly, to be joyful, as that is what Rashbi wanted.<sup>8</sup>

Rashbi was known for his constant Torah learning, making it his profession—*Toraso u'mnaso*. He was also known for his good deeds, the way he expressed his Torah knowledge, making it a part of his daily life.

On the day of his *histalkus*, we should intensify in these two areas:

1) The times one sets for learning should be used to the utmost. Primarily when learning Chassidus — which comes from the Zohar, the work of the Rashbi.

2) To fill every moment with good deeds, letting our learning affect the rest of our day.<sup>9</sup>

In 5740\*, as part of the *mivtza* of increasing children's programs, the Rebbe instructed Chassidim to intensify the worldwide Lag B'omer parades.

To incentivize the children, every child should write down how the parade impacted them, and the best writers would receive a prize. To make the impact longlasting, the letters should be compiled in a book, translated into many different languages, and sent worldwide.

There should also be pictures taken of the parades, not only of the entire procession but also of the children's faces. The parades will undoubtedly have better results when the children hear that they may appear in the papers.<sup>10</sup> **1** 

- 1. Toras Menachem 5749 vol. 3 p. 121.
- 2. Toras Menachem 5751 vol. 3 p. 244-245.

3. Shabbos Parshas Naso 5751; Sefer Hasichos 5751 p. 597. See also Toras Menachem 5712 vol. 2 p. 175.

- 4. Toras Menachem 5749 vol. 3 p. 100-101.
- 5. Sefer Hasichos 5751 vol. 2 p. 518.
- 6. Toras Menachem 5749 vol. 3 p. 157-160.
- 7. Toras Menachem 5750 vol. 3 p. 149.
- 8. Toras Menachem 5748 vol. 3 p. 297.
- 9. Toras Menachem 5748 vol. 3 p. 313-314.
- 10. Sichos Kodesh 5740 vol. 2 p. 903-904, 918-920.

לזכות החייל בצבאות ה' דובער שיחי' לרגל יום הולדתו **י"א אייר** וה'אפשערעניש' שלו **ל"ג בעומר** 

נדפס ע"י הוריו הרה"ת ר' **איסר** וזוגתו מרת **חי'** מושקא ומשפחתם שיחיו ניו

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Finding Your Purpose

א חסידישע מעשה

In a letter addressed to a Chossid who had recently moved to France, the Rebbe Rashab wrote at length regarding the importance of *avodah shebalev*, having set *shiurim* in Torah Ohr/Likkutei Torah and farbrenging often with the other Jews in his town.

The letter was written in quite a sharp manner. The [Frierdiker] Rebbe felt sorry for this man, since he lived in a place where the Chassidim were very simple and somewhat assimilated, so it would possibly hurt and aggravate the Chossid.

"For this reason I wrote the letter, so that it will bother him and consequently lead to positive action," the Rebbe Rashab explained.

Only days later the [Friediker] Rebbe received a letter from the Chossid in France. He described the shallowness of the community, how hard it would be to carry out the Rebbe's instructions, and how this pained him greatly. He asked the [Frierdiker] Rebbe to explain his situation to his father, the Rebbe Rashab. Once he collected his thoughts, he would write his own letter to the Rebbe too.

When the Rebbe received the

Chossid's letter he said, "A Chossid must listen, not excuse himself."

In the beginning of Tishrei, the man again wrote to the [Frierdiker] Rebbe, complaining how there had not even been a *minyan* on Rosh Hashanah and how it pains him so much to be living in such a community.

Yom Kippur came and the Chossid felt that there was a special feeling in the air amongst the congregants. They davened fervently and cried a lot.

When they left the shul, the Chossid started conversing with the congregants. Some started relating how they grew up as Chassidim in their hometowns. Later that week they met up for coffee together and told stories of their childhood as Chassidim. Some even grew up in Lubavitch and Kopust.

On Sukkos and Simchas Torah they spoke and fabrenged once again. More and more people came over saying how they were also descendants of Chassidim to a point that they decided to open a *nusach ari minyan* for all the Chassidim in a side room of the shul. They inaugurated the new shul in the beginning of Kislev, and on Yud and Yud-Tes Kislev, big farbrengens were held in the new shul. Many of their friends from the regular shul also attended the farbrengens.

Soon, a *shiur* in Torah Ohr started. They would gather three times a week, and the Chossid would tell over a *vort* from that week's *Chassidisher parsha*. Many of them started closing their businesses on Shabbos, beginning to keep Shabbos properly.

The Chossid wrote all this in a letter to the [Friediker] Rebbe and concluded, "*Baruch Hashem* all the instructions in the letter I received from the Rebbe [Rashab] came true! Let us hope it will only continue and grow."

After reading the Chossid's letter, the Rebbe Rashab told the [Frierdiker] Rebbe, "*MeHashem mitzadei gever konanu*—Hashem leads the footsteps of man. A Yid must always make sure to know why Hashem brought him all the way from his birthplace to where he is today."

(Oitzer Sipurei Chabad pg. 281)



DEDICATED IN THE ZECHUS OF YAACOV FISCHEL ישיחיש IN HONOR OF HIS UPSHERENISH LAG B'OMER 5782

MAY MAY HE GROW TO BE A CHOSSID, YAREI SHAMAYIM, AND LAMDAN

BY HIS PARENTS BINYOMIN AHRON AND GITEL RIVKAH שיחיו BACKMAN

## Arm and Head

This month marks 55 years since the Rebbe's launch of *mivtza tefillin* in connection with the Six-Day War in Eretz Yisroel.

Two years later, on Shabbos Parshas Matos-Massei 5729\*, the Rebbe explained that the *mivtza* is still very much relevant and important, adding a new source speaking to the significance of tefillin one that the Rebbe had never spoken of before.<sup>1</sup>

The source that the Rebbe added is a *halacha* in the Rosh based on the *possuk* וטרף זרוע אף קדקד—that the members of the *shevet* of Gad are strong in battle, preying on the arms and heads of their enemies, as a result of the mitzvah of tefillin, worn on the arm and head.

The Rebbe said that this new source is more applicable now than before the Six-Day War, since the politicians in Israel began negotiating the retreat from the portions of Eretz Yisroel captured during the war, thereby endangering Jewish lives, *chas v'shalom*.

Presented here are a few original materials connected with this idea:

1. A *kol koreh* declaration issued by Tzach (Lubavitch Youth Organization) in Yiddish—with the Rebbe's edits on the first draft—and in English, calling on everyone to enhance their efforts in *mivtza tefillin*.

- 2. The Rebbe's edits on a letter issued by Tzach based on the Rebbe's assertion that the *mivtza* is still relevant and important.
- An addition put into the weekly *likkut* (eventually published in Likkutei Sichos) of the following week, based on the Rebbe's words at the Shabbos farbrengen.

## Kol Koreh

[The Rebbe's edits are in **bold** type.]

In connection with the **current** situation in **our** holy land, the Lubavitcher Rebbe repeated, **with even more enthusiasm**, his **call and request** about **the special** duty of the hour, <u>to strengthen and</u> <u>spread **amongst** Yidden the mitzvah of tefillin.</u>

The Lubavitcher Rebbe *shlita* emphasized that in the present time, not only do we need the shield and protection that [the Torah promises as a result of tefillin, that your enemies] "will fear you," the fear that falls upon the enemies of the Jews, **through the Jewish people's** fulfillment of the mitzvah (as Chazal say in Gemara Brachos 6a)—but we also **now** need the G-dly strength that tefillin affords **the Jewish fighters** to be <u>victorious over their</u> <u>enemies who are still on their way to attack.</u>

He mentioned that this is an open and clear halachic ruling (cited from the Rosh, Halachos לעפני קיום מצוות תפילין (cited from the Rosh, Halachos מפני קיום מצוות תפילין (top) – that אמפני קיום מצוות תפילין באנשי המלחמה וטרף זרוע אף קדקד – that through fulfilling the mitzvah of tefillin (which tefillin are worn on the דרוע (arm) and on the קדקד (head)), and its perfection, the war-soldiers will experience (the promise of the *possuk*, to win in the mighty manner of) "prey upon the דרוע and also the היקדקד" (of their enemies).

There is no need to stress what a mitzvah and *zechus* it is to publicize this request, appeal, and insistence of the Rebbe *shlita*.

- A. To promote the mitzvah of putting on tefillin every person who already puts on tefillin should see to fulfill the mitzvah with all its intricate details and in the best possible manner; have the Tefillin checked in accordance with the ruling in Shulchan Aruch, and if possible, have them checked every year (as per Mechilta end of Parshas Bo).
- B. In every way possible, disseminate and spread the fulfillment of the mitzvah amongst Jews. Inspire and influence Jews, especially Jewish soldiers, their relatives and friends, to keep the mitzvah of tefillin properly, by explaining to them the extraordinary significance of this mitzvah.

Tal.: HTurinth 3-8261 PResident 8-4270

TZEIREI AGUDAS CHABAD

צעירי אגורת הב״ר

כים ארמויר שליטיא מליובאוויסש

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Under the Anapices of USTUR21 The Enhancinher Rubbi streets Control Office Antipies 7009 770 EASTERN PARKWAY - BROCKLYN 13, N. Y.

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אין בוזאמענהאנג מים דער איצמינער לאנע אזן אינרוער תיילינער לאנד, האם דער ליונצוויזספער רבי מלימ"ה ווידערחאלט און נאר מים מער סאמריים דיון רוף און בקתה וונין דעם מענילן נענאם מון דער דערו <u>זו נארסנארען און מארסריימן כא אירן די מבוה פון מעולין</u>.

דער ליובאוויששער רבי שלים"א האם באמאנם אז יענם בארעים זיך נים בלויז די באמידיםנולת פון "וידאו סנו" - דער פאד וואם נאמאלש די שנובא יפארל דורך דעם וואם אינין ויינען פקיים רי סנו פון שפילין (ויי די חיל ואנן שרא ברכות ו.א) - נאר איבס כוז סען אויך אנקומען בום ב-שליכן כח וואס מבות הסילין ניס די אידישע אנש המלחתהו בר באינגן די שוגאים איז נאנג פון דעם קשמר.

אראים או ארובן די שנארס אדן האנן פון יעם ששם: ער דער דערפאני אדראס איז און אפעע און לארק פסק-הלכה נענראפס החיקנן החקיים באנטי המלחמה ומרך זרוע אף קדקון – אד וירך פקיים היין די מבוה פון הפילין (ואר מפילין וועד געליינט אייםן זרוע (האנס) און איים דקדור (אפן), און אייד הקנות, וועם כיי די מלחמה (האנס) און איים דקדור (די המסה פון פסק צו זיון אין דעם סעכסיקן אופן פון): "פארצוקן דעם זרוע און אייך דעם קדקור" (פון שונא).

עס איז איבעריק צו אונסקרטרייבן רי מצוה און זכות צו מסרסס זיין די כקשה, אויסטאדערונג און מאנונג פון ליובאווימשן רבי"ן שליס"א.

א) צו פארשטארקן רי סצוה פון הנחתצתפולין - יערער בנית תפולין זאל סקיים זין רי סבוה מים אירע בופי דינים און הירורמן בורק ויין די תפולין ווי עם איר דער זין אין שווים דערור, און אויב פענליר, בורק זיין זיי יעדעך יאתר(לוים ככילמא מור מ' בא).

בן מיס אלע מענליכע מיסלען - שארפטרייבן און שארברייטערן די סבות נווישן אידן: גו רערוועקן און באווירקן אידן אפצותיכן די סבות מון הפולין ווי נעתעריק -

בפרם בוויפן די אידיקע זעלנער, וויערע קרובים און פריינס -רורך אויפקלערן זיי די אוםגעהווערע בעדייטונג פון דער פבוה.

ויהי רצון – ווי דער ליובאווימשער רבי שלים"א איז מסיים בים דער ברכה – אז בקרוב מבש זאל נעזאנס ווערז אז דער מבב נקחעים ני דער מארגאננענהיים, וויול ס'וועם נעוועלסיקן דער שלום איבער דער וועלם ובארם אין אוז הקרם ואם אירף איר שריים<u>יים והההי שלום בארך</u> און יעדער איד וועס סוסיף זיין אין הורה און איר עבוה סתור

צעירי אנודה הב"ד הפרכוית דיסטערן פארקווייי ברוקלין, נ.י.

#### THE "KOL KOREH" ISSUED BY TZACH IN YIDDISH BASED ON THE REBBE'S EDITS.

May it be Hashem's will—as the Lubavitcher Rebbe *shlita* concludes with the blessing—that very soon we'll be able to say that this situation is all in the past, for peace will reign all over the world, especially in the Holy Land, about which it says, "I will bring peace in the Land," and every Jew will increase in Torah and its mitzvos with peace, tranquility, and security.

Tzeirei Agudas Chabad Hamerkazis

#### Letter

#### B"H Motzei Shabbos Kodesh Matos Massei, 5729. Brooklyn, NY

Our dear and esteemed friend, Shalom U'bracha!

Shalom U bracha!

At the farbrengen of **this Shabbos Kodesh** (Shabbos Mevarchim **Menachem Av**), the Rebbe *shlita* said, amongst other things:

"...The inspiration, the request and the appeal about "mivtza tefillin" that I spoke about many times over the past two years and more is still very much relevant now as well. In fact, [it is relevant now] with even more urgency, because the current situation is such that we

THE REBBE'S EDITS ON A LETTER (IN HEBREW) ISSUED BY TZACH BASED ON THE REBBE'S ASSERTION THAT THE MIVTZA IS STILL RELEVANT AND IMPORTANT. THE LAST PARAGRAPH OF THE LETTER WAS WRITTEN ENTIRELY BY THE REBBE.

IN THE LIKUT FOR PARSHAS DEVORIM **5729 (WHICH CONTAINED A SICHA** FROM SEVERAL YEARS PRIOR), THE **REBBE'S WORDS FROM THE PREVIOUS** SHABBOS WERE ADDED TO NOTE 57. THIS WAS LATER PUBLISHED IN LIKKUTEI SICHOS VOL 9, PAGE 11.

11	שיחות	, דברים	לקומי

אדם. ווי צו כובש זיין

ואס בני גד ובני ראיבו

ען די ערשטע למלחמה

צופנים הנ״ל). וואס דאס

ענין פון סכנה יתרה,

יי זיך אויסגעטיילט פון

עידו ההולכים במלחמה.

ע אידן אין ניס געווען

נ מסינ - עיקר עבודתם

פרי טעם ודעת, עבודה

אבער ביי בני גד וכני

מועל די עבודה דמסינ

זכל, עמודה דבחי' חיי

איז אויך וואס ביי בני

וטרף זרוע אף קדקדייי.

א אהית ויחי שפב, ב הי

KOTIARO

due: men. (3) עיש משנית בפנים יש לבאר גם בעבוות ה' משיכ בהל' קסנות להראיש

שהיבאה במלתי יוים שם) שמפני קיום

מצות תפלין (שפניחין על הורוע והקרקור) ותיקונן יתקיים באנשי המלחמה וטרף

ומצוח חכות לפרסם הלכה זו ביו כל אנשי המלחמה וכרוביהם

.) שרנוי בהלשוו -- לא בקוכן הפנין.

שמזה מוכן, אשר נם בבני גד, מה שורי בהם גוסרף נויי הוא מעד מצות

התפילין שהיתה בידם. וכמפורש בכחיי סיפ משות וזיל : עלי היו בשוחים בגבורהם וכחם

בוכות המצוה שבידה, וכענין שדרשו וזיל

וסרף זרוע בזכות תפיליו שכזרוע אף עועד

להגיר: גר הוא אותיות ג' ר' (ראה אוחית

ויחי שפב. ב ואילך ובהנסמן שם), ובתפלין

השייכות של תפלין לבני גד - יש

בוכות תפלין שבראשה. וראה גם לעמו עו 15 ואילה.

- הלכות הפלין (ססיו -

זרוע אף קדקוד ...

או מיט אייז קלאם האבו זיי סורף יסות אָדער אַלס פלוגה געווען דעם זרוע האייב צוואמען מיסן דינען דאס צורי איפנים : 281

בשעת די מלחמה מיטן יצה״ר איז עפיי טעם ורעת. קען מען ניט מבטל זיין אלע זיינע כהית מים איין קלאפ אויף יעדער כח פאַדערט זיך א — באזונדער עבודה. בשעת אבער מען ניים מים מסינ. מצד המקיפים חיי יחידה. איז וויבאלר אז אין מקיף איז ניטא קיין התחלקות. איז במכה אחת הרגיעים מען אוועק אלע כחות פון רעם יצהיר.

אוז נאר א דיוק אין דעם: גוטרף זרוע אף קדקד" - פריער דעם -זרוע" און שפעטער דעם קדקר׳. און באר מער: דער קדקד קומט דא נאר בדרך טפל - אף קרקר:

בשעת די עבודה איז עפ"י שכל. הויבט מעז או פריער מיט שכל שבי ראש (סדקד), און ער איז דער עיקר, און פון שכל קוטט עס דערבאר אָראָם אין מדות שבלב ביו אין מעשה בפועל (זרוע). בשעת אבער מען גייט מיט מסינ, איז דער עיקר דער פועל ממש. ווארום כח המעשה דוקא דערגעמט דעם עצם אין פון דעם דערלאנגט

וירידיהם וכל כנ"י – שלים"א – ככל מקום שהם....

(58) ויש לומר שותר גיכ משיכ בבי בר והוא יביד עקבי: שעיי העבווה בבחר. פקב - בחינה הכי אחרונה שבאום כח המפשה - באים לבחי -והוא וא פתיקאר (ראה אוהית שם).

אמרו (וחינ רעים רנו, ב וראה גיכ שם רסב, ב): עשיין וחלת ראשין ושיין זארבי ראשין וחפילין כו'ד. לולהניר מסידור שש

התפלין, שבחיי המוחין שבתפלין, בתחילה הם ג' ואחייכ נחלעים לו'. פיייש). וראה גם לקאו ערפוב, למרקן חדו עד לוכ.

need not only for "they [the enemies] will fear you," a fear that comes in the zechus and directly as a result of the mitzvah of tefillin (Brachos 6a), but we also need the [fulfillment] of the famous halacha written by the Rosh (Halachos Ketanos, Hilchos Tefillin 15), which states:

Through fulfilling the mitzvah of tefillin and its perfection, the soldiers will experience "to prey upon the arm and also the head [of their enemies]."

It is a mitzvah and a zechus to publicize this halacha amongst all the soldiers, their relatives and friends, and

1 101 NIG T2333 12\*7\* 7120 TH PAIL HODDS HAT-15 671 076 ישתתנטל (שבה מברכים שפייא) אפר כ"ק ארמויר שלים"א בין השארא -----יה החתעוררות עיד "מבע הכלין" קכשיו, ואדרבה שמא חמעב בחוח אוא שדעוש כשה STREE THE DECK SEER ST. CO"W חבות הפלין (ברכות ו,א), אלם נם מיושרף, ירוע של חראיים (הלי קשבוה - הלי השלין סטייר);- בחור שים הלכה-210 חמלין והיקונן יהקיים באנשי ההלחפת ושרך זרוע אך ערקור"

ומצוה וזכות לשרמס הלכה זו בין כל אבשי המלחסה ושרוביהם ויוריהם

נא לתוריע לנו ממע מחנעשת בדה, וחדה למערע. אל קונה והי כצו אפר בנרוב איז ויניסף ואיזא אור בניון אל קונה אצר צה כן בוח אתאון כי יאוס הלוק בעואק יקנה לאל הנתוכים על ואיזטו וותר אונק

ל וילוסט טאתי גירן בעור ועליה (שרוביה

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וכל כבייד - שליסיא - בכל מקום שחם.

all of the Jewish people shlita, wherever they may be.

May it be Hashem's will that very speedily יאמר it will be said (Yud with a tzeirei, Aleph with a kumatz) that this situation was yesterday [i.e. in the past], for peace will reign around the world, especially in the Holy Land, about which it is said, "I will bring peace in the Land;"

And each and every one of the Jewish people will increase in Torah and its mitzvos (since the entire Torah is compared to tefillin), with peace, tranquility, and security.

Please notify us of your activities in this regard. Thanks in advance.

Tzeirei Agudas Chabad 🗊

See full explanation in Sichos Kodesh 5729 vol. 2, p. 322. 1.



לזכות מרים מינדל שתחי' בת רייזל שתקויים בה ברכת כ"ק אדמו"ר אליה ביחד עם בעלה שי' לגדל..." כיו"ח שי' לתחומע"ט מתוך שמחה והרחבה", וכ"ז באופן לכתחילה אריבער

 $\sim$ 

An essential part of the life of a Chossid is his study of the daily shiurim of Chumash, Tehillim and Tanya. As a takanah of the Frierdiker Rebbe, the Rebbe repeatedly stressed its significance in our lives. In the following paragraphs are presented a collection of sichos, letters, and stories through which we gain a better appreciation of this unique takanah.<sup>1</sup>

## NDUT A closer look at the takanah of Chitas DESSINGS

# EARLY TRACES

he structure of Chitas as we know it, was introduced by the Frierdiker Rebbe. The daily study of Chumash was a practice of Chassidim for generations, dating back to the days of the Alter Rebbe. In the words of the Frierdiker Rebbe: *"By Chassidei Chabad there is a* 

tradition that the Alter Rebbe instituted to study each day the parshah of Chumash with the commentary of Rashi. This was the custom of the Rabbeim as well."<sup>2</sup>

Regarding the origins of 'Chitas' as an acronym for Chumash, Tehillim and Tanya, and the unique blessings that are connected with their study, the Rebbe once recounted: "On Shavuos 20 years ago, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe repeated what was told to one of the Rabbeim in a vision. יויהי חתת אלקים על הערים' ("The fear of Hashem was upon the cities")—the word ("The fear of Hashem was upon the cities")—the word חומש, תהילים, תניא for יומש, תהילים, חת״.

"Through the daily study of Chitas, we will see the

*fulfillment of 'The fear of Hashem was upon them' and we will merit to go together peacefully to Eretz Yisroel with the complete and true* geulah.<sup>"3</sup>

The story the Rebbe was referring to took place in the year 5617\*. The Rebbe Maharash traveled to S. Petersburg on account of issues being brought about by the *maskilim*. His father, the Tzemach Tzedek, told him, "When I needed to go to the conference of rabbonim in S. Petersburg, I visited the *tziyun* of my mother. She told me that she had approached the Baal Shem Tov to invoke heavenly mercy on my behalf, that I should have the courage to stand up to those who opposed Chassidus. The Baal Shem Tov said to her, 'Your son is fluent in all of Chumash, Tehillim and Tanya by heart, and the Torah tells us 'רִיהִי חתת אלקים'. Chitas is an acronym for Chumash, Tehillim and Tanya; he who knows these by heart can break through all obstacles and concealments.""

The Tzemach Tzedek continued, and instructed the Rebbe Maharash: "Wherever you may be, whether in a government office or visiting a minister, recite a

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן Lubavi ליוכאוויפש 770 Eastern Parkway Brooklyn, N. Y. 11213 770 איסמערן פארסו 493-9250 ברוקלין, נ. י. H"10 1"0 ברוקלין BD18 3"13 X R D שלום ובררה! הנני קבלה מכ' סאשר ודבר בעתו 3 8 92 1.18 13 בראשו הפ"נ שבמכ' יקרא בעח קור החופש משנה 1123 2 יחד כמו שהם (ובשערים נסו הדבר -----יקום ע"ד חח"ת וחש המורה 100 0380 רכהנ"ל ביחד. החופש צ"ל, כפשום בצירוף ה"א ופרש"י והדארוא



IN 5740\*, RABBI ZEV DOV SLONIM AND HIS WIFE CONCEIVED THE IDEA OF PUTTING A CHUMASH, TEHILLIM AND TANYA INTO ONE HANDY BOOK IN MEMORY OF HIS FATHER.

IN THE POSTSCRIPT TO THIS LETTER ADDRESSED TO RABBI SLONIM, THE REBBE OFFERS ADVICE REGARDING THE ENDEAVOR, AND SUGGESTS AMONG OTHER THINGS THAT THE ESSAY WRITTEN BY RABBI SLONIM ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING CHITAS EVERY DAY—BASED ON THE TORAH OF THE RABBEIM—BE PRINTED SEPARATELY WITH ITS OWN TITLE PAGE.

THE FIRST CHITAS WAS PRINTED SHORTLY THEREAFTER.

portion of Chumash, Tehillim, and a chapter of Tanya."

The Rebbe Maharash related this story to his son the Rebbe Rashab, and concluded: "What do you suppose? This was a good prescription; with three portions of Chumash, three chapters of Tehillim and Tanya, all the plots of the *maskilim* were nullified, whilst *b'nei Yisroel* who hold true to Torah and its holiness were amazingly victorious! Subsequently, the leader of the *maskilim* escaped the country out of fear and humiliation, a result of the great financial loss that they caused the government, due to the unsold books that they published."

When the Rebbe Rashab later related this story to his son the Frierdiker Rebbe he added: "Great are *tzaddikim*, in the 50 years since this story until today, a chapter of Tanya does not only break through concealments, it brings about the deepest spiritual revelations both spiritually and materially. A chapter of Tanya by heart brings about a vast amount of blessing and success."<sup>4</sup>

"In response to your second question, whether you should decrease your daily studies in order to recite more Tehillim—my opinion is that you must keep to your daily studies. Regarding your heart's commendable desire to recite more Tehillim—aside from the Tehillim you recite prior to davening, you should recite the shiur Tehillim as it is divided according to the days of the month. Additionally, set aside time to study Chassidus each day, and every day to study that day's portion of Chumash. May Hashem grant you and your wife long years, and to always have good news to share."15

# THE APPROPRIATE VESSEL

rom the beginning of the Rebbe's *nesius*, the Rebbe would regularly emphasize how vital it is for every Chossid, and for that matter every Yid, to study the daily *shiurim* of Chitas. In addition to this being a basic part of our *hiskashrus*, the Rebbe

emphasized this as a source for blessings in one's life.

At several of the major farbrengens each year, the Rebbe would consistently mention the study of Chitas and encouraged everyone to adhere to this *takanah* of the Frierdiker Rebbe. On Yud Shevat and Yud-Beis Tammuz, the Rebbe would discuss Chitas as a *takanah* of the "*baal hahilula*" or "*baal hageulah*." On Simchas Torah and Shavuos the Rebbe would also speak of Chitas, drawing on its connection to these special days. On Simchas Torah we begin the study cycle of Torah anew. On Shavuos we received the Torah from Moshe

#### **REBBE, IT IS DISTURBING ME!**

An individual wrote to the Rebbe that for some time now he has been careful with learning Chitas, yet "it consumes too much of my time and it is disturbing me..." The Rebbe responded: "Torah and mitzvos enhance one's well-being both materially and spiritually. Obviously, it is inconceivable that what is truly good for you can be disturbing you. Any such thought is a scheme of the yetzer hara, which only exists for you to choose to battle and overpower it. So obviously, you should not pay heed to its words."9



Rabbeinu (Chumash), and we mark the *yahrtzeit* of Dovid Hamelech (Tehillim), and the *yahrtzeit* of the Baal Shem Tov, who revealed Chassidus to the world (Tanya).

Reading the Rebbe's letters printed in Igros Kodesh, one notices how often the Rebbe concludes a letter by instructing the recipient to keep the daily *shiurim* of Chitas. The words בטח שומר שלושת השיעורים השוים – are found literally hundreds of times throughout Igros Kodesh.

It is told that once the Rebbe asked someone during a *yechidus* if he had learned Chitas that day, to which this fellow responded that he had not. The Rebbe responded, "I'm taking from my time to connect my *yechidah* with your *yechidah*, yet you carelessly tell me that you haven't learned Chitas!"<sup>5</sup>

To many Yidden who turned to the Rebbe on various matters, the Rebbe instructed them to study Chitas as a conduit through which they will receive their blessings. In Elul 5710\*, the Rebbe wrote in a letter, *"It is my hope that you and your family will be appropriate vessels to* 

receive the [Frierdiker] Rebbe's brachos both materially and spiritually. Of the methods to become proper vessels is to keep the shiurim that the [Frierdiker] Rebbe instituted. Namely, to study each day's portion of Chumash with Rashi, the daily Tehillim after davening Shacharis, and Tanya according to how the [Frierdiker] Rebbe divided it for the days of the year.<sup>\*\*</sup>

In Sivan 5714\*, the Rebbe wrote to a Chossid regarding the study of Chitas, "As can be seen by the physical eye, Chitas is relevant for material success." Rabbi Dovid Raskin would often relate what he remembered hearing from the Rebbe: "The ten minutes of studying Chitas affects you, your children, and your grandchildren!"

A Yid once wrote to the Rebbe that his schedule is full of various shiurim that he is committed to, thus he only has time to learn the daily Chumash. He is therefore asking the Rebbe to be "released" from the daily Tehillim and Tanya. The Rebbe responded, "In response to your letter from 12/16 in which you write that due to your preoccupation with your studies, you only study Chumash with Rashi but do not keep the monthly shiur Tehillim or the shiur Tanya, and you ask that you should be released from the obligation of these two shiurim. I am surprised at your [train of thought]. Keeping these shiurim is not for the benefit of someone else, rather it is for yourself. Just like all of Torah and mitzvos, which are for the benefit of the one fulfilling them. Thus, if you were released from the obligation to keep these shiurim, you are also 'releasing' yourself of the good results that come from keeping these shiurim..."8

It is told that Reb Yaakov Stambler once lost

# **CHITAS - A TIKKUN**

"The difference between 'takanos' as opposed to mitzvos: Mitzvos were given to us from on high, whereas takanos on the other hand were decided by our sages down here, for they were given to us in order to rectify ourselves. Thus, the word takanah comes from the word tikun—to rectify. The same is true for the takanos of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe, for example Chitas, which was given to us for our tikun hanefesh."<sup>12</sup>

On Beis Kislev  $5748^{*13}$ , a few hours before the *sefarim* were finally returned to 770, the Rebbe admonished the *bochurim* gathered outside for the waste of time instead of learning. It was apparent that this incident caused the Rebbe much pain. A short while later, a *bochur* wrote a letter to the Rebbe asking for forgiveness and a *tikkun* for being a part of what had caused the Rebbe such pain. The Rebbe responded with one word: n=n.

0'K17 60-19398 RABIL MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON זנחם מפנדל שניאורסאהן Lub SERVICE STATE klyn 13, N 1\*0, #\*3 ברוקלין הוויה אייא נוינ וכוי הרב שמואל פנהם שייהלוי 10110 12101 לאחרי שחיקתו הכי ארוכה נחקבל מכתבו מעשיק,ובמענה עליוו א) נכון הדבר אשר נוהגים אנים בשנים האחרונוה להזור בתחונה הסאטר לכה רודי הנוספת בקונטרם ררושי התונה שים, והוא עים דברי ניק סויי ארסויר קו (ניסם בכה מוספים בקונטרם האסור) שבמטר זה נכלו חורתם של הדברים רבותנו נסיאנו ההל מרבנו הזקן,וכמי שאמר שו, כיק סוייה ארסויר, ההו בתור הזמנה שישהמסו בתחונה. ה 10 מונן ויב איין סקום כלל לקצר את מכשבר או לחוור לק חלק מסנו, ובמרים לשל במסטבר המלק של נשיא זה ומהלק של כמשה ואונים יקצרו או יאסרו רק חלק ארי אין ירוע מג שי המר עייו, ובכל אופן ברור 100%, 15 ELUL 577 ובסקוסות שנהנו שספטיקים באסצע הסאמר ובכלל כבר אמרו-שמנהג ,שהרי הוא היפך כבור החורה,אף שמלמדים זכות משום שלא לביש את **TESHURA DUCHMAN - BARBER WEDDING**, סאין לו, הרי כבר היי מעשה בפולין ואו אורה כיק מויח ארמויר, שבמקו שרוצים רוקא לקים בכובל, הנה יהווה מקודם שממאה המאמר כולו, ואחרי כן עוד הפכן ויפלקואו שו. בסח בעור סוער יהחיל ללפור תלכות הצריכות בחור הכנה לחי נשואי וסכסה סעסיס הסובניס,ציל הליסור בחברוחא. נקס לי לקרוח בסכתבו עיד הרוס הסוב שעשתה בינ חחיי והרי הוריעו חויל כל שרוח הברובם נוחה היתנו רוח הקלעום נוחה הי בברכה לבסוים אליסר הסק בטח שומר שיעורי החייה אירועים, נוסף על הקבע בנגלה ולאית ס האלו, הננה לבנין ביח, בנין ערי עד, שכל המרבה בהניל מיו

AT THE CONCLUSION OF A LETTER TO SOMEONE GETTING MARRIED, THE REBBE WRITES:

P.S. SURELY YOU FOLLOW THE WELL-KNOWN STUDY CYCLE OF CHITAS, IN ADDITION TO YOUR STUDY SCHEDULE IN NIGLEH AND CHASSIDUS. THIS IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT DURING THE MONTHS BEFORE YOUR WEDDING, IN PREPARATION FOR AN EVERLASTING EDIFICE. ANYONE WHO INCREASES IN THE ABOVE, IS PRAISED.

a substantial amount of money in an investment that went sour. When he wrote to the Rebbe about what had happened, the Rebbe responded by questioning, "Did you learn Chitas on that day?"<sup>10</sup>

To a woman who wrote to the Rebbe about various challenges that were placing her in deep distress, the Rebbe wrote various instructions, among them: "For one year, stop making such deep calculations about where you're standing in life... [Occupy yourself in seeing to] the kashrus of food and drink, taharas hamishpachah, hosting guests, learning Chitas, etc. And as mentioned above, do so in a practical and unpretentious manner."<sup>11</sup>

Not only did the Rebbe see the study of Chitas as a Chossid's basic duty, he demanded that we encourage others to study Chitas as well. In a letter dated 14 Shevat 5714\*, the Rebbe wrote, "It is incumbent upon you to try and influence your surroundings to learn from the teachings of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe and follow his ways; in particular to follow his takanos—the shiurim of Chumash, Tehillim and Tanya." At the farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Pekudei 5727\*, the Rebbe famously said while knocking with his finger on the table: "When Moshiach will come he won't be interested in any tricks. Instead he will demand: 'Write a list… how many Yidden did you influence to study Chitas?"<sup>14</sup>

# TO LIVE WITH THE TIMES

"To understand the particular avodas Hashem demanded of us each day, we must look at the shiurim in Torah of the day. As the Alter Rebbe taught regarding the portion of Chumash for each day, the same is true for the daily shiurim of Tehillim and Tanya."<sup>16</sup>

Throughout the years, the Rebbe taught us time and again, to look to the *shiurim* of Chitas (as well as Rambam, in later years) to understand what each day is about. Not merely to learn the *shiurim*, but to live by them. At almost every farbrengen, the Rebbe would expound on the significance of the day through the lens of that day's Chitas.

This notion dates back to the early days of Chassidus Chabad. At a public gathering during the early years of the his *nesius*, when the Alter Rebbe famously said "מען בעדארף לעבן מיט דער צייט" (literally: one must live with the times).<sup>17</sup> Subsequently it was learned that the Alter Rebbe's intention was for Chasidim to study each day's parshah of Chumash and to live by it.

The daily *shiurim* of Tanya were divided by the Frierdiker Rebbe, in two tracks. One track for a standard year and another for a leap year. When Reb Pinchas Menachem Alter, the Pnei Menachem of Gur, was in *yechidus* with the Rebbe, he asked why is it that there are days in which the *shiur* of Tanya is identical in both a leap year and a standard year, while during most of the year the *shiur* is different?

The Rebbe replied, "Just as it is with *krias haTorah*, there is a difference which *parshah* we read depending on whether it is a leap year or not, with the reason for this being that the *avodas Hashem* in these years is different. So, too, the *shiurim* of Tanya are in sync with the *avodas Hashem* of every day in that specific year. It is not merely because a leap year is longer."

# THERE IS NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT

At times, the Rebbe admonished Chassidim for not studying Chitas the way they should. One such example can be seen in this answer from the Rebbe to a question the *manichim* asked him about a certain question they were left with in Rashi after the Rebbe's *sicha*. In response, the Rebbe wrote: "I *said, amongst the writers there must be at least one individual* who learns Chitas well enough to remember, and would be able to answer this question very easily."

On another occasion, during a farbrengen in 5727\*, the Rebbe raised a simple question in Rashi, and then said: "From here it becomes apparent that Chitas is not being learned, and if it is being learned, then it is just being quickly read, and is forgotten right after. Or perhaps while it is being read one's mind is wandering elsewhere. Thus no one can answer this question. Had Chitas been properly studied, the answer to this question would have been known."<sup>18</sup>

# PRACTICAL GUIDANCE

# ENHANCING ONE'S STUDY OF CHITAS

At the farbrengen of Shavuos 5749\*, the Rebbe spoke about Shavuos being a time to increase in regular Torah study. Not only to add new personal *shiurim*, but also to increase in the daily study of Chitas: *"To increase in studying Chitas (aside from being more careful with the daily* shiurim) *means to devote more energy to better understanding what one learns in Chitas.*"<sup>19</sup>

### DON'T PUSH IT OFF!

"Regarding the shiurim of Chitas... it is self understood that they are to be learned on the day, and not to postpone it from one day to the next, for the shiur of each day belongs to its day."<sup>20</sup>

# WITHOUT PRONOUNCING THE WORDS

Regarding a Yid who wasn't in good health, the Rebbe instructed (among other things): *"He should take upon* 



himself—bli neder—to study the three shiurim... If at the time being, speaking is difficult for him, he can recite them with just his thoughts, if the doctors permit this.<sup>221</sup>

# WHEN TO LEARN CHITAS

"[Regarding] the time to learn Chumash, Tehillim and Tanya: As clarified in the preface to Hayom Yom, the shiur of Tehillim should be recited following Shacharis.

# **RABBI AHARON DALFIN RELATES:**

After some years of being married and raising a family, I let go of studying the daily Chitas. I was busy with work, and I couldn't do it all. Then some problems came up, and I wrote a long letter to the Rebbe asking for his advice. He answered – because he always answered – but he did not respond to my questions. He only wrote one word, "Chitas?"

I understood that the Rebbe somehow felt that my connection to him as a Chossid was growing weak, and that he attributed it to my laxity with this basic Chabad practice. But I didn't take his message to heart.

A couple of months went by and my problems continued, so again, I wrote to the Rebbe. And, again, he answered, "Chitas?"

So, finally, I started to learn Chitas. And when I did, when I had reconnected to the Rebbe, he answered all the questions which I had sent in – one by one.<sup>29</sup> The study of Chumash with Rashi as well as Tanya should ideally take place not long after Shacharis, preferably right away. If this is not possible, it can be made up [even as late as] the following night."<sup>22</sup>

# DAILY TEHILLIM RECITAL

"It is best to say Tehillim right after Shacharis. However, if [doing so] will affect the morning seder hayeshiva, it should be said (during breaks) before shkiah. In any case, you should say at least one kapitel right after Shacharis so that there will be some form of recital of Tehillim right after davening."<sup>23</sup>

# CHUMASH AND TEHILLIM AT NIGHT

"You ask [what to do] on short winter days, when your job doesn't necessarily allow enough time during the day to complete the shiur of Chumash... should you study it at

# WHAT'S GOING ON?

The following story is related by a member of *anash*:

Over the years I often drove the distance of a few hours from my house to New York for the Rebbe's weekday farbrengens, taking a detour along the way to pick up a relative of mine.

The long journey made it difficult for me to study Chitas during the daytime and I often wasn't able to learn the daily shiur before the farbrengen started at 9:30 p.m.

It was a Yud Shevat farbrengen in the 5740s\*. I did my usual trip and finally arrived at the farbrengen after the day of traveling. When I picked up my cup to say *l'chaim* to the Rebbe and made eye contact with the Rebbe, the Rebbe made a motion with his hand for a few seconds holding his thumb up, as if asking, "What's going on?"

When I arrived home a few days later, I wrote a letter to the Rebbe's Mazkirus, asking if there was any further explanation about the Rebbe's motion to me.

Shortly thereafter, I received a phone call from Rabbi Groner with the following answer from the Rebbe:

"מילוי <u>בלי נדר</u> תקנת בעל ההילולא חת"ת אזכיר עה"צ." "Be sure to follow, *bli neder*, the initiative of the one whose yahrtzeit we marked [the Frierdiker Rebbe], Chitas. I will mention this at the Ohel."

When I consulted with elder Chassidim, they advised me that the Rebbe was urging me to make sure to say Chitas during the daytime. night. I haven't heard a clear directive about this [from the Frierdiker Rebbe]. But it seems to me that if you know the chapters of the daily shiur of Tehillim by heart, they may be said after chatzos or before tzeis hakochavim, but not from tzeis hakochavim until chatzos. Regarding Chumash, you can split the shiur into smaller sections and learn a small amount at a time throughout the course of the day, while at your place of business. If you don't have the time even for this, you should study [the shiur of Chumash at night] with commentary on each possuk, which, in a time of pressing need, can be considered to be a form of Oral Torah, particularly in today's day and age, when many are lenient regarding the [injunction against] learning the Written Torah at night, although [this injunction] is mentioned in many sefarim.<sup>224</sup>

# WHAT IF I DON'T UNDERSTAND?

"Ideally, the [shiurim] should be learned, although it doesn't need to be studied in depth. Even just to recite the words is better than not reciting the [shiurim] at all."<sup>25</sup>

# WHEN TO MAKE UP MISSED SHIURIM

"... One should try to study [Chitas and Rambam] during the day. If, for some reason, one was unable to do this, they can and must be completed at night, up until chatzos, or even until the crack of dawn, just like the chelev and limbs of korbanos were able to be burned all night until dawn."<sup>26</sup>

# WHICH SHIUR TAKES PRECEDENCE WHEN MAKING UP

"The order in which one should make up [missed] shiurim of Chitas should obviously be: First yesterday's shiur [and then today's], because they are to be studied in order; not the second perek before the first."<sup>27</sup>

# STUDYING THE SHIURIM ON THE RIGHT DAY

"When someone is asked, 'Did you learn the shiurim of Chitas today?' he answers that he hasn't, for he was busy saying Shabbos Mevarchim Tehillim. When asked, 'Did you finish saying [Shabbos Mevarchim] Tehillim?' he answers that he hasn't worked that out yet. When he's asked, 'What about yesterday's shiurim of Chitas? You didn't have to

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THE REBBE INSTRUCTS SOMEONE WHO MISSED A SHIUR OF CHITAS TO STUDY THAT SHIUR TWICE.

say the whole Tehillim yesterday!' He admits that he didn't study the shiurim of Chitas yesterday either. Every Yid is assumed to be upstanding, but only when we're trying to give the benefit of the doubt, in which case we must say '[It must have been unavoidable, and] 'Hashem exempts one who was coerced' etc.' However, practically, there are apparently some people here who have not studied the shiurim of Chitas today or yesterday! We are therefore discussing this now so that from now on they will make sure to study the shiurim of Chitas. And not only from now on—they should also make up the shiurim [that they missed] in the past."<sup>28</sup>

# CHITAS TWICE

An individual wrote to the Rebbe: "This past Erev Shabbos, I missed the *shiur* of Chumash. I ask for a *tikkun* (rectification)." The Rebbe replied: "Regret the past, [and] make good resolutions for the future. Study that *shiur* twice. Give 2x 18 coins (cents) to tzedakah." **①** 

1. For additional reading, see *Darkei HaChassidus—Takanos HaRebbe*, Derher Kislev 5776.

- 2. Hayom Yom 19 Teves.
- 3. Toras Menachem 5716, vol. 2 p. 336.
- 4. Igros Kodesh Admur HaRayatz vol. 4, p. 268.
- 5. Teshurah, 11 Nissan 5756, France.
- 6. Igros Kodesh vol. 3, p. 430.
- 7. Ibid. vol. 9, p. 128.
- 8. Ibid. vol. 14, p. 288.
- 9. Igros Kodesh vol. 14, p. 435.
- 10. Teshurah Blau, Cheshvan 5771.
- 11. Likkutei Sichos, vol. 34, p. 285.
- 12. Toras Menachem 5710, p. 55.
- 13. See Derher, Teves 5776.
- 14. Toras Menachem 5727 vol 2, p. 157
- 15. Igros Kodesh, vol. 13, p. 160.
- 16. Rosh Chodesh Shevat, 5742.
- 17. Hayom Yom 2 Cheshvan.
- 18. Sichos Kodesh 5727, p. 395.
- 19. Sefer Hasichos 5749, p. 502.
- 20. Shabbos Parshas Massei 5727.
- 21. Igros Kodesh vol. 6, p. 341.
- 22. Igros Kodesh vol. 17 p. 146.
- 23. From a yechidus with Reb Eliyahu Friedman, Tammuz 5730.
- 24. Igros Kodesh vol. 18 p. 31.
- 25. From a *yechidus*, 28 Adar II, 5727.
- 26. Sefer Hasichos 5749 p. 194 footnote 39 and marginal footnotes there.
- 27. Igros Kodesh vol. 13 p. 331.
- 28. Toras Menachem 5742 vol. 2 p. 1037 (Vayakhel Pekudei).
- 29. My Encounter with the Rebbe, chabad.org/4059277.









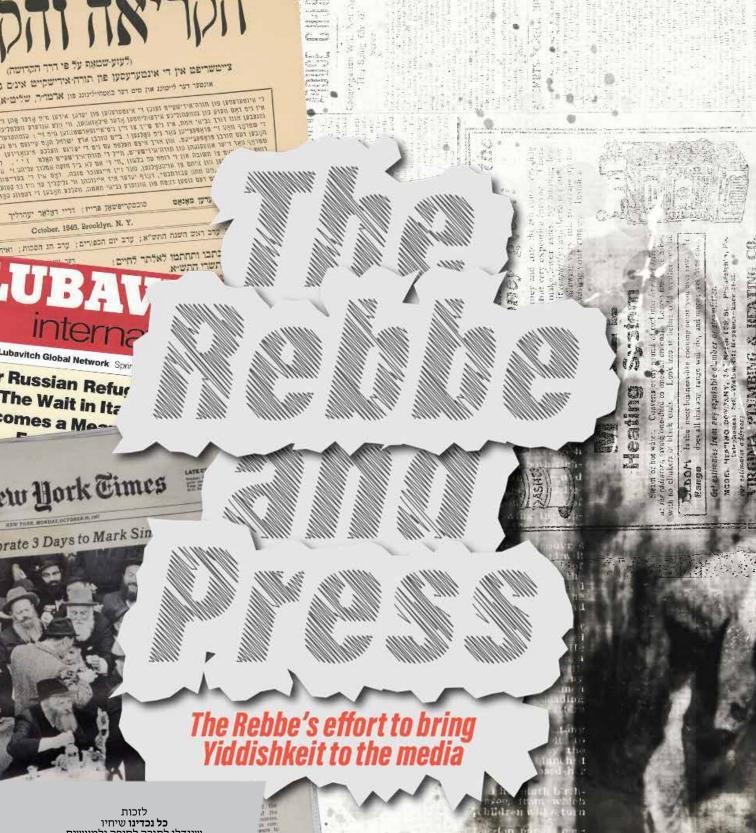
A COLLECTION (IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER) OF THE VARIOUS "LOOKS" OF THE CHITAS OVER THE DECADES.

### "CHITAS?"

A story is told of a *bochur* traveling from Eretz Yisroel to the Rebbe. Before he left Eretz Yisroel, he offered some people he knew from *mivtzoim* to have their names brought to the Rebbe for a *bracha*.

The night before he was traveling, he sat down to prepare his *tzetel* with the names for *brachos* to be given to the Rebbe. When he finished writing, he fell asleep before he had a chance to learn that day's Chitas.

As soon as he arrived in New York, he gave in his *tzetel* to the Rebbe's secretary. A few days later he merited to receive an answer from the Rebbe. At the bottom of his *tzetel*, next to his name the Rebbe wrote one word: חת"ח?



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Vodka to Served A Chassidisher Derher | Iyar 5782

- [14] Y. Hall, D. S. Stell, S. Martin, Burk, Phys. Rev. Lett. 76, 121 (1997).
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n recent times, the world has come to enjoy "publicity," especially in America. It has become a given that if something doesn't get publicity, it probably is not so important. Today it is the "minhag hamedinah," and as Chazal said: "When you enter a city follow its customs..."

...This is one of the positive customs introduced in America—and may they be blessed—to publicize good deeds and the people who participate in them. It has enabled many more positive things to be accomplished as a result, and it has also attracted many more Yidden who, without publicity, would not have been affected. It not only attracts new people, but it also strengthens those who are already involved.

-Yechidus 13 Adar I 5744

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# *THE POWER OF THE PRESS*

"The Rebbe was at odds with others about journalism," related Moshe Ishon, editor-in-chief of the Israeli newspaper HaTzofe. "There are rabbis who hold that one shouldn't ascribe great value to journalism but the Rebbe held quite the opposite. The Rebbe held that journalism must speak boldly, and the more clearly it speaks, the more influential it will be."1

Moshe Ishon had served as a representative for Israel's Jewish Agency in New York for several years. In 5740\*, he was facing a crossroads: One option was to accept an offer to become one of the directors of the Jewish Agency. A second option was to return to Israel and become editorin-chief of the newspaper "HaTzofe."

In a *yechidus* before returning to Eretz Yisroel, he asked the Rebbe which one to choose. The Rebbe's response was unequivocal:

"What's the question? The newspaper of course! A newspaper affects public opinion."

Following the yechidus, Mr. Ishon heeded the Rebbe's advice and became chief editor of HaTzofe,

כוחות המצו

a position he held for 16 years.

The Rebbe's view on utilizing the press to spread Yiddishkeit and Chassidus is an idea that goes handin-hand with the Rebbe's view on technological breakthroughs2: Since the world and everything in it was created "for the glory of Hashem," obviously the ultimate purpose of every creation is to be utilized by Yidden to serve Hashem.

Mass media, the Rebbe taught, with its ability to penetrate closed doors and places that are normally hard to reach, serves as a perfect conduit to impact people in a positive way.

As the Rebbe once told Reb Shmuel Levitin, that when he calls for hafatzas hamaayanos he means that Chassidus should spread so far that the headlines of the newspapers should announce a new shiur in Chassidus was founded in this shul, at such-and-such place and at such-and-such time.3

In a yechidus with Mr. Alter Volner, the executive director of ITIM news agency, the Rebbe explained to him this very point, and advised him how to make his newspaper (HaTzofe) a most attractive news source, affecting as many people as possible.

"The truth of the matter is," the

Rebbe said, "that the world would probably be better off without newspapers altogether. Rather than reading them, people's time would be better spent studying Torah. But since newspapers do exist, and there is a danger that people might read the wrong newspapers and be influenced by ideas contrary to Judaism, it is absolutely necessary that there should be religious newspapers to present the news in a way that will bring Jews closer to Judaism."

The Rebbe continued, "Only when a religious newspaper serves such a purpose does it have a reason to publish. For instance, if it reports that President Eisenhower met with another head of state in a way that demonstrates that this is all part of Hashem's plan, then such a newspaper is supporting Judaism."4

# **ENCOURAGING THE PRESS**

The Rebbe's constant encouragement to reporters and journalists was second-to-none. To many reporters and journalists the Rebbe offered advice and encouragement, and some newspapers



MOSHE ISHON. EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF THE ISRAELI NEWSPAPER HATZOFE IN CONVERSATION WITH THE REBBE AT DOLLARS.

מליובאביץ



RABBI RUBIN HOLDING A DISPLAY FEATURING HEADLINES FROM "TORAH TIMES."

received the Rebbe's instruction and detailed guidance from their initiation.

In 5731\*, Reb Gershon Jacobson, a 37 year old Lubavitcher Chossid, opened the newspaper "Der Algemeiner Journal." The Rebbe's advice from the beginning helped take the paper from a start-up to a successful and influential media platform.

As a matter of fact, the very name of the newspaper ("Algemeiner") was suggested by the Rebbe. The Rebbe explained that such a name, which literally means "everyone's paper," would impart to a prospective reader that this paper was different, this paper was for him.

At one point, Reb Gershon Ber had received many complaints about the paper not being religious enough. So he went to ask the Rebbe about that. The Rebbe's response was, "I don't doubt that there are other people out there who think the paper is too religious."

The Rebbe gave Reb Gershon Ber this advice: "A newspaper is for

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THE REBBE'S COMMENTS ON THE "TORAH TIMES" PUBLICATION.

people who read newspapers and who do not sit and learn Torah all day. In the Algemeiner Journal, they are able to at least read one column that contains words of Torah, among the material that they are interested in like literature and culture and articles by excellent writers. If you don't give them these things, they won't buy the paper. But when they do, they will also get words of Torah and news about religious institutions and religious events, and other information about Yiddishkeit. If you give your readers

### NOT FOR CHASSIDIM!

Although the Rebbe saw media as a powerful tool for *hafatzas hamaayanos*, time and again the Rebbe stressed the *ruchniyusdike* dangers that lay in the media, and even the prohibition of reading content not related to *avodas Hashem*.

In 5717\*, the Rebbe's *mazkirus* published an advertisement in local newspapers regarding a certain issue. As a direct result of these advertisements, the *bochurim* in the yeshiva took offense and accused the administration of the yeshiva of misdoings.

In a *yechidus* with the *bochurim*, the Rebbe spoke sharply in wonder: "How is it possible that a *bochur* can learn information—even related to Lubavitch—from a newspaper?"

The Rebbe continued: "Bochurim, and all young

Chassidim, should not know what is going on in the news. Even if they intended to look at the part that speaks about Lubavitch, it is clear that when one looks at one page, he is bound to flip to the next page."<sup>25</sup>

The Rebbe did not speak just of younger Chassidim. At a farbrengen in 5742\* the Rebbe spoke disparagingly about the "*minhag*" of people who must read the newspaper in order to know what is happening in the world. If he doesn't have time to read it, he'll be sure to ask his friend to update him on the latest news, and even ask a second friend to give him a rundown of the latest news. He is worried that maybe the first friend he asked may have missed out on some details.

*"Halevai* this custom will not become accepted by people who have set times for Torah study," the Rebbe said, *"and certainly not by yeshiva students and young girls studying in the educational institutions."<sup>26</sup>* 

# THE REBBE'S PICTURE

Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky relates:

About a half a year into my work for public relations, newspapers began asking for more and more news about Lubavitch, and even requested pictures of the Rebbe to publish.

I decided to ask the Rebbe to pick a picture of himself to send.

I presented several pictures for the Rebbe to choose from, but the Rebbe didn't even glance at one. The Rebbe told me: "Pick yourself. One thing: it should be with a smile."<sup>27</sup>

that, you have fulfilled your purpose."5

Similarly, in a *yechidus* with Mr. Alter Volner, the Rebbe emphasized the importance of maintaining a high standard of quality; otherwise people will be motivated to search for news elsewhere, defeating the entire purpose.

However, while maintaining the highest level of quality, the reporters and editors must always keep their mission of spreading *Yiddishkeit* at the forefront of their minds.

Mr. Volner proceeded to tell the Rebbe that there had been a debate among the editorial staff whether to report on sporting events. Many staffers opposed the idea because sports have absolutely no correlation with religion and therefore, they felt, such reporting does not belong in a religious newspaper.

The Rebbe answered that regarding events that take place on Shabbos, there is no question that they must be avoided. But the newspaper should definitely cover weekday sporting events. If not, the Rebbe explained, readers would likely look elsewhere for such news, and the paper will lose the chance to influence them in a positive manner.<sup>6</sup>

The Rebbe held strongly that anyone who is knowledgeable in Yiddishkeit on any level must feel obligated to impart his knowledge to other people.

In 5714\*, Mr. Herbert Brin, who had recently begun publishing "Heritage," a Jewish newspaper based in Los Angeles, visited the Rebbe for a *yechidus* with a question that had been bothering him in his new position: "Do I have a right to act as an editor and write editorials for a Jewish newspaper, when I know so little of Yiddishkeit, and I can't even daven? Maybe I'm in the wrong field."

The Rebbe proceeded to relate a famous story of the Baal Shem Tov, learning from it a powerful lesson:

One Yom Kippur in the court of the Baal Shem Tov, as the crowd of Chassidim was davening with great intensity, a young shepherd boy entered the shul. This boy, seeing the crowd emotionally pouring out their hearts, grabbed a siddur and attempted to join the davening. Try as he might, the young uneducated boy couldn't read a word. Left with no other option he began to daven in a way he knew best—imitating the chickens he raised on his farm. "*Kukareku*!" he cried out.

As the crowd of Chassidim looked on in shock at the seeming disgrace of Yom Kippur davening, the Baal Shem Tov began to speak. "It was this child's cry, even in the form of animal sounds, that broke through the Heavens and carried our *tefillos* up with it as well."

The Rebbe was demonstrating to Mr. Brin that no matter how ignorant one may be, he still has what to offer, albeit in his own way.



REB GERSHON JACOBSON AND THE ALGEMEINER JOURNAL.

But Mr. Brin was still not convinced. "I don't whistle in shuls," he responded, "I want to know that I'm doing the right thing."

The Rebbe stood up from his chair, reached into his pocket and asked: "How much is a subscription to your paper?"

"Three dollars and fifty cents." "I want a subscription," the Rebbe said as he handed Mr. Brin the money.

"You're a learned man," the Rebbe continued. "Do you have a right to hold back what you know?"<sup>7</sup>

The Rebbe's continuous encouragement was not limited to influential and wider-reaching journalists. The Rebbe encouraged all journalists to pursue their publishing career, even if they were publishing child-friendly content. Indeed, young children can be impacted by a publication on their level.

"After I was hired to oversee the Torah studies at the Gan Yisroel boys overnight camp in Montreal," related Rabbi Yisroel Rubin, shliach in Albany, New York, "I sought ways to make the campers enjoy the time they spent learning Torah. Every day, I published a one-page 'newspaper' describing the events and personalities of the day's Torah reading. I wrote it up journalistically, as though it was 'breaking news' happening today, and I used the New York Times typeface for the masthead.

"We named the publication 'The Daily Chitas' and the publication took off. The kids loved the humorous way we would present the weekly *parsha*. By summer's end we had 60 pages, which I stapled together and sent to the Rebbe.

"Once we came back to the city, Shmuel Greisman and I started to print the 'The Daily Chitas' once a week and to distribute them to various day schools.

"We wrote to the Rebbe about this, and he responded that the

publication was written nicely, but it needed a name that more people would understand. So we suggested the name Torah Times which the Rebbe liked. In fact, the Rebbe contributed \$600 to cover the printing costs for the first six months!

"But, when I gave copies to some non-Lubavitch rabbis, they disapproved; they felt it was disrespectful to present the stories of the Torah in a humorous and journalistic format. Once, a teacher at the Yeshiva of Flatbush came back with critical feedback on our Toldos issue. We had joked about King Avimelech being struck with constipation, which is the punishment he was given for abducting Sarah, and the teachers felt it was inappropriate.

"That negative feedback made me nervous and I was afraid to show that issue to the Rebbe. Instead, I decided to stop sending in the new issues for several weeks, and then, after I accumulated a pile of pages, I submitted all of them at once with issue number six missing. I figured it wouldn't be too noticeable if one page from a whole stack was left out. But I didn't get away with it; the Rebbe wrote to me, "Number six is missing."

"Clearly, the Rebbe was paying close attention to what we thought was a silly children's production. Knowing that he read every issue as did the Rebbetzin, which I later learned—encouraged me to continue the project despite the backlash."<sup>8</sup>

# A CRUCIAL Component

The Rebbe held that the influence of a particular activity or event should not be limited to the people who attend and are affected directly. A main and pivotal part of the activity should be publicizing what happened at the event in the various media outlets thus impacting an additional untold amount of people.

Reb Yitzchok Gansburg was a dedicated Chossid with a knack for devising innovative ideas for *hafatzas hamaayanos*. His son, Rabbi Yossi Gansburg, related the following story:

"Once, after a particularly successful activity, my father wrote to the Rebbe a report detailing the success of the event. The Rebbe responded: 'I didn't see it publicized anywhere.'

"Interestingly, on the other hand, smaller activities that were indeed publicized properly pleased the Rebbe very much."9

Rabbi Yossi Gordon, son of the shliach Rabbi Sholom Ber Gordon, related the following episode in which the Rebbe expressed similar sentiments about the importance of media publicity:

"I recall that when I was a kid, a teenager from our synagogue named Stephen Lutz was honored by President John F. Kennedy as the 'Boy of the Year' in recognition of 'superlative services to his home, school, synagogue, community and boys club.' During the ceremony, President Kennedy asked him, 'Who inspired you to become what you are today?' And he answered, 'It was Rabbi Sholom Ber Gordon, who is an emissary of the Rebbe.'

"This story appeared in The New York Times and other papers, featuring a photo of the boy with the president and, of course, the Rebbe saw it. But the Rebbe expressed his disappointment that my father was not in the photograph. 'If your picture had appeared in the paper,' the Rebbe told him, 'it could have caused one more Jewish girl to marry a Torah observant boy with a beard.""

The Rebbe encouraged reporters as well to see their position of influence as an opportunity to teach Torah. In a *yechidus* with Motti



THE NEWSPAPER ARTICLE REPORTING ON STEPHEN LUTZ RECEIVING THE "BOY OF THE YEAR AWARD" FROM PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY.

Eden, a journalist in Eretz Yisroel, the Rebbe encouraged him to add Jewish content to his news channel:

"When someone is listening to the news, and is waiting to hear the latest from Washington, but before announcing the news, the host begins to speak about Parshas Pinchas, how Pinchas acted zealously for Hashem and thus brought brachos to the entire Jewish people for all time, then the listener has no choice but to concentrate; he wants to hear what's going on in Washington, so

PUBLICATIONS THE REBBE WAS HEAVILY INVOLVED IN BEFORE THE KABBALAS HANESIUS CONTAINING TORAH AND CHASSIDISHE CONTENT.

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he's automatically forced to hearlehavdil-about Pinchas!"

# **MY FATHER WROTE TO THE REBBE A REPORT DETAILING THE SUCCESS OF THE EVENT. THE REBBE RESPONDED: 'I DIDN'T SEE IT PUBLICIZED ANYWHERE**.

When Mr. Eden mentioned that it's difficult to discuss Torah on the radio as news, the Rebbe replied, based on the teaching of Chazal that the Torah "must be new to us each day," that when you announce that there is "news" and go on to discuss the parsha, etc., you are essentially telling the truth. The words of Torah are applicable to every Yid even in the 20th century, the Rebbe continued, even to those



who speak only English, and even to the members of Kibbutz Hashomer Hatzair (a secular Zionist group).

"Since you work in this field, I am sure you will be able to find some sort of introduction, to connect it to the news that is happening in this physical world," the Rebbe concluded.10

# EARLY BEGINNINGS

Already from the Rebbe's early years, we see the Rebbe's involvement in publishing Torah and Chassidishe content.

"Hatomim," a publication laden with chidushei Torah and many Chassidishe treasures, was published in the 5690s.<sup>11</sup> One can get a feel of the Rebbe's tremendous involvement in this publication from the following letter of the Frierdiker Rebbe to Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka:

"With Hashem's help, through the work and devotion of your esteemed husband, my dear and cherished son-in-law *sheyichye*, a very important journal called 'Hatomim' will soon be published. While on paper the names of the editors will be other individuals, the entire work is really his. He is, bli ayin hara, a very distinguished yungerman ... "12

Among the first major initiatives begun by the Frierdiker Rebbe after his arrival in America, was the establishment of three new Chabad publications: "Hakriah V'hakedushah"-a monthly newspaper focusing on influencing the Jewish masses to teshuvah as a preparation for the geulah; "Talks and Tales;" and "Shmuessen Mit Kinder Un Yugent" (a Yiddish version of Talks and Tales), a monthly publication geared towards youth.

In a letter, the Frierdiker Rebbe explained the vital importance of these publications:

### INTERVIEWED BY THE REBBE

Numerous times, journalists came to the Rebbe for *yechidus* with the intention of interviewing the Rebbe about his opinion on current events and different matters. Many times they found that the Rebbe turned the conversation to a more personal one, asking them about what they are doing for Yiddishkeit in general and in their role as a journalist.

In a fascinating article, novelist Mr. Harvey Swados writes about his encounter with the Rebbe, when he asked the Rebbe about his opinion as to the reasoning behind the Holocaust, the future of the Jewish people and what the Rebbe thought of the Satmer Rebbe.<sup>28</sup>

When he had finished his prepared questions Mr. Swados writes:

"I thanked him for his courtesy and half rose to leave, when he restrained me with a motion of his hand.

"Now that you have interviewed me, I'd like to interview you. Unless you have any objections?"

"Please,' I said, 'go right ahead.' "But I am afraid that I won't be as diplomatic with you as you have been with

me.' And the Rebbe grinned at me."

The Rebbe proceeded to speak to him at length how a writer "must bear in mind his responsibility not only to his readers but to his past, his heritage."

Mr. Swados continues in his recount:

"Are you suggesting, Rebbe,' I asked, 'that I should re-examine my writing, or my personal code and my private life?'

"Doesn't one relate to the other? Doesn't one

imply the other?' "That's a complicated question.' "Yes,' he smiled amiably, 'it certainly is.' He paused. 'I warned you that I wouldn't be diplomatic, didn't I?' "Silence again. Then I thanked him as we all arose for

being so generous with



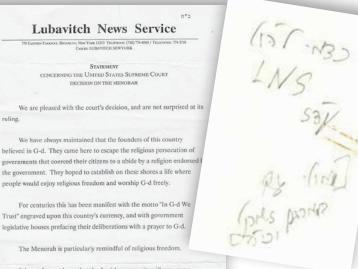
NOVELIST MR. HARVEY SWADOS.

his time. The Rebbe waved that aside. 'We'll see,' he said, 'what your writing turns out like in the time ahead."

In a write-up of a *yechidus* from 5711\* published in the Orthodox Jewish Life, Mr. Gershon Kranzler recounted the end of his *yechidus*:

"As I took leave, overwhelmed by the spiritual experience of the short hour I had been privileged to spend with the new Lubavitcher Rebbe, he stressed again an earlier warning. 'The only purpose of our talk can be to speak about the work which the late Lubavitcher Rebbe has started in this country, and into which he has been able to draw so many varied groups of Jewish people. This work must and will go on, with the help of G-d. We must all contribute to this historic mission. This is what I want you to convey to your readers. And if it helps to make them realize what our task is, and put their shoulder to the wheel, then our time was well spent indeed."<sup>29</sup>





It is our fervent hope that the Jewish community will now come together to fully utilize the religious freedom guaranteed and protected by this great country.

July 3, 1989

#### A STATEMENT THROUGH THE LUBAVITCH NEWS SERVICE ABOUT THE COURT'S RULING REGARDING THE PUBLIC MENORAH LIGHTING ON STATE PROPERTY

ruling

"When I arrived in this country in Adar Sheini 5700\* and learned of the situation in American and Canadian cities, I understood that writing letters is not enough. It is necessary to provide Jewish educational literature. Notwithstanding the publishing costs, I began a monthly newspaper called 'Hakriah V'hakedushah' as well as talks for the young and youth in Yiddish and English, which is, with the help of Hashem, having a great effect."13

In numerous letters, the Frierdiker Rebbe strongly encouraged anash and bochurim to distribute the publications and influence people to become subscribers.

"It must be publicized in every place and this is a tovas horabim (an activity which is for the benefit of the general public)," the Frierdiker Rebbe writes in a letter.<sup>14</sup>

Deviating from the long practiced custom of the Rabbeim that maamarim be printed only in Lashon Hakodesh, the Frierdiker Rebbe wrote maamarim in Yiddish especially for

**REGARDING A CERTAIN MATTER. THE REBBE WRITES TO RABBI YEHUDA** KRINSKY TO RELEASE A STATEMENT THROUGH THE LNS, THE LUBAVITCH NEWS SERVICE, AS WELL AS IN THE "MORGEN JOURNAL."

publication in Hakriah V'hakedushah. These maamarim were later printed in Sefer Hamamarim Yiddish.

The Rebbe was also very involved in the publication and distribution of all these three publications. In a letter to the editor of Hakriah V'hakedushah, Mr. Aharon (Harry) Hersch, the Rebbe writes how it is important the publication be printed before Rosh Chodesh so that it will reach its readers at the beginning of the month.

The Talks and Tales was edited by the Rebbe from its inception until its final issue in 5749\*. Chassidim saw the Rebbe bringing copies of the newest issues of the "Talks" and "Shmuessen" to the Ohel numerous times.15

To a group of Lubavitcher bochurim who wrote regarding hiskashrus, the Frierdiker Rebbe replied:

"You thank Hashem for this that you are mekusher to me and it is pleasant for me to hear this; however you must contemplate . . what were the actual results of your hiskashrus?

"You know what I demand . . to

bring the light of Torah and mitzvos into the homes of the Jewish people through being involved in the work of Merkos L'invonei Chinuch, Machne Yisroel, National Committee for the Furtherance of Jewish Education, and promoting the Hakriah V'hakedushah, Shmuessen, and Young Scholars Pocket Calendar."16

# LUBAVITCH IN THE PRESS

Soon after Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky began working in mazkirus (Tishrei 5718\*), and on instruction of Rabbi Hodakov, he began developing relationships with reporters. He slowly built up a strong enough connection to begin giving over the Rebbe's message to the reporters for publication.

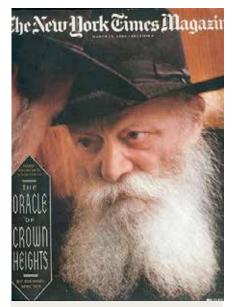
The projects that Rabbi Krinsky directed with the Rebbe's involvement included publicizing advertisements before yomim tovim, securing time on television for classes in Yiddishkeit and Chassidus, and also publicizing the Rebbe's michtavim kloliim.

"A bit after I began on this project, the Rebbe instructed us to start sending out press releases," Rabbi Krinsky related. "I can testify how



THE FIRST ISSUE OF THE "LUBAVITCH INTERNATIONAL" PUBLICATION.

much the Rebbe cared about these press releases. The Rebbe would edit each paper before it was released, adding a lot of valuable information and at the same time teaching the



# YUD-ALEPH NISSAN IN THE NEW YORK TIMES

The major value the Rebbe saw in the press is clearly illustrated in the following story: In honor of the Rebbe's ninetieth birthday on Yud-Aleph Nissan 5752\*, the New York Times magazine published a cover story about the Rebbe. While preparing the article, the journalist who was preparing the story asked Rabbi Krinsky if he would be able to visit the Rebbe's home. Rabbi Krinsky responded that the Rebbe had recently moved to his room in 770, and that a visit to the Rebbe's room would have to be approved by the Rebbe himself.

Upon asking the Rebbe, in an unprecedented manner the Rebbe agreed and gave Rabbi Krinsky a key to his room and an appropriate time to bring the reporter. editors the proper way to bring a Jewish message to the world."

Aside from being a good method of feeding Lubavitch news into the paper, these press releases served as a good means of getting general *Yiddishe* content into the news, about the upcoming *yomim tovim*, and the like.

Another thing that would be occasionally sent to the press was the content of the Rebbe's *sichos*. After farbrengens, Rabbi Krinsky would carefully choose parts of the *sichos* that were fit for publication in a newspaper and transcribe what was said. At times the Rebbe would instruct to omit a part of what was spoken.

In connection with these activities, the Lubavitch News Service ("LNS") was established as a branch of *mazkirus*. Over the years, more than 500 press releases were published—all of which were edited by the Rebbe!<sup>17</sup>

Rabbi Krinsky would also invite journalists to come and see the Rebbe first hand, first in *yechidus* and later for Sunday "dollars." The Rebbe always gave much attention to the journalists and encouraged them to report good news. Many times the Rebbe gave over specific messages for publication in their newspapers and magazines.

The visit of a television reporter and videographer to one of the

Rebbe's farbrengens is also what led to the revolutionary idea of having the Rebbe's farbrengens broadcasted on cable television throughout the 5740s<sup>\*,18</sup>

As the work of Lubavitch grew throughout the world, there was a need for a periodical that would exclusively cover the expansive work of Lubavitch, and offer a glimpse into the activities of shluchim around the world.

In 5749\* the Lubavitch News Service began publishing a fullcolor magazine, eloquently written and modernly designed, called "Lubavitch International."

WHEN RABBI KRINSKY GAVE THE REBBE THE FIRST ISSUE OF THE MAGAZINE DURING A CAR RIDE TO THE OHEL, THE REBBE EXPRESSED WITH MUCH SATISFACTION: "THIS LIFTS UP THE PRESTIGE OF ALL OF THE SHLUCHIM!"

The quarterly magazine was immediately received with much *nachas* by the Rebbe.

When Rabbi Krinsky gave the Rebbe the first issue of the magazine during a car ride to the



JOURNALIST MOTTI EDEN IN DISCUSSION WITH THE REBBE AT "DOLLARS."

Ohel, the Rebbe expressed with much satisfaction: "This lifts up the prestige of all of the shluchim!"

The Rebbe's fondness for the magazine was evident with his personally editing the editorial and the *sicha*, as well as issuing various *horaos* how the magazine should be run.<sup>19</sup>

In Eretz Yisroel, the Kfar Chabad Magazine, founded in 5741\*, was published on a weekly basis.

The editors of the magazine testify to the Rebbe's constant encouragement, direction and advice throughout the years.

"From my point of view, the fact that the Rebbe himself would read the Kfar Chabad on a weekly basis

# 2,000 Youngsters Throng Synagogue At Hanukkah's End

#### By IRVING SPIEGEL

Two thousand Jewish youngsters filled the Lubavitch Synagogue in Brooklyn yesterday with joyous music and song as candles glowed on two latge candelabra.

By chartered bus, taxi and subway, the children, from day schools in the metropolitan area and New Jersey, converged on 770 Eastern Parkway in the Crown Heights section the synagogue-headquarters of the Lubavitcher Movement, the worldwide body of Hasidic Jews.

They came to celebrate the end of the eight-day observance of Hanukkah, th Feast of Lights.

They came at the invitatic of Rabbi Menachem M. Scl neerson, spirtual leader of th Hasidic movement. In keepin with Hanukkah custom of giing gifts, Rabbi Schneerson, di tributed \$20,000 in crisp on dollar bills to Jewish childre here and in Lubavitcher insta lations throughout the countr during the holiday. was definitely a most prominent example of his special relationship with the magazine," related Rabbi Aharon Dov Halperin, editor-inchief of the Kfar Chabad Magazine.

"Rabbi Binyomin Klein told me that the Rebbe would often ask: '*Der Kfar Chabad iz shoin ongekumen*— Has the Kfar Chabad arrived yet?' Another special example was told to me by Reb Berel Junik, one of the *meshamshim bakodesh* for the Rebbe and the Rebbetzin. For an extended time period, the Rebbe and Rebbetzin would stay in the library on Shabbos and Yom Tov. One *erev Yom Tov* the Rebbe asked me to bring a Sefer Hamaamarim 5643-4 and a Kfar Chabad Magazine to the library before Yom Tov begins."<sup>20</sup>

In connection with the 500th issue of the magazine on 14 Kislev 5752\*, the Rebbe wrote a special letter to the editorial board in which one can see the great importance the Rebbe saw in the magazine:

"With pleasure I received the news that on 14 Kislev *haba aleinu l'tovah* the **five hundredth** issue of the **Kfar Chabad** Magazine will be published after they merited and were successful in publishing for close to 12 years consecutively, a fact that indicates the effect of the magazine on its readers.

"I send with this my heartfelt wishes and *brachos* to the editorial board, to the

#### THE ARTICLE IN THE NEW YORK TIMES BY IRVING SPIEGEL ABOUT THE CHANUKAH RALLY IN 5734\*.

GR IG

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אל את היא ביין אינויין אינוין אינוין אינויין אינויען אינויין אינוין אינוין אינוין אינוין אינוין אינוין אינוין א געראין גערוין אין אינוין אינוין אינוין אינוין אינויין אינוין אינוין אינוין אינוין אינוין אינוין אינוין אינוין א געראין גערוין אינוין אינויין אינויין אינוין אינו

מה לעשות בוה. הקסע תפני"ב תופיע ככל בונאות המייבם שפולתים מחוץ לנויארק בכל פרתבי הבל, אבל בהתוגאות שפוכרים כמן ננויארק הומיע רק

מרוני אבל בהמוצאות שנוכרים כאן בנויארק הופיל רק סרן. היים יבודא writers, and the readers of this important magazine, *shlita*, that Hashem should give them success to go from strength to strength in compiling and promoting the magazine, promulgating its purpose, which is spreading *Yiddishkeit*, Torah and mitzvos in general, and especially spreading the wellsprings of *Toras haChassidus*."

# THE NEW York times

A most prominent example of the Rebbe's view on the importance of using media to spread the message of Torah, is the story of the coverage of Lubavitch in the New York Times.

Over the years of Rabbi Krinsky's involvement in public relations, he had gotten through to many important newspapers, and successfully managed to publicize the Rebbe's message through their media platform. One newspaper—a most prestigious newspaper, with tremendous influence in the United States and around the world remained: the New York Times.

Rabbi Krinsky relates:

"There was a fellow working then in the New York Times by the name

ב"ה. עש"ק ויגש השל"ד כ"ק אדמו"ר שלים"א להקפעים מפכתב כ"ק אדמו"ר שלים"א לא מפכתי ני למפיגאל שי" בע"ם, אלא רשמחי בהטייפריימער ים נכדי למנוע שניאות ובלבולים מצדו, ואעפ"כ, \*חומה שאמרת\* קסעים ברורים בכרי CALIFICATION JY היים יהורא 1925A 157

RABBI KRINSKY REPORTS TO THE REBBE THAT HE WROTE OUT THE REBBE'S MICHTOV KLOLI FOR MR. SPIEGEL.

RABBI KRINSKY'S REPORT TO THE REBBE AFTER MR. SPIEGEL HAD ALREADY PUBLISHED HIS ARTICLE, EXPLAINING WHY THE MICHTOV KLOLI WASN'T INCLUDED.



MR. GARY TOCHMAN, A CNN REPORTER, ASKS THE REBBE WHAT HIS MESSAGE TO THE WORLD IS ON THE COMING OF MOSHIACH.

of Mr. Irving Spiegel. Mr. Spiegel was the authority on Jewish content for the newspaper and without him it was virtually impossible to put something Jewish in the paper.

"Although he was acquainted with many Jewish organizations, with Lubavitch he didn't really deal; he couldn't really connect to it, or so he claimed.

"I tried being *mekarev* him, to speak with him, to bring him to the Rebbe's farbrengens, and to simply build up an interest in him for Chabad, all to no avail.

"On Chanukah 5734\*, a children's rally took place in 770 with the Rebbe's participation. Interestingly enough, it was this rally that managed to pique the curiosity of Mr. Spiegel. I managed to tell him all the details of what had happened at the rally, and even included the *tochen* of the Rebbe's recent *michtav kloli* of Erev Chanukah.

"In an attempt to ensure that the Rebbe's words from the *michtav koli* make it into the paper, I typed up parts of the letter and sent it to him.

"Ultimately the article was published, though without the *tochen* of the *michtav kloli*. But still—Lubavitch had made it to the New York Times!

"When I gave the article to the

Rebbe, I included in my *tzetel* an apology for the lack of accuracy in the article. The Rebbe answered: "יה והמצו"ב ות"ח. ויה"ר מזאל יוצא זיין בזו המצו"ב ות"ח. ויה"ר מזאל יוצא זיין הייעגמ"נ" על כל השנה כולה [article]; many thanks, and *yehi ratzon* that with this we should be *yotze* the "*agmas nefesh*" for the whole year."

"Then the Rebbe added: "–ובפרט and שתקוה שעי"ז סללו דרך לימים יבואו"—and especially, since we can hope that the path has been paved for future days.

"This first article was indeed the opening of a long relationship.

"In the summer of that year, 5734\*, as the Rebbe introduced many new *mivtzoim*, the *bochurim* rented trucks and hung signs on either side, with the goal of attracting Yidden into these *mivtzoim* vehicles, and to encourage them to grow in their observance of Torah and mitzvos.<sup>21</sup>

"I called Mr. Spiegel to inform him of the *mivtzoim* vehicles that depart from 770 every morning. These vehicles, I told him, go to places around New York City to spread Yiddishkeit and bring Yidden closer to their roots. He developed an interest in this, and came one Sunday morning to report on the scene.

"Before his arrival, I notified the Rebbe of his visit. The Rebbe told

me to tell him that these *mivtzoim* mobiles are in fact 'tanks against assimilation'. This expression, that I had heard on that day from the Rebbe, was really the first reference to the now ubiquitous 'mitzvah tanks', a name that stuck to this very day.

"When Mr. Spiegel arrived, I told him the Rebbe's message. He couldn't help but acknowledge the fact that 'mitzvah tanks' are indeed a good description for these mobile Jewish outreach centers, and within a day or two, he published an article in the New York Times about the tanks.

"As time passed, our connection blossomed and Mr. Spiegel developed more of an interest in Lubavitch and the Rebbe.

"Throughout the years I always had in mind to bring Mr. Spiegel to the Rebbe's farbrengen, but somehow, it never turned practical.

"It was my wife who suggested that we have Mr. Spiegel over for a Yom Tov meal, after which we can invite him to participate



THE NEW YORK TIMES PUBLISHED A BEAUTIFUL DESCRIPTION OF THE SIMCHAS TORAH FARBRENGEN WITH THE REBBE IN 5728\*. THE REBBE WAS GIVEN A COPY OF THE ARTICLE AND WAS VERY PLEASED, ESPECIALLY BY THE ACCOMPANYING PHOTOGRAPH (TAKEN AFTER YOM TOV HAD ENDED).

in the Rebbe's farbrengen.

"I took up the idea, and the following Simchas Torah, we had Mr. Spiegel over for the Leil Simchas Torah meal. After the meal we walked to 770, to the Rebbe's Leil Simchas Torah farbrengen.

"In between the *sichos*, I introduced Mr. Spiegel to the Rebbe. 'This is Irving Spiegel from the New York Times,' I told the Rebbe. The Rebbe poured him some *l'chaim* and said: 'Mr. Spiegel, you can reach more Yidden than I can...'

"Mr. Spiegel was greatly affected by the Rebbe's words. The Rebbe at the time was known—especially to a New York Times reporter—for his broad influence the world over. Mr. Spiegel was shocked, and heavily impacted by the fact that the Rebbe told him that he, Irving Spiegel, has more influence than a world-influencing rabbi!

"His view changed entirely, as evident from the fact that articles about Lubavitch became commonplace in the New York Times. I remember once in the span of one week four articles were published about Lubavitch, and at the time the New York Times was the most influential paper in the world! (One of those articles was a write up published in the book review section on the latest volume of Likkutei Sichos!)

"Our open access to the New York Times brought the Rebbe much *nachas ruach*, and also became a source of envy from many other Jewish organizations."



In the later years, when the Rebbe was speaking so frequently about Moshiach's imminent arrival, the Rebbe would often tell reporters and journalists to use their media platform to publicize the news of Moshiach's coming.

One famous example is when Mr. Gary Tochman, a CNN reporter, came to the Rebbe with a videographer for Sunday "dollars" and asked: "Rebbe, can you tell us the message you have for the world about Moshiach?"

"It was printed in the press of all the countries," the Rebbe responded. "Moshiach is ready to come now, it is only on our part to do something additional in the realm of goodness and kindness."<sup>22</sup>

In the last dollars before Chof-Zayin Adar, on 26 Adar I 5752\*, Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky introduced an editor of the New York Post to the Rebbe: "It is called 'Post," the Rebbe told him, "then you will articulate a letter that Moshiach is coming very soon. Not coming—but he is on his way."

# *"THIS IS IRVING SPIEGEL FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES," I TOLD THE REBBE. THE REBBE POURED HIM SOME L'CHAIM AND SAID: "MR. SPIEGEL, YOU CAN REACH MORE YIDDEN THAN I CAN."*

At the farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim 5751\*, the Rebbe quoted the words of the Alter Rebbe that "Moshiach's coming will be reported in the *gazeten* (the newspapers)."<sup>23</sup>

The Rebbe continued and said that this indeed had been fulfilled recently with Moshiach's coming being publicized in numerous newspapers and instructed to publicize even more that Moshiach is coming and imminently will already be here.<sup>24</sup> **1**  really all about, Derher Tammuz 5778.

 See New World — Current Events Indicate Moshiach's Imminent Arrival, Derher Nissan 5775.

4. Here's My Story, Erev Shabbos Parshas Shelach, 25 Sivan, 5776

5. See JEM's interview with Mrs. Tzivia Jacobson: Here's My Story, Erev Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha, 5776.

6. Here's My Story, Erev Shabbos Parshas Shelach, 25 Sivan, 5776

7. Chaim Dalfin, *Conversations with the Rebbe*, pg. 31.

8. Here's My Story, Issue 461, Erev Shabbos Vayeitzei 5782.

9. *Effective Advertising*, Living Torah Toldos 5782.

10. Kovetz L'chizuk Hahiskashrus 37 p. 91. See the further discussion in the *yechidus* in *Changing the Course - Yechidus with Mr. Motti Eden* Derher Adar 5778.

11. See *A Light From Lubavitch*, Derher Adar I 5779.

12. Igros Kodesh Rayatz vol. 15 p. 208.

13. Igros Kodesh Rayatz vol. 7 page 22.

14. Igros Kodesh Rayatz vol. 5 pg. 326.

15. See Talks and Tales - Capturing the Hearts of the Young, Derher Teves 5781.

16. Igros Kodesh Rayatz vol. 8 pg. 322.

17. *B'shlichusa Ka Avdina*, Techayenu, Issue 6 (Yud Shevat 5777).

18. See *Let the World See*, Derher Nissan 5774.

19. Techayenu, ibid.

20. *Hashofar*, Kfar Chabad supplement, Hei Teves 5775.

21. For more on the mitzvah tanks see "*Are You a Tankist?*" Derher Kislev 5780.

22. 12 Cheshvan 5752, accessible at Chabad. org/490071.

23. Toras Shalom p. 12.

24. Sefer Hasichos 5752 p. 26. Regarding the Moshiach advertisements that were printed in the press prior to the *sicha* and the Rebbe's involvement in their publication see *Connect the Dots - Moshiach in the News*, Derher Teves 5775.

25. Hiskashrus issue 129.

26. Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5742 vol. 1 pg. 381.

27. Techayenu, ibid.

28. Available at Chabad.org/61921.

29. A Visit With the New Lubavitcher Rebbe by Gershon Kranzler. Available at Chabad. org/66877

<sup>1.</sup> Interview with JEM's My Encounter With The Rebbe project, available at Chabad. org/1367241.

<sup>2.</sup> See Chassidus on the Front Lines – The story of Tanya on the radio, Derher Kislev 5776. Breakthrough! – What modern technology is



דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג.

לזכות השלוחה מרת פערל גאלדא שתחי' לרגל יום הולדתה א' אייר, השליח גבריאל נח שיחי', לרגל יום הולדתו ט' אייר, הבחור הת' השליח לוי שיחי' לרגל יום הולדתו י"ב אייר, הבחור הת' השליח **מאיר** שיחי לרגל יום הולדתו כ"ט אייר נדפס ע"י הרה"ת ר' דוד ומשפחתו

Story

שיחיו **טייכטל** 

# **It's All Covered**

AS TOLD BY RABBI SHMUEL KOT (TALLINN, ESTONIA)

In the summer of 5760\*, several months after our wedding, my wife's grandfather, Rabbi Moshe Lasker, inquired by Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky about shlichus opportunities for us. Rabbi Kotlarsky mentioned that the Jewish community of Estonia (a small Eastern European country that had declared independence from the Soviet Union only 10 years earlier) was seeking a rabbi.

The small group of dedicated Jews in the capital city Tallinn reached out to many Jewish organizations around the world but were rejected. They all refused to consider the possibility of a Jewish future in Estonia. Rabbi Glazman, the shliach in nearby Riga, Latvia was involved with the Yidden of Estonia for many years, by sending Merkos Shluchim, shemurah matzah and other peulos, but there was no proper Jewish infrastructure there. The shul was a dilapidated building that the community had secured during the years of Communism where only a few elderly people would gather to daven. Nevertheless, the community was determined to grow and my wife and I came to visit for a few days to see if it was the right place for us.

The language and culture were so foreign to us and the Yiddishkeit situation was so primitive that we were skeptical about the chances of Estonia working out. Shortly after we returned to Israel from our brief trip, there was a Kinus Hashluchim for the shluchim of the Former Soviet Union and Rabbis Moshe Kotlarsky and Berel Lazar invited me to the hotel to meet Mr. George Rohr.

Mr. Rohr asked me what we needed to go on shlichus to Estonia and I mentioned that my greatest hesitation was the fact that the nearest mikveh was in Riga, three hours away. Hearing this he pledged \$50,000 to the construction of a *mikveh* in Estonia and that very day Chabad Lubavitch of Estonia was declared a reality.

It was not smooth sailing from the start. Some of the locals were unhappy with hiring a young Chabadnik as a rabbi, but by Chanukah 5761\* I

was installed as the first chief rabbi of Estonia since the Holocaust in a ceremony attended by the prime minister and other dignitaries.

We succeeded in our initial *peulos* of setting up a camp, Sunday school, other informal educational activities and providing for all the Jewish needs of the community, but we knew that the first big project would be building a *mikveh*. The locals laughed at us saying there were plenty of saunas in Tallinn. They couldn't grasp the logic of building a *mikveh* for a clientele they believed did not exist.

In the winter of 5763<sup>\*</sup> we started working on a building campaign for a *mikveh* as well as a kosher kitchen and classrooms. Rabbi Lazar insisted that any capital campaign must be an ambitious project to build a proper shul and Jewish community center with everything the community would need. It sounded like a good idea but I had no idea where to find the money for such a project locally. I wrote to Mr. George Rohr about the project but did not hear back from him.

During that time I traveled to New York and while at the Ohel I bumped into Rabbi Kotlarsky who happened to be there. He shared with me that the Rohr family just pledged \$350,000 to the Chabad Jewish Community Center in Estonia. I was elated to experience such a clear miracle at the Ohel and understood this as a sign from the Rebbe that we were doing the right thing by embarking on this project. I returned to Estonia and started preparing plans for a large beautiful center.

During the month of Cheshvan 5765\*, my father-in-law, Rabbi Avrohom Lasker, passed away after a prolonged illness and shortly after the *levaya* I returned to Estonia from Eretz Yisroel alone for a community meeting to unveil the plans for the forthcoming Jewish Center.

I will never forget how disastrous that meeting was. Aside from a handful of supporters, most of the people in attendance were downright hostile to the idea. Some declared the plans were terrible while others argued that building a shul on the property was a waste of good real estate. They figured a sports center would attract more people to the place. Above all people laughed at the notion that the funding for the project could be secured. The money we had from the Rohr family and other locals that had already contributed was only enough to cover the architectural plans, permits and preparing the site for construction. "What is this 27 year old rabbi thinking?!" they all said in one way or another. As a result I came to the conclusion that



I was too young and inexperienced to take on such a project and I came to the Kinus Hashluchim in New York in emotional turmoil. I wrote to the Rebbe about the entire situation and wondered what would happen next.

On 3 Kislev I was at the Ohel when I received a phone call from Rabbi Berel Lazar.

"Shmuel, do you know a woman named Bella Barskaya in your community?"

"Of course. I knew her well. Her husband is a prominent academic and she passed away recently."

"Do you know her children?"

"No. They do not live in Estonia."

"Her son Alexander Bronshtein is sitting with me right now in my office in Moscow. He would like to do something special for the Estonia Jewish community in his mother's memory. I shared with him your plans for a community center and he is pledging to provide all the funding you still need to make it a reality!"

I cannot describe the intensity of the feelings I had at that moment. The clarity, the relief and excitement that the Rebbe was clearly guiding us to success in our shlichus was so overwhelming. With our budget covered we were able to convince more locals to get on board with the project. In Elul 5765\* we celebrated the groundbreaking of the new shul. Two-and-a-half years later, in Iyar 5767\*, we merited to open the doors of the beautiful Estonian Jewish Center serving all the Jews of the country today.

# YOUR STORY

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

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נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו

# **KINUS N'SHEI CHABAD** -WOMEN'S GATHERING 25 Iyar 5747\*

Each year at the end of the month of Iyar, the central Lubavitch organization for women and girls - N'shei U'bnos Chabad would hold its annual convention in New York. The highlight of the convention was the special sicha the Rebbe would deliver to all the participants in the main shul of 770 following the banquet.

For a full overview of these events and how it developed, see "The Theme Of It All," Derher Sivan 5775 and "Kinus Nashim" Derher Iyar 5780.





An organizer hands the Rebbe a binder of material including *duchos*, *hachlatos* taken, names of participants, and recent activities.







As the Rebbe entered, he stopped and glanced at the centerpiece that had been showcased at the banquet. It was a little house held up by three pillars, portraying that year's theme "עושכותי בתוכם" דעפנותי בתוכם". This was in connection with the Rebbe's focus that year on establishing Chabad Houses, both in the conventional sense, as beacons of Yiddishkeit for others, but also in the sense of transforming our own homes and living quarters into *Batei Chabad*, homes of Torah, tefillah and tzedakah.



The Rebbe spoke about the importance of unity in the month of Sivan, to bring the oneness of Hashem into the world by making it a dwelling place for him. This starts with a Jewish womans unique power and responsibility to make her home a אמקדש מעט, in all, even (seemingly) mundane, aspects of life, through the light of mitzvos, especially the lighting of Shabbos candles.









After the *sicha*, dollars were distributed.



At the end of the distribution the Rebbe gave a *bracha* for קבלת התורה בשמחה and a healthy summer.



On the way out, the Rebbe exchanged some words with Rabbi Groner while pointing at the centerpiece. When with a smile he began lifting it, the room erupted into joyous applause to which the Rebbe joined and maintained all the way through the shul.







# Letters

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

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

#### Dear Editors,

Thank you very much for the Chassidisher Derher magazine.

I want to point out a mistake made in the Adar II issue. The letter captioned as written by Reb Leibel Mochkin [*The Great Escape* p. 46] was in fact signed by Reb Shalom Mendel Kalmenson and he mentions Reb Leibel in the letter.

Bentzion Korf MIAMI, FL

# **Sichos In English**

Thank you so much for your featured article about Sichos In English [Derher Adar I, 5782]. As a former employee, I was gratified to see that you made mention of Empire Press, one of the entities that Reb Yonah Avtzon, A"H, swept into his *farbrentkeit*.

Working at Empire Press in the mid-70s meant being part of the pulse; a direct line to 770, with Reb Zalman Chanin and Reb Sholom Jacobson running back and forth with corrections/typos, exuding urgency. Deadlines, set by Rabbi Hodakov or by the Rebbe's direction, would only frenzy the pace. As the English language typesetter, I was privileged to often see the Rebbe's involvement in material being printed.

It was also my privilege to work with Reb Yonah in those early years. He was so humble and extremely considerate, never condescending. But in his quiet way he was hyper-focused. On one occasion, we worked from dusk to dawn, through the night, to make a deadline the Rebbe gave him, directly. I was just a typesetter, but Yonah made me feel part of the team, part of the urgency.

Working at Empire Press was the highlight of my working life, and the above is one of my most cherished memories.

Aviva Segall Feldman CHESTER, NY

#### Dear Editors,

I wish to express my sincere apologies for a statement that was in my letter to the editor about a Moment of Silence in the previous Shevat issue, which said "... we have not seen or heard of any major involvement with the Rebbe's plea."

These words can be misinterpreted and do not reflect my true feelings of admiration and gratitude for all those who are indeed involved in advancing the Rebbe's call for a Moment of Silence.

I hope my contribution with this booklet will add to the efforts to help get the ball rolling to spread a Moment of Silence to all public schools.

To obtain a copy of this booklet please email me: auddoc770@gmail.com.

Dr. Levi A. Reiter CROWN HEIGHTS, NY