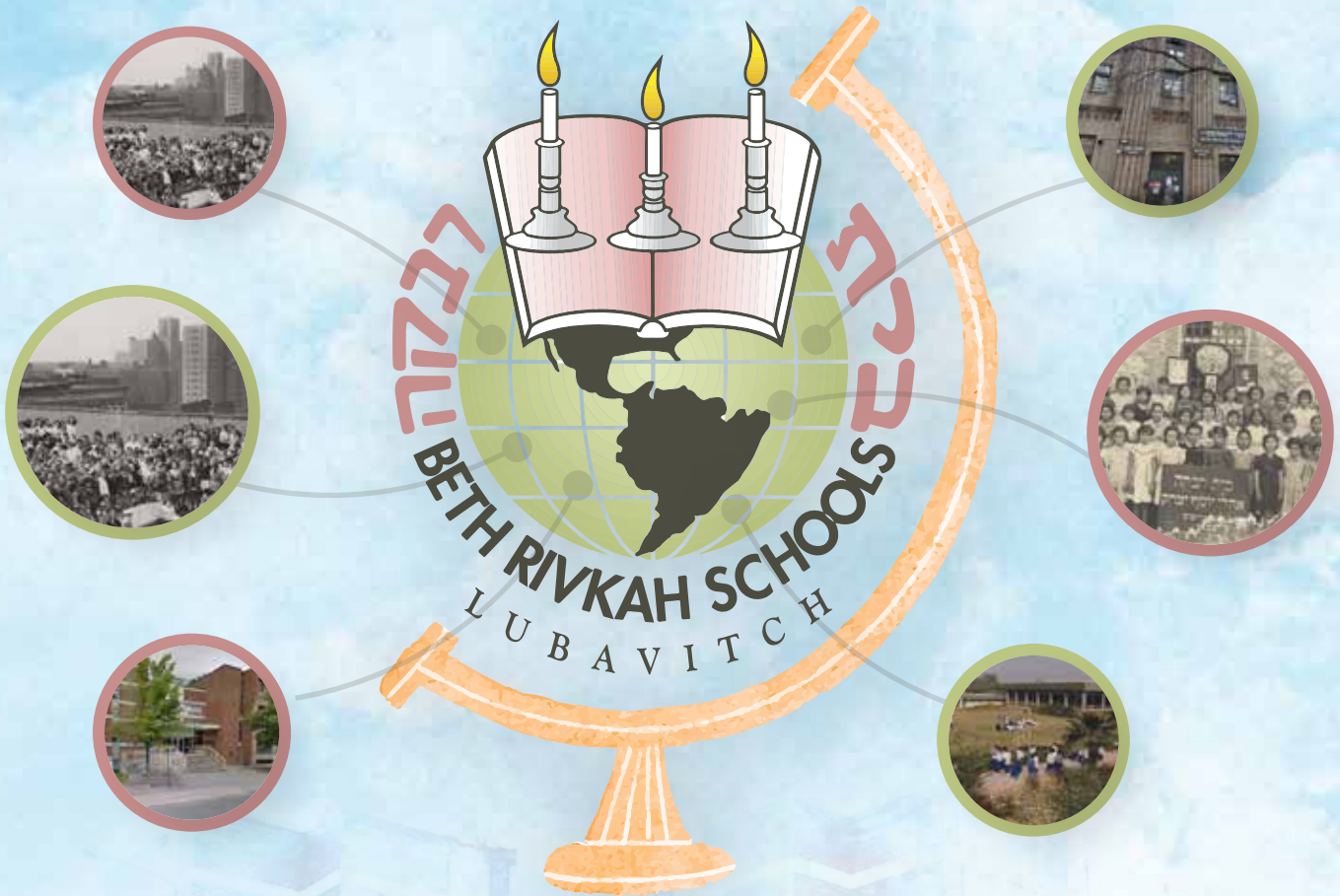


Derher

A Chassidisher

א חסידישער דערהער



► The Rebbe's Children

HOW THE REBBE RAISED A NEW GENERATION OF CHASSIDIM IN AMERICA

► Filling The Void

THE REBBE'S RESPONSE TO LOSS AND TRAGEDY

80 YEARS
בית רבקה
A School
with a
Mission



SHEVAT 5782
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In This Issue

Shevat 5782 / Issue 114 (191)



16

The Rebbe's Children

How the Rebbe Raised a New Generation of Chassidim in America



24

Filling The Void

The Rebbe's Response to Loss and Tragedy



36

בית רבקה

80 Years - A School with a Mission

6	Shemittah = First and Foremost Dvar Malchus	14	The Real Challenge Ksav Yad Kodesh	34	The Rebbe Opened His Eyes Stories of the Rebbe
8	"Leave The Questions In Galus!" Leben Mitten Rebbe'n - Shevat 5746	26	Hamaseh Hu Ha'iker Shevat	48	"You Can Go Yourself" Der Rebbe Vet Gefinen a Veg
13	Created As New A Chassidisher Maaseh	32	What Are You Waiting For? Gems	50	Chof-Beis Shevat 5752 Moments
				58	Derher Letters



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This magazine
has been made possible

לזכות
הרה"ת ר' שלום וזוגתו מרת שרה
וילדיהם ישראל, ריסא, חי' מושקא,
אמונה מלכה, יעקב יהודה, ולאה שיחיו
אייזיקוביץ
בקשר עם יום התחלת הנשיאות יו"ד שבט
ובקשר עם יום ההילולא כ"ב שבט

The dawn of *dor hashvi'i* is marked this month on the great and holy day of Yud Shevat.

It is the day that the Rebbe's *nesius* began and when he declared the mission statement of our generation: to finally bring the *Shechina* down to this world, completely, with the coming of Moshiach.

The Rebbe once explained that each year when we reach the date of the beginning of the *nesius*, a new level of the *nesius* is attained, along with an added level of *chayus* both in the *nossi* himself and in all people of his generation.¹

As such, the day of Yud Shevat is a time when we cast our focus once again on what it means to be part of the Rebbe's generation—*dor hashvi'i*—and the unique mission we have, as conveyed by the Rebbe in the first *maamar*, *Bossi L'Gani*.

One of the points the Rebbe discusses in the *maamar* is the responsibility on each and every one of us to spread Yiddishkeit with *mesiras nefesh*, following in the ways of Avraham Avinu. Quoting a *maamar* from the Frierdiker Rebbe, the Rebbe emphasizes that the way Avraham Avinu practiced *mesiras nefesh* was that he did not seek it out. He knew that his job was to teach people about Hashem. If doing so entailed *mesiras nefesh*, he was prepared to do that too. But his own spiritual attainment, to reach the level of *mesiras nefesh*, was not at all his concern. This is in contrast to the *mesiras nefesh* of Rabbi Akiva, where he actually sought it out.

Avraham Avinu's *mesiras nefesh* is obviously a higher level of serving Hashem, with the ultimate sense of "*bittul*," disregarding any concern with oneself, even one's own closeness to Hashem, and only caring about doing what needs to be done.

Interestingly, the Rebbe revisited some of the themes of this first Yud Shevat farbrengen later on in the year, including at the farbrengen of Yud-Gimmel Tammuz 5711.

And here the Rebbe explained a third approach to *mesiras nefesh*.

The Rebbe begins with a story told by the Frierdiker Rebbe about the time of his imprisonment: Sitting in his cell, the Frierdiker Rebbe remembered that while delivering a *maamar* earlier that year on Rosh Hashanah, he suddenly began speaking about the Baal Shem Tov's teaching on *hashgacha pratis*—how Hashem orchestrates and watches over every last detail of creation. At the time, it struck as strange, since it

had no apparent connection to the subject at hand.

“Had I not mentioned that teaching of the Baal Shem Tov in the *maamar*,” said the Frierdiker Rebbe, “I don’t know if I would have had the strength to make it through the imprisonment...”

The Rebbe asks: Why did this vort from the Baal Shem Tov give the Frierdiker Rebbe the necessary strength? And why did the Frierdiker Rebbe need the extra inspiration anyway? Didn’t he know that he was imprisoned for doing what he was supposed to do, spreading Torah and Yiddishkeit? Why would he feel dejected by the trials and tribulations of a physical prison sentence?

Here the Rebbe introduces the third approach to *mesiras nefesh*:

Even the higher level of *mesiras nefesh* discussed above still might involve a hint of personal interest. Ultimately, the person is out to do *his own* job of spreading G-dliness, and may not actually concern himself with whether or not the desired result is reached.

The Frierdiker Rebbe, on the other hand, was only concerned that Yiddishkeit in Russia continue flourishing. Therefore, he was terribly afraid that his efforts would *chas v’shalom* bring about the ultimate sacrifice of his life. True, he could excuse himself and say “I did all I could, and I even went on *mesiras nefesh*,” but what good is that when the dissemination of Yiddishkeit is no longer sustainable in his absence?!

The Rebbe cited the famous example that the Rebbe Rashab used in a similar instance, of the difference between a hired worker and a business owner. The worker will do all he can for the success of the business, but after his hours when his job is done, the results are not his to worry about. The business owner, on the other hand, worries about his business 24/7, and if the results are not coming in, he can’t sleep at night!

Yes, the owner too can tell himself “I’ve done all I can; there’s nothing more to do.” Yet he is still concerned about the outcome!

The Frierdiker Rebbe wasn’t just thinking about doing his job. He was concerned with the results. He wanted to finish the whole business and bring Moshiach! That was his one and only concern. So sitting in the prison cell, he was terrified that *chas v’shalom* his absence from the scene could cause a delay in Moshiach’s arrival, if even for one moment, and he was feeling truly distraught.

But then the Frierdiker Rebbe remembered the *vort*

of *hashgacha pratis* according to the Baal Shem Tov that he had mentioned on Rosh Hashanah, and that the Baal Shem Tov was the one who was tasked by Moshiach himself to spread Chassidus and actuate his arrival. He was therefore sure that he would ultimately be freed from prison, not because he himself wanted to be freed, but because the Baal Shem Tov’s work would certainly continue, through his efforts [as the *nossi hador*].

But wait, asks the Rebbe. Doesn’t it seem like the Frierdiker Rebbe’s mission wasn’t actually completed in his lifetime? After his *histalkus* on Yud Shevat, it seems as though his assurance that he would complete the task and bring Moshiach didn’t materialize.

The Rebbe explains:

This is only a *nisayon*, a test and a challenge for us to overcome. The Frierdiker Rebbe points out in a *maamar* that in our generation, we were given the ability to recognize when Hashem has presented us with a challenge, and to realize that it is ultimately not even a real problem—it’s just a test for us to overcome. We need to strengthen ourselves in our dedication to the Rebbe, and to listen to his instructions much as we did before Yud Shevat. This will bring forth our deepest powers from the innermost *kochos* of the *neshama*, allowing us to complete the *shlichus* we have and bring Moshiach speedily.



What a powerful lesson for us today, as we approach the day of Yud Shevat, a time when we recommit ourselves to the Rebbe’s *shlichus* for each and every one of us in *dor hashvi’i*.

It is our job to realize and understand that the Rebbe is our *nossi* and that he is leading the charge as we march towards the *geula*. The Rebbe is the one leading the effort and it is our privilege to have a part in it. The fact that we do not see and hear the Rebbe physically is, as the Rebbe says, merely a *nisayon*.

By holding steadfast in our *hiskashrus*, heeding the Rebbe’s call that to prepare ourselves and the world around us for the coming of Moshiach—we only have to open our eyes, and Moshiach is here! The Rebbe will lead us out of *galus*. May it be *teikef umiyad Mammosh!*

The Editors

ט"ו טבת ה'תשפ"ב
שנת המאה ועשרים להולדת כ"ק אדמו"ר



לזכות
הת' נחמן הכהן שיחי'
לרגל הגיעו לעול מצוות ט' שבט ה'תשפ"ב

נדפס ע"י הוריו
הרה"ת ר' ארי' יצחק הכהן וזוגתו מרת ראשא רוזא ומשפחתם
שיחיו וויינשטיין



First and Foremost



One of the central teachings of Shemittah is conveyed in the order of the verses and words by which the Torah defines the institution of Shemittah, namely: “When you will come into the land. . . the earth shall rest a Sabbath unto G-d. Six years shalt thou plant thy field,” etc. (Lev. 25:2-3).

The order of the text seems to be reversed, for the six work years precede the Sabbatical rest year, and not vice versa. Hence, the text should have first mentioned the six years of planting, and then decree the resting. However, order in Torah is also Torah (“instruction”).

The arrangement in the text mentioned above, relating to Shemittah, is significant and instructive in that it teaches the proper approach to life. It is expressed as follows:

When one “comes into a land” and desires to establish his way of life, which involves “working

the soil,” it is necessary to bear in mind that the first and foremost, as an idea and as a goal, is “Sabbath unto G-d”; not the “earthly” and material, but the spiritual and sacred. This approach will ensure one against being submerged by the material and mundane aspects of life. Moreover, bearing constantly in mind the above idea and goal, will transform the six drab working years; they will lose much of their drabness and become more refined and meaningful. Furthermore, the change and elevation of the six years will raise to a higher plane also the seventh year; from a “Shabbos unto G-d” to a “Shabbos Shabboson” unto G-d (v.4), with a dedication and solemnity of a higher order.

Similarly, in the daily life there are those aspects which have to do with material preoccupation (to earn a livelihood, etc.) and “common” necessities, such as eating and

drinking, etc. — all those aspects wherein there is “no pre-eminence in man over animal”. But there is also the area of “earthly rest” — of breaking away from the mundane leading into “Sabbath unto G-d” — turning to holiness and G-dliness, through setting aside times for prayer, Torah study, and the fulfillment of Mitzvot.

Here, too, the teaching of Shemittah is that it is necessary to begin the day with the idea and approach that, although it may be necessary later in the day to engage in “mundane” activities, the essence and purpose of these things are — to attain a “Sabbath unto G-d”. In this way, even the mundane aspects will attain refinement and real content, while the aspects of holiness and G-dliness will be intensified and elevated to a higher order. This is the way to attain a complete and harmonious life. **1**

(Michtav Kloli in English, Selichos 5725)



FARBRENGEN 10 SHEVAT 5746.

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

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

“Leave The Questions In Galus!”

SHEVAT 5746*



The month of Shevat 5746* was a particularly eventful month. In addition to the regular excitement associated with Yud Shevat and the influx of visitors, all of this year's highlights were in the shadow of the *sefarim* court case.¹

Another unique event that occurred this month was a surprise dollar distribution on Yud-Alef Shevat, which was the first of its

kind. The next time such a thing took place was three months later on Yud-Alef Nissan. Retrospectively, Chassidim realized that what had occurred that day in Shevat was a precursor to the famous ‘Sunday Dollars.’

Much of the material used here was collected from the diary of Meir Yechiel Herschkovich, a *bochur* in 770 at the time, and was supplemented by other yomanim.

SHABBOS PARSHAS VAEIRA - ROSH CHODESH SHEVAT

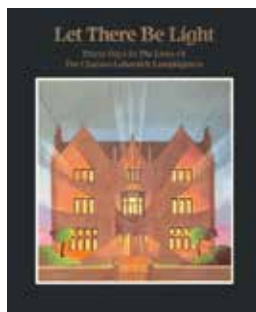
During the Shabbos farbrengen,² the Rebbe distributed *l'chaim* to several Chassidim as a form of participation in different events that were taking place in the coming week.

Reb Zushe Silberstein brought a group of college students from Montreal for the “Pegisha” Shabbaton, and in between *sichos* the Rebbe acknowledged them and smiled at them.

At the conclusion of the farbrengen, the Rebbe instructed the father of Chazzan Moshe Teleshevsky (who was absent at the time) to sing “*sheyiboneh*” in place of his son, and encouraged the singing from different sections of the crowd.

FRIDAY - 7 SHEVAT

Before Shabbos, three new *sefarim* were brought to the Rebbe; the two most recent releases of the Friediker Rebbe’s *maamarim* (5680*-81*, 5682*-83*), and a book called “*Let There Be Light*,” a photographic album chronicling the international menorah lighting ceremonies arranged by Chabad this year. These three *sefarim* were recently published at the behest of the Rebbe.³



Shortly before candle-lighting, a large crowd stood outside the library (where the Rebbe and Rebbetzin would be staying for Shabbos), singing enthusiastically as the Rebbe arrived. Walking into the library, the Rebbe waved one hand to encourage the singing, and held the photo album in his other hand.

SHABBOS PARSHAS BO - 8 SHEVAT

Many of the guests who came for Yud Shevat arrived before Shabbos.

In the first *sicha* of the farbrengen, the Rebbe raised his voice and passionately addressed the *shtetle* that the Friediker Rebbe had made regarding teaching children *kriah*. He took a strong stance that children should be taught how to read with the traditional “*kamatz alef uh*” method, and to avoid the adoption of supposedly faster modern approaches.



JEM 24092, VIA YOSSIMELAMED, 29 KISLEV 5746

The end of the fourth *sicha* was about Yidden who are so reluctant to leave *galus*, that “בשלח פרעה—Paraoh will have to send them out.” The Rebbe then concluded, “Instead of mentioning this undesirable possibility, let us better sing a *niggun simcha*.”

Chassidim began to sing the *niggun* “*U’beyom Simchaschem*.” At first, the Rebbe held a solemn expression, but once he started waving his hands and the singing picked up steam, his expression became more joyous.

While clapping his hands and encouraging the singing, the Rebbe instructed several of the assembled to say *l'chaim* on a large cup. One of them had recently brought some facsimiles of rare handwritten manuscripts of the Rambam’s *Pirush Hamishnayos*, which the Rebbe had greatly appreciated. When the singing reached a crescendo, the Rebbe waved his hands with great energy.

The Rebbe then distributed several bottles of *l'chaim*. Reb Yossel Wineberg received a bottle in honor of the farbrengen he was arranging the next day, celebrating the printing of the final *sefarim* of *Shiurim B’Sefer haTanya* (thus completing the set).

Also receiving bottles were Reb Mordechai Avtzon and Reb Dovid Chanzin, for the farbrengens that were to be held in their respective locations of Hong Kong and Petach Tikvah.

Towards the end of the farbrengen, there was a minor scuffle that caused a disturbance but was silenced after the Rebbe turned and gave a look in that direction.

After Mincha, the fellow who was responsible for the disturbance, approached the Rebbe and asked for a *bracha* that he should be a *mentch*. The Rebbe responded “*bekarov mamosh*.” He then wished the Rebbe a *bracha* for good health, to which the Rebbe answered “*amen*.”



10 SHEVAT 5746*

SUNDAY - 9 SHEVAT

The Rebbe instructed the team of “Sichos In English” to prepare a *sefer* out of the booklets they had previously published, to hire more editorial staff, and to have the *sefer* ready by the upcoming Erev Shabbos. Indeed, the team swiftly got to work, and spent the next few days and nights working around the clock to have the *sefer* ready within five days.

MONDAY - YUD SHEVAT

The Rebbe was *chazzan* for all the *tefillos*. After Shacharis, ten Mitzvah Tanks took to the streets to do *mivtzoim*.

Due to the many visitors, the shul downstairs was packed for the farbrengen (even more full than Yud-Tes Kislev), especially near the *bima*. As a result, it took a little longer for the Rebbe to enter. The Rebbe noticed that an elderly man was forced to stand as there were no seats, and expressed displeasure.

Throughout the *niggunim*, the Rebbe constantly encouraged the singing. The Rebbe also said *l'chaim* to the camera crew. At various intervals in the farbrengen the Rebbe spoke to Reb Efraim Yolles. After the Rebbe said the *maamar* (*Basi Legani*) *ke'ein sicha*, Chassidim sang *Didan Notzach* and the Rebbe was particularly joyous.⁴

Although dollars had been prepared for the Rebbe to distribute to the *tankisten* at the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe did not distribute the dollars and left right after *bracha acharona* while singing *Ki V'simcha*.

TUESDAY - YUD ALEF SHEVAT

Today, the Rebbe arrived in 770, and went into his room. Immediately afterward, Rabbi Groner announced that the Rebbe would soon distribute dollar bills to anyone who would come. A table was procured and set up in the lobby outside the Rebbe's room with the dollar bills lined up.

The Rebbe came out of his room in a silk *kapota* and *gartel* and began to distribute the dollar bills. Every individual who passed by received a dollar.

At first, there were not many people, but once the word of this unprecedented event spread, thousands flocked to 770. There were separate lines for men, women, and children, and all three groups rotated throughout the distribution.

When the preschool classes in Beis Rivka approached the Rebbe, the Rebbe's face lit up, and he nodded to the *morahs* who brought them.

A Yemenite Jew approached and sang the *possuk* “*Yaavducha amim v'yishtachavu lecha leumim*” in a Yemenite tune, and the Rebbe responded “*amen*.”

At a certain point, the line was stopped and the Rebbe sent out dollars to be distributed to those who did not yet receive. Before leaving, the Rebbe noticed an elderly woman standing by the door and asked her if she had received a dollar. When she answered that she had not, the Rebbe gave one to her.

Altogether, the Rebbe stood and distributed dollars for approximately three consecutive hours.

Later in the day the Rebbe went to the Ohel. As he was about to enter the car, a woman approached the Rebbe and asked for *tzedakah*. The Rebbe gave her a coin. She then complained to the Rebbe that she had been pushed when trying to approach. The Rebbe responded (in English) that they didn't



11 NISSAN 5746

mean it. She then informed the Rebbe that her heart is in pain, and the Rebbe responded, "We must be happy as there is a wedding soon."

WEDNESDAY - YUD BEIS SHEVAT

Yechidus klolis took place tonight for three groups; guests, bar mitzvah boys, and *chassanim-kallos*. Member of the Israeli Knesset Moshe Katzav was scheduled to arrive after the crowds left for an opportunity to speak to the Rebbe, but ultimately he did not make it in time and instead toured 770 at midnight.

The wedding of the grandson of Reb Mendel Futerfas and the daughter of Reb Yudel Krinsky took place.

Dr. Weiss related that he asked the Rebbe whether to come in for Yud Shevat or for the wedding, and the Rebbe told him to come for the latter, explaining that a wedding is higher than Torah.

SHABBOS PARSHAS BESHALACH - CHAMISHA ASAR B'SHVAT

A large fruit platter was brought to the farbrengen and the Rebbe partook from some grapes.

The third *sicha* culminated in a passionate plea about *galus*. The Rebbe held back tears as he spoke. "*Hert zich ain Yidden*, go out and scream with joy that Hashem must send the Yidden out of *galus*! *Ay*, you have *kashyos*? Go out of *galus* and leave the *kashyos* in *galus*!"

The Rebbe then distributed *mashke* for eight events and gatherings taking place in the upcoming week.

In the fourth *sicha*, the Rebbe spoke about and encouraged the grand *siyumei haRambam* being planned for Rosh Chodesh Adar II.⁵ The Rebbe urged the organisers to up the ante, to ensure that the *siyum* should be greater than last year and even more than what was already planned for this year. Bottles of *mashke* were given to those involved in the preparations.

At the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe said that "*Bnei Heichala*" should be sung and encouraged its singing.

The echoes of the *sicha* about *galus* were strongly felt. After Mincha, Chassidim sang *Zol Shoin Zain Di Geulah*. Also, later that night a farbrengen was held in the upstairs *zal* for *anash* and *bochurim*. The words '*ad mosai*' and '*daloi galus*' were added to every *niggun*.

SHABBOS PARSHAS YISRO - CHOF BEIS SHEVAT

Much to the surprise of many Chassidim, there was no farbrengen this Shabbos. This was the first time the Rebbe didn't farbreng on Shabbos since the beginning of the *sefarim* case on Yud-Tes Kislev.

TUESDAY - CHOF HEI SHEVAT

Before Mincha, the news arrived of the passing of Rabbi Yaakov Landa, the rav of Bnei Brak. After Mincha, Rabbi Groner approached Rabbi



RABBI YAAKOV LANDA, THE RAV OF BNEI BRAK.

Moshe Ashkenazi and handed him a note from the Rebbe instructing him to go to the Ohel and ask the Friediker Rebbe to inform his father, the Rebbe Rashab, of the passing of Rabbi Landa.

THURSDAY - CHOF ZAYIN SHEVAT

This morning, two Yidden from Migdal Ha'emek came to 770. They brought the Rebbe a note detailing their issues for which they sought *brachos*. One had a son who was to undergo a liver transplant and required necessary publicity (to find a donor), and the other also had a sick child.

To the first person, the Rebbe wrote to follow the expert medical advice of the two doctors who are dealing with it, and "*Azkir al hatziyun.*" The second person also received the response "*Azkir al hatziyun.*"

FRIDAY - CHOF CHES SHEVAT

This morning, a group of *baalei-batim* from Lyon, France waited outside 770 for the Rebbe to arrive. Among them was the mayor of the city. At 10:00 the Rebbe exited his car and warmly greeted them with a salute. Once in his room, the Rebbe informed Rabbi Groner that he wished to give them each a dollar bill for *tzedakah*. The Rebbe then stood in the lobby outside *Gan Eden Hatachton* and presented each of them with a dollar.

SHABBOS PARSHAS MISHPATIM - CHOF TES SHEVAT

In between *sichos* of the farbrengen this Shabbos, Reb Shimon Goldman approached the Rebbe to receive a bottle of *mashke* for the annual *melava malka* of the Gemach Shomrei Shabbos. As is the custom each year, he put on a *shtreimel* and told a story to the crowd.

The story was that Reb Nochum of Chernobyl once lodged with a simple villager, and as customary, he woke up at midnight to say *tikkun chatzos*. The villager noticed Reb Nochum crying and asked him, "Is there anything you need? Can I offer you some food?" Reb Nochum answered him, "I am crying for the Beis Hamikdash that was destroyed, and davening that we should be able to return Yerushalayim."

Reb Nochum then asked the villager, "When Moshiach comes, would you want to come to Yerushalayim?" The villager said, "I must ask my wife and see if she agrees." Upon his return, he told



JEM 197546 (24 TISHREI 5744), VIA LEVI FREIDIN

Reb Nochum, "My wife says that life is good over here. We have a house, a cow and everything we need. There's no need to go to Yerushalayim." Reb Nochum then asked, "What if the Cossacks come and take away your house and cow?" Stumped, the villager went back to consult his wife. When he returned, he told Reb Nochum, "My wife says that you should daven that the Cossacks go to Yerushalayim so that we can remain here in peace."

The Rebbe smiled throughout the story and gestured several times that Reb Shimon should face the crowd and address them, instead of facing the Rebbe. Later in the farbrengen, in the *sicha* regarding *n'shei u'bnos Chabad*, the Rebbe said that now there is no need to bring such stories from *Poilisher tzaddikim* as today's Jewish women want Moshiach to come.

At the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe sought Chazzan Moshe Teleshevsky to sing *sheyiboneh*, but neither he nor his father were there. The Rebbe turned to the pyramid of *bochurim* and a *bochur* from France took the cue and started to sing *sheyiboneh* upon the Rebbe's encouragement. The Rebbe then gave some *mezonos* to the organizers of the *kinus N'shei u'Bnos Chabad*, and that concluded the farbrengen. **1**

1. Much of the year 5746 has previously been serialized in Derher, searchable at index.derher.org.
2. This farbrengen was edited a mere two days later, on Monday. The Rebbe was seen looking over the *hanacha* while in the car on the way to the Ohel.
3. See *Hei Teves, Behind the Scenes*, Derher Teves 5779.
4. In the recording of the farbrengen the Rebbe can be heard singing along to *Didan Notzach*.
5. The Rebbe was *magiah* this *sicha* several days later, and although every *sicha* generally went through two layers of edits, a copy of the first edited draft was given to the *orchim* who were traveling back on Sunday before the second edit was completed.



Created As New

The Friediker Rebbe told Reb Chaim Amstislovsky that he was “created” by the look of a tzaddik. When the Friediker Rebbe once traveled to Riga, Reb Chaim related his story:

Reb Chaim was a handsome young man, connected with the high officials in town. Once, when walking down the street in S. Petersburg, he encountered the son of the rav of Kremenchug, Reb Yitzhak Yoel Rafalovitch.

Reb Yitzhak Yoel notified Reb Chaim that the Lubavitcher Rebbe (the Rebbe Rashab) was in town.

Reb Chaim asked Reb Yitzhak Yoel to arrange a meeting for him with the Rebbe, but was told that the Rebbe was not receiving people at the time for *yechidus*. With some effort, however, a short while later a *yechidus* was arranged for Reb Chaim.



REB YITZCHAK YOEL RAFALOVITCH (PICTURED ON THE FAR LEFT) AT A CONFERENCE OF RABBIS FROM ACROSS RUSSIA IN 5670* WHERE THE REBBE RASHAB WAS PRESENT.

When entering *yechidus* he became so overwhelmed, that he forgot whether it was day or night! The *yechidus* shook him up completely, so much so that all he remembered of the Rebbe's words was: “*Zolst matzliach zain b'chol asher tifneh*—you should succeed in everything you turn to.”

Only a day earlier, he had met with Minister Biliovsky, and conversed with him without an ounce of fear. Now, here by the Rebbe, he was shaken to the core and became completely *bottel*, a “new” person. ①

(Adapted from *Lesheima Ozen* p. 135)



כתב יד קודש

לזכות
הרה"ת ר' שאול אליעזר
וזוגתו מרת ציפה שרה מנוחה
ומשפחתם
מנחם מענדל, שושנה מרים,
ישראל, שמואל, ושניאור זלמן
שיחיו
וורטהיימר

The Real Challenge

In response to a young woman who wrote to the Rebbe that she wished to study in college and acquire worldly knowledge, in order to seek and master challenges in life, the Rebbe writes:

It is obvious (and common) that young people are eager to find a challenge, something novel, etc. Not only that, but this phenomenon has a basis in the mandate of *Chazal* "[one must do] according to how much they **are supposed to** do..." i.e. **fully** utilizing the capabilities they were given.

On the other hand, it is also understood and **obvious** that there is no point for someone to seek out a challenge before they arm themselves with the proper tools that will allow them to overcome the challenge and fix it (at the very least—the person should be confident that they have a **good** chance at it), but not that they will be defeated by it (which will result in further damage to the world around them and to

בודאי מובן (ורגיל) אשר הנוער צמא למצוא CHALLENGE ודבר חדש וכו' - ולא עוד אלא שיש לזה יסוד בציווי חז"ל לעשות "כמאן **דבעי** למיעבד", היינו לגצל הכוחות שניתנו לו **במילואן**.

לאידך גיסא מובן ג"כ **ופשוט** שאינו עניין כלל לחפש CHALLENGE טרם שיזדיין בנשק שיוכל להתגבר עליו ולתקנו (עכ"פ - שידע שיש סיכויים **טובים** לזה) - ולא שינוצח על ידו (שאז מיתוסף קלקול בעולם ואצלו וכו'), ובנוסח חז"ל שאסור לאדם לעמוד במקום סכנה ועוד יותר - כבתפלה שאומרים אותה



Dedicated In honor of
my wife
תחי' Rivka
And my children
Menachem & Rosie, Mendel & Laya,
Bayla, Devori,
Nechama, and Yossi שיחיו
By Danny Fishman שיחי'



The Rebbe's CHILDREN

HOW THE REBBE RAISED A NEW
GENERATION OF CHASSIDIM IN AMERICA

At the last Simchas Torah farbrengen before *hakafos* in 5752*, the Rebbe asked all the children present, along with their teachers and educators, to say a special *l'chaim*, explaining that children are referred to as “משיחיים—My anointed ones.” The reason is, said the Rebbe, that when you look at a Jewish child in our day and age, what do you see? Moshiach! Children’s education should be saturated with an awareness of the reality of Moshiach; a reality where there is nothing else other than the truth of *Elokus*.

Of course, it was the Rebbe that implanted this education into the hearts and minds of the children throughout the preceding years. With so many hours of attention and scores of *sichos* addressed directly to the children, the Rebbe raised a new generation of youngsters, Tzivos Hashem, ready to greet Moshiach.

Let’s go back to the earliest years of the Rebbe’s *nesius* and learn how already from the first day, the Rebbe showed special affection for the children in the Lubavitcher court, and in his unique way, started them on the path of becoming true Chassidim.

ARE YOU A LUBAVITCHER?

The following story is related by Rabbi Itche Meir Gurary, mashpia of Tomchei Temimim in Montreal:

In those early years of the Rebbe’s *nesius*, there were very few children around 770.

At the time of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *histalkus* in 5710* I was nine years old.

In order to explain the impact the Rebbe’s *nesius* had on us, I will preface with what was going on in the years before that.

Even though I grew up in



Crown Heights, I was never at the Frierdiker Rebbe’s farbrengens. There was one time that I merited to see the Frierdiker Rebbe at a Rosh Hashanah davening, by standing on the ledge near a window and looking from far. My father, Reb Zalman Gurary, was a very devoted Chossid, but he never thought to bring me in to be at the Frierdiker Rebbe’s farbrengen or davening.

There was one time when I was almost able to come in, but then something happened:

It was the last Simchas Torah farbrengen with the Frierdiker Rebbe, in 5710*.

In general, whenever there was a farbrengen upstairs in the Frierdiker Rebbe’s apartment, people would pack onto the stairway right outside, waiting by the door for hours, hoping and praying that they might be let in for a short time.

I was standing outside at this farbrengen when suddenly, during *kos shel bracha*, the Frierdiker Rebbe announced that everyone standing outside should be let in!

Immediately, everyone rushed in. The Frierdiker Rebbe’s wife, Rebbetzin Nechama Dina, was standing in the hallway right by the door of the dining room watching as people poured in. When she saw me, a small child

trying to get in, she said, “*Itche Meir vil oich kumen shteren mein man? Gei fun danet!*” (Itche Meir also wants to come in and disturb my husband? Get away!)” She knew me by name and I felt like I wouldn’t be able to face her again if I didn’t listen, so I had to run away. The one chance that I almost had to be at a farbrengen thus vanished. There were two times that my father brought me to the Frierdiker Rebbe to give *pidyonos* on Erev Rosh Hashanah, but other than that I was almost never in the Frierdiker Rebbe’s presence.

Why was it this way?

It could be said that the *chinuch* offered to the children at that time was different. Firstly, until 5707*, when



RABBI YITZCHOK MEIR GURARY AS A CHILD TOGETHER WITH THE FAMED CHOSSID, REB MICHOEL DVORKIN.

some Russian families were able to come to the United States, there were a total of three Lubavitcher children in Crown Heights that I can remember: Yossel Zalmanov, Asher Heber ע"ה, and יבלח"ט me. The rest of *anash* lived in different neighborhoods and they didn't daven in 770 on Shabbos.

In the *cheder* there was only one Lubavitcher *melamed*: Reb Avraham Barnetzky. Later Reb Avraham Popack joined, and Reb Yitzchak Kolodny. I remember the younger class at the *cheder* being taught by a fellow who didn't even have a beard. Then there was the *mesivta*, where one of the teachers was Reb Lashinsky, a Litvisher Yid and a great *talmid chacham*, but he was far from a Chossid. Another teacher was Reb Pesachovich; he was a very *geshmaker Yid* and a Gerrer Chossid, and only farbrenged about Kotzk and Ger. Rabbi Kastel joined eventually as well.

The younger divisions of the school had no teaching of Chassidus. The out-of-town boys who lived in the dorm had a *seder* at night where they learned Chassidus, but for us locals—there was nothing. Later on, when Reb Dovid Raskin came from France, he started teaching some of us Chassidus.

You have to also understand that the crowd in 770 was tiny in those years, the crowd was very small at farbrengens.

There were almost no Lubavitchers davening with the main minyan, there was not even a men's Mikvah in close proximity at the time (it was quite a walk)!

It was mostly "*balebatishe*" Yidden, nice people, but not necessarily a *dugma chaya* of what a Chossid should be.

What kind of Shabbos was there for us children to see? We almost never saw the (Frieddiker) Rebbe, and no one in the yeshiva taught us about the Rebbe. Where would we get our *chinuch* and *yiras Shamayim*?

It was the Rebbe who started to change things, getting involved in the *chinuch* of the children.

In those early years, the Rebbe would come into the small *zal* and sit where he would later daven Mincha on Shabbos; the same place where the farbrengen was (under the window in between the two rooms of the *zal*). On that table where the Rebbe davened, I would also sit.

We developed a relationship with the Rebbe. Many people don't realize this, but the Rebbe dedicated of his time and paid attention to the children.

There were times that the Rebbe would even kid around with me. My maternal grandfather was the Kapishnitzer Rebbe, and I would spend Shabbos with him in the Lower East Side. When I came back to 770, the Rebbe would ask me, "Are you a Lubavitcher or a Kapishnitzer?"

Then my involvement with the Rebbe intensified, due to this fascinating incident:

It was during the final year before the Frieddiker Rebbe's *histlakus*, and I was told that the Frieddiker Rebbe told Rabbi Hodakov that he should take me out of class at the yeshiva on Bedford and Dean and spend some time with me. He wanted Rabbi Hodakov to

farbreng with me, talk about *yiras Shamayim* and so on. When I finished my session with Rabbi Hodakov, he would take me into the Rebbe's room, and I had to repeat to the Rebbe what I learned. As a prize, the Rebbe would give me the most recent issue of Talks and Tales. This happened three or four times over the course of that year. It was amazing! The Rebbe gave us incredible attention.

As I grew up, I came to realize that everything I have in my life I got from the Rebbe.

Then, after the Frieddiker Rebbe's *histalkus*, Chassidim were asking the Rebbe to accept the *nesius* but he refused. Many Chassidim stopped giving their hand to the Rebbe, even when he would try to give them "*shalom aleichem*," as a symbol of reverence to the Rebbe. I was still a child at that time, and one Shabbos, when I passed by the Rebbe, he gave me his hand to say good Shabbos but I refused it. The Rebbe said, "*Bist shoyn a Lubavitcher Chossid? (So now you're already a Lubavitcher?)*"

I said yes, and he smiled.

YUD SHEVAT 5711

I vividly remember Yud Shevat 5711*, when the Rebbe accepted



THE REBBE IN CONVERSATION WITH THE KOPSHINITZER REBBE, REB AVRAHAM YEHOShUA HESCHEL.

the *nesius*. There was tremendous excitement in Lubavitch.

Even though I was only 10 years old, I knew something big was happening. There was chatter that the Rebbe is going to accept the *nesius* and I was very excited.

I was able to sense the feelings in the air: First the *histalkus* of the Friediker Rebbe and the hopelessness that it brought, and then the emergence of a new Rebbe and the start of a new era in history. For me personally, I knew that now I would have a Rebbe that I could see and relate to, and it was a very special feeling.

I also knew that something was going to happen, because my father was very involved in ensuring that the Rebbe should take on the *nesius*.

I remember the night of Yud Shevat 5711*. The small shul was packed. I was standing outside in the hallway and couldn't get into the *zal*.

I remember the famous Chossid Reb Sender Nemtsov speaking. I didn't know it was him, but I remember an elderly Chossid getting up and

saying something. Now I know that he was asking the Rebbe to accept the *nesius*. He said, "The *sichos* are good and fine, but we want Chassidus," and indeed the Rebbe responded by reciting the *maamar Basi L'Gani*.

From that night and on, everything changed.

The Rebbe made sure that the children would receive a proper *Chassidisher chinuch*, even from the youngest age.

One year later, during Chanukah 5712*, the Rebbe started giving out *Chanukah gelt* to the *yeshiva bochurim* in 770 who learned Chassidus. At that time, I couldn't be included in that group because I was a young boy. Then the Rebbe called my father into his room.

He told my father, "I want to give Itche Meir *Chanukah gelt*, but I only give to those who learn Chassidus. Start learning Chassidus with him, and then you can give it to him."

My father asked the Rebbe, "What could I learn with an 11-year-old child?" The Rebbe said, "It was customary by Chassidim

to start with the *maamar 'Adam Ki Yakriv'* from Likkutei Torah; you should start from there."

Indeed, my father learned that *maamar* with me. It is not necessarily an easy *maamar*. It talks about *malachim*, *nefesh haElokim*, and *nefesh habahamis*. It could be difficult for an 11-year-old child to understand. But the Rebbe felt that even small children should be taught these concepts at a beginning stage. This was the *chinuch* that the Rebbe wanted to implement.

The Rebbe worked very hard to get people to learn Chassidus; whether a *perek* of Tanya, a *vort*, whatever it is. The words of Chassidus have the power to change a person for the better. The Rebbe constantly pushed this; that everyone should learn Chassidus.

Before my bar mitzvah I was in *yechidus*. Often in those years, when in *yechidus* with a bar mitzvah boy, the Rebbe would say a *vort* on the *parsha*.

My *yechidus* was in Parshas Shemos, and the Rebbe expounded on the words of the *posuk*, "ואלה שמות" ואלה שמות...בני ישראל..ראובן שמעון

SPIN FOR ME

Rabbi Ephraim Piekarski relates:

At the time of the *histalkus* of the Friediker Rebbe, I was five years old and I have many fond memories of the time spent as a child growing up in the Rebbe's presence. My family came to the United States in 5707* and we moved to Crown Heights in 5712*. There were very few children in the community at the time and we saw the Rebbe often.

Whenever the Rebbe left the shul for his room after a *farbrengen*, we used to stand by the door of his room and sing "*Ki Vesimcha*," and the Rebbe would encourage our singing with a wave of his hands.

Even so, we were always taught that when the Rebbe approaches we should run away. We don't need to stick our faces in front of the Rebbe. I remember one Friday night, we were very young and didn't understand what we were doing, but we went over

to the door of the Rebbe's room and knocked. The Rebbe answered the door, his face a fiery red. We got so frightened that we ran away instantly.

There were quite a few instances when the Rebbe saw us playing ball outside.

But one game that we played was special for a different reason.

It must have been during Chanukah, 5715* or 5716*. My brother Abba and I were playing dreidel at a table that was situated right outside the Rebbe's room in *Gan Eden Hatachton*. Suddenly the Rebbe walked by and asked if he could play with us. Of course, we said yes and the Rebbe put down a dime on the table. The Rebbe then told my brother to spin the dreidel for him, and it landed on a *Hei*. The Rebbe said, "So we take half!" And he told my brother he can keep it.



RABBI GURARY AND HIS FAMILY GO BY THE REBBE ON EREV ROSH HASHANAH 5741*

the names of *B'nei Yisroel*... Reuven and Shimon." The Rebbe quoted the Midrash that says, "Reuven and Shimon went down [to Mitzrayim], and the same Reuven and Shimon came up," i.e. that the Yidden in Mitzrayim didn't change their names.

The Rebbe asked: Why does the Midrash mention these two names specifically? Reuven means "*re'iya*"—seeing *Elokus*, and Shimon means "*shemia*"—hearing *Elokus*. Only through *re'iya* and *shemia* of *Elokus*, can we pick ourselves up and go out of our own Mitzrayim. The Rebbe explained: "You're living in America, you're learning *limudei chol*. The only way to uplift yourself from Mitzrayim is through learning Chassidus!"

With my friend Yossel Zalmanov, the Rebbe did a similar thing. On the day of his bar mitzvah, the Rebbe gave Yossel's father a *ksav yad kodesh*, an original manuscript of the Tzemach Tzedek's handwriting from *Shores Mitzvas Hatefila*, and said: "Since the Tzemach Tzedek wrote this when he was young, you should learn this with your son, then bring it back tomorrow..."

There was no one else giving us a Chassidishe *chinuch*. No Chassidishe storybooks, not in any language. What did we have? The Rebbe himself took care of us. He

gave us his time and attention.

A few years later, when I was 16 years old, the Rebbe told me that every day before davening I should give *tzedakah*, and learn a *vort* of Chassidus. I should never daven without learning something. The quantity is not important, but I should learn it with a "*tzugetrugenkeit*"—with dedication and close attention. Until today, I am still very meticulous to learn Chassidus every single day because of what the Rebbe told me. If not for that, who knows where I would be. Probably just another Brooklyn Dodgers fan, if not worse...

Years later, my father once asked the Rebbe why Chassidim aren't seeing open miracles from the Rebbe; Chassidim need *mofsim*. The Rebbe responded, "What about your own health? And your wife's health? The fact that all is in order is not a *mofes*?" Then the Rebbe mentioned to my father about me, saying, "If not for what I've invested in him, what would have become of him?"

The Rebbe made me. And with care, attention, and devotion, the Rebbe raised a full generation of Chassidim in America.

L'Chaim Yidden! 🕒

KNOW WHAT TO ASK

Rabbi Gurary Relates:

I believe this story occurred in 5719*: My father was approached by the Rebbe's brother-in-law, Rashag, and asked if he would accompany Rashag on a fundraising trip to South America and introduce him to some of his wealthy business contacts. My father agreed with one condition: At the time, my father was going through a crisis in his business and was in dire need of the Rebbe's *bracha*. If Rashag would ask the Rebbe to give him a special *bracha*, my father was willing to go along on the trip. The Rebbe agreed to the deal, and the two of them indeed had a very successful trip.

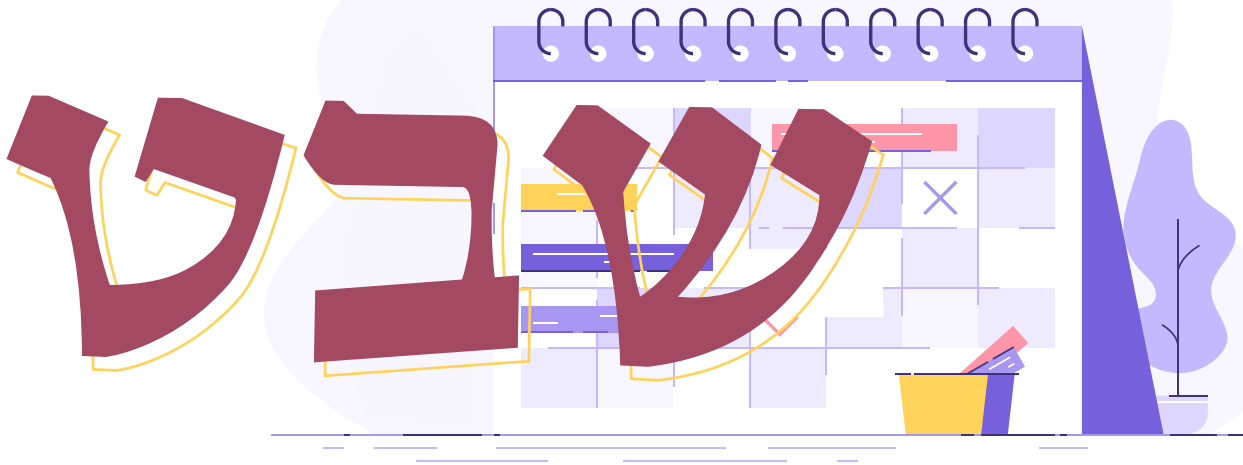
Upon their return my father asked Rashag to go to the Rebbe and complete the deal, and the Rebbe in turn invited my father to come into his room.

When my father came in, he told the Rebbe that he was dealing with a serious crisis in his business that could result in a big financial loss, and that he was in dire need of a *yeshua*.

The Rebbe responded, "Reb Zalman, I thought you are a smart person! Given the chance to ask for an extraordinary *bracha*, the first thing you ask for is money? The first thing you should ask for is for *nachas* from your children, that they grow up to be *frumme* children and *Chassidishe* children!"

My father was taken aback. He immediately told the Rebbe, "Yes! That's what I want!"

This may have been one of the things the Rebbe had in mind when he told my father that the fact that I turned out alright was thanks to a *mofes* from the Rebbe.



ROSH CHODESH SHEVAT

- On this day Moshe taught the entire Sefer Devarim “*Mishneh Torah*” to all of the Yidden, and as Rashi says, he translated it for them in all 70 languages. On Rosh Chodesh Shevat, each and every one of us receive a special *koach* to be able to disseminate the Torah to every Yid, in a deep way with a long term effect.¹

YUD SHEVAT – THE BEGINNING OF THE REBBE’S NESIUS

- Each year on the day that the Rebbe’s *nesius* started, the same energy that reigned on that original day shines again. It is therefore an auspicious time to strengthen our *hiskashrus*, and to contemplate the fact that our shepard has not forsaken his flock, and that the Rebbe is showering us with all the blessings that we need.²

YUD SHEVAT – THE HISTALKUS OF THE FRIEDIKER REBBE

- In preparation for Yud Shevat, the Rebbe instructed Chassidim to participate in farbrengens on Shabbos Mevarchim and Rosh Chodesh Shevat, since these days contain all the days of the upcoming month, especially Yud Shevat.³

- The Rebbe also requested that word should be spread to fully prepare for this day, including reminders about the proper *minhagim* for Yud Shevat.⁴
- Spiritual preparations should be made as well, by learning the Torah of the Frierdiker Rebbe, especially the yearly *perek* of the *maamar Basi Legani*. It should be studied in depth, and in public.
- We must also increase in our fulfillment of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s instructions—learning Chitas every day and spreading Chassidus to whomever we can. This is especially relevant to those who merited to receive clear *horaos* from the Frierdiker Rebbe, that while fulfilling them, they should picture his presence there with him.⁵
- In addition to the *minhagim* we do on a *yom histalkus*, Yud Shevat is a time for us to learn from the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *avodah*, not to be complacent, and to do everything with joy and appreciation of Torah and mitzvos.⁶
- Yud Shevat is also the passing of the Rebbetzin Rivka, the wife of the Rebbe Maharash, therefore it is also a day for Jewish women to increase in the *avodah* of Rebbetzin Rivka, causing all the Rebbetzins to live on - “*Ma zar’an bachaim af hein bachayim.*”⁷

לזכות
 החייל בצבאות ה'
 שניאור זלמן הכהן שיחי'
 לרגל הולדתו י' מר חשון ה'תשפ"ב

לזכות הוריו הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל הכהן
 וזוגתו מרת בת' שיחיו כהן

נדפס ע"י זקניו
 הרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק וזוגתו מרת ציפא
 ומשפחתם שיחיו
 ויגלר

15 SHEVAT - NEW YEAR FOR THE TREES

- Today is the most special day of the month (as is every fifteenth of the month, when the moon is at its fullest), and it is also the new year for trees. Therefore, special gatherings should be arranged in every community for men, women and children, at which their resolve in Torah and mitzvos and in following the Rebbe's ways is strengthened.⁸

22 SHEVAT - THE HISTALKUS OF THE REBBETZIN

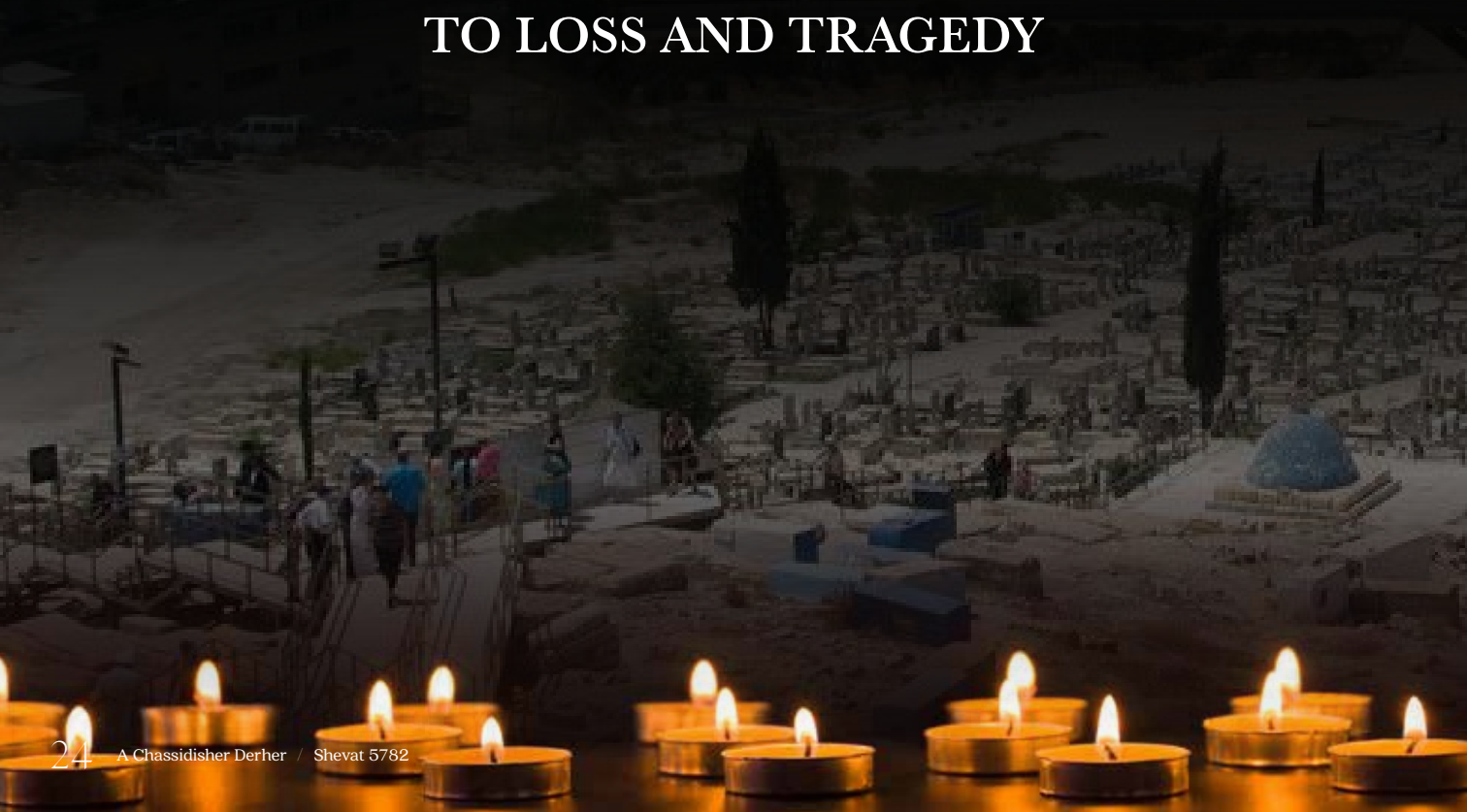
- The *yahrtzeit* of the Rebbetzin should be marked by increasing in davening, learning Torah, and giving tzedakah. One demonstrates that "*zarah bachayim*—her descendants are alive"—and thus "*hee bachayim*—she is alive" by learning from her conduct and emulating her ways.
- We should set up times to learn Torah, in every community, and to increase in the already progressing *shiurim*. These *shiurim* should inspire *yiras Shamayim*, davening and keeping the mitzvos, including tzedakah.
- Tzedakah giving should be increased,⁹ preferably in multiples of 470—the *gematria* of the Rebbetzin's name.¹⁰

- We can bring her to life by naming our children after her and educating them to follow in her ways, including the anticipation we all must have every day for the imminent coming of Moshiach.
- The Rebbe also requested that *mosdos* be established in the Rebbetzin's honor, especially ones connected with the mitzvos related to women and schools for girls (like the "Beis Rivka" school that the Frierdiker Rebbe established).¹¹
- In 5749*, just one day after Chof-Beis Shevat, the Rebbe already encouraged the Chassidim to begin the preparations for the *peulos* of Chof-Beis Shevat of the following year.¹² **T**

1. Sefer Hasichos 5747 vol. 1 p. 287.
2. Igros Kodesh vol. 3, p. 255.
3. Hisvaaduyos 5752 vol. 2 p. 120.
4. Hisvaaduyos 5751 vol. 2 p. 188.
5. Hisvaaduyos 5749 vol. 2 p. 223.
6. Hisvaaduyos 5748 vol. 2 p. 270.
7. Hisvaaduyos 5752 vol. 2 p. 190.
8. Hisvaaduyos 5748 vol. 2 p. 309.
9. Hisvaaduyos 5749 vol. 2 p. 291-293; 296-297.
10. Hisvaaduyos 5750 vol. 2 p. 284.
11. Ibid.
12. Hisvaaduyos 5749 vol. 2 p. 305.

FILLING THE VOID

THE REBBE'S RESPONSE
TO LOSS AND TRAGEDY



לזכות
הרה"ת ר' לוי וזוגתו מרת **מנוחה מינדל**
ומשפחתם שיחיו לברטוב

למזל טוב לנסיעתם ולהצלחה רבה
בשליחותם הק' באוסטין, טעקסאס

נדפס ע"י
משפחת פלדמן
פלארידא. טעקסאס.



Hundreds of people remember their personal encounters with the Rebbe while they were grieving or suffering from challenging life-issues. More than advice they received, what is etched in their hearts and minds is the fatherly care and concern they received from the Rebbe. As the רועה נאמן of our generation, the Rebbe concerns himself with the wellbeing of each and every Yid, both spiritually and materially, as if he were his only child. Thus, their trouble is truly the Rebbe's trouble. Whatever it may be that a Chossid is going through, the Rebbe is there with him.

There is a famous line the Frierdiker Rebbe once wrote in a letter: "א יתום קלאגט, א קינד וויינט" (an orphan grieves; a child cries). An orphan is left without anyone to turn to, leaving him no other alternative than grieving helplessly about his painful situation. A child on the other hand, has a father to turn to, so he cries to his father for help.

This notion is most profoundly brought out by the way our Rebbe attentively showed his concern for those suffering the loss of a loved one. Whether through encouragement in *yechidus* or in a letter of *nichum aveilim* the Rebbe wrote, as well as the close attention the Rebbe would regularly show *yesomim*.

The following article is a collection of letters, anecdotes, and personal stories, which illustrate the Rebbe's unique approach to dealing with losses, rooted in his deep concern for every Yid, whatever it may be that they are going through.

You Are Not Alone

Shortly after the Six Day War, the home of Ariel Sharon was struck with tragedy. Sharon's 11 year old son Gur was killed in a tragic accident. While he was mourning

the sudden loss of his son, he received a unique letter from the Rebbe in which the Rebbe explained the *nusach* one wishes a mourner:

"...An element of comfort—or, more than just an element—is expressed in the ritual *nusach*, repeated by generations of Torah and tradition



ARIEL SHARON WITH HIS SON GUR.



JEM 108157 (4 SHEVAT 5733)

among our people: המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים (May Hashem comfort you among the mourners of Tzion and Yerushalayim).

"At first glance, the connection between the mourner to whom this *bracha* is directed and the mourners of Yerushalayim's destruction appears to be quite puzzling. In truth, however, they are connected. For the main consolation embodied by this phrase is in its inner content, namely: The grief over Tziyon and Yerushalayim is common to all Yidden, wherever they may be... Similarly, the grief of an individual Yid or *Yiddishe* family is shared by the entire nation...

"Another point and principle, expressed by double consolation, is that just as Hashem will most certainly rebuild the ruins of Tziyon and Yerushalayim and gather the dispersed of Israel from the ends of the earth through Moshiach Tzidkeinu, He will also, without a doubt, remove the grief of the individual, fulfilling the promise הקיצו ורגנו שוכני עפר—the dwellers of the dust shall rise and sing. Great will be the joy, the true joy, when all will be reunited at the time of *techiyas hameisim*.

"There is yet a third point: In regard to Tziyon and Yerushalayim, the Romans—and before them, the Babylonians—were given dominion only over the wood, stone, silver, and gold of the *Beis Hamikdash*'s physical manifestation, but not over its inner spiritual essence, contained within the heart of each and every Yid; for the nations have no dominion over this and it stands eternally. So too, regarding the mourning of the individual, death dominates only the physical body and concerns of the



JEW 9831; VIA CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM (12 ADAR 5752)

THE REBBE HANDS A DOLLAR TO THE HUSBAND OF MRS. PESHA LEAH LAPINE AND HER CHILDREN, ONE WEEK AFTER HER TRAGIC MURDER.

person who passed. The *neshamah*, however, is eternal; it has merely ascended to *Olam Haemes*. That is why any good deed [performed by the mourner] that accords with the will of He who gives life, *Hashem Yisbarech*, adds to the *neshamah's* delight and merit, and to its general good.”¹

One of the most difficult feelings a person can have is when he feels that he is alone in his misery, for an outsider cannot possibly relate to the depth of one's personal loss. With the first point in the letter, the Rebbe made it clear that as lonely as one may feel during a time of loss, he must remember that a Yid is never truly lonely.

Those who would seek the Rebbe's counseling, more than anything else, what they received from the Rebbe was the sense that being at the Rebbe's side, they were not alone, in a very tangible way.

The Rebbe would very often find opportunities to comfort mourners also by giving them special attention. For example: On the Shabbos following the murder of Mrs. Pesha Leah Lapine, her children stood near the Rebbe throughout the farbrengen. The Rebbe poured wine from his *becher* to each of them, and then to their father, saying ברכה והצלחה, ומחה ה' דמעה מעל כל פנים בגאולה האמיתית והשלמה. Then he specifically encouraged them during the singing.

The Eternity of the Neshamah

One of the most painful aspects of losing a loved one, if not the most painful aspect, is the loss itself. The person who one was close with and loved is no longer here and we are left with a feeling of emptiness. The Rebbe's clear view on the eternal life of the *neshamah* would serve as a reminder that a deceased person is never 'gone' for the *neshamah* lives on forever.

This is perhaps the most fundamental principle the Rebbe would repeat time and again to people grieving the loss of a loved one. In numerous letters, and *yechidusen* the Rebbe spoke of this idea with various implications, depending on the situation.

To one heart-broken individual, for whom it was very difficult to get back to himself and as a result was not capable of focusing on his Torah study, the Rebbe explained that the notion of the *neshamah's* eternal life is the reason the Torah prohibits mourning and dwelling in sorrow for more than the allotted time frame in Shulchan Aruch.

In the letter the Rebbe wrote to him, the Rebbe illustrated that these feelings of dejection are certainly coming from the *yetzer hara* who, as usual, looks for each and every opportunity to distract one from his divine service. Says the Rebbe, “If you follow the advice of the *yetzer hara* this will cause grief to the *neshamah* of your loved one, for she is being abused by the *yetzer hara* for the purpose of weakening someone's Torah study. Therefore, on the contrary, you must study Torah with diligence for this will be a source of *koras ruach* (gratification) for the *neshamah* of your loved one, and the vessel through which to draw down Hashem's blessings for the entire family.”²

Following the horrific tragedy at the Beit Sefer L'melacha of Kfar Chabad in 5716^{3*} where four students along with their teacher Hatomim Simcha

“...Death dominates only the physical body and concerns of the person who passed. The *neshamah*, however, is eternal.”

Zilberstrom were murdered by terrorists, the Rebbe instructed the founding of ‘Yad Hachamisha’ in memory of the five whose lives were brutally taken.

Shortly after the groundbreaking for the new building of Yad Hachamisha, the Rebbe wrote a letter to Simcha's mother. The letter starts with this notion: “All Yidden are believers in the idea that a person is mainly his *neshamah*, his ממעל ממש, which lives on eternally.” The Rebbe then translates this idea to mean that one can ‘win over death’ so to speak:

“Since the purpose of man's creation is to affect this material world, therefore, when the *neshamah* is connected to an accomplishment in this world, especially something that will perpetually bear fruit (education of further generations), this is victory over his death (for he is continuing to fulfill the purpose for which he was created, to impact this world). Additionally, this causes the



JEM 108157 (4 SHEVAT 5733)

MEIR FRIEDMAN, ONE OF THE TEACHERS AT BEIT SEFER L'MELACHA WHO PLAYED A ROLE IN SAVING CHILDREN DURING THE ATTACK, MOURNS THE DEATHS AT THE SITE THE NEXT DAY. MEMORIAL CANDLES CAN BE SEEN AT THE BOTTOM LEFT.

greatest *koras ruach* (gratification) to the *neshamah*.⁴

With this point, the Rebbe also addresses the painful question a mourner may ask: Indeed the *neshamah* is eternal, yet for us living in this world, a dear and beloved person has been removed from our lives. How does one deal with the reality in this world where the connection that was shared with this person is no longer?

“How would I feel if my son went overseas and was living in a foreign country where he could not communicate with me; but, I could be assured that all his needs were being met...”

In a lengthy letter, the Rebbe poses a question. The Shulchan Aruch tells us⁵ two seemingly contradictory *dinim*: “One should not mourn more than is appropriate...” and “One who does not mourn as instructed by our sages, is considered cruel.” If mourning is natural, what can be wrong with mourning extra? And if it is wrong, then why is someone who mourns less considered cruel?

The Rebbe explains that when someone passes away, two things take place simultaneously: On the one hand,

the *neshamah* transcends the limitations imposed on it by the body. At the same time, however, the person’s material presence is lacking, leaving his loved ones with a great void. These are the reasons for the above mentioned *dinim*. The purpose of *aveilus* according to *halacha* is to bring about *teshuvah*, thus maintaining the connection between the *neshamah* and those close to it in this world, for it sees what’s doing with them and derives *nachas ruach* from their good actions.⁶

On one occasion, a mother who lost a child at a tender age wrote a letter to the Rebbe seeking advice with regards to her older son who had become despondent after his brother’s passing. The Rebbe’s response to her was: “...You should explain to him that doing things that will benefit Yiddishe children would bring *nachas ruach* to the *neshamah* of his brother... The *neshamah* is waiting for those who care for its satisfaction to do something for its benefit and *aliyas haneshamah*...”⁷

Reb Nachum Rabinowitz related what he heard from someone who went into *yechidus* after losing an only child. The man related:

“At that point, I felt that my life no longer had any purpose. I saw no value in my wealth and status. I went to see the Rebbe in search of consolation and advice. The Rebbe asked me how I would feel if my son went overseas and was living in a foreign country where he could not communicate with me; but, I could be assured that all his needs were being met and that he wasn’t suffering at all. I answered that, although the separation would be difficult to bear, I would be happy for my son.

“The Rebbe then continued: ‘And although he could not respond, if you could communicate to him and send him packages, would you do so?’

“‘Of course,’ I answered. ‘This is precisely your present situation,’ the Rebbe concluded. ‘With every prayer you recite, you are sending a message to your son. And with every gift you make to tzedakah or institution you fund, you are sending a “package” to him. He cannot respond, but he appreciates your words and your gifts.’”

On a similar note, Rabbi Mordechai Sufrin of London, related: “In 5732*, my wife gave birth to our son, the seventh of our children, who tragically passed away only nine weeks later. Seeking encouragement and inspiration, we decided we would travel to New York to have a *yechidus* with the Rebbe.

“We came to the Rebbe before Purim. In the middle of the Purim farbrengen the Rebbe exclaimed, ‘Is Sufrin from London here?’ I immediately went up to the Rebbe’s place, and he gave me a bottle of *mashke* to say *l’chaim*, and told me to share some of it while I was in New York, and also to others in Paris and London. Then he gave me



THE REBBE ATTENDING THE HAKAMAS HAMATZEIVA OF RASHAG. 14 ADAR I, 5749*.

a *bracha*, 'From now on you will have only good news.'

"During the *yechidus* we had with the Rebbe, he talked to us about our deceased baby. Among other things, I remember the Rebbe telling us, 'Although you certainly are frustrated that you can no longer see him, you must remember that he can see you.'"

Bringing Nachas to the Neshamah

At the farbrengen of Chof Av 5742*, the Rebbe began:

"When it comes to a *yahrtzeit*, we remember the *neshamah* of the deceased in *Olam Ha'emes*, who has come to understand the greatness of what can only be accomplished in this material world. Concerning the study of Torah, we are told 'Torah is not in the Heavens.' The Alter Rebbe explains this to mean that any development or resolution of a Torah impasse, or a *psak din*, can only be accomplished by a Yid who is alive here below. Likewise, in regards to mitzvos, they cannot be performed in *Olam Ha'emes*...

"From this it is understood that after passing, the *neshamah* of the deceased finds itself in a state where it requires the actions of those in this world, who have an opportunity to act on behalf of the *neshamah* to perform these physical mitzvos, through their physical limbs and organs... on its behalf, and in its merit..."⁸

In a letter the Rebbe wrote: "Surely you know what is brought down in *sefarim* regarding the manner through which children can cause gratification to the *neshamos* of

their deceased fathers. One of the main ways is through the spreading of Torah and mitzvos, especially keeping in mind how much your father devoted his life for matters of Chassidus in general and spreading its teachings in particular. Therefore I hope that you are active in this area,

HOW TO EXPLAIN A LOSS TO YOUNG CHILDREN?

"In response to your question whether or not you should reveal to your children about the passing of their mother. In my opinion, you should slowly explain to them that Hashem has brought her to a place in which there is no illness. This place is in Heaven, from where she can give to her children, as well as she can beseech Hashem that her children be successful in their learning and behavior. Her motherly compassion for her children is intact, and she yearns for them to behave in the proper manner, through which they cause her much *nachas ruach*, in which state she can see to it that they be successful in their endeavors. The only thing that has changed, is that now we cannot see this with our physical eyes.

"Obviously, the language you will use to explain this to your older children is not necessarily appropriate for the younger ones, however the general concept can be explained to all children."



and particularly during the year of mourning, for your merit (and responsibility) is several times greater, since you are in a position through which you can affect a particular circle, and nothing can stand in the way of one's will."⁹

In another letter the Rebbe wrote: "...to see to it that all children of the one who passed away should follow the path of Torah and mitzvos on a daily basis... Understandably, **this** is of utmost importance, not only for them, but for their deceased father too—this is of much greater importance than eulogies that are to be printed or delivered in a speech..."¹⁰

To the son of a famed *talmid chacham* the Rebbe wrote: "If there are any Torah innovations from your father, make the effort to publish them, for the *nachas* this will cause his *neshamah*, needs no explanation."¹¹

Similarly, to the family of Rabbi Mendel Kasher, author of the compilation '*Torah Shleimah*' the Rebbe wrote: "Ostensibly one can be sure, that continuing his main work—the Torah Shleimah—and completing it as soon as possible, would be the greatest respect to him, and [would bring about an] *aliyas haneshamah* higher and higher."¹²

No Explanations!

Following the tragedy at Beit Sefer L'melacha (see above), the Rebbe spoke about the tragedy with great pain and anguish on numerous occasions.

At one instance, the Rebbe spoke of some who had tried to give their own interpretation of what had happened, borrowing the notion of 'בקרובי אקדש' (Hashem's name is sanctified through the passing of those close to him), which Hashem said regarding the

untimely passing of Aharon Hakohen's two sons.

"In truth," said the Rebbe, "this is no explanation... The notion itself is not understood [the fact that Hashem's name is sanctified by the passing of *tzaddikim* is beyond our rationale]. Thus, what do you gain by explaining something not understood with another idea that is not understood?! Therefore, this is *tanchumin shel hevel*—condolences of vanity. Rather: ***Va'yidom Aharon***—Aharon remained silent.

"Obviously, we are not permitted to question Hashem's actions, but that doesn't mean we understand what happened. To this day I have not found any explanation for this tragedy..."

"[When Moshiach comes] we will offer thanks to Hashem for all of our suffering in *galus*, and only then will we comprehend how this was indeed revealed good."

Preparing for Life's Challenges

Mr. Yaakov Shiffman related:

"In 5733* my father was diagnosed with colon cancer. Two years later, his health began seriously deteriorating. At one point, we went to the hospital where the doctors examined him and saw that there wasn't much they could do..."

"Of course, we didn't want to give up. One cousin told us, 'You should go to see the Lubavitcher Rebbe.'

"It was the first week of Kislev. My sister and I went along with our father and mother to a *yechidus* with the Rebbe. We entered the Rebbe's room, I stood in the back while my father spoke quietly with the

Rebbe for a few minutes. When the Rebbe finished speaking with my father we began to leave, but suddenly the Rebbe said to me, ‘You stay.’

“I was already anxious about everything that was going on with my father. I was only 16 years old at the time, and I got very, very nervous. Then, the Rebbe said to me, ‘*kum*’ (come over), gesturing that I should approach. He went over to his shelf and pulled out two volumes of *Maseches Brachos*, and said to me: ‘By the laws of nature, your father is extremely sick now, he’s near the end. Hashem will help, but your father will be depressed, and you’re going to be depressed. You will need something to give you strength. I want to teach you something which will help keep you going.’

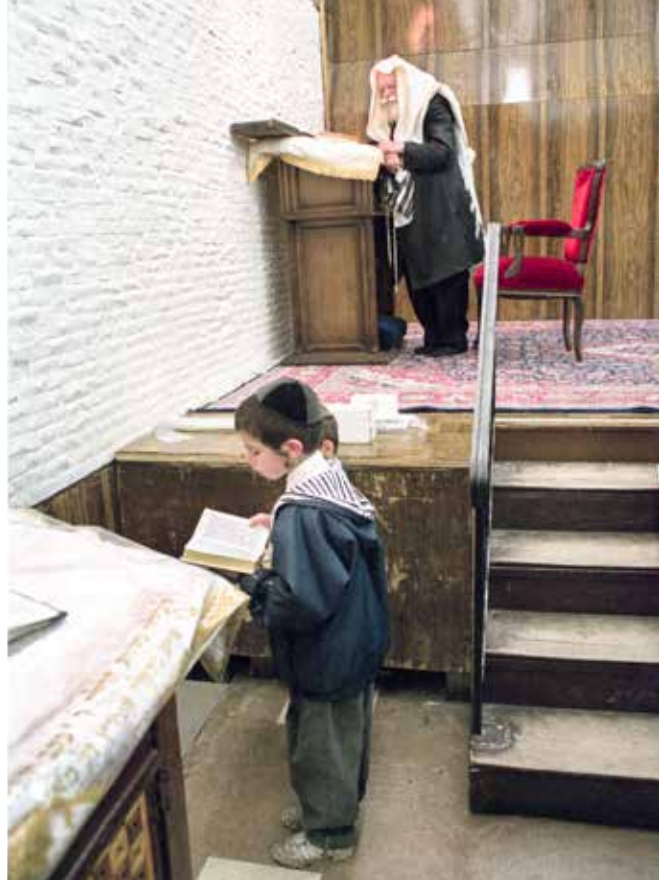
“The Rebbe opened the Gemara to *daf yud* and began to teach me the story from *Melachim Beis* which the Gemara discusses there. King Chizkiyahu was ill, and the *navi* Yeshaya visited him. The *navi* told the king that his days are numbered and he should prepare for the end, but Chizkiyahu refused to accept this, saying ‘No, I have faith in Hashem.’ Although the *navi* said it was too late, Chizkiyahu began to *daven*, for no matter what, a Yid doesn’t give up hope.

“I was standing across the Rebbe’s desk and he was sitting. But in the middle of the story, the Rebbe motioned for me to come around the desk, and I looked into the Gemara together with him. He translated the dialogue slowly into Yiddish, one word at a time, pointing to the place, like a father teaching his son. The loving way the Rebbe looked at me stands out in my mind—I never saw that type of love. He gave us his *bracha*, but then he gave much more. He saw that this boy needed fatherly love, and he gave it.

“I remember the Rebbe pointing to the words with his finger, then looking at me and pointing again. He had me repeat it until it was clear that I understood. The Rebbe wanted to make sure that I understood the Gemara’s idea well, and that I could explain it to my father too: That even at death’s door you should never give up hope, you should never become depressed, and you should accept Hashem’s will.

“This all took quite some time, about 25 minutes. When I came out of the Rebbe’s room, I was sweating. As we drove home, I told my father what had happened, and he broke down and cried. As soon as we got home, we learned that Gemara three or four times.

“Two and a half months after our *yechidus* with the Rebbe, my father passed away. After he passed away, I was on the verge of becoming despondent. I didn’t have relatives to look after me: My mother was an only child, my father’s whole family had been



JEM 234913, VIA LEVI FREIDIN (07 TISHREI 5750)

THE REBBE LOOKS ON AS A YOUNG BOY RECITES KADDISH FOR HIS FATHER, SHORTLY AFTER HIS PASSING.

wiped out in the war, and I was only 16 years old.

“I don’t know how to thank the Rebbe for this, but he sat me down and told me the facts of life. Everyone else had been telling me, ‘No, it will be good, it will be good.’ The Rebbe looked at me and told me how to be prepared for it.

“Over the following years, I had times when things got tough. I left yeshiva for a while and wandered away. But then I remembered what the Rebbe taught me. Throughout those years, I probably learned that piece of Gemara thirty times, and it got me back on track. The fact that I am today who I am and that I raised a beautiful family is because of that night when the Rebbe lovingly spent so much time with me.” T

1. Igros Kodesh, vol. 25 p. 3.
2. Likkutei Sichos vol. 35 p. 334.
3. See Derher, Sivan 5774.
4. Ibid. p. 339.
5. Yoreh De’ah Siman 394.
6. Likkutei Sichos vol. 35 p. 332.
7. Ibid. p. 336.
8. Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5742, vol. 4 p. 2012.
9. Likkutei Sichos vol. 35 p. 340.
10. Ibid. 339.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid. p. 342.



לזכות
הרה"ת ר' יצחק ישראל
וזוגתו מרת רחל בריינא
בניהם ובנותיהם
מנחם מענדל, שרה רבקה,
חנה פרימט ריקל, יהושע דוד
שיחיו
מאגאלניק



What Are You Waiting For?



In a letter written to a relative shortly after the Friediker Rebbe's histalkus on Yud Shevat 5710, Rabbi Efraim Eliezer Yolles reveals some of the intimate details he knew about the Friediker Rebbe's connection with the Rebbe, and encourages the younger Chassidim to immediately accept the Rebbe as the new nossi:!*



Sunday, Parshas V'Ata Hakrev [Tetzaveh] 5710*,
Day of the Shloshim [of the Friediker Rebbe].
Williamsburg.

My dear and cherished relative, Harav Tzvi,

I was unable to prolong [my stay] and speak with you,
my dear one, for I was in a hurry to return to my dear
daughter's home. Now, too, I am in a hurry to return home.

Throughout the hour and a half that I [just] spent
in the presence of the crown of Chassidei Chabad, the
true *tzaddik*, Ramash [the Rebbe] *shlita*, the impression
of the holy and pure words, uttered by the mouth of the
holy of holies, the [Friedidiker] Rebbe, was manifest:

On the night of Hoshaana Rabba 5706*, he
[the Friediker Rebbe] told me that he would give
me a *hoshaana* through [his son-in-law] Ramash

shlita, adding that "his hand is like my hand."

Obviously then, his [the Rebbe's] mouth is like his
[the Friediker Rebbe's] holy and pure mouth.

I stand in wonder at you, the young holy flock [of
Lubavitch], why are you procrastinating [and avoiding]
connecting yourselves with this holy and pure *tzaddik*?

Although I understood from the true and pure
words of the holy Ramash *shlita* that he is not yet
willing to lead the holy congregation, you, the young
members of the Chabad community, must overpower
even the will of the *tzaddik*, and [accept him as your
Rebbe] from below, for the sake of Hashem's glory.

I am not a Rebbe, but thank G-d, I am the son and the
student of a Rebbe, as well as the grandson and student
of a Rebbe and the *tzaddik* of a generation, a holy and



The REBBE OPENED His EYES

As related by

MRS. LEAH NAMDAR,
Shlucha to Gothenburg, Sweden.

This story happened around 5750*. My husband and I were just married and living in New York. Many weeks, when we would go to Sunday “dollars,” we would bring with us to the Rebbe people who came to us from different countries. Typically I would go as the last of the people in the women’s line (before the men’s line began) and then my husband would go as the first of the men’s line, or the other way around, and we would usually be able to go together and take people to the Rebbe. It was a beautiful thing to have the *zechus* of watching people meeting the Rebbe for the first time, and it was always a very special experience.

It happened that my brother, Rabbi Yitzy Loewenthal, now the shliach in Denmark, who was a *bochur* at the time, met someone on *mitvzoim* in London, and the individual told him that he had a relative in Italy who had a baby who was blind. Upon hearing this, my brother suggested that they bring the baby to the Rebbe.

Meanwhile, my mother-in-law, who lives in Italy, had *b’hashgacha pratis* also met this family—unbeknownst to my brother—and she had also suggested that they go to the Rebbe! So when they got these two separate suggestions to go to the Rebbe,

they decided that it would be a good thing to do.

The baby’s mother arrived in New York on a Thursday, and came to our apartment on Sunday morning along with a number of her relatives, prepared to see the Rebbe. She was holding a beautiful baby, several months old, with dark eyes that could not see. The doctors had told the parents that the child simply did not possess optic nerves, and they did not believe it would ever be possible for the child to see.

The Rebbe took the dollar and placed it on the eyes of the baby and said, ‘Dos is far dem kind. Besuros tovos’ — ‘This is for the child. Good news.’

We stood on the line together and I explained what would happen: We would go past the Rebbe and the line would move fairly quickly, and that they would have a chance, just at that moment, to say something to the Rebbe. As we got closer and closer and the excitement mounted,

לזכות
החיילת בצבאות ה'
חנה תחי'
לרגל הולדתה י"ג כסלו
ה'תשפ"ב

נדפס ע"י הוריה
הרה"ת ר' יואל וזוגתו מרת ריקל
ומשפחתם שיחיו
ניו



the line seemed to move faster and faster and suddenly we were in the Rebbe's presence. As we stood before the Rebbe, the mother simply burst into tears, just crying. And the line was moving! So I quickly said to the Rebbe, in Yiddish, "The child is blind and they are asking for a *bracha*."

The Rebbe said, "*Dos is far deer*—This is for you" — and gave me a dollar. Then the Rebbe said, "*Dos is far eer*—This is for her" — and gave the mother a dollar. And then the Rebbe did something very interesting, that I had never seen before. The Rebbe took the dollar and placed it on the eyes of the baby and said, "*Dos is far dem kind. Besuros tovos*—This is for the child. Good news."

And with that, the line moved us away from the Rebbe. The mother asked me excitedly, "What did the Rebbe say?" So I told her that the Rebbe said that this is for the baby, and that there would be good news. She gave a shriek of joy, and there was a litany of hugs and kisses from all the relatives who had accompanied her.

We left and went back to our apartment, and the mother came back on wings of joy. She borrowed our telephone to call her husband and I understood from what she was saying that she was confident their baby was going to see.

A few months later, my mother-in-law came

from Italy to visit us and she brought me a brown leather handbag as a gift. She told me that this was a gift from the woman I had brought to the Rebbe. I asked, "How's she doing? How's the baby?"

"They're doing great," my mother-in-law answered.

"One more question: Can the baby see?"

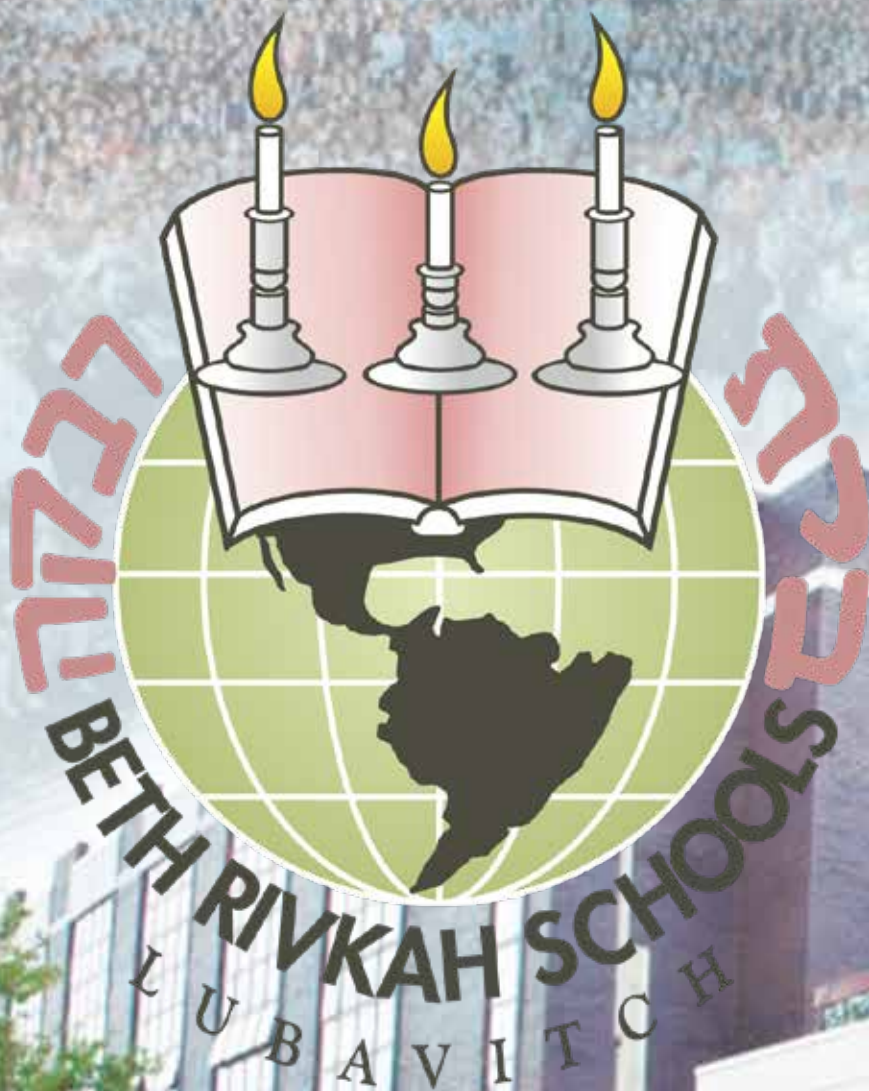
"Of course!" my mother-in-law replied. "He got

'He got a bracha from the Rebbe! Of course he can see!'

a *bracha* from the Rebbe! Of course he can see!"

Turns out, one day after she returned from the Rebbe, as the mother was spoon-feeding the baby, someone called to her and she turned around. As she did so, the baby reached out and took the spoon from her hand—and she realized the baby could see. (Until then, since the baby couldn't see the spoon and didn't know when to open his mouth, the mother would have to open his mouth for each spoonful.)

A few years later, my husband visited Italy for a family *simcha* and he danced with this boy. He wore glasses, but could see just as well as anyone. This is just one of the *nissim* that were rolling around under the table of the Rebbe. **1**



לזכות הגה"ח הרב אברהם ליב וזוגתו
שיחיו שוחאט
שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר למדינת ונצואלה
מאז שנת תשמ"ה
להצלחה רבה בכל המצטרך

נדפס ע"י בנם הרה"ת שלום דובער שי'
שוחאט ומשפחתו



A School with a Mission

The Beginnings of Beis Rivkah

As the flagship Chabad girls' school marks 80 years since its founding, we take a look back at the history of this pioneering institution.

“Making It” In America

On Simchas Torah 5704*, a small crowd gathered in the dining room on the second floor at 770 for the Frierdiker Rebbe’s Simchas Torah farbrengen. They expected to hear stories about Chassidim of old, words of Chassidus and inspiration. Instead, they were informed that they would be going to war...

“Yidden! Fathers and mothers!” the Frierdiker Rebbe said, directing his words to American Jews at large. “Save your children, your sons and your daughters from the *treife* Talmud Torahs! This is wartime! You must know that it is a *spiritual* war!”

“During wartime, if even a simple soldier prevents the explosion of a small bomb, he receives a medal. A

simple soldier during wartime can earn much more than a general in peacetime. Removing a *triefe* teacher before he influences the children is like preventing the explosion of a bomb.”¹

The Frierdiker Rebbe did not suffice with the *sicha*. After Yom Tov, he wrote to Reb Yisrael Jacobson, asking him to gather Chassidim for an *asifa* in his *yechidus* room, where he would speak in more practical terms. During the *yechidus*, the Frierdiker Rebbe informed them that the focus of the group would be girls’ education. After hearing basic pointers from the Frierdiker Rebbe, the participants met in the *zal*, where they divided up the various neighborhoods and split up into pairs to get to work.

Grassroots

The Frierdiker Rebbe’s *sicha* and the subsequent gathering came



16 ADAR 5709

after two years of activity under the auspices of Merkos L’inyonei Chinuch. Several months after the Rebbe had arrived, the Frierdiker Rebbe appointed him to lead the newly founded Merkos and entrusted to him the field of girls’ education.

ACHOS HATMIMIM

The founding of Beis Rivkah wasn’t the Frierdiker Rebbe’s first involvement in education for girls.

While in Riga, the Frierdiker Rebbe founded “Achos Hatmimim,” a group for the daughters and wives of *tmimim*, to study Chassidus and strengthen one another in the *darkei haChassidus*, under the leadership of Reb Elye Chaim Althaus, Reb Mordechai Chefetz and Reb Avraham Eliyahu Asherov.

“Guiding and educating the daughters of Chassidim requires the exact same care and attention from their parents and teachers as they would give the sons of Chassidim,” the Frierdiker Rebbe writes in a letter.²

In a letter written years later, the Rebbe attests to the fact that the Frierdiker Rebbe “put his holy heart into this project very, very much, investing his utmost capabilities into it a lot more than what is known to the public...”³

Seeing the success of Achos HaTmimim in Riga, girls in America asked the Frierdiker Rebbe for permission to open a chapter in New York. The Frierdiker Rebbe was very pleased with their idea, and immediately appointed Reb Yisrael Jacobson, Reb Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky and Reb Yochanan Gordon to lead the New York group.

This group was extremely precious to the Frierdiker Rebbe, and he even asked to be notified of the *shiurim* times.⁴ Every Sunday, girls would come from Williamsburg, Boro Park, and Bensonhurst to learn about Chassidus and the Rabbeim from Reb Yochanan Gordon in Brownsville. The Rebbe insisted that Reb Yochanan, even in his old age, continue giving these classes. When he complained to the Rebbe that his ears were failing him and he could no longer hear the questions posed by the girls, the Rebbe told him that the important thing is that they should be able to hear what he is saying, not the other way around.⁵



REBBETZIN SHTERNA SARA, WIFE OF THE REBBE RASHAB, IN A GROUP PHOTO WITH THE GIRLS OF “ACHOS TMIMIM” IN RIGA, 20 TEVES 5700. (THIS WAS DURING THE MONTHS-LONG JOURNEY OF THE FRIERDIKER REBBE AND HIS FAMILY’S ESCAPE FROM WAR TORN EUROPE).

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When the Frierdiker Rebbe arrived in New York, many neighborhoods were teeming with Jewish children. Hundreds of thousands of Jews had immigrated to New York over the decades, but the state of Jewish education was dismal. The vast majority of Jewish children attended public school. Those who were lucky enough to learn some Torah usually did so after school for a short time a few times a week.

The Frierdiker Rebbe writes in a letter about the schools that were established during the years 5702*-4*, “Merkos L’inyonei Chinuch has been establishing schools for girls and they have already established many such institutions with great success. There were cases in which the students of Beis Rivkah and Beis Sarah — those are their names — forced their parents to begin observing Shabbat, break their non-kosher dishes and purchase kosher meat.”⁶

According to the account of Rabbi Hodakov, the very first Beis Rivkah school was established in Boro Park, in the shul of Rabbi Eliyahu Simpson. Over the next two years, according to reports in *Hakriah V’Hakedusha*, four more schools were established.

After the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *sicha* on Simchas Torah 5704*, many new Chassidim got involved in the work of Beis Rivkah, and new schools sprung up all over New York and beyond.

At first, most of these schools were afternoon Talmud Torahs. An activist would visit a neighborhood, speak to parents about Jewish education, and gather a group together. A teacher would be hired for each afternoon, and the group would gather in a local shul. With that, a new school would be created. By 5706*, there were 26 separate schools operating, 12 in New York and another 14 in other cities.

What happened to all those schools? According to Rabbi Hodakov, Chabad was not interested in controlling and funding each school. The Frierdiker Rebbe would help a group get started and provide the seed money as a loan, and as soon as a local group of parents were ready to adopt it, they would be given the reins, after which many of them evolved into large Torah institutions. The first Beis Rivkah, founded in Boro Park, later served as the nucleus for the Bais Yaakov school that exists there until today.

The first full-day school (“parochial school”) was opened in 5704*. Just three years later, in the school book, they were able to look back with pride on those difficult days:

“Only three girls registered and only one English teacher was hired, but with hard work and *Yiddishe akshanus*, it has become one of the most important Jewish educational institutions in America.”⁷

BEIS RIVKAH’S MISSION

In a letter to the girls of Beis Rivkah in Paris, the Frierdiker Rebbe wrote about the special mission of Beis Rivkah girls:

“In addition to the general mission of achieving *yiras Shamayim* and good character traits, fulfilling mitzvos and obtaining the Jewish and worldly knowledge needed to build your own Jewish home, you should also recognize your task as students of Beis Rivkah: To prepare yourselves for the task of educating your sisters, other Jewish girls, in the ways of Yiddishkeit.”⁸

“Veniflinu”

The Rebbe was deeply involved in the work. In a letter written in 5704*, the Rebbe apologized for a late response to a letter because “I am very occupied with the preparations of Merkos for the new school year...”⁹ When the Rebbe visited Paris in 5707* to bring Rebbetzin Chana to the United States, he was involved in establishing Beis Rivkah and Beis Sarah schools there, as well as in Prague.¹⁰

The Frierdiker Rebbe was also very involved. We know this from the Rebbe’s own attestation: “My father-in-law entrusted me with the printing activities and Beis Rivkah... and he is personally involved in their affairs—much more than people think...”¹¹

The Rebbe’s involvement continued into the later years, during the Rebbe’s *nesius*. For example, each stage of the Kfar Chabad Beis Rivkah, such as the seminary, was opened by the Rebbe’s direct instruction, and the Rebbe personally took responsibility for some of the finances.¹²



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ONE OF THE EARLIEST BEIS RIVKA SCHOOLS IN BROOKLYN N.Y.



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RABBI HODAKOV ADDRESSES A DINNER BENEFITING BEIS RIVKAH IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THE SCHOOL.

Each year, the Rebbe would write a letter for the Beis Rivkah dinner encouraging people to donate. In one extraordinary inscription in a Beis Rivkah fundraising book in 5710*, the Rebbe wrote the following in his own handwriting:

"I hereby participate with those mitzvah-doers who are taking part in the special campaign of Beis Rivkah to remove all debt. I hope that every one of *anash*, to whom the institutions of my father-in-law, the Rebbe זצ"ל, are precious, will do the same. And he will awaken Divine mercy upon them and their households, that they may be blessed with all their needs, physically and spiritually."

In Reshimos, the Rebbe recorded a beautiful talk he had given at a Beis Rivkah dinner in 5706*, where he explained the purpose and dire need for the Beis Rivkah schools:

"This is not merely a Torah-study initiative, that the students should acquire knowledge. Our objective is that the girls should be [true] *Yiddishe kinder*!

"In most instances, girls live in an atmosphere where all anyone is concerned about is 'making a living' or 'having a good time.' There is no appreciation for the special qualities of the Jewish nation, the 'נפלינו'. Yiddishkeit is seen as a burden...

"...Beis Rivkah and Beis Sarah—founded and headed by my father-

in-law—has made its mission to impress upon the hearts of the girls that they are *bnos Yisroel*, to appreciate the *kedusha* and purity that comes along with this and the special responsibility they carry..."¹³

The Rebbe often spoke about the tremendous merit of learning in an institution of the Frierdiker Rebbe.

In 5718*, a *bochur* had difficulties finding a *shidduch* and asked for the Rebbe's guidance. The Rebbe responded with a fascinating directive:

"Chazal say that all *bnos Yisroel* are beautiful. Obviously, the true beauty according to Chazal is spiritual beauty... a student of Beis Rivkah would be a most worthy choice, because her very presence in that institution indicates her *yashrus* and fear of Heaven. And, being that she is there with the approval of her parents, it also indicates her parents' fear of Heaven..."¹⁴

In another fascinating instance, the Rebbe instructed a *kallah* to add a name (being that her name was the same as her future mother-in-law), and the Rebbe suggested the name Rivkah; one of the reasons being that she learned and taught in Beis Rivkah!¹⁵

Every year, as the school year would draw to a close, the Rebbe would receive the graduating class for a *yechidus*. As the groups grew larger and larger, the event moved

into the large shul in 770. (It was also later merged with the annual *yechidus* to girl camp counselors.)

Until the end of the 5720s*, the *yechidus* was a *bracha* and a short talk in which the Rebbe focused on the meaning of graduation (that it is not a conclusion of anything but rather a stepping stone to even greater growth). As the years progressed, it developed into full *sichos* around an hour long (followed by a "dollars" distribution via the teachers).

The Rebbe would give over lessons from the *parsha*, from the time of year, from the daily *shiurim* in Rambam, and general messages about the unique *avodas Hashem* of women and their obligations with regard to *limud haTorah*. These were very similar to the talks the Rebbe delivered to women at the N'shei Chabad conventions and before Rosh Hashanah. Quite a number of these *sichos* were later edited by the Rebbe for publication.

Being a Pioneer

From the very outset, the Rebbe defined the school of Beis Rivkah as one for every Jewish child. Nobody was allowed to be turned away.

In Beis Rivkah's early days, Reb Itche Goldin—whom the Rebbe had appointed as its administrator—would knock on doors of Jewish homes and convince parents to send their girls—tuition free.

One Holocaust survivor had wished to send her daughter to a different Jewish girls' school but had no money for tuition. The administration of that school suggested she send her daughter to public school and when she would have sufficient funds enroll her in their school.

"I did not survive the war to send my daughter to public school," she said. When she

approached Beis Rivkah, Reb Itche accepted the girl into the school without charging a penny.¹⁶

In an interview with JEM's *My Encounter With the Rebbe* project, another woman relates how she was expelled from her school in the middle of the year.

"My mother could not find another school that would accept me in the middle of the school year, until she found Beis Rivkah. There were a few classrooms in a small house and I remember some classes being held in what smelled to me like a fish shop. But from the moment I walked through the door, I was happy. Rabbi Goldin and Rabbi Majesky really took an interest in me and made sure that I was doing well."¹⁷

As the years went on and the classes grew older, the administration opened a high school as well as a seminary. The Rebbe himself put in effort in convincing parents of girls and even students themselves that they should attend Beis Rivkah.

In the 5730s*, many Russian families emigrated to the United States.

"One day," relates Mrs. Shaindel Teichtel, principal of Beis Rivkah High School, "I received a phone call from Rabbi Hodakov, and he asked me a very startling question. 'How many girls in Beis Rivkah don't eat kosher at home?'"

"I was surprised to hear such a question and replied that to the best of my knowledge, all of the students come from kosher homes.

"Rabbi Hodakov then asked, 'What about all of the many hundreds of girls from Russian families that have recently arrived in the United States?'"

"I answered that, to the best of my knowledge, many Russian immigrants attend the Nefesh girls school in Boro Park.

"Rabbi Hodakov replied: 'The Frierdiker Rebbe did not establish

LEARNING ENGLISH

Following the *sicha* of Yud Shevat 5737*, when the Rebbe spoke strongly about going on *mesiras nefesh* to keep the purity of education, Mrs. Chana Gorowitz asked the Rebbe whether they should minimize the time allotted to *limudei chol*. The Rebbe replied: "That is utterly impossible with the current laws, the *dina dimalchusa*, here [in New York]!"²⁰

In another answer from the same period, the Rebbe writes that changes could only be made if certain conditions were met:

"Obviously: 1) All this is up to the decision of Beis Rivkah's educational committee. 2) Care must be taken to ensure that students are not lost due to the changes. 3) Care must be taken to ensure that it does not weaken the name of Beis Rivkah in the circles from which Beis Rivkah should be drawing students."

Mrs. Tiechtel shares on the same topic: "Some parents suggested that we minimize the hours of *limudei chol* by following the curriculum which was necessary for a 'minimal diploma,' which was easier to achieve than a regular diploma. The Rebbe crossed out 'minimal' and said '*im biyicholes*,' i.e. for those girls who are academically able, they should study for the full diploma.

"At some point, we managed to have a system in which girls were able to learn extra *limudei kodesh* without affecting their diploma. Then the government changed the rules and this was no longer possible. We asked the Rebbe if we should continue the program, and the Rebbe responded with an interesting answer: 'You could surely do it in 12th grade without affecting the diploma.' We hadn't

mentioned it in our letter, but the Rebbe knew that the twelfth grade had less government requirements and therefore could and should continue with more Torah study."

Another answer from the Rebbe on this topic was regarding the seminary girls, many of whom would attend Touro College, a private Jewish university in New York.

The *hanhala* of the seminary wrote to the Rebbe that many girls enroll in Touro College to receive credits for a teacher's diploma, which they often needed in the course of their jobs and *shlichus*, etc. However, Beis Rivkah preferred that girls enroll in such courses only after concluding seminary, when they were more mature and more equipped to handle the environment. Therefore, they asked the Rebbe: "Should we continue our policy about college which is to discourage study in college, even Touro College? Or, should we make a policy that as long as a student is in seminary, she may not enroll in college at all." With an underline, the Rebbe's response was: "Continue our policy about college which is to discourage study in college..."

WHO SHOULD BE THE TEACHER FOR LIMUDEI CHOL?

In Beis Rivkah of Melbourne, *frum* teachers were apparently not available, and the faculty asked the Rebbe whom to hire instead.

"It is better to hire a non-Jew," the Rebbe wrote, "who obviously has no connection to the students outside of the specific field of study, than a Jewish woman who does not observe Torah and mitzvos... it would be very difficult to ensure that she has no influence in that regard."²¹

Beis Rivkah so that girls could attend other schools.' He told me that we should make an effort to enroll as many students as possible."

Many students from Russian homes were soon enrolled. But should they be in separate classes?

"Some local parents pressured us to set them up in separate classes apart from the *frum* students," relates Rabbi Leibel Newman, "but Rabbi Hodakov gave over the Rebbe's directive to set them up in the regular classes, so they would be able to learn from their counterparts and acclimate into Beis Rivkah. Indeed, although many parents feared they would be a negative influence, the opposite took place."

When Mrs. Tiechtel herself graduated from elementary school, the high school had just been established, and her parents expected her to enroll there. But she wanted to attend Beis Yaakov, as her sister had. They decided that she would write to the Rebbe.

"Maybe it was a little bit inappropriate to write this," Mrs. Tiechtel relates, "maybe I had no right to, but I was a teenager and very independent in my thinking. I wrote the letter in Yiddish but I used an English expression: '*Ich vil nisht zein a guinea pig*.' I don't want to be a guinea pig. (Definitely not the right kind of words...)"

"The Rebbe crossed out the words 'guinea pig' and wrote '*chalutza*'—pioneer. The Rebbe knew how to reach a teenager with one word. You tell me to be a pioneer? I'll climb the mountain, cross the river, I'll do anything! So, of course, I was part of the pioneer class of Beis Rivkah High School."¹⁸

Education for Girls?

In a fascinating *sicha* on Erev Lag Ba'omer 5750*, the Rebbe offered



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REB YITZCHOK GOLDIN CAN BE SEEN STANDING IN THE BEIS RIVKA SCHOOL PHOTO (SECOND FROM THE RIGHT) IN THE EARLY 5720S.

lengthy insight into why and what women are supposed to learn in today's day. The reasons can generally be categorized in two points: Nowadays, the Jewish community is no longer in the "*shtetl*," we are exposed to many secular ideas that were previously not prevalent. Therefore, it is imperative that women and girls study Torah to counter the negative forces. Furthermore: We are approaching the time of Moshiach, when, as the Rambam says, "knowledge will increase in abundance." When Moshiach comes, the special unique qualities of women will be revealed and dominate even more than those of the men.

"In fact," the Rebbe said on a more personal note, "many righteous women throughout history were well versed and quite scholarly—from the times of the Mishnah and then later generations. This is likewise recounted in the memoirs of the Frierdiker Rebbe regarding the Rebbetzins in the family of the Alter Rebbe, and the Frierdiker Rebbe behaved similarly with his own daughters..."¹⁹

Based on the above, the Rebbe added that women and girls are not only required to learn those areas of Torah that are applicable to their obligations, but also deeper subjects. Not only should they learn *halachos* without reasons; they should learn the

reasons and delve deeply into them, even with שכלא וטריא—discussion and exploration, allowing them to develop their minds in a Torah way.

Can They Be Forced?

Over the years, the Rebbe gave many directives to the Beis Rivkah Schools, often through Rabbi Hodakov. In an exclusive interview with *A Chassidisher Derher*, Mrs. Tiechtel shared several examples:

"At some point, we noticed that there was intense competition between students over summer camp placement. We asked the Rebbe if we could assign our students to camps—just as the *bochurim* were assigned Merkos Shlichus—thereby avoiding the competition. The Rebbe responded that girls function best '*b'makom shelibah chafetz*' (where their hearts desire), and we should refrain from doing so. However, the Rebbe said that we could make standards about which camps they are allowed to attend, and we indeed did so.

"We once asked the Rebbe: What is the necessary criteria to accept a girl who wants to move from another school to Beis Rivkah? The Rebbe said that it should include three factors: 1. '*Kechefetz libah*' (she should want it). 2. The agreement of

her parents and the *hanhala* of the previous school. 3. That the decision will add to her *yiras Shamayim*.

“On one occasion, Rabbi Hodakov directed us to teach French as a second language, as is common in many high schools. First of all, he said, this is so that a girl should never be able to say, ‘I don’t want to attend Beis Rivkah because they don’t teach a foreign language.’ Secondly, he told us to specifically teach French, which would prepare girls to be shlichos in French speaking countries—where there was a particular need at that time.”

Rabbi Newman shared the directives he received regarding curriculum:

“There were two directives the Rebbe told me in *yechidus*. One was regarding secular books, particularly science texts that convey theories which contradict Torah—at that time there were no kosher texts as there are today. The Rebbe was very clear that we should not tear out pages, as that would only have the opposite effect. Rather, we were to explain that the opinion in the text does not conform to Torah. The second: That we should not skip any parts of Torah, such as the stories of Tamar or Dovid and Batsheva. Rabbi Asher Ehrenreich, the dean of Bais Yaakov of Boro Park, also received

these two directives in his *yechidus*.”

Another directive from the Rebbe to Beis Rivkah of Australia was regarding the use of Sephardic Hebrew:

“There are several Chabad schools in Eretz Yisrael which learn with a Sephardic accent,” the Rebbe told Rabbi Shmuel Gurevitch of Melbourne. “Obviously, if there are equal opinions in the matter, it is more worthy to study with an Ashkenazi accent, simply to allow the girls to understand the *chazzan* in the shul and to use the same *kamatz* and *patach* as their brothers and fathers. But if it will create a *machlokes*, or even if some girls will leave the school, it is not worthwhile. True, in the past it was associated with *maskilim*, etc., but today it’s just a matter of accent.”²²

When The Rebbe Looked Back

In 5747*, the Rebbe’s letter for the dinner of Beis Rivkah in Montreal included this powerful paragraph that sums up Beis Rivkah’s mission in the past, present and future:

“If in the early years of Beis Rivkah it was still necessary to use *emunah* and *bitachon* regarding how the Beis Rivkah institutions would

fulfill the hopes and expectations of the founder, now we can clearly see how the *talmidos* that Beis Rivkah produces are the true “*ezer kinegdo*” in fulfilling every shlichus of spreading Yiddishkeit and spreading the wellsprings of Chassidus in various, and also forsaken areas of the world. Similarly, in the widespread activities of N’shei U’Bnos Chabad, and also as dedicated educators. All this is done, with Hashem’s help, with great success, happily and with gladness of heart — in addition to the extraordinary shlichus as an *akeres habayis* and *aim habanim*.” T

1. *Sefer Hasichos* 5704 pg. 34.
2. *Igros Kodesh* Admur Rayatz, vol. 4 p. 186.
3. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 6 p. 259.
4. *Igros Kodesh* Admur Rayatz, vol. 4 p. 399.
5. See Derher Adar I 5776 pg. 19 & 26.
6. 1 Adar II, 5703. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 6, letter 1962.
7. *Toldos Chabad B'Artzos Habris* pg. 285.
8. *Igros Kodesh* Admur Rayatz vol. 9 pg. 456.
9. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 1 pg. 325
10. *Igros Kodesh* Admur Rayatz, vol. 13 pg. 431.
11. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 2 pg. 310.
12. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 13 pg. 259-60.
13. *Reshimos* Choveres 30.
14. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 16 pg. 101.
15. *Embrace* issue 4 pg. 17.
16. See Derher, Av 5779.
17. Here’s My Story, 24 Cheshvan 5777.
18. Derher Sivan 5777 pg. 13. Here’s My Story, 26 Sivan 5781.
19. *Sefer Hasichos* 5750 vol. 2 pg. 457.
20. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 32 pg. 112.
21. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 15 pg. 171.
22. Transcription of *yechidus* as recorded by Rabbi Shmuel Gurevitch.
23. Letter 11 Kislev 5711, *Igros Kodesh* vol. 4 p. 67.
24. 10 Iyar 5712, *Igros Kodesh* vol. 6 p. 32.
25. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 1 p. 111
26. *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 22 pg. 434.
27. *Techayenu* Elul 5779 pg. 27.



THE REBBE ADDRESSES THE GRADUATING CLASS OF BEIS RIVKA. ROSH CHODESH TAMMUZ 5751.

Beis Rivkah International

Morocco

DISTANT FRONTIERS

When Reb Michoel Lipsker arrived in Morocco in 5710*, he asked the Rebbe about opening a girls school, and the Rebbe gave him a framework for how to approach such a project.

“It is difficult to give a detailed opinion from here, but the general point is this: There are many areas of *tznius* that the Sephardim have taken upon themselves for many generations, pertaining to women, teenage girls, and even little girls. So when it comes to the education of their daughters, you must be extremely cautious that they shouldn’t end up saying that ‘from when Lubavitch came to their country, we went from a higher *kedushah* to a lesser one.’ Thus, you must first investigate by the *charedim* and elders in the community as to what the *minhag* of their ancestors was. Even if certain changes are necessary, it must be done in a

way that it will not spark talk that this brought them to a lesser holiness.”²³

Later on, the Rebbe gave him further instructions. After encouraging him to go ahead with establishing girls schools in Meknes and elsewhere, the Rebbe added:

“It must not be together with the boys — not only should they not learn together in one room, but they should not even use the same entrance to the building. It would be even better if they were in separate buildings and

separate streets, for the more careful you are in these matters, the better...”²⁴

The school started with Reb Michoel’s daughters, and it quickly blossomed. After a few years, it was a fully functioning school, with classes going all the way through high school. As it was the only Jewish high school in the area, even the children who went to other elementary schools attended the Lubavitch high school, and the results were such that it grew and grew in popularity.



AN EARLY PICTURE OF BEIS RIVKA IN MOROCCO.

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THE BEIS RIVKA BUILDING IN MONTREAL.

Montreal

THE REBBE'S CLOSE ATTENTION

In preparation for this article, Rabbi Yosef Minkowitz, dean of Beis Rivkah in Montreal, shared some of his memories:

"I moved on shlichus to Montreal in Elul 5733* to be the principal of Beis Rivkah. The school was founded by the Rebbe with just a few students in 5716*, and now *baruch Hashem* has grown to 500 *talmidos*. In numerous letters to the *bochurim* who escaped the Nazis in Poland and were sent by the Friedliker Rebbe to Montreal, the Rebbe strongly requested the opening of a Beis Rivkah in Montreal as early as in 5703*. In one amazing letter, the Rebbe wrote to them that it is worth all the effort just for the sake "of one girl saying one extra *bracha*!"²⁵

"Over the years, we merited numerous answers and *brachos* from the Rebbe in different aspects of the institution. We also had the *zechus* that the Rebbe wrote special letters to Beis Rivkah Montreal both for the graduates and for our annual dinner.

"From the beginning of my shlichus, I felt the need to forge a real *hiskashrus* of the *talmidos* with

the Rebbe himself. From the mid 5730s*, I began bringing buses of students to the Rebbe each year, first for Yud Shevat and then in later years for Chof-Beis Shevat.

"One year in the late 5730s*, the *talmidos* told me that they really wanted to see the Rebbe close up, and not just from afar in the *ezras nashim*. This was years before the Sunday dollars or other regular distributions and they wanted the opportunity to feel a closer connection to the Rebbe. We therefore gathered on the sidewalk to see the Rebbe as he entered 770 in the morning. As the Rebbe passed, he gave them a salute, and they were very touched.

"A minute later Rabbi Groner came outside and said that the Rebbe wanted all the girls to come into the foyer of 770. I was very surprised; in those years, it was very unusual for women or girls to even enter the main building of 770 (unless it was to go in for *yechidus*). 'Why does the Rebbe want us to come in?' I asked in surprise, but Rabbi Groner said he didn't know. We gathered all the girls into the foyer, and soon the Rebbe came out of his room and gave them all coins for *tzedakah*.

"At the end of each school year, I instructed all the *limudei kodesh* teachers in all departments to write a

duch to the Rebbe summarizing what they learned during the year. Usually I did not receive a response from the Rebbe about these *duchos* and wasn't sure if the Rebbe actually read them, but I felt it was my responsibility to report, being that the *mossad* was under the Rebbe's *nesius*. One Erev Rosh Hashanah in the late 5730s*, I was standing at the Ohel next to Reb Aizik Schwei from Montreal, when he told me excitedly, 'Look at that!' while pointing into the Ohel. The reports we had sent were clearly visible having been brought by the Rebbe on a recent visit to the Ohel...

"In 5751*, I made a special photo album of class pictures of the girls and faculty of our school for the Rebbe. When we came as a school for Yud Shevat, I presented the album to the Rebbe during 'dollars'. The Rebbe looked at the album and asked me: דאס איז פאר מיר, צי דאס?—is it for me, or you need it to fundraise?"

"I was surprised by the question, and answered: ס'איז נישט אויף?—געלט, ס'איז פאר'ן רבין?—It's not for money, it's for the Rebbe!"

"The Rebbe repeated his question again, and I emphasized that we had made it for the Rebbe alone. Hearing that, the Rebbe said, זאל עס, בלייבן ביי מיר—let it stay with me' and *bentched* us with *besuros tovos*, and as I walked away, the Rebbe called me back with the most amazing words:

דורך דעם וואס עס וועט זיין ביי מיר?—You will make money, through it remaining with me!"

"*Baruch Hashem*, over the years we saw the fulfillment of the Rebbe's *brachos* and another floor and a new wing were added to the building for the growing student body.

"In Cheshvan 5752*, after Rav Mordechai Eliyahu visited the Rebbe, he visited Beis Rivkah Montreal where he gave a fiery speech about



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REB SHMUEL CHEFER IN HIS OFFICE IN BEIS RIVKA IN KFAR CHABAD IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THE SCHOOL.

the Rebbe's greatness and about the importance of Beis Rivkah. That same day I wrote a letter to the Rebbe reporting about the visit and the content of his speech. A few days later we received a special answer from the Rebbe: נת' ות"ח ובודאי יפרסם הנ"ל באופן: להמשיך עוד ועוד תלמידות תי' בבית רבקה וכו'—I received it, and many thanks. You will surely publicize the above in a manner that will draw more and more students to Beis Rivkah, etc. I will mention it at the *Tziyun*."

"Another response that we received from the Rebbe:

"There was once a girl in our school from a modern family whose mother wanted to move her to public school. When the Rebbe was informed about this, he wrote the following uncharacteristically strong-worded *maaneh*:

"They should ask other women or men to speak to her and explain to her that if chas veshalom she will send her daughter to a school where she will mix with non-Jewish students—she takes upon herself full responsibility towards Hashem for whatever might result, *Rachmana litzlan*, from this choice. Vedai lameivin."

"The Rebbe concluded with an unusual line: 'They can say this in my name as well.'²⁶

Kfar Chabad

A SHINING FUTURE!

Rabbi Shmuel Chefer, dean of Beis Rivkah in Kfar Chabad for many decades, shared the followings stories in an interview several years ago:²⁷

"I once asked the Rebbe for guidance on when it was permitted to expel a student. The Rebbe told me, 'I will not answer that question. I could tell you that every *Yiddishe tochter* is a *bas Sarah, Rivkah, Rochel v'Leah*. It is one golden chain from the *imahos* until Moshiach. If you think you can break it...'

"One of the Rebbe's instructions was regarding the professions that were taught in high school. The Rebbe allowed us to teach a variety of professions like bookkeeping and others, but not those which would be considered more attractive than

teaching. It was very clear that our schools had a very specific mission.

"The Rebbe always pushed us to attract girls from communities that were not yet observant. To do so, he once instructed us to publicize the fact that Chabad is a worldwide organization, implying that students would have many opportunities opened to them by joining Beis Rivkah. To this end, he instructed us to bring visitors from United Jewish Appeal [a worldwide philanthropic organization] to demonstrate to parents and students that we were well connected worldwide.

"At times, it felt as if our efforts with some students were futile. When I mentioned that to the Rebbe, he said, 'But the *possuk* says that a person can only see with his eyes, not what is within people's hearts...'

"However, when certain students seemed wholly incompatible with our institution, the Rebbe did write that, 'In general, between a *yochid* and a *rabbim*, the *halacha* follows the *rabbim*, and in this case, the *rabbim* is the institution and its existing students.

"When the Rebbe appointed me to lead Beis Rivkah in Kfar Chabad, he said, 'Beis Rivkah has a shining future!' At the time, the school was small, with only several dozen students in a decrepit building. I couldn't foresee it, but the Rebbe's *brachos* are always fulfilled..."



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASSIDEI CHABAD

BEIS RIVKA CAMPUS IN KFAR CHABAD

Campus Chomesh

On the Shabbos following Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka's *histalkus*, Shabbos Parashas Mishpatim 5748*, the Rebbe said that he had already heard from many people who wished to establish *mosdos* bearing the name of the Rebbetzin, adding that this is indeed a very appropriate gesture.

One of the prominent *mosdos* planned in her memory was a new campus for Beis Rivkah, "Campus Chomesh"—carrying the first letters of her name in *Lashon Hakodesh*, Chaya Mushka Schneerson.

Ground was broken near the time of the *shloshim*, on Sunday 24 Adar.

Before the ceremony, Rabbi Avraham Shemtov and Mr. Ronald Perelman, the main benefactor of the project, came to the Rebbe for dollars at the Rebbe's home on President St.

The Rebbe thanked Mr. Pearlman profusely for "taking action, and beginning it in the nearest opportunity, within the *shiva*," and wished him much success both in this project as well as in his personal affairs. The Rebbe then gave a dollar to Rabbi Shemtov and said, "Thank you for bringing Mr. Perelman!" Then he gave another dollar to Mr. Perelman and said, "Thank you for bringing Rabbi Shemtov!"

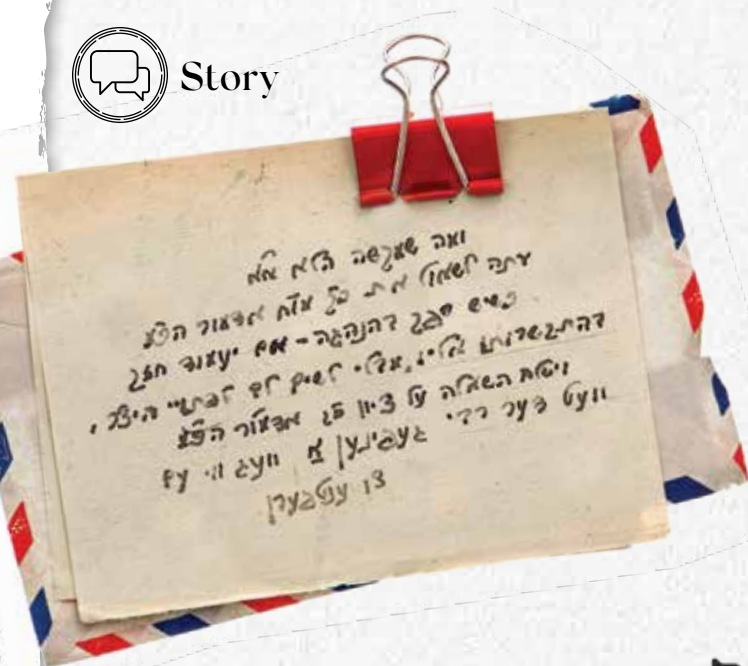
Later that day, during the ceremony, the Rebbe's car appeared at the groundbreaking site. Rabbi Shemtov approached the car, and the Rebbe told him, "Tonight is the Rebbetzin's birthday. I'm now on my way to the Ohel, and I will also stop at her resting place. I would like to give you a donation on her behalf, along with mine. Enclosed is 470 dollars, the equivalent of the *gematriya* of her name."



THE REBBE'S CAR MAKES AN UNEXPECTED APPEARANCE AT THE GROUNDBREAKING OF CAMPUS CHOMESH ON LEFFERTS AND BROOKLYN AVE. 25 ADAR 5748



KEHOT PUBLICATION SOCIETY



דער רבי וועט געפינען א וועג...

לזכות החיילת בצבאות ה'
רבקה גיטל תחי'
לרגל יום הולדתה י"ד שבט

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

“You Can Go Yourself”

AS TOLD BY RABBI ELIEZER LAINE (BROOKLYN, NY)

It was the spring of 5733* and I had just finished two years of learning in kollel. I was approached by the administrators of a school in Flatbush with an offer to lead a new summer day camp for their school.

On Shavuot the Rebbe started a tremendous campaign to encourage every Jewish child to attend a Jewish summer camp, which several months later we understood to be a spiritual preparation for the Yom Kippur War.¹ I was ambitious and surprised the administrators by launching the camp with triple the amount of campers they had initially expected. I had a list of 50 more children who wished to attend the camp but their parents were unable to pay the tuition. I asked the administrators to allow them to participate in camp free of charge and they agreed.

I wrote a letter to the Rebbe about the fact that we were

accepting these 50 children to camp free of charge and the Rebbe responded with a lengthy response of *brachos*. I know that the Rebbe had tremendous *nachas* from this camp since that summer there was a unique rally arranged for the local Lubavitcher day camps in 770 and the Rebbe specifically instructed Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda Hecht (who was in charge of arranging the rallies) to invite our camp to the rally. We were the only non-Lubavitch camp there and the Rebbe distributed coins to our camp first.

Two years later I was able to open a second camp with an associated yeshiva in Long Island and maintained friendships with several of the leaders of both schools, especially with a certain *rosh yeshiva* from Long Island.

Many many years later, late one evening the phone



rang at my home and when the answering machine turned on I was able to hear the voice of the *rosh yeshiva* from Long Island sobbing, “Rabbi Laine, Rabbi Laine, please answer the phone. It’s urgent!”

I immediately picked up the phone and asked him what could possibly be so urgent after eleven o’clock at night.

“My grandson is very ill,” he said crying. “He has *yenne machlah* in his brain and the doctors gave up hope.”

“I’m so sorry to hear this and I hope he has a *refuah sheleima*, but how do I come into the picture?”

“I heard that people daven at the Lubavitcher Rebbe’s Ohel for *brachos* and are helped in that way. Can you please urgently drive over to the Ohel and daven on behalf of my grandson?”

“Listen here,” I said. “You live barely a 15 minute drive from the Ohel. I suggest you get into your car and drive over to the Ohel yourself and ask the Rebbe for a *bracha* for your grandson. When the *tefilah* will come from the grandfather it will certainly be most effective.”

“But I don’t want anyone to see a picture of me davening at the Ohel. Is there any way to go so that no one will see me?” the Rosh Yeshiva asked.

“The only ones that have photos are the ones who bring photographers. If you don’t bring a photographer you can be sure no one will take your photo,” I assured him.

“Can I go after midnight?” he asked.

“Absolutely. The Ohel is open 24 hours a day.”

“But I don’t know what to do there.”

I explained to him how to write a *tzetel* to the Rebbe by including his name and mother’s name, the name of his grandson with his mother’s name, to briefly describe the situation and ask for a *bracha*. When standing at the Ohel he should say the Rebbe’s *kapitel*, his *kapitel* and his grandson’s *kapitel*.

“I can do all this. Is there anything else I should do?” he asked.

I must explain that for a while I had been avoiding this

rosh yeshiva and I would not approach him even on the rare occasions I saw him at events because I was aware that he had spoken very negatively about the Rebbe on certain occasions. Although I would never say the following to someone on a regular basis, once he was asking me what to do at the Ohel I decided to diplomatically persuade him to change his ways.

“Unfortunately there is a practice among certain circles to speak disparagingly about the Rebbe. If you might be guilty of this conduct, or perhaps witnessed such behavior and did not protest against it, it would be appropriate for you to ask the Rebbe for *mechilah*.”

“Yes, I think I might need to do that,” he said.

The next day the *rosh yeshiva* called me and shared that he went to the Ohel at two o’clock in the morning, he asked *mechilah*, wrote a *tzetel* and said Tehillim with bitter tears.

“I hope the Rebbe will daven to Hashem on my behalf for a miraculous *yeshuah* for my grandson.”

For years I did not hear what actually happened to this *rosh yeshiva*’s grandson, until once I gave a ride to Rabbi Zalman Bluming, a shliach in Durham, NC. He shared with me that years earlier there was a frum teenager from New York who was a patient at the Duke Cancer Center. His father would come to visit every week and over time they became very good friends.

Out of curiosity I asked him if the last name matched that of my friend the *rosh yeshiva* and it turned out that this patient was his grandson.

“He made a miraculous recovery,” Rabbi Bluming told me. “He is already married and the father of two children.”

1. See *Stop the Enemy*, Derher Tishrei 5781.

YOUR STORY

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



לזכות
שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר בכל אתר ואתר
שיצליחו בשליחותם הק' בהצלחה
מופלגה מתוך הרחבה בגשמיות וברוח
ניות ולגרום נח"ר אמיתי ולבשר אך ורק
בשו"ט ומשמחות

נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' אהרן וזוגתו מרת רבקה שיחיו
סלונים
בינגהמטאן, נ.י.

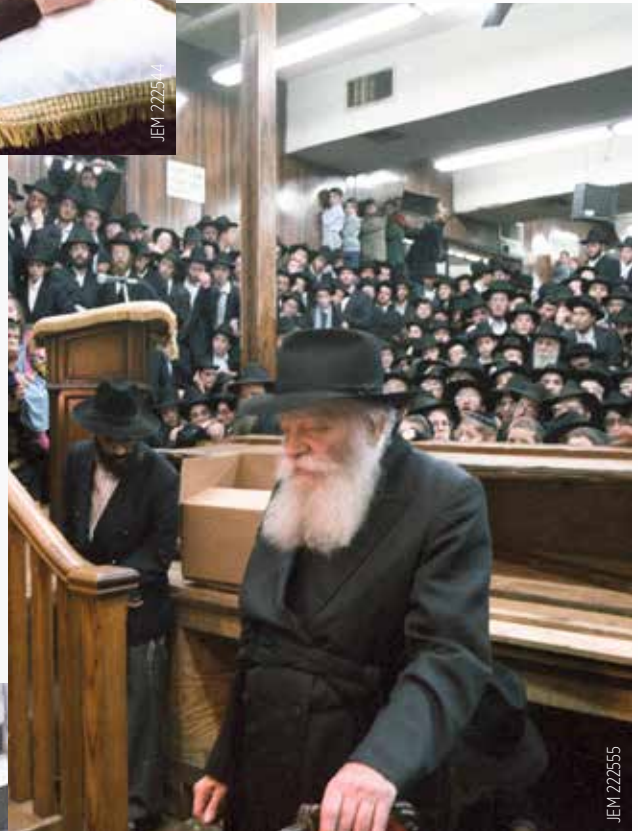
CHOF-BEIS SHEVAT 5752*

THE REBBE ENTERS THE SHUL FOR MAARIV

As the Rebbe approached the amud, he indicated
that after Maariv there would be a sicha.



Concluding the
final kaddish.



After Maariv, the Rebbe ascended
to the shtender and recited a sicha
about the Rebbetzin and the lessons
we should take from her life.

At the conclusion of the sicha, the Rebbe makes his way to the “dollars shtender” for the distribution of Kovetz Chof-Beis Shevat. Enclosed with the kovetz is a five dollar bill to be used for tzedakah (chamesh—five—being the acronym of the Rebbetzin’s name), and a piece of lekach.



JEM 222590

Distributing the kovetz to men, women and children. The kovetz contains a collection of sichos and letters about the role of Jewish women.



JEM 222845

Chassidim from all over the world came to be with the Rebbe on Chof-Beis Shevat. That night the Rebbe distributed the kovetz for over five hours concluding at 12:30 a.m.



JEM 222701



KRIAS HATORAH

The Rebbe brings the sefer Torah to the bima.

During the
Rebbe's aliya



Returning to the amud
after the aliya



Reciting the yom Tehillim at the conclusion of Shacharis.



JEM 222984



JEM 222997

After Mincha, the Rebbe davened Maariv in his usual place, followed by a sicha.

After many hours at the Ohel, the Rebbe returned to 770 and shortly thereafter entered the shul for Mincha.



JEM 223102

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.

Moment of Silence

Dear Editors,

Thank you for the well documented article on the Moment of Silence which appeared in the Cheshvan 5782 issue. Although the Rebbe invested tremendous *kochos* in this issue—clearly defining the moral benefits of this mandate, giving clear instructions on how to proceed as well as his *brachos* to those who would involve themselves with this—we have not seen or heard of any major involvement with the Rebbe’s plea.

It is interesting to note that the Rebbe understood that parents play an important part in the success of this endeavor. Simply put, the Rebbe explained that it would be up to the parents to provide direction to their children on what to think about during the Moment of Silence. This point is of particular interest to me as a way to help implement this idea as I have recently published a booklet directed to parents, explaining the importance of the

Moment of Silence as well as their part in advising their children on what they should meditate on during that moment.

This booklet is easy to read being written in a lyrical format and cleverly illustrated; a must for *shluchim* and *mitvzoim*.

Booklets can be ordered by contacting me at auddoc770@gmail.com.

Dr. Levi A. Reiter
CROWN HEIGHTS, NY

Tes-Vov Cheshvan

Dear Editors,

I have enjoyed reading the new Hama’aseh Hu Haikar column.

I must point out that in the month of Cheshvan, there was a missing date. The Rebbe spoke more than once about the date of 15 Cheshvan.

In the *farbrengen* of Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha 5744* (*Hisvaaduyos* 5744 p. 435) which was on 8 Cheshvan, the

Rebbe made a request that *kinusim* for children be arranged before Zayin Cheshvan—the end of the *tekufa* of Tishrei—as a continuation to Tishrei.

Then the Rebbe added: “If there are still those who didn’t fulfill this, or didn’t do it to its fullest, although we said earlier that the *tekufah* of Tishrei ends on Zayin Cheshvan, a Yid always has the ability to add extra time; in this case until the Fifteenth of Cheshvan when the moon is at its fullest (קיימא סיהרא באשלמותא), meaning that the *shleimus* of everything in the month is on the fifteenth.”

Later the Rebbe said again: “Someone

had a true *onnes* and was unable to arrange a *kinus* before Zayin Cheshvan and he asked what to do. He was answered that that he can make up for it until 15 Cheshvan, when סיהרא באשלמותא.”

Also in 5748*, the Rebbe spoke about the uniqueness of the Fifteenth of Cheshvan as the prime time of the month, and a time to add in the the *avodah* of bringing the *inyanim* of Tishrei into the rest of the year. (Hisvaaduyos 5748, p. 446).

Moshe Rabin

CORAL SPRINGS, FL

