

A Chassidisher **Derher**

א חסידישער דערהער

The Rebbe's Gvir
REB YOSSEL ROBINSON

The Ultimate Joy
HOW TO CELEBRATE A SIMCHA

היי טעב
נבדח!

THE STORY
OF HEI TEVES



TEVES 5782
ISSUE 113 (190)
JANUARY 2022

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

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

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



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has been made possible

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

בקשר עם יום הבהיר ה' טבת



The month of Teves is always special, because right in the beginning of the month, on Hei Teves, we commemorate one of the most meaningful events of *dor hashvi'i*—the day that the United States Federal court recognized and proclaimed that “Didan Notzach,” the Rebbe is victorious.

This year, the month of Teves carries added significance:

On 11 Teves begins the 120-day period leading up to Yud-Aleph Nissan, which this year will mark 120 years since the Rebbe’s birth. The number “120” connotes the full lifespan of a person, as the *possuk* says, “והיו ימיו מאה ועשרים שנה—His days [of his life] shall be 120 years...” Chassidim all over the world have already begun preparations for this milestone, as befitting for such a great and momentous day.

For more than 40 years now, the United States government, as well as many state and local officials, along with leaders in other countries, have recognized the Rebbe’s birthday as a time to reflect on the Rebbe’s impact around the world. A true testament to the Rebbe’s work of influencing all the nations of the world in the spirit of G-dliness, as preparation for the coming of Moshiach—when “לעבדו . . . אז אהפך אל עמים שפה ברורה . . . שכם אחד—Then I will transform the nations to a pure language...to worship Hashem of one accord...”

The Baal Shem Tov was told by Moshiach that he will arrive when the *maayanos* of Chassidus are spread to the outside.

Since then, all of our Rabbeim have been active

in *hafatzas hamaayanos*, each in their own way. Nevertheless, the Rebbe explains that the main thrust in the efforts of reaching the furthest “*chutza*” was only in the time of the Frierdiker Rebbe.

The Rebbe Rashab established the yeshiva of Tomchei Temimim, where Chassidus would be taught in an orderly fashion as part of the regular *sefer hayeshiva*. In other words, his greatest impact was on yeshiva students; *b'nei Torah*. In the times of the Frierdiker Rebbe, however, the need arose to reach out to Yidden who were far away from Yiddishkeit. Due to the revolution and political turmoil, it became very difficult for people to keep Shabbos and other basics of Yiddishkeit, and the Frierdiker Rebbe sent out his shlichim and *talmidim* to help Yidden even with the basics.

In a *sicha*, the Rebbe connects this with the *ushpizin* of the Rebbe Rashab and the Frierdiker Rebbe, which occur on Hoshaana Rabba and Shemini Atzeres, coinciding with the *ushpizin* of Dovid Hamelech and his son Shlomo:

Dovid Hamelech in his time had to fight enemies which were very close by, inside or on the border of Eretz Yisroel. Shlomo on the other hand, reigned over a time of peace, and in his non-combative manner, he was able to influence even the farthest nations—all the way to the queen of Sheba in Africa. Similarly, the Rebbe Rashab dealt primarily with *b'nei Torah*—i.e. Yidden who are already “close by,” within the sphere of Yiddishkeit. The Frierdiker Rebbe’s reach extended much further, influencing even those who were far away from Torah observance.¹

Perhaps, in the spirit of our preparations

for Yud-Aleph Nissan, we can add:

Much of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s activities in spreading Yiddishkeit were actually administered and carried out by the Rebbe. After coming to the United States, the Frierdiker Rebbe founded three new organizations to centralize his activities in spreading Yiddishkeit: Merkos L’Inyonei Chinuch, Machneh Yisroel, and Kehos, and he handed them over to the Rebbe to stand at their helm.

But the Rebbe himself took things a step further by extending influence on all inhabitants of the world, calling on everyone to observe the *sheva mitzvos b'nei Noach* and to live moral and just lives inspired by the divine principles of the Torah.

In fact, the Rebbe explained that one of the reasons for translating Shaar Hayichud V’haemuna into English is in order to allow even non-Jews to learn and understand how to believe in Hashem in the proper way.²

This is one of the major innovations of *hafatzas hamaayanos* in our generation, the Rebbe explains. *Nessi Doreinu* brought the teachings of Chassidus to the world in a way that it influences even the non-Jews, allowing them to learn and understand concepts of Chassidus.³

With that, the entire world will be prepared for the coming of Moshiach, may it be *teikef umiyad Mammosh!*

The Editors

יום הבהיר י"ד כסלו ה'תשפ"ב
שנת המאה ועשרים להולדת כ"ק אדמו"ר

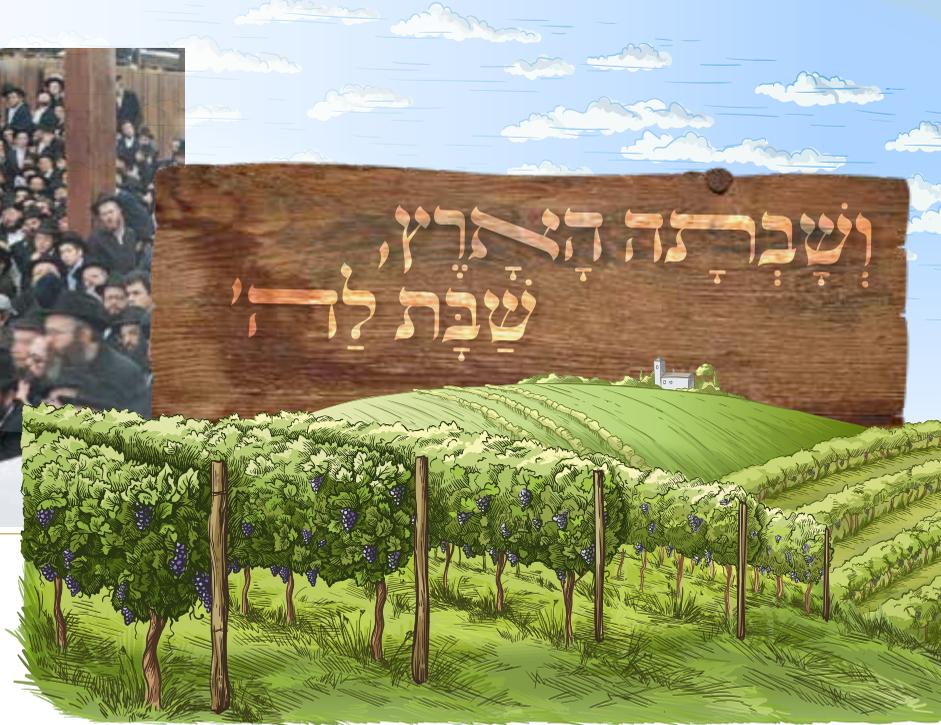
1. Simchas Torah Day 5742.
2. See Shabbos Parshas Bereishis 5729.
3. See Night of Simchas Torah 5747, sicha 1.



לזכות
הרה"ת ר' ארי' הלוי שיחי' לאנג לרגל יום הולדתו כ"ח כסלו
ולזכות בנו הת' יעקב יצחק הלוי שיחי' לרגל יום הולדתו ב' טבת
*
ולע"נ
הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' זאב יוסף ע"ה בן יבלחט"א ר' שלום שיחי'
וזוגתו מרת רחל בת ר' מרדכי ע"ה
סיימאנס
נלב"ע י"א טבת ה'תשס"ח
ת'נצ'ב'ה'



Shemittah = Change



One of the great challenges of raising children is training them to restrain themselves from doing whatever they wish to do. Instinctively, they don't want to do the right thing, as the *posuk* says, יצר לב האדם רע מנעוריו. Educating them entails teaching them that they must make the right choice even if it is not what their instinct wants. They must change their natural habits.

Breaking a habit or changing pace is a challenge not just for young children, but for full grown adults too. This includes not only

changing from an easy habit to a hard one; even changing from a hard to an easy habit can be painful. As the Gemara states regarding the workers of the city Mechuza:¹

“Workers [*akhlushei*] of Mechuza, who become weak if they do not work.”

These laborers were accustomed to steady, strenuous work, and therefore sitting idle was difficult for them, not enjoyable.

Change is difficult.
Shemita is all about change.
Change of pace.

For six years, we are used to spending the daytime hours working the land, understanding that we must work to support ourselves. Now, for a full year, we change pace completely, no work whatsoever, and instead we learn and daven all day.

Shemita teaches us and gives us the strength to make drastic changes, until the next *Shemita*. **T**
(Adapted from *Sefer Hasichos* 5747 p. 74)

1. Bava Metzia 77a



JEM 10801 (CHESHVAN 5725)

<p>ע"י בנם ר' יקותיאל יהודה וזוגתו מרת פעסל לאה ומשפחתם שיחיו רוהר</p>	<p>טור 'לעבן מיטן רבין' הוקדש לזכרון ולעילוי נשמת ר' שמואל ב"ר יהושע אליהו ז"ל ואשתו מרת שרה ע"ה בת ר' יקותיאל ומרת לאה הי"ד ת"נ'צ'ב"ה</p>
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The Winter Selichos

TEVES 5725*



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

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

THURSDAY - 5 TEVES

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

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

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

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

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

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

SHABBOS PARSHAS VAYIGASH - 7 TEVES

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

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

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

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



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

TUESDAY - ASARA B'TEVES

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

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

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

SHABBOS PARSHAS SHEMOS - 21 TEVES

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



A PICTURE OF REBBETZIN SHEINA AS A CHILD.

intent of honoring Shabbos, except for sleeping.

The Rebbe then explained that since the subject of the story is a *neshama klalis*, this dialogue is relevant to us. The lesson is that even our sleep, which represents the lowest and most mundane faculties of a person, must be for the sake of Shabbos. This is achieved through the toil that one exerts before Shabbos.²

The next *sicha* was very stirring. The Rebbe spoke about the cries of the Yidden during *galus Mitzrayim* mentioned in this week's *parsha*. At a certain point the Rebbe cried out, "Voss vil Er m'zol mekayem zain mitzvos, er zol unz aroisnemen fun galus—Why does Hashem still need our mitzvos? He should take us out of galus already!" He quoted the Friediker Rebbe teaching, that Hashem derives (*kevayachol*) pleasure out of the fact that we are in *galus* because the value of our *avodah* is so much greater. The Rebbe exclaimed, "Zol Er mevater zain oifem taanug, un aroisnemen fun galus—Hashem should forgo this pleasure and take us out of galus!" The atmosphere was very tense; while the Rebbe was sobbing, many Chassidim were crying. The *sicha* concluded with a *bracha*.

Afterward, the Rebbe poured *lchaim* for many of the visitors, including approximately 30 college students who were there as part of the "Pegisha"³ arranged by Tzach. The *mashke* from the bottle swiftly ran out, so they had to mix it with several other bottles to continue the distribution. The Rebbe was in high spirits and nodded encouragingly to Reb Zalman Posner, one of the organizers of the Pegisha. The *farbrengen* ended on a high note, with the Rebbe encouraging the intense singing of "*Hoshia Es Amecha*."

SUNDAY - 22 TEVES

When the Rebbe came to 770 that morning, somebody attempted to hold the door open for him. However, the Rebbe instructed this individual, that he must in fact enter first, as he was carrying tallis and tefillin.

YECHIDUS

(The following is a direct excerpt from the diary of Rabbi Meni Wolff describing the day of his *yechidus*.)

As a *hachana* for our *yechidus* we had a *farbrengen* last night with Reb Sholom Marozov in our dormitory on Troy Avenue.

Tonight was *yechidus*.

The first *bochur* to enter the Rebbe's room was *hatomim* Chaim Yehuda Rabinowitz. When he came out, he related that the Rebbe had advised him to learn the "*halachos hatzrichos*" (pertinent and necessary halachos) of Shulchan Aruch such as *Hilchos Shabbos* and *Birchos Hanehenin*. The Rebbe also thanked him for committing to learn a *masechta l'iluy nishmas* Rebbetzin Chana.

After him *hatomim* Nosson Ashkenazi went in. I was next in line to enter. The pressure was mounting, I was feeling very emotional and trembling with fear. This would happen to all of us when we were about to enter for *yechidus*. Our stomachs churned nervously. Ashkenazi stepped out, walking backwards...

I went over and grasped the door handle, and then knocked lightly as I opened the door. While closing the door I felt the Rebbe stare at me. I walked over to the table and the Rebbe stretched out his hand. I gave him my *tzetl*, my heart beating strongly, overwhelmed with emotion, trembling. The Rebbe read my *tzetl*, started to fold back the papers and let out a sigh. The Rebbe continued to read the paper, one hand on the table, the other hand resting on a drawer that extended from the table.

The Rebbe began to read another page and I had no idea what was to come. The Rebbe was flipping through the pages, back and forth, his body turned to face my direction, but his eyes were fixed to the paper.





Then the Rebbe began to respond to several of the things I had written about.

“Regarding your eyesight, you must consult with a doctor, as everything must be done *al pi teva* (with natural means).

“As to Shulchan Aruch,” continued the Rebbe, (—I had forgotten to write which *chelek* I was currently studying—) “Which *chelek* are you learning? I don’t know, but if it is *chelek alef* that is good, and you shall add another *chelek* to your study schedule.”

I had also written about my memory, to which the Rebbe responded: “Regarding your memory, see to it that you study *Mishnayos baal peh* to the degree that they will be etched in your mind, and your head should be occupied with *maamarim* of any size. You should have much *hatzlacha* in your learning of *nigleh* and Chassidus, as well as your *kiyum mitzvos b’hiddur*. Your father and mother should enjoy much *chassidische nachas* from you.”

This is about all I remember. The Rebbe continued to flip through the pages, gave me a sharp look and at that moment I understood

that my *yechidus* was over. As I began to leave the room, I noticed the Rebbe inserting my paper into a pile of papers or perhaps writing something down. I don’t exactly recall. I opened the door and walked out. I had spent a total of four minutes in the Rebbe’s room.

The Rebbe had instructed several other *bochurim* that night to review *Mishnayos* and *maamarim baal peh*. One *bochur* had asked the Rebbe about *tefilah*, and the Rebbe advised that he daven while looking into the *siddur* and said no further on the subject. To another *bochur*, the Rebbe suggested that he should review both *nigleh* and *Chassidus baal peh* when he walks in the street. The Rebbe told yet another *bochur* that it is preferable to learn with one *nigleh chavrusa* for the entire day, rather than have two *chavrusos* and switch from the morning to the afternoon.

For some reason, I left the *yechidus* rather broken and crushed. I sat alone motionlessly in a corner and cried for a long time. After I reviewed the entire *yechidus* in my mind, my spirits had plummeted. And so it remained for the rest of the week. At



the next Shabbos farbrengen, the Rebbe gave me a look with both eyes which restored my spirits.”

TUESDAY - CHOF DALED TEVES

After Mincha, the Rebbe stopped to speak to a non-observant teenager, who frequently merited special attention from the Rebbe. This time, the Rebbe told him to work a little and not to think about himself, to be healthy, and that he should get married and send the Rebbe an invitation to his wedding. The Rebbe also advised him to learn Gemara with someone and see to it that he should be healthy and able to learn. The conversation lasted for around 15 minutes. The affection and warmth that the Rebbe showered on him was almost like that of a father to his son. It was clear that the teenager extremely appreciated the conversation. The Rebbe spoke with him in English.

THURSDAY - CHOF ZAYIN TEVES

Tonight before the Rebbe left 770 to go home late in the evening, he peered into the zal and saw my brother Nosson resting on a bench. As he continued walking, the Rebbe noticed me hiding behind the wall and leaned over to see who it was.

SHABBOS MEVARCHIM SHEVAT, PARSHAS VAEIRA - 28 TEVES

During the farbrengen today, the Rebbe told Reb Yona Edelkopf to make an announcement about a *melava malka* that would take place that Motzei Shabbos in honor of the Cheder Torah Ohr (an extracurricular afternoon/Sunday program

that would teach Yiddishkeit to public school students in Eretz Yisroel). Reb Yona promptly made the announcement, however, he omitted several important details. The Rebbe then said “*Vu, vos, ven,*” meaning that he should clarify the important details. Reb Yona got up again and added a few words. The Rebbe smiled and told him to be even more explicit, like Hashem told Avraham at the *akeida*, “*bincha, yechidcha, Yitzchok.*” Reb Yona made his announcement again. The Rebbe smiled throughout. Ultimately the Rebbe asked someone else to make the announcement properly, which he did with all of the relevant details.

Apparently, the Rebbe had given 100 dollars towards this *melava malka*. The Rebbe gave Reb Yona *l'chaim* to distribute at the *melava malka*. Reb Yona then gave the Rebbe more *mashke* also for the *Melava Malka*. The Rebbe responded, “*Ich geb eich meine, vos git ir mir andere—I am giving you from my mashke, why are you giving me yours?*” and made a dismissive gesture, but ultimately gave him from that *mashke* too.

Before the Rebbe left to walk home, he noticed that it was snowing outside, so he lifted the collar of his coat and walked home slowly. **T**

1. <https://ashreinu.page.link/3rvr> - minute 12:00
2. See the continuation of the sicha, for the Rebbe’s lesson from Rebbetzin Sheina’s response, in *Toras Menachem* Vol. 42, p. 113.
3. See “Changing Lives Forever – The Story of the Pegisha” - *Magazine* 79 (154), Adar II 5779.



לזכות
הרה"ת ר' יצחק אהרן וזוגתו מרת חנה ומשפחתם
שיחיו מאן
שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר במישיגן למעלה מיובל שנים
להצלחה רבה בכל עניניהם
לאריכות ימים ושנים טובות

נדפס ע"י בנם
הרה"ת ר' אברהם שמואל וזוגתו מרת חי' צפורה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
מאן

Whose Name?

Reb Zalman Zezmer, the rav of the city Kislaveh, would travel to various villages with the goal of spreading Chassidus. Since he was addressing people that were not fond of Chassidus, he would conduct himself in the style of the *maggidim* of the time, standing and speaking from the shul's *bima* wrapped in a tallis, so he should not be suspected of teaching Chassidus.

One time, Reb Zalman came to the city of Volozhin where the well known *gaon* Reb Chaim of Volozhin lived. He received permission from Reb Chaim to speak on Shabbos afternoon in the town's main shul prior to Mincha.

That week's *parsha* was Vayishlach and he spoke about Yaakov Avinu's service to Hashem. He explained how by using physical objects to serve Hashem, Yaakov Avinu extracted

the holy sparks from within them, *avodas habirurim*, and elevated them to *kedushah*. Quoting the first *possuk* of the *parsha*,¹ "Vayishlach Yaakov *malachim el Esav*," he explained how the word '*malachim*' refers to the sparks of holiness that are within the physical, and Yaakov 'sent' them to 'Esav'—referring to Hashem(!).

Upon hearing Reb Zalman refer to Hashem with the name of Esav, the crowd angrily started hitting him and wouldn't let him leave. They waited until Reb Chaim Volozhiner came and they told him what happened.

Reb Chaim requested to meet with Reb Zalman and asked him, "How do you have the audacity to refer to Hashem with the name Esav, a wicked and evil person!?"

"It is a clear statement of *Chazal*," Reb Zalman responded.

Reb Chaim tried to think what

Reb Zalman could be referring to but soon gave up. "From what I remember, there is no such *maamar Chazal* in the entire Talmud Bavli, Yerushalmi, Midrash, Sifri, Sifra, Mechilta or Zohar!"

"It's a famous *maamar Chazal*," Reb Zalman replied and quoted: "*Kol haTorah shmosav shel Hakadosh Baruch Hu*—the entire Torah is names of Hashem."² So you see, even the word 'Esav' written in Torah refers to Hashem."

Impressed, the *gaon* Reb Chaim ordered to have him released and treated well. **1**

(*Halekach V'Halibuv* p. 204)

1. Bereishis 32, 4.

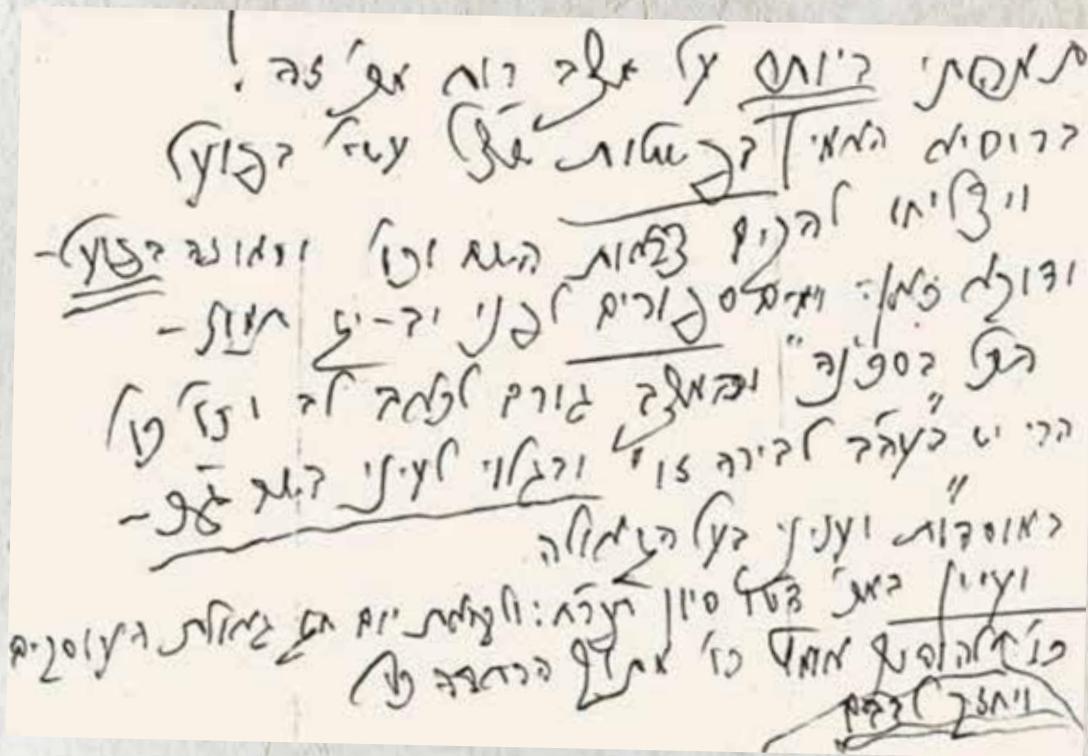
2. See Ramban in his introduction to Torah commentary. Zohar vol. 3, 98b.



כתב יד
קודש

Now You Worry?!

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



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

תמהתי **ביותר** על מצב רוח מכ' זה!

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

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

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

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

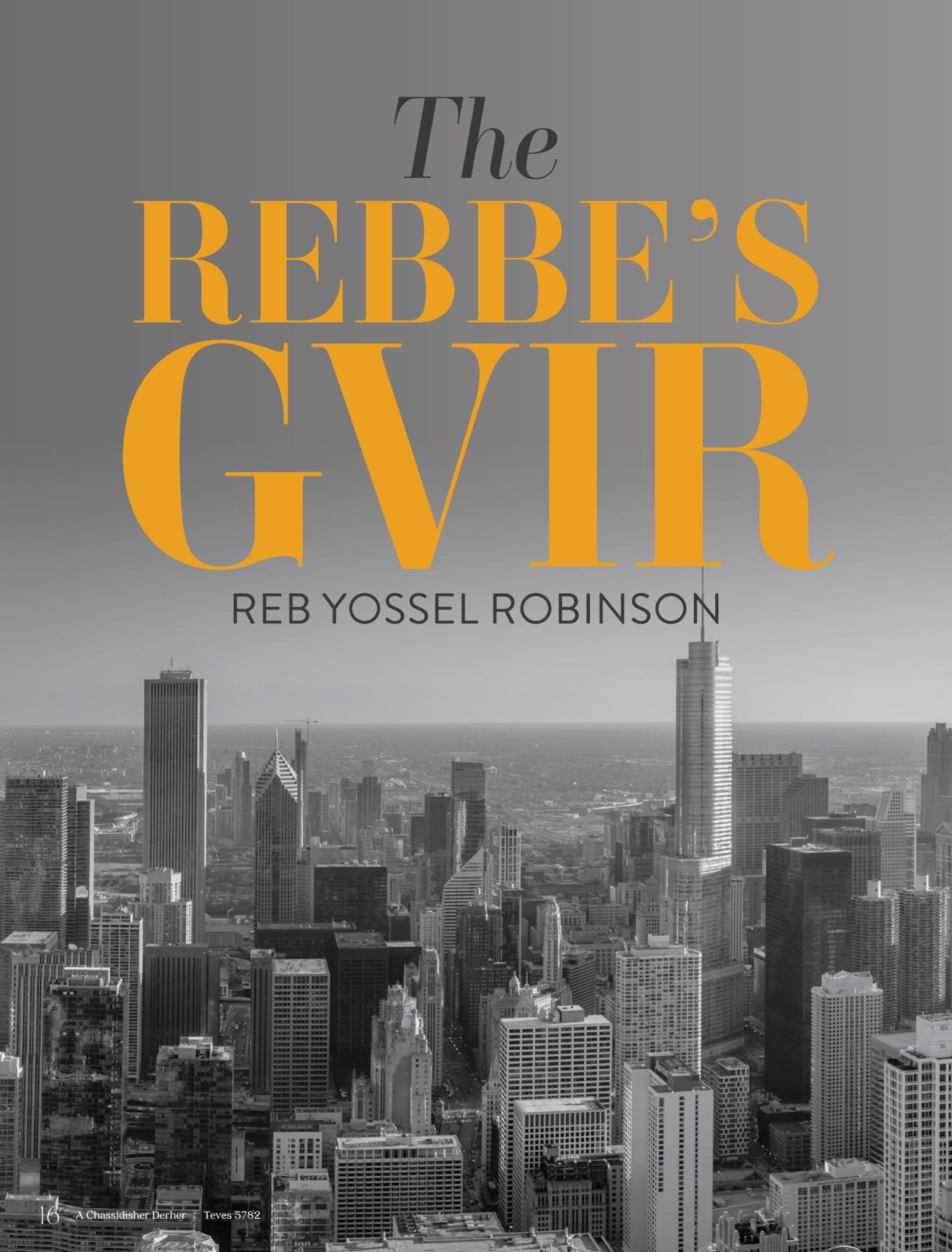
[Don't you realize that] “there is a Master of this metropolis,” **revealed and visible to humans too**—over all of the institutions and activities of the *baal hageula* [the Frierdiker Rebbe].

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

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

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

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

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

The
REBBE'S
GVIR

REB YOSSEL ROBINSON

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

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

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

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

נדפס ע"י
משפחתה שיחיו

Officers of West Point

Rabbi Gershon Shusterman relates:

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

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

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

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

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



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

would never be seen afterwards.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



RABBI MENTLICK FARBRENGS WITH THE BOCHURIM IN 770.

Friediker Rebbe and the Rebbe.

“Anyways, back to his speech in the yeshiva.

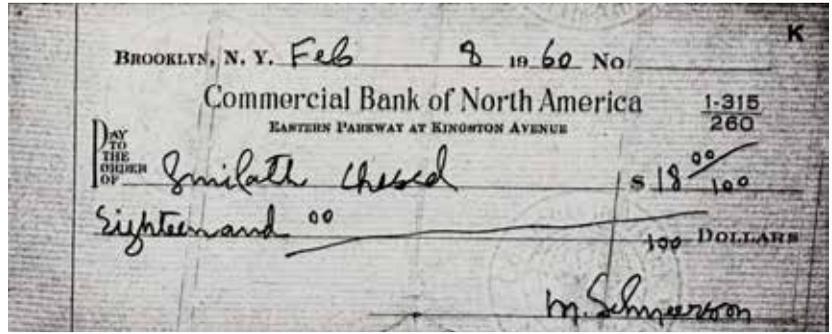
“He said that he had visited 770 and spent the day there to observe the yeshiva. The key line that he told us was this: ‘This is not a yeshiva. This is West Point. You are not here to merely learn Torah or learn how to learn Torah. You are here to become officers for Yiddishkeit. And to be an officer,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

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

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

From the Earliest Supporters

Reb Yossel Robinson was among a small group of Chicago



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

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

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

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

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

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

Rabbi Yosef Greenberg of Alaska shared the following:

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

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

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

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

Reintroducing a Halachic Work

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

770 EASTERN PARKWAY SHORTLY BEFORE THE FRIEDIKER REBBE MOVED IN.



THE FOLLOWING PICTURES OF THE SDEI CHEMED, REB CHAIM CHIZKIYAHU MEDINI, WERE TAKEN AS HE TOOK LEAVE OF HIS CONGREGATION IN CRIMEA. CIRCA 5568*.

Reb Chayim Chizkiyahu was an unassuming Yerushalmi-born rav of Sephardi origins who was gifted with a phenomenal memory. (For historical context - he lived around the same time as the Rebbe Maharash.)

Despite his considerable talents, he had difficulty finding *parnasah* in Eretz Yisroel, and became the rabbi of the little known, ancient Jewish community of Crimea which had a very low level of observance. During his years there, he managed to educate the population and raise the level of Yiddishkeit significantly.

He soon became well-known

throughout the Russian empire as a holy person and a brilliant *talmid chacham*. As a result, many of the wealthy Russian Jews would send him *sefarim* — for a simple reason. Rabbonim would often send new *sefarim* to wealthy Jews with the hope of receiving a donation in return. Not having use for them, many of these *gevirim* chose to send them to Reb Chaim Chizkiyahu, who soon amassed a library of over 10,000 *sefarim*.

(After his passing, the Frieddiker Rebbe purchased many of his *sefarim* from the local government, which had confiscated much of the library; those *sefarim* are currently part of the Rebbe's library stranded in Russia.)

With access to such a library, he decided to embark on a mammoth project: to create an encyclopedia of halachic rulings. He wrote a multi-series volume work called *S'dei Chemed*, where — in alphabetical order — he wrote about every halachic concept at great length, from the *sugya* in Gemara down to the latest of the *acharonim*. It was a groundbreaking project; no similar encyclopedia existed (perhaps with the exception of *Pachad Yitzchak*, which had been published over 150 years earlier).

Needless to say, it became very popular among rabbonim when it was released in the early 5650s

(1890s). The Rebbe Rashab was very enthusiastic about the set as well; he wrote to Reb Chaim Chizkiyahu asking him to send several dozen sets to Lubavitch, so that he could personally disseminate them throughout the area.³

(Reb Chaim Chizkiyahu later moved to Eretz Yisroel and founded a yeshiva in Chevron, in Beit Romano. Before his passing, he sold the building to the Rebbe Rashab for Yeshivas Toras Emes.)

After World War II, with the destruction of European Jewry, there was also a significant shortage of *halacha sefarim*. Therefore, the Frieddiker Rebbe instructed Kehos to reprint the *S'dei Chemed* for the benefit of rabbonim around the world.

Upon receiving the directive from the Frieddiker Rebbe, the Rebbe — then director of Kehos — began working intensively on the project. Rights for publication were procured from Reb Yehudah Shmotkin,⁴ who had received the rights of publication to *S'dei Chemed* before the war. Several *yungerleit* were brought in to work on reorganizing the large and complex set and creating comprehensive *mafteichos* for it. The Rebbe himself spent countless hours personally going through every page, editing their work and adding much of his own.⁵

The cost of the publication was prohibitive. In the Rebbe's own words, "I did not envision" the true cost of the work. To provide funding, the Rebbe first turned to a wealthy individual named Reb Eliezer Kroizer, who sponsored the beginning of the set. However, the Rebbe soon turned to Reb Yossel Robinson, and he agreed to sponsor the rest of it.

When the time came to publish, Reb Yossel was low on cash and he asked that no donations be solicited until his situation was sorted out. He even asked that a





RABBI HODAKOV WRITES TO REB YOSEF REGARDING THE PUBLICATION OF THE SDEI CHEMED.

certain check — already in the hands of the Frierdiker Rebbe — not be cashed until he could ensure the funds were present in his account.

The Rebbe wrote openly about the issue to Reb Yankel Katz of Chicago, one of Reb Yossel’s good friends:

“There is a problem: The publisher wants money. The people want the *sefarim*. The [Frierdiker] Rebbe has *taanos* why we publish so little... and suddenly we receive this letter!

“...I hope that you will take the matter into your hands and work out the matter with our friend Mr. Robinson. Meanwhile, I will continue the work; I don’t want the Rebbe’s *kpeidah* on me or on him...”⁶

In a letter directly to Reb Yossel, the Rebbe’s close relationship to him is apparent:

“There is no need to mention the *maamar Chazal*, ‘*Aser bishvil shetis’asher*.’ When a Jew gives *tzedakah*, it is a *makor* and *kli* for livelihood. You see this clearly, especially in recent times, in how my father-in-law the Rebbe *shlita* brings you opportunities for *parnasah*...”⁷

Ultimately, Reb Yossel was able to make the payments and the *sefarim* were published. The first volume was presented at his son’s wedding in Chicago by Rabbi Shlomo Aharon Kazarnovsky, the Frierdiker Rebbe’s representative to the wedding.

(Another special mention regarding the wedding: Several days earlier, Reb Yossel and his son flew to New York to receive the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *bracha*. The Frierdiker Rebbe received them while wearing his *spodik*, and blessed them warmly.)

A special moment by the Rebbe regarding the S’dei Chemed took place in Sivan of 5710*, a few months after the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *histalkus*. But first, another important story must be told.

Burning the Mortgage

When the Frierdiker Rebbe arrived in America, Agudas Chasidei Chabad purchased the building of

BROAD & BOLD

Reb Yossel’s last surviving daughter, Mrs. Simon, shared the following story about her father’s communal activism:

“During the war years, my father worked very hard to raise money to save Jews from Europe. At one point, he had an opportunity to save Jews but he needed funding to make it happen. He decided to visit the Chicago mafia, which was known to have active Jewish members.

“One night, he visited their smokey basement where the mafia guys were gambling with large wads of cash. When the bodyguard at the entrance asked him what he wanted, he thrustured pictures of concentration camps in his face, and he quickly gained entry.

“When the mafia people heard why he had come, they immediately cleared all the cash off the table and handed it to him for his activities.”



THE FRIERDIKER REBBE DURING HIS VISIT IN THE UNITED STATES IN 5690*.

MAKING THE VESSEL

Rabbi Leibel Shapiro shared the following story:

“Later in life, Reb Yossel lost his wealth. Nevertheless, whenever he visited 770, he was held in very high regard for his decades of support.

“During one such visit, after Mincha, I saw him approach the Rebbe. Normally it was against protocol, but none of the *mazkirim* tried to stop him. He told the Rebbe that he wasn’t feeling well, so the Rebbe responded that he should be examined by Dr. Seligson. Then I heard the Rebbe say something amazing:

“*Un dos vet zein der keili bderech hateva oif di refua*—that will be the vessel, the natural means for your healing.”

770 for the relatively low sum of \$30,000 (equivalent to roughly half a million dollars today). Due to the difficult financial situation, only one-sixth of the price was paid up-front and a mortgage was obtained for \$25,000, to be paid in yearly installments of \$1,350 (= \$26,000 today) for the duration of 20 years.⁸

Shortly after the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *histalkus*, Reb Yossel Robinson took it upon himself to pay up the remainder of the debt and “burn” the mortgage. It was considered a very big deal, relative to Chabad’s financial situation at the time, and, upon Reb Yossel’s request, the Rebbe held a special *farbrengen* to mark the occasion.

It was at the height of the campaign to convince the Rebbe to accept the *nesius*. Therefore, in the preparations for the *farbrengen*, Reb Yisroel Jacobson prepared a special head-table for the Rebbe to sit at. However, the Rebbe refused to sit according to his arrangement, and instead sat down in his regular spot, in the middle of the long table at the back of the *zal* — with Reb Yossel at his side.

The Rebbe delivered a *sicha* about the meaning of a home according to Chassidus, and declared that 770 is

not only a private home but a “general home for the entire Jewish people.”

It was a special occasion, the Rebbe said, because the Frierdiker Rebbe didn’t have full ownership over the home due to the mortgage. However, “the very fact that the Rebbe left the debt and waited 10 years for this specific individual to redeem the house, is in itself a great *zechus* [for him], because the Rebbe didn’t take money from someone just because he wanted to give.”⁹

During the *farbrengen*, Reb Yossel asked the Rebbe to teach something from the volumes of *S’dei Chemed* which had just been published.

The Rebbe agreed and added, “The publication of *S’dei Chemed*, in truth, deserves a *farbrengen* of its own.”

The Rebbe handed the key to his room to the *bochur* Sholom Chaskind and asked him to bring any volume of *S’dei Chemed*. When he returned with the fourth volume, the Rebbe handed it to Reb Yossel and asked him to open it randomly. The Rebbe read the contents of the page for a few moments, and then delivered a *sicha* about it.

The page opened was *maareches daled minim*, where the author discussed the issue of paying for an *esrog* immediately, thereby ensuring that it belongs to you completely, as per Torah’s instruction of “*u’lekachtem lachem* — you shall take for you.”

The Rebbe noted that the Frierdiker Rebbe actually did the exact opposite — he followed the *minhag* to delay paying for the *esrog*. In the *sicha*, the Rebbe explained how delaying payment didn’t actually disqualify the purchase, because of the *meshicha*, the commitment to pay later, and for various other reasons as well.



REB YOSSEL READILY AGREED

Presented here is a letter from Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Hecht of Chicago, written to the Rebbe in Adar 5709*, during the Frierdiker Rebbe's lifetime, about Reb Yossel's great interest in Lubavitch activities and his willingness to be involved in any way possible.

To the esteemed son-in-law of the Rebbe, the great and known rav, renowned for his Torah and holy work, the amazing person, in the most literal sense of the word, a man of remarkable middos, Harav Hagaon, Harav Hachossid, Harav Menachem Schneerson,

Shalom u'Bracha!

When I got back [to Chicago], I spoke with our most esteemed friend, Reb Yosef Robinson, and I conveyed the [Frierdiker] Rebbe's words about his private affairs.

In the conversation, when I described to him how the [Frierdiker] Rebbe became an American citizen, and how important it would be for the [Frierdiker] Rebbe's activities to be publicized in the English newspapers, he took upon himself to publish an article in the Sentinel newspaper¹¹ at his expense, provided that I give him a nicely written piece about the [Frierdiker] Rebbe's activities, obviously written as a biography, along with a photograph of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe. I asked him to try and have this as the cover story and he agreed to this as well. We decided to try to have this published in the Pesach edition of the paper. Right now we are waiting for your response, along with the appropriate material...

Making it Possible

Beyond the unique merit of paying off 770's mortgage, Reb Yossel had another unique *zechus* with the same donation:

Throughout the Frierdiker Rebbe's years in America, the Frierdiker Rebbe provided a large part of the funding for the Rebbe's institutions, Merkos, Machne Yisroel and Kehos. With the Frierdiker Rebbe's *histalkus*, the financial future of those institutions was put into jeopardy. At the end of Sivan 5710*, the Rebbe held a meeting with the senior Chassidim, where he told them about the lack of funding in the *mosdos* and explained that the work must continue — and he could therefore not take on any new responsibilities until they were made financially stable. For Chassidim, the indication was clear: They should not bother asking the Rebbe to assume the *nesius* unless the institutions were properly funded.¹⁰

Chassidim say that Reb Yossel made his large donation for the same reason. According to some accounts, the Rebbe indicated that he would not be able to assume the *nesius* with such large *chovos* weighing down on 770 and Lubavitch. Upon receiving that message, Reb Yossel agreed to take the cost on himself.

Hence, Reb Yossel has an immense *zechus* by taking part in the start of *dor hashvi'i*. T

1. After the passing of his father-in-law, Reb Dovid Stockhomer. It should be noted that others placed this story in 5725*, when the Rebbe was davening at the amud.

2. For more information regarding this story, see Hotzo'as Sefarim Kehos, pg. 100.

3. Igros Kodesh Admur Harashab vol. 1 pg. 164.

4. Father of Rabbi Yisroel Shmotkin, shliach to Wisconsin.

5. See Igros Kodesh vol. 4 pg. 487.

6. Igros Kodesh vol. 3 pg. 105

7. Ibid. pg. 115.

8. Igros Kodesh Admur Harayatz vol. 13 pg. 303. Regarding this section, see Beis Chayenu pg. 123.

9. Toras Menachem vol. 1 pg. 82.

10. See Toras Menachem vol. 1 pg. 115, Yimei Bireishis pg. 175

11. The Sentinel—The voice of Chicago Jewry was a weekly newspaper of the Chicago Jewish community from 1911-1977.

1

שלום וברכה
 זלמן שליט"א העבס ספר לי את דברי ירדני הלכניים האמיתיים "די אמת" ע
 הארציקע זון סוף איבערזעכענע ריידן, וואס זייף אונזלעכע פנימיות'דיקע
 נעמילן זענן די חיל האוווה וליכמי לא בחבי אינשי "אונזלעכע אינטרליכע
 הארץ זעמילן מאנען זיך אין ווערטער נישט אויסשרייבן" אזא אינטרליכער
 נעמיל'עווערזעכענע איז זייער ווערטפול און באדערף כרייגען צו
 פעולות טובות אין חינוך התורה והמצות וזו חובת ישראל, אז סען זאל
 זוכן העלמן א אידן בכלל און א בן בני תורה בפרט.
 חנה יום ו' י"א תשרי.

3

שלום וברכה
 זלמן שליט"א העבס ספר לי את דברי ירדני הלכניים האמיתיים "די אמת" ע
 הארציקע זון סוף איבערזעכענע ריידן, וואס זייף אונזלעכע פנימיות'דיקע
 נעמילן זענן די חיל האוווה וליכמי לא בחבי אינשי "אונזלעכע אינטרליכע
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 זוכן העלמן א אידן בכלל און א בן בני תורה בפרט.
 חנה יום ו' י"א תשרי.

2

פרנסה טובה בהרחבה כנשמיות וברוחניות.
 המכרכם בצלמי תורה
 וברכות
 חנה יום ו' י"א תשרי

4

וואס אפעל איינע אונטער מיין?
 בברכה חג כשר ושפה לו ולב"ב סי. זלמן שליט"א

Letters

Letters

Over the years, Reb Yossel received many letters from the Frierdiker Rebbe and the Rebbe. The following are some unique selections¹:

1. The First Letter

Shortly before leaving the United States in 5690*, the Frierdiker Rebbe wrote a letter to the young Yosef Robinson.

"I did not receive an answer to my letter. I wrote to you that you can write to me in any language; simple Yiddish is just fine.

"You surely gave my regards to your brothers and to Mr. Katz. What have you accomplished [for Yiddishkeit]? You youngsters should be doing more. Don't suffice with a dollar donation and a nice word — that's just talk..."

2. Mezakei Harabim

On a *nichum aveilim* letter, the Frierdiker Rebbe added in his own holy handwriting:

"[I bless you] with success, and to be of the *mezakei harabim* with acts of *tzedakah*, physically and spiritually."

3. True Heartfelt Words

In a letter from the Frierdiker Rebbe:
 "Our good friend Reb Shlomo Zalman Hecht delivered the genuine and heartfelt message from you, my good friend. In regards to such *primiusdike* sentiments, Chazal say, "The letters of the heart cannot be expressed in words."² Such a genuine dedication is very valuable and must surely bring to good deeds in strengthening Torah and mitzvos and *ahavas Yisroel*..."

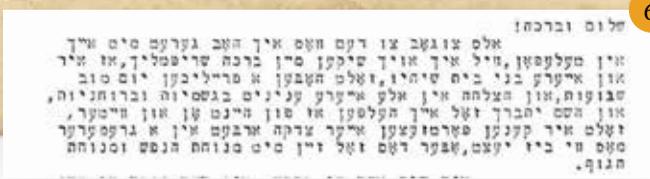
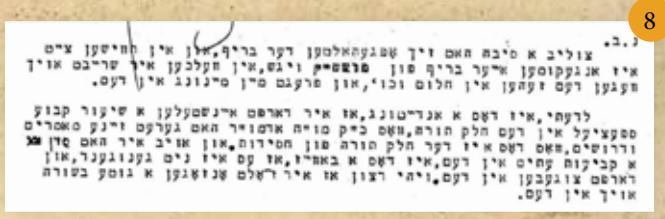
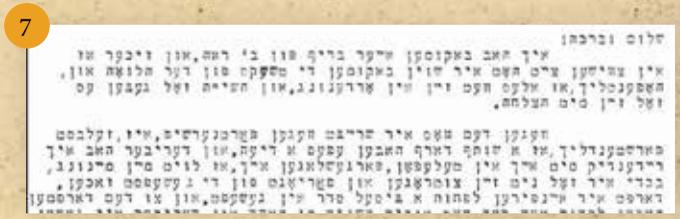
4. How is your grandchild?

On a *michtav klali-prati* in 5711*, the Rebbe adds in handwriting, "How is your grandchild, *sheyichye*?"

5. True Appreciation

In 5712*, Reb Yossel fell on hard times. When he nevertheless continued to contribute, the Rebbe wrote the following in appreciation:

"...I especially value your current good deed knowing the *nisayon* you, no doubt, had to overcome..."



“The more difficult the *nisayon*, the stronger your *iskafya*... *iskafya* makes an impact, elevating and refining the person. *Iskafya* is very precious to Hashem and opens new conduits for his blessing...”

In handwriting, the Rebbe adds, “[With blessing] that you should very soon bear the news of good business...”

6. In Addition to Our Conversation

In this letter from 5712*, we learn about a special *kiruv* to which Reb Yossel was *zoche* — telephone conversations with the Rebbe:

“In addition to our conversation on the telephone, I want to write my *bracha* as well...”

7. Partnership

The following letter seems to indicate that the Rebbe loaned Reb Yossel money and entered into a “partnership” with him in 5712*.

“I received your letter... and you have, by now, surely received the checks of the loan...”

“In regards to what you wrote regarding the partnership: Obviously, a partner should have the right to offer an opinion, and therefore, when we spoke on the telephone, I proposed that...”

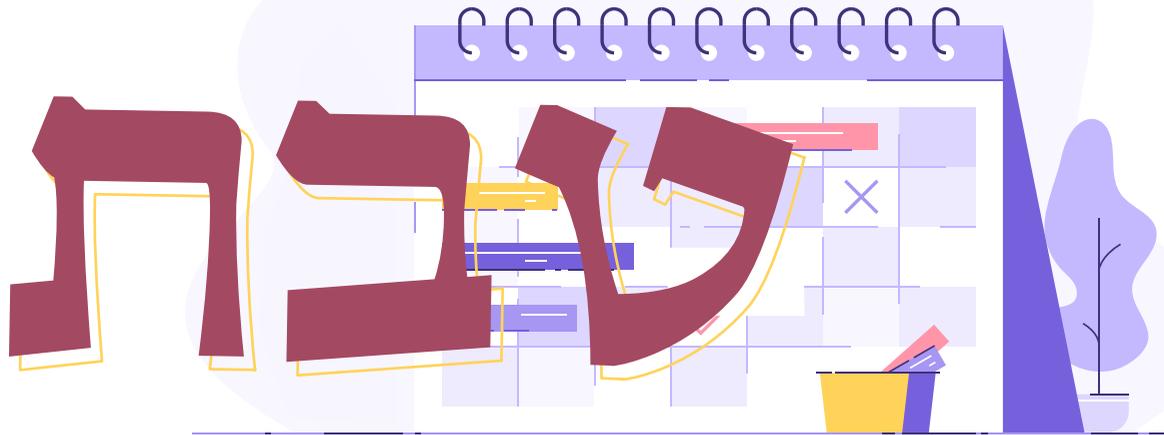
8. The Dream

In the postscript to this letter, the Rebbe tells him how to regard a dream that he had:

“I received your letter in which you write about seeing in your dream, etc. and you request my opinion.

“In my opinion, it is an indication that you need to study a regular *shiur* in the part of Torah in which the Rebbe, my father-in-law, spoke his *maamarim* and *drushim*, in other words, in Chassidus...”

1. Teshura, Turin, 23 Adar I 5776.
2. See Sanhedrin 35b and Rashi.



ZOS CHANUKAH

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

HEI TEVES - THE SEFARIM VICTORY

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

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

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

ASARAH B'TEVES - DAY OF FASTING

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

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

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

12-TEVES

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

CHOF-TEVES – THE HILULA OF THE RAMBAM

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

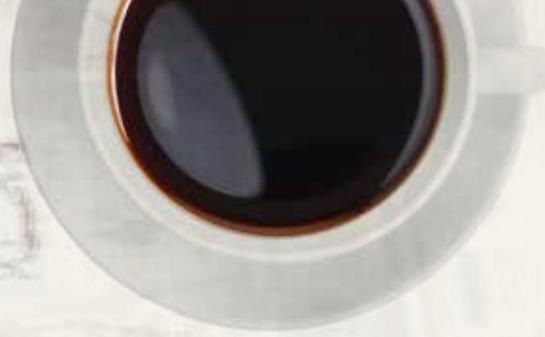
CHOF-DALED TEVES – THE HILULA OF THE ALTER REBBE

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

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

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

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



לזכות
החיייל בצבאות ה'
השליח מנחם מענדל שיחי'
לרגל האפשערעניש' שלו ח' תשרי ה'תשפ"ב

נדפס ע"י הוריו
הרה"ת ר' שמואליק וזוגתו מרת ח' מושקא
שיחיו גרינברג
שלוחי כ"ק אדמו"ר לוויציטה, קנסס

A Visit With The New Lubavitcher Rebbe



Presented here are selections of an interview with the Rebbe shortly after Yud Shevat 5711, by Dr. Gershon Kranzler, published in *Orthodox Jewish Life* (Sept./Oct. 1951), under the heading: "Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, having just accepted the position as leader of the Lubavitch movement, talked of his concerns and his approach to strengthening Judaism in the United States."



I was standing in the hallway of the Rebbe's residence in Brooklyn. The Maariv service had just concluded and the Yeshiva Bachurim were streaming out of the *Beth Hamidrash* into the cold winter evening. Released from the strenuous routine of many hours of concentrated study, the young scholars, most of them with beard and *peyos*, were chatting freely and loudly, while they put on their coats to leave the building. Suddenly the loud talk ceased and a look of awed respect appeared on the lively faces as the new Rebbe walked through the hall towards the door. Deferentially, they pressed forward on both sides of the narrow doorway. One young man, flustered, moved from one side of the way to the other, to make more room and stumbled into the path of the Rebbe. Before he had a chance to recover his balance, the Rebbe had taken him by the shoulder and had gently helped him to the side, a smile lighting up his serious face.

Instantly, the embarrassment of the young scholar was gone. The Rebbe's smile reflected in his happy eyes, and

the entire atmosphere was suddenly changed. The awe was gone and a warm current of friendly understanding seemed to flow through the young scholars pressed closely into the hallway, brightening the frosty dark of the evening.

This experience of a few fleeting moments, the mute exchange of a smile and glance, answered many a question that had risen in my mind since the passing of the late Lubavitcher Rebbe a year before, and the election of his successor. I had the privilege of knowing Rabbi Menachem



M. Schneerson before he assumed his new office and I had come to appreciate the young scholar with the serious face and unassuming, almost shy manners. He then directed the educational aspects of the Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch. But now everything was different. This was no longer the "RaMaSh," the son-in-law of the Rebbe, respected as a scholar, a friendly advisor, and interpreter of the thoughts of Chabad Chassidism. His new burden of office, with its responsibility for the thousands of followers of Chabad the world over, and its exacting demands for attention to the hundreds of visitors seeking aid, advice and inspiration from the Lubavitcher Rebbe day in, day out, would seem to have removed Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson from any close personal relation. But the little incident in the hallway taught me better, and I began to appreciate the importance which a Chassidic leader of this type can assume for the future of the Jewish people, even in these days of twentieth century culture.

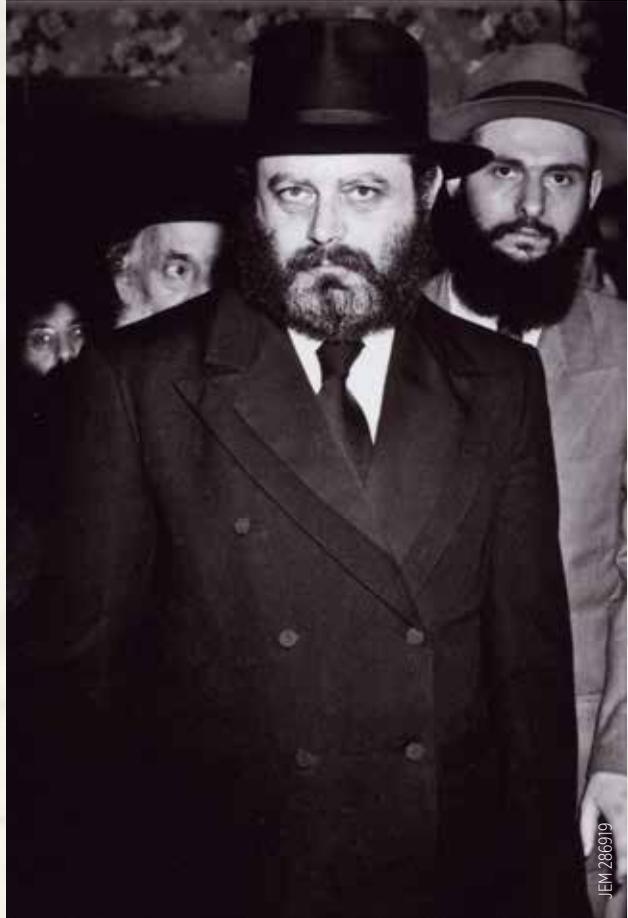
When the opportunity arose to visit the Rebbe and to transmit his views and perspective on the task ahead, I remembered something Rabbi Schneerson had once said when he addressed a gathering of young workers for the furtherance of Jewish education: "It is not we that count, we with our weaknesses and capabilities. It is our will to do a job that we realize is important. Success is not in our hands, it is in G-d's. But we have to will to do what He demands of us, and in that will all our weaknesses and insufficiencies wane and become insignificant."

I could not have searched for a better motto to characterize the message of courage and encouragement which I took with me when I had the privilege to spend some time with the new Lubavitcher Rebbe, and to question him on his views concerning the contemporary Jewish scene.

IS DISPERSION A CATASTROPHE?

"It is a mistake," said Rabbi Schneerson, "if we conceive of the worldwide dispersion of the Jewish people in *golus* [exile] as a catastrophe. As a matter of fact, this very lack of concentration of the remnants of our nation was the source of our salvation throughout the centuries of persecution and pogroms. Hitler was the greatest threat to our national survival because the largest concentration of the masses of Eastern and Central European Jewry had come into his evil grasp. On the other hand, however, concentration of large groups of our people in one country has been the means of creating the spiritual centers from which the rest of the Jewish colonies could draw their inspiration, leadership and material replenishment.

"Our history in *golus* is an unbroken chain of the



emergence and disappearance of such centers in country after country, and from one corner of the earth to the next. As the Jewish sun set in one land, it had already begun to rise in another. Now that the great centers of Eastern Europe have been destroyed by Fascism and Communism, America has become the focus and fountainhead of Jewish survival. Providence has prepared a new home for Torah and Yiddishkeit in this country, while the flames devoured the bastions of the strongest and most impregnable Jewish fortresses on the other side of the ocean."

With earnest emphasis, the new Chabad leader continued: "American Jewry must recognize this sacred, historical mission which Divine Providence has entrusted to it at this critical moment of our struggle for survival. The largest concentration of our best elements are in America. We must lead the smaller Jewish communities in other countries and continents, even in *Eretz Yisrael*, which must lean heavily on American support for its economic and spiritual survival. The very shape which Jewry and Judaism of tomorrow will present, depends on the active leadership of each and every Jew in this country.

"Realization of this historical mission," Rabbi Schneerson said, "demands a complete about-face and



reevaluation of our spiritual position. America's great genius has been in the development of the individual, of the pioneering and self-made man type. Although this helped in developing our potentialities by demanding every last ounce of ingenuity and perseverance, it has on the other hand focused too much attention on egoistic aims and interests. Personal goals have dominated. Only in our spare and leisure time, after we have carved our groove in terms of economic or social success, have we dedicated some time and effort to philanthropic and communal affairs. We have been social workers on an amateur, after-working-hours basis. This pattern of life has been no less characteristic of American Jews than of other Americans.

"But it is at this point that there must be a change of basic outlook and concomitant redirection and reorganization of our existence as a community and as individuals. Primarily we must live the life of social beings, with the responsibility and dedication of our best efforts for the *clal*, the community. Only then can we afford to invest in our own individual aims and goals."

This, Rabbi Schneerson stressed, was his main message to American Jews: "The only way American Jewry can live up to its historic task is by self-sacrificing, self-effacing *mesirat nefesh* for the Jewish *clal*."

"The thing we have to fear most at this moment is the defeatism and the defection that has gripped some of our best elements in this country in the face of the

growing effects of so-called 'interfaith' movements, of the watering down of the very content of our religion to a point where our children will no longer know whether they are Jewish or not. Charity begins at home. We cannot talk of assuming responsibility for the rest of the Jewish world, of building new centers for Torah and Yiddishkeit elsewhere, even in *Eretz Yisrael*, when right here in our midst our brothers and sisters are being engulfed. More than that, we have no right to teach and lead others if at home we neglect the very thing we want to make others do.

"But," warned the Rebbe with a smile, "I don't want you to convey the impression that I am merely giving *mussar* - moral exhortations. It has never been the way of Lubavitch to give *mussar* only. *Mussar* serves us only as a means towards actions. Whatever we say or preach must be geared to some active goal. We ourselves can point to amazing results that draw in ever-widening circles of non-religious as well as religious elements of our people."

In response to the look of surprise in my eyes, the Rebbe continued: "Yes, I mean non-religious circles. You see, it has always been the belief of Chabad that there is not a single Jew, as far as he may seem or thought himself to have drifted from the center of Yiddishkeit, who does not have some good point, some particular mitzvah which by nature or by inclination he may promote. This spark of good in each soul can and must be utilized for the good of the Jewish community and



in turn, for the good of the person who does it. For this reason, the late Lubavitcher Rebbe called not only on Orthodox Jews for cooperation in this work after he settled in this country ten years ago, but he drew on all types of Jews who had the power and will to contribute some aspect, some particular skill or capacity towards the offensive for Jewish education and the Torah life.”

Rabbi Schneerson paused. For some minutes he remained sunk in reflection, then said: “Let’s realize this. The Jewish people has been so heavily decimated in the past decade or two that each of us must be made to count, and to count doubly. And it is for this reason that this call to take the offensive for Torah Judaism is not only directed at the observant. The accomplishment counts for what it achieves objectively and what it does to the one involved. In this respect, too, a mitzvah is its own reward.

“Many of those who may think they are lost as ‘*Epikorsim*’ are really not, and need only some stimulation, some bridge to find the way back. There was for example, the man who visited the late Lubavitcher Rebbe to ask for his counsel concerning some business matter. After he had answered the question, the Rebbe suggested that he put on Tefillin. The visitor protested, ‘What is the sense of talking to me about Tefillin if I do not believe in anything at all. I am an *Epikores*.’

“Not so easily does one become an *Epikores*,’ replied the Rebbe. ‘One has to know a great deal of

the questions and problems and know the answers, and then refuse to accept them, to deserve this title. You first put on Tefillin, and you will discover that you needed only such a bridge to find yourself.”

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

This is the new Lubavitcher Rebbe. The high office, the admiration of the people, the burden of directing innumerable activities of world-wide organizations, had not marred his modesty. Publicity is generally sought by leaders of such stature, but the new Rebbe is not that kind of leader. As he once told a gathering of his co-workers: “We, ourselves, don’t count. It is our task, our sacred mission, that matters. And if we but want to carry it on, our goal will not remain unachieved.” **T**

THE ULTI

Simcha

HOW TO CELEBRATE A SIMCHA

לזכות

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

נדפס

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



MATE

What's Most Important

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

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

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

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

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

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

How to Spend

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

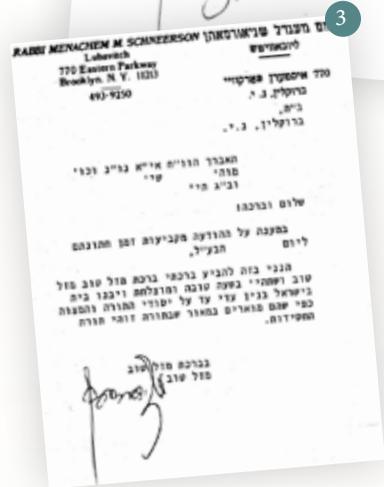
In another letter, the Rebbe writes:

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

“In previous generations, a Chassidische *simcha*

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

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

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

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

Photos of the First Wedding

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

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

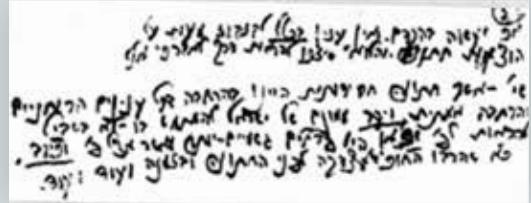
In *yechidus* with Reb Pinnye Korf before his wedding, the Rebbe mentioned with regret that “with the money spent on pictures at



* 5731-1970

A CHASSIDISHE WEDDING

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



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

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

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

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

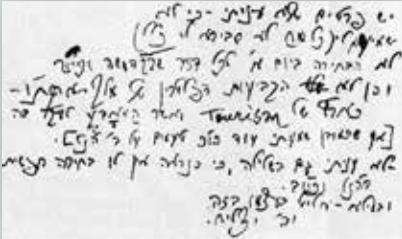
“Instead of being preoccupied with all the externalities of the wedding, worrying about the flowers and the pictures—nowadays people don’t suffice with black and white photos, they must have colored pictures only, *Rachmana litzlan*—it would be a better use of the time to do teshuvah over all of one’s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

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

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

THE WAY TO CELEBRATE

Part of a response the Rebbe wrote to the question of whether it is appropriate to celebrate a bar mitzvah in Eretz Yisroel a few days after the actual birthday:



יש פרטים שלא עניתי - כי לא שמייעא לי
(כלומר לא סבירא לי כלל)
לא הבחירה ביום א' לכל דבר שבקדושה
וכיו"ב
וכן לא הקביעות דפלטריין של מלך -
אהקת"ו - כארץ של tourism ואשר המאדע
לבקר בה
[אף שכמובן שמעתי עוד כו"כ טעמים על
ב' הנ"ל].
- לא עניתי גם בשלילה (כי כנראה אין לו
בחירה חפשית בהנ"ל וכיו"ב).
ובמילא - יחליט בעצמו בזה
וה' יצליח.

There are some details [of the issue] to which I have not responded, because I am not fond (at all) of the fact that: [Many people] choose Sunday as the day for holy matters and the like. Also, [I am not fond of] designating the king's palace—Eretz Yisroel—as a land for tourism and a fashionable place to visit. [Though I have obviously heard many more explanations for these two phenomena.]

[On the other hand]—I have also not responded in the negative (because as it seems, you do not have full control over the above issues and the like).

Therefore, you should decide on your own.

May Hashem grant [you] success.

(Igros Kodesh vol. 26, p. 348)

that level. Nevertheless, they can still prepare themselves for their wedding in a proper way... And if he is worried that his wedding will not be as 'nice' as all his friends, he should know that at the first wedding in history—that of Adam Harishon, there were no colored pictures, and not even any black and white ones, and the wedding still seems to have been a success...⁵

Traveling

In a lengthy *sicha* directed primarily at the *yeshiva bochurim* (although the Rebbe mentions that even others should make similar considerations), the Rebbe bemoans the fact that people constantly write to him, asking for "permission" to travel across the world for a family *simcha*.

"The Torah is very meticulous about Yidden's money," the Rebbe said. "Even if you find all the best discounts, traveling overseas is a big expense..."

"I am receiving letters non-stop, asking for permission to travel to a *simcha* of a cousin, or a second cousin, or a friend who once learned with him. They want me to be the one to take away the pleasure of traveling overseas to participate in this *simcha*. The real question is: Since when is this a thing, that every time there is a *bris* somewhere overseas, all the cousins must travel to participate?"

The Rebbe said that this is a question that should be asked to the *hanhala* of the yeshiva, or brought to a *rav* for a ruling. But in general, the Rebbe explained, wasting money and time on traveling to a *simcha* is not appropriate.

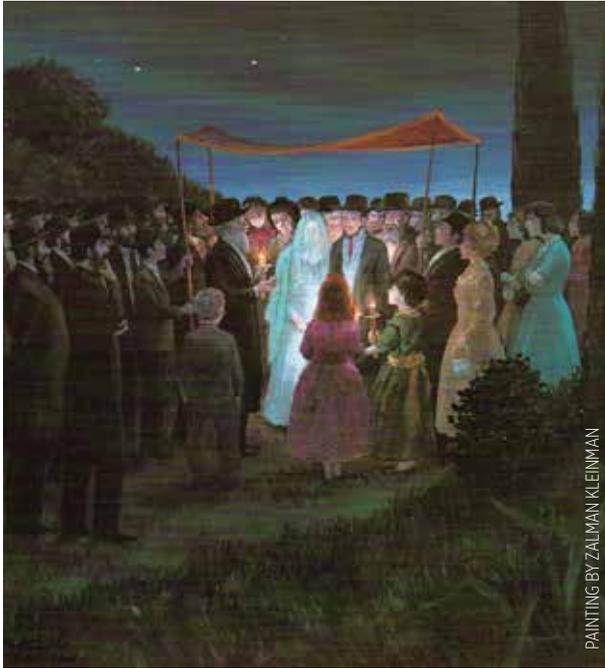
"A *bochur* goes to the *hanhala*, gets the permission he wants, and then he writes to me that he already has permission to go and he even has the money for it!

"Where he got the money, I don't know. Perhaps he borrowed it, maybe he sold his shoes. But let's say he won the lottery—so now he thinks that it is a sign from heaven that he should use this money for '*hachnasas kallah*' by traveling overseas for a wedding! There are cheaper ways to fulfil the mitzvah of *hachnasas kallah*, like participating in a wedding here in New York, by buying a subway token for 50 cents or a dollar. But he wants to spend \$500 on this mitzvah!"

The Rebbe elaborated on this point, explaining that every person needs to have the right priorities and use their time wisely, for learning Torah, and their money for useful purposes, like giving *tzedakah*.⁶

On the other hand, there were many times that the Rebbe did give *brachos* for people to travel to *simchos*, especially for close family members. Over the years, the Rebbe would not allow the *talmidim hashluchim* who were sent to Australia for a two-year *shlichus* to leave their post for any reason whatsoever. However, in the later years the Rebbe began allowing exceptions to be made, and in one written response the Rebbe even intimated that "נשתנו העתים בזה" (times have changed in this regard).⁷

It should also be noted that regarding making larger *simchos*, there is an interesting story of the Rebbe as related by Mrs. Sara Shemtov. Sara's father, Dr. Robert (Moshe) Feldman, had the *zechus*



PAINTING BY ZALMAN KLEINMAN

to serve the Rebbe and the Rebbetzin, and when Sara got engaged to Levi Yitzchak Shemtov, she was in touch with the Rebbetzin about the *simcha*.

She relates:

“Back then, in 5748*, when we became officially engaged—on the Sunday after my visit to her—the Rebbetzin called. She wanted to shower us with blessings, and I wish that I had the presence of mind to remember everything that she said. What I do remember is the overall feeling—that a very loving grandmother wanted to wish us the absolute best.

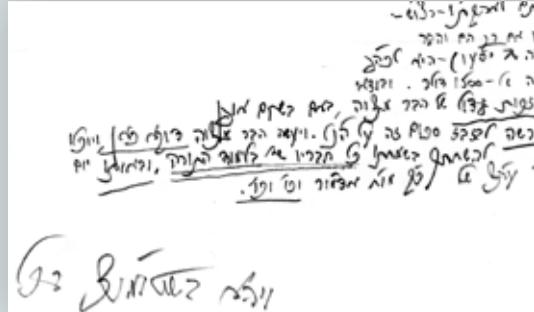
“I had hoped to bring [my *chossin*] Levi Yitzchak to meet the Rebbetzin, but that was not to be. Her health deteriorated, and she was rushed to the hospital.

“My father was with her, of course, and the astounding, overwhelming thing to me is that although the Rebbetzin was within hours of her soul leaving this world, she did not seem concerned about herself at all. She didn’t ask about the prognosis or the treatment. Instead, she kept asking my father, ‘How is the young couple? How are they doing? Are they happy? When is the wedding?’

“After she passed away, and the *shivah* period ended, my father had an occasion to be with the Rebbe, who also asked about my engagement. When he heard that we were scaling down the celebration, the Rebbe said, ‘Everything should take place as scheduled, and I hope it will not be smaller than originally planned. In fact, it should be bigger. It shouldn’t be at home; it should be in a rented hall. It should be very joyful, and with live music. You should do this because this is how the Rebbetzin would have wanted it.’”⁸

PROPER CELEBRATION

The following is the Rebbe’s response to a letter from a *Chossid*, dated Rosh Chodesh Kislev 5730*, notifying the Rebbe of his plans to travel with his son to Eretz Yisroel for his bar mitzvah.



נסיעתם לאהקת"ו - רצו"ש - (אפילו אם רק הם והבר מצוה ש' יסעו) - היא לכה"פ הוצאה של - 1500 דולר. ובודאי יהי' זכות גדול של הבר מצוה, באם בשום אופן לא ירשה לבזוז סכום זה על הנ"ל. ויעשה הבר מצוה דוקא כאן, ויוכלו להשתתף בשמחתו כל חבריו ש' בלימוד התורה, ובאותו יום יבקר עה"צ של כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר וכו' וכו'.

ויהא בשטמו"צ בכל

Your visit to Eretz Yisroel (even if only you and the bar mitzvah boy sheyichyu would be traveling) will cost at least 1500 dollars. It would surely be a great zechus for the bar mitzvah boy, if he would not allow whatsoever the waste of such an amount on the above. Rather, the bar mitzvah should be celebrated specifically here, and all his friends sheyichyu who learn Torah with him would be able to partake in the simcha, and on that day he should visit the Ohel of the [Friediker] Rebbe, my father-in-law etc. etc.

May it be in an auspicious and good time in all aspects.

(*Igros Kodesh* vol. 26, p. 247)

A Good Avenue

As Chassidim, the Rebbe wants us to use every opportunity we have to further awareness of Yiddishkeit and *hafatzas hamaayanos*. Being such a potent and spiritual time, a *simcha* is the best opportunity to be utilized towards this end.

Firstly, the Rebbe encouraged families celebrating weddings to have a *tzedakah pushka* on the tables



at the wedding meal, especially on the tables where the *chossan* and *kallah* are seated.⁹

Additionally, the Rebbe encouraged that the event itself, when possible, should be used to spread Yiddishkeit to the guests.

In a letter to someone celebrating a bar mitzvah, the Rebbe writes:

“It is surprising that you did not elaborate about the bar mitzvah of... You certainly utilized the gathering to inspire the hearts of the participants and to prompt them to take action...”¹⁰

In one instance, when asked by a family if they can make their son’s bar mitzvah celebration earlier than the actual date, the Rebbe responded:

“According to the Zohar Chadash p. 15d, which explains the reason for the great joy of a bar mitzvah [the day that a person begins their obligation to fulfill the mitzvos], it is obvious when the proper time to celebrate is [i.e. on the actual date]. However, if someone wishes to make a celebration... that will lead to increased Torah study and mitzvah observance, what could be wrong with that? Why would this avenue of strengthening Yiddishkeit be any less legitimate than all others?”¹¹

Also when it comes to a bris, the Rebbe similarly instructed that the *seudah* should include a farbrengen inspiring the participants to strengthen their mitzvah observance. In this instance, the Rebbe ruled that the ability to have a farbrengen in this spirit trumps the need to make a bris first thing in the morning. For, as the Torah says, ultimately the purpose of every mitzvah is to bring more *yiras Shamayim*.¹²

The Rebbe often quoted the Zohar about the great celebration Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai made for his son on the day of his bar mitzvah, encouraging

everyone to follow his example and likewise celebrate their children’s bar mitzvah in a joyous manner.

When a father asked the Rebbe about keeping his son’s bar mitzvah a quiet affair, the Rebbe was astonished by the idea. However, the Rebbe did add an important qualification:

“In response to your letter from Motzei Shabbos, in which you ask about the bar mitzvah of your son in the upcoming month of Iyar, whether you should make it in private or public, but you did not offer a reason for either option.

“It would seem that when a Yid enters the age of mitzvos, there should be no justification to make it a private event. Even in previous generations [it was appropriate], and all the more so nowadays, in our spiritually low time, we must seize every opportunity to strengthen Torah and mitzvos, and to allow the memories of such an event to be engraved in the hearts and minds of the participants as much as possible.

“Obviously, my intention is not that you should waste money. Rather, you should conduct a Torah-true celebration in the Chassidische spirit, where all the participants will bless your son to grow up as a *yarei Shamayim*, Chossid, and *lamdan*. The statement of our Rabbeim is well known: What a Chassidische farbrengen can accomplish, even Malach Michael cannot...”¹³



THE REBBE LEAVES 770 WHILE A CHUPAH IS TAKING PLACE

Of course, the Rebbe also encouraged the bar mitzvah *bochur* to deliver words of Torah at the celebration, both in *nigleh* and Chassidus.

In one letter, the Rebbe writes:

“I was pleasantly surprised to see in the copy of your bar mitzvah speech that you learn Likkutei Sichos, and that you succeeded in repeating ideas from there in a manner that the crowd will understand...”¹⁴

Participating in Their Simchos

With a *simcha* being such a pivotal moment in a person’s life, every Chossid wishes for the Rebbe to be a part of their *simcha*, bestowing his holy *brachos* and participating in the *simcha* in his special way. And the Rebbe, from his part, blesses each and every person and indeed ensures that the moments should truly be a *שעה טובה ומוצלחת*—a good and auspicious time.

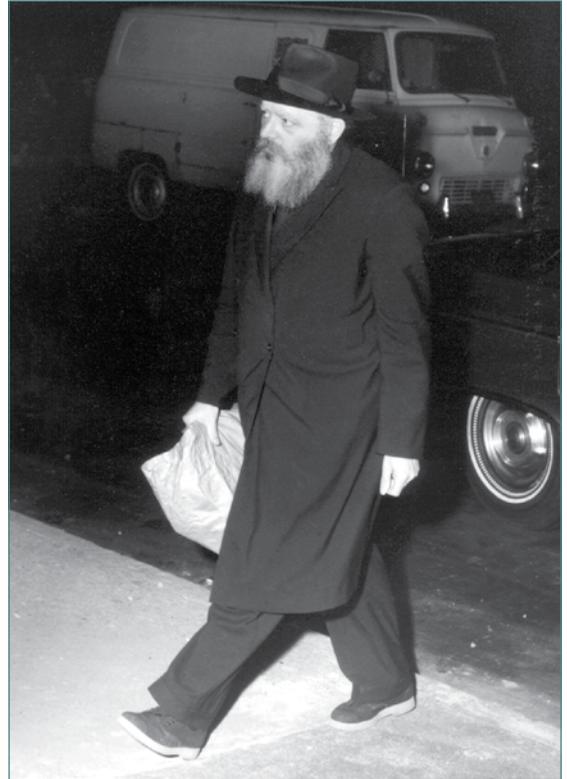
At a *farbrengen* once, the Rebbe described the holiness of the shul in 770, as he often did, as the place where his father-in-law, the Frierdiker Rebbe lived and carried out his *avodah* for ten years. The words the Rebbe used on this occasion were: “כ”ק מו”ח אדמו”ר נשיא דורנו האט געלערנט און געדאווענט, און געבענטשט אידן, און מקבל געווען בקשות, און האט זיך מצטער געווען בצערן של ישראל, און משתתף געווען בשמחתן של ישראל וואס געפינען זיך בכל קצוי תבל...”

“It was here that he learned and davened, blessed Yidden, received their requests, and felt the pain of all the Jewish people, and participated in the joys of Yidden all over the world...”

On the audio recording of this *farbrengen*, one can hear how the Rebbe cries while speaking these words.¹⁵

Indeed, the Rebbe participates in all the *simchos* of Chassidim and bestows his eternal *brachos* upon each and every one.

The Rebbe once told Reb Shmuel Zalmanov that he would not have time to edit certain pages of a publication that evening because there was going to be a wedding. Reb Shmuel was surprised, because the Rebbe had already stopped being *mesader kiddushin* for a while, but the Rebbe explained: “Instead of being there in the physical sense, we must participate spiritually, and that requires even more work!” **T**



Reb Boruch Kievman related:

During *yechidus* before our wedding, the Rebbe promised the kalla that even though he would be visiting the Ohel on the day of the wedding, 23 Elul 5726*, he would make sure to come back in time to be present (in his room) for the chupah.

As the kalla arrived under the chupah, the Rebbe’s car pulled up at the curb outside 770 and the Rebbe went straight to his room for the chupah as he had said.

This beautiful photo was taken by the wedding photographer at the moment the Rebbe emerged from the car.

1. Samach Tesamach 5657, p. 226, et. al.

2. Igros Kodesh vol. 10, p. 131.

3. Ibid. vol. 19, p. 394.

4. Ibid. vol. 18, p. 207.

5. 20 Av 5714.

6. Motzei Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim 5739.

7. V’Nichbesha Háaretz p. 107.

8. Here’s My Story, Erev Shabbos Parshas Yisro 5775. Chabad.org/2489427.

9. Yechidus 1 Cheshvan 5739, et. al.

10. Igros Kodesh vol. 10, p. 213.

11. Igros Kodesh vol. 16, p. 150.

12. Igros Kodesh vol. 4, p. 155.

13. Igros Kodesh vol. 10, p. 376.

14. Letter dated 3 Nissan 5738; Heichal Menachem vol. 1, p. 44.

15. 20 Cheshvan 5741, sicha 1.



MOSHE RABBEINU IN TASMANIA

As told by
Rabbi Chaim Gutnick

Drs. Michael and Atarah Hasofer were a couple from Israel—he a statistician, she a psychologist—who moved to Tasmania, a small island south of the Australian mainland, where they settled in Hobart. They decided that their children would be raised with absolutely no knowledge of Judaism.

The kids, once they got older, discovered that their friends celebrated non-Jewish holidays, and they were jealous. They asked their parents, “Why don’t we celebrate holidays?” The parents, however, did not even want to tell their children what they *didn’t* believe. But the children persisted, and eventually their parents were compelled to tell them, “We are Jews, but we don’t believe in or practice Judaism.”

The children complained: “It’s not fair! Why shouldn’t we celebrate our holidays?”

So the parents gave in and put up a menorah. But

only a menorah, they told the kids. But one thing led to another, and the children were thirsty for Judaism.

Eventually, they met other Jews in Tasmania, and they created a community—not by any means a religious community, but a Jewish community, which would get together from time to time. Michael was one of the only people in that small Tasmanian Jewish community

“THE PARENTS, HOWEVER,
DIDN’T EVEN WANT TO TELL
THEIR CHILDREN WHAT
THEY *DIDN’T* BELIEVE.”

who could read Hebrew so he became the de-facto lay-leader. The others said, “You have to read for us,” “But I’m an atheist,” he countered. “We don’t care what you believe, we need you to read!” was the reply.

לזכות
יהודית יפה תחי'
לרגל יום הולדתה התשע עשרה כ"ט טבת ה'תשפ"ב
ולזכות אחותה מנוחה תחי'
לרגל יום הולדתה השתים עשרה ר"ח שבט ה'תשפ"ב

לע"נ
ר' יהודה מרדכי בן ר' ברוך ע"ה
נלב"ע כ"ט טבת ה'תשי"י
ת"נ צ"ב ה'

ולע"נ
הרה"ת ר' אריאל ע"ה
בן יבלחט"א ר' שאלתיאל זאב שליט"א
נלב"ע ח' שבט ה'תשע"ה
ת"נ צ"ב ה'

נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' דובער וזוגתו מרת רחל ומשפחתם שיחיו
מאטשניק

In time, the Hasofers' interest grew. They bought Jewish books and their cultural Judaism slowly began to become sincere Judaism. They got to the point where the parents had exhausted whatever Jewish knowledge they had from their secular upbringing and from the books they had purchased. The children had more and more questions but their parents simply didn't know the answers.

One Shabbos, the Hasofers' oldest child discussed with his father: "I read in the Chumash that Moshe communicated with G-d, and G-d spoke to him." The father replied, "If this is true, there should be a Moshe in our generation as well." And the two of them sat down and prayed, asking that G-d should send them the present-day Moshe, because they have questions and they have no answers.

The next day, Michael was walking down the street, and who should he see but a rabbi, dressed in the complete *Chassidische* getup! It was Rabbi Chaim Gutnick from Melbourne, Australia. Michael ran over to him, hugged him, and said, "You must come to our house! We have so many questions!"

And so he did, and eventually the Hasofers became completely *frum*, moving to Sydney, where they lived as Lubavitchers and where Michael became

the founding president of the Australian chapter of the Association of Orthodox Jewish Scientists.

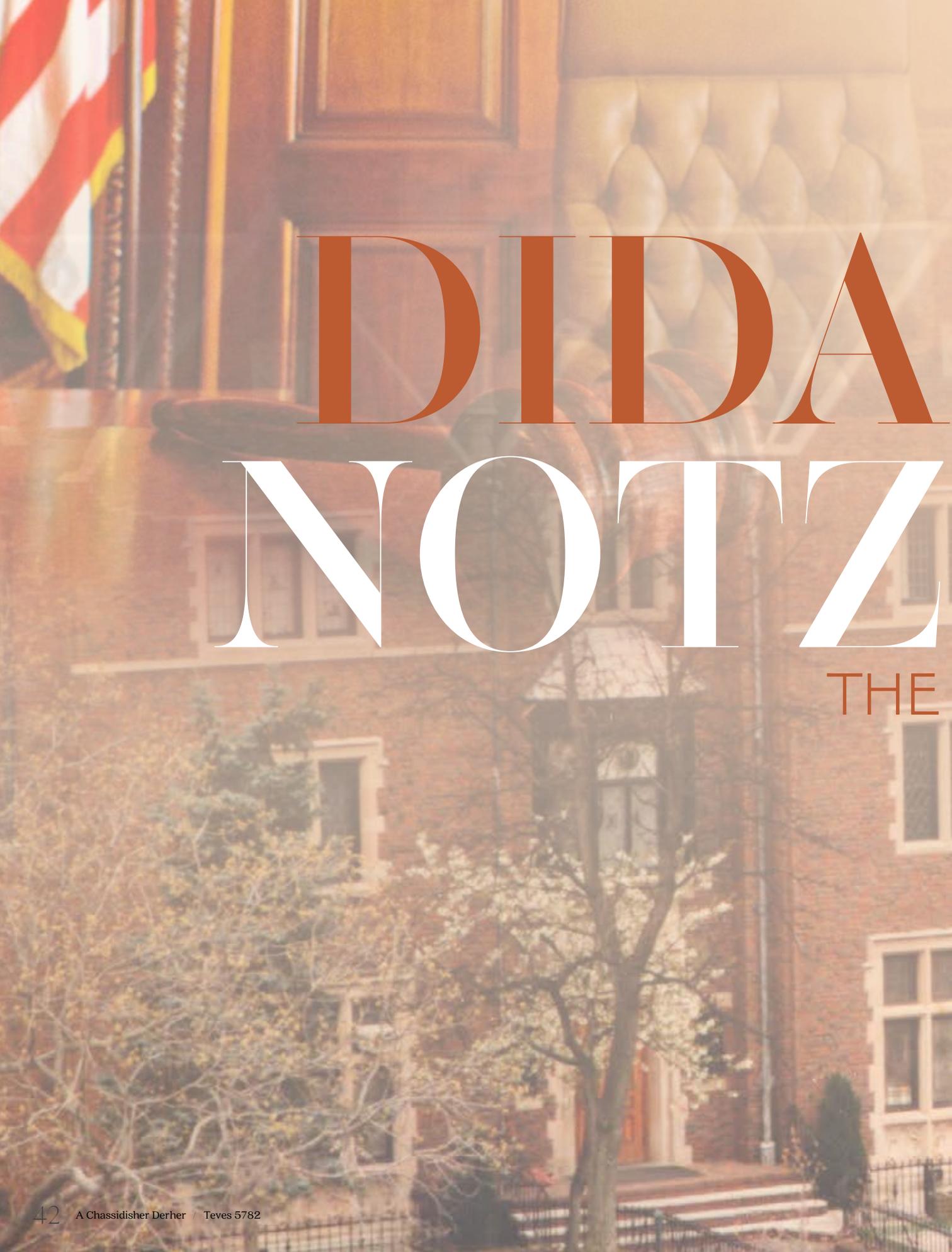
Years later, one of the Hasofer daughters was chatting with Mrs. Pnina Feldman, a daughter of Rabbi Chaim Gutnick, when she found out the rest of the story. "It was right after Shabbos," Mrs. Feldman recalled, "and my father got a telegram from the Rebbe to go to Tasmania—no other details, just that he should go there. So he went to Tasmania.

**"IF THIS IS TRUE, THERE
SHOULD BE A MOSHE IN OUR
GENERATION AS WELL."**

"He was walking down the street in Hobart, Tasmania, unsure of what he was meant to do there, when suddenly a man approached him, gave him a bear hug, and begged him to come to his house!"

And the rest is history.

The Hasofers asked for the Moshe of the generation, and the Moshe of the generation sent his shliach right to them. **1**



DIDA NOTZ

THE

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

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

N ACH!

STORY OF HEI TEVES

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

CHABAD LIBRARIES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

SHEVAT - SIVAN 5745*

THE THEFT

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



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



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

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

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

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

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

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

TAMMUZ 5745*

HU BACHAYIM!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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



LISTEN TO THE
DERHER FOR
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Yud-Beis Tammuz, the Rebbe spoke at length about the grave situation, elaborating on the role of a Rebbe and why this invalidated all the arguments and justifications of the other side.

“There are those who think that because 35 years have passed since the *histalkus* of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe, he is now more distant than ever. This is an absolute lie! The exact opposite is true! With each year he becomes more alive, stronger and more active, amongst us, within us, and through us amongst all Yidden and in the entire world!”

In addition, the Rebbe gave clear instructions that a property be purchased in Kfar Chabad that very day, 15 Tammuz, the *yom hilula* of the Or Hachaim. A temporary structure should be placed there immediately and the members of the Kfar Chabad kollel should learn the Chassidus of the Frierdiker Rebbe and the daily Rambam, right there on that day.

Towards evening of 15 Tammuz, the seven members of Agudas Chabad were again called into *yechidus* and in addition to the issue of the *sefarim* the Rebbe spoke very strongly about the need for strengthening and sustaining the Crown Heights community. The Rebbe handed each participant the *kuntres* “Yud Beis-Yud Gimmel Tammuz 5687*” that was just reprinted.

After the *maamar* at the farbrengen in honor of 15 Tammuz that night, which was being broadcast around the world by WLCC, the Rebbe spoke a long and searingly painful *sicha* about the situation. The Rebbe decried the fact that there were some Chassidim who were aiding the thief, as well as the fact that he was forced to get personally involved in the matter.

“I am not a lawyer, and law is not my field. My *inyan* is to answer a difficult question in Rambam, or from a *maamar* of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe... I hoped Chassidim would spare me the need to get involved in this issue, but alas this is not the case...”

“He says that it’s already been 35 years that the [Frierdiker] Rebbe is no longer with us... How can you have a conversation with such a person? We have no common language!”

It became increasingly clear to Chassidim that this was not just a case of the theft of *sefarim*, but that something much more painful and ominous was unfolding. On Shabbos Parshas Balak the Rebbe dedicated an entire *sicha* to the *sefarim*, and then on Shabbos Parshas Pinchas he held a farbrengen that lasted until 8:00 p.m. (the longest Shabbos farbrengen during the Rebbe’s *nesius*) and spoke a *sicha* about the *sefarim* in a manner that no one could recall ever happening before.

“As I prepare a Rashi to speak at the farbrengen I am distracted worrying about what will be with the building (770). I don’t know why it’s happening. But it distracts me!”

The Rebbe’s pain and concern was clear to all and it became clear that the crisis was taking a toll on the Rebbe’s health. A certain dread befell Chassidim throughout the world. Although there was not much most people were able to do about the issue in a practical sense, this became the focus of every Chossid. What will be with the *sefarim*?

MENACHEM AV 5745* -
CHESHVAN 5746*

PREPARATIONS

During the following weeks the Rebbe instructed that new members be added to the board of Agudas Chabad since several of the original members had passed away, and on 18 Menachem Av he called the expanded group for *yechidus* to encourage them to move faster in resolving the issue.

When it became clear that the opposition would not agree to have a *din Torah*, a non-Lubavitch *beis din* paskened that Lubavitch must settle this issue in a secular court. The case would be heard in a federal

court since the thief had crossed state lines in the course of the crime, taking the stolen *sefarim* to his home in New Jersey. An all-star legal team was retained, led by Mr. Nat Lewin and Mr. Jerry Shestak; Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky and Rabbi Avrohom Shemtov were chosen to lead the legal battle on behalf of Agudas Chabad.

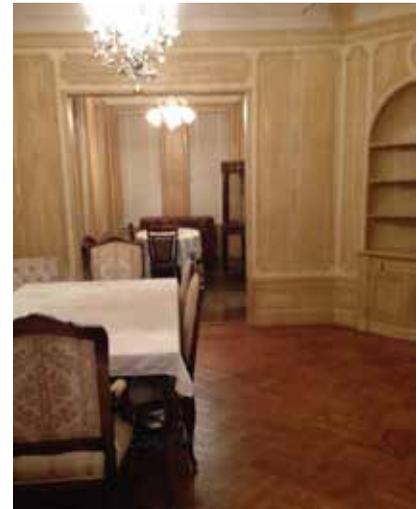
The first order of business was to stop the sale of any more *sefarim*. In the month of Menachem Av, Justice Glaser signed a temporary restraining order on the defendant from entering the library and ordered the stolen *sefarim* to be held in court storage until further notice.

“When I notified the Rebbe of the restraining order he gave a very audible sigh of relief,” Rabbi Krinsky recalled. “The Rebbe instructed me to notify the Rebbetzin of all the developments.”

Bringing the case to trial was fraught with much worry and fear. Aside from the unpredictability and the liabilities involved with public legal proceedings, the issues at hand dealt with the core of Chassidus, the role of a Rebbe and the relationship of the Rebbe with Chassidim.

Agudas Chabad filed a motion that the case be heard by a federal judge and not a jury, arguing that specifically due to the uniqueness of this unprecedented case, its outcome should not be in the hands of twelve random citizens. The opposing side obviously protested this, but miraculously the court ruled in our favor. Judge Charles Sifton, of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York, would preside over the case at the federal courthouse in Downtown Brooklyn.

In preparation for the trial, a team of Chassidim led by Rabbi Sholom Ber Levin, the librarian of the Rebbe’s library, scoured through tens of thousands of documents to find evidence of



THE DINING ROOM IN THE REBBE'S HOME WHERE THE REBBETZIN'S DEPOSITION TOOK PLACE

the library’s true ownership. They produced an impressive collection of evidence but the Rebbe would focus on one specific letter of the Frierdiker Rebbe that had already been published in *Igros Kodesh*.

On 4 Tishrei, the Lubavitch legal team gathered in *Gan Eden Hatachton* for a *yechidus* with the Rebbe to discuss the strategy for the case. The Rebbe entered the room holding a lulav (which the Midrash connects to the idea of victory⁵) and spent two hours guiding the lawyers on how to proceed. While the lawyers were excited about the hundreds of documents of evidence that had been gathered, the Rebbe pointed to the Frierdiker Rebbe’s letter to Dr. Alexander Marks as the cornerstone of the entire case.

During the *Kinus Hashluchim* at the end of Cheshvan, the Rebbe instructed Rabbi Krinsky to share the details of the case with the *shluchim* since “this is relevant to them *b’gashmius u’beruchnius*.”

In addition to the line-up of witnesses presented by both sides, the judge requested that the Rebbetzin, as the daughter of the Frierdiker Rebbe who would certainly have inside knowledge of the Frierdiker



IN THIS LETTER, THE REBBE ADDS NEW MEMBERS TO AGUDAS CHASSIDEI CHABAD AFTER SEVERAL OF THE ORIGINAL MEMBERS HAD PASSED AWAY.



DRAWING BY THE COURT ARTIST OF THE SEFARIM TRIAL.

Rebbe's affairs, should serve as a witness as well. When Rabbi Krinsky mentioned to the Rebbe that there was a possibility to absolve the Rebbetzin of such a task, the Rebbe opposed the idea and said that her testimony would be very helpful and she would succeed with "flying colors."

On 26 Cheshvan the Rebbetzin gave testimony in a deposition that was recorded in her home on President Street. For several hours lawyers from both sides asked her various questions and the opposing side tried very hard to extract testimony that would benefit their position, but they were deeply disappointed. Throughout the deposition the Rebbetzin made it clear that her father the Frieddiker Rebbe was completely dedicated to Chassidus and Yiddishkeit and did not have anything of his own.

The climax of the deposition came at the very end when the opposing lawyer asked: "In conclusion, in your opinion, did the *sefarim* in your father's room and basement belong to him or to the Chassidim?"

"They belonged to the Chassidim, since my father belonged to the Chassidim."

After the Rebbetzin's *histalkus* on Chof-Beis Shevat 5748* the Rebbe stated that these words had a tremendous impact on the outcome of the case.

On that same day, several members of Agudas Chabad sought to arrange a compromise with the opposing side in order to protect the Rebbe and Lubavitch from the horrifying prospect of a public court case. When they proposed their idea the Rebbe became very upset with them and wondered how they could even think of such a thing. "This was a war against all the Rabbeim!" the Rebbe said passionately, and mentioned each one all the way to the Baal Shem Tov.

"Their fight is not about the *sefarim*," the Rebbe said, pointing to his chair. "It's about the *beinkel* [the chair, i.e. the very essence of the Rebbe's *nesius*]."

By now the seriousness and urgency of the situation became clear to Chassidim around the world. Thousands recited the entire Tehillim every day and intensified their efforts in Torah, *avodah*, *gemilus chassadim* and *hafatzas hamaayanos*.

On 29 Cheshvan Judge Sifton set Yud-Tes Kislev as the date for the beginning of the trial.

YUD-GIMMEL KISLEV

THE FIRST VICTORY

The first major hurdle in connection with the actual trial hit Chassidim like a thunderbolt. The opposing side audaciously demanded that the Rebbe testify in

court. The very thought of such a thing occurring sent shock waves throughout Lubavitch but it seemed that there was no way out of it.

During the *farbrenge*n of Shabbos Parshas Vayeitzei, Rashag approached the Rebbe and spoke about the case. The Rebbe was very serious and animated in emphasizing that this was a monumental war against all the Rabbeim. When Rashag asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* that he should not need to testify in court the Rebbe responded that he will also go to testify because this issue was so critical.

"Monday evening I was in the Rebbe's room discussing the next day's court proceedings when the judge would rule about the Rebbe's testimony," recalls Rabbi Krinsky. "At one point the Rebbe intimated that he was ready to give testimony in court. I don't know where I got the *chutzpah* from but I said very forcefully 'No!' The Rebbe was a bit startled from my outburst but did not say anything."

Chassidim called for a half-day fast on Tuesday, Yud-Gimmel Kislev, and at 6:00 a.m. 770 was packed with young and old reciting the entire Tehillim. The fear and trepidation was unbearable.

That morning in court, Agudas Chabad's legal team pulled all the stops and at around 11:00 a.m. the judge ruled that the Rebbe would not give testimony in the case—the first of many victories to come! The joy of Chassidim knew no bounds and Yud-Gimmel Kislev became enshrined in the Lubavitch calendar as a day of celebration.⁶

Later that day the lawyers had a lengthy *yechidus* with the Rebbe in the library building as a final preparation for the trial. The Rebbe emphasized to them that they should do their job as lawyers and not as Chassidim. "Do as you see fit," the Rebbe said. "But I hope to win over your minds..."



THE REBBE STRONGLY ENCOURAGES THE SINGING AT THE JOINT TZIVOS HASHEM - TIFERES ZKEINIM LEVI YITZCHOK RALLY, CHANUKAH 5746.

At the conclusion of the *yechidus*, Mr. Jerry Shestak said to the Rebbe: “I understand that tonight is your wedding anniversary. *Mazel tov!*” The Rebbe responded with a radiant smile, “It should be the first of many *mazel tovs*.”

KISLEV - ADAR RISHON 5746*

THE TRIAL

The trial began on Yud-Tes Kislev and continued for approximately three weeks. Chassidim of all ages, men and women, attended the proceedings every day of the trial. There was limited space in the chamber and a rotation was arranged to allow everyone a chance to personally watch the proceedings. Many will recall the venerated Chossid and Rosh Yeshiva, Harav Mordechai Mentlik, who although did not understand any of the proceedings, nevertheless stood reciting Tehillim with his trademark soldier-like *kabolas ol* throughout all the hearings. Men and women sat separately and everyone had a Tehillim in their hands. The overflowing crowd filled the halls of the court reciting Tehillim. The judge was pleased and impressed with the discipline and decorum the Chassidim displayed throughout the trial.

The entire set of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *Igros Kodesh* was placed on a table at the center of the courtroom since much of the debates centered around the meaning of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s words in his letters. In addition to regular witnesses who had personal involvement with the Frierdiker Rebbe and the library, there was a lineup of professional witnesses, who were called upon to explain the history of Chassidus and Chassidim, the meaning of a Rebbe and many aspects of *halacha*.

One of the central debates in the case was about the following: The opposing side proposed that all the evidence proving that the library belonged to Agudas Chassidei Chabad was irrelevant since it was set up this way only as a front. The question arose whether it is conceivable that the Frierdiker Rebbe would do such a thing.

The Rebbe was extremely troubled by the fact that people who were Chassidim of the Frierdiker Rebbe could even suggest that, and was pained at the tremendous *chillul Hashem* it caused.

In one dramatic episode during the court case, the man who served as the librarian of the library had the *chutzpah* to say in his testimony that it was all a lie. During cross examination the lawyer for Lubavitch asked the man to close his eyes and envision the image of the Frierdiker Rebbe. He then asked him to repeat what he had just said.

Suddenly, the man was overcome with emotion and tearfully said that the Frierdiker Rebbe was all about *mesiras nefesh* for Shulchan Aruch and it is inconceivable that he would say or write something that is untrue...

Other professional witnesses on behalf of Lubavitch included: Dr. Louis Jacobs from England, a renowned author on Chassidus and Chassidim; Rabbi Zalman Posner

and Rabbi Immanuel Schochet as eminent scholars in Chassidus; Rabbi Ralbag from Iggud Harabbonim as a halachic authority; and Mr. Elie Wiesel, as a renowned activist and author who spoke about the impact of Chabad throughout the world today.

As the legal battle played out in court, the Rebbe was waging a spiritual battle. Before Yud-Tes Kislev 5746* it was rare for the Rebbe to go to the Ohel more than twice a month. For the duration of the trial, however, the Rebbe went to the Ohel almost every single day with less than a handful of exceptions! The Rebbe’s entire demeanor was extremely serious throughout this time period and the Rebbe was updated every day on the proceedings.

Each year on Chanukah it was customary for the Rebbe to participate in a Tzivos Hashem rally as well as a gathering for the Kollel Tiferes Zekeinim Levi Yitzchok-Chochmas Noshim. That year the Rebbe notified the organizers that since he was going to the Ohel every day because of the trial, they should host the event jointly and on Wednesday, 29 Kislev, the Rebbe addressed the packed shul of elderly and very young with several powerful *sichos*.

The Rebbe emphasized that the best way to diminish the ever increasing darkness of *galus* was through increasing in *simcha*,



RABBIS BEREL LEVIN AND YITZCHOK WILHELM REVIEW DOCUMENTS AT THE COURTHOUSE



SCENES OF THE JOYOUS DANCING ON 5 TEVES 5747* WHEN THE NEWS OF DIDAN NOTZACH FIRST BROKE.

and instructed Chassidim to host Chanukah events and farbrengens every night of Chanukah. Before Shabbos the Rebbe sent a message to the shluchim in Eretz Yisroel to arrange special gatherings on Motzei Shabbos with a big “*shturem*.”

During the farbrengen of Shabbos Chanukah the Rebbe spoke with ever increasing urgency to increase in gatherings of *simcha*, and surprised the crowd by announcing that there would be another farbrengen on Motzei Shabbos.

At this surprise farbrengen, the Rebbe addressed one of the most laughable claims of the opposing side: Agudas Chassidei Chabad has not been “active” for over 40 years! Although the “activeness” of Lubavitch needs no proof, the Rebbe derived from this false argument that apparently there is more that can be done, and encouraged Chassidim around the world to increase their Chanukah *peulos* and all their other efforts in spreading Yiddishkeit and Chassidus to even greater levels. The Rebbe called for a special album to be published of Chabad’s Chanukah outreach of that year. The beautiful album entitled *Let There Be Light* was published before Yud Shevat at the Rebbe’s insistence.

During this farbrengen the Rebbe explained at length the story of when the Baal Shem Tov and the Maggid

visited the Alter Rebbe in prison on Yud-Tes Kislev and explained that the imprisonment was a result of a *kitrug* in Heaven against Chassidus. How was it possible for a new *kitrug* to emerge against Chassidus after the Alter Rebbe had already neutralized an earlier *kitrug* against Chassidus during the lifetime of the Maggid?

As Chassidus becomes more revealed in the world and conquers new vistas, a new *kitrug* reemerges and must be dealt with all over again, the Rebbe explained. Chassidim understood that the Rebbe was unambiguously stating that the situation with the *sefarim* was a new and frightening *kitrug* against Chassidus.

When the Rebbe returned from the Ohel on Sunday, Zos Chanukah, everyone was shocked with a surprise farbrengen. Once again the Rebbe spoke at great length about the *kitrug* against the Alter Rebbe and everyone could see the Rebbe’s grave concern about the trial.

There were other major changes in the Rebbe’s behavior which seemed directly connected to the trial. Shabbos Bereishis 5746* was the last time (aside for the two exceptions of Erev Pesach and Shavuos 5749*) the Rebbe said a *maamar* with the standard tone preceded by a *niggun*, and from that point on only said *maamarim ke’ein sicha*. Chassidim were shocked that

on Yud-Tes Kislev and Yud Shevat the Rebbe said *maamarim ke’ein sicha*.

At the same time the Rebbe started editing his *maamarim* for publication for almost every Yom Tov and *yoma depagra*, which was previously extremely rare.

Closing arguments were heard in the court on 11 Adar I. After both sides made their final presentations, the judge allowed them to each send in one letter with follow up arguments and concluded that he will have a verdict within a few months. However, Judge Sifton was soon assigned to a major criminal case involving multiple defendants which dragged on for months, and the long awaited verdict took much longer than anticipated.

Chassidim continued to say Tehillim but there was a certain optimism in the air. The words “Didan Notzach” were fitted to a *freilicher* tune which was sung very frequently in the Rebbe’s presence and the Rebbe encouraged it very strongly. During the Yud Shevat farbrengen the Rebbe even sang the words along with the Chassidim. But time dragged on...

At the conclusion of the farbrengen of Yud-Tes Kislev 5747* the Rebbe said the words “Didan Notzach” giving Chassidim renewed anticipation for an imminent verdict and victory. Chanukah that year the Rebbe elevated the pace and expectation of the *peulos* and *mitvzoim* and spoke a *sicha* almost every night inspiring Chassidim and shluchim to increase in their *peulos* every night. It was the first year of the iconic car-top menorah parades and in a rare, public expression of satisfaction the Rebbe said that the Chanukah *mitvzoim* of that year was done as expected.

HEI TEVES 5747*

DIDAN NOTZACH!

On⁷ Tuesday, Hei Teves the long awaited verdict arrived: Didan



ONE OF THE LEAD LAWYERS, MR. NATHAN LEWIN, SPEAKS AND PARTICIPATES IN THE DANCING DURING THE SEVEN DAYS OF CELEBRATION FOLLOWING THE VICTORY.

Notzach! In a stunning victory the judge ruled that all the *sefarim* belong to Lubavitch and that all the claims of the opposing side were null and void.

The news spread throughout the world like wildfire and Chassidim rushed to 770 to express their relief, joy and jubilation. The *freilicher niggun* Didan Notzach was blaring over loudspeakers and a growing circle of dancing Chassidim formed on the sidewalk in front of 770. When Rabbi Krinsky entered the Rebbe's room with the good news, he asked the Rebbe if there would be a *farbrengen* in honor of the *simcha* and the Rebbe said he needed to think about it.

As 3:15 p.m. came closer, 770 was packed with celebrating Chassidim and the Rebbe notified *mazkirus* that due to the crowd he would daven downstairs in the main shul instead of in the upstairs *zal* as usual. *Bochurim* immediately set up the elevated *bima* for the Rebbe which was typically used for Tishrei and had just been there throughout the days of Chanukah.

As the Rebbe entered the shul to the loud and joyous chanting of Didan Notzach, the Rebbe distributed coins for *tzedakah* to the many children who were there, and when he reached his place the crowd instinctively

started singing Ashrei with the tune used in summer camps. In an exciting turn of events, the Rebbe asked Rabbi Groner for a Chumash, which was an indication that the Rebbe would say a *sicha!* The joy in the room intensified immensely.

In a historic *sicha*, the Rebbe spoke about the importance of realizing that every situation is for a purpose. Gleaning from the story of Yosef and his brothers being learned on *yom shlishi* of Parshas Vayigash, the Rebbe noted that immediately after revealing himself to his brothers, Yosef insisted they recognize that Hashem sent him to Mitzrayim and it was not due to their own decision. Every terrible situation has a purpose and the pain and suffering of the recent situation is in order for us to grow in all areas of Yiddishkeit, Chassidus and *hafatzas hammayanos*.

The Rebbe reiterated his urgent call to establish Chabad Houses everywhere in the world and invoked the final words of that day's Chitas: ותחי רוח יעקב אביהם!

As Chassidim streamed to 770 from all over the world, the celebrations continued unabated throughout the night. A festive impromptu *farbrengen* took place in 770 that night and many elder Chassidim spoke emotionally and passionately

about the immense gratitude to Hashem for the miraculous victory.

On Wednesday, 6 Teves, the Rebbe went to the Ohel and davened Mincha and Maariv in the upstairs *zal* upon his return to 770. After Maariv, the Rebbe turned to the crowd and started to say a surprise *sicha*. The Rebbe declared that now was an auspicious time and everyone could send in *panim* that the Rebbe would take with him to the Ohel the next day.

Word of the Rebbe's unprecedented offer reached every Jewish community in the world within hours. Every fax machine in every office in 770 continued printing faxes of *panim* non stop, in addition to the many thousands that brought their *panim* personally to 770 from throughout the tri-state area.

All the while, the celebration in 770 continued throughout that night.

The next day when the Rebbe went to the Ohel, 14 sacks filled with *panim* accompanied the Rebbe in a separate car. Another batch of sacks were brought to the Ohel later on. The Rebbe returned to 770 very late and after davening Mincha and Maariv said yet another *sicha!* The third *sicha* in as many days.

That night Agudas Chabad hosted the official *seudas hodaah* in the main shul of 770, with the participation



REB YOEL KAHAN SPEAKS ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HEI TEVES IN THE DAYS FOLLOWING THE VICTORY

of many distinguished guests from around the world, including Mr. Nat Lewin who had worked so hard on the case. In addition to expressing his immense gratitude for being able to work on such an important and historic case, he explained how the Rebbe's guidance to base the case on the Friediker Rebbe's letter to Dr. Marks had turned out to be the main catalyst for the judge's decision.

In a short but historic speech, Reb Yoel Kahn distilled and identified the essence of the victory of Hei Teves. As the Rebbe had emphasized during the trial and during the *sicha* of the afternoon of Hei Teves, the situation of the *sefarim* was similar to the *kitrug* that led to Yud-Tes Kislev. However, in the times of the Alter Rebbe, Reb Yoel explained, the *kitrug* was against *Toras haChassidus* so the result of the victory was an increase in the spreading of *Toras haChassidus*. This time the *kitrug* was against the *nossi*, the *maor*, the source of Chassidus. The opposition challenged the very essence of a Rebbe. Therefore, the result must be an unprecedented increase in the awareness of the Rebbe himself.

"Today, thousands of Yidden wrote *tzetelach* to the Rebbe—an unprecedented expression of the world's awareness of the Rebbe!"

The celebrations continued

non-stop throughout the night.

That Shabbos in 770 there was a tremendously joyous Yom Tov atmosphere. The Rebbe held a *farbrengen* and spoke very strongly about Moshiach. On Motzei Shabbos the non-stop celebrations continued until the fast of Asara B'Teves began early in the morning. After Shacharis, the rabbonim presented the Rebbe with a *psak din* that Moshiach must come immediately.

After Mincha the Rebbe spoke a *sicha* of *divrei kevushin* (as was the Rebbe's custom on fast days) with a very joyous tone and thanked the many guests who had traveled to be in 770 to celebrate the "*besuros tovos*" in a manner of *משתה תמיד*. That night the celebrations continued until the early hours of the morning marking seven days of continuous joy and thanksgiving for the tremendous miracle of Didan Notzach.

On Monday evening after Maariv, the Rebbe spoke a long *sicha* explaining the meaning behind Didan Notzach. He declared that as Yud Shevat was approaching, everyone needed to prepare themselves properly and he expected three reports of every Chossid's progress over the next 30 days until Yud Shevat.

Thus concluded the *שבעת ימי המשתה* of Didan Notzach.

THE SEFARIM RETURN HOME

Following Judge Sifton's verdict, the opposing side filed an appeal with the Second Circuit of the US Court of Appeals. The Rebbe considered this move as an appeal on the essential idea of the eternity of a *nossi*. On Shabbos Parshas Vayikra the Rebbe delivered a foundational *sicha* on the eternity of the *nossi hador* and instructed that it be prepared for editing, to be published as the Likkutei Sichos for Shabbos Hagadol.⁸ This was extremely unique.

The Rebbe also instructed that a special *kuntres* be published with the final *maamar* of the Rebbe Rashab—ד"ה ראשית גויים עמלק—תר"פ, and the final *maamar* of the Friediker Rebbe—ד"ה באתי לגני תש"י.

On Tuesday, 25 Cheshvan, a panel of three judges upheld the original verdict that the *sefarim* belong to Lubavitch unequivocally. The celebration in 770 was indescribable and the Rebbe davened Mincha downstairs on the elevated *bima*, but had a very serious expression throughout.

On 27 Cheshvan, the court ruled that the *sefarim* must be returned to 770 on Monday, 2 Kislev. That Shabbos was the first International Kinus Hashluchim and 770 was in full Yom Tov mode.

Agudas Chabad planned on arranging a celebratory parade for Monday in front of 770 to welcome back the *sefarim* but the Rebbe rejected the idea, preferring that the return happen without pomp and fanfare.

Unfortunately, the Rebbe's wish was not completely fulfilled. As the Rebbe approached his car to go to the mikveh in preparation for going to the Ohel, he noticed crowds of *bochurim* waiting around for the *sefarim* to return to 770 and spoke very sharply about the need



THE SEFARIM RETURN, 2 KISLEV 5748*.

to welcome the *sefarim* by learning the *sefarim* and not wasting time outdoors.

At 3:00 p.m., while the Rebbe was at the Ohel, an armored vehicle pulled up to 770 and 13 boxes containing the stolen *sefarim* were carried into 770 by members of Agudas Chabad and placed in *Gan Eden Hatachton* near the Rebbe's room. The Rebbe instructed Rabbi Krinsky to take out a few *sefarim* from the boxes and bring them to the Ohel. One of them was a *sefer* titled *מזמור לתורה*—which seemed extremely appropriate for the circumstance.

Another *sefer* was *דרך אמונה* and the Rebbe instructed that it be republished as soon as possible. Two days later a beautiful new edition of *דרך אמונה* was published and the Rebbe explained part of it at the following *farbrengen*.

As the anniversary of Hei Teves approached many Chassidim were unsure how the Rebbe would react to it, in light of the Rebbe's insistence that the return of the *sefarim* be done in a quiet manner. Hei Teves 5748* occurred on a Shabbos and to everyone's delight the Rebbe held a *farbrengen* (even though it was not a Shabbos that the Rebbe would ordinarily have a *farbrengen*) and the Rebbe spoke extensively about the victory of Hei Teves and established the day as an *עת רצון לדורות*—an auspicious time for all generations!

ELUL 5749* - ELUL 5750*

THE FINAL PHASE

After Lubavitch's resounding victory, the opposition audaciously pushed forward with new allegations



THE FRIERDIKER REBBE'S YECHIDUS ROOM ON THE SECOND FLOOR OF 770, WHICH CONTAINED SOME OF THE MOST PRECIOUS ARTIFACTS OF THE LIBRARY, INCLUDING THE BAAL SHEM TOV'S SIDDIR

against the Rebbe and a long and bitter legal battle ensued behind the scenes. On Wednesday, 26 Tishrei 5750* the opposition demanded that the Rebbe should testify in court at this new trial, *Rachmana litzlan*, but the judge ruled that such a thing was unnecessary. The news was received in 770 with tremendous *simcha* and during *Mincha* everyone could see the Rebbe was especially joyful.

On Tuesday, 19 Teves 5750* the court ruled in favor of Lubavitch and on Tuesday, 28 Elul (which was *Gimmel D'Selichos*) the 13 *sefarim* that had been on the Frierdiker Rebbe's desk on Yud Shevat 5710* were finally returned to their rightful place, marking the completion of the long and bitter saga. When the Rebbe was notified that the entire saga had finally come to its complete end, the Rebbe remarked, "Nu, now we can say *divrei Torah*..."

A complete and total
Didan Notzach! **T**

פדה בשלום

On Yud Kislev 5746*, days before the onset of the trial the Rebbe explained in the *maamar* that all the redemptions of the Rabbeim occurred on days that we recite *kapitel* 55 in *Tehillim*, which contains the *possuk* of *פדה בשלום*, either for the days of the month (Yud Kislev) or the days of the week (Tuesday: Yud-Tes Kislev and Yud-Beis Tammuz).

It is interesting to note that all of the major victories that transpired in connection with the trial of the *sefarim* occurred on a Tuesday.

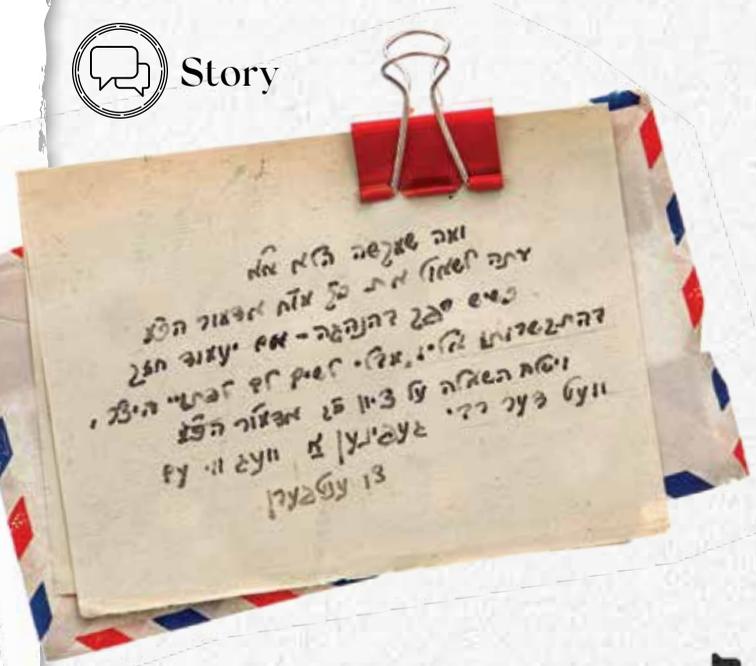
י"ג כסלו תשמ"ו, ה' טבת
תשמ"ז, כ"ה חשוון תשמ"ח, י"ט
טבת תש"נ, כ"ח אלול תש"נ.

1. See Hei Teves—A Higher Perspective, Derher Teves 5774; Establishing a Yom Tov, Derher Teves 5775; A Challenging Time—An Eternal Victory, Hei Teves through the eyes of the *bochurim*, Derher Teves 5776. Much of the information for this article was culled from the Kuntres "Didan Notzach" by Rabbi Shmuel Lubecki.
2. See Retaining Chassidus, Derher Adar I, 5776.
3. See further in the article for more on this issue.
4. See Rescue of the Library, Derher Adar I, 5774.
5. Vayikra Rabba 30:7

6. See Derher Weekly, Vol. #2, Issue #10.

7. See *Leben Mitten Rebbe'n*, Derher Teves 5778 for a detailed yoman of Hei Teves 5747. See A Challenging Time—An Eternal Victory, Hei Teves through the eyes of the *bochurim*, Derher Teves 5776, for a detailed description of the celebrations from the view of the *bochurim*.

8. Likkutei Sichos vol. 32, p. 19.



דער רבי וועט געפינען אַ וועג...

לע"נ
 הילדה התמימה אלטא מינא ע"ה
 בת יבלחט"א הרה"ח הרה"ת
 ר' ישכר שלמה ומרת שיינא שיחיו
 טייכטל
 תלמידת בית רבקה חברה בצבאות ה' זכתה לקירוב
 מיוחד מכ"ק אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו
 נקטפה בדמי ימיה ביום ש"ק, פרשת ואלה שמות
 כ"ג טבת ה'תש"נ
 ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

נדפס ע"י
 משפחתה שיחיו

The Law Changed!

AS TOLD BY RABBI SHIMON S.Z. GRUZMAN
 (CASTRO VALLEY, CALIFORNIA)

In the month of Elul 5777* we decided to open a preschool in our home. At the time the law in California mandated that a home daycare center could only apply for a permit with a capacity of eight students for the first year. The state inspectors came to inspect our home to ensure it was up to code and that all the safety measures necessary for a home daycare center were in place, and we received this permit with ease.

By the end of the school year we wanted to apply for a permit to have a higher capacity of students in our

preschool, but this presented a unique challenge. In addition to renewing our state permit, it was necessary to apply for a permit from our local county because opening a larger daycare presented a zoning concern

A small preschool of eight children was still considered normal home usage. Having more children in our home on a daily basis meant that our home was becoming more of a business and a more public space, necessitating a conditional use permit, so we would need to apply for an amendment to the zoning of our home.



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

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

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

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

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

Throughout the summer we waited to hear from

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

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

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

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

YOUR STORY

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



JEM 286795

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

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



THE REBBE HEADS HOME

Zos Chanukah 5734*

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

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





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JEM108458

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.

פארוואס זאל מען משנה זיין מעשה בראשית?

Dear Editors,

I am always amazed when pictures of the Rebbe, never seen before, surface so many years after תמוז ג'.

Your publication printed a photograph of the Rebbe that neither I, nor anyone in my family knew existed.

In last year's Cheshvan edition you featured a full page image of the Rebbe exiting his car on his way into 770 [Moments, Cheshvan 5745].

What may have seemed like an ordinary snapshot to most, was most extraordinary to me.

In this picture, my (paternal) *zeide*, Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky, is wearing his *kapote* and my (maternal) bubby, Rebbetzin Bassie Garelik, is holding me atop a (bris) pillow, as this was the morning of my bris.

I'd like to share an interesting anecdote from that day. That morning, my *elter zeide*, Rabbi Sholom Posner, inquired from my *zeide*, Rabbi Gershon Mendel Garelik, as to who will be sandek. In his true, sincere and Chassidic fashion, Zeide Garelik replied: "אויב נישט דער רבי, וועט איר זיין—If not the Rebbe, then you will be it."

To that end, Zeide Sholom stood by the Rebbe's door (possibly right after

this photo was taken) and when the Rebbe emerged he asked the Rebbe to be sandek. The Rebbe smiled and replied: "פארוואס זאל מען משנה זיין מעשה בראשית", loosely translated as "Why change the way things have always been?"

Leibel Krinsky

PALM BEACH GARDENS FL

"Are there other chassanim who are Kohanim here?"

Dear Editors,

Thank you for the beautiful article about the legendary Chossid, Reb Shmuel Levitin [Unique, Even in Previous Generations, Derher Cheshvan 5782].

I want to comment on one of the stories related about Reb Shmuel: You wrote that Reb Shmuel was able to be *melamed zechus* in front of the Rabbeim in a clever way, and was able to say the right thing at the right moment. To illustrate this point, there's a story of a farbrengen where the Rebbe Rashab bemoaned the *chillul Shabbos* that was commonplace at the time, and Reb Shmuel's response about a Yid's *mesiras nefesh* to keep Shabbos.

It's important to add context to this story: Reb Shmuel obviously understood that every word of a Rebbe carries layers of spiritual meaning, and if the Rebbe

was talking in this manner, it was likely due to a heavenly prosecution about *chillul Shabbos*. As a faithful Chossid, Reb Shmuel must have thought that the Rebbe would want him to respond in the way he did, to help alleviate the heavenly judgement of the Jewish people, *chas v'shalom*. And we see that he indeed had done well, as the Frieddiker Rebbe seemed to agree with his sentiment.

Again, thanks for the article.
Much continued hatzlacha.

Yosef Blanter
BROOKLYN, NY

Likkutei Levi Yitzchok

Dear Editors,

Thank you for the new interesting section of Hamaaseh Hu Ha'ikar. I wish to point out two corrections in the section for 13 Tishrei:

1) You wrote that it is befitting to learn “the first *maamar* the Rebbe Maharash said—on הצור תמים פעלו תרכ”ז—on

13 Tishrei.” This is incorrect. The first *maamar* the Rebbe Maharash said was before he became Rebbe, in the beginning of 5626*, as the Rebbe says in Sefer Hatoldos Admur Maharash, p. 13. See also Hisvaaduyos 5749, vol. 3, pg. 93, fn. 82, that the *maamar*—זכור את יום השבת—לקדשו תרכ”ז, which is the first *maamar* in Sefer Hamaamarim 5626, was one of the first *maamarim* he said in public.

2) The footnote on this paragraph in the Derher is incorrect, as it’s a repeat of footnote 11, which is about Napoleon’s March. The correct source is Hisvaaduyos 5752, vol. 1, pg. 72. And there you will see that there are two words missing from the translation in the Derher: דפרשת האזינו. Meaning, the first *maamar* of Parshas Haazinu said by the Rebbe Maharash was הצור תמים פעלו תרכ”ז, the first “Parshas Haazinu” after he became Rebbe. And that’s the *maamar* the Rebbe says to study for 13 Tishrei.

Thank you,

Avraham D. Vaisfiche
BROOKLYN, NY

