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# 100

## THE REBBE'S BAR MITZVAH

*On Yud-Aleph Nissan this year, Chassidim mark 100 years since the Rebbe's bar mitzvah, in 5675.*

*The Rebbe once said about the Frierdiker Rebbe's bar mitzvah that on this day he became a fully-grown Yid, and it served as a preparation for all his accomplishments later on in his life, including his leadership as nossi.<sup>1</sup>*

*Needless to say, the Rebbe's bar mitzvah is a most important event in the Rebbe's life, and consequently, in our lives as Chassidim as well.*

*In this spirit, we present the following compilation of stories and anecdotes about the Rebbe's bar mitzvah, as well as the Rebbe's activities marking the date of the Frierdiker Rebbe's bar mitzvah.*

### WEeping TURNED TO JOY

*From the Memoirs of Rebbetzin Chana<sup>2</sup>*

*Following Shabbos, Rosh Chodesh Adar I, 5719*

At a time when we look forward to a good week, and it's also *Rosh Chodesh*, particularly of the month of Adar, when "we increase joy," I should write in a cheerful mood.

However, I'm sitting alone at home, not so upbeat. On the 28th of Tevet, I became 79 years old. Thank Gd that I've been able to keep going until now in my present condition, emotional and physical, but it gets more difficult every day.

This week was the bar-mitzvah celebration of a friend's son. It reminded me of the *bar-mitzvah* of my

older son, long may he live in good health and with success. All the *bar-mitzvahs* of our sons were celebrated by us in a fine manner. But my older son's was something special, extraordinary, on a highly sublime level. It was our family's first personal celebration.

My husband, of blessed memory, was held in high regard. This was despite the initial "birth pangs" of his rabbinic position due to opposition by non-Chasidim and Zionists against Lubavitch, which they considered him to personify and which is why they didn't want to accept his appointment. But now it was already seven years that we had lived in the city, and our supporters were proud of my husband's accomplishments, while those opposing had often expressed their remorse. Now both sides had an

opportunity to express their feelings.

For our good friends, it was a genuine celebration, expressed in a delightfully friendly closeness which had a delectable feeling, as I remind myself now.

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

I don't remember exactly when it started, probably around 12:00 noon, after the conclusion of prayers at *shul*. The men sat in the large hall, while we women were



in the large dining room. Of course, the tables were beautifully set with abundant food, for both the men and the women.

Around 3:00-4:00 p.m. we saw some of the male guests, both old and young, emerging with weeping faces. I tried looking inside the main hall to discover the reason for their tears, but it was

so crowded in there that I couldn't see through all the heads.

When I asked those who had been inside, they told me that the father—my husband—had requested our son (long may he live) to promise him something. I wasn't inside, so I don't know the actual course of events. But our son's reply,

apparently, wasn't immediate. Everyone was amazed by the great character of such a young boy, that he was so guarded and cautious about giving his reply.

I don't know the details of what actually happened there, but around 6:00-7:00 p.m.—I remember it wasn't so light any more—the weeping faces I had previously

## REPEAT FOR THE SHLUCHIM

*In an interview with A Chassidisher Derher (Tammuz 5773), Rabbi Moshe Feller related a fascinating story about the farbrengen of Yud-Tes Tammuz, 5728:*

As a result of my activities with B'nei Brith, I was subsequently invited to be a scholar-in-residence at the International B'nei Brith ten-day retreat that summer, near New York.

After receiving the Rebbe's *brocha* I agreed to join. Over my time there, I developed a core group of guys who endeavored to learn with me at every free moment. Half way through the retreat I made arrangements to leave one evening in order to attend the Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen that night.

When my "*talmidim*" found out my plans, they pestered me for explanations. What is a farbrengen? Why must you travel? Can't you farbreng here?

I found myself in a challenging predicament. How could I justify visiting the Rebbe when it would entail leaving behind these youngsters thirsting for Chassidus?

I had no choice but to stay, and, in fact, we farbrenged late into the night, discussing fundamentals of Chassidus and the *geulah* of Yud-Beis Tammuz.

The retreat continued until the nineteenth of Tammuz whereupon I traveled to New York. I entered 770 only to be notified by Rabbi Binyomin Klein that the Rebbe wanted to see Rabbi Shlomo Cunin, Rabbi Yitzchok Dovid Groner and myself! I hurried off to get my *kapota* and returned to the Rebbe's room.

Rabbi Klein was waiting for me and informed me that we would have to wait to see the Rebbe because the Rebbe had decided to hold a surprise farbrengen at one in the afternoon!

Due to the short notice, 770 was quite empty when the Rebbe strode in a short while later for the farbrengen. The small group of shluchim, chassidim, and bochurim who had gathered listened closely as the Rebbe spoke of that year being 75 years from the Frierdiker Rebbe's bar mitzvah.

The Rebbe explained that when the Frierdiker Rebbe had his bar mitzvah, seven days of festivities ensued, similar to *sheva brochos*. But because the fast of 17 Tammuz interrupted the celebrations, and 18 Tammuz was Shabbos, the Rebbe Rashab said a *maamor* on Sunday.

In that spirit the Rebbe recited a *maamor*, with the same *dibur hamaschil* as the one the Rebbe Rashab had recited that same day 75 years prior—"Vechozakta ve'hayisa le'ish."

The farbrengen lasted just over an hour, and the Rebbe then returned to his room. I then entered for my *yechidus*.

Although I had not had any *tzetel* prepared to give the Rebbe, and I hadn't written to the Rebbe the entire time I was at the retreat, the Rebbe exclaimed:

היות דו האסט זיך איינגעהאלטען פון קומען דא "ב תמוז האב איך פאר  
דיר פארענדעקט דעם מאמר...

*Because you restrained yourself from coming here for Yud-Beis Tammuz I completed the maamor [today] especially for you...*

Wow. I was simply blown away. I hadn't even informed the Rebbe about my decision not to come, and yet the Rebbe had transformed the challenge into an opportunity!







THE SHUL IN YEKATRINOSLAV WHERE THE REBBE'S FATHER, RAV LEVI YITZCHOK, SERVED AS RAV

seen became very happy. Now from inside we heard the sound of such joyous dancing and singing, and the joy became so intense that it affected those outside, too. One sensed that the enthusiastic rejoicing held some deep significance, and that both the nature of the request and the one who gave his reply would remain memorable for a long time.



## AFTERNOON FARBRENGEN

75 Years - 5728

On Yud-Beis Tammuz 5728, the Rebbe marked 75 years since the Frierdiker Rebbe's bar mitzvah. In honor of the occasion, the Rebbe published a *kuntres* called "קונטרס תפילין דמארי עלמא - תרנ"ג", containing the *maamorim* recited at the Frierdiker Rebbe's bar mitzvah.

At the farbrengen on Yud-Beis Tammuz, the Rebbe urged the shlichim and Merkos shlichim to increase in *mitvza tefillin* (launched by the Rebbe around one year earlier), explaining that the prevailing *minhag Yisrael* is to connect a bar mitzvah with *tefillin*.

At the conclusion of the farbrengen, the Rebbe requested that additional farbrengens be arranged throughout the coming week, similar to the week of the Frierdiker Rebbe's actual bar mitzvah, when the celebration continued with nightly farbrengens for seven days, including Shabbos, 17 Tammuz (*Shiv'ah Asar B'Tammuz - nidcheh*).<sup>3</sup>

On Monday, 19 Tammuz, the Rebbe held a short surprise farbrengen right before mincha (see sidebar) and delivered a *maamor* with the *dibur hamaschil* "*Vechozakta ve'hayisa le'ish*" (subsequently *mugah* by the Rebbe in 5749).

Later that day, the Rebbe wrote an interesting letter to the president of Israel, Zalman Shazar, notifying him of the surprise farbrengen:

ב"ה, י"ט תמוז, ה'תשכ"ח

ברוקלין, נ.י.

לכבוד הו"ח א"א נר"נ בחור מעם ומורם מעם  
ודורש טוב לעמו בעל מדות תרומיות ענף עץ אבות  
מו"ה שניאור זלמן שליט"א

שלום וברכה!

הנני לאשר קבלת מכתבו מיום סגולה י"ג תמוז,  
וכנהוג אצל אחב"י למצוא רמזים ולקשר ענין  
בענין הרי סימן טוב הוא שנתקבל מכתבו אחרי  
ההתוועדות של היום.

שאף על פי שלכאורה תמוה הוא מהו ענין  
התוועדות בימי בין המצרים, הרי ב"ב-י"ג תמוז  
דהאי שתא מלאו 75 שנה מיום הבר מצוה של כ"ק  
מו"ח אדמו"ר, ובקשר עם זה נדפסו המאמרים אשר  
אביו כ"ק אדמו"ר נ"ע אמרם בחגיגת הבר מצוה  
ובמשך כל השבוע שלאחר זה ובלשון כ"ק מו"ח  
אדמו"ר - "שבעת ימי המשתה", שנסיימו ביום  
א' ח"י תמוז, תענית נדחה, ולכן היתה ההתוועדות  
והסעודה של יום השביעי ביום ב' י"ט תמוז,  
וכמבואר ברשימה שם בסוף החוברת.

וזוהו הטעם להתוועדות של היום, אף כי בקיצור  
(בכמות) בזמן, כדי לחזור התוכן דסיום מאמרי הבר  
מצוה מענינא דידיא.

ובחזרי מן ההתוועדות האמורה - מצאתי מכתב  
כ' בתאריך י"ג תמוז, עם שני קוים מתוחים מתחת  
ל"ג תמוז.

משום כך הנני מזדרז לענות לכ' וגם לצרף בזה  
המאמר תפילין דמארי עלמא - תרנ"ג, ששם ג"כ  
קטעי הרשימה בנוגע להבר מצוה...

I hereby acknowledge the receipt of  
your letter from the auspicious day of  
Yud-Gimmel Tammuz, and as is the  
custom amongst Jews, we find hints  
interconnecting one point with another,  
[likewise] it is noteworthy that I received  
your letter after today's farbrengen.

Although holding a farbrengen during  
the "three weeks of mourning" may  
seem puzzling, [we have nevertheless  
done so] being that this year, we mark  
75 years since the [Frierdiker] Rebbe's  
bar mitzvah. In this spirit, we have  
published the *maamorim* that his father,  
the Rebbe [Rashab], recited at the bar  
mitzvah celebration and during the  
following week—as my father-in-law put  
it, the "*shivas yemei hamishte*"—which  
concluded on Sunday, 18 Tammuz. [That  
year] it was a fast day, so the festive meal  
and farbrengen of the seventh day were  
postponed to Monday, 19 Tammuz, as is  
explained in the diary published at the  
end of this pamphlet.

This was the reason for holding a  
farbrengen today, although it was a short  
one (time-wise), so that we could review  
the content of the last of this series of  
timely *maamorim*.

When I returned from this farbrengen,  
I found your letter dated Yud-Gimmel  
Tammuz, with the date underlined twice.

I therefore hurried to reply to you, as  
well as to enclose [a copy of] the *maamor*  
which also includes selections of the diary about the  
bar mitzvah...<sup>4</sup> **D**

1. Likutei Sichos vol. 2 p. 597
2. Part 39; translation copyright by Kehos
3. See Kuntres Bar Mitzvah 5653 (Kehos 5760) p. 61
4. Igros Kodesh vol. 25 p. 193