

A black and white photograph of a man in a hat and vest sitting in a chair in a room with bookshelves. The man is looking towards the right. The room has several shelves filled with books. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows.

COMPILED BY:  
**RABBI LEVI GREENBERG**

WRITTEN BY:  
**RABBI MENDY GREENBERG**

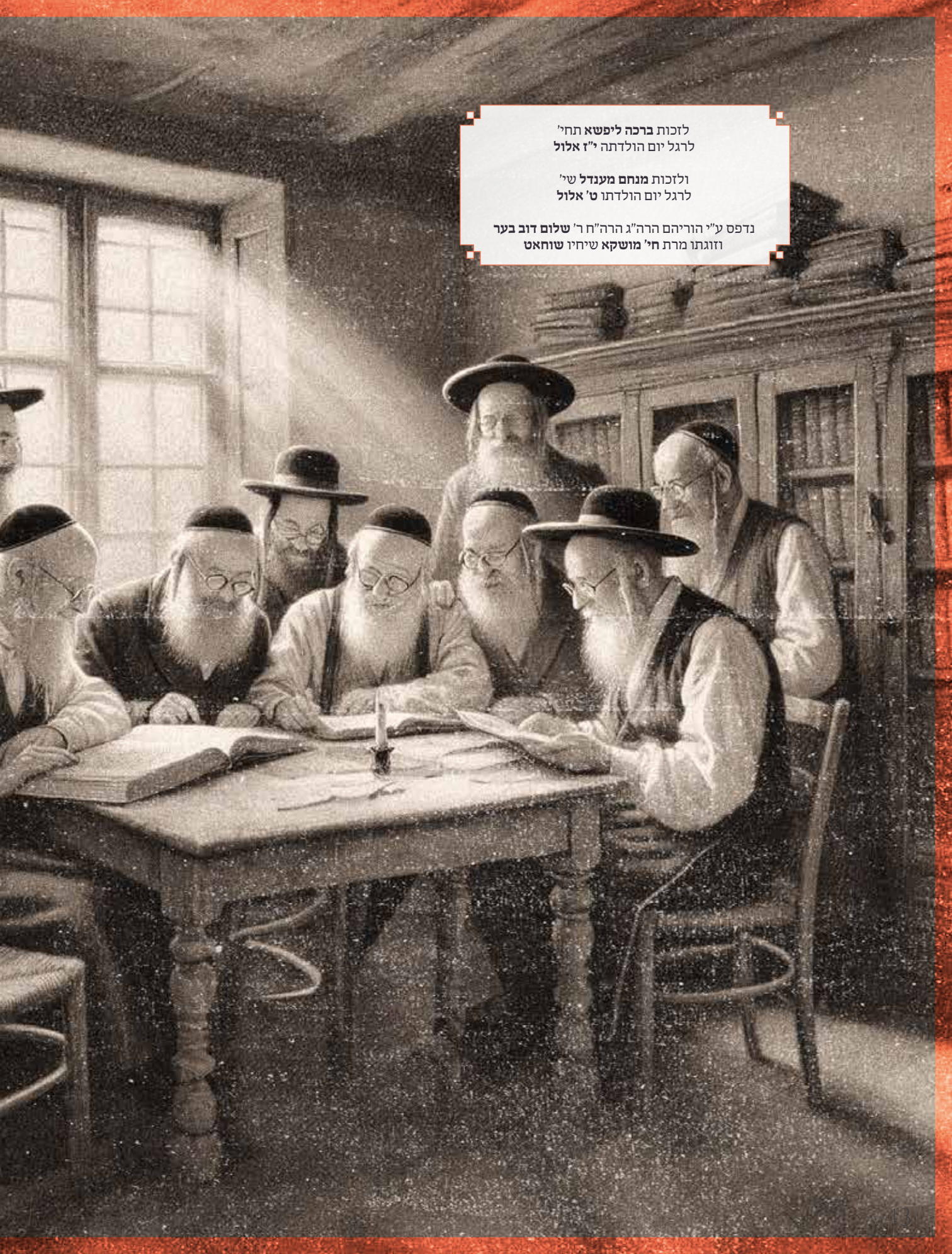
# PUBLIC TORAH LEARNING

**A CALL THROUGHOUT  
THE GENERATIONS**

לזכות ברכה ליפשא תחי'  
לרגל יום הולדתה י"ז אלול

ולזכות מגחם מענדל שי'  
לרגל יום הולדתו ט' אלול

נדפס ע"י הוריהם הרה"ג הרה"ח ר' שלום דוב בער  
וזוגתו מרת חי' מושקא שיחיו שוחאט



# THE MESSAGE FROM LUBAVITCH

“To the Anash of the city of Haditch...”

Thus begins an undated letter from the Tzemach Tzedek to the Chassidim of the town of Haditch in Ukraine.

A message had reached the Tzemach Tzedek from the distant town, saying that the conduct of Anash in the local shul did not meet the expectations of a Chabad shul. People were speaking *devarim biteilim* as minyanim were in progress, and walking around during davening.

This was unacceptable. Not only because more was expected of Chassidei Chabad, but also because of the significance of their location. “Your community,” the Tzemach Tzedek points out, “is home to the resting place of the *Aron Elokim*, my grandfather the [Alter] Rebbe!” The letters of the Alter Rebbe speak with great emphasis about the appropriate conduct expected in a chassidishe shul during davening; it was unthinkable that right near his resting place, his instructions wouldn’t be heeded.

The Tzemach Tzedek gave several instructions to rectify the situation. One of them—the topic of this article—concerns public Torah study:

“Learning with a minyan is something that needs to be strengthened as much as possible, because it is the foundation and source of everything.”<sup>1</sup>

*Shiurei Torah B’Rabim*, learning with a minyan, was the subject of numerous directives of the Rabbeim throughout the generations. In fact, this is the topic of the oldest surviving *nichtav klali* from the Alter Rebbe.

## IGGERES HAKODESH SIMAN CHOF-GIMMEL

The earliest letters from the Alter Rebbe are short ones, usually pertaining to *tzedaka*. The first known long letter is a letter dated circa 5545, the early years of his *nesius*.

The Alter Rebbe cites the Mishnah, “עשרה שיושבין ועוסקין” (ten people sitting and engaging in Torah study have the *Shechinah* resting among them),<sup>2</sup> and dwells at length on the virtues of learning Torah in a public setting.

He explains that there is a key distinction between a person who learns Torah alone, and one who learns in a minyan. While Torah learning alone is obviously worthy of reward,

the reward is personalized and limited to the capacity of the individual. But the presence of the *Shechinah* mentioned in the Mishna is far greater—it means that a revelation of Hashem’s infinite light, without regard for the individual’s capacity, rests on those who learn in a minyan. A person who learns Torah alone certainly receives reward, but a minyan of Torah learners is graced by an incredibly powerful *Giluy Elokus*.

The letter, later published as *Iggeres Hakodesh Siman 23*, includes very practical *horaos*: The Alter Rebbe says that every day, between Mincha and Maariv, a shiur should be held in Ein Yaakov. Another daily shiur should be held in Shulchan Aruch—Orach Chayim, and—on Shabbos toward Mincha time—a shiur in Hilchos Shabbos.

The letter continues with a sharp reprimand for one who separates himself to study other topics, or—worse—leaves the room without ensuring the presence of a minyan in his absence. “And he who listens to me,” the Alter Rebbe concludes, “in his days and in our days, the Jewish people will be redeemed.”



OPENING PAGE OF THE MITTELER REBBE’S INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST EDITION OF THE ALTER REBBE’S SHULCHAN ARUCH IN 5574.

# THE CAUSE FOR PUBLICATION

In the years following the Alter Rebbe's *histalkus*, the Mitteler Rebbe repeated the Alter Rebbe's call for public shiurei Torah in his letters to Chassidim. In several letters, the Mitteler Rebbe emphasized the importance of a *kvius ittim l'Torah* in a public setting—three times a week for learning Chassidus, and daily for learning *nigleh*.

Which area in *nigleh* should one focus on?

In those years, the Mitteler Rebbe published the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch, and in his letters—including the introduction to the Shulchan Aruch itself—he places a big emphasis on *halachos b'taameihen*, learning Halachah with an understanding of the reasoning behind the law (the goal of the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch).

“More than once or twice, I heard from his holy mouth that if Hashem would agree with him, he would decree that all Anash, from great to small, in every city and shul, establish groups to learn *halachos* with their reasonings... I, therefore, decree upon them to establish set shiurim in these *halachos* in every shul...”



PHOTO OF THE IMREI EMES AROUND THE TIME OF HIS MEETING WITH THE REBBE RASHAB.

The Mitteler Rebbe instructs that the entire Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim be divided among the members of a shul to be studied every day and night, concluding the study of all its *halachos* once or twice a year.

In the above-mentioned introduction, the Mitteler Rebbe lays out a learning plan for his Chassidim to follow: For those who are very preoccupied with their work and have little time on their hands, the Mitteler Rebbe recommends Mishnayos, Rif and the Shulchan Aruch of the Mechaber along with the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch; for full-time learners, he lays out a detailed plan, the *sefer* that the Mitteler Rebbe received from the Alter Rebbe on how to know *halachos b'taameihen*.

One should first learn a Masechta, the Mitteler Rebbe says, with the Tosfos that have halachic ramifications, and focus on the Rosh, reviewing the *halachos* that derive from it, followed by the Tur (without Beis Yosef), reviewing the material several times. One should then proceed to Beis Yosef, reviewing each *siman* two or three times, and continue with the rulings of the Shulchan Aruch and the Rema, here too, reviewing the material several times. A separate time should be set aside to learn the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch along with Kuntres Acharon, reviewing the text proper several times until one is fluent in the *halachos* and their rationale. This is all in addition to set Shiurim in Tanach, Midrash, Zohar and Sifrei Musar.<sup>3</sup>

## WHEN THE GERRER REBBE WANTED PERSPECTIVE

In the years of the Rebbe Maharash's *nesius*, new winds began to blow in Russia. Secular movements began to sweep through the Jewish community, taking many of the youth away from Torah and Mitzvos.

In addition to founding Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim, the Rebbe Rashab began numerous initiatives in the early years of his *nesius* to combat this phenomenon. By the year 5667, some ten years after Tomchei Temimim had been established, the Rebbe Rashab's name had spread far and wide as a champion of authentic Yiddishkeit throughout the Russian Empire.

That year, when the Rebbe Rashab visited Würzburg in Germany, he received notice that the Imrei Emes, who had only recently assumed leadership of Ger, wanted to visit. The visit didn't materialize, but the following year, when the Rebbe Rashab visited Königsberg, the Gerrer Rebbe reached out again. A meeting was arranged at a middle point between the two Rebbes, in the private study of Reb Shmuel

of Sochatchov, son of the Avnei Nezer.

The Gerrer Rebbe wanted to hear about the challenges to Yiddishkeit in Russia and the Rebbe Rashab's strategy to combat them. The conversation was recorded by the Rebbe Rashab in a letter to the Frierdiker Rebbe, and sheds light on the Rebbe Rashab's perspective about the importance of public Torah study.

"His first question," wrote the Rebbe Rashab, "was about the state of Yiddishkeit in our regions. I answered that the environment is generally a Jewish one, but there are many worrying aspects. Many of the youth are behaving in unacceptable ways. The reason is that in recent years, there has been a different spirit spreading throughout the *klal*, and it has negative consequences in a variety of ways."

At the time of this meeting, the Rebbe Rashab was 47 years old, and he pointed out that just a few decades earlier, in his own youth, things looked very different.

"I briefly explained that I personally recall earlier years in which you could find *balebatim* in the Beis Midrash who, after closing their businesses, would come to the Beis Midrash to learn—one Mishnayos, another Gemara, another Poskim, each one on his own level. But it was specifically in the Beis Midrash, and not at home—and that sustained the learning. Most importantly, it gave prominence to Torah study in one's heart; one's son would pay attention and wouldn't drift too far, and the father would pay attention to ensure his son learned as well.

"This is no longer the case even among *balebatim yirei shomayim*. Instead of going to the Beis Midrash, each person

thinks he will learn at home. When he arrives home—his wife and children are more dear to him...and he spends time with them instead of learning. Most critically, when the son sees that his father doesn't learn, the Torah becomes entirely superfluous to him."<sup>4</sup>

## CHEVRE MACHZIKEI HADAS

The context of the above-mentioned meeting was an initiative that had taken place several years earlier, the establishment of "Chevre Machzikei Hadas," which was founded as an antidote to the efforts of the "Chevre Mefitzei Haskalah" to establish secular Jewish schools throughout Russia. The initiative was the brainchild of the Slonimer Rebbe; he corresponded with the Rebbe Rashab and even paid a visit to Lubavitch, in the hope that the Rebbe Rashab would join and promote the initiative.<sup>5</sup>

In 5662, the Rebbe Rashab wrote several letters about the organization, which had the stated goal of bringing frum Jewry into organized groups to help them establish traditional *chadorim* and *yeshivos*. But in one letter, the Rebbe Rashab adds another important area that needed to be strengthened: Public Torah learning.

"It is of utmost importance to reinstate what was done in times of old, when everyone was obligated to come to the



Beis Midrash at a specific time... If one desires to learn on his own, he may do so, but specifically in the Beis Midrash; and in all aspects of Yiddishkeit—*be a Jew on the outside, publicly!*"

The Rebbe Rashab continues to explain that at the core of the struggle for Yiddishkeit was the shame and embarrassment that Yidden felt for being “old-fashioned.” It was common for those who loved to learn Torah to do so privately, while portraying themselves as “modern” in public. Those who were *yirei shomayim* in their personal lives would find ways to position themselves on the side of the *maskilim*. There were three common examples which the Rebbe Rashab pointed to: paying homage to the great *maskilic* writers for revitalizing the Hebrew language, approving of their commitment to education, and generally trying to portray oneself as an intellectual.

Each one of these was antithetical to true Yiddishkeit, the Rebbe Rashab pointed out. Using *lashon hakodesh* for common speech and even *apikorsus* is utterly contemptible and may even be forbidden; education was not valuable if it weakened one’s Torah observance; and when the Torah says that we are the *am chacham v’navon*, it didn’t mean that we should be up-to-date with the latest intellectual trends. Yet, people were terrified of being labeled *batlanim* (idlers) or *chashuchim* (primitive), two of the favorite insults of the *maskilim*.

An antidote to this shameful reality was public Torah learning. It was critical for there to be a space where Yidden gather and strengthen their commitment to Torah and mitzvos together; anchored in the timeless truth of the Torah, the Beis Midrash gives a Jew a sense of pride and belonging. He would no longer feel alone.<sup>6</sup>

## SUPPORTING THE TEACHERS

In the early years of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *nesius*, the Yevsektzia was doing everything possible to destroy Yiddishkeit. They expropriated shuls for “cultural centers,” closed down Mikvaos on grounds of public health, and attempted to enroll all Jewish children in state-run Yiddish schools, where they were taught to reject the beliefs of their parents.

Although Yiddishkeit was still legal and there were many functioning shuls and active *rabbanim*, public Jewish life took a massive hit. If, in the Rebbe Rashab’s times, many were uncomfortable demonstrating their Yiddishkeit publicly, the situation had now taken a drastic turn for the worse.

In addition to establishing underground *chadorim*, the Frierdiker Rebbe worked to strengthen public learning of

Torah among adults. If people were going to survive the terrible trials and tribulations of Communist Russia, they would need to associate with one another, giving each other mutual strength and *chizuk*. A Jew on his own would find it much more difficult to survive.

In letters and *farbrenge*s, the Frierdiker Rebbe told stories about the suffering of the Jewish people in ancient times, during the Crusades and the Inquisition, when they remained steadfast in their commitment to Torah and mitzvos.

“In many cities,” the Frierdiker Rebbe writes in one letter about the state of affairs, “people find solace in studying the words of Hashem in the shuls and *batei midrash*; like in medieval times, when the ‘burning tails barged into the vineyards’ of the Jewish people—they were all, as one, committed to Toras Hashem and His mitzvos.”<sup>7</sup>

In another letter, the Frierdiker Rebbe writes about the *sichos* he delivered during that period. “I related stories about Yidden under the Inquisition, and similar stories about the suffering of the Jewish people throughout *galus*, and I cannot deny that, with Hashem’s kindness, the words made a deep impact, not only on Anash and *yirei shomayim* but also on simple Jews, and in some instances, on intellectuals and secular Jews; over the years 5685 and 5686, many were *niskarev*.”<sup>8</sup>

Through letters and *shluchim*, the Frierdiker Rebbe would arrange public *shiurei Torah* in cities throughout the Soviet Union. To ensure consistency, the Frierdiker Rebbe often personally covered the bill, supporting the *maggidei shiurim*—who mostly lived in dire poverty—to enable them to continue teaching. In Leningrad, for example, there was a shul called Tzemach Tzedek which was used as a front for the payments; numerous *melamdim* and Torah teachers in the city were paid salaries by the shul, with money funneled to them by the Frierdiker Rebbe.

In a letter to a supporter in Germany, the Frierdiker Rebbe explains that a *maggid shiur* could be supported with around 75 kopeks or a single ruble per week, but he was supporting some 175 different people in that position (the Frierdiker Rebbe writes in code that the number of shuls that have such *shiurim* are “approximately the sum of Avraham Avinu’s years”), with a sum total of \$350 a month—equal to over six thousand dollars in our day.<sup>9</sup> Reb Shlomo Yosef Zevin was involved in the Frierdiker Rebbe’s efforts, and in a letter to the Joint Distribution Committee, he mentions a number of cities specifically: “Nikolaev, Minsk, Mohilev, Babroisk, Vyetka, Moscow, Leningrad, Samarkand, Kulash, and more.”<sup>10</sup>

# THE FIRST TIFERES BACHURIM

Aside from regular shiurei Torah, the Frierdiker Rebbe established an organization for young working men called Tiferes Bachurim. In the evenings, young men, both in university and in the workforce, would gather to learn and spend time together.

Rabbi Zevin describes these programs in glowing terms. “We thought that the youth were lost from traditional Judaism, aside from the few learning in Yeshivos. Who would have believed that many young men, in the workplaces and in the universities, would gather for organized evenings of Torah study? But facts are facts: in Vitebsk, in Moscow, in Leningrad, in Minsk, in Nevel, and in Samarkand, and more, they gather to learn Gemara, Mishnayos, Ein Yaakov, Midrash, Shulchan Aruch, and so on. One cannot overestimate the impact these groups have on the bochurim, and on their entire cities.”<sup>11</sup>

One of the earliest shluchim to strengthen Torah learning was Reb Bentzion Shemtov, who was sent—as a *bochur* of 22 years old—to the region of Vohlin.<sup>12</sup> “For two-and-a-half years,” the Frierdiker Rebbe wrote to Reb Menachem Zemba, “he worked with diligence, establishing dozens of *chadorim*. He gave fiery speeches about Torah learning, about the necessity to have groups for Gemara, Mishnayos, Halachah and Agadah, Tiferes Bachurim and *taharas hamishpacha*, and a new spirit enveloped the entire Vohlin...”<sup>13</sup>

After Reb Bentche was arrested, Reb Yankel Zhuravitzter took his place, traveling extensively to establish Torah classes and *chadorim*.<sup>14</sup> Many of these groups were sustained throughout the 5690s, until the outbreak of World War II. In a letter from Cherson in 5694, a *chossid* reports to the Frierdiker Rebbe that the *shiurim* are going strong. “Every day after Mincha we learn Ein Yaakov, and sometimes the Alter Rebbe’s Shulchan Aruch, taught by Reb Moshe Charitonov. After Maariv, a *perek* Tanya. Before Kabbolas Shabbos, Likkutei Torah is taught by Reb Yedidya Pesach Frenkel, and before Shacharis and Mincha by Reb Moshe Charitonov.”<sup>15</sup>

## THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

As the Frierdiker Rebbe worked tirelessly to sustain Yiddishkeit in the Soviet Union, he was also in contact with Chassidim throughout the world, encouraging them to strengthen Yiddishkeit and Chassidus in their own surroundings.

For Chassidim in America, the Frierdiker Rebbe established Agudas Hatemimim, with one of the purposes of the society being to arrange public Torah classes.<sup>16</sup> For Chassidim in London, the Frierdiker Rebbe sent a special *shadar*, Reb Ezriel Zelig Slonim, with the goal of reviewing Chassidus and likewise establishing *shiurim*.<sup>17</sup>

Reb Ezriel Zelig found the task very difficult; the descendants of chassidim living in London were simple Jews, who didn’t understand much of what he said and didn’t appreciate what he wanted to accomplish. He told the Frierdiker Rebbe



A GROUP PHOTO  
OF MEMBERS OF  
TIFERES BACHURIM  
IN RUSSIA, 5689.

that London needed a full-time Chabad Rov to elevate the community, and the Frierdiker Rebbe chose Reb Mordechai Zev Gutnik (father of Rabbi Chaim Gutnick of Australia).

Convincing the community to hire Rabbi Gutnick was a challenge. The *gabbaim* of the community said that they wanted a modern rabbi, not one of the “*chashuchim*” of the old country. Still, Reb Ezriel Zelig persevered, and Rabbi Gutnick was appointed to the position. When Reb Ezriel Zelig left England, the Frierdiker Rebbe commented to Reb Chatche Feigin that “*Zelig ken durchbrechen a zach*, Zelig is able to break through obstacles.”<sup>18</sup>



REB MORDECHAI ZEV GUTNIK. HE SERVED IN HIS POSITION AS ROV IN LONDON FOR ONLY 3 YEARS UNTIL HIS UNTIMELY PASSING IN 5692, AT THE AGE OF 35.

## THE FIRST PERSON TO CARE

During the Alter Rebbe’s early years, the small town of Lulyekvina stood on the border between the Polish commonwealth and the Russian empire. At a time when Poland was teeming with Jewish life and economic activity, the border at Lulyekvina signified the end of both; Russia was a massive rural area, without a sophisticated economy and devoid of Jews. Officially, the Russian Czars forbade Jews from entering their empire. As the years progressed, Jews began to trickle in. Tailors, shoemakers, agricultural workers, and others would bribe border officials and cross the border into the Russian interior.

The new Russian Jews earned a comfortable living, but their spiritual life was extremely lacking. In Poland, every Jew belonged to a shul which doubled as a social society; there was the shoemakers’ shul, the bakers’ shul, and so on. They gathered each morning and night to daven and host Torah classes in Aggada. But in Russia, they were bereft. Aside from the big cities, a town would be served by a single person, who served as *chazan*, *shochet* and *melamed*. The villages didn’t even have that.

Reb Yochanan Zev of Horodok was a learned and wealthy chossid of the Alter Rebbe who made his living by trading in materials throughout the countryside. One year, when he visited the Alter Rebbe, the Alter Rebbe gave him a new mission: instead of selling his wares in the Polish countryside, he was to sell them in the Russian countryside, using the opportunity to visit local Jews on the way.

The next few months were very difficult for Reb

Yochanan Zev. In Poland, he was surrounded by Jews; he would often meet *b’nei Torah* or even fellow Chassidim in the local inns, and he would often return home for Shabbos. But in the Smolensk region of Russia, he was surrounded by non-Jews. Even Shavuot was spent among boorish and uneducated Jews. By the end of his trip, in Elul, he came back to the Alter Rebbe, begging to be relieved of his mission.

The Alter Rebbe responded strongly. “The Torah says *Mei’Hashem mitz’adei gever konanu, v’darko yechpatz*,” the Alter Rebbe said. “Hashem directs the steps of a person because He wants *darko*, His will, to be fulfilled. How can a person say which mission he wants to or doesn’t want to fulfill?”

Reb Yochanan Zev headed back to Russia after Sukkos, and this time, he saw different results. During the weeks of heavy snowfall, he would spend many days with the local Jewish families. There wasn’t much work to do, so he was able to speak to them about Torah and mitzvos and *middos tovos*. He emerged from the winter with several *baalei teshuvah*. The Alter Rebbe began sending melamdim to locations determined by Reb Yochanan Zev, all with the goal of establishing public Torah classes in Chumash, Mishnah, Gemara, Midrash, and Aggada, and creating *chadorim* for children.

The efforts were met with incredible success. In the decades that followed, when Russia annexed large segments of Poland, and Jews suddenly had access to those regions, newcomers were shocked by the high level of the small, local Jewish communities—replete with shuls, *rabbanim* and competent *melamdim*.

(*Divrei Yimei Chayei Admur Hazaken* pg. 15-17)



In the 5690s, the Frierdiker Rebbe's health began to suffer, and he spent an increasing amount of time consulting with doctors and resting in convalescent towns. But a glimpse into his Igros Kodesh reveals what to him was the real cure—news of Chassidim establishing shiurei Torah.

In a letter to Reb Yisrael Jacobson in America, the Frierdiker Rebbe thanks him for informing him about the establishment of new shiurei Torah, sharing that “news about public Torah learning in general, and of Chassidus in particular, especially among the youth—such news is literally a cure for me, and strengthens my physical abilities.”<sup>19</sup>

This theme is repeated several times, and is evident in letters of Chassidim as well. For example, there was one special shiur personally established by the Frierdiker Rebbe during his visit to Chicago in 5690. This Gemara shiur was led by Reb Moshe Shayevitch, one of the local activists who was in contact with the Frierdiker Rebbe throughout the following years. Once, when the Frierdiker Rebbe was living in Poland, Reb Chatche Feigin received news that the shiur was going strong—and rushed to inform the Frierdiker Rebbe about it. As Reb Chatche later wrote to Reb Moshe, “When I received news that the shiur established by the Rebbe is still in effect, and they are currently studying Maseches Beitzah, I immediately wrote about it to the Rebbe *Shlita*, because I know that these matters are *mamash* a cure for his ailments...”

News about this shiur continued to come to the Frierdiker Rebbe's desk. When he arrived in Chicago for the second time, in 5702, plans were made to pay the shiur a personal visit, but the Frierdiker Rebbe's time in Chicago was cut short by the sudden passing of Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah; the Frierdiker Rebbe compensated them with a letter instead.<sup>20</sup>

## ESHEL HATORAH

In 5701, the Rebbe came to America and took the helm of the three newly formed institutions of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, Machne Yisroel and Kehos. In those days, Merkos was dedicated solely to children's education, while Machne was the division that strengthened Yiddishkeit among adults. In his message to the Tomchei Temimim dinner in 5705, the Frierdiker Rebbe announced the opening of a special division of Machne Yisroel called Eshel HaTorah (“Eshel” an acronym for “Irguni Shiurei Limud (HaTorah)”) to encourage the establishment of shiurei Torah among *balebatim*.<sup>21</sup>

Not much is known about the work of this division, but in Kovetz Lubavitch of the following months, there are reports of new shiurim established in numerous locations. A new group for Torah study was established in Ahavas Achim Tzemach Tzedek of Boro Park, the shul of Reb Elye Simpson, led by his son Reb Shimon Aharon. A Gemara class was established



in Nusach Ari of Dorchester, where they learned Maseches Kiddushin under the leadership of Reb Avraham Dov Hecht. Several new study groups were established in Montreal, where they learned Chumash-Rashi, Shulchan Aruch, Tanach, and Pirush Hamilos.

The final mention of Eshel HaTorah is found in the end of 5706, in a letter on Erev Rosh Hashanah from the Frierdiker Rebbe to the bochorim, encouraging them to speak in local shuls over Yom Tov about the importance of a public *kvius itim l'Torah*.<sup>22</sup>

## WHEN TEN SIT TOGETHER

When the Frierdiker Rebbe was released from prison on Yud-Beis—Yud-Gimmel Tammuz, the celebration was muted. Although the immediate danger had passed, the authorities were still intent on causing harm. When the news arrived in Leningrad, a small, quiet farbrengen was held in the Frierdiker Rebbe's home; Chassidim danced in their socks to avoid attracting attention.

The real celebration took place the next year. By Yud-Beis Tammuz 5688, the Frierdiker Rebbe was living in Riga, far from the hands of the Communists, and the celebration took a public form. That year, the Frierdiker Rebbe released a special Maamar in honor of the day, with the *dibbur hamaschil* “*Asarah Sheyoshvin*,” the same teaching of Chazal which is the topic of the Alter Rebbe's letter in Iggeres Hakodesh, a *maamar* which likewise expounds on the incredible power of learning Torah in public.

In the attached letter, the Frierdiker Rebbe noted that the



THE REBBE  
DISTRIBUTING THE  
KUNTRES "12-13  
TAMMUZ 5688".

redemption was one that belonged to the entire Jewish people; it was especially important for those who spread Yiddishkeit in the Soviet Union, because their work was vindicated; the government had conceded that teaching Torah was not illegal. Therefore, the Friediker Rebbe noted, this was a special occasion for all lovers of Torah and those who study it, as well as *maggidei shiurim*, those who teach Torah in public, and concluded with a special *bracha* for their work.<sup>23</sup>

This topic was a recurring theme in the Rebbe's Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengens throughout the years. Many of the Rebbe's calls for public Torah learning were discussed on Yud-Beis Tammuz or during the farbrengens around that time, such as Tes-Vov Tammuz or the Shabbosim of Chukas and Balak. One year, there was a special farbrengen on the Shabbos before Yud Beis Tammuz dedicated specifically to fulfilling the *hora'os* of this letter.<sup>24</sup>

In the days surrounding Yud-Beis Tammuz 5742, the Rebbe's Maamarim began with "Asarah Sheyoshvin,"<sup>25</sup> and eight years later, around Yud-Beis Tammuz 5750, the Rebbe released a *mugedike* edition of some of the maamarim, and also personally distributed a *kuntres* containing the Friediker Rebbe's maamar and letter to thousands of Chassidim.<sup>26</sup>

The Rebbe's call for public Torah study was repeated in numerous iterations. It was part of the *mitvza* of *Yavneh V'Chachameha*; it was included in the Rebbe's call to "take over the world with *Limmud Hatorah*" in 5731, and in the Rebbe's call for *Hakholas Kehilos* (gathering Yidden on Shabbos for Torah study) in 5750. It was a central aspect of any initiative that included Torah learning — the *mitvza* to print Tanyas included having a local Tanya class with the new *seforim*; the *takanah* to learn Rambam included a call for

public study; and the Rebbe's call to learn *Inyonei Moshiach U'Ge'ulah* was also meant to be done as a community.

More than anything else, the Rebbe taught by example. In previous generations, the Rabbeim would sometimes write *maamarim* on paper or deliver them to select audiences, but we merited the gift of the Rebbe utilizing every available opportunity to teach Torah in public—and, as the years progressed, with ever-increasing frequency.



During a *Sicha* on Shabbos Parshas Naso 5750 on the topic of *Limmud HaTorah*, the Rebbe smiled and announced "a new *gezeirah*": that every single man, woman and child establish a new public shiur in Torah, preferably with ten people in attendance.<sup>27</sup>

In addition to the obligation of men to learn Torah, the Rebbe pointed out that women have obligations to learn the parts of Torah which are necessary for practical behavior (and even with regard to learning together with ten people, the Rebbe said, "there is reason to say that the special power of ten Jews gathering together applies to women as well"), and children too, can teach Torah — they can even teach Aleph-Beis and *nekudos* to their friends.

The main thing, the Rebbe concluded, was that the world should be inundated with endless public shiurei Torah, reflecting the words of the Shavuot Haftarah, "כקול מים רבים, כקול ש-ד-י, like the sound of many waters, like the sound of Hashem; with thousands and thousands of Yiddishe voices declaring, as the Haftarah concludes: "קול רעש גדול, ברוך כבוד, in a great roaring sound, "Boruch Kevod Hashem Mimkomo."

## SOME OF THE REBBE'S DIRECTIVES FOR PUBLIC TORAH STUDY

### KEEPING SHULS OPEN:

“The Rebbe *der Shver* wanted that Shuls should be open during all hours of day and night” (Shabbos Parshas Bamidbar 5736, Sichos Kodesh v. 2 p. 232). For more on this topic, see “Keeping Shuls Open At Night” - Derher Shevat 5783.

### MAKE IT PROFITABLE:

“*Asarah Sheyoshvin V'Oskin Batorah* teaches that the shiurim must be in public, they must be *yoshvin*, i.e., carried out in a calm and focused manner—not rushing through to *chap* a shiur quickly, and *oskin*—it should be like a business, which must bring results and turn a profit (i.e. tangible results).” (Shabbos Parshas Shelach 5743, Toras Menachem v. 3 p. 1658).

### RAMBAM:

“...The daily shiur of Rambam in a way of *sheves achim gam yachad*, through learning it in a public setting (and preferably, with the cycle of three perokim a day)...” (Shabbos Parshas Bechukosai 5749, Sefer Hasichos v. 2 p. 478).

### BETTER BUSINESS:

“A businessman should devote a fixed amount of time to Torah study...preferably, one should study in a place of Torah, a synagogue or a *yeshivah*... The

more a person studies, the more will he be successful because he will...make decisions much faster than one who has not studied Torah.” (Machne Yisroel Yechidus 4 Tishrei 5751, Sichos In English-Mugah).

### CHASSIDUS CLASSES FOR YOUNG WOMEN:

“If several days will pass between classes, it is preferable for each class to be on a topic of its own... In my opinion, you should also use every class to speak about the *arum* of Chassidus or stories of Tzaddikim” (Letter to Reb Yochanan Gordon, Igros Kodesh v. 12 p. 136).

### WEEKLY GEMARA SHIUR:

“If it is only one hour per week, it would be appropriate to learn a *mesechta* whose *sugyos* aren't very long, and a short *masechta* which they could finish over several months... Maseches Megillah is a good suggestion...especially in light of the interesting Aggadah material it contains” (Letter to Reb Moshe Yitzchak Hecht, Igros Kodesh v. 16 p. 19).

### A SHUL IN ERETZ YISROEL:

“Every shul, especially one in Eretz Yisroel, must have a daily shiur, and a shul connected to *Rabboseinu Nesi'einu* should have a daily shiur in Chassidus as well” (Yechidus to Reb Tuvye Blau, Heichal Menachem v. 1 p. 221).

1. Igros Kodesh Tzemach Tzedek pg. 166.
2. Avos 3:7.
3. Igros Kodesh Admur Ha'Emtzai pg. 126-7, 176, 196-8.
4. Igros Kodesh Admur Rashab #1018, vol. 4 pg. 305-6.
5. See Toldos Chabad b'Rusia HaTzaris, pg. 267-8.
6. Igros Kodesh Admur Rashab #117\*\*, vol. 1 pg. 277-9.
7. Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz #3773, vol. 11 pg. 38.
8. Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz #340, vol. 1 pg. 627.
9. Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz #151, vol. 1 pg. 322.
10. Toldos Chabad B'Rusia HaSovietis pg. 52.
11. Ibid.
12. See “The Staunch Soldier,” *Derher* Adar I 5782.
13. Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz #423, vol. 2 pg. 149.
14. See “If I Had Twenty Yankelach” - *Derher* Tammuz 5784.
15. Toldos Chabad B'Rusia HaSovietis pg. 157.
16. Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz #291, vol. 1 pg. 517; #3799, vol. 11 pg. 69.
17. Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz #303, vol. 1 pg. 542-3.
18. *Eved Melech*, pg. 107-117.
19. *Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz* #758, vol. 3 pg. 296.
20. *Toldos Chabad B'Artzos Habris* pg. 70.
21. *Likkutei Dibburim* (new edition) vol. 3 pg. 914-5.
22. Toldos Chabad B'Artzos Habris pg. 314-5.
23. Sefer Hamaamarim 5688 pg. 146ff.
24. Shabbos Chukas 5737, Sichos Kodesh vol. 2 pg. 167.
25. Sefer Hamaamarim 5742 pg. 206-9, Sefer Hamaamarim Melukot (new edition) vol. 4 pg. 73-93.
26. For more about this distribution, see “Eternal Momentos” - *Derher* Tammuz 5783.
27. *Sefer Hasichos* 5750 v. 2 pg. 501. See also the *hanacha bilti mugah*.