

לזכות מרת דבורה לאה תחיל' רוזנפלד  
לרגל יום הולדתה י"ב אדר  
נדפס ע"י משפחתה שיחיו



# A Sudden Urge for Tefillin

*Recounted by R' Shabsi Turner*

This story occurred in the mid 5720s. There was a *bochur* going through a difficult time in his personal life, eventually resulting in his being thrown out of Yeshiva, and even estranged from his family.

A Lubavitcher family in Chicago graciously took him in. Unfortunately, however, he continued on his downward spiral.

Around that time, the United States joined the war in Vietnam and young men throughout the country were drafted for service in the army. The *bochur* was terribly afraid of being drafted and deployed, and was looking for ways to receive an exemption.

Finally, he thought of an idea; he would enroll in a yeshiva and thereby avoid the draft. He decided to try his luck and enroll in the Central Lubavitcher Yeshiva at 770.

He traveled to New York for Shavuot, and after Yom Tov, went into *yechidus* with the Rebbe. He wrote a note, and brought it into the Rebbe, but before the Rebbe read it, he asked the *bochur*: “When was the last time you checked your tefillin?”

The *bochur* was astonished. “Rebbe,” he said, “I haven’t been putting on tefillin for two years now.”

As if he hadn’t heard the answer, the Rebbe asked again,

“When was the last time you checked your tefillin?” to which the *bochur* repeated his previous response.

The Rebbe said, “It might happen that a ‘wild idea’ will fall into your head to put on tefillin. I suggest that you make sure they are currently kosher.”

The Rebbe proceeded to ask the young man why he had come, and the *bochur* explained that he wished to enroll in the yeshiva in order to avoid the draft. The Rebbe told him, “I don’t know if I have enough sway here at the yeshiva, but I will try.”

As time passed, the *bochur* realized that he would not be accepted in the yeshiva at 770 but he was not drafted into the army either. When he arrived home, he searched for his tefillin and sent them to a *sofer* for inspection.

Some time later he enrolled in college, but things did not improve. He continued spiraling downward until one day he found himself in a mental institution. After being there for a while, he called his family and asked them, “Please bring me my tefillin; I want to put on tefillin.”

Thus began his journey back to himself. With time, he recovered and returned to Yiddishkeit completely, building a beautiful family and bearing Chassidische children and grandchildren. **1**