

מכירת הגזלים TREASURES FROM THE REBBE'S LIBRARY

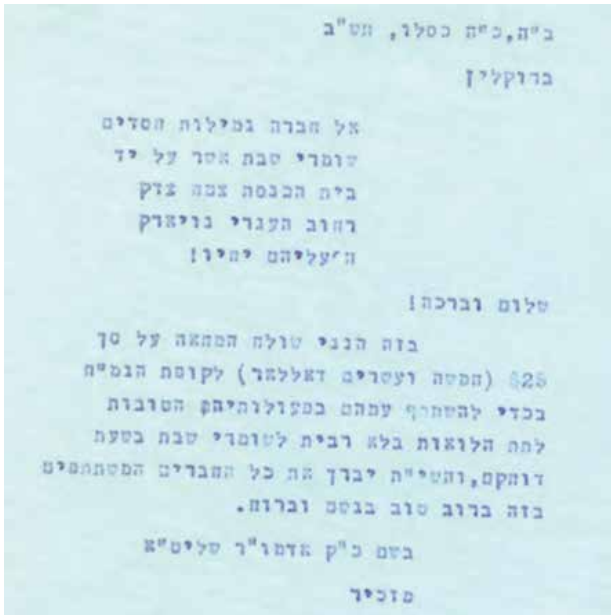
נדפס ע"י ולזכות
הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל וזוגתו
מרת דבורה לאה שיחיו טרייטעל
לרגל יום נישואיהם כ"ט אדר ראשון
ולזכות בתם החיילת בצבאות
ה' חי' מושקא תחי'

GMACH SHOMREI SHABBOS

In Parshas Mishpatim, the Torah talks about the mitzvah of lending money to people in need. As such, the community Gmach Shomrei Shabbos¹ free-loan fund in Crown Heights held its annual Melaveh Malka fundraiser on Motzei Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim. At the Shabbos farbrengen before the event, the longtime administrator of the fund, Reb Yochanan Gordon, would be instructed by the Rebbe to don a shtreimel and say a few words about the event, along with a dvar Torah or story about the importance of this mitzvah. After Reb Yochanan's passing in 5729, this practice was continued by his son-in-law and successor at the Gmach, Reb Shimon Goldman.

In honor of Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim this month, we present the following historic documents connected with the Gmach.²

WRITTEN BY:
RABBI MENDEL JACOBS



The Frierdiker Rebbe responded with a letter in return: **In response to your letter, I was pleased to hear about your activities during the year 5704, that you extended loans to 103 people, totaling \$9,980.**

I read with joy your invitation to the 35-year celebration since the founding of “Gemilus Chasadim Shomrei Shabbos.” I send my blessings to all the members... And may Hashem watch over their sons fighting in the army³, wherever they may be on land, sea, and air, may they return home safely...



I enclose a check for \$25 as my gift to the Gmach...

As it turned out, the Treasurer, Reb Tzvi Hirsh, passed away on 11 Shevat 5705, just a few days shy of the 35th anniversary celebration.

Reb Yochanan wrote a heartfelt letter to the Frierdiker Rebbe following Reb Tzvi Hirsh’s passing, describing his relationship with the late treasurer:

Although it is difficult for me to write about this, I feel compelled to write about our late friend Reb Tzvi.

I knew him since I came to this country. He was orphaned in his youth, and he was brought to a potter to learn how to make earthenware pottery. But he absorbed the shul-spirit [by attending] between Mincha and Maariv, hearing classes on Ein Yaakov, Pirkei Avos, and Midrash. He later married a woman in Pleshchanitz, and was drafted into the army... During the Russo-Japanese War, he fled to the United States.

...He worked as a “customer-peddler,” and in the evening he worked as a volunteer collecting and distributing pushkas for Colel Chabad. From the time I arrived here [in the States], he frequented my home, as well the home of my brother Y.Y., where we would learn a maamar or a sicha, or just schmooz about the elder Chassidim he had known.

...Ay! He was a precious Jew! He had weak eyesight and it was difficult for him to read from a sefer. He would travel everyday to visit sick acquaintances of ours⁴, traveling to another neighborhood every day; one day to the Bronx, one day to Boro Park, etc.

He passed away on 11 Shevat and was interred on 12 Shevat.

The Frierdiker Rebbe responded with a letter to Reb Tzvi Hirsh’s children, urging them to appreciate the spiritual legacy that their father left them and emulate his ways, and with another letter to Reb Yochanan asking him to stay in touch with the children and try to maintain their connection with Yiddishkeit.⁵

1. When the fund was established, it was primarily used to help people who had difficulty finding and maintaining a job due to Shabbos observance; presumably where the fund got its name.
2. Published in Mibeis Hagnazim, article #143, p. 355.
3. During World War II.
4. Reb Yochanan was appointed by the Frierdiker Rebbe to head the Bikur Cholim arm of Machne Yisroel.
5. Igros Kodesh Admur HaRayatz vol. 8, p. 548-9.