



THE REBBE RECITES KINOS ON TISHA B'AV.



SHLOMO VISHINSKY VIA ZEVI MARKOWITZ / CHAI ART GALLERY

טור' לעבן מיטן רבי'ן 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'

ע"י בנם  
ר' יקותיאל יהודה  
וזוגתו מרת פעסל לאה ומשפחתם  
שיחיו  
רוהר



A YEAR OF MIRACLES

# “My Children, Do Not Be Afraid!”

THE MONTH OF AV 5750 — SHNAS NISSIM —  
IN THE REBBE'S PRESENCE.

COMPILED BY: RABBI YANKY BELL

WRITTEN BY: RABBI MENDEL JACOBS

*This month included many extraordinary occurrences in the Rebbe's presence, many of which were addressed by the Rebbe at the Shabbos farbrengens. As such, although we usually begin our story with an overview of the Rebbe's sichos throughout the month, we will save that part of the story till later to provide the necessary background.*

## Summer Camp Visits

As the summer drew to a close, the Rebbe was visited by many of the children returning from time spent at various camps.

On Tuesday, 2 Av, a group of children returning from Gan Yisroel in Michigan joined the Rebbe's *minyán* for Maariv.

At the end of davening, one of the children called out, “*Yechi adoneinu moreinu v'rabbeinu*,” and everyone responded. The Rebbe seemed very pleased.

Toward the end of the month, on Monday, 22 Av, a rally was held for the children of the local day camps. The rally was supposed to have taken place a week earlier;

however, due to the untimely passing of Reb Yaakov Yehuda Hecht, the legendary emcee and translator of the Tzivos Hashem rallies, it was postponed until after the *shiva*.

After davening Mincha with the Rebbe, the children recited the Twelve Pesukim, and when they concluded, everyone gave them a round of applause. The Rebbe clapped along with the children, turning to all directions and showing everyone to clap with even more enthusiasm.

The rally was emceed by Rabbi Shimon Hecht, while Rabbi Sholom Ber Hecht translated the Rebbe's *sichos* to English, filling their late father's two roles.

The rally concluded with the Rebbe distributing packets of coins to the chaperones, and then to the *Tankistim*, for them to distribute—three coins to every child.

On the first day of the month, Rosh Chodesh Av, and on the last day of the month—the first day of Rosh Chodesh Elul—the Rebbe went to the Ohel. (The Rebbe's visit to the Ohel on Rosh Chodesh was unprecedented. No one could remember another time throughout the



APPLAUDING THE CHILDREN WHO RECITED THE 12 PESUKIM.



ENCOURAGING THE NIGGUN 'SHEYIBONEH' AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE RALLY.



THE REBBE EXITS THE SHUL AFTER THE RALLY.

Rebbe's *nesius* that he visited the Ohel on this day.)

On the last day of the month, groups of campers from Gan Yisroel New York and Montreal were scheduled to daven Mincha with the Rebbe at 3:15, but they missed the opportunity due to the Rebbe's unscheduled trip to the Ohel.

The Rebbe gave Rabbi Leibel Groner packets of coins to be distributed to the children and instructed that some points from the *sichos* to the children of the day camps should be repeated for these children as well.

## Tisha B'Av

This month includes the solemn day of Tisha B'Av, which will very soon be transformed into a joyous Yom Tov, with the coming of Moshiach.

A special ad, edited by the Rebbe, was placed in the New York Times and other newspapers, calling on everyone to increase in Torah, Tefilla, and Tzedakah, and stating the hope that this day will be transformed from mourning to joy.

When the Rebbe entered the shul for Mincha of 8 Av, just before the fast, the crowd was singing a *niggun*, but the Rebbe did not encourage the singing, and everyone was quiet immediately. The Rebbe's face was extremely serious; almost frightening.

After Maariv, the Rebbe sat down for Eicha and the evening Kinot.

On Tisha B'Av morning, the Rebbe joined the *minyan* for Shacharis. (However, as is known, the Rebbe does not actually daven with the *minyan* on this morning, since he

follows the practice of the Rabbeim to daven Shacharis with Tefillin privately.)

The Rebbe received an *aliya* and read the Haftarah.

After Shacharis, the Rebbe sat down to recite the traditional Kinot until about 1:00 p.m., when he left the shul for his room.

Upon reaching the door of his room, the Rebbe heard a *bochur* making a *siyum* on Maseches Moed Katan over a microphone from the big shul downstairs. When he finished the *siyum*, the Rebbe asked Rabbi Groner, "Is he going to say *kaddish*? In all the Gemaras there's a *kaddish* printed at the end of a *siyum*!" Rabbi Groner tried to send a message to the *bochur*, but he had already left the shul, and no one was able to locate him. All the while, the Rebbe was waiting near the door of his room. When Rabbi Groner told the Rebbe that the *bochur* was already gone, the Rebbe waved both of his hands, as if dismissing the whole incident, and went into his room.

Later in the day, the Rebbe came downstairs for Mincha wearing Tallis and Tefillin as customary, and again recited the Haftarah.

## Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda Hecht

On Sunday, eve of 15 Av, devastating news was shared: the great chossid and staunch activist, Reb Yaakov Yehuda Hecht, passed away suddenly. Rabbi Hecht was exceedingly devoted to the Rebbe and his work, administering a wide array of institutions, including: The National

Committee for the Furtherance of Jewish Education (NCFJE), Yeshiva Hadar HaTorah, Machon Chana, Camp Emenah, and more. He also emceed all the children's rallies at 770 and translated the Rebbe's *sichos* into English for the children in front of the Rebbe. Moreover, he was a well-connected congregational rabbi, holding close ties with philanthropists and government officials in New York City, State, and beyond.

After Maariv, when the Rebbe was about to enter his room, Rabbi Hecht's sons and son-in-law were waiting in Gan Eden Hatachton, where they notified the Rebbe about what had happened.

The Rebbe's face became very serious, and he continued into his room. A few minutes later, the Rebbe called for Rabbi Hecht's eldest son, Rabbi Sholom Ber Hecht, conveying several instructions about how to move

forward. The Rebbe asked that they should have his body released immediately from the hospital in Ellenville, NY, where he had passed away, and brought to Camp Emenah, where the *tahara* should take place.

The Rebbe also instructed that no non-Jew should be allowed to touch the body.

The next day after Shacharis, the Rebbe asked that an announcement be made about the time of the *levaya*. It was set for 12:00 p.m.

In the meantime, the Rebbe went to the mikvah and prepared to go to the Ohel. It was still unclear whether or not the Rebbe was planning to participate in the funeral.

At 12:10, the Rebbe entered the car to leave for the Ohel. Huge crowds had gathered on Eastern Parkway in anticipation of the *levaya*, and the Rebbe waved to many people from the window of the car.



THE REBBE ENTERS THE SHUL ON TISHA B'AV.



RECEIVING AN ALIYA DURING SHACHARIS.



RECITING KINOS.



RECITING THE HAFTORAH DURING SHACHARIS.



RABBI HECHT EMCEEDS A RALLY WITH THE REBBE IN 1975, JUST A FEW MONTHS BEFORE HIS PASSING.



RABBI HECHT'S GRAVESTONE NEAR THE OHEL. SOME OF THE LAST FEW LINES WERE ADDED BY THE REBBE.

The funeral procession began at 12:55, with members of the Rebbe's *Mazkirus* in attendance. They passed some of the local organizations that Rabbi Hecht ran during his lifetime, as well as his shul in East Flatbush, and then continued to the cemetery.

All the while, the Rebbe was at the Ohel. Late in the evening, after the funeral was over, the Rebbe approached the fresh grave for a short while, before leaving back for 770.

During the shiva, the family was visited by the Rebbe's *mazkir*, Rabbi Binyomin Klein. He told them that the Rebbe wished to relay that all of the institutions run by Rabbi Hecht were under the auspices of Machne Yisroel, and added that one of the institutions should be renamed to carry the name Yaakov Yehuda.

The Rebbe edited the text for Rabbi Hecht's gravestone, adding the fact that he delivered Torah classes over the radio airwaves and influenced thousands of people in this manner.

On 19 Av, the Rebbe wrote to the family in response to their suggestion that Rabbi Sholom Ber Hecht, the eldest of the sons, would succeed his father's role in all the *mosdos*, along with a committee made up of other family members: "He should accept the position, and may it be in a good and auspicious hour. [Everything should be in

a peaceful manner] as our sages stated, like one man with one heart. I will mention this at the Ohel."

## Dollars

The Rebbe's Sunday dollars distributions this month saw many individuals come and seek his holy blessings and counsel, as usual.

What was unique around this time was the reassurance that many people sought, as tensions rose in the Middle East (Iraq had invaded Kuwait, which would have major implications for the safety and security of Eretz Yisroel). The Rebbe reassured everyone that Hashem would watch over His people and that there was no need to be afraid.

On Sunday, 7 Av, the Israeli journalist Shlomo Nakdimon visited the Rebbe.

The Rebbe told him that his name, Nakdimon, is reminiscent of the character discussed in the Gemara—Nakdimon Ben Gurion—who provided water for the people of Yerushalayim during a famine. "Water represents the Torah," the Rebbe said. "You too must provide water—Torah for your readers, by inserting Torah ideas in your articles."

Mr. Nakdimon asked the Rebbe if he is pleased with



CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 51909

ISRAELI JOURNALIST SHLOMO NAKDIMON PRESENTS THE REBBE WITH HIS BOOK 'FIRST STRIKE', 7 AV.



CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 52985

ISRAELI KNESSET MEMBER ELI KULAS MEETS WITH THE REBBE, 14 AV.



CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 51990



CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 52455

SUNDAY DOLLARS, AV 5750

the current government in Israel, and the Rebbe replied that he would rather not talk politics, but he added:

“For some thirty years now, I’ve been clamoring about not putting Jewish lives in danger [by giving away land]. The current government needs to be careful about saving lives. A narrow government is more conducive to staying on the right path.

“The name [of the Prime Minister,] Shamir means that it has the power to break through stone. I hope that he will have the power not to be influenced by the hearts of stone around him, but on the contrary, he will influence them for good...”

An individual came by the Rebbe saying that he does not need a *bracha*. The Rebbe said, “I need a *bracha*, he needs a *bracha*, and you also need a *bracha*. Every person needs a *bracha*!”

A woman came by the Rebbe and said that she needed the Rebbe’s *bracha* regarding a certain issue, but she didn’t want to disclose it right then. Instead, she wanted to write it in a letter to the Rebbe. The Rebbe replied that at the moment, he is not answering letters.

“Is there no reason for me to write then?” the woman asked.

“There is reason to write,” the Rebbe answered, “because I take all the letters that come here to the Ohel of my father-in-law. This has been the practice here in Lubavitch for the past few years.”

Rabbi Simcha Ashlag of Bnei Brak asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* for the Jews of Eretz Yisroel, that they should only have good things and no bad things happening.

The Rebbe replied: “There’s no such thing as bad things in Eretz Yisroel. The land itself spits out anything negative. The only *bracha* we need is that the good things should be open and revealed...”

An individual came to the Rebbe saying that last week he had come asking for the Rebbe’s *bracha* for a person who was in a coma, and miraculously the person had since woken up from the coma and was discharged from the hospital! The Rebbe smiled and said, “They left the coma in the hospital!”

An individual came to the Rebbe on crutches, and the Rebbe told him that he should heal quickly, and dance on the upcoming Yom Tov of *Chamisha Asar B’Av*. The person responded, “I hope so...” and the Rebbe was displeased. “Why do you only hope so? You must ask Hashem for good news!” The person replied that if he could dance on *Chamisha Asar B’Av* next year, it would

be a big miracle. The Rebbe said, “I’m talking about this year! Next year you’ll dance twice as much!”

When the person nodded his head reluctantly, the Rebbe said, “Your recovery should come this year, this way I won’t have to argue with you...”

On Sunday, 14 Av, Israeli Knesset Member Eli Kulas came to see the Rebbe, and asked for a *bracha* for all the inhabitants of Eretz Yisroel, adding, “Does the Rebbe have a message for the people of Israel? Iraq has invaded Kuwait, and everyone is apprehensive about it.”

The Rebbe replied: “We need to increase our *bitachon* in Hashem, and He will in turn increase His blessings; healthy blessings and peaceful blessings, with peace of mind and body.”

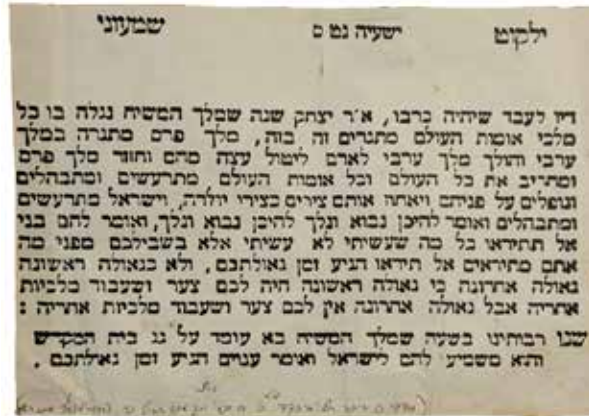
On Sunday, 21 Av, someone asked the Rebbe how to have a positive influence on their child, and the Rebbe said: “There are two ways to go about it; either by the parents themselves or through friends. Sometimes, when the parent tries to influence the child, it’s not as effective, because the child feels like they’re being treated like a little kid. It might be better to try through friends.”

On Sunday, 28 Av, the Rebbe was visited by Mr. Roni Milo, the Israeli Minister of Police. He said that the Rebbe’s *brachos* are very necessary now, in these difficult days. The Rebbe replied: “These are not difficult days. It’s almost the month of Elul, when the Alter Rebbe says that the King—Hashem—is in the field. This means that He is closer to every Jew, and especially to the Jews who live in the Holy Land, about which the Torah says that His eyes are upon her throughout the entire year.”

## The Midrash

On the evening of 16 Av, the Rebbe was walking out of shul after Maariv when he stopped at the door to read an interesting sign. It quoted a Midrash Yalkut Shimoni that some people thought might be addressing the current political situation in Eretz Yisroel. The various kings of the world will be engaged in war, and the Persian king will be feared to be destroying the world. All the nations of the world will be terrified, and the Jewish people will be bewildered, asking, “Where should we go?” But at that moment, Hashem will say to them, “My children, don’t be afraid! Everything that I’ve done was only done for your sake... The time for your redemption has arrived!”

The next day, Rabbi Leibel Groner notified the individual who had posted the sign, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok



THE SIGN QUOTING THE MIDRASH YALKUT SHIMONI POSTED AT 770. THE LAST TWO LINES WERE ADDED LATER PER THE REBBE’S INSTRUCTIONS.



IRAQI TANKS ENTERING KUWAIT IN THE MONTH OF AV 5750.

Kazen, that he should add another two lines from later in that Midrash:

“At the time when Melech Hamoshiach comes, he will stand on the roof of the Beis Hamikdash and announce to the Jewish people: ‘Humble ones, the time for your redemption has arrived!’”

The message caused great excitement at 770, and everyone began publicizing the words of the Midrash all over the world.

Reb Itche Shpringer of Crown Heights sent a copy of the Midrash to a *rav* in Eretz Yisroel, who passed it around in Eretz Yisroel, causing great excitement. Reb Itche wrote to the Rebbe about this, noting that the Midrash was “passed around from hand to hand,” and the Rebbe circled these words, adding: “The more the better.”

At the farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Re’eh, the Rebbe spoke about this Midrash at length (see below).

Later in the month, the Rebbe wrote to Rabbi Yehosef

Ralbag, who had asked about the security situation in Eretz Yisroel:

1. Regarding what you write about the security situation in Eretz Yisroel:  
Ask a five-year-old who studies Chumash, what is the simple meaning of the explicit words of the *possuk*: Hashem's eyes are always upon it [the land] etc.
2. Regarding the idea of stocking up on food: This will drive up the prices of food in Eretz Hakodesh!!

The Rebbe later instructed that this *maaneh* to Rabbi Ralbag should be publicized.

On 28 Av, a radio station from Eretz Yisroel interviewed Rabbi Leibel Groner on what the Rebbe said about the security situation. He repeated the Rebbe's reassuring words, as well as the words of the Midrash Yalkut Shimoni. He also said that the Rebbe is of the opinion that gas masks will not be needed at all.

## Chof Av

The *yahrtzeit* of the Rebbe's father, Harav Levi Yitzchok, fell out on Shabbos Parshas Ekev, and it was a very special Shabbos with many guests and extraordinary occurrences.

The Rebbe davened at the *amud* for all the *tefillos*, as he always does on this day. The children of Camp Gan Yisroel of Parksville were present throughout, and they sang the various parts of davening as they would do in camp—with the Rebbe's encouragement.

During the farbrengen on Shabbos afternoon, the Rebbe gave the children much attention (see below).

## Farbrengens

On the first Shabbos of the month, Parshas Devarim—Shabbos Chazon, the Rebbe held a farbrengen as usual.

Approaching Tisha B'Av, the Rebbe addressed the sad time of year as a temporary descent that brings about the great elevation of the third Beis Hamikdash.

The *niggunim* were quite lively, including a long rendition of Napoleon's March. The Rebbe turned to Reb Yosef Neymotin during the singing and motioned to him to say *l'chaim* on two full cups.

Towards the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe distributed bottles of *mashke* to individuals holding gatherings in the upcoming week, including Reb Noach Bernstein.

He was making a farbrengen on 10 Av in honor of a Tanya printing in Pennsylvania, and the Rebbe noted that he should add that it would take place at a permissible hour, after midday (since many of the mourning practices are still observed until then).

At the farbrengen on the next Shabbos, Parshas Va'eschanan—Nachamu, there were two distinguished *rabbanim* visiting from Eretz Yisroel, Rabbi Shimon Dayan from Southern Israel, and Rabbi Schapiro from Yerushalayim. The Rebbe showed extra attention to the guests, especially Rabbi Dayan.

The Rebbe spoke about the double consolation offered by Hashem to the Jewish people on this Shabbos, and how it manifests in our *avoda* to transform this physical world into a holy place. Another major theme of the Farbrengen was based on the instruction of Chazal that from the 15th of Av, a person must increase their Torah study, and this in turn will increase the days of their life. "This means quite simply," the Rebbe said, "that if a person was supposed to live for 120 years, this increase can bring them to live till 180 years old, or even more: to live eternally, with the coming of Moshiach."

The next Shabbos, Parshas Ekev, was Chof Av—*yahrtzeit* of the Rebbe's father, Harav Levi Yitzchok.

Interspersed in the crowd were the campers from Camp Gan Yisroel in Parksville, which the Rebbe showered with attention.

The Rebbe began by speaking about the fact that this year marked 46 years since the passing of his father, the *gematria* of "לוי," his father's first name.

The Rebbe spoke of his father's immense *mesirus nefesh* to fight for Yiddishkeit at a time when there were very few *rabbanim* left in the Soviet Union, especially those willing to stand up for what's right.

At the end of this *sicha*, the campers began singing a *niggun* and the Rebbe turned towards them, waving his hands with great encouragement.

The Rebbe also turned towards Reb Avraham and Reb Sholom Hecht, whose brother, Reb Yaakov Yehuda, passed away earlier in the week (see below).

In the third *sicha*, the Rebbe spoke about the upcoming month of Elul, when the "King is in the field," and mentioned the campers who were present, themselves coming from the "field," outside of the city. They came dressed in their distinctive clothing (i.e. camp t-shirts), allowing everyone to recognize that they are "*zera beirach Hashem*"—children blessed by Hashem, as the *possuk*

says. The Rebbe then invited the children, along with their counselors and caretakers, to say *l'chaim*, and wished them that they should all be a source of *nachas* to their parents and educators.

The Rebbe turned to the camp's administrator, Rabbi Avraham Shemtov, and asked, "Can someone give them *l'chaim*? Let them say *l'chaim*!"

With that, the children said *l'chaim* and began singing the joyous *Niggun Hakafos* of the Rebbe's father. The Rebbe encouraged the singing immensely, turning again and again towards the children. One of the children cried out, "*Yechi adoneinu moreinu v'rabeinu*," and everyone responded after him, while the Rebbe smiled broadly.

In the fourth and final *sicha*, the Rebbe spoke again about increasing Torah study, including for women. Citing the example of Rashi's daughters, the Rebbe pointed out that throughout our history, there were many women who excelled in Torah study.

Then the Rebbe spoke about the late Reb Yaakov Yehuda Hecht:

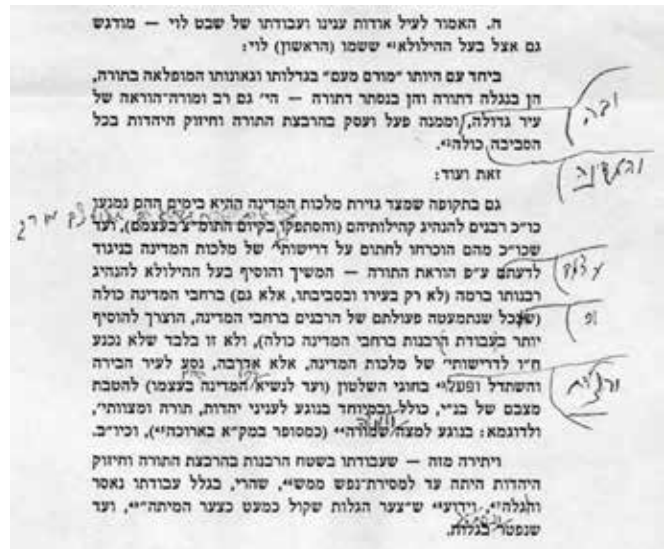
"We find ourselves within the *shiva* and *shloshim* of someone whom the [Frierdiker] Rebbe appointed to educate Jewish people, especially children. His name was Yaakov Yehuda—[a special name on two accounts, since] Yehuda is the mainstay of all the Tribes of Israel, and Yaakov is the choicest of our forefathers.

"Let us hope that very soon we will no longer need to speak about sad occurrences, for Moshiach will come, with *techiyas hameisim*, and we will be able to point with our fingers and say, 'Here is Yaakov Yehuda,' along with Yaakov Avinu, and the [Frierdiker] Rebbe, *Nessi Doreinu*, together with all of his Chassidim..."

When distributing bottles of *mashke*, the Rebbe gave a bottle to Reb Chaim Yitzchok (Harry) Spiegel, who announced that there would be a dinner for Chabad of Simcha Monica, California, on a cruise ship. He concluded that the Rebbe is invited as well, and hopefully, he will lead us out of *galus* to Eretz Yisroel, now!

The Rebbe smiled and asked, "What will be with the boat if we bring Moshiach now?" Mr. Spiegel answered that the boat will come to Eretz Yisroel along with Moshiach! The Rebbe smiled and told him to announce that to the whole crowd; they need to hear it too.

On the final Shabbos of the month, Parshas Re'eh, the Rebbe made an unbelievable, groundbreaking announcement. As the tension in Eretz Yisroel heightened, the Rebbe cited the words of the Midrash in Yalkut Shimoni:



THE REBBE'S EDITS ON THE SICHA OF SHABBOS PARSHAS EKEV, 20 AV 5750, SPEAKING ABOUT HIS FATHER, HARAV LEVI YITZCHOK.

There will come a time when the various nations of the world will be at war with one another. The king of Persia and the king of Aram will cause a great ruckus. The Jewish people will be afraid and feel anxious from the situation, but Hashem will reassure them: "My children," He will say, "all of this is only a preparation for the *geulah*. The time for your redemption has arrived!" The Midrash continues that Moshiach himself will stand upon the roof of the Beis Hamikdash and announce, "The time for your redemption has arrived!"

At the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe repeated these words again, highlighting that there was nothing to be afraid of; Moshiach is on his way!

## You Have the Strength!

A woman wrote to the Rebbe that she is in the middle of a pregnancy and she feels like she doesn't have strength. The Rebbe replied:

[Regarding what] you write that you don't have strength etc.:

Hashem created the souls of every living being, including yours and your husband's. Hashem has already created the soul of the fetus, and He chose you and your husband for the sacred mission of bringing it into this world, with joy and gladness of the heart. I will mention this at the Ohel. **1**