

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  
תנצ"ב



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



A YEAR OF MIRACLES

# Ushering In A Year of Wonders

ELUL—5750

This month, we conclude our journey through the special year of Shnas Nissim with the Rebbe. The year's final month of Elul included many special events, including the Rebbe's calming assurance through a growing state of tension in the Middle East, and culminating in preparations for the upcoming new year.

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THE REBBE LEAVES THE SHUL AFTER SELICHOS.

## Farbrengens

Every Shabbos afternoon at 1:30 p.m., the Rebbe entered the shul for a farbrengen where he spoke timely words of Torah and said *l'chaim* with Chassidim.

On the first Shabbos of the month—Parshas Shoftim, 4 Elul—the Rebbe spoke about the special qualities of the month of Elul, a time of *teshuva* and closeness to Hashem. The Rebbe also spoke about the fact that we are standing at the threshold of Moshiach's arrival, based on the words of the Midrash Yalkut Shimoni, which had been “publicized widely and continues to spread even further,” that Moshiach stands on the roof of the Beis Hamikdash and announces: “Humble ones! The time for your redemption has arrived!”<sup>1</sup>

While the Chassidim sang *niggunim* between *sichos*, the Rebbe encouraged the singing strongly, at times even joining the song in an undertone. The Rebbe motioned to several individuals to say *l'chaim* on full cups, including Israeli Knesset Member, Reb Avraham Werdiger. Visiting the Rebbe for the week, Reb Avraham received much positive attention from the Rebbe. He was instrumental, at the Rebbe's behest, in allowing Mr. Shamir to establish the current government in Eretz Yisroel.

Toward the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe distributed bottles of *mashke* to people hosting gatherings in the upcoming week. The first one to receive was the oldest of the Scharf boys, who announced that the bottle was

for a farbrengen in honor of the conclusion of Kaddish, eleven months after his father's passing. While he spoke, the Rebbe watched and smiled, and when he concluded, the Rebbe said, “*Gut!*”

The Rebbe then called for Rabbi Shimon Hecht, who was sitting in his late father, Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda's place, and gave him a bottle of *mashke* to “make a farbrengen.” Rabbi Hecht was confused and announced that there would be a gathering in honor of his father's *Shloshim*, but the Rebbe corrected him, saying, “For a farbrengen!”

On Shabbos Parshas Ki Seitzei, 11 Elul, the Rebbe spoke about the theme of the Parsha—waging war, which includes the spiritual battle that each of us wages against one's natural tendencies. But though we are in constant battle, the theme of Elul is joy; it's a time when Hashem expresses His love for us, and we respond by serving Him with joy.

In the second *sicha*, the Rebbe spoke about the late Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda Hecht, drawing lessons from his lifelong commitment to educating Jewish children. The *gematria* of his name is 212, the Rebbe said, which is the same as the word “רבי,” because he dedicated his life to educating children who are referred to as *tinokos shel beis rabban*. At the conclusion of this *sicha*, the Rebbe encouraged the singing very strongly, and turned to Rabbi Shimon Hecht, who was sitting in his father's place, indicating that he should say *l'chaim* on a full cup.

[On the following Tuesday, a large gathering was held



A LARGE CROWD GATHERS AT 770 MARKING THE SHLOSHIM OF RABBI YAAKOV YEHUDA HECHT.



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at 770 to mark Rabbi Hecht’s *Shloshim*. In the midst of the event, the Rebbe sent out the edited version of this section of the farbrengen and asked that it be printed and distributed amongst the participants.]

At the end of the farbrengen the Rebbe distributed bottles of *mashke*, as usual. Members of the *hanhala* of the Central Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim approached to receive a bottle for a farbrengen in honor of Tes-Vov Elul—marking 93 years since the founding of the yeshiva. When the Rebbe saw the yeshiva’s *mashpia*, Rabbi Shlomo Zarchi, he asked Rabbi Leibel Groner if he too was part of this group.

Shabbos Parshas Ki Savo was also Chai Elul, and the theme of the farbrengen centered around that date. One of the ideas that the Rebbe discussed was about the Alter Rebbe, who is referred to as “Alter,” meaning elderly. Just like an elderly individual has stocked up on many years of lived experience, the Alter Rebbe is similarly “stocked” as his Chassidus includes the general ideas of all the Chassidus that would be taught in subsequent generations.

On the final Shabbos of the month, Parshas Nitzavim-Vayelech, the Rebbe cited the famous teaching of the Alter Rebbe, who heard from the Maggid in the name of the Baal Shem Tov: On the Shabbos before Rosh Hashanah, we don’t bless the upcoming new month, because Hashem

Himself blesses this month. With the power of His *bracha*, the Jewish people are able to bless the remaining 11 months of the year.

It’s interesting that specifically in this teaching three Rabbeim are mentioned: The Baal Shem Tov, the Maggid, and the Alter Rebbe. The Rebbe explained that in order to bring Hashem’s blessings down into this world, we invoke the *zechus* of our Rabbeim. This mirrors the daily practice in the Beis Hamikdash, where before bringing the *korban tamid*, they would mention the city of Chevron to invoke the *zechus* of our holy Avos.

The Rebbe concluded the farbrengen with a call to action: It was mentioned several times in the past that on Shabbos, people should gather together for Torah study. When addressing these gatherings this week, people should be reminded to assist their fellow Jews and ensure that everyone has what they need for the upcoming Yomim Tovim. Especially this year, when Rosh Hashanah leads straight into Shabbos, care must be taken that everyone has enough food, meat, and wine, and everything else necessary for a hearty celebration.

The Rebbe mentioned that we are now concluding the year which has the acronym of “*Shnas Nissim*”—the year of miracles—and we are entering into the year of “*Ar’enu Niflaos*”—when Hashem will show us the wonders of the complete and final *geula*.



THE REBBE EXITS THE ELEVATOR ON THE WAY TO HIS ROOM AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF THE CHILDREN'S RALLY, 7 ELUL.



## What Was the Outcome?

Throughout the month, there were several interesting occurrences:

On Sunday, 5 Elul, the Rebbe visited the Ohel as usual, following the distribution of dollars. The Rebbe left 770 at 5:55 p.m., returning late into the night at 11:50! At 12:00 a.m., the Rebbe entered the shul for Mincha and Maariv, encouraging the singing with a radiant face.

The next week, the Rebbe again returned very late from the Ohel, at 11:15 p.m., and the next week at 10:25 p.m.

As it turned out, the crowds coming to see the Rebbe at Sunday dollars were growing larger by the week, and it became very difficult for the Rebbe to go to the Ohel afterward in a timely manner. On the final Sunday of the month, the Rebbe did not go to the Ohel on Sunday and went on Monday instead. Rumor has it that the Rebbe said he would officially change his practice from going on Sunday to going on Monday with the start of the new year, after performing *Hataras Nedarim* on Erev Rosh Hashanah.

On Thursday, 16 Elul, a shliach from out of town had joined the Rebbe's *minyán* for Shacharis along with one of his supporters. As the Rebbe left the shul following davening, he waved his hand in encouragement towards the supporter, who was holding a child in hand. Later that day, the Rebbe told Rabbi Leibel Groner to ask the shliach: What effect did the Rebbe's encouragement have on the supporter? The Rebbe wanted an answer before leaving for the Ohel later that day! The shliach responded that the effect was "extraordinary."

## Women and Girls

The Rebbe addressed two groups of women and girls this month:

The first, on Tuesday, 7 Elul, consisted of the campers and staff of Camp Emunah. Originally, the Rebbe had sent a message that Rabbi Sholom Ber Hecht should address the girls, but on Tuesday morning, the Rebbe let it be known that he himself would address them.

At 3:00 p.m., the campers arrived and took their seats in the big shul of 770. A small group of men was at



THE SCHARF CHILDREN (LEFT) STAND AT THEIR PLACE NEAR THE REBBE AT THE CONCLUSION OF SHACHARIS, 8 ELUL.



THE REBBE ADDRESSES THE WOMEN, 22 ELUL.

the front of the shul near the Rebbe's platform in front of a movable *mehitza*. The Rebbe entered the shul at 3:25, encouraging the singing of the men while the girls clapped along. Mincha was davened, followed by shofar blowing, and the girls then recited the Twelve Pesukim as the Rebbe watched with noticeable pleasure.

Then the Rebbe addressed the girls, and Rabbi Sholom Ber Hecht translated into English. The Rebbe spoke about the name of their camp: *Emunah*, and how it gives life to all the Torah and *mitzvos* we do. Drawing closer to the upcoming new year, the Rebbe mentioned that this Rosh Hashanah leads straight into Shabbos, giving all the women and girls—even the very young ones—a special opportunity to bring more light into the world by kindling Yom Tov and Shabbos candles for three days in a row.

The Rebbe concluded that children's rallies of this type usually end with singing *niggunim*. However, since most of the participants at this gathering are women and girls, we will ask the *chazan* to sing "*Sheyiboneh Beis Hamikdash*" on his own, and to end off with "*Amen, kein yehi ratzon!*"

Chazzan Teleshevsky indeed sang *Sheyiboneh*, and all the girls clapped along, after which the Rebbe distributed packets of dimes to the counselors for the girls.

This Mincha was the last time that the Scharf children recited Kaddish for their father. When the Rebbe came into the shul for Maariv that evening, the children were not at their regular place next to the Rebbe's platform. During Maariv, the Rebbe kept looking very intently at the spot where the children used to stand, and they understood that the Rebbe wanted them to be there even though they had already finished with Kaddish.

Later in the month, on 22 Elul, the Rebbe addressed all women and girls gathered at 770 in advance of the new year. "This has been referred to as 'Shnas Nissim,'" the Rebbe said, "and we have indeed seen many miraculous occurrences throughout the year."

The Rebbe continued at great length speaking about the incredible phenomenon taking place in Russia, where thousands of families and individuals were finally allowed to leave to the United States and Eretz Yisroel after decades of harsh oppression.

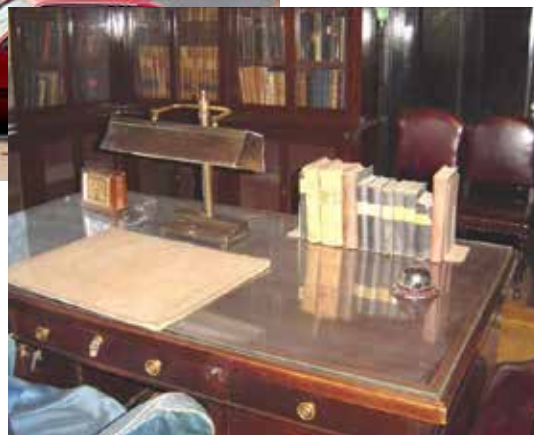
The Rebbe also spoke about the coming of Moshiach



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THE 11 SEFORIM RETURNED TO THE FRIEDIKER REBBE'S DESK IN ELUL 5750, IN THE SAME SPOT UNTIL THIS VERY DAY.

CONSTRUCTION AT THE LIBRARY NEARS COMPLETION. PHOTO FROM 12 ELUL 5750.



as most imminent:

“We have spoken several times in the recent past about the words of the Yalkut Shimoni,” the Rebbe said, “that when times are turbulent throughout the world, Hashem tells His children, ‘Do not be afraid, the time for your redemption has arrived!’”

The *sicha* went on for over an hour. At its conclusion, the Rebbe handed out packets of dollars to the organizers to distribute to all the women present. When Mrs. Chava Hecht (wife of the late Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda) passed by, the Rebbe gave her an additional packet of dollars, saying, “Give this out for the *aliyas haneshama* [of your husband], but do it with joy!”

Before leaving the shul, the Rebbe took to the microphone once more and said, “We’ll conclude with a wish to each of you, as the [Friediker] Rebbe would say it in the singular tense: *L’shana tova tikasev v’schaseim!*”

## The Library

Over the past several months, construction had been underway at the Agudas Chabad Library with a plan to connect the basement of the building at 770 with the library building next door, as well as adding a bridge connecting the third floors of the two buildings. Towards the end of Elul, the basement construction was completed, along with the facade of the bridge.

On 21 Elul, marking 50 years since the Chanukas Habayis of the building of 770, the Rebbe edited and published a *maamar* titled “*Al Shlosha Devarim*,” the same title of the *maamar* delivered by the Frierdiker Rebbe at

the original celebration in 5700.

Towards the end of the month, on Tuesday, 28 Elul, the final remaining *seforim* that had been stolen during the infamous theft several years earlier were returned to 770. These were the 11 *seforim* that were on the Frierdiker Rebbe’s desk at the time of his *histalkus*. The Rebbe was visibly relieved when learning the news that this long, painful saga had finally come to an end, and asked that the newly arrived *seforim* should be placed on the desk in the same order as they were at the time of the *histalkus* on Yud Shevat.

## Hashem Is Watching Every Yid!

Each Sunday, the Rebbe was visited by thousands of individuals seeking his blessings and holy counsel.

**On Sunday, 5 Elul**, many people asked the Rebbe about the rising tensions in the Middle East and their implications for Eretz Yisroel. The Rebbe reassured them that all would be well.

One army reservist asked the Rebbe—if war were to break out in Eretz Yisroel, should he return to fight and protect the land? The Rebbe responded, “There will not be a war! If you wish to help protect the land, you can go back even during peaceful times.” The reservist asked

the Rebbe again, "But if there were to be a war, should I go?" The Rebbe repeated: "There will not be a war. There will be peace!"

A woman told the Rebbe that she was planning to send her daughter to Eretz Yisroel for this school year to attend a Beis Yaakov seminary, but she was now rethinking her decision due to the current situation. The Rebbe replied: "There's nothing to rethink; don't make yourself crazy. Send her there. It's better to be there than here!"

Another woman told the Rebbe that she planned on leaving soon to Eretz Yisroel, but her mother-in-law was very worried. The Rebbe said, "There's nothing to worry about. Hashem is watching every Yid!"

A *rav* from Bnei Brak came to the Rebbe asking for a *bracha* for his yeshiva, which he referred to as "a neutral yeshiva." The Rebbe responded, "You keep saying that you are neutral. Why don't you say that you're a chossid?" The Rebbe gave him an additional dollar, wishing him to be a chossid and to go from strength to strength.

"And don't be frightened by this!" the Rebbe said.

The *rav* told the Rebbe that his children are enrolled in "*Tzevakos Hashem*," and the Rebbe corrected him: "*Tzivos Hashem*." The children had asked the *rav* to bring back dollars from the Rebbe for them, and the Rebbe asked, "What are their ranks in *Tzivos Hashem*?"

The father replied that two of them are captains, one is an officer, and the other is a general. The Rebbe blessed the children and gave the *rav* 8 dollars for his 8 children, saying, "Moshiach will have 8 names. May each of your children greet Moshiach with another name!"

When one woman passed by, the Rebbe asked her about her sister. "It's been three or four years since she's written to me. Please make sure that she writes more often and shares good news."

**On Sunday, 12 Elul**, an individual came to the Rebbe saying that his brother-in-law was very sick. The Rebbe told him to check the mezuzos of his home. "The doctors want me to convey to my brother-in-law that his situation is grave," the man said. "Why would the doctors want you to do that?" the Rebbe replied. "You don't need to mix in with the doctors' affairs. You need to tell your brother-in-law that he'll have a *ksiva vachasima tova*."

A woman came to the Rebbe, pointing at a young boy, saying that he is very sick, and asking if she should change his name. The Rebbe said no and asked for his name.

"Yosef ben Sara," she replied.

"That's a good name," the Rebbe said. "Mainly because



REB MORDECHAI BEN DAVID WITH THE REBBE AT SUNDAY DOLLARS, 12 ELUL.

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RABBI MENACHEM MENDEL MENDELSON AT SUNDAY DOLLARS, 12 ELUL.

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SENATOR JOSEPH LIEBERMAN AND HIS WIFE HADASSAH IN CONVERSATION WITH THE REBBE, 26 ELUL.

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THE REBBE WITH MR. JERRY WEINTRAUB ON THE NIGHT OF EREV ROSH HASHANAH.

Yosef [Hatzaddik] lived for 110 years!”

Another woman told the Rebbe that she plans to discharge her son from the hospital, taking responsibility for the decision on her own. The Rebbe said that she should not make such a decision before consulting a doctor.

Reb Mordechai Ben David Werdyger came to the Rebbe, saying that Rabbi Shlomo Cunin asked him to ask the Rebbe for a “*shtarke bracha*” for the telethon fundraiser. The Rebbe said, “May it be doubly-strong, *kiflayim l’tushiya*.”

Reb Mordechai mentioned that he sang for the children who were rescued from the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, and the Rebbe wished him that from now on he should sing for happy occasions, unlike the Chernobyl situation, which was quite the opposite.

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Mendelson, the *rav* of Komemiyut, Eretz Yisroel, came to the Rebbe, and reported that he recently visited the Lubavitcher yeshiva in Kiryat Gat. Boruch Hashem, the yeshiva is growing and doing well, but they need a *bracha* because they’re deeply in debt.

The Rebbe replied, “You are a *rav*! You must give a halachic ruling that they should be free of all debt, enabling them to be at ease, like the Rambam says, in order to fulfill Torah and *mitzvos* properly. The Rambam

can be the basis for your *psak-din*.”

On Sunday, 19 Elul, a woman came to the Rebbe saying that she had cancer, and that she needed the Rebbe’s *bracha*.

“Forget about it,” the Rebbe said, “and lose it. You say that you have it, you can just as well say that you lost it.”

“With the Rebbe’s prayers?” she asked. “Yes!” the Rebbe answered.

Rabbi Simcha Yerushalmi came to the Rebbe and said that while he was the chairman of the religious affairs office in Rechovot, he often assisted the Chabad Chassidim, and the Rebbe had once sent him a thank-you letter for this.

“Why do you speak about the Chassidim as if you’re not one of them?” the Rebbe asked.

“*Chas v’shalom!*” Rabbi Yerushalmi answered. “I am a descendant of many holy Jews, including Reb Mendel of Rimnitz, the Yismach Moshe, and others.”

The Rebbe replied, “But at times it’s harder to make a holy person into a Chossid, because he thinks he’s already holy.”

“I am a Chossid!” Rabbi Yerushalmi said.

“May you be a Chossid and also holy!” the Rebbe answered.

Rabbi Yerushalmi mentioned that in his younger

years, he learned with the Minchas Elazar of Munkatch.

The Rebbe concluded: “May Hashem bless you have his zealotness, but express it in a peaceful and pleasant manner.”

**On Sunday, 26 Elul**, Senator Joseph Lieberman came to the Rebbe, saying that it was a great pleasure to see the Rebbe again. The Rebbe told him that he’d heard a lot about what the senator was up to, and blessed him with a double benediction of Hashem’s blessings.

**Senator Lieberman:** I appreciate it very much. These are serious times in Washington, and thank G-d I have the opportunity to be active. Your blessings mean a lot to me, steering me in the right direction.

**The Rebbe:** But you have Hashem’s blessings directly, without any intermediary, and you will utilize them in good health and with much success.

The senator asked the Rebbe if he had advice as to the situation in the Middle East, and the Rebbe said: “Things move so quickly, there are changes every day; it’s difficult to predict what will be tomorrow. Take one day at a time...”

Senator Lieberman introduced his wife to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe gave her a dollar “for your cooperation with your husband.”

“We have four children,” Senator Lieberman said, “the youngest is Chana Rochel; I think that’s a good Chabad name.”

The Rebbe gave them four dollars, instructing them to let the children give the tzedakah on their own. “Don’t rely on the senator,” the Rebbe said with a smile.

An individual came to the Rebbe saying that a while ago, he had asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* for a *shidduch*, and the Rebbe had told him that very soon he should send the Rebbe his wedding invitation, but he still hasn’t found his match.

The Rebbe replied: “No one can do that for you. It says ‘*Ha’ish mekadash lirtzono*,’ a man betroths by his own will.”

The man insisted: “The Rebbe should decree that I will soon become a *chassan*!” The Rebbe replied: “I already did!”

An individual told the Rebbe that he heard that the Rebbe asked everyone to speak about the words of the Yalkut Shimoni (about the imminent coming of Moshiach), and the Rebbe agreed, adding, “Don’t be afraid that [it might be perceived as] we’re mixing into politics...”



THE REBBE HANDS OUT COINS FOR TZEDAKAH WHILE LEAVING THE MIKVAH, EREV ROSH HASHANAH.

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## Preparing for Rosh Hashanah

Of course, as the year drew to a close, preparations were underway for the new year, 5751.

In an unusual gesture, the Rebbe released three *Michtavim Klaliyim* before Rosh Hashanah (as opposed to two, as he normally does): One on Chai Elul, a second on 25 Elul, and a third on Gimmel D’Selichos. The theme of the letters was about the unique advantage of this year’s Rosh Hashanah, which brings together three consecutive days—a “*chazaka*”—of holiness, by leading directly into Shabbos.

On Wednesday, 22 Elul, an announcement was made and signs were posted that the Rebbe would begin receiving *panim* on Motzei Shabbos after the first Selichos. Everyone who is in town at the time is asked to bring their *panim* at the earliest opportunity, allowing for the guests who arrive later to give the Rebbe their *panim* in due time. Additionally, everyone was asked to place the



HATARAS NEDARIM.

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money for *d'mei pan* in a separate envelope.

On Motzei Shabbos, 26 Elul, at 1:05 a.m., the Rebbe entered the shul for the first Selichos. The Rebbe was fairly serious and he did not encourage the singing on his way in. After Selichos, at 1:50, the Rebbe began receiving the long line of people with *panim* until 3:00 a.m. The Rebbe wished each person a “*Ksiva vachasima tova.*”

The Rebbe received *panim* again after Maariv on Monday night, and then again on Tuesday night.

On Tuesday evening, the night of Erev Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe distributed dollars after Maariv and was visited by a special delegation of *balebatim* from California, including Mr. Jerry Weintraub.

The Rebbe spoke and smiled warmly to them, and then called back Mr. Weintraub, wishing him “Much success,” and giving him two additional dollars.

On the morning of Erev Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbe entered the shul for Selichos at 8:35. At around 10:45 a.m., the Rebbe left for the *mikvah*, and only afterward came back to the shul for Shacharis, much later than usual—beginning at 11:45.

After Shacharis, a group of *rabbanim* and elder Chassidim sat down on the Rebbe’s platform and the Rebbe performed *Hataras Nedarim* before them.

At around 1:15 p.m., the Rebbe received the last line of people giving their *panim*, then received the communal *pan* from a group of elder Chassidim, headed by Reb Mendel Futerfas. The Rebbe responded with a *bracha*

for the new year, including a *bracha* beginning with each letter of the Aleph-Beis.

At 2:45 p.m., the Rebbe left for the Ohel. People who were at the Ohel observed that the Rebbe cried openly while standing there.

The Rebbe returned to 770 at 6:36 p.m., minutes before candle lighting.

The Rebbe then davened the final Mincha of Shnas Nissim—5750 in the small *zal*. When Mincha ended, it was already 7:02 p.m., the onset of the new year—5751—*Shnas Ar’enu Niflaos...* ①

1. See the previous installment of this column in the Av magazine.