

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  
תנ"צ'בה'

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



A YEAR OF MIRACLES

# Teves 5750

As we continue our journey through 5750—“Shnas Nissim”—the year of miracles, the month of Teves brings a unique flavor. Although Teves can be perceived as an ordinary month with fewer Yomim Tovim and special dates, this year, the atmosphere is full of excitement. Jews worldwide, and Chassidim in particular, prepare to celebrate 40 years of the Rebbe's *nesius* next month on Yud Shevat.

Already since last Yud Shevat, the Rebbe has been citing the *possuk* “נתן ה' לכם לב לדעת ועינים לראות ואזנים לשמע”—after 40 years in the desert, Moshe Rabbeinu tells the Jewish people that Hashem has finally given them a heart to know, eyes to see, and ears to hear. In other words, it is only after 40 years that one truly understands the teachings of his Rebbe.

It was a special time to be in the Rebbe's presence. This, of course, is in addition to the fact that no day with the Rebbe is “ordinary”. The sichos, the farbrengens, the Rebbe's words during dollar-distributions, are fascinatingly insightful. Let's explore.

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SAM SHLAGBAUM VIA JEW 308412 (14 TEVES 5750)



# Farbrengens

The month of Teves begins during Chanukah. In the year 5750, the first Shabbos, 2 Teves, was the final day of Chanukah, and the weekly Shabbos farbrengen was dedicated in large part to this theme. The Rebbe spoke about the lesson from the miracle of Chanukah—that a small amount of oil lasted eight days. The oil itself, however, was ordinary oil, and it was enough for at least one day, even according to the natural order. This teaches us that within nature itself, Hashem always gives us what we need to fulfill the mitzvos and do our *avoda* of spreading Yiddishkeit and Chassidus.

“There was a time,” said the Rebbe, “like in the days of the Mittlerer Rebbe, when the Chassidim were poor and destitute and could barely afford the few *kopeks* it would cost to buy copies of the *maamarei Chassidus*. To accommodate this situation, the Mittlerer Rebbe made sure to send his *maamarim* in installments so people wouldn’t have to shell out more than they could afford at once. In other words, Hashem gave them the means to do what they had to do, though it was on a smaller scale.

“Today however, we live in a time when there is so much more available to us. The [Frierdiker] Rebbe told us that our job is to spread Chassidus to the whole world, and we certainly have the capacity to do so. Especially in this country [the United States], where we’ve been blessed with unparalleled abundance; there’s enough food to eat, clothes to wear, and large homes, affording us the peace of mind we need to do our *avoda* well.

“The [Frierdiker] Rebbe himself came and lived in this country for ten years, watching some of his Chassidim live with abundance, and he used the material abundance for further spreading Chassidus. We must follow his example...”<sup>1</sup>

Towards the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe called for a farbrengen (a “Chassidishe Melaveh Malka”) to be held by Chassidim as a continuation to this farbrengen, and then asked that the following be publicized:

Whoever did not yet have a chance to give their children Chanukah Gelt (or has not given enough Chanukah Gelt) should decide now, on the final day of Chanukah, to rectify this in the next few days.

[It should be noted that the next day, on Sunday 3 Teves, the Rebbe went to the Ohel, and after davening Maariv upon his return, he notified that there would be a distribution of dollars for Chanukah Gelt.]

During a *niggun*, the Rebbe turned to the Scharf boys and handed a piece of cake to the middle boy, then one to the older boy, and asked where the youngest one was, who was seen at the last farbrengen. Then the Rebbe turned toward the bleachers, where a large group of guests were standing, and the singing subsided. The Rebbe said, “There is a group of guests here, boys and girls; let them say *l’chaim!*” Once the children started saying *l’chaim*, the Rebbe added, “And the local children should join them too, increasing the joyous atmosphere.” The singing continued, and the Rebbe vigorously encouraged the singing with both his hands.

## Will There Be a Farbrengen?

On the next Shabbos, preparation for Yud Shevat could be felt as the Rebbe spoke about the *posuk* of “וְיָמֵינוּ כְּיָמֵי יוֹסֵפִים” and the upcoming milestone of forty years. The Rebbe also spoke about the need to increase in *ahavas*



SEVENTH DAY OF CHANUKAH, ROSH CHODESH TEVES 5750.



THE REBBE RECEIVES MAFTIR ON ASARA B'TEVES.

*Yisroel* and *tzedakah*, as well as an increase in Torah study “*b’shufi*”—in abundance, by both yeshiva students and lay people.

On Thursday of the following week, on 14 Teves, the Rebbe went to the Ohel and delivered a *sicha* after Maariv upon his return.

The Rebbe addressed what was on many people’s minds: Would there be a *farbrengen* on Yud Shevat? It had been almost two years since the Rebbe stopped *farbrenging* during the week, but perhaps an occasion of this magnitude would bring change.

The Rebbe said:

“We find ourselves within the thirty-day period before Yud Shevat, the *yom hahilula* of my father-in-law, the Rebbe. It is therefore an appropriate time to discuss some things about the day.

“The *farbrengen* of the *yom hahilula* will take place, as has been the practice in recent years, on the preceding Shabbos. On the following Sunday [9 Shevat], and most certainly on Monday, the *yom hahilula* itself, we will visit the *tziyun* of the *baal hahilula*.

“It would be appropriate for everyone to utilize this day by traveling to surrounding communities (based on each person’s choosing), in the spirit of *נתנו לה' לכם לב לדעת* (i.e. with the added strength of

the culmination of forty years of the Rebbe’s teachings -ed.], to share a few words with the locals about the Parsha, and certainly some words of Torah from the *baal hahilula*, especially the *maamar* that he published for the day of his passing [Basi L’Gani]. These words should inspire them to action, following in the ways of my father-in-law, the Rebbe...”

The following Shabbos, Parshas Vayechi—Chazak, 16 Teves, the Rebbe mentioned the old *minhag* practiced in many communities that on Shabbos Chazak, the *gabbaim* make a *kiddush* for all the congregants in celebration of completing a complete *sefer* of Torah.

“For some reason,” the Rebbe said, “we don’t see this practice today. Perhaps they rely on me, because I *farbreng* on Shabbos Chazak, so they suffice with that. But there is enough time after this *farbrengen* for the *gabbaim* to make a *kiddush*, especially in light of what we’ve been speaking of throughout this year—the importance of gathering Jews together on Shabbos to speak words of Torah...”

Towards the end of the *sicha*, the Rebbe spoke about the need to celebrate the coming of Moshiach by dancing with one’s feet. With that, the Rebbe stood up and began singing his father’s *Hakafos Niggun*, clapping his hands to all sides for a long time.



KIDDUSH LEVANA, 12 TEVES 5750.

On Wednesday, 20 Teves (*yahrtzeit* of the Rambam), the Rebbe went to the Ohel and when he returned, he went to his home on President Street where he davened Mincha and Maariv. The Rebbe then delivered a *sicha* about the Rambam and about the daily study of Rambam, highlighting the importance of continuing this study diligently and drawing lessons from that day's *shiur*.

On the following Shabbos, 23 Teves (the day before Chof-Daled Teves, *yahrtzeit* of the Alter Rebbe), the Rebbe spoke about increasing in *limud haTorah*: Coming from the *yahrtzeit* of the Rambam, we must enhance our daily study of Rambam (whether three *perakim*, one *perek*, or Sefer Hamitzvos), and our commitment to studying the works of the Alter Rebbe—the Tanya and the Shulchan Aruch. The Rebbe called for reinstating the age-old tradition of Chassidim studying one *perek* of Tanya before beginning Shacharis every morning.

Of course, the Rebbe spoke about the upcoming *yom hahilula* of Yud Shevat—40 years and continuing the preparations.

## A New Era

In honor of the upcoming milestone Yud Shevat, a major breakthrough came to pass in Lubavitch: With the Rebbe's consent, the first *sefer* of the Rebbe's Torah bearing the name “Toras Menachem” was published. It was a collection of the Rebbe's *sichos* on the teachings of his

father, titled “*Toras Menachem—Tiferes Levi Yitzchok*.”

On Wednesday evening—the night of 28 Teves, birthday of the Rebbe's mother, Rebbetzin Chana, members of Vaad Hanachos B'Lahak gave the Rebbe the *sefer*, and the Rebbe responded by circling the date (28 Teves) with his holy handwriting and wrote: נת' ות"ח ודבר בעתו והזמ"ג" (It was received, thanks. It is an appropriate and opportune time to mention this at the Ohel on this very date).

The next day, the Rebbe went to the Ohel with the *sefer* in hand.

Also, on Wednesday evening, a community wide meeting was held, organized by Tzach (Lubavitch Youth Organization), discussing appropriate preparations for the upcoming great and holy day of Yud Shevat. Each participant received a card to write in their *hachlatos* in connection with this milestone, to be given to the Rebbe.

## Dollars Distribution

This month saw a broad array of visitors who came to see the Rebbe, receive his blessing, and a dollar for *tzedakah*.

On Sunday, 10 Teves, the Rebbe was visited by the chief rabbi of Warsaw, Rabbi Menachem Joskowicz. The rabbi told the Rebbe about the various activities he administers there, including daily minyanim, a *mikvah*, and so on, and the Rebbe said, “Poland was once the

major nerve center of Yiddishkeit around the world. See to restore its old glory!”

When Rabbi Avrohom Shemtov passed by, the Rebbe said, “We must see to bring the [good results] from the satellite into fruition.” Rabbi Shemtov did not immediately understand, and the Rebbe explained, “I mean the Chanukah satellite” [Chanukah Live].

On Sunday, 17 Teves, the Rebbe was visited by the Debreciner Rav. The Rebbe told him, “You are a *posek* who rules in halacha. Chazal say that ‘*Dvar Hashem*—this refers to halacha’ and they also say that ‘*Dvar Hashem*—this refers to the *keitz*’, the end date for Moshiach’s arrival. We see that these two ideas are connected.” The *rav* made some motions with his hands, and the Rebbe said, “Why are you moving your hands around? The time for Moshiach’s coming is long overdue. You must write a halachic ruling in one of your *seforim* that Moshiach must come. This is a serious matter!”

One of the bochorim introduced Mr. Chaim Schneerson from Leningrad to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe spoke with him in Russian, saying that he must uphold the “Schneerson” heritage, with its characteristic unwavering strength, in matters of Torah and mitzvos.

Right after Mr. Schneerson, Rabbi Yosef Aharonov, the administrator of Tzach in Eretz Yisroel passed by the Rebbe. The Rebbe asked him if the people from Russia who had just passed by had any connection with him. Rabbi Aharonov answered that the other *bochur* brought Mr. Schneerson, and the only connection they have is that they passed by at the same time. The Rebbe said, “Do you

have a branch of Tzeirei Agudas Chabad in Leningrad as well? It would be a good idea!” With a smile, the Rebbe gave him a dollar, saying, “This is for a good beginning. *Besuros tovos.*”

The Rebbe was also visited by the Radoshitzer Rebbe, Rabbi Dovid Aharonchik, who is a descendant of the Lelover dynasty. The Rebbe said to him: “May you have long years in your reign, going from strength to strength in all matters of Torah and mitzvos. You probably know that Lelov is renowned for *ahavas Yisroel*. You must show a living example in this regard; however good it’s been till now, let it increase many times over.”

Rabbi Aharonchik told the Rebbe that he has been sending pamphlets about Yiddishkeit to the non-frum schools in Eretz Yisroel for seven years now, and although he’s written to the Rebbe about it, he hasn’t yet received an answer. The Rebbe responded, “You should send material to the *frumme* schools as well.” The Rebbe added with a smile, “*Ahavas Yisroel* applies to them too; I don’t need to tell you that...”

Throughout the month, the Rebbe often distributed dollars in the evenings as well, after Maariv.

On 20 Teves, the Rebbe distributed dollars after Maariv in his home, and was approached by a delegation of activists who were working on rebuilding Yiddishkeit in Poland: the philanthropist David Chase, Mr. Ronald Lauder, and Rabbi Yechezkel Besser. Mr. Chase told the Rebbe about the various programs that they were orchestrating, and the Rebbe told the group that it was his opinion that they should deal primarily with the elderly people. For the young people, there doesn’t seem to be any future, and it would be worthwhile to try and persuade them to move to other countries.

## Difficult Times

There were a few sad occurrences during this month in the Rebbe’s presence. The first was on Motzei Shabbos 17 Teves, when an elder Chossid, Reb Eliyahu Nochum Shklar, was tragically killed by a passing car while on his way to the Colel Chabad Melaveh Malka.

The next day after distributing Sunday dollars, the Rebbe went to the *mikvah* and on the way, he looked with pain toward the large crowd gathered for the *levaya*. Before the Rebbe’s car pulled away, the Rebbe turned and looked towards Brooklyn Avenue, where Reb Eliyahu Nochum’s *aron* was due to come from.



CHIEF RABBI OF WARSAW, RABBI MENACHEM JOSKOWICZ VISITS THE REBBE.



DOLLARS DISTRIBUTION, 10 TEVES 5750.

CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 57941

Another tragic occurrence happened with the daughter of Reb Zushe Rivkin from Kfar Chabad (wife of Rabbi Aharon Dov Halperin), who was gravely ill. On Sunday evening, 25 Teves, the Rebbe distributed dollars after Maariv, and Reb Zushe asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* for his daughter and a guarantee (“*havtacha*”) that she would get better. The Rebbe responded, “Only Hashem can guarantee.” Reb Zushe persisted that “A tzaddik can decree and Hashem will fulfill,” and the Rebbe responded, “*Besuros tovus...*”

The next morning at the end of Shacharis, Reb Zushe arrived and recited *kaddish* for his daughter, who had sadly passed away. The Rebbe gazed at him throughout.

That afternoon, the Rebbe participated in two *levayos*. The first was of Mrs. Chaya Posner, wife of longtime Pittsburgh shliach Rabbi Sholom Posner. The Rebbe came out wearing his winter coat and followed the *aron* down Eastern Parkway, crossing Kingston Avenue and stopping in the service lane near the subway entrance. The Rebbe watched as all the cars of the funeral procession drove away, and then remained standing in his place for another 24 minutes, gazing intently straight down the road where all the cars had driven. The Rebbe didn’t say a word; he just stood there in place as many Chassidim stood around him. At one point, Rabbi Groner mentioned to the Rebbe that all the cars from the procession were already gone, but the Rebbe didn’t flinch.

Eventually the Rebbe returned to 770, washed his hands outside the door, and then went into his room. About 15 minutes later, the Rebbe came out again, this time for the *levaya* of Reb Zushe’s daughter.

The Rebbe’s face was extremely serious. The Rebbe followed the *aron* across Kingston Avenue again, all the while looking towards Reb Zushe. As soon as all the cars of the procession were out of sight, the Rebbe turned around and went back to 770.

The atmosphere during Maariv was, understandably, quite gloomy. The crowd did not sing when the Rebbe entered and exited the shul, and the Rebbe’s face was very serious.

May Hashem comfort all mourners and bring an end to tears, with the coming of Moshiach.

## Didan Notzach!

Boruch Hashem, there were also some very joyous moments this month!

On Tuesday 19 Teves, the Rebbe went to the *mikvah* in the morning, something he would generally do only if he was planning to make a trip to the Ohel.

At around 2:30 in the afternoon, the news arrived at 770 that a verdict had been rendered in the court case against the Rebbe (which came in continuation to the victory of Hei Teves), completely in the Rebbe’s favor.



THE REBBE IN CONVERSATION WITH REB ZUSHE RIVKIN.

LEVY FREIDIN VIA JEM 223292 (26 ELUL 5749)

The Rebbe did not go to the Ohel. Instead, the Rebbe joined the crowd for Mincha at 3:15 p.m and Maariv at 5:30. The Rebbe's face was glowing as he encouraged the singing strongly, and a joyous atmosphere was felt in Lubavitch. Chassidim farbrenge and danced throughout the night.

## The Zechus of Crown Heights

Throughout the month, the Rebbe offered various responses to the letters he received. Below is a selection:

An individual wrote to the Rebbe that he bought a new home in the Crown Heights neighborhood, and the Rebbe replied:

“ויהא כל זה בהצלחה וזכות השכונה דכ”ק מו”ח אדמו”ר מסייעת, אזכיר עה”צ.”

“May all of this be successful. The merit of the [Friediker] Rebbe's neighborhood adds good measure. I will mention this at the Ohel.”

One of the bochurim, Boruch Kahana, wrote to the Rebbe that he is involved with writing the Beis Chayeinu publication (a description of the goings on in the Rebbe's presence), and he is asking for a bracha that his writing should not disturb his learning in yeshiva. The Rebbe underlined the words “not disturb” and added:

“וואדרבה, אזכיר עה”צ”

“On the contrary [it will only help your learning]. I will mention this at the Ohel.”

An organization called “Tel Tapiyos” wrote to the Rebbe that they would like to arrange a trip of 40 *rabbanim* from Eretz Yisroel to travel to the Rebbe in honor of Yud Shevat—40 years, and the Rebbe replied:

“ארבעים רבנים לצאת מאה”ק!?”

“40 *rabbanim* to leave the Holy Land?!”

When an individual wrote to the Rebbe about plans to travel to the Rebbe in a way that was not fully in line with the law, the Rebbe responded, “כפשוט מופרך—This is obviously out of the question.”

Reb Yaakov Katz, the rosh yeshiva of Tomchei Temimim in Kfar Chabad, sent the Rebbe a report about his work, and the Rebbe replied:

“אזכיר עה”צ להצלחה בחינוך התלמידים וכו’ והזמ”ג, כנתינת כח דחנוכה, להוסיף בנר מצווה ותורה אור מיום ליום.”

“I will mention you at the Ohel for success with educating your students, etc. It is an opportune time to increase in ‘mitzvos [which are] the lamp and Torah [which is] the light, as the Yom Tov of Chanukah invigorates us to do.”

Thus concluded a month of great preparation in this special year of Nissim. Next month, we will explore the great milestone of Yud Shevat—celebrating 40 years of the Rebbe's *nesius*. 1

1. Transcript (R”D—unedited) of the farbrenge.