

לזכות

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סלונים
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My EARLY YEARS *with the* REBBE

An Interview with the Rebbe's Mazkir,
RABBI YEHUDA KRINSKY ^{שי}

A Chassidisher Derher was privileged to sit down with Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky for a fascinating interview about his early years in the presence of the Friediker Rebbe and the Rebbe. Presented here in honor of Yud Shevat.

Written By: Rabbi Mendy Greenberg

With special thanks to Rabbi Yirmi Berkowitz

My Childhood

When my parents got married in 1914, they had both recently immigrated to America. Seeing the state of Yiddishkeit in the new country, they made a vow: if Hashem would bless them with children, they would do everything in their power to raise them as *shomrei Torah Umitzvah*.

Born in 5694, I was the youngest, the “*ben zikunim*.” There was no Yeshiva in Boston—only after-school *cheder*—so I had to enroll in public school. I was a regular kid; I was very athletic, I would play baseball, and I was also one of the fastest runners in school. During the morning races before class began, I would often come in first. After elementary school and junior high, I got into a pre-Harvard prep-school, the Boston Latin School, which was—and still is—one of the most prestigious high schools in the country.

But after a short time there, my parents decided that I needed to go to Tomchei Temimim in New York. When local Jews would ask my parents how they could possibly remove their son from such a prestigious school to go to a Yeshiva, they responded, “We are not that interested in his learning how to make a living, as much as learning how to live.”

Lubavitch wasn’t new to us. My family had a close relationship with Lubavitch even before the Frierdiker Rebbe came to America. The *shadarim* who came from Russia—figures like Reb Mordechai Cheifetz and Reb Itche Masmid—would stay in our home, and my parents made sure they had everything they needed.

They were very strict about their personal kashrus; I remember Reb Itche Masmid watching my mother as she cracked the eggs in the kitchen to ensure everything met his standards. But they always ate what she cooked, and my parents did everything to make them feel comfortable.

As young as I was—maybe six, seven, or eight years old—watching these visitors was very special.

Hakafos with the Ramash

In 5707, I was supposed to come to New York to enter Tomchei Temimim after Simchas Torah, but one of my brothers was going to 770 before Hoshana Rabbah, and my parents decided I might as well go to the Rebbe for Yom Tov too. So, I ended up arriving the day before Hoshana Rabbah.

On Hoshana Rabbah night, I went to 770. When I opened the front door, I was struck by the image of a person standing in the *zal* at a *shtender* saying Tehillim. It was the Rebbe, then known as the Ramash. I was captivated by his countenance. There was something extraordinary about his face that drew me to him like a magnet.

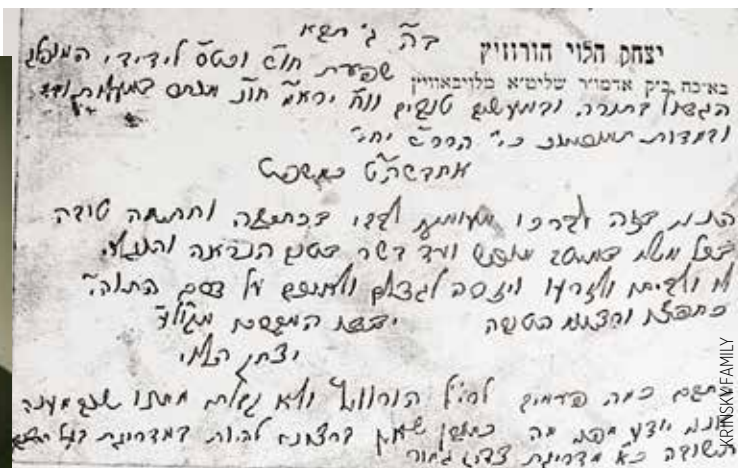
[It was actually not the first time I saw the Rebbe. The first time was at the wedding of Reb Avraham Hecht, in 5704. The Rebbe attended that wedding and spoke at length. Because the *mechutan* was of Hungarian descent, the Rebbe discussed a certain halachic matter from the *Chasam Sofer*. Of course, as a young boy, I didn’t grasp the content of the Rebbe’s words.¹]

On the first night of Shemini Atzeres, we went to *hakafos*. There were two *minyanim*—one downstairs in the *zal*, and one upstairs on the second floor, with the Frierdiker Rebbe. Naturally, the Rebbe attended the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *minyan*, and at around 10:30, the Rebbe came down from the *seudah* and went into his office; it seemed he was ready to go home. But then he came out, and walked into the *zal*, already wearing his coat.

I was there with five or six other *bochurim* from out of town who hadn’t gone home for Yom Tov. The Rebbe asked us, “Did you have a *possuk* of *Ata Horeisa*? Did you have



REB SHMAYA KRINSKY, FATHER OF RABBI YEHUDA KRINSKY.



A LETTER SENT FROM REB ITCHE DER MASMID TO REB SHMAYA IN THE YEAR 5694.

a *hakafa*?” We told him that we had neither. We were just *bochurim*, and hadn’t participated in the *hakafos* beyond the actual dancing. Nobody had paid us any attention.

The Rebbe went back into his room for a moment and immediately returned to the *zal*. He had removed his coat. The Rebbe proceeded to arrange full *hakafos*, with *Ata Horeisa*, for us boys. Everyone had a *possuk*, and then we did *hakafos*, and he danced with us—for a very long time. By that time, other *bochurim* and people had joined us.

I was a 12-year-old boy, a shy newcomer. At first, I stood on the side, watching, hoping that the Rebbe would place his hand on my shoulder during the dancing. Finally, I mustered the courage to step into the circle. I got close to the Rebbe, and my wish came true—he put his hand on my shoulder. I was elated.

The Rebbe stayed with us until the end, and only then did he go home. I don’t think the Rebbe knew who I was, and I can’t recall who the other *bochurim* were. Why did he go through all the bother? For a bunch of young *bochurim*. I was really taken aback by the Rebbe’s warmth. From that moment, I was smitten.

That was the beginning of my life...

The First Glimpse

On Simchas Torah, my third day in “Gan Eden,” there was a gathering in the courtyard of 770—what later became the main shul—for Jewish children from the neighborhood. A few dozen children were present; they were given fruits and sweets while reciting *brachos*, and the Rebbe stood on a bench and spoke to the children in Yiddish. Afterwards, Rabbi J. J. Hecht translated the Rebbe’s words into English.

During the Rebbe’s talk, someone whispered to me that if I looked up to the second floor, at the kitchen window of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s home, I would see his holy face. I glanced up, and for the first time in my life, I beheld the shining countenance of the Frierdiker Rebbe. He was seated, wearing a *shtreimel*, looking down at his son-in-law—the Rebbe—who was addressing the children below.

There was another “first” for me at that gathering: Rabbi Hecht asked me to bring a box of fruit from the Rebbe’s room into the courtyard. That was the first time I entered the Rebbe’s room.

My Yechidus with the Frierdiker Rebbe

Just before my bar mitzvah on 15 Kislev, about two months after I arrived at 770, I went into *yechidus* with my brother, Yosef Dov.

The Frierdiker Rebbe was sitting at his desk. His eyes were



RABBI YEHUDA KRINSKY AROUND THE TIME OF HIS BAR MITZVAH.

KRINSKY FAMILY



CHILDREN GATHER FOR AN EVENT IN THE COURTYARD OF 770 IN THE 5710S.

piercing, but full of warmth, and his face had a special glow.

First, the Frierdiker Rebbe *bentched* my brother, and then he turned to me and gave me a *bracha* as well. It was hard to understand the Frierdiker Rebbe’s words, so his secretary, Reb Elye Simpson, repeated everything for us.

Even now, I can still hear the tone of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s voice and the way he spoke when he gave me the *bracha*. Among the things he said, he repeated the word “*lernen*” (learning) three times, and also the word *ehrllich*.

This story had an interesting postscript, about 40 years



THE FRIERDIKER REBBE FLANKED BY THE REBBE AND RASHAG, 5703.

later. Once, while discussing one of the issues regarding the trial of the *seforim*, the Rebbe remarked to me: “*Bist doch ah chossid fun’m shver*—You’re a Chossid of my father-in-law.”

I didn’t understand what the Rebbe meant, and as if reading my thoughts, the Rebbe added, “Did you not receive a *bracha* from my *shver* for your bar mitzvah? If so, everything will be with *hatzlacha*.”

A Taste of Gan Eden

I was just a young *bochur*, and at my age, one wouldn’t typically be allowed into the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *farbrengens*. They were held on many occasions during the year, but were generally very short. They took place in the dining room on the second floor, and the space was limited. There were maybe 15 people seated around the table, with another 20 or so standing nearby.

At that age, I couldn’t get in. But that didn’t stop me—I’d stand by the doors and hope. There are two entrances to the second floor. One is the wooden staircase that comes up from near the Rebbe’s room, and the other is the staircase in the middle of the building which leads into the kitchen on the second floor. Even though I knew I wouldn’t be allowed in, I would stand by the door, just hoping, perhaps the door would open and I’d catch a glimpse.

Then, one time, when I was standing there alone, the door opened. It was Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka. I had never seen her before, and I’m sure she had never seen me either. But at that moment, she had *rachmanus*—like a mother. She told me, “*gei arein*” (go inside). I’ll never forget her kindness.

I walked into the *farbrengen* room. The Frierdiker Rebbe

was seated in his chair at the head of the table, his *shtreimel* on his holy head. The Rebbe was sitting to his left, Rashag to his right. He was already speaking. I couldn’t understand much of what he was saying, but the image—his presence, the aura, the way everyone was listening intently. It felt like I was in another world, in Gan Eden. Nothing else existed in those moments.

From that time on, the Rebbetzin had broken the ice for me. She let me in a few more times over the next couple of years, and the Rebbe let me in on several occasions as well.

When I didn’t make it into the *farbrengen*, I would stay nearby, and after the *farbrengen* ended, the doors would open, and everyone was allowed inside for a moment to pass by before the Frierdiker Rebbe and say *l’chaim*, and he would nod to each one. The Frierdiker Rebbe would be sitting, with the Rebbe and Rashag standing on either side of him—one on the left, one on the right—like soldiers.

I don’t know where I got the courage from, but I too would approach the table, pick up a glass with a bit of *mashke* and say *l’chaim* to the Frierdiker Rebbe—and he would acknowledge me with a smile. It was a blessed moment, and is still embedded in my memory.

When We Missed the Farbrengen

On one occasion, we missed the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *farbrengen*, so the Rebbe did *chazarah*.

On Shavuos 5709, Eretz Yisroel’s Chief Rabbi Yitzchak Isaac Halevi Herzog was staying near Crown Heights not

far from the yeshiva on Bedford Avenue corner Dean Street. Arrangements were made for him to visit the yeshiva for Mincha on Yom Tov, but the Friediker Rebbe was going to farbreng during those same moments in 770, so some *bochurim* were asked to remain at the yeshiva and not go to 770. Even the Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Mentlik, missed the farbrengen. I was asked to *layn* the *kriah* of that Mincha, and call the Chief Rabbi up to the Torah for *Levi*.

As compensation, the Rebbe promised that he would do *chazara* for all those who had stayed at the yeshiva to accommodate Rabbi Herzog. So, that night, after Yom Tov, we entered the Rebbe's room, and the Rebbe reviewed the entire farbrengen for us.

The Presence of the Ramash

In those days, the Rebbe was very reserved. Everyone knew he was a *ga'on olam* in all areas—*Nigleh*, Chassidus, Kabbalah, and beyond—and he was held in very high esteem.

For example, Reb Zev Kasinetz (who would later become my father-in-law) and Reb Yitzchok Dov Ushpal were in charge of researching footnotes for the *maamarim* that the Rebbe would prepare for publication. Once a week, they would enter the Rebbe's room with the references they couldn't find, and without hesitation, the Rebbe would tell them the exact source for each one. They never ceased to be amazed.

Despite the Rebbe's greatness, he was very warm to anyone who approached him. He was a "part of the crowd." He davened in the *zal*, and farbrenged with the Chassidim. On occasion, my father in Boston would send questions on halacha or other matters, and the Rebbe always graciously answered.

I would occasionally receive postcards and letters to the address of 770. Since the Rebbe oversaw the *mosdos* that

were based out of 770, all mail went through him, so when several letters of mine had accumulated, the Rebbe would send a message to the yeshiva that he wanted to see Yudel Krinsky. The first time this happened, I found the Rebbe in the Merkos office; he smiled at me, handed me the mail, and said, "This is for you."

Over time, I've reflected on why the Rebbe did that. He could have simply passed the letters on to me with one of the *bochurim*. Why did he go through the bother of always handing them to me personally?

One answer is that many of these were postcards that anybody was able to read, and perhaps the Rebbe didn't want personal correspondence laying around. But I think there was an additional reason. I was the youngest in my family; my parents were already older when I was born, and naturally, I was a bit more pampered. Leaving home at such a young age was difficult for me. So, the Rebbe made a special effort to draw me in and make me feel good.

At The Rebbe's Table

The Rebbe had a very specific pattern of behavior every Shabbos. Upon arriving at 770 in the morning, he would retrieve his key from above the sink at the end of the hallway, and go into his room. Then, a bit before *borchu*, he would come into Shul in his tallis, holding his siddur and a Tanya. He would first learn Tanya, and then begin to daven. One of the *mispa'elim* would bring him a Chumash; this was my brother Pinchus Shmuel's *chazaka* for a while, and I had the privilege of doing so later as well.

The Rebbe's place—the same spot as he would sit in after the *nesius*—was on the bench under the window that connected the *zal* to the *cheder sheni*. I sat on the same bench as he did. I knew that the Rebbe was a special person, but there wasn't any reason I couldn't sit close to him on the same bench. It just felt natural.

The Rebbe always received *shishi*. During *kriah*, he would stand at his place by the table, but for other parts of davening when one stands, he would move to the nearby wall facing *mizrach* (where a *shtender* was later placed for Shabbos).

After davening, the Rebbe would stay in the empty shul, davening at length, often for two hours after everybody had left. It looked exactly as it did in the years after he became Rebbe. His face was turned toward his *siddur*, completely still, with no external movements or audible sounds.

An impressive memory of those days: At that time, a learned Jew named Dr. Nass davened regularly in 770. He wasn't a Chabad Chossid, and occasionally, he would approach the Rebbe to discuss Torah—sometimes, even as the Rebbe was in the middle of davening. I recall one time, while the Rebbe was in the middle of davening, he came over with a



REB ZEV KASINETZ.

question on a Rambam. The Rebbe couldn't respond verbally, so he pointed with his finger to specific lines in the Rambam and motioned toward certain *seforim* in the library, indicating which ones Dr. Nass should bring to find the answer.

Shabbos Mevorchim Farbrengens

On Shabbos Mevorchim, the Rebbe would daven at a faster pace. The Rebbe would return his *seforim* to his room, and after a short while would enter the *zal*.

The farbrengen usually lasted about an hour and a half. Those present would say *l'chaim*, the Rebbe would say a few

sichos, and the crowd would sing *niggunim*. However, the Rebbe himself did not make kiddush.

One exception stands out in my memory: on Yud-Beis Tammuz 5709, which fell on Shabbos, the farbrengen was attended by a large crowd—around fifty people—including the guests who had come for Yud-Beis Tammuz, and on that occasion, the Rebbe did make kiddush.

Usually, around twenty people attended the farbrengen—those who were fortunate enough to understand how special the Rebbe was. One regular participant was a world-famous chess player, Mr. Samuel Reshevsky. The Rebbe once spoke about the lessons in *avodah* that may be learned from the game of chess, and it was later edited by the Rebbe for publication in *Yemei Bereishis*.

At the time, the regular crowd at 770 wasn't very large. Most Anash didn't live in Crown Heights, and many *bochurim* would travel home for Shabbos. The yeshiva's kitchen didn't operate on Shabbos, and I would eat at Rabbi J.J. Hecht's home, because he was a *mechutan* with our family. When he was appointed as a rabbi in Flatbush, I started to go to Rabbi Elya Simpson in Boro Park for Shabbos, but I never gave up attending the Shabbos Mevorchim farbrengens. On those Shabbosim, I stayed in 770. I would buy challah and wine and make kiddush in my room—but I never missed a farbrengen.

The farbrengens were very special. Sometimes, the Rebbe would speak about current events and then connect the subject to the names of the participants and their professions—seamlessly incorporating them into the *sicha*. It was an extraordinary thing to see. For example, at the Yud-Beis Tammuz 5709 farbrengen I mentioned earlier, the Rebbe spoke about the connection between the Biblical personalities of Yosef, Pinchos, and Yehuda—which were also the names of my brothers and I.



THE REBBE'S SHABBOS AND YOM TOV DAVENING PLACE (PHOTO FROM CIRCA 5730).



THE REBBE DAVENING SHACHARIS AT HIS SHABBOS PLACE.

Three Rebbes At Once

It was Friday afternoon on Beis Nissan 5709, around 3:30pm, when I was walking in front of 770 with my two brothers, Yosef Dov and Shmuel, I said, "Let's go into 770 and see what's happening."

We walked into 770, and standing there was the Rebbe in his short jacket. When he saw us, his face lit up. He was looking for a minyan for Mincha. It was the Rebbe Rashab's *yahrtzeit*, and the Frieddiker Rebbe was waiting in his room to daven at the *amud*, but there were only seven people there.

We went into the Frieddiker Rebbe's room. First, the Frieddiker Rebbe said *karbanos*, and then he began davening. It was very special; during *chazaras hashatz*, we were able to hear every word and every *bracha*.

After the last *kaddeishim*—since there wouldn't be a minyan later—the Frieddiker Rebbe continued with Kabbalas



THE FRIEDIKER REBBE IN HIS YECHIDUS ROOM IN MID-5709.

Shabbos until the end of *Mizmor Shir Lyom Hashabbos*, and recited that *kaddish* as well. With that, the davening concluded, and we left.

I later realized that three Rebbes were present at that minyan. There was the Rebbe, the Frierdiker Rebbe, and the Rebbe Rashab whose *yahrtzeit* it was. That day, I felt as if I had won the lottery.

Yud Shevat 5710

In those years—5708, 5709, and 5710—the Rebbe would publish a *maamar* of the Frierdiker Rebbe connected to the occasion, such as Pesach, Purim, etc., and these were the *maamarim* we learned in Seder Chassidus and so on.

The Thursday night before Yud Shevat, 5710, the *maamar Basi Lgani* was distributed. The *kuntres* contained two *maamarim*: *Basi Lgani* for Yud Shevat, the *yahrtzeit* of Rebbetzin Rivka, and the continuation, *Hayosheves B'Ganim*, for 13 Shevat, the *yahrtzeit* of Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah, and I remember gathering in the *zal* that night to learn the *maamar*.

There was also *yechidus* that night. One *yechidus* was with Reb Naftali Dulitzky, a Chassidische *gvir* from Eretz Yisrael, and another was with the newly arrived group of *bochurim* from Paris—Reb Dovid Raskin, Reb Shalom Marozov, and Reb Itche Pevzner. The Frierdiker Rebbe was very pleased to see them, and he told them, “*Fun tzeit tzu tzeit vet men areingein*, from time to time you will come in [to see me].”

I remember eating *seudas Shabbos* that Friday night with a few close *chaveirim*; we sat in the kitchen with two other



THE KUNTRES WITH THE FRIEDIKER REBBE'S MAAMARIM, PUBLISHED FOR YUD SHEVAT 5710.

bochurim, *farbrengring* late in the night.

On Shabbos morning, I headed to 770 with two friends for Seder Chassidus at about 8:30 a.m. As we got to the corner of Brooklyn Avenue and Eastern Parkway, we saw the mailman coming from 770. He stopped us and said, “You better hurry up. Something’s going on in 770. It doesn’t seem too pleasant—you might want to get there sooner.”

When we got to 770, it was just minutes after the *histalkus*.

I went to the *mikvah* on Union Street. Normally, it wasn’t open on Shabbos, but that day it was, and I saw that the Rebbe was there, in a separate room. Afterward, we returned to 770 and went upstairs to say Tehillim in the bedroom. The Rebbe was there for quite a while, going in and out.

Ordinarily, the Rebbe joined the ten o’clock minyan, but that day, since the Rebbe was busy, he joined a small minyan in the Cheder Sheni at 10:30. When we reached *Chazaras Hashatz*, the *zal* had already emptied, and we wanted to move over there, but the Rebbe spoke up and said that *Chazaras Hashatz* must be recited in the same location as *Tefillas Lachash*.

Throughout the day, there was a small *minyan* saying Tehillim in the bedroom, but hardly anyone was there—nobody really knew about it. After all, it was still Shabbos. After Shabbos, the crowds began arriving.

The *levaya* took place around 11:30 on Sunday morning. The *aron* was carried down the wooden steps and carried on the shoulder out to the street until Rogers and Eastern Parkway. From there, it was placed in a car and driven to the yeshiva at Bedford and Dean. The procession paused there for a while before continuing to the Beis Hachaim.

I remember the Rebbe, just before the *kevura*, saying publicly that the burial was on condition that if a will was discovered which designated a different burial place, they would move the *aron* there.

Looking Forward

We were all terribly brokenhearted. Even I, a young *bochur*, cried like a baby. Nevertheless, we all had clarity about the future from the very beginning. The *bochurim* and almost all the *yungeleit* understood immediately what needed to happen. We always knew that the Rebbe was very, very special. The Rebbe was head and shoulders above anyone we had ever met, in Torah, in *yiras shmayim*, and in simple *menschlichkeit*, and in everything you could think of. To us it was certain—the Rebbe would be Rebbe.

In one of those first few months, after Yud Shevat, my father wrote to me that someone who worked with him had become ill and told me to ask for the Rebbe's *bracha*. I passed the message on to the Rebbe, and you can imagine my shock when the Rebbe's secretary, Rabbi Hodakov, told me soon thereafter that the Rebbe wanted to see me. I entered the Rebbe's room with trepidation.

The Rebbe asked me several questions about the person, and then said that he was puzzled. Boston was a major center for medical research, and there was research being done on this particular condition. Why were the doctors unaware of it? The Rebbe was under the impression that new developments should have already arrived. The Rebbe suggested that we reach out to those research centers directly.

Then the Rebbe asked, "Does he learn Chassidus?"

I responded that I didn't know.

"*Es darf doch zein b'derech hateva... Zog dem tattn er zol lernen mit em Chassidus, vet er hobben ah refuah sheleima*—the cure needs to come in a natural way, so tell your father to

learn Chassidus with him, and he will have a speedy recovery."

Do you need more of a Rebbe than that? To me, that was as much of a *kabbalas hanesius* as I ever needed.

But still, on weekdays, the Rebbe would wear a three-piece suit; it was a statement that he wasn't accepting the *nesius*, and as time passed, there was a groundswell growing—we need to finish it up already; the Rebbe needs to publicly accept the *nesius*. Every Erev Rosh Chodesh, the Rebbe would go to the Ohel in a school bus. The Rebbe would sit in the front, and older *bochurim* would travel with him and sit in the back. The visit itself was fairly brief, lasting about half an hour.

As the year progressed, the Rebbe said that if anyone wanted to give him *pidyonos* to take to the Ohel, they could do so at his door before he boarded the bus. People would hand him their *pidyonos*, which he take it along with him.

Things began to be more formal; at some point, *yechidus* was only available by appointment, but people would still stop the Rebbe in the street, or in the *zal*, or even when the Rebbe was walking between his room and the Merkos office with paperwork for the secretaries.

Kabbalas Hanesius, Yud Shevat 5711

A day after Yud Shevat, Rabbi Krinsky sent the following letter (translated from Yiddish) to his family in Boston, describing the events of the day. Presented here is his account in its entirety:

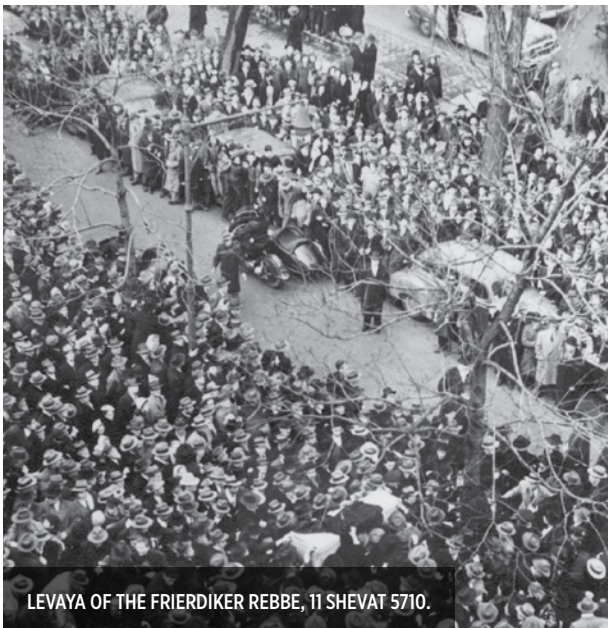
B"H, Thursday, Parshas "Vaya'aminu BaHashem Uv'Moshe Avdo" 11 Shevat, 5711

Dear parents, brothers and sisters,

I knew you would regret not coming for the *yahrtzeit*. Last night, the Rebbe *Shlita* spoke Chassidus on the *possuk*, *Basi L'gani Achosi Kallah*. There was a *sicha* before the *maamar*, and another following it. The Rebbe began the *maamar* by stating, "The Rebbe writes in his *maamar* for the day of the *histalkus*." He said this in a regular tone. Suddenly, "*Basi L'gani Achosi Kallah*" he said in the *niggun* of the *maamar*, and proceeded to deliver the Chassidus.

He recited several lines of the *maamar* and then explained how the Alter Rebbe explained it, what the Mittler Rebbe added, what the Tzemach Tzedek added, what the Rebbe Maharash added, what the Rebbe Rashab added, and what the [Frierdiker] Rebbe added (specifically, the explanation of the concept: "*Ikar Shechinah B'Tachtonim Haysah*"). The crowd was in awe.

Some fainted from the severe crowding, but the Rebbe's voice continued to resonate as he said the *maamar*, giving us strength to remain on our feet.



LEVAYA OF THE FRIERDIKER REBBE, 11 SHEVAT 5710.

In the middle of the *maamar*, the Rebbe paused twice. During the first break, he instructed us to sing the *Beinoni*, noting that the [Frierdiker] Rebbe cherished this *niggun*. Following that, we sang the Rebbe Rashab's *niggun*. During the second pause, we sang the Tzemach Tzedek's *Yemin Hashem Romeima* and a *niggun* from the Mittlerer Rebbe. (The Alter Rebbe's *niggun* was sung between the two parts of the *sicha* after the *maamar*.)

The beginning of the *maamar* was difficult, where he explained what the [Frierdiker] Rebbe wrote in the parentheses “*kol hashvi'in chavivin*—all seventh ones are beloved.” The Rebbe explained that we are now in the seventh generation, and the greatness of the seventh is that it is the seventh from the first.

In every section of the *maamar*, the Rebbe mentioned all the Rabbeim. In the third part (while continuing with the *niggun* of the *maamar*), he told a story about the Alter Rebbe, the Mittlerer Rebbe, and so on, and he repeatedly emphasized that we are in the seventh generation.

You'll see the *maamar* soon—it will probably be printed shortly. For many in the crowd, this was the first time they had heard a Rebbe deliver Chassidus, and the feeling in the room was indescribable.

Hershel [Fogelman] and Moshe [Yitzchok Hecht] were here, but Shea [Goodman] wasn't able to come.

I want to share with you about someone from here who was drafted into the army. His name is Harry Greenbaum, a young man and a *baal teshuvah* who would often come by. Perhaps you even know who he is—you'd likely recognize him if you saw him.

Before leaving, Harry went in to see the Rebbe. The Rebbe gave him a coin to keep with him and instructed him not to eat anything there that might carry a suspicion of being non-kosher.

He is currently stationed at Camp Devens. He wrote to one of his friends here in yeshiva, saying that he's “living off air,” meaning he has nothing to eat. He didn't provide his address, but he has ours. If he ever comes by, you should make sure to welcome him warmly. Perhaps it's possible for you to send or bring him something—I'm not sure how long he will remain there.

There's more I could write, but I want to send this letter in time for it to reach you before Shabbos.

Yesterday, as you would expect, there was a trip to the Ohel, and the site has already been built up significantly.

Maybe next week, I'll write another letter.

Make sure to write back. Be well, and may we hear good news.

L'alter l'teshuvah u'legeulah,

Yehuda



RABBI YEHUDA KRINSKY (RIGHT) AND RABBI LEIBEL RASKIN (LEFT) ON MERKOS SHLICHUS IN THE EARLY 5710s.

P.S. After the *maamar*, the Rebbe said:

“Listen carefully, Yidden. Don't place birds in your pockets, [i.e., don't get carried away] thinking everyone will now go back to their peaceful lives, *ish tachas gafno v'ish tachas teinaso*—each person under their vine and fig tree—as free people.... Remember: the Rebbe's mission, which he entrusted to each of us, remains fully intact.

“Coming to a farbrengen, saying *l'chaim*—this is good, but it doesn't suffice for the necessary *avoda b'koach atzmo*. Each of us must work on refining our *nefesh habehamis*.”

Yatir MibiChayohi

During the months after the Frierdiker Rebbe's *histalkus*, the Rebbe spoke often about the Alter Rebbe's words in Tanya that a Tzaddik after his passing is more present than during his lifetime.

I was a young *bochur*, and I didn't understand why the Rebbe was speaking so much about the Ohel. We had the Rebbe, we loved him, and we weren't missing anything. Of course, there had been the *histalkus* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, and we had been touched deeply, but I still didn't understand why the Rebbe focused on it so much.

After Gimmel Tammuz, the Rebbe's words became clear. It was very cathartic and it was very encouraging. We are not lost; the Rebbe is with us—more so than during his physical lifetime.

Yud Shevat for me is a Yom Tov. Whatever I am and whatever I hope to be, I owe to the Rebbe. The Rebbe is my entire life. He always was, and he always will be. **T**

1. See *Mekadesh Yisroel*, p. 6.