



A Beautiful Home

The time following the theft of *seforim* from the library in the mid-5740s was a difficult one for Lubavitch and the Rebbe's pain was apparent to one and all. There is no question that the *seforim* saga was a difficult one. During a farbrengen at an early point in the story, the Rebbe spoke about two things of great concern: The *seforim* (as would be expected) and the *shechuna*, the neighborhood of Crown Heights.

This was very important to the Rebbe and he stressed that there should be beautiful homes available at low prices. The Rebbe connected this with making a *kiddush Lubavitch*.

Source: 15 Tammuz 5745

eight facts CROWN HEIGHTS

More on this subject can be found in the article *Crown Heights*, Derher 50 (131), Cheshvan 5777.

More than a Name

Crown Heights: Two words that are synonymous with the Lubavitch movement in this era, but have you ever thought about the meaning of these two words?

At the Yud Shevat farbrengen of 5744, the Rebbe brought attention to this and explained the message contained within The word "Heights" is the idea of exalted and elevated; when both words are together, it reads as the "exalted crown".

When thinking of crowns, our attention is drawn to the words of the *mishna* that there are three crowns and the word "Heights" reminds us of the "*Kesser Shem Tov*," the crown that is exalted above the others.

Source: Farbrengen Yud Shevat 5744



Don't be afraid

"You must tell your mother that she has no need to panic from the fact that a colored family moved in nearby. They too are people with whom one can share a neighborhood. On the contrary: there are also white people that are not of the best nature..."

The Rebbe addressed this letter to an individual who was planning to sell his home on New York Avenue because of the changing demographics in the neighborhood. The Rebbe also spoke about this in public and encouraged the Jewish community not to be frightened by it.

Source: *Igros Kodesh* vol. 6, p. 298



Special Visits

Aside for the famous locations that the Rebbe frequented, such as 770 and his home on President Street, there are a number of other places that merited a visit or two from the Rebbe.

Here are some of them:

723 Eastern Parkway: The original building of Beis Rivka, in which the *bochurim* conducted their Pesach *seder* from 5712 through 5720. The *seder* then moved to 676 Eastern Parkway. The Rebbe visited both of these locations to see how the *seder* was being conducted.

The Rebbe also visited the buildings of Hadar Torah, F.R.E.E., 1414 President Street, Machon Chana, and several other places.



Shuls and Shtieblach

Crown Heights looked very different 70 years ago. Today it is known as the base of Chabad-Lubavitch, but back then there were many other groups of Chassidim and even a number of *chassidische* rebbes. Over 40 shuls of all types dotted the expanding neighborhood; some were simply *shtieblach* while others were impressive structures, many of which are no longer around today.

Source: Letters to the Editor, Derher Teves 5777

Rent

“The price to live in the Friediker Rebbe’s neighborhood is a steep one and one must be prepared to pay this sum!”

This was a claim the Rebbe debunked and decried on 15 Tammuz 5745. The Rebbe made it clear that the skyrocketing rent prices and lack of decent accommodations posed a grave problem for Crown Heights and instructed that a committee be formed to tackle this issue. The Rebbe explained that if housing would continue in such a manner it would drive people away and hinder our efforts of bringing others closer to Chassidus.

Source: 15 Tammuz 5745



Inside Not Outside

The Rebbe encouraged the public to hold their personal *simchos* within the boundaries of the *frum* community of Crown Heights. The Rebbe saw this as a way to strengthen the neighborhood.

In 5739, Reb Gershon Ber Jacobson, publisher of the *Algemeiner Journal*, asked the Rebbe for his approval to hold his daughter’s wedding at the Brooklyn Museum, which was just beyond the limits of the community. He requested to do this simply for logistical purposes yet the Rebbe’s opposition was clear:

“If you will not make the [the wedding] in this neighborhood, ו”ח, this will counter all the efforts in establishing the neighborhood, and if this is done by a publisher of a newspaper, that will be viewed as ‘a thunderous opposition, etc.’”

Silent victory

Do you know what district lines are?

In short, every city is divided into districts. Each district has its own representatives and funds for its specific needs. The larger a district is the more diverse the voting base in that area will be.

When it came time to redraw the district lines of Crown Heights, in the winter of 5737, the Rebbe was in favor of it to be split into two. This would enable the Yidden to have a larger percentage of the vote in their district of Crown Heights and therefore be able to promote policies that were in favor of the Jewish institutions.

The Rebbe encouraged Chassidim of all ages, men, women and children, to attend the hearings on this subject. Even the *bochurim* were told to leave *seder* and show up in support of the split of districts. The *bochurim* were hesitant to do so as they would miss davening *mincha* with the Rebbe. The Rebbe responded that he would wait for them and not start davening until they returned.

An additional instruction the Rebbe gave was that once there was a favorable verdict, there should not be any big celebrations and cheering.

For more than 12 hours, from 2:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m., Chassidim of all ages sat and listened to the proceedings, most of them not understanding much. And then the next day, after an additional six hours, the verdict came out in favor of the Jewish community. The atmosphere in the room was relaxed and at bay as everyone followed the Rebbe’s directives. Later on, some individuals attested to how beneficial this type of reaction was.

Source: See Derher Teves 5775, Behind the Picture

