



לזכות

החתן הרה"ת ר' **מנחם מענדל** שיחי' **רפפורט**
והכלה המהוללה מרת **מושקא** תחי' **מאן**
לרגל חתונתם בשעתומ"צ
י"א טבת ה'תשע"ט

נדפס ע"י הוריהם

הרה"ת ר' **יוסף יצחק** וזוגתו מרת **מרים**
ומשפחתם שיחיו **רפפורט**
הרה"ת ר' **אברהם שמואל** וזוגתו מרת **חי' צפורה**
ומשפחתם שיחיו **מאן**



A First Yechidus

TEVES 5726



Rabbi Sholom Ber Wolpo was a member of the *kevtza* from Eretz Yisroel which came to study in 770 during the year 5726. The *bochurim* would go in to *yechidus* one time during their stay. In a detailed letter to his family in Eretz Yisroel, Reb Sholom Ber writes about his first *yechidus* and the occurrences of that week in 770.



THURSDAY NIGHT, 22 TEVES

I was given two options for when I could go into *yechidus* with the Rebbe. My first option was on Thursday, 14 Teves, and the second option was on the following Sunday, 17 Teves. At first I thought it best to go on the later date, which would give me ample time to prepare myself for the *yechidus*. But as the days wore on, I decided not to push off my *yechidus* any longer, and instead to grab the first opportunity I get. So I ended up having my *yechidus* on Thursday.

I am very happy with that decision, since there were only five *bochurim* who went in for *yechidus* that Thursday, whereas on Sunday many more *bochurim* went in causing it to be very late at night, and after fasting the entire day in preparation for *yechidus* it would have been very difficult to concentrate.

The day of my *yechidus* finally arrived and I felt absolutely elated. As the time for my *yechidus* drew near, I sat down to write my *tzetel*, as I wished to write it as close to my *yechidus* as possible. By that time I no longer had the presence of mind to learn anything. Although night had already fallen, I felt the pressing need to recite Tehillim as I stood next to the Rebbe's room waiting my turn.

I was the last of the *bochurim* in line for *yechidus*. When the person before me walked out of the Rebbe's room, my vision blurred from utter fear and confusion. I knocked on the Rebbe's door and entered the room. I mumbled "*Shehecheyanu*" and I

couldn't tell if the Rebbe answered "*Amen*." I came forward a few steps towards the Rebbe's desk, bent down and stretched out my hand to give the Rebbe my *tzetlach*, after which I took a few steps backward. The Rebbe put on his glasses and began to read the *tzetlach*. After he concluded reading each page, the Rebbe placed it on the table faced down. Whilst reading my *tzetel* the Rebbe nodded with his head a few times. During all this time only one thought filled my mind; that I am giving myself over completely to the Rebbe.

The Rebbe's face was white and held a very serious expression. The Rebbe looked entirely different than any other time I saw him. When I first came into the Rebbe's room, the Rebbe raised his eyes and looked at me and then (either wrote a line or) erased my name from the paper that the Rebbe had on his desk. From that point on, until he began to inquire about my family, the Rebbe didn't look at me at all. I was so taken over by emotion that when the Rebbe spoke to me I had to try with all my might to listen and pay attention to what he was saying.

When the Rebbe spoke about my learning, he spoke with great *koch*. The Rebbe then gave me various *brachos*, most of which I couldn't remember since I was so emotional at the time. When I left the Rebbe's room I was certain that I wouldn't remember a thing. But then I sat down to transcribe whatever I remembered, and every time I went over the *yechidus* and wrote it down I recalled more details. When I had the whole *yechidus* written down,¹ I gave it to the Rebbe to be *magiha* (as many other *bochurim* have done). I haven't yet received a reply but I hope I will in the near future.

When the person before me walked out of the Rebbe's room, my vision blurred from utter fear and confusion.

After I and four other *bochurim* from Eretz Yisroel had our *yechidus*, we farbrenged together with a few other *bochurim* from here. After that I went to the downstairs *zal*, said *krias shema she'al hamita*, and began to revisualize my *yechidus*; how I felt, how the Rebbe looked, and how he spoke to me, and I was filled with immense joy. The other *bochurim* came downstairs from the farbrengen and we began to dance. I was bursting with *simcha*, crying and dancing at the same time. Later on I again reviewed what the Rebbe told me and the *hora'os* the Rebbe gave me during the *yechidus*. Afterwards, we went back upstairs and continued to farbreng.

In the days following the *yechidus* I had difficulty keeping the instructions the Rebbe had given me during the *yechidus*, especially the Rebbe's instruction that I should constantly think words of Torah. This is something that I had an easier time with before the *yechidus*, but I guess this was meant to be a "new *avoda*" and I needed to put in new effort. The Rebbe also told me during the *yechidus* that I should learn the *piskei dinim* of the *sefer "Derech Hachaim"* authored by the "Nesivos" (*Hilchos Yomim Noraim* from *Derech Hachaim* is printed in the back of our *machzorim*).

There was a *bochur* who went in for *yechidus* on Sunday and felt very brokenhearted before the *yechidus*. He told me that the Rebbe gave him detailed answers to all of his questions. The Rebbe instructed him to learn the beginning of *perek memalef* of Tanya by heart, until the words, "V'hinei Hashem nitzav alav... u'vochein klayos v'leiv." The Rebbe told him that he must know that everything is dependant on his willpower and the proof is that when this *bochur* truly wanted something, he succeeded in achieving it. At the end of his *yechidus*, the Rebbe gave him a *bracha* that he should have *hatzlacha* in *avodas hatefilla*, at which point he understood that he needs to put effort into his davening...

A *Yid* from Russia arrived today, so the Rebbe's farbrengen this coming Shabbos will probably be very *freilech*. We hope there will be a farbrengen on each Shabbos of the next four weeks. (Shabbos

You can't imagine how happy I am to be here with the Rebbe, and now after I went in for yechidus the feeling is entirely different.





JEM 10437



In galus Mitzrayim, even when bnei Yisroel were in the depths of galus, their names, their essence, remained steadfast in its connection with Hashem.

Mevorchim, Shabbos Rosh Chodesh, and the Shabbosim before and after Yud Shevat).

The Rebbe hinted to one of the *bochurim* that we will be allowed to stay here at least until after Shavuos.² I hope that with Hashem's help, we will be able to stay for this coming Tishrei. You can't imagine how happy I am to be here with the Rebbe, and now after I went in for *yechidus* the feeling is entirely different. Sometimes Rabbi Hodakov comes out of the Rebbe's room and announces that the Rebbe will not come out for *Mincha*, which causes us to feel sad as we look forward all day to see the Rebbe's holy face. Especially as the Rebbe sometimes looks directly at certain *bochurim* (after davening), giving us tremendous *kochos* in *avodas Hashem*. One can clearly see how the look of the Rebbe has such a strong positive effect on a person.

WEDNESDAY, 25 TEVES

On Shabbos Mevorchim, the Rebbe farbrenged³ for three hours. In the first two *sichos* the Rebbe discussed the following question of the Gemara. The *possuk* in Shemos says “וימררו את חייהם בעבודה קשה, ובכל עבודה בשדה, את כל עבודתם אשר עבדו בחומר ובלבנים, ובכל עבודה בשדה, את כל עבודתם אשר עבדו בהם בפרך—They embittered their lives with hard labor, with clay and with bricks and with all kinds of labor in the fields, all their work that they worked with them with back breaking labor.” The *possuk* specifically mentions that *bnei Yisrael* worked with “clay and bricks,” and then concludes by mentioning “all of their work.” Why is it necessary to mention the “clay and bricks” specifically if it is included in the general term “all of their work?”

The Rebbe spoke at length in *nigleh* and explained an alternative way of learning the Gemara, unlike the conventional way. The Rebbe then asked, why indeed was the enslavement in *Mitzrayim* specifically with clay and bricks, and what is the lesson that we can learn from this? The Rebbe explained that the meaning of *chomer u'liveinim* in *avodas Hashem* is that we need to “*horeve*,” to toil in learning and davening. That is why the Zohar says בחומר דא קל וחומר ובלבנים

דא ליבון הילכתא. (In the realm of learning Torah, “*chomer-clay*” refers to “*kal vachomer*”—in-depth study of Torah, and “*levenim-bricks*” refers to “*libun hilchesa*”—clarification of halacha.) Similarly in *avoda*, Hashem receives the greatest enjoyment from a Jew whose mind and heart are blocked and despite the difficulty he davens at length with contemplation.

The Rebbe then said the *maamar Veileh Shemos* followed by another two *sichos*. At the end of the farbrengen the Rebbe spoke about the Frierdiker Rebbe's directive, quoted from the Tzemach Tzedek, “*Tracht gut vet zain gut*—Think positive and it will be good.” Since there are those who always ask for a source, the Rebbe said that this concept stems from the Zohar as well as from a Rashi in Parshas Shemos.⁴ The Rebbe expounded upon the Rashi, asking numerous questions, and basing the idea of “*Tracht gut vet zain gut*” on the Rashi.

The Rebbe spoke about how in *galus Mitzrayim* *bnei Yisroel* kept their Jewish names, “*shelo shinu es shemam*.” Why is the Jewish name so important? It is because the name of a person is his very essence, etched in the depths of his soul. For this reason, even when a person has fainted and lost control of his external faculties, he can be revived through calling out his name, since his name awakens the essence of his being, which remained intact despite the damage caused to his external presence. So too, the essence of a Jew is bound with Hashem. For this reason, even when a Jew shows no interest in Yiddishkeit in his daily life, he will sacrifice his life when put to a test of faith. As the Alter Rebbe puts it, “A Jew never desires, nor is he able, to separate himself from Hashem.” This fact was proven in *galus Mitzrayim*, that even when *bnei Yisroel* were in the depths of *galus*, their names, their essence, remained steadfast in its connection with Hashem.

Whilst saying this *sicha* the Rebbe cried until he could not continue. Everyone was completely shaken by the *sicha*. After the *maamar* the Rebbe became much more joyous. **1**

1. See the full transcript of the *yechidus* in Derher, Kislev 5778.

2. Although later on it was established that the *kevutza* would stay for an entire year, in the first few years the *bochurim* would stay for just a few months as they couldn't receive papers to remain for longer.

3. See the full farbrengen in Toras Menachem vol 45, p. 324.

4. “Vayira Moshe,” Shemos 2:14. See the *biur* in Toras Menachem *ibid*, p. 340.