

לע"נ  
חיה מוסיא ע"ה בת יבלחט"א  
הרה"ת ר' משה הלוי שליט"א  
לוי  
נלב"ע י"ט טבת ה'תש"ס  
תנ"צ'בה'

נדפס ע"י אחיה  
הרה"ת ר' שלום דובער  
וזוגתו מרת רבקה רחל  
ומשפחתם שיחיו  
לוי

ESSEL EYEWEAR

# The Lamplighter from Lubavitch

REB YITZCHOK DUBOV

Reb Yitzchok Dubov is remembered amongst the most distinguished Chassidim of *dor hashvi'i*.

From his childhood in Lubavitch to his involvement in the Rebbe's *hach tara*, Reb Yitzchok was always dedicated to the Rebbeim above and beyond the expected.

*A Chassidisher Derher would like to thank Rabbi Dovid Dubov, Shliach to Princeton, New Jersey, for sharing with us his vast knowledge about his grandfather's life. The first part of this article is based on his interview.*



RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON  
Lubavitch  
770 Eastern Parkway  
Brooklyn 13, N. Y.  
HYadlnh 3-9250

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן  
ליובאוויטש  
770 איסטערן פארקוויי  
ברוקלין, נ.י.

ב"ה, ימי הסליחות, ה'תשס"ו  
ברוקלין, נ.י.

הרב הגאון [הרה"ג] הרב יצחק שי'  
מורה יצחק שי'

THE REBBE ADDS THE TITLE  
[הרב הגאון] IN A LETTER  
TO REB YITZCHOK, DATED SELICHOS 5716.



## Years of Bliss

Reb Yitzchok Dubov was born in a small town named Yokshitz near Babroisk in 5647\*. From a young age, his father would bring him along on his trips to Lubavitch, and on one such trip, he decided to leave young Yitzchok to study in the *cheder* there. He was a young child of nine or ten years old at the time.

From that day until his marriage, Reb Yitzchok had the merit to be in constant and close proximity to the Rebbe Rashab and Frierdiker Rebbe. Even during his younger years when he was too young to understand the *maamarim* of the Rebbe Rashab, he was profoundly impacted by his presence.

Young Yitzchok and his *cheder* friends would often spend their breaks standing unobtrusively behind the Rebbe Rashab's wall. The structure was thin and sounds easily carried through, so the children were able to listen to the Rebbe Rashab's davening, which was often conducted at great length, accompanied by many *dveikus niggunim*. (Once, as they were standing there in the bitter cold, Rebbetzin Rivkah shooed them back indoors.) On one occasion, Reb Yitzchok later recalled,<sup>1</sup> the Rebbe Rashab spent 45 minutes reciting just from the word *echad* until the end of *Baruch sheim!*

At the age of 14, Yitzchok joined Yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim. Six blissful years passed for Reb Yitzchok in the yeshiva, studying *nigleh*, Chassidus, and davening under the tutelage of the legendary *meshpi'im* Reb Shmuel Gronem Esterman and Reb Michoel Blinner.

He excelled in his studies, and as a product of Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim, was a considerable *gaon* in both *nigleh* and Chassidus by the time of his marriage. Later on, he would receive *semicha* from the Rogatchover



REB YITZCHOK IN HIS YOUNGER YEARS AS RAV IN RIGA.

Gaon, and when the Frierdiker Rebbe lived in Riga in 5688 (תרפ"ח), the Frierdiker Rebbe told members of *beis harav* that, "Alle shaalos zol men fregn by Reb Yitzchok, all halachic inquiries should be referred to Reb Yitzchok."<sup>2</sup> The Frierdiker Rebbe once referred to him as "Mibechirei talmidei Lubavitch, one of the best students of Lubavitch."<sup>3</sup>

In addition to his Torah scholarship, Reb Yitzchok was an *oved* and a powerful *baal tefillah* and *baal menagen*, and a member of the Rebbe

Rashab's choir. He retained many of the *niggunim* he learned in Lubavitch, and in many cases, was the only link transmitting those *niggunim* to Chassidim of our day.

## Alef Beis and Likutei Torah

As a *bochur*, Reb Yitzchok had the opportunity to see the Rebbe on two occasions, when he visited Nikolaev, the town where the Rebbe was born.

The first time was in 5663\*, when the Rebbe was a year-and-a-half old.

During that visit, he held the Rebbe on his lap, and opened a *siddur* with him, showing him the *alef-beis* in a playful manner.<sup>4</sup>

The second occasion was just a few years later, in 5668\*. Reb Yitzchok was a close friend of Reb Asher Nikolayever's son, Shmuel. One time while they were in Nikolayev, Reb Asher visited the Rebbe's father, Horav Levi Yitzchok, and he brought his son and Reb Yitzchok along. As they approached the house, they were greeted by a surprising scene. Reb Levik was sitting on his lawn with the Rebbe, age 6, and his brother Reb Berel, age 3, reading the *chassidische parsha* in Likutei Torah to them. Reb Asher asked incredulously, "You are teaching them Likutei Torah? Do they actually understand?"

"Ask them," the Rebbe's father responded.

To their utter disbelief, the Rebbe repeated the entire column of the *maamar* Reb Levik had been teaching...<sup>5</sup>

## Escape

In 5671\*, Reb Yitzchok married and accepted a Rabbinic post in Penza. Over the next 11 years, he served as *rav* in several Russian cities.

One story about his *rabbanus* demonstrates Reb Yitzchok's strong character:

Reb Yitzchok once received a *shaila* regarding an animal's *kashrus*. The *shochet* felt that there were grounds to disqualify the animal, but the butcher feared a major loss, and threatened to slander Reb Yitzchok to the government if he ruled against him.

This was no empty threat. Nonetheless, Reb Yitzchok picked up a handful of the animal's innards and threw it at the butcher.

Fearing retribution, Reb Yitzchok fled to Lubavitch, where Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah gave him a room in the Rebbe Rashab's home. While

lodging there, Reb Yitzchok overheard Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah retell the story to the Rebbe Rashab, and the Rebbe Rashab said a complimentary comment with a smile, expressing his *nachas* from the fearless conduct of a Lubavitcher *tomim*.<sup>6</sup>

His final post was in a Russian city bordering Latvia. Those were the early days of Communist oppression, yet Reb Yitzchok wasn't deterred from administering to his community.

One day in 5682\*, while in a back room of his home, he heard a knock at the front door. Listening closely, he heard a police officer ask the person who opened the door if Yitzchok Dubov was home. Immediately, he jumped out the back window and hid in a barn for several days, while the secret police combed the city searching for him. After the Soviets lessened their surveillance, several of his dedicated congregants managed to smuggle him over the border into Latvia.

## In the Free World

For the next seven years, Reb Yitzchok lived in Riga. There, he served as the *rav* of the "Russian *minyán*."

In 5687\*, Reb Yitzchok had the opportunity to be involved in the Frierdiker Rebbe's release from Soviet Russia. It was shortly after Yud-Beis Tammuz and Chassidim understood that the Frierdiker Rebbe was still in grave danger and needed to leave the Soviet Union immediately.

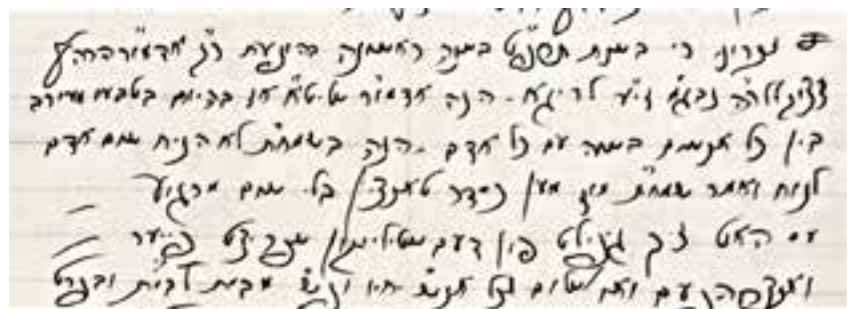
Reb Mordechai Dubin, a Chossid and prominent member of the Latvian parliament, was leading the rescue efforts in Riga. He attempted to arrange a visa for the Frierdiker Rebbe to immigrate to Latvia but was faced with various challenges. At one point, he had an idea to have all the local *rabbanim* invite the Frierdiker Rebbe to serve as their chief rabbi. Reb Yitzchok was the one who made it happen. From morning to evening, he ran from one *rav* to the next, requesting, cajoling and convincing them all to sign the letter. Ultimately, their efforts bore fruit and the Latvian government agreed to issue this visa.

With the Frierdiker Rebbe now in Riga, Reb Yitzchok merited to be in close proximity to him regularly, and even served as the *rav* of *beis harav*. During that period of time, he also became close with the Rebbe. They would often speak in learning together, and the Rebbe showed a great friendship towards him.

He spent the entire Tishrei 5689\* together with the Rebbe. In a letter about that month, he described how the Rebbe did not allow anyone to rest on Simchas Torah.

"The Rebbe displayed a pleasant disposition and communicated with everyone. But when Simchas Torah came, he didn't allow anyone to rest, declaring, 'On Simchas Torah, one needs to dance continuously, with no respite!'

"It felt as though the quiet one was spouting fire (see image)."<sup>7</sup>



REB YITZCHOK'S DESCRIPTION OF SIMCHAS TORAH 5689\* WITH THE REBBE IN RIGA.

## "PLEASE SEND REGARDS TO YEDIDEINU HAGADOL, OUR GREAT FRIEND, THE RAMASH SHLITA."

Throughout the coming years, although he lived far away, he maintained a constant correspondence in Torah learning with the Rebbe. When his son learned in New York, he wrote to him, "Please send regards to *yedideinu hagadol*, our great friend, the Ramash *shlita*" (this was before the *histalkus* of the Friediker Rebbe). In fact, one of the scholarly letters written by the Rebbe in the "Teshuvos U'biurim" section of Kovetz Lubavitch,<sup>8</sup> a deep treatise on the concept of tefillin, was written to Reb Yitzchok.

In one letter from the later years, the title for Reb Yitzchok had been typed out as "Harav Hachossid," and the Rebbe added in his holy handwriting, "Harav Hagaon."

### *The Rebbe's Sheva Brachos*

Reb Yitzchok was a talented *baal menagen*, and he passed on many unique *niggunim* from previous generations.

For the occasion of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's wedding in Poland in 5689\*, Reb Yitzchok wasn't able to participate, but he was present during the *sheva brachos* farbrengen which the Friediker Rebbe held on Yud-Tes Kislev in Riga.

During the farbrengen, the Friediker Rebbe asked him to leave the room and formulate a *niggun* on the words "Yehi Hashem Elokeinu imanu, ka'asher haya im avoseinu..." He left the room, and a short time later returned with his composition. He had attached the words of the *possuk* to a *freilicher niggun*.<sup>9</sup> When the



A DELEGATION OF LUBAVITCH CHASSIDIM GREET RABBI YITZCHAK HERTZOG, CHIEF RABBI OF ISRAEL. R-L: REB SENDER NEMTZOV, REB SHMUEL REIN, REB BENTZION SHEMTOV, RABBI HERTZOG, REB YITZCHOK DUBOV, REB SHMUEL GROSSMAN.

Friediker Rebbe heard the *niggun* he had chosen, he noted that according to the Alter Rebbe, this was a *niggun* that "scrubbed the *neshama*."

This occurrence later became a tradition. Whenever Reb Yitzchok would come to visit 770, the Rebbe would ask him to sing a *niggun* during the first farbrengen where he was present. This occurred every time without fail.

### *Manchester*

During Chanukah 5689\*, Reb Yitzchok traveled to Manchester as a *shadar* to raise funds for Tomchei Temimim. Travel was a very difficult endeavor, and he was uncertain when he would be able to return to see the Rebbe. As can be imagined, it was very difficult for him to depart. At the close of his farewell *yechidus* before his trip, the Friediker Rebbe told him, "*Mir velen zich noch zehen, we will yet meet again*."<sup>10</sup>

In Manchester, the local families asked him to remain and join their community. Reb Yitzchok became the *baal tefillah* of the Nusach Ari shul, and later, after their *rav* Rabbi Menachem Tzvi Rivkin passed away

in 5708,\* he became the *rav* of the Chassidim in Manchester.

In addition to his communal responsibilities, Reb Yitzchok assumed the role of a *mashgiach* in Manchester Yeshiva, a Litvisher yeshiva in the city. It was through the yeshiva where Reb Yitzchok made his most lasting impact.

### *Respect*

"He was a gifted *baal nigleh*," says Rabbi Chaim Rapoport who grew up in Manchester. "He was a diligent *masmid*, and his dedication to learning went a long way with his students. He would deliver a '*farzeitishe shiur*,' where he focused on Gemara, Rashi, Tosfos, and basic *mefarshim* like Maharsha and others. The *bochurim* enjoyed it immensely."

Reb Yitzchok didn't allow his role to remain in the realm of *nigleh*. He constantly utilized his relationships with the *bochurim* to teach them Chassidus and to connect them with the Rebbe. He maintained a daily *shiur Tanya* with the *bochurim*, and used every opportunity to teach them messages of Chassidus. On Erev Rosh Hashanah, many of the *bochurim* of the yeshiva would send



REB YITZCHOK STUDIES TANYA WITH TWO BOCHURIM IN MANCHESTER, CIRCA 1964.



REB YITZCHOK (STANDING BEHIND THE REBBE) SINGS A NIGGUN UPON THE REBBE'S REQUEST AT THE 3:30 AM FARBRENGEN UPON THE ARRIVAL OF THE CHARTERED GROUP FROM ENGLAND, 21 TAMMUZ 5721\*.

the Rebbe *panim* with Reb Yitzchok's encouragement.

There was once a *bochur* who needed some extra help in *nigleh*, and Reb Yitzchok would tutor him each afternoon for a half hour.

"Don't tell the Rosh Yeshiva," Reb Yitzchok told him somewhat in jest, "but we are going to learn Likutei Sichos," he said as he took out the first volume of Likutei Sichos, which had recently been published. Those sessions in Likutei Sichos and Tanya—and Gemara as well—had lasting implications, and this *bochur* later became a Lubavitcher Chossid.

Many others followed a similar path. Several large Lubavitch families in England today attribute their connection with the Rebbe to Reb Yitzchok, and a number of the Manchester *bochurim* later went on to study in 770 and become shluchim of the Rebbe.

Even those who didn't continue on to Lubavitch harbored a profound respect for their distinguished *mashgiach*. "Even the Manchester *rosh yeshiva*, Rabbi Segal, studied Tanya with Reb Yitzchok on a daily basis," says Rabbi Avraham Jaffe. "And until



A LETTER THE REBBE SENT TO THE BOCHURIM IN THE YESHIVA OF MANCHESTER, DATED YEMEI HASLICHOS 5726\*, IN RESPONSE TO A PA'N THEY SENT BEFORE ROSH HASHANAH.

Should you want additional explanations, you can surely get them from the dears of your Yeshiva, and friends, particularly the Mashpia in Chassidus Rabbi I. Dubov, whom I know personally, and your friend Shemtov. I trust you say some kapitlech Tillia every day. Wishing you success in your Tora studies with Yiras Shamain, and hoping to hear good news from you in any language you find most convenient,  
With blessings *m. Zitzchok*

“...THE MASHPIA IN CHASSIDUS RABBI I. DUBOV, WHOM I KNOW PERSONALLY”.  
A LETTER FROM THE REBBE, DATED 23 TAMMUZ 5712\*.



REB YITZCHOK SPEAKS WITH REB NACHMAN SUDAK.

this very day, Reb Yitzchok’s former (Litvisher) *talmidim* arrange a *minyana* at his gravesite each year on his *yahrzeit*, to honor his memory.”

“The key to his relationship with the local *misnagdisher* community was respect,” says Rabbi Chaim Rapoport. “In addition to his authenticity and his *avodas Hashem*, Reb Yitzchok was a warm person who showed respect to everyone he encountered, never belittling or demeaning anyone, no matter how much he disagreed with them.”

### From the Rebbe

The Rebbe greatly appreciated Reb Yitzchok’s work. On one occasion, Reb Aharon Cousin, one of Reb Yitzchok’s *talmidim*, wrote to the Rebbe that he

had been invited to Reb Yitzchok’s home for Sukkos.

The Rebbe replied, “I was glad to learn that you have been invited to Rabbi Dubov’s home for Sukkos: I am sure you will find it a real ‘*Zman Simchaseinu*.’”<sup>11</sup>

“I once visited Reb Leizer Nannes,” recalls Rabbi Rapoport, “and he related that the Rebbe once instructed him to take a layover in Manchester on his way to Eretz Yisroel. Reb Leizer was puzzled, so the Rebbe explained: *A kuk ton oyf Itche Yokshitzer iz oichet a inyan*, to see Itche Yokshitzer (Reb Yitzchok’s nickname) is also significant.”

When the Rebbe’s brother Reb Yisroel Aryeh Leib passed away in Liverpool in 5712\*, the Rebbe asked the Chassidim in England to handle

the funeral arrangements. The Rebbe appointed Reb Yitzchok Dubov to take care of the *tahara*. “*Zolst firen mit di tahara vi a benon shel kedoshim*—you should conduct the *tahara* as befitting a person of holy lineage,” the Rebbe told them.<sup>12</sup>

“We were *bochurim* learning in Manchester at the time,” Reb Berel Futerfas relates, “and Rabbi Dubov asked Avremel Shemtov, Sholom Ber Gurkov and myself to take part in the *tahara*.”

Reb Moshe Gurary of Tel Aviv was asked by the Rebbe to travel to London and bring Reb Yisroel Aryeh Leib’s *aron* to be buried in Eretz Yisroel. The Rebbe told him that the *chelek haruchni*, the spiritual part, has been accomplished, and all that’s left to be done in Eretz Yisroel is the *chelek hagashmi*, the physical element.

### The Conduct of a Chossid

Reb Yitzchok’s conduct made a lasting impression on his congregants and students.

“He would lead a *seudah shlishis* each week, where he would sing *Mizmor L’Dovid, Bnei Heichala*, and review Chassidus,” says Rabbi Chaim Rapoport. “Each Yud-Tes Kislev, he would gather all the *rabbanim* of the city for a *farbrenge*n.”

“He was a *daykan* in everything. He never compromised on a single detail in *halacha*. He insisted, until his last day, on every nuance in *minhagei Chabad*. He was even insistent on the way *niggunim* were sung. I remember him correcting us on nuances in the Alter Rebbe’s *niggun*, as he had heard it from the Rebbe Rashab himself.

“Each Shabbos, he would learn Chassidus for many hours, and begin davening after *krias haTorah* (he served as the *baal koreh* in the shul). He would remain in one place for many hours, sometimes davening until eight o’clock in the evening.

PINNY LEW

“He continued doing so until the Rebbe wrote to him about it. Although he could find support for his conduct in *halacha*, the Rebbe wrote, *‘Betach bimachano yesh l’hischashev b’ma yomru habrios*—surely, in his location, one should take public opinion into consideration.<sup>23</sup>

“Then he began davening a bit earlier.”

“He also would relate many stories, and give us a *‘chassidische lachluchis*,” explains Rabbi Avrohom Jaffe. “He would regale us with stories of Lubavitch; he would talk a lot about the ‘Bubbe Rivka’ (the Rebbetzin of the Rebbe Maharash) and others he merited to know.”

“Reb Mendel Futerfas once said,” says Rabbi Rapoport, “that in the yeshiva in Lubavitch, there were some *bochurim* who loved studying *nigleh*, others focused on Chassidus, while others put their efforts into davening *b’avodah*. Reb Yitzchok, he said, was different. He always did exactly what was expected of him at that moment.

“Indeed, we saw in him a perfect balance. He studied *nigleh* assiduously; he also learned Chassidus for hours each day, and his davening was an example for every Chossid.”

### The Fateful Visit

During the years leading up to World War II, Reb Yitzchok never had the opportunity to visit the Frieddiker Rebbe, and later, when the Frieddiker Rebbe came to the United States, he was even farther away. An opportunity to come visit the Frieddiker Rebbe didn’t materialize for many years.

In 5710\*, Reb Yitzchok’s son, Leibel was scheduled to get married on 7 Shevat in New York. Reb Yitzchok initially didn’t plan to be at the wedding, but he received a letter from Reb Moshe Leib Rodshtein, encouraging him to come. “In addition to participating in your son’s wedding,” Reb Moshe Leib wrote, “this



THE LETTER FROM REB MOSHE LEIB RODSHEIN, URGING REB YITZCHOK TO COME TO NY FOR HIS SON’S WEDDING, DATED 16 TEVES 5710\*.



THE REBBE JOINS THE KABALAS PANIM AT THE WEDDING OF REB YITZCHOK’S SON, REB YEHUDA LEIB, 7 SHEVAT 5710\*.

REB YITZCHOK, HE SAID, WAS DIFFERENT. HE ALWAYS DID EXACTLY WHAT WAS EXPECTED OF HIM AT THAT MOMENT.





LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASSIDEI CHABAD

REB YITZCHOK ADDRESSES A KABOLAS PONIM FARBRENGEN HELD IN THE UPSTAIRS ZAL OF 770 IN HONOR OF A GROUP FROM ENGLAND VISITING THE REBBE FOR SHAVUOS 5723\*.

is an opportunity to visit the Rebbe *shlita*; many years have passed since you have merited to see him. I am confident that if you will contemplate the matter, you will decide to come...”

Reb Moshe Leib Rodshtein later told Reb Yitzchok’s son that the Rebbe had asked him to write to Reb Yitzchok encouraging him to come. The Rebbe said that Merkos was even willing to pay his ticket, and if he was worried about the responsibilities he held in Manchester, Merkos would arrange a replacement from among the Chassidim in Paris.<sup>14</sup>

It was very important to the Rebbe that he come visit.

Ultimately, he decided to make the trip. On the night before the wedding, he went into *yechidus*. It was the first time he had seen the Frierdiker Rebbe in over 20 years, and the difference in the Frierdiker Rebbe’s appearance shook him to his core.

He asked the Frierdiker Rebbe, “*Vos macht der Rebbe*, how is the Rebbe?”

The Frierdiker Rebbe answered, “*M’darf zein tzufriden*, we must be happy. May Hashem help that we only hear good news about Yidden.”<sup>15</sup>

He told the Frierdiker Rebbe that he regrets that the Shabbos *sheva brachos* will be in Williamsburg, a far walk from 770. But the Frierdiker Rebbe picked up his hand, “*Vest gornisht farfelen*, you won’t miss anything.”<sup>16</sup>

The next day was his son’s wedding. The Rebbe participated in the *kabbalas panim* and was honored with *brachos* at the *chupa*. Reb Yitzchok asked him to participate in the wedding meal as well, however, the Rebbe declined. Every Wednesday night, the Rebbe explained, he had a study session with the Frierdiker Rebbe. “*Ich vel dos kein mol nisht avekgeben*, I will never give that up.”<sup>17</sup>

That Shabbos, the Frierdiker Rebbe was *nistalek*. The Frierdiker Rebbe’s *bracha* to Reb Yitzchok 20 years earlier, “*Mir velen zich noch zehnen*, we will yet meet again,” had come to fruition just three days before the *histalkus*!

Reb Yitzchok rushed over on Motzei Shabbos, and was present throughout the *tahara* (in which only *temimim* from Lubavitch were

permitted to participate) and the preparations for the *levaya*.

Amidst the pain of the terrible loss, Reb Yitzchok immediately began thinking about the future. During the first three days of the *shiva*, he was glued to the Rebbe, watching his conduct and davening. He constantly observed him, and was puzzled by three *hanhagos*.

First, he noticed that the Rebbe didn’t bang his fist over his heart when reciting “*slach lanu*” in Shmoneh Esreh. Secondly, he wondered why the Rebbe paused before reciting the last *kaddish* of davening, and thirdly, he noticed that the Rebbe walked back to his room without putting on Rabbeinu Tam’s tefillin in shul. Knowing that *halacha* says to put them on as close to each other as possible, he wondered why the Rebbe chose to do it in his room.

On the fourth day of the *shiva*, the Rebbe sat down on a bench, and told Reb Yitzchok, “*Zetz zach*, have a seat.”

The Rebbe proceeded to tell him a number of stories about the Frierdiker Rebbe, while everyone present crowded around to listen. All



THE REBBE FARBRENGS FOR THE GUESTS FROM ENGLAND AT 3:30 AM, 21 TAMMUZ 5721. REB YITZCHOK SITS BEHIND THE REBBE, SECOND FROM LEFT.

these stories were later edited by the Rebbe and printed in the *hosafos* of Likutei Sichos volume 2 and in Toras Menachem.

Listening to the stories, Reb Yitzchok was shocked to discover that the Rebbe had answered all three questions.

The Rebbe explained that when one doesn't recite *tachanun* (for example, during a *shivah*), he doesn't bang his fist over his heart for "*slach lanu*" either. Additionally, the Rebbe related, when the Frierdiker Rebbe was in the year of *aveilus* after the *histalkus* of the Rebbe Rashab, he would lean over and say something quietly before the last *kaddish*. The Rebbe added that he does the same and recites a few lines of Tanya. Thirdly, the Rebbe spoke about the tefillin of Shimusha Rabba and Raavad, adding quietly to Reb Yitzchok that as per the Frierdiker Rebbe's instruction, he puts on the additional pairs of tefillin privately. (Shimusha Rabba is worn together with the *shel yad* of Rashi, before switching to Rabbeinu Tam, and the Rebbe would therefore return to his room.)

Reb Yitzchok was flabbergasted. He had just witnessed open *ruach hakodesh*.<sup>18</sup>

He shared his experience with other elder Chassidim that day, and asked them to join him that evening in asking the Rebbe to accept the *nesius*.

When Reb Yitzchok went in, the Rebbe said, among other things, that he hadn't received a directive from the *shver*, from the Frierdiker Rebbe. (The Rebbe also mentioned this answer in a letter to Chassidim in England in response to their *ksav hiskashrus*.)

Additionally, the Rebbe said, "*Ba mir der Rebbe lebt*—for me, the Rebbe is alive."

Reb Yitzchok answered, "In 5680\*, I'm sure the Rebbe Rashab was alive for the Frierdiker Rebbe, and nevertheless the Frierdiker Rebbe accepted the *nesius*."<sup>19</sup>

The Rebbe didn't respond.

Several days later, Reb Yitzchok returned to England. Upon landing in London before dawn, he proceeded immediately to the home of Reb Bentzion Shemtov. After a long conversation, they both gathered the

*anash* of London, and wrote the first *ksav hiskashrus* to the Rebbe.

Reb Yitzchok continued to urge many other Chassidim to do the same. He would speak publicly and privately, writing letters to many as well, describing the "open *gilui Elokus* I witnessed," and encouraging everyone to commit themselves to the Rebbe.

"In my opinion," he wrote in one letter, "all the Chassidim outside of America should crown him as Rebbe, and then it will automatically come, even if he doesn't want it."

### *Hiskashrus*

Reb Yitzchok's next visit to the Rebbe was for Simchas Torah 5716\*. In a letter, he happily described the state of affairs in 770. Reb Moshe Leib Rodshtein told him, he writes, that the youth are attracted to the Rebbe like bees to honey.

Reb Yitzchok's *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe was unwavering. He had an incredible love for everything from the Rebbe. When the first volume of Likutei Sichos was published, he kissed it when it arrived in the mail, and decided that he would study it every week along with being *maavir sedrah*.

For many years, Reb Yitzchok would visit 770 at least once each year. He was no youngster; these trips took place through his seventies and eighties, but he was never too tired to make the trip.

During farbrengens that he was present, the Rebbe would show him many *kiruvim*, and usually ask him to begin a *niggun*. On his first Simchas Torah, he brought a *niggun* which became very popular, and the *bochurim* continued to sing it by the Rebbe's farbrengens throughout the year. On that Yud Shevat, the Rebbe himself began this *niggun*.<sup>20</sup>

"On Yud-Alef Nissan 5722," relates Reb Shlomo Zarchi, "the Rebbe farbrenged in honor of his birthday

for the first time. The Rebbe's new *kapitel* of that year included the *possuk*, 'Yomim al yemei melech tosf.' During the farbrengen, spontaneously, Reb Yitzchok Dubov began singing the well-known tune to those words. That was the first time we sang a *niggun* to the Rebbe's *kapitel*."

### Ben Tish'im

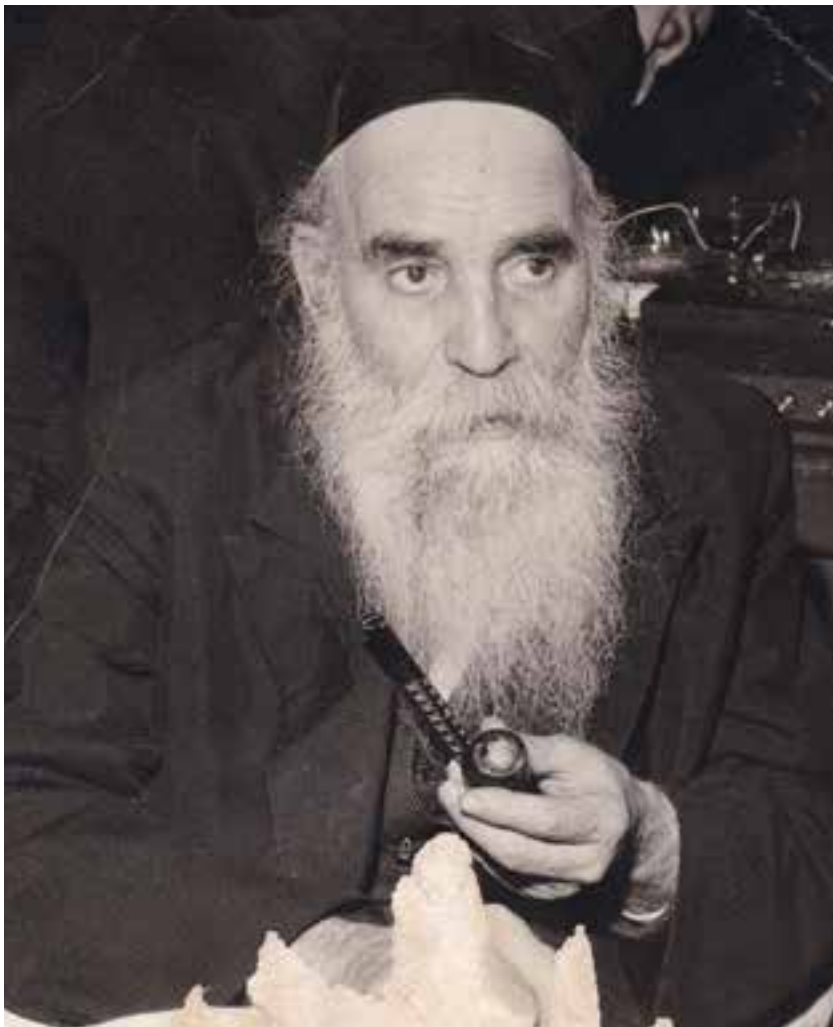
As Reb Yitzchok progressed in age, his eyesight began to fail him. Once when he was in New York, his son approached the Rebbe during a farbrengen and asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* on his behalf. The Rebbe said that he would deal with it in their *yechidus* the following night.

The next night, the Rebbe told Reb Yitzchok that he won't begin

seeing immediately because everyone is waiting outside to see the *bracha* materialize and they will say that this is the only reason you came here. But one morning, the Rebbe said, Reb Yitzchok would wake up and his eyesight would be restored and he would be able to start davening from the *siddur* again three times daily...<sup>21</sup>

During his last visit to the Rebbe for Yud Shevat 5735\*, he was quite weak and the Rebbe asked him to sit during the *yechidus*. For Reb Yitzchok, sitting during a *yechidus* was unthinkable. He told the Rebbe that he wouldn't sit; if he needed support, he would lean on the Rebbe's desk.

Reb Yitzchok's eightieth birthday fell out during a visit to New York.



During a farbrengen, he approached the Rebbe and shared that he had reached 80 years of age, and the Rebbe blessed him to become a "ben tishim," to reach 90 years as well.

Indeed, Reb Yitzchok passed away on Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av 5738, several days before his 91st birthday.

The day before his passing, he related that there are two merits that he is bringing along to the next world. First, that he helped bring the Frierdiker Rebbe out of Soviet Russia, and second, that he had a hand in the *hachtara* of the Rebbe. ❶

1. Reb Dovid Dubov.
2. Ibid. As he heard from Reb Sender Liberow.
3. *Igros Kodesh Admur Harayatz* vol 13 pg. 255.
4. Heard by Reb Dovid Dubov from *anash* in Manchester.
5. Ibid.
6. Heard by Reb Dovid Dubov from Reb Shalom Ber Gurkov, a talmid of Reb Yitzchok.
7. *Early Years* pg. 298.
8. For more about that periodical, see "Kovetz Lubavitch," *A Chassidisher Derther* Elul 5775.
9. Rabbi Dovid Dubov (who heard this story from Reb Zalman Gurary) seems to remember this as the *Niggun Hisvaadus Someach*, *Nichoach* vol. 16.
10. Heard by Reb Dovid Dubov from his father Reb Leibel a"h.
11. *Teshurah Dubrowsky-Cousin* 5758 p. 2.
12. As heard by Rabbi Tzvi Telsner of Melbourne.
13. *Igros Kodesh* vol 5, p. 312.
14. Heard by Reb Dovid Dubov from his father Reb Leibel a"h.
15. *Yemei Breishis* p. 59.
16. As heard by Reb Dovid Dubov from the Kaplan family.
17. *Mekadesh Yisroel* p. 72.
18. *Yemei Breishis* p. 92.
19. Rabbi Dovid Dubov. *Yemei Breishis* p. 84.
20. *Nichoach* vol. 12 *Niggun Simchoh* #3. Reb Yoel Kahn relates that this is a *niggun* Reb Yitzchok would sing frequently.
21. *Sichos Kodesh* 5726, p. 629