

A Chassidisher Derher

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הקואתול
העם

א חסידישער דערהער

אזוי ארמל למספר...
א מעשה...
אזוי ארמל למספר...
א מעשה...
אזוי ארמל למספר...
א מעשה...

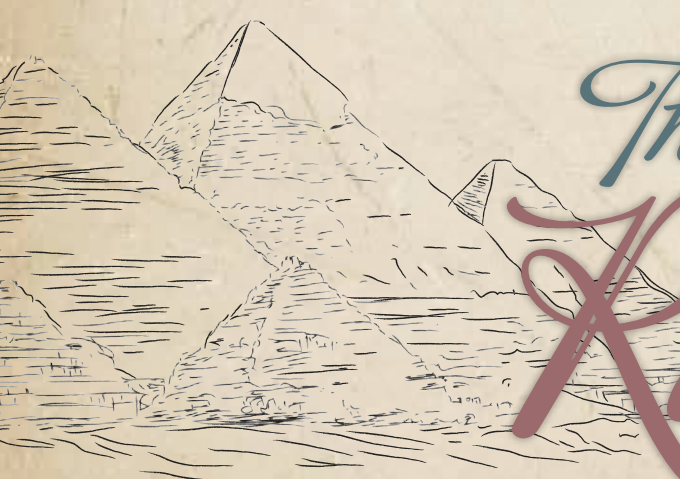


Didan Notzach!

A HEI TEVES FARBRENGEN

Spiritual Children

RABBI LEIBEL POSNER SHARES
RECOLLECTIONS OF THE FIRST YEARS
OF LUBAVITCH IN AMERICA



The Rebbe's Rambam

A deeper look at the life and teachings of the
Rambam, in honor of his yahrtzeit on Chof Teves.



TEVES 5783
ISSUE 126 (203)
JANUARY 2023

אזוי ארמל למספר...
א מעשה...
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א מעשה...

לעילוי נשמת
הרה"ת ר' שלום דובער
בן הרה"ת ר' יצחק ע"ה
קאלאדני
נלב"ע ה' טבת ה'תשע"ט

נדפס ע"י
משפחתו שיחיו

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Publisher

Rabbi Yossi Kamman

Editor in Chief

Rabbi Mendel Jacobs

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Rabbi Levi Kesselman

Managing Editor

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Circulation and Marketing

Rabbi Mendy Shishler

Photo Research Editing

Rabbi Avremi Browd

Editors

Rabbi Mendel Alperowitz

Rabbi Dovid Olidort

Copy Editor

Rabbi Eliezer Zalmanov

Design

Rabbi Mendel Bergstein

Contributors

Rabbi Yanky Bell • Rabbi Yossi Bendet • Rabbi Koppel Chaiton • Rabbi Avrohom Moshe Dyce • Rabbi Tzemach Feller
Rabbi Mendy Goldberg • Rabbi Levi Gourarie • Rabbi Levi Greenberg • Rabbi Menachem Mendel Greenberg
Rabbi Mendy Greenberg • Rabbi Zevi Kaplan • Rabbi Levi Katz • Rabbi Yossi Katz • Rabbi Menachem Lazaroff
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This magazine
has been made possible

לזכות
הרה"ת ר' שלום וזוגתו מרת שרה
וילדיהם ישראל, ריסא, חי' מושקא,
אמונה מלכה, יעקב יהודה, ולאה שיחיו
אייזיקוביץ

בקשר עם יום הבהיר ה' טבת

REACHING THE CORE

We find ourselves in a Hakhel year—and as such, every aspect of our *avodah* throughout the year can be connected with the idea of Hakhel.

One of the special dates marked in the month of Teves is the fast of Asara B'Teves; the day that Nevuchadnetzar and his army laid the city of Yerushalayim under siege, paving the way for the destruction of the first *Beis Hamikdash*. Interestingly, when the *possuk* in Yechezkel describes this event, some very specific terms are used:

“סמך מלך בבל אל ירושלים **בעצם היום הזה**...”¹

“The king of Bavel besieged Yerushalayim **on this very day...**”

The Shulchan Aruch cites this *possuk* as proof that the fast of Asara B'Teves is so important, that were it to occur on a Shabbos we would still have to observe it, similar to what the Torah says about Yom Kippur, which is also to be observed “**בעצם היום הזה**” (on this very day), even on Shabbos.

Although this notion seems like a negative quality of

the day, emphasizing the stringency of the fast and the magnitude of the tragedy it commemorates, the Rebbe sees this idea in a very different light:

Chassidus explains the meaning of “בעצם היום הזה” on Yom Kippur to mean that the “עצם”—the essence and innermost part of the *neshama* of every Yid—shines on Yom Kippur, which in turn connects us with the “עצמות” of Hashem. Hence, Chazal say that “עיצומו של יום מכפר”—the essence of the day of Yom Kippur itself is what brings about atonement.

Likewise, says the Rebbe, on the day of Asara B'Teves we again have the ability to tap into the essence of the *neshama* and connect ourselves with the essence of Hashem, just like Yom Kippur.

With that in mind, we can better understand how to accomplish the mitzvah of Hakhel:

One might ask: How is it possible to bring together all the Jewish people despite all our many differences? In fact, the *possuk* of Hakhel itself underlines that there are

core differences between people: “האנשים והנשים והטף—Men, women, and children.” We have different genders, different ages, and so many other variances. How is it possible to truly come together as one?

The answer is right here in the theme of Asara B'Teves:

When the essence of our *neshamos* shine, all the differences melt away. At our core we are all the same, at one with the essence of Hashem. This is the true meaning of Hakhel.²

With that, we will merit the ultimate Hakhel with all of the Jewish people together in the third *Beis Hamikdash* and the coming of Moshiach now!

The Editors

יום הבהיר י"ד כסלו ה'תשפ"ג שנת הקהל את העם
מאה ועשרים שנה

1. Yechezkel 24:2.

2. Asara B'Teves 5748, Hisvaaduyos 5748 vol. 2, p. 191.



To The Moon

On Friday, 6 Teves 5729 (December 27, 1968) Apollo 8, the first crewed spacecraft to leave Earth and reach the moon's orbit, returned from its mission and landed in the North Pacific Ocean. At the farbrengen that Shabbos, the Rebbe addressed the lessons to be learned from this historic mission.*

Don't Get Distracted

Everything that a Yid sees or hears contains a *hora'ah* in *avodas Hashem*. Not only should this event not distract from one's *avodah*, it should add to and strengthen it.

The question is then asked: How are we still able to utter the words in *Kiddush Levanah* regarding the moon "*Eini yachol lingoa bach—I cannot touch you,*" if, in the coming days or months man will in fact reach the moon and be able to touch its surface? The obvious answer is that when

one actually says "*K'sheim she'ani rokeid kingedech ve'ini yachol lingoa bach—just as I leap toward you but cannot touch you*" at *Kiddush Levanah*, he is standing on Earth. However, the factors that went into bringing about such a revolutionary event might make one think that this was mankind's accomplishment and that Hashem had nothing to do with it. The sheer brainpower and planning it took seems to be only human effort, however much.

One must see past this and

realize that, on the contrary, this was Hashem's way of showing us His vast greatness and our own lowliness. When one realizes this truth, he will not be distracted from his *avodah*.

Making Emunah Real

As mentioned before, seeing this event should also help in terms of one's *avodah*. When someone recognizes the immense beauty and greatness of Hashem's creation up close on such a rare occasion, it should strengthen his *emunah*. At times, a Jew's *emunah* can



be in a state of *makif*—not so present or relevant to him. But when he sees such clear signs of Hashem’s power, his *emunah* will awaken from within him.

The Specifics

The boosted presence of one’s *emunah* is brought about by two specific things: Firstly, the very fact that we were able to surpass the belief that, due to various technical and scientific obstacles, it would be impossible to accomplish such a thing—shows us the incredible capabilities of the human brain, which

was also designed by Hashem in His infinite knowledge. At the same time this shows us how limited the mind is—that previously this whole idea was unimaginable and now, with a little thought, it is within our reach.

Secondly, the *possuk*¹ says, “Lift your eyes on high and see who created these.” Now that we have an advanced method of “lifting our eyes,” we surely can recognize “who created” in a much clearer way. The more we seek and the more we discover—the more there will be to find in Hashem’s infinite universe.

In conclusion, we see that not only is this event not a challenge to our beliefs, on the contrary, it enables us to gain a clearer recognition of the beauty and intricacy of Hashem’s creation—bringing a *chizuk* in *emunah*.

Additionally, anything we see and hear can teach us lessons in *avodas Hashem*; not only from the general idea, but also, as mentioned above, by looking at the specifics as well. **T**

*From the sicha of Shabbos Parshas
Vayigash 5729 (Bilti Mugah)*

1. Yeshayahu, 40:26.



כתב יד קודש



לזכות הורינו
ר' אברהם שמואל וזוגתו מרת
רבקה מירל שיחיו שפאלטר
ר' משה חיים וזוגתו מרת שרה
שיחיו גיפצן



נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' יצחק מאיר וזוגתו מרת
לאה ומשפחתם שיחיו
שפאלטר

DON'T FALL FOR IT

The Rebbe's note to a woman who was hesitant to take on a new mitzvah because she considered herself "not religious."

אחד מדרכי היצה"ר הכי רגילים - לפתות את האדם שהוא (האדם) אינו דתי (1) וכיון שמצוה פ' [=פלוגית] הנה בעבר לא קיים אותה (מאיזו סיבה שתהי') - למה יקיימה בעתיד? (2)

וכנראה גם אותה מבלבל בזה (בכדי למנוע ממנה וממשפחתה שי' ברכות השם בגו"ר) והמענה המוכיח שכ"ז שקר גמור.

(1) באם לא הי' ח"ו דתי - לא הי' מקיים כל מצוה כלל.

(2) רצון ותשוקת כאו"א מבנ"א [=מבני אדם] צו וואקסן לא רק בגוף אלא גם בנשמה בהבנה, במדות טובות, בצדקה, וכיו"ב, ועי"ז מוסיף השם בברכותיו.

אזכיר עה"צ ותבש"ט.

One of the **most common** tactics of the *yetzer hara* is to convince the person that since he (the person) is not religious (1), and being that he never kept this particular mitzvah in the past (for whatever reason) — why should he start keeping it now? (2)

It seems that [the *yetzer hara*] is employing this [tactic] on you as well (in order to withhold Hashem's blessings, materially and spiritually, from you and your family).

The **obvious** response [to the *yetzer hara*] is that all of the above is **utter lies**.

1. If you were not religious, *chas v'shalom*, you would not have kept any mitzvot at all.
2. It is the will and desire of **every single person** to grow, not only in body but also in soul and intellect, in good character traits, in charity, **and so on**. With that, Hashem will increase His blessings.

I will mention you at the *Tziyun*; may you bear good news.

(Teshura Simpson-Prus 5779)



לעבן מיטן רבין



JEM 108558

THE REBBE ENTERS THE SHUL ON ROSH CHODESH TEVES 5735*, JOINING THE CHILDREN FOR A CHANUKAH RALLY.

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>ע"י בנם ר' יקותיאל יהודה וזוגתו מרת פעסל לאה ומשפחתם שיחיו רוהר</p> | <p>טור 'לעבן מיטן רבין' הוקדש לזכרון ולעילוי נשמת ר' שמואל ב"ר יהושע אליהו ז"ל ואשתו מרת שרה ע"ה בת ר' יקותיאל ומרת לאה ה"ד ת'נ'צ'ב'ה'</p> |
|--|--|

Tefillah Betzibur

TEVES 5735*

Excitement was in the air as everyone geared up to prepare for the 25th year of the Rebbe's nesius. In only a few weeks, a new era was approaching and on Yud Shevat they would celebrate this great milestone.

Presented below is a selection of the diary of Reb Yitzchok Meir Sossover, a bochur at the time.



SUNDAY, 8 TEVES

Among those who entered *yechidus* this evening were Reb Shmuel Chefer and Reb Nissan Nemanov.

Reb Yekusiel Farkash went in for *yechidus* with his daughter who is not well. The Rebbe spoke with the girl and asked her what she learned in school, her age, and whether she lights Shabbos candles. When she responded that she lights two candles every Friday night, the Rebbe exclaimed, “Two?!” Then the Rebbe asked if she also makes a *bracha*, to which she replied that she does.

Afterwards the Rebbe inquired if she received *Chanukah gelt* during the eight days of Chanukah. When the girl replied that she did not, the Rebbe showed surprise and proceeded to give her two dollars, explaining that one is for the Shabbos candles and one is for *Chanukah gelt*.

The following night, Reb Nissan Nemenov farbrenged in 770 and recounted his *yechidus*. The Rebbe had inquired about *tefillah b'tzibbur* in the yeshiva, and Reb Nissan responded that it needs improvement. The Rebbe continued on this topic and told him, “We just celebrated Yud-Tes Kislev, and as we know, the *maamar Padah B'shalom* explains that true freedom comes about through the study of Torah, *gemilas chassadim*, and *avodah*—which specifically refers to davening with a *minyan*.” The Rebbe spoke about this animatedly and got up from his chair, waving his hand in the air as he exclaimed, “Why don't they daven with a *minyan*?!”

The Rebbe continued: “Even *misnagdim* recognize the importance of *tefillah b'tzibbur*. How much more so should Chassidim, who study Chassidus, and therefore understand that *tefillah b'tzibbur* is as great as the *tefillos* of *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah* when our *neshamos* are closer to Hashem! These are concepts that are only properly understood by those who study Chassidus.”

The Rebbe then told Reb Nissan: “You don't need to say this in your own name, as these ideas are expounded upon in Chassidus, specifically in *maamarim* studied by *bochurim*. They should look at the *maamar Padah B'shalom* which was just printed last summer and read what is written explicitly there.

The Rebbe then said emphatically: “The fact that *eltere Chassidim* didn't seem to be so meticulous about *tefillah b'tzibbur*—for that one needs to be an *eltere Chassid*.”

Afterwards the Rebbe said that the *bochurim* must study two or three *maamarim* by heart, so that they always have what to daven with. This is also beneficial for *hafatzas hamaayanos*, as one is more successful when he knows several concepts of Chassidus *baal peh*. It is also advisable to study *maamarim* from three different times of the year, in order to have something to repeat for every Yom Tov.

TUESDAY, ASARAH B'TEVES

The Rebbe entered the shul during *selichos*.

At first the Rebbe was reciting *selichos* without a *gartel* but then he hurriedly put it on and did not tighten it completely, instead he held it with his hands. The Rebbe turned towards the *chazzan* and asked where the *minyan* was up to. Reb Meir Harlig approached and answered where they're holding. The Rebbe then motioned and asked the *chazzan* to recite *selichos* a little louder.

When *Rachamana D'anei* and *Avinu Malkeinu* were sung, the Rebbe encouraged the singing.

SUNDAY, 15 TEVES

On his way out of his room for Maariv, the Rebbe passed a man collecting tzedakah, so he reached into his pocket looking for coins. Reb Binyomin Klein tried to hand him some, but by then the Rebbe had already gone back to his room and returned with a few coins. He gave tzedakah to the individual and then deposited some more into the *pushka*.

After Maariv, a woman was waiting outside with her son for his *upshernish*. She wanted to give the scissors to the Rebbe to cut the boy's hair, but the Rebbe informed her (speaking in Hebrew with a Sephardic accent) that he usually does not cut *upshernish* boys' hair, and instead gave them a *bracha*. They followed the Rebbe into *Gan Eden Hatachton* and the Rebbe gave them a dollar coin.



REB YITZCHOK MEIR SOSSOVER

THURSDAY, 19 TEVES

On his way out from Maariv, the Rebbe saw Mrs. Garelik and her children from Italy, and gave them dollars.

Tonight, an individual from Yerushalayim entered for *yechidus* and recounted afterwards that the Rebbe told him that the *kolelim* in Eretz Yisroel are of sufficient quality but they don't study "*aliba d'hilchesa*" (with a focus on the final *halacha*). This is evident in the lack of rabbonim and *morei hora'ah*.

He related this with great excitement, as on that very day he had met with someone who had asked him to mention this to the Rebbe. Although he had not done so, the Rebbe still addressed the question that he did not ask.

SUNDAY, 22 TEVES

Mr. Porat, a security officer for El Al, arrived for a *yechidus* with his children. The Rebbe gave dollars to all of the children, the older of whom received bills while the younger ones received coins. The Rebbe asked the daughters if they light Shabbos candles and they answered that they do, and that they do it because of the encouragement of Reb Kuti Rapp.

Upon exiting *yechidus*, Mr. Porat told Reb Leibel Groner that the Rebbe had responded to things

about which they had not even written. Rabbi Groner replied that a similar story had recently occurred as well.

A person came for *yechidus* and gave the Rebbe his *tzetel* and the Rebbe told him he can force an answer, should the man choose. The man did not understand what the Rebbe meant by that statement. The Rebbe then answered all of his questions. After he left he realized that he had given the Rebbe an entirely blank sheet instead of his letter.

Next in *yechidus* was an individual named Wertheimer, who had brought with him an old manuscript of Rashi's commentary, together with some *sefarim* that he had published.

The Rebbe took two of the *sefarim* and told him that he already has the others. Regarding the manuscript, the Rebbe said that this will make a big *shturem* especially amongst the Sephardim, because until now they only had *sefarim* on Rashi from the *chachamim* of Spain, and now they will have from the *chachamim* of France too. He remained in *yechidus* for approximately 45 minutes.

As he left, the Rebbe told Reb Leibel Groner to ask him for his address, as he had told the Rebbe about the great expenses involved in publishing his *sefarim*. [Presumably the Rebbe wanted to reimburse him for them.]



CHACHAM REFAEL CHUDIDAITOV STANDS BEHIND THE REBBE'S PLACE (BOTTOM ROW, THIRD FROM RIGHT) AT THE FARBRENGEN OF YUD SHEVAT 5735*.



IN HONOR OF YUD SHEVAT, TZACH PREPARED 25 "LUBAVITCH MITZVAH MOBILES" FOR THE FIRST EVER MITZVAH TANK PARADE. THIS WAS FIRST PRESENTED ON THE NIGHT OF YUD SHEVAT, AS THE REBBE ARRIVED AT 770.

WEDNESDAY, 25 TEVES

Tzach had written to the Rebbe about *hachlatos* in the area of *mitvzoim* that had been undertaken in honor of the 25th year of the Rebbe's *nesius*, including *hadlakas neiros Shabbos*. The Rebbe inquired why they had neglected to include *tefillah b'tzibbur*.

Regarding the security of the *shechunah* the Rebbe wrote: "בּוּדָאִי עוֹסְקִים בְּמַרְץ הַדְרוֹשׁ אִזְעָה" צ בְּכָל הַנ"ל—They are certainly engaging in all this with the required alacrity. I will mention this at the Ohel."

SHABBOS MEVARCHIM, 28 TEVES

At today's farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke about the Zohar's commentary on the words *atem shalom*. The Rebbe then said: "There is a Jew here from Russia who can sing a song with these words." The Rebbe then told Reb Leibel Groner to bring some bottles of *mashke* and then gave *l'chaim* to Chacham Refael Chudidaitov, who began singing the song "*Atem Shalom*," and the Rebbe nodded along with his head.

The Rebbe poured wine from his *becher* into the two bottles of *mashke* and then poured back a *l'chaim* from them and gave it to Chacham Refael.

Upon Chachem Refael's request that the Rebbe should take *l'chaim* as well, the Rebbe poured into his *becher*. Chacham Refael then requested *l'chaim* for his son, Moshiach. The Rebbe smiled and called "Moshiach," and when he came the Rebbe poured him some *l'chaim* as well.

At the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke with closed eyes and reiterated that not a penny needs to be spent on anything in honor of 25 years. All efforts should be put solely into more *mitvzoim*.

Afterwards the Rebbe distributed *l'chaim*, and he called out, "Reb Shimshon is making a bar mitzvah." When Reb Shimshon Stock approached the Rebbe with his son, the Rebbe poured some *l'chaim* for them.

The Rebbe concluded the farbrengen by saying: "Since we spoke about *mitvzoim*, and being that it's Shabbos and these efforts are not yet possible to be carried out, whoever commits to go on *mitvzoim* starting tomorrow until Yud Shvat should say *l'chaim*. The Rebbe then gave the bottle to Reb Dovid Raskin.

The Rebbe started the *niggun* "*Ufaratzta*" and made a *bracha acharona*. As he got up to leave, he encouraged the singing. **1**



DIDAN NOTZACHEN

A HEI TEVES FARBRENGEN

לע"נ
אבינו הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' יוסף מנחם
מענדל ב"ר יצחק ע"ה
ואמנו מרת זיסל דבורה בת ר' אלי הכהן
ע"ה
טענענבוים
תנ"צ'בה



RABBI MENDEL
KAPLAN



RABBI YITZCHOK
RASKIN



RABBI YOSSE
NEMES



The Feelings of a Bochur

RABBI MENDEL KAPLAN

In the summer of 5745*, I was a young *bochur* in the *masmidim* program of Gan Yisroel New York. On Yud-Beis Tammuz, we were in the shul watching the live broadcast of the Rebbe's *farbrengen*. It was then that the Rebbe spoke of the *sefarim* for the first time.

At the time, most of us really didn't understand what the Rebbe was talking about. Additionally, I was very young at the time and it was difficult for me to make sense of all the details. I'm not sure exactly when, but a few weeks later we began to hear "*The vaad of Aguch went into yechidus*" and things like that. Eventually, we began to understand what exactly was transpiring, and only then did we understand what the Rebbe was saying at the *farbrengen* of Yud-Beis Tammuz.

When Tishrei came around, the pain was felt. Everyone had heard of the way the Rebbe expressed himself about the *sefarim*. By then we all knew that we would soon be going to court.

At that time, many people began saying extra *Tehillim*, *minyanim* were being organized, and so on. I remember a *farbrengen* sometime in the beginning of 5746*, our *mashpia* was speaking of the fact that the court case was to begin on Yud-Tes Kislev. We all felt there's something "otherworldly" going on.

When the trial started, everyone was getting on buses and going to the courthouse. Generally speaking, *bochurim* of my age didn't go every day, but we went a few times. The atmosphere at the time was as if we were on trial. It was something personal, of utmost importance to each and every one of us.

Every night in 770, everyone would be discussing the events of that day, trying to hear from anyone who knew exactly what happened in court during that day. "Our lawyer said so-and-so." "So-and-so testified..." and so on. Everyone was very involved. I remember seeing documents from the court that a relative of mine got his hands on. Everyone was eager to hear any detail they could procure. We were not bystanders, this became our life.

We were observing half-day fasts, starting the days early with *Tehillim minyanim*. At this point, the whole saga became a focal point of our lives.

On Zos Chanukah, the Rebbe spoke of the *kitrug*, about the Alter Rebbe during his arrest ahead of Yud-Tes Kislev, telling us how we are to understand what *kitrug* there could possibly be on Lubavitch today. We knew how pivotal the situation was. We knew we were not living through a normal point in time, that something *himeldik* was going on.

During the winter, the episode took a toll on the Rebbe's health. To witness the pain this was causing the Rebbe, hurt us tremendously. There was a strong sense of pain everyone shared.

The first victory was on Yud-Gimmel Kislev. The other side tried as much as they could to have the Rebbe testify in court. Needless to say, the notion of the Rebbe having to go through this situation was unthinkable. When we heard the news—'*didan notzach!*' The judge ruled that the Rebbe won't testify in court!'—the excitement was felt in the air! I remember a few days later, on Friday night, an older *bochur* in 770 was getting together a group of *bochurim* to dance through the streets of Crown Heights to be sure everyone was aware that *didan notzach!*

One incident from that period that stands out in my mind occurred on Simchas Torah 5747*. During one of the *hakafos*, the crowd was chanting '*didan notzach*' again and again. The Rebbe stopped encouraging the crowd, instead, the Rebbe stood leaning on his *shtender* and was gazing deeply at the crowd. It felt as though *hakafos* were on pause for those few minutes. Personally, it felt very frightening.

On the morning of Hei Teves I was at home. My



A REPORT TO THE REBBE FROM AGUCH IN THE WEEKS LEADING UP TO THE COURT CASE WITH THE VARIOUS HACHLOTOS UNDERTAKEN BY ANASH AND BOCHURIM TO MERIT A DIDAN NOTZACH.



RABBI MENDEL KAPLAN AS A YOUNG BOCHUR IN 5745*
RECEIVING KOS SHEL BRACHA FROM THE REBBE.

JEM 2/11/78

father called and said “Mendel, I hear it’s *didan notzach*.” I vividly remember my feelings when hearing those words. “What?! Really?!” It was unbelievable! Although I was still a fairly young *bochur* at the time, the joy and celebration felt very real, even to me. I ran over to 770 as fast as I could. I was literally shaking with joy when running to 770.

Living through the day of Hei Teves, I say to myself, I know exactly what it will feel like when Moshiach comes. You must understand, at the time that’s precisely what we felt! No one needed any *marshke* to be joyous. The normal state of being at that moment was an expression of the most intense joy one can only imagine. It was a very real and very raw *simcha*. You felt just so happy. No one who lived through that day will ever forget it. There’s no question Hei Teves 5747* was the happiest day of my life!

In hindsight, this was a tremendous expression of *hiskashrus* of Chassidim. The way the *simcha* exploded on Hei Teves, was a direct outcome of how much we felt connected to the ongoings the year earlier. The story of the *sefarim* had become our story, the *niggun* “*Didan Notzach*” became our *niggun*. After living through everything we lived through, our feelings on Hei Teves were like a dam that burst open and the water came gushing out.

When the Rebbe came downstairs for Mincha, 770 was on fire! The deepest emotions of joy were pouring forth from

within everyone present. Many people had driven in from nearby, 770 was full. The *chazzan* sang the davening in a Yom Tov tone.

The next day I was in the small *zal* upstairs in 770, standing right behind the Rebbe during Maariv. After Maariv, the Rebbe turned around and began a *sicha*. Being that no one was expecting a *sicha*, there was no microphone at the beginning of the *sicha*. The Rebbe spoke of the time being an *eis ratzon*, and that everyone can send in requests for the Rebbe to bring to the Ohel the next day. I don’t know if any *bochurim* had the presence of mind to ask for anything personal, or simply wrote that Moshiach should finally be revealed. The feeling at the time was that the *sitra achra* had been defeated.

By the next evening, many guests started to arrive from further places around the world, especially from Eretz Yisroel. There was a big *farbrengen* arranged for that night. The atmosphere in 770 was electrifying. I remember sitting at that *farbrengen* with friends, it was an atmosphere of pure *simcha*, everyone felt happy in the Rebbe’s *simcha*. Everyone was on a high for a week straight, nonstop *l’chaim*, *farbrengens*, dancing, and so on.

After a week of celebrating, the Rebbe said a *sicha*, in which the Rebbe instructed us on how to prepare ourselves over the next 30 days leading up to Yud Shevat. We had never heard the Rebbe speak this way before, about *hachanos* for

*📅 5747-1987, 5745-1985

Yud Shevat. The feeling at the time was that it's almost done, the Rebbe is now preparing us for Moshiach's coming.

The victory of Hei Teves was followed by an appeal. Although the situation was severe, we were sure it was going to be good. It had to be. Thus, we didn't feel pressure the way we did during the original trial. When we heard the news of *didan notzach* the second time, on Chof-Hei Cheshvan 5748*, we were of course joyous, but it wasn't the same as the first *didan notzach*. Hei Teves was raw emotion.

As Hei Teves 5748* approached, everyone was nervous about what would be. Would the Rebbe accept the day as a Yom Tov? Reb Yoel didn't want to give in a *maamar* for the Rebbe to be *magiha* in honor of Hei Teves, instead Reb Dovid Feldman prepared it and gave it in. *Bochurim* put a *hakdasha* on that week's Haoros Ubiurim. As well, a sign was hung up on the back wall of 770. Everyone was very anxious as to how the Rebbe was going to react. At the farbrengen the next day, the Rebbe spoke of Hei Teves, and thus the Yom Tov of Hei Teves was born—*Didan Notzach!*

The Shluchim's Involvement

RABBI YITZCHOK RASKIN

Shabbos Mevarchim Nissan 5747* was during the appeal. The Rebbe spoke of the case with great pain, and said that he's giving it over to the shluchim. On Motzei Shabbos, I received a phone call about a group of shluchim who organized a meeting for the next day in New York. I drove in from Vermont to attend the meeting. At the time, I was on shlichus for only a few years, so I was one of the youngest shluchim present at the meeting.

It was decided during the meeting to form a committee of shluchim, six shluchim from within the USA and six shluchim from abroad. I was drafted as one of the six American shluchim. For almost two weeks we stayed in New York, organizing our plan of action.

Our work was divided in two. One part was with regards to the case itself, to be in touch with Rabbi Krinsky and Rabbi Shemtov, to see that for any help the lawyers would need in preparing the case, such as help with research, we would be there to assist.

At the same time, we were working on the *ruchniusdike* aspect of the case, to inspire Chassidim to see what they can do on a spiritual level to ensure the Rebbe's victory. I held meetings with the *bochurim* of 770, to encourage them to inspire their fellow *bochurim* to add in their learning, as per the words of Chazal "השכם והערב עליהם" (wake up early and spend more time learning Torah to overcome your enemies). Among other things, we printed a

booklet called "*Kuntres Shnei Maamarim*," with the *maamarim Reishis Goyim Amalek* (the last *maamar* of the Rebbe Rashab) and *Basi Lgani* (the last *maamar* of the Frierdiker Rebbe) which the Rebbe connected to each other.

Among the shluchim, we held a few conference calls, to inspire fellow shluchim to add in their *shurim* and *mitvzoim*. There was a big *hisorerus*, everyone felt they wanted to help, so it was channeled to try and bring the Rebbe as much *nachas* as we can.

Another thing the committee felt necessary to do was to print a book in English detailing the Rebbe's position on the *sefarim* case. A writer was hired, and eventually the book "Despite All Odds" was printed. It was a huge undertaking. Most of our work was done quietly, behind the scenes.



THE SIGN HANGING IN 770 ABOUT HEI TEVES ONE YEAR LATER, IN 5748*. AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SHABBOS FARBRENGEN, THE REBBE LOOKED TOWARDS THE SIGN AND BEGAN SPEAKING ABOUT "DIDAN NOTZACH."



The Rebbe recognized the committee, and various things the Rebbe spoke of, the committee facilitated. On various occasions of disagreements between *mosdos*, the Rebbe instructed those involved to turn to the committee.

We regularly wrote a *duch* to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe would answer.

It's interesting to note that during an earlier period as well, while the original trial over the *sefarim* was going on, the Rebbe also requested that the shluchim should get involved:

At the farbrengen of Zos Chanukah 5746*, the Rebbe said that the other side was claiming that Lubavitch is not active *chas v'shalom*. This led to a huge *shturem* of *mivtza Chanukah*. The Rebbe gave this task over to the shluchim.

On a most basic level, it seems that those who will carry out the task of making Lubavitch more active are those who do the Lubavitch activities around the world—so the shluchim were a natural choice.

However, on a deeper level, perhaps it could be said that when a father is suffering, the natural response for him is to want his children to know. Just as it was a few months later on Chof-Beis Shvat, I received a telephone call that the Rebbe wanted the shluchim to be informed of the *histalkus*. We are the Rebbe's children. Thus, as the appeal was going on and the other side was trying to drag it out as much as they could,

the Rebbe wanted his children to understand what he's going through and to get involved.

This phenomenon was revealed as well on Hei Teves 5748*. The Rebbe thanked many shluchim who had traveled to be with the Rebbe on this day. Some, the Rebbe even asked if their wives had come too.

The whole episode of Hei Teves brought out the love Chasidim have for the Rebbe. I remember Rabbi Mentlik standing in the courtroom wearing his *gartel*. He was a Chossid who didn't understand a word of what was going on, but he felt that he had to be there.

Today after Gimmel Tammuz, *zaro bachayim*, there's no question that the strongest way to be connected with the Rebbe is to be on the Rebbe's shlichus.

Although not directly related to our topic at hand, I would like to conclude with a short story about the Rebbe's concern for his shluchim:

When my father was to move out on shlichus to Morocco, my grandfather was very concerned about it. In *yechidus*, he cried bitterly to the Rebbe. At one point during the conversation, he asked the Rebbe, "What will be with the *chinuch* of his children?" The Rebbe responded in a serious tone, "דאס לאז פאר מיר—this, leave to me."

Hei Teves Today

RABBI YOSSI NEMES

At the time of Hei Teves, I was on shlichus in South Africa and it was very difficult to explain to *baalei batim* there the importance of what was going on. At the time, it was really focused only on the Rebbe's pain and *agmas nefesh*, and Hei Teves we were celebrating the Rebbe's *simcha*. Today, I feel the victory of Hei Teves was a pivotal moment in history that changed our lives forever.

A few years after Gimmel Tammuz, I was in Kfar Chabad for a Shabbos. After davening, Reb Shalom Feldman was farbrengeing about *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe. "*Hiskashrus* is one thing," Reb Shalom said. "Just as the Rebbe put everything aside for us, we must put everything aside for the Rebbe."

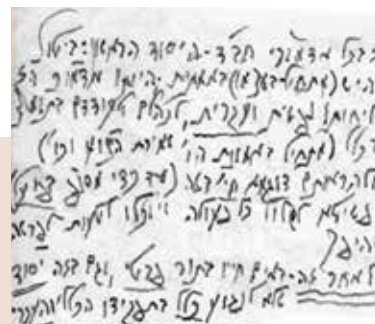
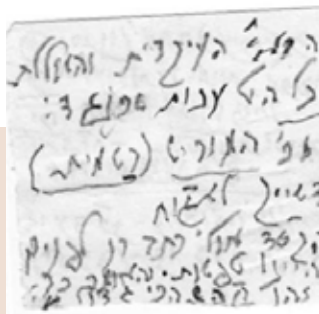
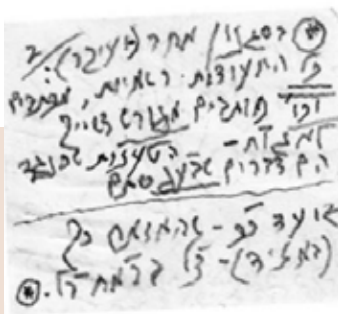
When I think of Hei Teves in hindsight, this line sums it up. During the *sefarim* case, the Rebbe wasn't fighting a war on his own, rather he included us in it. The Rebbe's response to the attack on Lubavitch, on *dor hashvi'i*, was that of "*mashlich chayov mineged*." The Rebbe put everything aside for us.

During that time the Rebbe spoke a lot about the eternal life of the *nossi*. The Rebbe spoke in terms that he never used earlier, the idea of *noch mehr lebendiker*—even more alive, and so on. The victory of Hei Teves actualized this idea.

The *hiskashrus* the Rebbe has with us and we have with the Rebbe today, is an outcome of the victory of Hei Teves.

It's brought down regarding Yud-Tes Kislev, that the Alter Rebbe could have avoided the whole ordeal. Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berdichev suggested that the Alter Rebbe 'burn down' the whole S. Petersburg. The Alter Rebbe went on *mesiras nefesh*, putting himself aside in order for Chassidus to be spread the way it was after Yud-Tes Kislev.

I feel the same is true regarding the story of Hei Teves. The Rebbe could have been *mevatel* the *kitrug* and avoid all the suffering that came along with it. Yet the Rebbe wanted it to play out in a natural manner, with all the *mesiras nefesh* that came along with it. This



נוגע כלל בתפקידו הכללי והעיקרי... "הראי' העיקרית והשוללת כל הטענות שכנגד: מכתב המוריש רשמית דשייך לאגודת חסידי חב"ד. הקס"ד אולי כתב רק לפנים (היינו טיפשות) והאומר כך זהו חילול השם הכי גדול ועד כדי כך שהאומר כך (במידה) צריך להיות ברמ"ח ר"ל. ובסגנון אחר (ועיקר): כל התעודות רשמיות, מכתבים וכו' כותבים מפורש דשייך לאגודת חסידי חב"ד - הטענות שכנגד הם דברים שבע"פ סתם

THE REBBE'S HANDWRITTEN NOTE FOR THE LAWYERS, DETAILING THE ROLE OF A REBBE AND THE ABSURDITY OF THE CLAIM BY THE OTHER SIDE THAT THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO INHERIT THE SEFARIM.

כבכל אדמו"רי חב"ד היסוד הראשון: ביטול היש (מתחיל בע"צמו) באמיתיות. היותו אדמו"ר ה"ז שליחות נפשית ועיקרית, לנהלם ולעודדם בתומ"צ בכלל (מתחיל באמונת ה' שמירת הש"ע וכו') ולהראותם דוגמת ח"ב בזה (עד כדי מסירות נפש בפועל) ופשיטא לשלול כל פעולה שיוכלו לטעות לפרשם להיפך. לאחר זה באים חייו בתור פרטי וגם בזה יסוד שלא



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THE REBBE SPEAKING AT THE FARBRENGEN OF YUD-TEVES KISLEV 5746*, THE EVENING BEFORE THE COURT CASE BEGAN.

way, the idea of *hu bachayim* was brought down into our world.

In Chassidus it's explained that when a king is at war, he takes out the most precious treasures that have been passed down throughout the generations in order to be victorious. During the time leading up to Hei Teves, the Rebbe revealed things that none of the Rabbeim have done in the past. For example, the Rebbe detailed the role of a Rebbe on paper¹. Similarly, the Rebbe shared a very personal story of when he asked the Frierdiker Rebbe for specific *sefarim*, reminding the Frierdiker Rebbe of the *tzava'a* of the Rebbe Rashab. For the Rebbe to share such a story is unimaginable, literally *bizbuz ha'otzros!*

Everyone knows of the Rebbetzin's deposition, how she famously said "they (the *sefarim*) belong to the Chassidim," and the impact this had on the judge. Yet, very few pay attention to the *mesiras nefesh* the Rebbetzin had during this deposition, and to speak so boldly. Together with the Rebbe, the Rebbetzin put her own self totally aside for the victory of Hei Teves.

This is *hiskashrus* for me. We owe it to the Rebbe that we put ourselves totally on the side and do whatever we can to bring the *geulah bepoel!* **T**

1. See Derher Weekly, Vayigash 5772.



The Ice Cream Recipe

After completing two years of *kollel* as a newlywed, I wrote to the Rebbe and asked, “What should I do now? Where should I go?” After some back-and-forth correspondence, the Rebbe told me I should go to Australia and look for *rabbonus*. I told the Rebbe, “The Rebbe has given me this shlichus to become a *rav*. Really, with my learning, my being, my abilities and so on, I don’t know whether I’m suited to be able to fill that position in the manner the Rebbe would like us to.”

The Rebbe replied, “*Zechus harabbim misa’yato* — The merit of working for the community will stand you in good stead.” So I took that as a strong *bracha*, something that has stood by me ever since then. I went to Rabbi Zalman Shimon Dworkin, who was the Lubavitcher *rav* in Crown Heights at the time, and with the Rebbe’s approval I asked to begin *shimush*. I also did some *shimush* in Montreal with Rabbi Yitzchok Hendel, and for the next six months I prepared to take on this position that the Rebbe had given me and that the Rebbe had given me such a strong and good *bracha* for.

During that time, while we were still in New York, my wife

and I helped out in Tzach. They would arrange for people to visit Crown Heights for Shabbosim, and one week, two young girls were sent to us to stay for Shabbos. They were part of a group visiting from South Carolina to spend a weekend with Lubavitch.

These two girls sat at our table. They had never really seen anything of *Yiddishkeit* before, so we used the opportunity to talk to them about *kashrus* and Shabbos. At the conclusion of the meal, my wife served *pareve* ice cream. Now, we had discussed during the meal about kosher and the importance of not eating dairy and meat together. These girls had just finished their chicken, and now the *rebbezin* was presenting them with ice cream — which they thought was dairy. “Was this some sort of test?” they wondered. They looked very confused.

My wife realized what was going on in their minds and said, “Don’t worry, this ice cream is what we call *pareve*. It’s not made with milk. It can be eaten together with meat.” So they enjoyed it.

מוקדש
לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר
נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' דוד וזוגתו מרת מושקא
בניהם ובתם
זאב אריה, חנה רחל, מנחם מענדל
שיחיו
רחמני



As related by **Rabbi Mordechai Gutnick**, rabbi of Elwood Talmud Torah Hebrew Congregation in Melbourne, Australia and a senior member of the Melbourne Beth Din.

*This story was featured in Living Torah, Disc 199, Program 476.
Our thanks to JEM for enabling its publication here.*

They went back home and a few weeks later, we got a letter from them saying how lovely it had been in Crown Heights and how they saw, for the first time, another aspect of Judaism which seemed so beautiful, so authentic. They had attended a farbrengen with the Rebbe and wrote how holy he looked, and so on. They thanked us for helping make the weekend so spiritually uplifting.

At the bottom, beneath their signatures, one of the girls wrote:

P.S. I told my mother about the non-dairy ice cream and she was very intrigued. Could you please send us the recipe?

I took that letter and thought, "I want to give the Rebbe *nachas*, so I'm going to send it in." I wrote a note explaining what this was and sent it in.

A few hours later, I got a phone call from Rabbi Klein, the Rebbe's secretary, and he said, "There's an answer from the Rebbe for you." I wasn't expecting any answer. The Rebbe had sent out the letter from the girls that I had sent in and wrote

on it, "Thank you for the good news. You should continue her connection to Judaism [the connection of one of these girls] in a way that is suitable for her."

And then the Rebbe drew an arrow to the P.S. that asked for the chocolate ice cream recipe.

To me, this was the greatest preparation that I could have. With all the rabbis I spoke to and all the *shimush* I did preparing to go home and be a rav in Australia, the greatest piece of advice I ever received was how the Rebbe — in middle of what was a very busy time — had the time to think about a girl in South Carolina and to say that we should send her an ice cream recipe, because that ice cream recipe may bring her a little bit closer to *Yiddishkeit*.

This is our Rebbe. And this was the greatest piece of advice I could get as far as how a spiritual leader has to care about every single individual, even the smallest thing that can possibly bring them a little closer to *Yiddishkeit*. **1**



לעילוי נשמת
 הרה"ת ר' יעקב בן הרב שמואל
 יוסף ע"ה גרינבוים
 נלב"ע מוצאי שבת קודש פרשת
 ויחי יעקב ט"ז טבת תש"פ
 ע"י אשתו ביילא רי שא ובנו
 מנחם מענדל גרינבוים ומשפחתו
 שיחיו



Based on Talks With the Rebbe

In honor of the yom hahilula of the Alter Rebbe on Chof-Daled Teves, we present a copy of this fascinating booklet about the Alter Rebbe, printed by Kehos in 5708.



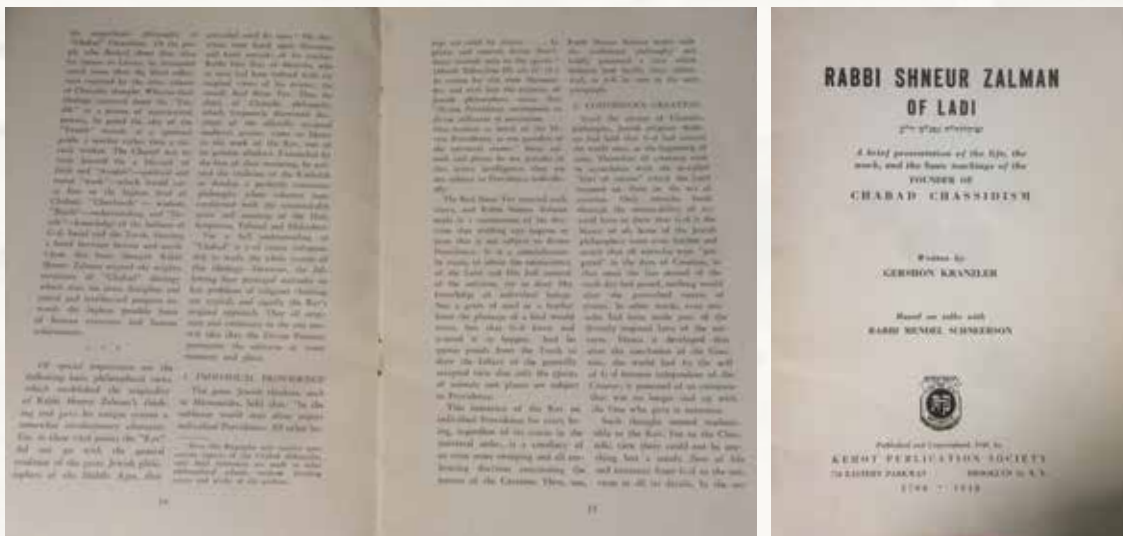
What makes this 24-page booklet so unique is that the author, Dr. Gershon Kranzler, attests on the title page that he culled his information "Based on talks with Rabbi Mendel Schneerson."

This was of course before the Rebbe's *nesius*. It seems that Dr. Kranzler had a longstanding relationship with the Rebbe in those years, and he would meet with the Rebbe on various occasions for conversation.

In his interview¹ with the Rebbe published in *Orthodox Jewish Life* in 5711*, Dr. Kranzler notes:

"I had the privilege of knowing Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson before he assumed his new office and I had come to appreciate the young scholar with the serious face and unassuming, almost shy manners. He then directed the educational aspects of the Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch. But now everything was different. This was no longer the 'RaMaSh,' the son-in-law of the Rebbe, respected as a scholar, a friendly advisor, and interpreter of the thoughts of Chabad Chassidism..."

It's clear that the Rebbe had spent much



THE ORIGINAL BOOKLET, AS PUBLISHED IN 5708.

time with him, explaining concepts and history of Chassidus. He continues:

“The familiar pale face, with its deeply searching eyes and frame of black beard, seemed to have taken on added seriousness. The sense of warm understanding and deep responsibility for every word spoken which had always characterized Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson was now still more marked.”

It should be noted that in an obituary published in *The Baltimore Sun* after Dr. Kranzler’s passing in 2000, it states that, “Throughout his life he studied the Talmud and was close to many of the Torah scholars of the 20th century. He studied with Rabbi Menachem Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe...”

The contents of the book include:

- Rabbi Shneur Zalman—Photograph.
- Genealogy [The Alter Rebbe’s ancestry traced back to the Maharal].
- Biography of Rabbi Shneur Zalman
- Facsimile of a letter in Rabbi Shneur Zalman’s handwriting [the same letter given out as a *teshurah* at the Rebbe and Rebbetzin’s wedding—written by the Alter Rebbe to his Chossid, Reb Moshe Meisels].
- Important dates in the life of the Rav.
- Published works of the Rav.

- Bibliography [a list of sources where much of the information had been previously published, including *Hatomim*, *Likkutei Dibburim*, etc].

TANYA NOW IN PRESS

It’s interesting to note that when describing the Alter Rebbe’s view on *tzimtzum* and how he opposes the opinion of *tzimtzum kipshuto*,² the author adds with an asterisk:

“As to those who followed this doctrine, see editor’s note on *Shaar Hayichud Vehoemunah*, Ch. 7. (*Tanya* edited by Rabbi Mendel Schneerson, now in press).”

The author is referring to “*HaTanya Hashleima*” that the Rebbe was preparing for print, including the original text of the *Tanya*, surrounded by sources, references, and brief commentary. The Rebbe’s notes from the draft of this sefer were eventually published, and there is indeed a lengthy comment on this section about *tzimtzum*.³



In 5719* the booklet was reprinted, and this time the title page stated, “Based on talks with the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, א”שליט” ①

1. Part of this interview was published in *Derher*, Teves 5782.
2. See “*Reality—Charting the great debate over the extent and impact of tzimtzum*,” *Derher*, Av 5780.
3. See *Mareh Mekomos, Hagahos, V’Haoros Ketzeros L’Sefer Shel Beinonim* (Kehos 2014), p. 379.

לזכות החיילת בצבאות ה'
שיינא תחי'
לרגל יום הולדתה ג' טבת

נדפס ע"י הוריה
הרה"ת ר' חיים אפרים וזוגתו מרת ח'
מושקא ומשפחתם שיחיו
גאלדשטיין

PRACTICAL HORA'OS

A CLOSER
LOOK AT
SOME OF
THE REBBE'S
HORA'OS

IN LIEU OF A GIFT, PLEASE DONATE...

THE REBBE'S APPROACH TO THE
CONCEPT OF GIVING TZEDAKAH IN
LIEU OF AN EXPECTED GIFT

A birthday, anniversary, or other milestone celebration wouldn't be the same without gifts, and for Chassidim, when it came to the Rebbe's milestones, they wished to give the Rebbe meaningful gifts. The Rebbe explained, time and again, that the most meaningful gift — both for the Rebbe's milestones and for anyone else's — is to increase in tzedakah and in other ruchniyusdike pursuits.

GIFTS FOR THE REBBE

As the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's 40th wedding anniversary approached in 5729*, thousands of Chassidim sent their well wishes, as well as pledges to increase in Torah — including the study of Iggeres Hateshuvah which had just been released in its own booklet¹ — and tzedakah to mark the occasion. In a *sicha* on Shabbos Parshas Vayishlach 5729*, the Rebbe addressed these well wishes and gifts.

The vessel and the pathway to draw down brachos and hash-pa'os is through learning Torah and doing mitzvos. Many of those who sent brachos for the anniversary connected their brachos with an addition in their study of Torah — in particular, in the study of Iggeres Hateshuvah — and in giving tzedakah, which is the most fundamental of all the mitzvos.

Although generally speaking, there are those whose focus is Torah-study and those whose focus is business, however since when it comes to kedushah each aspect comprises the other aspects as well, in this case those who until now have only contributed by increasing in Torah-study should also add in tzedakah, and those who have added in tzedakah should also add in Torah-study.

GIFTS FOR ANYONE

Several days after the above *sicha*, the Rebbe once again addressed the topic of giving gifts. This time, the Rebbe went into detail, explaining what people get wrong when they give presents, and how to elevate gift-giving to a *ruchniyusdike* pursuit.

There is a laudable custom that when one wishes to bless a fellow Jew, it is connected with giving a donation to tzedakah in their name. For example, in the Mi Shebeirach, we say that the person should be blessed “because I will — without a vow — give tzedakah in his merit” — because the money you’re donating belongs to you, and you can transfer the zechus of the donation to someone else.

Another thing we do is to study Torah in the person’s merit, as Shulchan Aruch rules in Hilchos Talmud Torah, “A person may make a deal with his fellow that he will study Torah, his fellow will provide his livelihood, and they will split the reward.”

Therefore, it is fitting that from now on, this minhag be established.

The way of the world is that when you want to wish someone well, you send them a gift. And though this has become an established custom among Yidden as well, best would be to connect the well-wishing with tzedakah and Torah. Therefore, it is proper that whenever people gather to bless someone — a chosson and kallah, a bar mitzvah and the like — it should be connected with giving tzedakah and learning Torah in the merit of those who are being blessed. And if they really want to give gifts anyways — not that there’s a reason to — they should be

sure not to go into debt over it.

This is one of the unique challenges in the United States: the need to one-up your neighbor. When the neighbor gives a gift, you — who perceive yourself to be twice as great as the neighbor — feel a need to give a gift worth twice as much! But you don’t have the money, so you take a loan, even with collateral, as long as you can outdo the neighbor.

If Hashem doesn’t make unreasonable demands of His creations, certainly the bar mitzvah or the chosson don’t need to ask for more than the givers can afford...

All this applies when it’s not connected to tzedakah. When it is connected to tzedakah, however, the Gemara in Maseches Taanis says, “Tithe so that you will become wealthy.” ...

Therefore, it’s important to publicize that when you wish another Yid well, especially those close to your heart, you should connect it with giving tzedakah and learning Torah on their behalf.

*In yechidus klolis for chassanim and kallos and bar mitzvahs the Rebbe would always mention this *minhag*: That the bar mitzvah — or the *chassan* and *kallah* — and all of their relatives and acquaintances should give tzedakah in their merit. **T***

1. See “Marked Through Matanos” — Derher Kislev 5774.

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The Rebel Rambam

*A deeper look at the life and teachings
of the Rambam, in honor of his
yahrtzeit on Chof Teves.*



לע"נ
הרב צבי בר' יצחק ע"ה
נלב"ע ל' כסלו ה'תשפ"ב
ת"נ צ"ב'ה'
ולזכות אשתו תבלחט"א מרת ברכה תח"י
קופפר



לע"נ
הרב צבי בר' יצחק ע"ה
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ולזכות אשתו תבלחט"א מרת ברכה תח"י
קופפר

נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' יצחק יהודה וזוגתו מרת חנה
ומשפחתם שיחיו
קופפר

Handwritten Hebrew text in a cursive script, likely a continuation of the inscription or a related document, partially obscured by the white text box.

Rabbeinu Moshe Ben Maimon, known as the Rambam is one of the most celebrated figures in Jewish history, up there with Moshe Rabbeinu, Dovid Hamelech, and Rebbi Akiva. A leader not only revered in his time, but a nossi providing inspiration and example to following generations of gedolei Yisroel.

What stands out about the Rambam, in ways more than other great Jewish historical giants, is the Rambam's influence and importance in a wide range of areas, reaching and effecting a large number of diverse types of people, both in his own lifetime and throughout the ages. He is seen as one of the greatest Torah authorities to *lamdanim*, a great rationalist to philosophers, a breakthrough physician to doctors, and an unparalleled Jewish leader to historians.

Whether in *chakirah* or *halacha*, philosophy or medicine, the Rambam didn't just leave a mark—he paved the way. The Rambam's courageous and caring leadership of the Jewish people and the individual treatment he gave one and all, both in the material and spiritual sense was outstanding and exemplary, leading to the great impact he had on his many generations of students who merit to gain insight into his greatness through his extensive works and writings.

In the Rebbe's Torah, the Rambam is seen as an

important step in revealing *Elokus* in this world and creating a *dira b'tachtonim*. The Rebbe repeatedly brings lessons from the Rambam's life, his work, and his Torah, teaching us to learn from the Rambam's *middos*, perspectives, and styles in *halacha*.

Above all the Rebbe revealed to us the greatness of the Rambam's watershed work, the Yad Hachazakah—Mishneh Torah, instructing one and all to learn and complete this central and elemental part of Torah. The Rebbe himself spent hours at farbrengens teaching the Rambam's Torah, revealing different rules in Rambam, giving *biurim* in Rambam, and sometimes even illuminating parts of the Rambam according to Chassidus.

The Rebbe's praise for the Rambam is outstanding, to the extent that he said regarding the Rambam "*Lo dumiya tehila*"—it is truly impossible to describe the greatness of the Rambam, because comparable to Hashem, as *tzaddikim domim l'Boram* [*tzaddikim* are similar to their creator], any depiction would be limiting and undervaluing his greatness.

The Rebbe also expounded on the famous unattributed quote, written on the Rambam's *kever* "*M'Moshe ad Moshe lo kom k'Moshe*—From Moshe (Rabbeinu) to Moshe (the Rambam), there was none like Moshe." He explained that since no one protested it, and being that silence is akin to admission according to the Rambam, we must say that all the *gedolei Yisroel* through the centuries that saw this line, accept this statement that the Rambam stood out from all the generations of *nevi'im*, *tana'im*, *amora'im*, and *geonim*, as a unique and special phenomenon.

While the Rambam as a philosopher and doctor was



THE MATZEVA OF THE RAMBAM IN TEVERIA.

already well known across the world and through the ages, both through his Hebrew title Rambam, and through the common Greek version of his name “Maimonides,” the Rebbe took this to the next level, encouraging heads of state and leaders both in the Jewish community and beyond, to work to have the Rambam remembered and honored, carrying the Rambam’s influence to unimaginable distances. The Rebbe proved from both the Rambam’s life and Torah, that the Rambam himself had put emphasis on influencing the entire world, non-Jews as well as Jews, to better themselves and unite in serving the Creator.

Leader of his Generation

While there are many different angles through which one can look at the Rambam, we will begin with the way the Rebbe describes the Rambam as a leader, as the *nossi hador*—the shepherd of his generation. As a true *gadol b’Yisroel* and *manhig*, the care and responsibility for every Yid in his generation and beyond, is evident in everything the Rambam worked on. Both in his writings and his life, the Rambam’s guidance and care is profound.

Beginning with his extensive works and writings, we see in the Sefer Hamitzvos and the Mishneh Torah the Rambam’s success in making Torah and *halacha* easily accessible to every single Jew, no matter their background. Carrying through the Rambam’s famous Igros and the fundamental Moreh Nevuchim, we can see the Rambam’s effort to guide and uplift his generation and provide direction and *chizuk* to every single Jew; not only in his generation, but throughout our entire history, as the Rebbe referred to the Rambam, “*Moreh nevuchim le’doro u’lechol hadoros haba’im achrov*—The guide to the confused in his generation and all the generations that follow.”¹

Beyond the spiritual and conceptual impact the Rambam had through his Torah, one must not overlook the Rambam’s part as physical protector and healer of his generation. Partly thanks to his position in the Sultan’s court, the Rambam was granted influence and power to fight against decrees and to campaign for the Jewish people before the Sultan. All this was in addition to his full time occupation as physician, spending his time assisting people in need, both Jews and non-Jews, providing them



THE ORIGINAL PORTRAIT THAT HAS COME TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH THE RAMBAM, PUBLISHED IN 1744.

with physical healing, and mental and emotional care.

The Whole World

As clearly seen in the history of the Rambam’s life, his sphere of influence reached far beyond the walls of his own community, further even than the entire Jewish world. The Rambam was known as a famous healer and philosopher across the entire civilized world. In an edit to an article written about the Rambam that was later published in the “Talks and Tales,” the Rebbe adds that Richard the Lionheart, King of England, sent men to the Rambam requesting a cure for his illness, all the way from London!²

While the Rambam’s prominence may have initially been tied to the physical assistance he offered to the royalty in Egypt, the Rebbe points out that as the Sultan’s confidant the Rambam definitely had the opportunity to positively impress on the Sultan and his court the ethics and morals of Yiddishkeit and belief in Hashem.³ This widened his impact on the people of the entire world, helping them, inspiring them, and leading them to keep the *sheva mitzvos bnei Noach*.

To this point, the Rebbe quotes an account of the Rambam’s day which he himself wrote, where he describes that he’d come home from the Sultan’s palace, worn and weak, and he “would find all the corridors packed with people, both Jews and non-Jews... I would go out to heal them and write prescriptions and directives, treatments for their ailments... till the night.” The Rebbe explained that the Rambam served as a prominent illustration of how one has to help every person, no matter how difficult it may be for them, just as the Rambam dedicated many precious hours to this end.⁴

While the Rambam’s effect on the gentiles of his time

was supreme, he was first and foremost the leader of his own flesh and blood, the Jewish people. The Rebbe learns a *remez* [an intimation] from the term “*parnasas echav*” [support for his brothers] that is mentioned as one of the reasons the Rambam took up the profession of medicine after his brother Dovid passed away, suggesting that on a deeper level, this refers to the Rambam’s “support” of the entire Jewish people—the Rambam’s brothers. This includes both physical support with his influence by the Sultan and spiritual support in strengthening the *emunah* of his generation.⁵

[It is interesting to note that in a number of historical sources, the Rambam was designated by the Sultan as the “*Rayis el Yahud*,” the head of the Jewish community under the Sultan’s command, a position that was later filled by the Rambam’s descendants.⁶]

Transforming Mitzrayim

The Rambam’s living in Mitzrayim and the great work he accomplished living in that infamous land serves as another significant element in the story of the Rambam’s role as a *nossi* of the Jewish people.

The link between the Rambam and the transformation of the land of Mitzrayim is nearly impossible to miss. Beginning with the Rambam’s birth, on to his life and career, and even through his ultimate passing and burial, this connection is profoundly visible. The Rebbe ties this in with the Rambam’s position as a champion for *geulah* and personal redemption for the Jewish people, starting from each person or community on their level, and ultimately, with readying the entire Jewish people for Moshiach.

This *geulah* component in the Rambam, combating and converting Mitzrayim, begins with his opportune birth on Erev Pesach, symbolizing and encompassing the spirit of *geulah* and *yetzias Mitzrayim*.⁷ This point is also displayed through the double meaning of the acronym Rambam, standing for “*Revos mofesai b’Eretz Mitzrayim*—increasing my miracles in the land of Mitzrayim,” which so acutely represents the Rambam’s toil in the furtherance of *geulah* for one and all, including by transforming the land of Mitzrayim itself.⁸

This also explains why the Rambam only arrived in

Eretz Yisroel after his passing even though he had always wanted to relocate there throughout his life, because as the leader tasked with uplifting and transforming the world, he needed to be in *chutz la’aretz*, specifically in Mitzrayim, the land synonymous with confines and *galus*. Ultimately, in Mitzrayim the Rambam completed his greatest contributions to the Jewish people,⁹ most famously, his Mishneh Torah. In Mishneh Torah one can plainly see the Rambam’s catering to every Jew, giving each and every student the opportunity to learn the *halachos* and study Torah on their level, leading to their personal as well as the general *geulah*.

Choker and Mekubal

Hand in hand with the Rambam’s communal work, there is an equally key element in the Rambam’s life that can be clearly seen in the Rambam’s life and even more so in his written works, and that is the Rambam’s personal world of intellect, study, and Torah.

In every language, the Rambam’s name is synonymous with intellect and genius. The Rebbe terms the Rambam as a man of *sechel*, describing the pain the Rambam suffered being held back from delving into deep thought by his many preoccupations at court and back at home. On another level, we can see the Rambam’s affinity for the pure power of *sechel* all throughout the Rambam’s Torah, exploring his opinions in areas of *chakirah* and *yedias Hashem*. This theme is brought and thoroughly expounded on in Chassidus Chabad.

In addition to his knowledge of Torah, the Rambam’s understanding in all areas was outstanding. The Rambam was a master in philosophy, medicine, astronomy, just to name a few. In fact, the Rebbe edited into the “Talks and Tales” article on the Rambam that the Rambam actually wrote a number of books on medicine and philosophy.¹⁰

[Regarding the Rambam’s knowledge of secular subjects, there is another interesting edit on the above-mentioned article. The writer wrote about the Rambam that he “also studied medicine, and became such a great doctor that the king...” The Rebbe put a line through that sentence and wrote instead, “*bachar umnus rofeh limkor parnasaso* - he chose the profession of physician as a source of income.”]

Based on the Rambam's knowledge of philosophy and his logical and rational approach to many areas in the topics of belief, faith, and the mitzvah of knowing Hashem, the Rambam's first four *prakim* of Sefer HaMada and his principal work in *chakirah*, the Moreh Nevuchim, have often caused a bit of a stir, with some thoroughly rejecting parts of these works, and others cautiously refraining from learning or teaching them. This, of course, says nothing about the Rambam's impeccable stature throughout all the generations spanning all different *gedolei Yisroel* from all backgrounds.

In Chassidus Chabad as well, we find a nuanced approach to the Moreh Nevuchim; from a warning not to learn it until age 20 in Beis Harav, on to the Alter Rebbe and Tzemach Tzedek's affinity for the *sefer*, a *chavrusa* that they had in the *sefer* regarding which the Alter Rebbe explained that he was being *metaken* the Rambam, a similar *chavrusa* with the Rebbe Maharash, concluding with

the Rebbe's take on Moreh Nevuchim, explaining that after learning Chassidus, there is much to be learned from it.¹¹ This fascination with the Rambam's *chakirah* goes hand in hand with a line that the Frierdiker Rebbe brings in a *sicha* that the Rambam was able to grasp up to levels in *Olam HaBriah* through *sechel* alone.¹²

The Rambam and Kabbalah

While it may look like the Rambam was well-versed specifically in the world of *chakirah*, in fact, the Rambam was also a great *mekubal*. The Rebbe Maharash conveyed to the Rebbe Rashab, at one of their joint sessions in learning Moreh Nevuchim, a tradition that he had received from Rebbe from Rebbe up to the Baal Shem Tov, that



THE REBBE PAUSES FROM LEARNING RAMBAM IN HIS CAR TO WAVE TO CHILDREN AT THE LAG B'OMER FAIR OF 5744*.

the Rambam was “*A groise mekubal* - a great Kabbalist,” and explained that the Rambam was very careful not to even hint to this fact, because at that stage in time, it was considered dangerous to reveal aspects of Kabbalah even through a hint or clue.

While in the Rebbe’s Torah it is generally taken as a given that the Rambam learned and knew Kabbalah, this was not necessarily the accepted opinion of all *gedolei Yisroel* throughout the generations. For example, the Shalshes HaKabbalah and Rabbeinu Shlomo Alkabetz both wrote clearly that the Rambam didn’t learn Chochmas HaEmes [the true wisdom i.e. Kabbalah], though the Chida brings from a number of sources that later in the Rambam’s life, the Rambam had in fact learned Kabbalah.¹³

In a *sicha* from Shabbos Parshas Va’era 5746*, the Rebbe discusses the debate whether the Rambam saw and learned the Zohar, and brings that most opinions hold that the Rambam had in fact seen the Zohar. One of the primary proofs is that there are a number of *halachos* in Sefer HaYad that their only source is from the Zohar. However, the Rebbe also brings the minority opinion that the Rambam didn’t learn Kabbalah but points out that being that *nigleh* and *pnimiyus* haTorah correspond, there can still be a Kabbalah way of understanding the Rambam.¹⁴

Most famously, the Rambam’s familiarity with the Zohar and Kabbalah is highlighted in regards to the opening words of the Yad HaChazakah, “*Yesod Hayesodos V’amud Hachachmos* - The foundation of the foundations and the pillar of the wisdoms,” the *roshei teivos* of which spell out the name of Hashem. The Rebbe even suggests that this opening line is actually a translated quote from the Zohar on Parshas Vaaira, “*Pekuda da kadmaah lechol pekudin* - This command comes before all other commandments.”¹⁵

The Rebbe also points out that the one who first

shifted our attention to this acronym in the opening of the Rambam was the Rambam’s own grandson, Harav Dovid Hanogid.

Elaborating a bit more on this subject, there is the *sicha* from the Frierdiker Rebbe from the summer of 5700*, where he shares things he heard from his father, the Rebbe Rashab, during their summer in Marienbad 5668*.

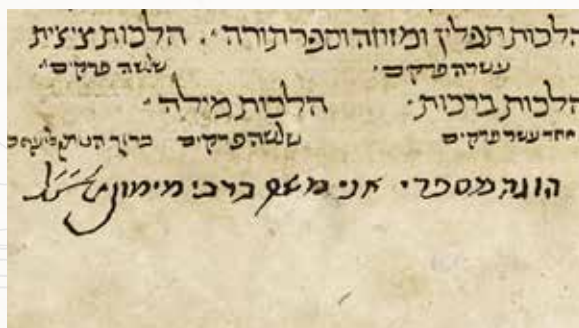
He tells that the Rambam was able to grasp intellectually up until *Olam HaBriah*, and was even able to explain it in the Rambam’s standard terminology. It was just that the generation was not worthy of it. He then adds that the Rambam’s understanding was *Daas Elyon* [Heaven’s perspective], and was actually able to understand and grasp the *afisas hakochos* of *Olam HaAtzilus* [loosely translated: “the nothingness of the dynamisms in the world of Atzilus], and that the Rambam’s *avodah* was *Yichuda Ilaah* [the higher level of unification]. He ends off explaining that the Rambam converted aspects and terms from *chakirah* such as *yesodos and amudim* (foundations and pillars), making them a vessel for Hashem’s name - *Shem Havaye*.

This last point, referencing the Rambam’s fusion of *chakirah* and Kabbalah is a very interesting theme that we find in general in Chassidus Chabad, and to some extent in the Rebbe’s Torah as well. In truth, many conclusions and products of this fusion can be found in the Rambam’s Sefer Halachos as well, bringing the Rambam’s learning and his effect on the world of Jewish thought and Jewish practice full circle.

An example of this idea is found in the beginning of Sefer HaMada where the Rambam brings the four elemental foundations. The Rebbe explains that even though it may look like the Rambam took it from secular schools of philosophy and physics (as some have suggested), in reality this cannot be the case in regards to rules of science that are brought in a *sefer halacha* (in contrast to rules of medicine). Instead, the Rebbe suggests that the source is actually from Zohar.

The Rambam’s Perspective

By looking at the backlash and opposition that the Rambam’s unique and breakthrough style drew, we also see another remarkable *midah* by the Rambam, (one that is shared with the Alter Rebbe), and that is the aversion



THE RAMBAM’S SIGNATURE

to *machlokes*. While the Rambam held his ground and never backed down from a halachic or *hashkafic* stance, the Rambam did not take those who opposed him to task. The Rambam handled each criticism and outright disapproval calmly and peacefully, all while standing with resolve for halacha and true *emunah*.

The sometimes hostile opposition that the Rambam had to put up with during his life is just one of the terrible difficulties and hardships he had to endure. From his tumultuous and frightful youth, to the death of his closest family members, on to a taxing and strenuous daily regimen, wearing down and weakening the Rambam, stealing him away from his world of Torah and intellect, the Rambam suffered quite a bit. Yet, this did not change his view of reality; the Rambam continued to see the world with a positive view, seeing the good in everything.

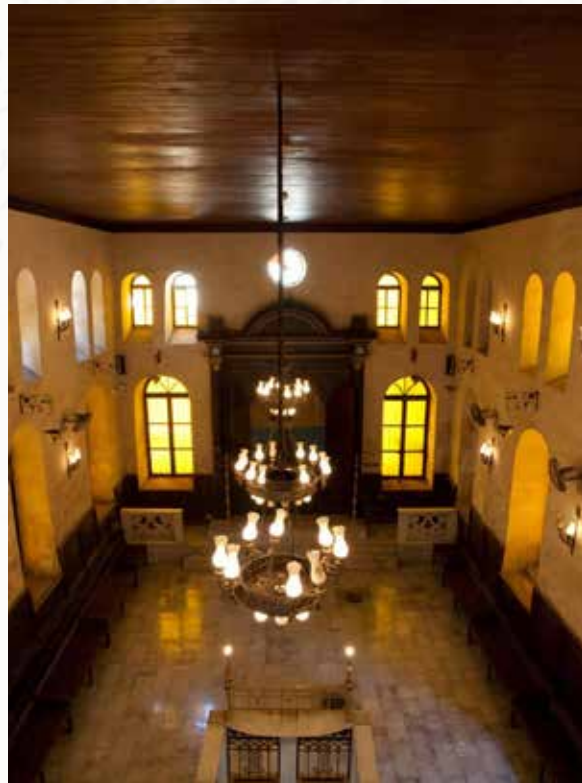
The Rebbe points out that while in the *halachos* of Geirus the Rambam paskens that we must tell any gentiles that want to convert that the Jewish people are “*dvuyim u’schufim* - worn out and broken,” - and that is truly one of the perspectives to see the world through - nevertheless, although as mentioned, the Rambam had more than enough reasons to resolve to see the world in that negative light, he writes in Moreh Nevuchim that a person is meant to look at everything with a good eye, with good hope, and strong faith, resulting in an *avodah* based on happiness and positivity¹⁶.

Conclusion

The Rebbe’s incessant talk and portrayal of the Rambam and the Rebbe’s explanations throughout the years about different elements in the Rambam’s personality and life story paint the larger-than-life image of the Rambam that we have become accustomed to.

In many ways, it seems almost like a mirror image of this depiction of the Rambam can be seen in the Rebbe’s *nesius*.

In addition to the depth and vastness of the Rambam’s and Rebbe’s Torah and the great excitement and desire for *geulah* as seen in both the Rambam’s and Rebbe’s teachings, we can also see it in the Rebbe’s care for each and every person, in the Rebbe’s influence on the world’s “movers and shakers,” and in how the Rebbe strengthens the *emunah* in thought and practice for the entirety of the Jewish people. Above all, this is expressed in the Rebbe’s fusion of physical and spiritual care, strengthening the



THE SHUL THE RAMBAM USED IN CAIRO, EGYPT

neshama while caring and uplifting the *guf*, extending a term that the Rebbe beautifully uses to refer to the Rambam—the “*rofeh neshamos v’gufim*—healer of bodies and souls¹⁷. **T**

1. Yud-Beis Tammuz 5728, Sichos Kodesh 2, p. 277.
2. Published in Kfar Chabad 947, p. 60.
3. Yud-Gimmel Nissan 5746, Toras Menachem 3, p. 100.
4. Yud-Aleph Nissan 5745, 1710.
5. Yud-Gimmel Nissan 5746, Toras Menachem 3, p. 100.
6. Based on findings in the Cairo Geniza, published in Katedra 40, p. 72-80.
7. Tzav, Shabbos Hagadol 5748, Sefer Hasichos p. 366.
8. Shemos, 21 Teves 5752, Sefer Hasichos p. 104-105.
9. Sefer Hasichos 5751, p. 96.
10. Published in Kfar Chabad 947, p. 60.
11. Likkutei Sichos, Chof Vov, p. 39.
12. Sefer Hasichos, Kayitz Tof Shin, p. 41.
13. Ibid. fn. *27.
14. Toras Menachem 5746 2, p. 19.
15. Sefer Hasichos 5748, 2, p. 239-240.
16. Yud Shevat 5732, Sichos Kodesh p. 364-5.
17. Sichos Kodesh 5739 2, p. 512.

Timely Titles

לזכות בנינו ובנותינו
ומשפחתם שיחיו
להצלחה רבה בכל העינים

נדפס ע"י
הרה"ת ר' יוסף יעקב וזוגתו
מרת מלכה בינה שיחיו
מאראס
בורני, טעקסאס

SEFER HAKAN

ספר הקן

קובץ מאמרים על אדמו"ר הזקן
רבי שניאור זלמן מלאדי
למלאות ק"ן שנה להסתלקותו

יצא לאור ע"י יחוגי חן- למשנת חב"ד
בהוצאת יקרית-ספר- בע"מ. ירושלים



The year 5723* was pervaded with a particular theme. It was 150 years since the *histalkus* of the Alter Rebbe on Chof-Daled Teves 5573*, and the Rebbe relentlessly called attention to the significance of this milestone. Dubbed "Shnas HaKan" (kuf-nun = 150), 5723* became known as the year of the Alter Rebbe. As such, many initiatives were launched to mark this momentous anniversary. One iconic example is the commemorative journal; Sefer HaKan.

Counting

anniversaries can be a very important thing. A round number denotes the completion of a cycle and fifty years mark the end of a distinct period. Thus, 150 years is considered especially significant, with the cumulative power of three jubilee eras reinforcing its importance.

On these auspicious occasions, the Rebbe would urge Chassidim to observe the anniversary and mark it through positive actions and accomplishments, often with some symbolism that relates to the particular anniversary.

Naturally, the year 5723* was a fruitful year in this regard, with many initiatives launched to commemorate the Alter Rebbe. The Rebbe encouraged Chassidim to assiduously study portions of the Alter Rebbe's Torah, and together they completed both the Tanya and Shulchan Aruch. They resolved to study Torah for an extra 150 hours, gave tzedakah in increments of 150, and many other admirable achievements.

One particularly remarkable initiative originated in a quaint club in Jerusalem. Spearheaded by Zalman Shazar, a group of like-minded intellectuals with a passion for Chassidus decided to pay homage to the Alter Rebbe and produce a memorial work that is Sefer HaKan.



OVERVIEW



Sefer HaKan is composed of 14 scholarly essays, each one focused on a different aspect of the Alter Rebbe's life, personality, and teachings. It opens with a foreword from Zalman Shazar, and is supplemented by two appendices and a bibliography.

👉 **Baal HaTanya U'Mehus Chassidus Chabad:** Copied from then-unpublished manuscripts, this essay is a brief biography of the Alter Rebbe and a primer to the essential tenets of Chabad Chassidus by Rabbi Avrohom Chein¹. In it he writes: Since the times of the Rambam there was never such a storied and multifaceted character as the Alter Rebbe. He was one whose entire life was sublime passion to Hashem, Yidden, and all of Hashem's creations.

👉 **Biurim L'Sefer HaTanya:** Published here for the first time is an excerpt of a composition that addresses difficulties in the beginning of Sefer HaTanya and resolves them with explanations from Chassidus. It had recently been discovered at the time in a handwritten manuscript and attributed to the Tzemach Tzedek.

👉 **Gilui V'Kisui B'Shitas Rabbeinu Hazaken:** An essay on revelation and concealment in the Alter

Rebbe's approach to the dissemination of Chassidus by Rabbi Moshe Aryeh Leib Shapiro², in which he proposes that the Alter Rebbe exposed the true nature of Chassidus (thus disarming and refuting the allegations of its opponents) and simultaneously concealed it through teaching in a grounded and comprehensible way.

👉 **Biurim B'Divrei Shulchan Aruch L'Admur Hazaken:** A collection of nine scholarly analyses of selected passages from the Alter Rebbe's seminal halachic work, the Shulchan Aruch, by Rabbi Dov Eliezerov.

👉 **Chabad Sheb'Shitas Chabad:** As it was the Alter Rebbe who innovated the identity of "Chabad," Rabbi Adin (Even-Yisroel) Steinsaltz submitted an in-depth essay exploring the makeup of *chochmah*, *binah*, and *da'as* the way they are coded in the human psyche and their spiritual parallels in Kabbalah.

👉 **Iggeres Admur Hazaken 'U'Tzedakah K'Nachal Eisan':** A piece by Chaim Liberman that provides background to the compilation of Iggeres Hakodesh of Tanya, and makes some important clarifications and corrections regarding the letter "U'Tzedakah K'Nachal Eisan" (Tanya pg. 321).

👉 **HaRebbi V'Haniggun:** An essay on the role of song and *neginah* in Chabad and the 10 *niggunim* of the Alter Rebbe, most notably the '*Daled Bavos*,' by Rabbi Shmuel Zalmanov.

👉 **Kavana U'Tefillah B'Mishnaso Shel Rebbi Shneur Zalman Mi'Liadi:** An analysis of the Alter Rebbe's understanding of *tefillah* and its requisite *kavana* (mindfulness) by Dr. Nissan Mindel.

👉 **Maamarei Admur Hazaken:** Another essay by Rabbi Adin (Even-Yisroel) Steinsaltz, wherein he charts the evolution of the Alter Rebbe's literary output and compares various works to contextualize them. This essay was written in light of the then-recent publication of two new collections of *maamarim*, "Maamarei Admur Hazaken–Hanachos Harav Pinchas (M'Shklov)" and "Maamarei Admur Hazaken–Es'halech Liozna," as they provide novel insight into

the structure and development of the Alter Rebbe's *maamarim*.

👉 **Oisvos Mesapros:** After examining a sample of the Alter Rebbe's handwriting, Ruth Zucker, an expert graphologist, provided a detailed character analysis of the Alter Rebbe. What emerges is a fascinating portrait of the Alter Rebbe from an objective outsider's perspective. Originally written in English, her report was translated into Hebrew by Zalman Shazar. (See sidebar "A Leaf From The Book.")

👉 **Harav Rabbi Shneur Zalman Mechadesh Hadrush:** An essay by Israeli author Eliezer Steinman where he posits that the Alter Rebbe revolutionized a new approach to preaching and pedagogy; instead of shunning the practice he embraced it and brought it to new frontiers.

👉 **Hatrumos Hapsichologiyos Shel Baal Hatanya:** A look at Sefer HaTanya through the lens of psychology and the Alter Rebbe's contributions to the field, by Zalman Schachter.

👉 **Gvulos HaHakarah B'Toras HaRav M'Liadi:** An essay on the classification of abstract and esoteric concepts in the Alter Rebbe's Torah by Dr. Amos Funkenstein.

👉 **Appendix A. Bizchus Artzenu Hakedosha:** A chapter in history about the early migration of Chassidim to Eretz Yisroel and the events which led to the inception of Colel Chabad, by Rabbi Chanoch Glitzenstein.

👉 **Appendix B. Al Admur Hazaken:** Several selections from the memoirs of the Wilensky-Gershuni family about the Alter Rebbe, by Miriam Yalan-Shteklis.

👉 **Bibliography:** Compiled by Avraham Meir Habermann, this extensive list (252 citations) records every work in the Alter Rebbe's canon as well as works about him.

1. A son of the famous Chossid, Reb Dovid Tzvi ("Radatz") Chein.

2. Rosh Yeshivah of Toras Emes, and Maggid Shiur of "Chugei Chein".

BACKGROUND

Every week, an eclectic group of people would gather in the home of Reb Avrohom Chein in Rechavia (Yerushalayim). It all began with a Tanya shiur that rapidly gained renown and attracted members of the literary and Jewish intellectual elite. Poets, professors, and politicians would convene weekly to study Chassidus with Reb Avrohom. Of notable mention is Zalman Shazar, one of the founding members and a regular participant, even while he served as president of the country.

After Reb Avrohom's passing in 5718*, Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin was chosen to lead the learning. To honor the founder, Reb Avrohom, the shiurim were continued in his home, and the group rebranded themselves as "Chugei Chein L'Mishnas Chabad" (The Chein Society For Chabad Thought). When Rabbi Zevin became too preoccupied with his project of Encyclopedia Talmudit, he passed the mantle to Rabbi Adin (Even-Yisroel) Steinsaltz. Under Rabbi Steinsaltz's expert tutelage, the society flourished and later relocated its headquarters to Shazar's residence. Mr. Shazar would frequently correspond with the Rebbe about the society, usually reporting what they had learned and seeking advice as to which topics they should study.

When the Rebbe began to promote the 150th *hilula* of the Alter Rebbe, the society also wished to join in with a project of their own. A suggestion was raised to produce a commemorative journal containing academic essays about the Alter Rebbe submitted by the finest writers and thinkers of the time and have it published under the auspices of the esteemed "Chugei Chein L'Mishnas Chabad."

When Mr. Shazar informed the Rebbe about this idea, the Rebbe responded in a letter: "You are correct in assuming that I would be satisfied to hear about this; in fact, I am more than pleased." The Rebbe then expressed his concern that all of the material should be befitting of the publication and reflect the Torah and values of the Alter Rebbe accordingly. The Rebbe concluded: "This way, I will be able to formally express my satisfaction in public, and not only in our private correspondence."

Rabbi Steinsaltz was appointed to oversee the project, and he dutifully carried out his task. When he asked the Rebbe to contribute and write something for the *sefer*, the Rebbe declined and explained: "If I were to write something for the *sefer*, it will be interpreted as if I approve of everything written in the book and it must be studied by Chassidim and Temimim alike."

Since several of the contributors were not fully observant and did not possess Torah values, the Rebbe was reluctant to formally endorse everything written in the book. At the same

SIMILAR WORKS

Throughout various anniversaries of the Alter Rebbe, similar milestone works have been published:

- In 5673, Reb Chaim Eliezer Bichovsky and Reb Chaim Meir Hillman (author of *Beis Rebbi*³), published a book to commemorate 100 years since the passing of the Alter Rebbe. Titled "Me'ah She'arim," it contains a selection of 100 letters and maamarim that were not previously available.
- In 5705, the Friediker Rebbe commissioned Rabbi Yitzchak Avigdor Orenstein and Rabbi Shlomo Leib Eliezerov to publish a book marking 200 years since the birth of the Alter Rebbe. Unfortunately, although they collected a significant amount of material, the book was never published, likely due to the untimely passing of Rabbi Orenstein.

time, it is clear that the Rebbe supported and encouraged the project overall.

One of the most groundbreaking features of the book is the graphologist's analysis of the Alter Rebbe's handwriting (see sidebar "A Leaf From The Book"). In a letter to Mr. Shazar in 5719*, the Rebbe expressed his amazement at the results: "Had I not known that the graphologist wasn't at all familiar with the Alter Rebbe, and if I would not know you personally, I would not have believed this could be possible." The Rebbe also expressed his regret that he had neglected to suggest that they use a different sample of the Alter Rebbe's handwriting from which more can be gleaned about his character⁴.

Although *Sefer HaKan* was originally intended to be completed that year, for some reason it was delayed by several years. Finally, in 5729*, the completed *sefer* was released, more than five years after its inception. It was eagerly received by many, and the vast spectrum of contributors made a great impression of the unanimous admiration for the Alter Rebbe.

3. See Derher Cheshvan 5783 - "Timely Titles - Beis Rebbi".

4. The sample used in the study was from a famous letter of the Alter Rebbe, while the Rebbe now recalled a facsimile of a lengthy halachic responsa that was included in a certain edition of the Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*. Incidentally, the sample picture that accompanies the article appears to be from the *Mahadurah Kama* (first edition) of Tanya, which is not, in fact, the handwriting of the Alter Rebbe.

A LEAF FROM THE BOOK

OISYOS MESAPROS
(THE LETTERS RECOUNT)

A GRAPHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE ALTER REBBE'S HANDWRITING

Presented with this manuscript, a graphologist would find himself in quite a predicament. He will be utterly stymied if he were to attempt to capture the spirit of the character that emerges from these letters, as there are no words in the modern dictionary that can do it justice, especially considering the vast distance in time, mentality, and greatness.

Furthermore, the sample presented is a mere facsimile of a manuscript. As such, this analysis is by no means a full representation of the magnitude of this character.

Upon first impressions, one will discern that this is an immensely great, sublime and mind-boggling figure. One sees intense feelings and admiration for personality and individualism, but as strong as it is—it is still restrained by a certain reverent awe before transcendental forces. It seems that the author was able to tolerate a certain duality and balance two conflicting ambitions, the tension of which would bring a lesser person to the brink of insanity.

אותיות מספרות
חקר גרפולוגי על כתיבת יד האדמו"ר הזקן

מאת
רות צוקר

הגרשולוג העומד בפני כתיבת יד מופלאה זו רואה את עצמו במטוכה רבה, ואינו יודע איך למצוא במילינו המודרני את המונחים ההולמים כדי לתאר כראוי את האישיות המתגלית מתוך האותיות של הפקסימילית הנחקרת. בשל המרחק העצום של מנטליות, של זמן ושל ממדי הגדלות, וקושי נוסף באנליות, הוא המחסור בחומר כחוב. כל המחקר הנוכחי בנוי לא על מקור כי אם על צילום של תעודה. על כן אם אי אפשר יהיה להקיף את כל גדלותה של אישיות הכותב, ישמחו נא הדברים האלה מעין הסבר והתנצלות.

הרושם הראשון המתקבל מתוך ציון בכתיבת היד הוא כי לפניך דמות עצומה, נשגבה, מוזעזת, מתגלית התפעלות והערצה עזה לאישיות, שהיתה איתנה מאד ומסוגלה להיות תמיד נחונה תחת השפעת יראת הכבוד בפני השראת כוחות טרנסצנדנטליים. המחבר, כנראה, היה מסוגל להתייבב בפני התמודדות של שתי השאיפות המקבילות, ששררו בתור נפש, התמודדות שהיתה אולי מביאה אדם קטן הימנע, לידי טרוף הדעת.

השאיפה האחת — לפתח את כל חושיו, ואת כל חיוניותו האישית והפיסית לכוון רב ושלם, עד שישמשו לו בסיס מוצק ואיחן.

אברהם וועזען אסן לא מוסר בקרית יבאניק
לקרית יבאניק אסן אצט נפסק אטונע וועס מוסר
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כתב ידו של אדמו"ר הזקן, ככל ה"יתניא"

The first ambition – is to develop all of his faculties and his personal and physical capabilities to their maximum strength, until they serve as a solid foundation for him. (Not continued - ed.)

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

בתוך אישיותו המבוגרת של המחבר, לא היה יותר כל צורך להתמודד עם הרצונות, אבל ההתייחסות נגד ההתנגדות מבחוק, נשארה לו כנראה בכל תקפה. אישיותו של המחבר היתה איתנה למדי כדי שלא להיכנע בפני כל העולם שבחוץ.

כתיבת היד, לפי טיבה, אינה יכולה לפתור את החידה: מה היה בקרבו גדול ממה — רצונו להעניק משלו לאחרים, לתת לאחרים מחויבותיו ומאצילות התבוננותו התלהבותית — או סגולתו המופלאה שכבש לו, להקדיש את עצמו במידה אין סופית לאין סוף עצמו.

מאת המתרגם

גברת רות צוקר, מחברת הנתוח הגרפולוגי הוזה של כתיבת יד האדמו"ר הוקן ר' ש"ן מלאדי, הגה הוקרת שחוות דעתה שמשו שנים רבות יסוד להכרעות בתי דין ובתי משפט בישראל. היא למדה את תורת הגרפולוגיה מפי הפרופסור ג. א. מאנגאט, נשיא ארגון הגרפולוגים בניג'יבה שבשוויץ, ואחדים ממחקריה הגרפולוגיים על סופרים, חדשים גם ישנים, נתפרסמו בירחונים מקצועיים בלועזית וקנו להם שם.

כאשר בקשתי אותה לערוך נתוח גרפולוגי זה, עוד לא ידעה עברית כלל, מלבד צורת האותיות בלבד ולא הכינה את פירוש המלים. כמו כן בחנתי אותה יפה ונוכחתי כי לא היה לה או כל מושג על אישיותו של האדמו"ר הוקן, לא על תולדותיו ולא על תפקידו בעולם הרוחני של היהדות. כל כתיבתה זאת לא היתה אלא על יסוד נתוח האותיות בלבד ולא סיפרה אלא את אשר סיפרו לה האותיות.

המחקר בעשה על יסוד צלום של כתיבת יד אויטנטית, שקבלתי לצורך זה מידי האדמו"ר רמ"מ שניאורסון שליט"א, שבם קרא את הנתוח הוזה והסכים לפרסמו. בשעת תרגומי את מחקרה מאנגלית לעברית, לא נסיתי להפש למונחים שלה לברשים המקובלים בספרות החסידות, אלא בזהרתי יותר, שהמונחים ישארו כפשטותם, כפי שהיא השתמשה בהם.

ש"ן ש.

Mrs. Ruth Zucker, the author of this graphological analysis of the Alter Rebbe's handwriting, is a researcher whose opinion has served as a basis for many court rulings in Israel. She learned the theory of graphology from Professor G. A. Magnat, president of the Association of Graphologists in Geneva, Switzerland, and some of her graphological studies on writers were published in academic journals, earning her much renown.

When I asked her to conduct this graphological analysis, she did not know any Hebrew at all. She could only recognize the shape of the letters, but did not understand the meaning of the words. I also evaluated her carefully and ascertained that she knew nothing of the Alter Rebbe, neither his history nor about the significance of his role in the Jewish world. All of her writing was based only on the analysis of the letters and she only related what she was told by the letters.

The research was done on the basis of a photograph of an authentic manuscript, which I received for this purpose from the Lubavitcher Rebbe, who also read this analysis and agreed to publish it.

When I translated her research from English to Hebrew, I did not try to express her ideas in terminologies used in Chassidic literature, rather I was careful that the terms retain their basic meaning, as she used them.

Shneur Zalman Shazar

לזכות
עליזה תחיל'
שוחאט
לרגל יום הולדתה - כ"ב טבת

ולזכות הוריה
הרה"ת ר' שלום דוב בער זוזגתו מרת חיה
מושקא שיחיו
ולזכות אחיותיה ברכה ליפשא, שיינדל,
ואחיה מנחם מענדל שיחיו





RABBI LEIBEL POSNER

SPIRITUAL CHILDREN

Rabbi Leibel Posner shares recollections of the first years of Lubavitch in America, precious moments with the Friediker Rebbe, and early interactions with the Rebbe.



I was born on 11 Nissan 5688* in Eretz Yisroel. My father, Reb Sholom Posner, learnt in Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch during the last year-and-a-half that it was open. When it moved to other locations, he traveled along. While he was in Rostov, he got engaged to my mother and they traveled to Eretz Yisroel in about 5685* where they married. They stayed there for a few years and my father worked as a *shochet* and other things, and that is where I was born. Shortly afterwards, in 5690*, at the Frierdiker Rebbe's instructions our family moved to America.

In 5690*, during his visit to the U.S., the Frierdiker Rebbe agreed to see women in *yechidus*. My mother, Mrs. Chaya Posner, took her children, Zalman (age 3) and me (age 2) along to the *yechidus*. Things were very difficult at the time, *parnasa* was tough, and yet, when she was in *yechidus* for a brief moment, she simply asked, “*Voss vet zein mit di kinder?*” What kind of Yidden will these children grow up to be in America?

As my mother used to tell it, “The Frierdiker Rebbe leaned his holy head on his holy arms, then he lifted his holy head and said, ‘*Zei vellen gantz zein*—they will be “whole” – complete.’ He reassured her about our future as Yidden.

Ten years later, in 5700*, when the Frierdiker Rebbe arrived to settle in America permanently, our family was living in Chicago.

I vividly remember the time leading up to the Frierdiker Rebbe's arrival in the early days of World War II, the fear of what would be and the tireless efforts of Chassidim living in America at the time. For example, I recall a meeting that took place in our house on Shemini Atzeres 5700* concerning the rescue efforts. Being that it was a matter of *pikuach nefesh*, one of the Chassidim made a phone call on Yom



THE FRIERDIKER REBBE CIRCA 5690*.

Tov.

It was not like today when it is simple to travel anywhere at any given time. Unfortunately, we were unable to travel to New York to greet the Frierdiker Rebbe, although we knew about every detail and it was the topic of discussion day and night.

I arrived in New York in Cheshvan of 5701* when I was 12 years old, and began learning in Yeshiva Torah Vodaas. Shortly thereafter I merited to enter *yechidus* with the Frierdiker Rebbe along with my brother. The Frierdiker Rebbe gave us a *bracha* that we should be successful in our learning.

Warm On The Bus

That same year, when a class for us opened in 770, my brother Zalman and I left Torah Vodaas to learn in Tomchei Temimim. The yeshiva consisted of 20 *bochurim* and two classes, the “younger class” and the “older class.” We learned in the room that later became the Merkos office (*mazkirus*). We were the only *bochurim* from out-of-town.

A few months later, on 11 Nissan 5701*, I became bar mitzvah. *Yechidus* used to take place on Sunday,

Tuesday, and Thursday nights starting at 8:00 p.m., so we arranged to go into *yechidus* with the Frierdiker Rebbe on Thursday before our scheduled Sunday departure back home for Pesach.

On that Thursday at 10:00 p.m., Rabbi Eliyahu Simpson told us that since the Frierdiker Rebbe was tired, we should go in for *yechidus* another night. We said that we planned to travel and couldn't go another night. He said, “So you'll go in on Motzei Shabbos.” There wasn't usually *yechidus* on Motzei Shabbos but since Rabbi Simpson said we would go in then, we figured an exception would be made this time.

On Motzei Shabbos, Rabbi Simpson, who lived in Boro Park, did not show up in 770. We waited for a while and then we called him. He said that he was not coming and that we should speak to Reb Shmuel Levitin. We went to Reb Shmuel and told him the situation, and he sent us to the other *mazkir* of the Frierdiker Rebbe. A few minutes later the *mazkir* called us back and told us to go into the Frierdiker Rebbe's room ourselves. “What? To go by ourselves?” we asked. He said, “Yes, just go upstairs and knock on the door.”

In those days the upstairs of 770 wasn't locked the way it is now. My

brother and I had a little argument over who would knock because neither of us had the temerity to knock on the Rebbe's door. Zalman ended up doing it because he was older. The Frierdiker Rebbe was sitting at his desk with a *sefer*. When we entered he gave us a large smile which made us feel more at ease. We walked over to the desk.

Reb Zalman Posner related: The Rebbe asked us, "Mit vos fort ir? - How are you traveling home?" I replied, "By bus." The Rebbe asked how long it would take to get home, and I said twenty-four hours.

Reb Leibel continues: The Frierdiker Rebbe asked us, "S'iz varem afen bus?—Is it warm on the bus?"

We thought maybe we didn't hear right because the Rebbe didn't speak so clearly, so he asked again, "S'iz varem afen bus?" We said yes.

"Vos is vegen davenen?" We said we would daven on the bus.

He asked, "Mit tefillin oichet?" We responded that we would daven on the bus with tefillin.

The Frierdiker Rebbe continued, "Everything must be measured according to the time and place. In the current time and place we are satisfied with you, but you should know that when your father learned in Lubavitch it was *gor andersh* [completely different]."

When he said the word "*gor*" he

stretched out the word for a long time and made a sweeping motion with his hand and head.

"*Ir zolt nit kuken af di kinder fun di street*—You should not look at the children of the street."

[Later when we repeated the *yechidus* to Reb Shmuel Levitin he corrected the word *street* to the Yiddish word "*gass*." We responded that the Frierdiker Rebbe had used the English word "*street*," not "*gass*."]

The Frierdiker Rebbe then said, "You are my children. You are the physical children of your parents and you are my spiritual children." Afterwards we discussed the *seder* of the bar mitzvah celebration, what day to make it on, and so on.

My brother and I would only go home for Pesach, and we'd stay for two or three weeks. During our visit home for Pesach of 5702* we arranged *mesibos Shabbos* and the Frierdiker Rebbe mentions it in a letter dated 12 Nissan 5702*. He also wrote to us to *chazzer* Chassidus in shuls, and that is what we did.

During that Pesach, our father told us to go and get tested in our learning by Rabbi Rubenstein who was the rav of the Bnei Ruven shul in Chicago. I was 14 at the time and my brother Zalman was 15 and a half. We were tested by him and he was very impressed with us.

S'HUT GEHERT FUN MOYL

I remember the Frierdiker Rebbe once sent a message to Reb Zalman Gurary to relay to the talmidim that his father (the Rebbe Rashab) couldn't stand next to someone that "*s'hut gehert fun moyl*" (literally "hearing from the mouth," referring to bad breath). The Rebbe said that bochurim should brush their teeth and if necessary they should rinse their mouths with salt water. He also said that they should be clean and dressed properly.

On another occasion, the Frierdiker Rebbe also told Reb Zalman that when he far-brengs with us, we should say l'chaim on tea or on lemonade, and Hashem should help that it will have an effect like saying l'chaim on mashke.

When the Igros Kodesh of the Frierdiker Rebbe was released years later, I found a letter written to Rabbi Rubenstein dated 12 Nissan saying that he should test us and added: "ויהנה מהם הנאה גדולה—and surely you will derive great pleasure from them." At the time, we had no idea that the Frierdiker Rebbe wanted him to test us.

After my family moved to Pittsburgh in 5703*, my brother and I were planning to travel home for Pesach as we had done in previous years. But our teacher, Reb Zalman Gurary, "gave us over the head": "What? You're going home? Moshiach is coming soon and you will never have been by the Rebbe for Pesach?!"

At that time, the campaign of *l'alter l'teshuvah l'alter l'geulah* was in full



RABBI LEIBEL POSNER (SECOND TO THE BOTTOM ROW, SECOND FROM THE RIGHT) AS A 14-YEAR-OLD BOCHUR IN 5702* WITH THE STUDENTS IN 770.

* 5702-1942, 5703-1943

swing. The Frieddiker Rebbe was urging Yidden to do *teshuvah* to hasten the imminent *geulah*, excitement and anticipation were in the air. So we wrote a letter home stating that we wanted to stay in New York for Pesach. My father responded, “You want to keep all of the *olam haba* for yourselves? What about your parents? What about *kibud av v’em*?” So we went home.

When we got home, my father told us another reason he wanted us home. In Pittsburgh there were people who said that Lubavitchers were good *frum* people but they didn’t know how to learn well. My father wanted us to come home to speak to people in Torah so that they would see that Lubavitcher *bochurim* can and do really learn. Later, after seeing the above letter, we understood that this was also what the Frieddiker Rebbe wanted.

At the Frieddiker Rebbe’s table

I don’t remember my first farbrengen with the Frieddiker Rebbe although I have a memory of the farbrengen that took place on Chai Elul 5701* when the Frieddiker Rebbe spoke about the *kol koreh of l’alter l’teshuva l’alter l’geulah* for the first time. The Frieddiker Rebbe was *mech-abed* Rabbi Rubenstein, the rabbi of the Bnei Reuven shul in Chicago by asking him to read the *kol koreh*. The farbrengen took place in the upstairs *zal*.

One Shabbos at Mincha during the year of *aveilus* for the Frieddiker Rebbe’s mother, Rebbetzin Shterna Sara, the Frieddiker Rebbe called over the *gabbai* Reb Berel Chaskind and said that the *chazzan* should start to say *kaddish* right after *hagbah* and continue until the *sefer Torah* reaches the *aron kodesh*. The *chazzan* seemed to not fully understand and said *kaddish* quickly.

After Mincha the Frieddiker Rebbe again called over Reb Berel and explained again how it should be done. That is when this *minhag* began.

In the late 5700s*, the *hakafos* on Simchas Torah were held in the Frieddiker Rebbe’s apartment. On Simchas Torah morning, my friend Zelig Sharfstein and I wanted to join *hakafos* there. The stairs opened up to the hallway



A SERIES OF LETTERS FROM THE FRIEDDIKER REBBE TO VARIOUS RABBINIM IN CHICAGO IN THE DAYS BEFORE PESACH 5702*, REGARDING THE “SONS OF REB SHOLOM POSNER”.

which was unlocked but chained shut so we couldn't enter. Just then Reb-betzin Chaya Mushka walked by.

We asked her to let us in and she said, "It's late, almost *kriah!*" When we told her that we had missed *kriah* downstairs, she unlatched the chain and let us in. We had missed *hakafos* but merited to be there for *kriah* and to witness the Frierdiker Rebbe receiving *chosson Bereishis*.

Chabad was very small then and there was always plenty of room in those days. One Friday, when the Frierdiker Rebbe was saying *kaddish* for his mother, he wanted a *minyán* for Mincha early in the afternoon on a Friday. Believe it or not, it was actually a challenge to find a *minyán*.

Once Reb Berel Chaskind asked my brother Zalman and myself to build the Frierdiker Rebbe's sukkah. In order to access the porch where the sukkah would be built we had to walk through the Frierdiker Rebbe's room. So we went to the Frierdiker Rebbe's room and knocked on the door. The Frierdiker Rebbe looked at us questioningly and we pointed to the sukkah porch. After we finished building it, we had to walk through the Frierdiker Rebbe's room again to get out. This time, his face was down towards his desk and he didn't look up at us.

I recall one farbrengen with the Frierdiker Rebbe when the Chassidim were singing the *niggun* "*V'chol karnei resha'im agade'a teromamna karnos tzaddik*." Whenever they got to the part of "...*karnos tzaddik*," there was one man (Rabbi Dovid Stockheimer, father-in-law of Rabbi Mordechai Mentlick, Rabbi Moshe Pinchas Katz and Rabbi Avrohom Ziskind) who would point to the Frierdiker Rebbe. This made the Frierdiker Rebbe laugh.

I am reminded of another time the Frierdiker Rebbe laughed: Once at a farbrengen there was an enormous

THE GENERATIONS OF OLD ARE SUPERIOR

A special porch was built upstairs in 770 for a sukkah for the Frierdiker Rebbe, as the elevator couldn't be used on Yom Tov. (One of the considerations when 770 was purchased was that the building had an elevator for the Frierdiker Rebbe, who was wheelchair-bound.)



The sukkah was small, barely accommodating 10 people, so during farbrengens the *bochurim* would take brief turns being inside and listening.

When it was my turn, the Frierdiker Rebbe was telling a story: When he was a child he attended a farbrengen. At the farbrengen there was a *shochet* who cried out, "Once upon a time there were *shochtim* who were G-d-fearing and *talmidei chachamim*, but who am I?" Then there was a *melamed* who cried out, "Once upon a time there were teachers who were G-d-fearing scholars, but what am I?" And there was an old Chossid sitting there who said that when he was a child he was at a farbrengen where a *shochet* and a *melamed* were crying that they were insignificant in comparison to their predecessors.

At this point the Frierdiker Rebbe burst out laughing. Every generation laments that we are nothing in comparison to previous generations and that nowadays there are no Chassidim left. People have felt that way throughout history, but the truth is we have a shining future and we will keep going and keep growing!

chocolate cake on the table. At the end of the farbrengen the Frierdiker Rebbe told Rabbi Simpson to distribute slices of cake. So Rabbi Simpson sliced a small sliver and put it on a plate. The Frierdiker Rebbe said, "*Tov ayin hu yevorach*—One with a good eye is blessed." In other words, give bigger pieces of cake. So Rabbi Simpson cut a very big piece and offered it to Reb Avraham Pariz, a skinny Chossid who hardly ate at all. The sight of him being offered a huge slice of chocolate cake caused the Rebbe to laugh.

Before Purim 5708*, Rabbi Hoda-kov called me to the office (which he shared at the time with the Rebbe,

later this was the Rebbe's room), and said that the Rebbe wants to send me on a "*shpatzir*." The Rebbe sent me to visit cities in the New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware areas spreading Yiddishkeit. Before I went on this shlichus I was *zoche* to *yechidus* with the Frierdiker Rebbe. At the *yechidus* the Frierdiker Rebbe said, "*Bai yenam darf men zeh'n di maalos un nisht farzen di chesronos*—We must see the *maalos* in others but not overlook the *chesronos*."

"Chassidim say that in the Torah there are various letters, big letters and small letters. We must see the *maalos* of another in big letters and the *chesronos* in small letters. Travel safely."

These are words which a person can live with his entire life. It is the core principle with which we look at another Yid.

I took what was called the “milk train” - the train would stop in every local station. I took with me a sample of everything that Kehos had to sell and it fit into one briefcase. (Imagine nowadays traveling with a sample of everything that Kehos sells!) I traveled through New Jersey and returned to New York for Purim and then traveled through Delaware and Pennsylvania, arriving in Pittsburgh in time for Pesach.

When I returned after Pesach, I entered *yechidus* once again to give a report of what I had done during the trip. The Frierdiker Rebbe asked me what was next. I said that I was learning *shechita*. The Frierdiker Rebbe said: “Do you know how to *shtel a chalef*?” I said yes and he agreed that I should do it.

This was apparently the first trip of its kind, sort of a pilot project. That summer Merkos Shlichus as we know it began, with pairs of *bochurim* going out during the summer.

An Early Connection

The first time that I saw the Rebbe was on the day he came off the boat, Chof-Ches Sivan 5701*. The Frierdiker Rebbe sent a group of prominent Chassidim to welcome the Rebbe, and we (the *bochurim*) waited to greet him in 770. When the car arrived at 770 we ran to greet him. Each of us gave a personal *shalom aleichem*.

After that first time, we didn’t interact with the Rebbe very often. We were careful not to bother him unnecessarily and only turned to him for important matters. One would engage in conversation with the Rebbe in

regards to matters related to Merkos, *mesibos Shabbos*, Shaloh, or other outreach activities, but not arbitrarily.

[As an aside, I will relate this story that happened some years later: It was shortly after the *histalkus* of the Frierdiker Rebbe and before the Rebbe accepted the *nesius*, when I returned from out of town, I went into the Rebbe’s room. When the Rebbe extended his hand and said “*Shalom aleichem*,” I responded “*Aleichem shalom*” but kept my hands at my sides. The Rebbe extended his hand once again. Again I responded “*Aleichem shalom*,” without extending my hand. The Rebbe smiled and said: “*Yoh, an akshen!*” (I.e., I stubbornly acted as a Chossid does by not shaking the Rebbe’s hand.)]

One of the first things printed by Merkos in the early 5700s* was a *bentcher*. The *bentchers* arrived in a small truck that stopped to unload in the *shalash*, which in those days was an open driveway. In the meantime it started to rain.

One of the *bochurim* who was helping to bring in the boxes, Yitzchok Flohr, had no coat, so the Rebbe told Yitzchok to use his coat. The Rebbe at that time had a light gray gabardine coat and Yitzchok took it off the coat rack and wore it. When we finished schlepping, he hung it back where he had taken it from. The Rebbe told Yitzchok, “*Fundestvegen, a makif darf men hoben an eigeneh*,” which in

simple terms meant, “You ought to get yourself your own coat.” But I think the Rebbe was alluding to something deeper. A person can’t just rely on the Rebbe but must do his own *avodah*. Borrowing *makif*, meaning inspiration from one’s surroundings, is not enough.

I remember once, when the Rebbe entered the *beis midrash* in 770 on a Shabbos, 37 minutes after *shkiah* and wanted to daven Maariv. We were standing around the *bimah* discussing this and I said: “There are three minutes left until the time,” as we used to wait until 40 minutes after *shkiah* to daven Maariv after Shabbos. The Rebbe turned to me and said: “*Noch a machmir*—another stringent one.”

Don't Complain

One day Rabbi Hodakov called me from the *beis midrash* to come into the Merkos office. When I entered, the Rebbe was there with Rabbi Hodakov and Reb Leizer Pinchas Weiler. Reb Leizer Pinchas was a tzedakah collector who would travel around spreading Yiddishkeit. At the time, he was visiting Philadelphia and wanted to arrange a *mesibos Shabbos* there. I was called into the room to be asked to run it.

It was a Thursday night. They



AT A DINNER FOR TOMCHEI TMIMIM ON 7 ADAR II 5703*, THE GABBAI REB BEREL CHASKIND HOLDS THE MICROPHONE FOR THE FRIERDIKER REBBE.

decided to advertise in the Morgen Journal in Philadelphia that there will be a *mesibos Shabbos* at a specific time and location. In the announcement they wrote: "A young rabbi from New York will be coming to run it." I said, "I am not a rabbi, I am a *bochur*. It should say that a *yeshiva bochur* will be coming."

The Rebbe said, "*Oib nit b'po'el iz dos b'ko'ach. Un oib s'iz nit b'ko'ach toig takeh nit.*" (If you're not a rabbi yet, at least you are potentially. And if it's not true in potential either, that's a problem...)

Before I left, I went into Merkos to receive the funds for the trip, and the Rebbe told me to bring back with me a copy of the ad in the Morgen Journal.

When I arrived in Philadelphia, I asked Reb Leizer for a copy of the newspaper ad. When I opened it, I saw that it read: "A young **Rebbi** from New York will be coming".

After Shabbos, I returned to New York and reported to the Rebbe. I said that many children joined, and I showed the Rebbe the ad. When the Rebbe saw it, he laughed and said: "You see, one ought not argue. You did not want the title rabbi, so you became a Rebbe."

One day, our *melamed*, Rabbi Zalman Gurary, decided that it was not dignified for *Temimim* such as ourselves (ages 12-15) to be playing ball in the *shalash*, the courtyard of 770. So we did other things during recess but did not play ball. All of a sudden, one day, an upstairs window opened and the Rebbetzins were laughing and raining down balls on us. From that day on ball-playing became kosher again in the 770 driveway.

About 40 years passed and I was in Israel with my wife, Tirtza. We were visiting Reb Reuven Dunin in Haifa and while we were there we met Yankel Smith, who learned with us in 770 back then, when we were

bar mitzvah age. He was not from a Chabad family. He told me that when the ban on ball-playing was issued, he decided to leave 770 and go to a different, non-Chabad yeshiva, because he enjoyed ball-playing and was not willing to give it up. He met the Rebbe in the hallway and the Rebbe asked him, "I heard you are leaving yeshiva. Why?" Yankel answered that he was leaving because ball-playing was now forbidden. The next day, the Rebbetzins threw the balls out the window and Yankel Smith decided to remain in the yeshiva.

Chief Rabbi Herzog

In 5709*, Shavuos fell on Friday and Shabbos. That year the Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Yitzchak Herzog, was in Crown Heights. He was staying on S. Marks, between New York and Nostrand. He davened at 310 Crown Street, which is now Bais Rivkah but was then the Crown Heights Yeshiva. It was difficult for him to walk back and forth to Crown Street so many times, so he requested of the Rebbe to make a *minyán* Mincha for him at Lubavitch Yeshiva on Bedford and Dean which was much closer to where he was staying.

The problem was that no *bochurim* wanted to go to the minyan. The Frieddiker Rebbe would farbreng on the second day of Shavuos at Mincha time and no bochur wanted to miss the chance that he might be given permission to enter the farbrengen. (It was hard in those days for *bochurim* to get into farbrengens.)

So the Rebbe gave a *pekudah* that no *bochur* would be allowed to attend the Frieddiker Rebbe's farbrengen until Mincha is finished at Lubavitch Yeshiva. We went and arrived early. Before Mincha I *chazzered* the *maamar* that came out for that Shavuos. When



REB LEIBEL (CENTER OF TOP ROW) WITH HIS FAMILY IN PITTSBURGH. THIS PHOTO WAS TAKEN IN THE YEAR 5710* AT THE BEHEST OF THE FRIEDDIKER REBBE WHO REQUESTED THAT FAMILIES OF CHASSIDIM. SEND THEIR PHOTOS

we came to 770, we went upstairs and of course the door to the farbrengen was locked. We waited to try and get in. The Rebbe himself got up from his place between *sichos* to unlock the door and allow entry for *bochurim* who had gone to make that *minyán*.

Afterwards, the Rebbe wanted to hear everything that had happened from beginning to end. I told him that I stopped *chazzering* the *maamar* in the middle when Rabbi Herzog came for Mincha. The Rebbe said that I should have finished it. He also asked me about the *drashah* that Rabbi Herzog gave and I reported all the details. The Rebbe obviously understood that to his father-in-law it was important that Rabbi Herzog be properly respected and helped, and thus it became the Rebbe's priority too.

The Military Officer

In the late 5700s* I had a *chavrusa* with Reb Chaim Friedland. He was the son-in-law of a local businessman named Ben Horowitz. Through Reb Chaim I became acquainted with Ben's son, a young man aged 21 or so. During the war this young man



REB LEIBEL (SEVENTH FROM RIGHT) WITH REB ZALMAN GURARY'S SHIUR IN 770 IN 5702*.

enlisted in the army, and because he was very smart he joined the military intelligence corps. In six months he learned Japanese and climbed the ranks as an officer.

I wanted to bring him closer to Yiddishkeit and so Reb Chaim invited him to his house while I was there. We got to know each other and began to talk regularly. Once, we made up to meet at his home at 8:30 in the evening, and we spoke until 1:30 in the morning.

At one point, I felt that I reached a place where I couldn't continue engaging with him the same way and that I needed to change my approach. So, I went to the Rebbe and told him about my relationship with this individual. I asked that the Rebbe suggest a new approach that I can use.

The Rebbe told me that the strategy I was using was not correct, and instead I should adopt the following attitude.

The difficulty in conveying concepts of faith to another stems from the fact that belief is not something that one can see with his eyes although, specifically today, science allows a perfect illustration for belief in Hashem.

The physics of an atom, for example, shows that the root and existence of every object is energy, and energy is not a substance. The Rebbe ran his hand along the edge of the desk and

said that this appears to us as something solid, a "continuity" (using that word in English). But modern science tells us that there really is more space than matter. Clearly, logic states that specifically things which we can see with the eye are not accurate, and this idea stands—to the point that one who does not believe so is considered to be one that does not speak logic.

"One of the rules of physics is that one can not imagine something which they do not know of its existence. For example," the Rebbe said, "there is an elephant and there is a subway. The elephant is in Africa, and the subway is in New York. One can imagine that the elephant is in the subway because he knows of the existence of each of them. But one who does not know what an elephant is, or what a subway is, cannot imagine."

Later in the conversation, I asked the Rebbe if I could bring this young man to him. The Rebbe agreed. I said I will bring him on condition that I can be in the room during their conversation. The Rebbe agreed to this too.

I suggested to the *bochur* to come meet the Rebbe and he agreed. The conversation lasted three hours. I don't remember exactly what the Rebbe said. The Rebbe spoke in Yiddish and the *bochur* spoke in English. When there was a need I translated. When I would say a word that was not precise, the Rebbe corrected me and said:

"That was not my intent" and would say the correct word.

When the meeting ended and the young man went home, I stood near the Rebbe's door when the Rebbe said to me: "Ah, it has already been so many times that I wanted to bring him to the Rebbe (referring to the Friediker Rebbe) and it didn't work out."

One day, the Rebbe asked me: "What is with that fellow? Has he begun putting on tefillin?" The Rebbe asked since he agreed during the meeting that he will begin to lay tefillin. I replied that I will find out.

I called and the fellow told me "No." When I told the Rebbe, the Rebbe said, "But he promised that he would." "He says that he didn't," I said. "He says that he only committed to thinking about the idea."

Unfortunately the ending of the story is not the brightest. In the summer of 5710* I went home to Pittsburgh and stayed there looking for a job. One day I received a call from Rabbi Hodakov saying that the Rebbe wants me to travel to Los Angeles. In Elul I returned to New York, and the Rebbe told me to depart to Los Angeles on Chai Elul and to work with Reb Shmuel Dovid Raichik.

During that conversation the Rebbe asked me how that young man is doing and I said that I will find out. I went to his house, and his mother told me that he is in Los Angeles. I went back to the Rebbe and said that he is in Los Angeles and because I am traveling there I will make a point to meet him.

Between that time and Chai Elul, I became engaged. When I went to Los Angeles I had a hard time reaching my friend. Eventually I got on a phone call with him and we made up to meet at a certain time and place. When I came there, he was nowhere to be found and I did not manage to meet him during my trip.

would take *chossan Bereishis* because it is longer. The Rebbe explained the answer at length.

The Histalkus

On Shabbos Yud Shevat 5710* I came to 770 at 8 o'clock in the morning. When I arrived, I saw Reb Sholom Ber Eichorn (a *mashbak* of the Friediker Rebbe) pacing back and forth with a very serious expression on his face. I asked if everything was okay, and I immediately understood what had happened.

Sunday morning was the *levaya*. Beforehand, I went with Reb Bentzion Sacolik and a few *bochurim* to dig the *kever*. We specially dug wide at the bottom and narrow at the top so that Chassidim could stand around during the *kevura*.

After we dug, I went back to 770 for the *levaya* which left 770 at approximately 12:00 p.m. I merited to be one of those who carried the aron from 770 through the crowds to where the car was waiting on Brooklyn Ave. There were four small stools in the vehicle, one at each corner of the aron. The Chassidim sitting on these stools would place their hand under the aron, and in this way “carry” it all the way to the cemetery. Three older Chassidim were seated inside; Reb Shmuel Levitin, Reb Berel Rivkin, and Reb Yisroel Jacobson. The fourth seat was empty. The Rebbe stood there by the open door of the car and sought “*An eltere Chossid*” to come take the fourth seat, but due to the crowding it was impossible for anyone to get through. Suddenly, the Rebbe said to me: “Leibel, go in,” so I sat down.

When we came back to 770, we all tore *kriah* and sat *shiva* in the Friediker Rebbe’s room for half-an-hour.

Wedding

As mentioned before, in Elul 5710* the Rebbe sent me to California. Before I left, the Rebbe told me to bring the just-published *Kuntres Chai Elul* to California. At that time, I asked the Rebbe to make me a *shliach mitzvah*. The Rebbe replied, “What greater shlichus can there be than to bring a *maamar*?” Still, he gave me two nickels and two dimes. I asked him if I could exchange them for other coins. The Rebbe replied, “But not for coins of lesser value!”

Before departing to California, I became engaged to my wife Tirtza Freimark. After I proposed to Tirtza and she accepted, as we stood under the Williamsburg Bridge together I dropped a nickel into the payphone to call the Rebbe and ask for his bracha.

The following night, we had *yechidus* together and the Rebbe asked: “When two people marry, what is the reason for the great joy? The logical reason is that marriage ensures the continuation of generations. But if that’s so, then a wedding reminds us of our mortality, which is not a happy thought.” The Rebbe quoted a Zohar that says that in heaven each soul is divided into two. Both halves are sent down separately in two different bodies, male and female. At the wedding we rejoice at the reunion of the two halves of one soul.

On Yud Shevat 5711*, when the Rebbe accepted the *nesius*, I was in California on shlichus. The wedding was going to take place at the end of Shevat and I needed to be in New York at least two weeks before the wedding for final preparations. Yud Shevat was three weeks before the wedding and I wanted to come a week earlier to be at the *farbrengen*, but the Rebbe wanted me to remain in California to *farbreng* there. I told the Rebbe (during a telephone conversation) that

I needed to come to New York to have a *kapote* made. I wanted to use this as an excuse to come to New York earlier, but the Rebbe saw right through it. He said, “*Nu, vet der shnyder neiyen shneller*—the tailor will just have to sew faster.”

I didn’t argue further. We got married on 30 Shevat 5711* and the Rebbe was *mesader kiddushin*. Our wedding was the first place he went (other than to 770 and the Ohel) since the *histalkus* of the Friediker Rebbe a year earlier.

Before the wedding, I went to the Rebbe and asked him to be *mesader kiddushin*. He said that this is up to the kallah’s side. I replied that I was asking on their behalf as well, and he consented. At the *chupah* we asked the Rebbe to say all of the Sheva Brachos as well, which he did, and that became the established practice by all of the *chupahs* at which the Rebbe was *mesader kiddushin*.

The wedding was in Washington Heights. The Rebbe asked to be notified via telephone the moment that he would need to leave to make it on time. The Rebbe was going to take a car service. Obviously, we did not want the Rebbe to travel in a cab, so we arranged with Reb Sholom Ber Goldschmidt to drive the Rebbe. He had a car and would wait at the phone in 770 to hear from us. Half an hour before the *chupah* the Rebbe was notified and Reb Sholom Ber brought him to the hall.

During the *kabbalas panim*, I sat at the head of the table and when the Rebbe entered I stood up. My father said: “Don’t move away!” Of course I listened to my father, but still I was not going to sit right near the Rebbe and I sat at the corner of the table.

In a letter to his brother, Reb Berel Baumgarten a”h shared further about Reb Leibel’s Kabbolas Ponim.

The Rebbe then asked: “Where will

the *chupah* take place? The roof opens or it will be outside?” When one of the family members said that it will be inside, the Rebbe seemed very unsatisfied and said: “The *chupah* will be inside?”

Reb Leibel’s father, Reb Sholom, immediately agreed that the *chupah* should be outside. The *mechutan* argued though; he said that the locals are not used to such things, it is very cold outside and other arguments to justify having it inside. The Rebbe said: “My wedding was also in the winter. The *chupah* was under the sky, and *baruch Hashem* I am happy with the *shidduch*.” When his father-in-law began to argue back again, the *chossan* motioned to him that he should stop.

Reb Eliyahu Simpson then said that it was probably too late to attain the necessary permit. The Rebbe hinted that this was not necessarily the case. Reb Sholom stood up to go and speak with the managers. It was difficult for him to pass through since people had crowded around to hear the Rebbe. After about five minutes Reb Sholom returned saying that everything was in order, and they had even arranged the right canopy and poles. The Rebbe said: “*Halevai* it was so easy to persuade the people with *bechira chofshis* as it was to persuade them.”

After this, the Rebbe asked the *mechutan* where he was from, and he responded that he came from Germany. The Rebbe said: “Germany gave us a lot of Torah, and much *gedulah*.” He then sighed and said: “And a lot of tragedy. The Torah had its effect on many places, in Eretz Yisroel, Babylon, Persia, Germany, France, Poland, Russia, and now in America. Now the world is ready [for the coming of Moshiach].”

Then the Rebbe said: “Since the *histalkus*, I have not left the house of the Friediker Rebbe other than to go home and to the Ohel. This is the



THE REBBE CONVERSES WITH REB SHOLOM POSNER AT THE KABBALAS PONIM OF REB LEIBEL POSNER ON 30 SHEVAT 5711.

JEM 286928



THE REBBE UNDER THE CHUPPAH

POSNER FAMILY

first time that I have gone somewhere, for the wedding of your daughter, a *simcha*. Because *simcha* breaks through all boundaries, Hashem should bless us that the *simcha* should break our boundaries, and included in boundaries is the gate around the holy *Tziyun*, and we should celebrate many *simchos*.”

When Reb Leibel went to cover the *kallah* with the veil, the Rebbe went into a *dveikus* and instructed that a *niggun* be sung while he prepared himself in the manner that he would before reciting a *maamar*. However, the *shushvinin* came and walked the *chossan* to the *chupah*. The Rebbe went out with only a *kapote* and *gartel*, and did not wear a coat.

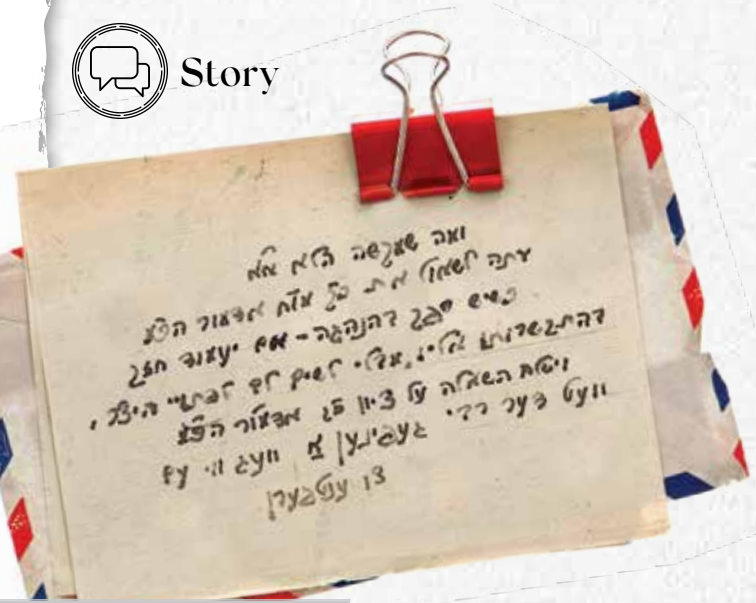
The Rebbe recited the *birchas eirusin*, and after the *kesubah* was read,

the Rebbe recited *sheva brachos*. When the Rebbe came to the words “*Sos tasis vesagel haakora*,” his eyes filled with tears. Then the Rebbe continued in a smooth and beautiful tune, until reaching the words, “*yishama b’arei Yehuda u’vechutzos Yerushalayim*,” when he paused again as his holy eyes filled with tears.

After the *chupah*, when everyone went back into the hall, the Rebbe spoke again for a while with the *mechutan*.

Thus, Reb Leibel and his wife merited that their wedding was the first one where the Rebbe was *mesader kiddushin* after accepting the *nesius*. ❶

1. The sicha was edited by the Rebbe for the sefer *Yemei Bereishis*, p. 337.



דער רבי וועט געפינען אַ וועג...

לעילוי נשמת
הרה"ת ר' יעקב בן הרב
שמואל יוסף ע"ה גרינבוים
נלב"ע מוצאי שבת קודש
פרשת ויחי יעקב ט"ו טבת
תש"פ
ע"י אשתו ביילא רישא
ובנו מנחם מענדל גרינבוים
ומשפחתו שיחיו

The Timely Article

AS TOLD BY RABBI ARON SCHIMMEL (POSTVILLE, IA)

After two years of searching for a *makom hashlichus* I accepted a job in Postville, IA as a *mashgiach* in Rubashkin's meat plant and eventually became a *shochet*. But I never gave up on my dream of being a shliach. This was 25 years ago.

While I continued seeking out shlichus opportunities I became active with shlichus work in Postville, setting up Chassidus *shiurim* for the many *frum* Yidden living here permanently or temporarily as *shochtim* and *mashgichim*, and reaching out to Yidden living in the surrounding area. Over time we developed quite an operation, and I was appointed to be the official shliach to Northeast Iowa. We now have a Chabad House on the main street with a library and visitor center serving locals and tourists. *Bochurim* learning in the local yeshiva started going out on *mitvzoim* every Friday to the surrounding towns under my directorship and our list continues to grow every week.

Despite these successes, in reality our shlichus

is not the typical situation where one feels that their presence is vital. We live in a vibrant *frum* community and our long list of contacts is spread out over a vast area and it's very difficult for us to appreciate our impact. Over the years I was plagued with doubts whether this was a real shlichus and contemplated seeking other opportunities.

Finally, this year on Gimmel Tammuz I was so disturbed that I felt the need to ask the Rebbe for a clear sign that Postville was the right shlichus for us. On Sunday, Daled Tammuz I was at the Ohel and I described to the Rebbe our situation and how I was very confused as to the purpose of our shlichus. "I'm requesting the Rebbe to give me clarity on what the purpose of my shlichus is and what I should do," I concluded.

As I sat down to drink a coffee after leaving the Ohel I turned on my phone and noticed a notification that I received an email from a certain Rabbi Martin Rosenfeld. I had no recollection of

ever meeting such a person until I started reading his message.

He writes to me that he is preparing a *dvar Torah* for a tri-state area publication called the Jewish Link entitled *Making a Difference in the World of Kiruv*. In it he describes how years earlier he was in Iowa for a conference and visited Postville.

“I davened Mincha at the local minyan and met a friendly shochet who was insistent I join him for lunch. This man was in the Charedi camp, I learned, but not at all an isolationist. He was a real mixer and very well-connected. He asked me if I would like to meet the local Chabad rabbi, Rabbi Aron Schimmel, and within minutes Rabbi Schimmel was over at his apartment.

I asked the rabbi how he spent his day since all the Postville inhabitants were already observant, and other rabbis also lived in this town. Rabbi Schimmel discussed what he did for the local Jews but then described the geographic area he served. In Northeast Iowa there had once been active communities in such places as Dubuque and Waterloo. The synagogues that were once traditional had long disappeared. But Jews still remained in this area. Rabbi Schimmel established relationships with many of these Jews and would visit them to talk about upcoming Chagim, counsel them, and help them in any way he could. His outreach was one-to-one except for occasions such as Chanukah when he might find a group to teach and inspire.

The shlichut of Rabbi Schimmel was truly a “retail undertaking and outreach in the true sense of the word. He came to his flock rather than wait for them to come to him”.

The article continues that although the author served as a rabbi for many years, he now lives in New Jersey working as an attorney, but continues to make an effort to be involved in community work, assisting smaller congregations in surrounding cities who cannot afford to retain a full time rabbi.

“Rabbi Schimmel of Postville, Iowa has shown the way in a new type of kiruv work. You can’t always wait for the flock to come to you, so you then must go to the flock”.

He concludes the article by stating that anyone is qualified to do this type of work if they can lead davening, or read the Torah, or give a class or work with Jewish people one-to-one. He even gives five practical ideas on how “to meet your flock in the pursuit of kiruv.”

I stared at my phone screen in shock. Minutes after asking the Rebbe for clarity as to the purpose of my shlichus, a Yid I could barely remember notifies

me that hearing about my shlichus in Postville years ago inspired him to do the same, and he is now encouraging tens of thousands of tri-state Jews to do so as well—using my name!

In truth, the essential story of my shlichus is no different than thousands of other shluchim. Nevertheless, specifically my shlichus was the conduit through which thousands of Jewish Link readers would soon be called upon to devote themselves to helping other Yidden! I could not have asked for a clearer sign than this.

Awash with so many emotions I responded to Rabbi Rosenfeld thanking him for his message and shared how it arrived at the perfect time. The next day, Hei Tammuz, he responded:

Rav Aron: I wanted to share a very beautiful quote from Rav Yeruchem Levovitz, who was a long-time mashgiach in Mir Yeshiva during the mid-20th century. He said:

“When a person does not know his faults it is unfortunate. But when he does not know his strengths it is a true tragedy.” You are giving chizuk to people in so many diverse communities. That is a very great zechus. You are the last man standing in much of NE Iowa. That is an accomplishment few can match, or are capable of matching. Continue your holy work till 120.

In the Hayom Yom for Hei Tammuz the Rebbe describes how a Chossid once complained to the Alter Rebbe about his financial situation, to which he responded: “You are needed — to illuminate your surroundings by studying Torah and by serving Hashem with your heart. As for your livelihood and the things that you need — this Hashem must give you. Do what you must and Hashem will do what He must.”

I had legitimate doubts about my shlichus and the Rebbe sent me a clear message that I need to continue doing what I am needed for. Regardless of how small and insignificant I feel I am, I am having a real impact in places I could have never imagined. I am sure many others can be inspired by my personal experience and realize that no matter how trivial their positions may seem, as long as it’s the Rebbe’s shlichus, know that it matters very much. **7**

YOUR STORY

Share your story with A Chassidisher Derher by emailing stories@derher.org.



JEM 118741

לזכות

הרה"ת ר' **יצחק אהרן** זוזגתו מרת
חנה ומשפחתם שיחיו מאן
שלוחי כ"ק **אדמו"ר** במישיגן למעלה
מיובל שנים
להצלחה רבה בכל עניניהם לאריכות
ימים ושנים טובות

נדפס ע"י בנם
הרה"ת ר' **אברהם שמואל** זוזגתו מרת
ח' צפורה ומשפחתם שיחיו
מאן



JEM118755

SUNDAY DOLLARS

UNIQUE SCENES FROM THE DOLLARS
DISTRIBUTION OF 21 CHESHVAN 5750*

On Sunday morning at the entrance to 770 Eastern Parkway long lines formed as the Rebbe stood near the door of his room to distribute dollars for tzedakah and share a private moment with thousands seeking his bracha and advice.

While there are many photos and videos of these special weekly events, we present here a collection of photos that show the familiar scene from a unique perspective taken by photographer Yossi Melamed.



JEM 118913



JEM 118996



JEM 118911







Rabbi Aharon Wieder, the Linzer Rov, presents his new sefer to the Rebbe.







Letters

A forum for readers to send their feedback, add to, or ask any questions about articles. Submit your letter to feedback@derher.org.

Submissions may be slightly modified by our editorial staff before publishing.

The connection of Teshuvah with 120 years and Hakhel

I want to thank the Chassidisher Derher for the recent article about the Rebbe's *koch* in Igeres HaTeshuvah (Elul 5782, issue 122).

As mentioned in the article, following the special printing of Igeres HaTeshuvah which was sponsored by the Rebbe in Elul 5728*, the Rebbe proceeded to explain portions of Igeres HaTeshuvah at farbrengens throughout 5729* until the spring of 5731*.

I thought it would be appropriate to share about the *koch* in Igeres HaTeshuvah which took place in later years of the Rebbe's *nesius*:

In honor of Chof Menachem-Av 5739*, which marked forty-five years from the *histalkus* of Harav Levi Yitzchok, the Rebbe began editing a series of Likkutei Sichos expounding on the *biurim* of his father on Igeres HaTeshuvah. This series continued throughout the month of Elul, including five *biurim* which were subsequently printed in the *hosafos* of Likkutei Sichos vol. 19.

Following this, starting from Chof Av 5750* until Yom Kippur 5751*, the Rebbe

edited seven more *biurim* and again the following year, from Chof Av 5751*, the Rebbe edited an additional three *biurim*.

After Chof-Zayin Adar I 5752*, Chassidim sought ways to bring the Rebbe a *refuah* and the *hisgalus* of Moshiach. One of the ideas was for Chassidim to learn about and implement in actual *avodah* the Rebbe's teachings on Igeres HaTeshuvah, based on the saying of Chazal "גדולה תשובה שמביאה" —Great is *teshuvah* because it brings healing to the world."

At the time, when this idea was presented to the Rebbe by the *mazkirim* who would read out letters written to the Rebbe, the Rebbe nodded his head affirmatively encouraging the project. Following this, Kehos printed a special book including all of the above mentioned *biurim* from Likkutei Sichos along with additional *biurim* from the Rebbe, to enable Chassidim to learn the *biurim*. Afterwards, when Likkutei Sichos vol. 39 was printed, these were all included there.

It seems to be a revealed *hashgacha protis* that the article about Igeres HaTeshuvah was published recently because *teshuvah* has a very special connection both to the Rebbe's 120th year and to the current year of Shnas Hakhel:

In the *sicha* of Shabbos Parshas Vayera, 20 Cheshvan 5740* (printed in Likkutei Sichos vol. 20 pg. 401), the Rebbe speaks about the unique characteristic of that day, which marked the beginning of the 120th year since the birth of the Rebbe Rashab. Even a *ben chamesh l'mikrah* realizes its significance, since Moshe Rabbeinu lived that amount of years, making it the *shleimus chayei ha'adam* (the complete life of a person).

The Rebbe continued that 120 years has another profound significance: Hashem said about the generation of Noach that until 120 years, He would slow His anger against them, but if they would not do *teshuvah* by then, He would bring the *mabul*.

This teaches that the 120th year has the power of *teshuvah* by way of which a *mabul* can be averted.

More so, the *possuk* says that before the destruction of the *mabul* actually started, Hashem brought down rain. If the people would have done *teshuvah* this rain would have been “*gishmei bracha*—rain of blessings.” (Only because the people didn't do *teshuvah* did it turn into destructive waters.)

The Rebbe concluded that we can derive from this the greatness of the 120th year, that it has the spiritual power to nullify the Heavenly decree for a *mabul* and to in fact transform it into *gishmei bracha*!

Regarding the special connection of *teshuvah* to Hakhel, it should be noted that the whole *koch* of the Rebbe in Igeres HaTeshuvah and the Rebbe expounding on it started during Elul 5727* which was a Shnas Hakhel.

In a fascinating *michtav kloli* from

the days of Selichos 5727*, the Rebbe said that Hakhel in a spiritual sense indicates and demands the gathering of all of one's thoughts, words and deeds, orienting them toward, and placing them in, one's inner “*Beis Hamikdash*” with wholehearted submission to the King's command—the will of Hashem.

The Rebbe continued that at the conclusion of the Hakhel year, every Yid must undertake a special “stock-taking” to do *teshuvah*, changing thoughts, words and deeds in one's daily life which require change; to repair and improve those which need perfection and to instill more enthusiasm and vitality into those thoughts, words and deeds which can be on a higher level. (See at length in “To the Sons and Daughters of Our People Israel” (Kehot) vol. 1 pg. 56 and onward.)

One last interesting point is that at the same time that the Rebbe was explaining Igeres HaTeshuvah in the *sichos* of Tishrei 5728*, he also said a *hemshech* of *maamarim* on *teshuvah*. Throughout Tishrei, the Rebbe delivered a *maamar* on the *dibbur hamaschil* “*Vehaya bayom hahu yitaka b'shofar gadol*” three times, a novelty in the Rebbe's Torah. This was then followed by a *maamar* on Shabbos Parshas Noach on the *possuk* “*Hineni mevi osam... kahal gadol yashuvu heinah.*” This *possuk* shares a common theme with Hakhel and was included in a *niggun* about Hakhel that the Rebbe strongly encouraged in Hakhel years.

May we be *zoche* to see the Rebbe again with the *geulah sheleima* in this special year of Hakhel and *Me'ah V'esrim Shana*!

Mendel Zaklikovsky

YESHIVA AT THE OHEL, NY